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## Crow's Nest : 2014 : 02 : 11

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the  
crow's  
nest



## Organic is out, local is in p. 3



## Hey guys, the Olympics are on p. 8

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### Electric vehicle drivers face fines

BY TYLER KILLETTE  
STAFF REPORTER

In the past four months, Kira Barrera has received \$120 in parking tickets on campus -- even though she has a \$173 commuter parking permit stuck to her windshield.

Barrera, an environmental science graduate student, is one of about six people who regularly drive an electric vehicle to campus and take advantage of the two free charging stations near the Tavern. Though there is no time limit on the chargers, a policy change made in November restricts use to charge completion. Once the meter shows a full charge, Parking Services patrollers are allowed to issue a \$30 ticket.

While hybrid cars usually need about two hours to charge, fully electric vehicles, like Barrera's Nissan Leaf, may need up to six hours. However, the rate of charge varies and can be tough to gauge.

"It's an estimate," Barrera said.

So, even when she arrives on campus in the morning and the meter says it will take six hours for her car to charge, it may be done sooner. And she may be subject to a \$30 ticket without knowing it.

With an 85-mile range on her vehicle and commute from Clearwater, she needs to use a charging station every time she comes to campus.

Charging an electric vehicle costs about 11 cents an hour, according to Barrera. Though USFSP's charging stations are free, Barrera's parking ticket charges are the equivalent of paying for 1,090 hours of energy.

Barrera took her complaint to Bill Benjamin, purchasing manager for USFSP Parking Services, in early January. Over the next two weeks, she received two more parking tickets, the latest on Jan 22. While the citations were issued for charge completion, neither had a chalk time noting when the vehicle was found fully charged.

Barrera appealed both tickets to Parking Services but received no response.

On Jan. 24, she sent an email to a group of campus employees and

See CHARGING, p. 2

## Textbooks: necessary expense?

BY JENNIFER NESSLAR  
STAFF REPORTER

Sydney Whitfield didn't purchase all her required textbooks this semester.

She enrolled late in her Environmental Science course and wasn't able to purchase the \$90 book ahead of time. Her professor has yet to assign work from the book.

"There are other ways to get around just buying," said Whitfield, a freshman who is working on her prerequisites. If her professor does assign the textbook, Whitfield will decide whether she wants to purchase individual chapters online or buy the book from the USF St. Petersburg Barnes & Noble bookstore.

Whitfield isn't alone, according to a Florida PIRG Education Fund study. The study claimed that 65 percent of college students choose not to purchase textbooks due to cost.

But Jay Hartfield, General Manager of the USFSP Barnes & Noble, disputes this number.

"That is not the case whatsoever," he said.

Because of Barnes & Noble's dynamic pricing, selling used and rental books, Hartfield thinks textbooks sales are "on the rise" at the store.

According to the study, a "fundamental flaw in the publishing industry" causes the high textbook prices. When a professor assigns a book, students are expected to purchase it. The student is a "captive market," the study said, and the publishing industry can therefore cause prices to rise without punishment.

The study suggests cost-reducing options such as e-books and

used textbooks as temporary solutions.

But Hartfield said e-book sales have not increased like people would imagine. "Students still want the physical book," he added.

But some students aren't allowed

Barnes & Noble because, by contract, a portion of the money students spend goes back to the university. These funds are used for scholarships and university initiatives. Most students don't realize the money they spend at the book-



photo by Chelsea Tatham/The Crow's Nest

to purchase e-books. Nancy Carr, an English education graduate student, purchases novels for her English courses. Because many of her professors believe electronic devices distract other students, instructors require her to purchase a physical copy.

Used and rental options are more popular.

USFSP student Morgan Demuth rents all her books from websites like Chegg.com and CollegeBook.com because she thinks renting from online sources is cheaper than purchasing from the bookstore.

Hartfield said he hears stories from students who are unsatisfied after purchasing their books at other online sources, and then come to Barnes & Noble to buy the books again.

"People who choose to go to other sources probably don't get the right textbooks or formats," he said.

Hartfield explained students should purchase textbooks from

store goes back to the university, Hartfield said.

While the contract between Barnes & Noble does not say specifically that a portion of textbook expenditures go back to the school, it says the bookstore donates \$3,000 a year for scholarships. An additional \$1,000 per year is given to the school as a "performance and payment bond," also to be used for scholarships.

Hartfield feels the price of textbooks hasn't affected student trends in purchasing.

"Much like everything, yes, there's been a rise in textbook prices, but what hasn't there been?" Hartfield said. "We've implemented dynamic pricing to cut that off."

But the PIRG study views used, rental and e-book options as only temporary solutions to the problem. The research explores solutions, such as open-source textbooks and campus initiatives, like the ideas proposed by Student

Government senators Justin Scott Linn and Andrew DeFraties.

Linn proposed creating a check-out system in the Nelson Poynter Memorial Library. SG would build a library of textbooks, starting first with the common books used in prerequisite courses. He also had plans to look into open-source textbook options.

After the bill passed through the general assembly, it was sent to Legislative Affairs, where it was held to complete further research on the idea. Last week, backlash from senators caused DeFraties to rework the bill and edit it before resubmitting.

"It is unfortunate that political pressure prevents great ideas from coming to fruition," DeFraties said, "But persistence will always outlast resistance."

The study encourages the use of open-source textbooks, which are accessible to anyone, free of charge, on the Internet.

Carol Hixson, dean of the Nelson Poynter Memorial Library, said the library has no control over what textbooks professors select for their classes. If they did select an open-source textbook, the online textbook would be free to students.

Hixson is waiting for SG to get back in touch with her about the library textbook reserve program. After speaking with *The Crow's Nest*, she said the library is planning a student forum regarding textbooks.

"We hope that SG will agree to co-sponsor it with us," she said.

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## World conference to focus on students

BY AMANDA STARLING  
STAFF REPORTER

Ballrooms are set to become conference rooms as Douglas McElhaney, coordinator and retired U.S. foreign ambassador, ushers in activists and diplomats for a three-day discussion of world

issues.

The World Affairs Conference, which the Honors Program debuted last spring, worked as a two-day discussion of what global topics impacted St. Petersburg residents. But this year, McElhaney is targeting the youth audience as he sets up panels for student interest.

"I think it's interesting for students to hear any kind of discussion like this," McElhaney said. "It won't be necessarily what you read in newspapers, magazines or manuals."

Topics for the conference include religion and politics, the state of Africa, the Middle East, politics

with Asia, sustainability and LGBT rights. The event brings forward authors, journalists, military diplomats and other professionals with perspectives on global affairs.

See CONFERENCE, p. 3

## News Briefs

It's the week of love! Grab your date and celebrate at USFSP.

### Monday, Feb. 10

Oh, oops. You don't have a date. Before you stay in bed all week gorging yourself on chocolate and drowning in tears, check out our solution. At 8 p.m. in the University Student Center, there will be a Love-A-Bull auction. Bid for a date to the rest of this week's events. Note: If you want a date for actual Valentine's Day, you may need to do some convincing while you have their attention throughout the week. To be auctioned as a date, sign up on Student Government's PeteSync page. You will need to arrive at 7 p.m. If you want to purchase a date, show up at 8 p.m. You can spend a maximum of \$20 on a date. Proceeds benefit the Edible Peace Patch Project.

### Tuesday, Feb. 11

Finally, you can express your love (or frustration) for Sodexo and the food services at USFSP. Share your ideas and solutions. The Open Forum on USFSP Dining Services begins at 5 p.m. in USC Ballroom 3. The goal is for students to discuss Sodexo and work together for a change in food services.

Rewind after the forum with the viewing of Don Jon, a romantic comedy about how media stereotypes of relationships complicate love. The movie begins at 8 p.m. in the USC ballrooms, sponsored by the Sex and Relationships Club and the Harborside Activities Board.

### Wednesday, Feb. 12

Dinner's up! Join the Harborside Activities Board and Intervarsity Christian Fellowship in the USC for dinner and comedy. At 6 p.m., dinner is served. At 8 p.m., John Jacobs takes the stage. Jacobs, a contestant on MTV's "Are You The One?," is a rapper, comedian and actor.

### Thursday, Feb. 13

Get covered in foam on Harborwalk. We have no idea what bubbles have to do with love, but it sounds entertaining. The foam appears at 7 p.m., compliments of HAB.

### Saturday, Feb. 15

Take me out to Al Lang. And no, we're not watching the Rowdies or the Rays. The first home game in the history of USFSP club baseball begins at 2 p.m. at Al Lang Stadium. Our opponent: USF Tampa. The first 200 students receive free pizza and USFSP baseball T-shirts.

# Hart: ERC won't repeat election mistakes

BY AMANDA STARLING  
STAFF REPORTER

Andrew Hart, the supervisor of elections for Student Government, doesn't just wait for packets to arrive to approve potential candidates. He spends months planning polling locations, organizing election packets and assembling members of deciding bodies in the election.

SG elections are a semester in the making.

In addition to involvement with student government at the University of Florida, Hart, 24, has experience working with a congressman in Capitol Hill. He wanted to become involved on campus in a new city, and SG seemed the best fit.

"I thought student government would be a good avenue to go through, so I applied for one of positions on the Supreme Court," Hart said. "They found out that (while) working on these student government campaigns, we were under the jurisdiction of intense election codes."

Because of this background, the court recommended Hart apply for supervisor of elections.

"I was talking about how it's a very different student government system over [at UF] and sort of how I felt that the codes were very important," Hart said. "I figured I'd help any way I can."

He faced the "grilling" of SG senators about the supervisor position in his first days enrolled as a

graduate student for Florida studies. He recalls questioning about bias in his position interview.

"One of the things they kept asking me was if I was going to be able to be unbiased," Hart said. "I told them, 'Guys, I'm a brand new student, I've never been to St. Petersburg before ... I don't know anyone on campus. I don't know anything about your student government or about the cliques that are in student government ... I don't know that stuff, and I don't intend to find out.'"

Hart organized the fall semester elections for senators and built his Election Rules Commission. Students of different backgrounds, from political science majors to history majors, expressed interest in critical election decision-making. But he needed individuals who were qualified for his needs: no bias.

Hart isn't daunted by the campaign concerns of spring 2013, when candidates Mark Lombardi-Nelson and Jimmy Richards competed for the student body president seat. His interviews with the court made it clear that SG wanted to keep it in the past.

"From what I understand, it [last election] was a series of events where codes weren't followed and there were different interpretations going on," Hart said. "We didn't have enough people on the ERC to review the rules and procedures." Without having enough people on the committee to make a decision, they couldn't move forward, he explained.

The elections process is now

smoother, according to Hart. With a full ERC instead of three members and an interim election instead of a midterm election gave him time as a new student to build a proper commission and set up for a better election.

Statutes and rules are critical to know, and Hart still reviews over them. He spends much of his time reading and analyzing both his graduate coursework and SG statutes in preparation for elections and selecting members of the Election Rules Commission.

"I still go over them," Hart said. "It's great if you know the rules of procedure and things like that, but it's always important to go back and look and make sure that you're interpreting them correctly because we don't want another catastrophe like what happened a year ago."

Hart organized the final two weeks before spring voting to prepare his candidates. He assembled "Campaign Go-To" guides and rules packets, and set up meetings



Photo Courtesy of Andrew Hart

with the candidates during the qualification period this week. He emphasizes open contact between candidates and the ERC.

"If you have a question, ask it," Hart said. "I'm a huge person on asking for permission instead of asking for forgiveness. Because when we ask for forgiveness, we find ourselves in a situation like last time."

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## Charging policy made in 'fairness'

Continued from front page

student leaders, informing them of the issue.

Benjamin replied saying that following his meeting with Barrera, he asked his employees to wait thirty minutes before issuing a citation for charge completion. That was the first Barrera had heard of the policy change, and though she doesn't doubt its implementation, she said she hasn't seen evidence of it.

Benjamin told *The Crow's Nest* he did not make the change publicly known. "Really, this was just to accommodate her (Barrera)," he said.

Still, the 30-minute leeway is not a complete solution for Barrera. In her meeting with Benjamin, she offered to create a contact list of the all the regular electric vehicle drivers on campus, so Parking Services could contact them when their charges complete.

"If they have time to drive by every hour to look at my car, I don't see why it would be an inconvenience," Barrera said, adding that sending a text to students would

be simple for Parking Services workers.

In response, Benjamin explained that with 22 parking lots to monitor (counting each level of the garage separately), parking patrollers do not have the time to contact drivers.

University spokesman Tom Scherberger compared the policy to parking at a city-run metered spot.

"The St. Pete Police Department doesn't call you before putting a ticket on your car," he said.

Initially, there was no time limit placed on use of the charging stations. The rule restricting use to charge completion was implemented in November in an effort to make the stations "accessible to everyone," Benjamin said. Along with placing signs citing the regulation at each station, Parking Services employees also left notices on the windshields of electric vehicles, which outlined the new policy.

Benjamin said people coming to campus should know how long their cars need to charge and shouldn't take advantage of the

charging stations at USFSP when there are others available in the city. Barrera said she uses the stations at the Dali Museum when the ones on campus are occupied.

Barrera uses an app made specifically for her car that monitors its charge from a distance. Though she can request an update at any time, the app is not programmed to send a notification when the car is fully charged. And even when she requests an update at just the right time, she can't always leave class or her job at the U.S. Geology Survey (just west of campus), to move her car.

Barrera also takes classes in Tampa, and though there are only two charging stations on campus, they are not monitored by time or charge completion. Instead, drivers use an app that specifically monitors the two chargers and lets them know when a charge is complete or a spot opens up. When the chargers are occupied, drivers have the option of parking in designated holding spaces right next to the

stations.

Benjamin said he has been in contact with the Tampa campus and its policy.

USFSP's charging stations were funded through a grant from the U.S. Department of Energy. Benjamin said they were supplied on the basis there would be no charge for two years, however, the school has had to pay for electricity since installation. Since universities are not authorized to charge for electricity (only electric companies can do that), USFSP cannot charge for use of its stations.

USFSP Parking Services does not receive state funding. Money collected from parking citations is used to pay for maintenance of parking lots, signage, electricity, employee salaries and the bond on the parking garage.

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# Is local the new organic?

BY DANIEL FIGUEROA IV

CROW'S NEST CORRESPONDENT

You see it everywhere in supermarkets these days, the exalted "certified organic" label. An assumed promise of healthy and environmentally conscious food fit for a guiltless meal. However, a newly emerged concept now threatens the myths of organic foods -- eating locally.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, for a product to be labeled as USDA certified organic, it must contain at least 95 percent organic ingredients with the remainder coming from ingredients off a nationally approved list.

Grocery stores, such as Whole Foods Market, have done much to promote the idea of organic foods as healthier and tasting better while also being better for the environment. However, food writers like Michael Pollan purport these claims are unsubstantiated, and the promotion of organic food at such a level has come at the cost of local suppliers and regional distributors.

In an interview with NPR's Jon Brooks, Pollan said he felt we were building a "straw man, being that the whole point of organic food is that it's more nutritious." Pollan also admitted he, a staunch supporter of the organic movement, tends to "favor local food, whether

it's certified organic or not."

Pollan isn't the only modern foodie disillusioned by society's

better taste are controversial and highly debated.

Many Tampa Bay area chefs have



photo by Daniel Figueroa IV/The Crow's Nest

focus on organic eating.

During an Oct. 2013 cooking demonstration at the Museum of Fine Arts in St. Petersburg, chef and cookbook author Pierre Thiam opted to substitute the salmon from one of his recipes with locally sourced grouper because he feels local sourcing is "absolutely" more important than focusing on organics.

"That organic salmon from Alaska wouldn't be as good as the grouper we had today," Thiam said. "Organic is important, but it shouldn't be a religion."

At its heart, organic food has environmental advantages from not using artificial fertilizers, pesticides or growth hormones. Ideas about its nutritional benefits or

made great strides in order to focus on locally sourced ingredients. Greg Baker, chef and owner of Seminole Heights restaurant the Refinery, gets most of his food through the Suncoast Food Alliance, a network of farmers within a 100-mile radius of Sarasota. Weekly, he introduces new menus based on what is available from those farmers.

"I would rather have something that was picked today hitting my menu tomorrow that's nutrient dense, has a low carbon footprint and is ultimately more delicious, and carries actual food value, than worry about, sure, that's an organic lemon that was picked two weeks ago," Baker said.

Baker acknowledges that using best management practices -- even

if you're using conventional methods of growing -- ensures there is not a monoculture, the soil is not depleted and that, in 40 years, they will not have wiped out any useful residual nutrient.

Tampa's Café Dufrain has also committed itself to local sourcing, comprising its menu of at least 75 percent sustainable, organic or local foods.

In St. Petersburg, Ben Harris of the Spot Grill recently revamped his entire menu to include fresher and locally sourced ingredients.

Through other efforts, the Art Institute of Tampa's culinary program is developing workshops on sourcing food locally. Worden Farm in Punta Gorda currently offers workshops on organic gardening in the home and preserving fall harvests throughout the summer months.

With cooler weather here, farmers markets, like the Saturday Morning Market in St. Petersburg where Eve Worden, owner of Worden Farm, offers her harvest to the public, are popping up all over the Bay area. Such markets offer a direct connection between producer and consumer, which builds communal relationships, an often overlooked aspect of smart eating.

At the markets, farms like Worden's offer the advantage of produce that is 100 percent organic as well as locally sourced.

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The downtown St. Petersburg Publix, just blocks from the Saturday Morning Market, offers a package of organic romaine lettuce (roughly one head) grown and shipped from California for \$4.29. On the same day at the market, Worden was selling her locally grown organic lettuce for \$2.50 per head. Worden loves interacting with her community and said she uses the direct connection with her consumers to keep her prices down. Worden doesn't eat salads in the summer because the produce is not available here.

"When I see all that packaged stuff in the store, and it's all dead, I just can't," she said. "I can't when I'm used to this (her produce). I mean, just look at how vibrant the colors are. That's nutritious food."

Ultimately, food isn't about the label, Worden explained. It's about understanding priority and the food choices you're making.

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**Go local:** The Saturday Morning Market is held from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. every week at First Avenue S. and First Street S., in the parking lot next to Progress Energy Field. Vendors offer breakfast and lunch options as well as produce and other goods to take home.

## South Asian Association spreads Indian culture

BY MATT THOMAS

STAFF REPORTER

Kadi rolls and Indian flatbread along with cottage cheese and potatoes are some of the foods Radhika Dang, president of USF St. Petersburg's South Asian Association, has in mind for the club's Indian food night.

The menu "depends on how many people can take spicy food," Dang said.

"Slumdog Millionaire" was the most requested for a movie night,

despite not being a Bollywood film.

SAA is in the recruiting stage, but by the end of the semester, members hope to have many goals accomplished. In addition to hosting food and movie nights, SAA hopes to start a Bollywood dance team, fundraise for an orphanage in India and have a festival on campus.

South Asia is made up of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

"The SAA is an organization dedicated to promoting, analyzing

and sharing South Asian tradition, culture and issues. The organization will promote cooperation with other organizations interested in south Asia," said chemistry professor and SAA faculty advisor Madhu Pandey.

After seeing a group of students dance at Diwali, known as the festival of lights, on campus last November, Pandey encouraged the group to start SAA.

SAA plans to increase their presence on campus through collaborations such as working with Multicultural Affairs to put

together Holi, the festival of colors, in March. Members would also like to work with the All-Star Dance Team and to develop a Bollywood dance team that would perform at events other clubs are hosting. Once formed, the dance team would have several practices each week with Dang helping as choreographer.

Dang, along with club members Niharika Yerrapragada, Ananya Rajan and Sarah-Joy Roxborough, has been hard at work to make the club fully functioning. She depends on a planner to keep track of all of her responsibilities.

"Everything in my planner is true," Dang said.

The group hopes to pick up from the last attempt to make an SAA group started last May.

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**Get involved:** Join the SAA on PeteSync or contact Radhika Dang at rdang@mail.usf.edu.

## Conference seminar offers student internships

Continued from front page

McElhaney sees student involvement as ways to become informed with global issues and connect with professionals in fields they may consider.

"It provides opportunities in the sense of listening to people like Edward Loo or diplomats that have been in foreign service for a number of years," McElhaney said.

"They'll get a real insider's view of what goes on. Virtually all of the people who spoke last year were very frank and open about their

opinions in these things. You don't get that very often in the political discussion."

New to the conference is a discussion on the role of a U.S. foreign affairs officer, led by Edward Loo, a resident foreign affairs officer at Florida International University. Loo, a diplomat of 26 years, brings forward stories of representation in East Asia, Europe and Central America.

Loo became involved as a foreign affairs officer after seeing a

presentation as a college junior at Duke University. His travels encouraged him to share the potential career path with students.

"It's been a great opportunity," Loo said. "I've lived so long overseas that I've developed a better appreciation for who we are as Americans."

Loo will present on potential fellowships and internships to college students, ones who can involve internal works in D.C. or travel abroad at embassies.

"The organization is so large

and so broad," Loo said. "I always give as much responsibility as they can take on. It depends on skills, maturity and enthusiasm."

The special student conference will include a panel of diplomats and bagged lunch on Feb. 14.

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**Go global:** The World Affairs Conference begins on Feb. 13 at 4 p.m. in the University Student Center Ballroom and resumes at 9 a.m. on Feb. 14 and 15.

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## Love, true love

By Erin Murphy  
STAFF REPORTER

Valentine's Day is this Friday. \*Cue cheering couples and the monotonous booing of the perpetually single.\* Whether you're celebrating the 14th with someone sweet, or just enjoying the sugary delights of cookie dough ice cream, you're bound to have love on the brain. Here are some lovey-dovey gift ideas that we'd like to see given more often.

**Socks.** Yes, socks. Show that special someone you care by knitting them a pair of glorious, love-stitched socks. You know, so they won't get cold feet ...

**A non-traditional bouquet.** Flowers are ordinary. Candy and confectionary cornucopias are being commonplace. Why not say "I love you" with a basket of bacon?

**A handmade card.** You seriously can't go wrong with something handmade, however cheesy. Actually, the more cheese, the better.

**A portrait of your face.** To be hung over the mantle with care. (This gift idea not to be attempted by the artistically challenged.)

**An embroidered hanky.** Every proper lady needs a handkerchief embroidered with her lover's initials. For the Jane Austen in us all.

**A cardboard cutout of Jude Law.** Really, don't we all need more of Mr. Law in our lives? Hey, Jude!

**A rock.** Nothing says "We'll always be together" like an age-old piece of sediment.

**Cheese of the Month Club.** It's the gift that keeps on giving ... for 12 months, anyway. Sounds like a gouda idea!

**A trail of conversation hearts, spelling out your love story, that leads your honey bunny from their home all the way to the very spot where you first met, as fireworks burst in the background, with a heartfelt melody that you wrote just for them being sung overhead by a boy choir in robes, while Morgan Freeman narrates their sure-to-be-a-hit reaction, and all the while the power of your love makes the impossible possible, causing bald men to grow hair rapidly, and Ryan Seacrest to get taller.** The problem is not putting all of this together, it's trying to top it next Valentine's Day.

## BSA: discussion serious, turnout low

By CHRISTINA QUAY  
CROW'S NEST CORRESPONDENT

Jordan Palavra, president of USF St. Petersburg's Black Student Association, slouched in his chair at the front of the room. The 19-year-old's mouth formed a thin, nervous-looking line as he tells the one person in attendance they might be alone for this week's discussion.

The group's latest success was a forum about twerking, a popular yet provocative dance move, and the negative appropriations it implicates toward black women. Palavra said it was their biggest turnout yet.

On Jan. 30, however, the topic of the day -- interracial couples -- garnered less interest.

By 5 p.m., the meeting had not commenced. Two people wandered in, and one left after realizing she was in the wrong room. It was doomed to be a two-way conversation -- until four students entered at 5:15.

"Is anyone else coming?" Palavra asked. He listed a few names, but heads shook no in response.

So Palavra dove right into the day's discussion.

"Who here has ever dated someone from a different race?" he asks.

There was no immediate response. Two or three raised their

hands, some turned to each other in conversation with furrowed brows. Then, freshman Keonna Gilmore quieted the group with her clear voice.

"It's complicated for us," she said. A few nod in agreement.

"What do you mean?" Palavra asked her.

"Someone asked me if I could date outside my race," Gilmore said. "I'm mixed."

Gilmore explained she can't associate with only one race, because one of her parents is white and the other is black. She said pressures to "choose" or "pick" a single race association would force her to abandon half of her identity.

Since she was a child, Gilmore attended predominantly white schools. She recalls an African-American boy telling her on the school bus she wasn't black.

"He pointed at my skin, and he said, 'You aren't black, you're like her,' and he pointed to a white girl. [Mixed children] are forced to see both perspectives of race. You're either not black enough or you aren't white enough. It really takes a toll on you," Gilmore said.

Her voice tightened as she told the group that her grandfather refused to see her for the first five months of her life. Though he spoiled her since they met, his negative perception of her parents' marriage was never discussed.

"My peers even tell me all the time, I should date a black guy. In the black community, it seems like a lot of people get angry when a black girl is with a white guy, or the other way around," Gilmore added. "They say you should stick within your race. It's a stereotype."

Using Gilmore's example, Palavra explained the importance of educating others. It's about ending ignorance, he told the group.

"I asked someone recently to come to one of our meetings, and they told me that they don't identify with black culture," Palavra said. "I feel like people see 'black' in the front of the name and think we're all about Black Power, and it holds such negativity for a lot of people."

The Caribbean Cultural Exchange, a club formed just last spring, has 49 members and more than 100 people on its email list. In contrast, BSA lacks adequate membership for a full executive board, though it has existed since 2011. Palavra believes the issue comes primarily from minorities on campus not participating.

"There's not a lot of people of color on campus, and if they don't care, how can we make other cultures care?"

According to the University of South Florida's 2013 diversity profile, 4 percent of students identified as Asian, 7 percent as

African-American and 14 percent as Hispanic. The remaining 71 percent are white.

But behind these percentages are individuals with the power to participate.

Out of 184 Asian students, 338 African-American students, 636 Hispanic students and 3,315 white students, there are less than 10 students consistently associating with, and attending, BSA on a weekly basis.

Founder of the Caribbean Cultural Exchange Nia Joseph, 18, said the USFSP Office of Multicultural Affairs has initiated a council that involves each multicultural group on campus. The council plans to coordinate events that involve multiple groups, Joseph explained.

In the past, BSA has put on Bring It Back Bash, where there is music, dancing and food in a semi-casual setting. This year's bash is set for March 21.

Palavra wants students to know "BSA is a club that accepts every creed and color."

"All we want to do is educate each other about our differences," he said. "It's time that we as people embrace other cultures and see them for what they really are, not what someone else deemed them to be."

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## Review: "The Lego Movie"

By MATT THOMAS  
STAFF REPORTER

This simple plot sets the stage for many Lego worlds and characters to come together in a movie that feels like the perfect playlist of Saturday morning cartoons. It functions as a comedy, action-adventure and family film where audiences get to see Batman, Shaq and Gandalf in the same movie.

The plot is relatively simple. Emmet, an extraordinarily ordinary construction worker, accidentally comes across the "Piece of Resistance," deeming whoever finds the Piece "the Special."

To stop the villainous plot of Lord Business and save the Lego world, Emmet must unite the Piece of Resistance with the Kragle, the choice weapon of Lord Business. It sounds dumb on paper, but it functions in ways previously unimaginable on screen.

The movie is fast paced and averages a joke a minute. Directors Phil Lord and Chris Miller ("Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs," "21 Jump Street") specialize in slapstick humor, puns, countless amounts of references to both movies and real world trends, and jokes that are only understood after a second

viewing.

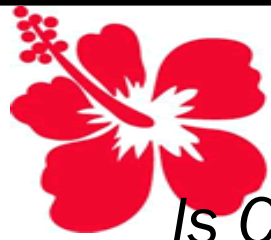
More impressive are the movie's themes. There's a subtext about creativity and straying from the beaten path that the movie encourages. Could the filmmakers be taking a shot at Hollywood producers for having their blockbusters follow the same template, or are the filmmakers justifying their own quirkiness?

The animation at work in this movie is a great achievement. The Lego pieces move with stop-motion mannerisms, explosions are done in Lego form, water is small blue Legos and that's not even half of it. Camera tricks and creative 3D also add to the fun.

There's a surprise turn or fresh idea waiting at every corner of the movie, and just when it seems the directors might run out of steam, they introduce an entirely different plot element that changes the course of the entire movie in its third act. The movie's late turn managed to be hilarious, creative and heartwarming all at once.

"The Lego Movie" is pure entertainment for all ages that will be the subject of conversation among peers for the next couple of weeks and endlessly quoted. SPACESHIP!

life@crowsteststpete.com



# TRADER JOE'S

arts  
& life

5

## Is Coming

With the announcement of the Trader's Joes grocery store chain coming to St. Petersburg, businesses near Fourth Street N. and 28th Avenue N. were forced to relocate. The Crow's Nest checked up with Ringside Café, Casita Taqueria and Classy Closet to see how they're taking the move.

**Back in the ring:** When the news came, he felt his stomach turn.

Last September, Greg Pugh, 22-year owner of local restaurant and music venue Ringside Café, was told by a reliable source that the Fourth Street property where his business stood would be sold to make way for a Trader Joe's grocery store.

Three weeks later, property owner Chuck Ross confirmed it.

"It was like getting a pink slip," said Pugh, who had such a long history with the building and the Fourth Street community.

In late October, Trader Joes confirmed plans to build a store on the site.

Pugh, originally from California, moved to St. Petersburg with his wife Kelly after arranging to buy Ringside from the first owner, who had just recently turned it into a music venue and restaurant.

When Pugh bought the business, he quickly made changes, revamping the menu and changing the Friday/Saturday music schedule to seven nights a week.

"Believe me there were some times I questioned doing that, but we thought there was an awful lot of fantastic talent," Pugh said. "And we also just felt we needed to be consistent. If people wanted that environment, they should be able to get it every night."

Back then, Ringside was almost exclusively a blues venue. In fact, Pugh said their tagline was "Home of the Blues" long before House of Blues was around.

But Pugh said Ringside's history has been one of evolving with its home city, and changes were coming.

"For years, Fourth Street was the place to be," Pugh said. "At night time there really wasn't much going on downtown, and we were one of few places to go for a while."

Pugh said with restaurants like Harvey's, Babalu and Pepin, St. Petersburg was a string of mainstays, and "wasn't nearly as transient" as it is today.

"You could see that downtown was starting to become a really hot environment. But it wasn't

like a light switch that went off, it was a slow evolution," Pugh said. "Demographically the age was slowly lowering, it was coming around. Things started changing. It feels like we were a part of that, in some ways."

Sensing the changing time and place, Pugh and his manager, Mitch Gray, decided to change the tagline to "Home of Rock and Blues" around 10 years ago.

"We mix it up quite a bit now. My manager Mitch Gray has been with me the whole time and he works very hard ... he is genuinely concerned about what people like and enjoy, and he works hard at developing a relationship with the bands," Pugh said.

Pugh said he and Gray have never felt threatened as St. Petersburg continues to grow because it has retained a "small town flavor."

"We're still a small city and have kept that environment," Pugh said. "There are plenty of us small businesses around. We've been fortunate in St. Pete to have the support of the local community, the friendship and the devotion."

Pugh's trust in the community was put to its greatest test yet when he found out Ringside would have to find a new home at the end of last year.

He said that for his regulars, the hardest part of the move was separating Ringside from a building with so much history. Built in 1912, the structure was originally a two-story apartment and then an amateur boxing club — thus the boxing motif that is still a part of the venue today.

Pugh said he was feeling pretty dejected when a local eye surgeon and regular at Ringside came up to him one night and said, "Don't get down. We need a place like Ringside in St Pete. And people know that."

"I said to him, 'You don't know how much better I feel now,'" Pugh said.

Not long into his search for a new location, the plight of Ringside caught the attention of local business owner Jeff Knight. He invited Pugh and his employees to move Ringside to what was then the newly renovated Club Detroit at 16 2nd St. N — right in the heart of downtown.

"Jeff greeted us with open arms and presented us with an opportunity that I don't think we could have come close to anywhere," Pugh said. "We didn't have to reinvent the wheel, we just had to bring what we had on Fourth Street to downtown ... and we would be offering the exact same thing in a better environment, with better sound and more national acts."

Pugh said the transition has been an interesting one for him, the employees and the clientele.



photo by Ryan Ballogg/The Crow's Nest

"At Ringside, we've known people that have come, drank, played, enjoyed and unfortunately passed away. And we know their kids. We know people that have met there and gotten married. It's been a journey that you don't necessarily expect, and before you know it you're living it and looking back on it," said Ringside owner Greg Pugh.

In regards to any blame that has been placed on the property owner, Pugh said, "You can't say anything negative. There's no bad person here. It's just life."

The only major change at the new Ringside is the menu. The Club Detroit location did not have a kitchen, so Knight arranged for Ringside to share a kitchen with Calypso, a connected restaurant that he also recently bought.

Pugh said on day one at the new location, they started to see regulars show up, as well as new faces. The feedback has been great so far.

"People do rise to the occasion," Pugh said. "There's a whole energy down there that's not on Fourth Street that's exciting. It's a destination."

"I visited the new Ringside today, I was very impressed with the new digs," said Steve Holcombe in a comment on Ringside's Facebook page. "This will become a nice rebranding of what's become a legendary place for musicians here in the bay area."

On Saturday, local band Pitbull Toddler played to a full house.

A manikin of the trademark Ringside boxer looked down on the crowd from a ledge below the second floor balcony, the glow of stage lights reflecting in its eyes.

"Bricks and mortar come and go, but the personalities, the music, survive," Pugh said. -- **Ryan Ballogg, Staff Reporter**

**New casa for the Casita:** Mexican restaurant Casita Taqueria sold beer and tacos for \$2.50 on Jan. 11, its last day on Fourth Street. More than a month later, and the beloved taco joint has yet to reopen.

"We're getting there slowly," said Don Arvin, who owns the restaurant with his wife Gwen.

He explained they initially experienced trouble getting the proper

construction permits for renovation at the restaurant's new Grand Central District home, an old gas station at 2663 Central Ave.

But now, Arvin said they are in full swing, remodeling the building and updating plumbing and electricity. He hopes they'll be open by the end of February.

"We're excited," Arvin said. "The residents of Kenwood seem awesome and all of the Grand Central people have already reached out to us."

Despite having some work to do, Arvin believes they'll be able to recreate the eclectic feel of the restaurant's formerly cozy and colorful structure.

On Feb. 6, the Arvins took to the Casita Taqueria Facebook page to reassure anxious customers they wouldn't be taco-less for much longer.

"After a slow start and some unexpected hiccups we're finally at full speed! May not look like it yet but we're getting there! Shooting for the end of this month! We miss you all :)," they wrote. -- **Tyler Killete, Staff Reporter**

**Boutique owners stay classy:** Janette and Alexandria Ohanian, mother-daughter owners of consignment boutique Classy Closet, were surprised when reporters from the *Tampa Bay Times* asked for an interview regarding rumors that a Trader Joe's would be occupying their location by the end of 2014.

"We were given a letter telling us we had 60 days to relocate," Janette Ohanian recalls. The letter was not from the City of St. Petersburg, but from landlord Charles Ross, a local attorney who, as Ohanian was told, sold the property occupied by Classy Closet and other businesses on the block for a large sum.

"There are 13 grocery stores in a

mile radius already," Ohanian said. "The city could have done something ... Why build another one?"

She mentioned that neither she nor any of the other businesses occupying the block were offered financial assistance or reimbursement for the move, from the landlord or from the city. Only one business, a barber shop, closed for good.

Despite inconvenience, Ohanian said the forced relocation was a "blessing in disguise."

"As well as I thought I was doing over there (at the Fourth Street location), I've quadrupled my sales," she said.

Ohanian has seen returning customers and new customers, bringing new items and a wider variety of inventory to the new 540 Central Ave. storefront.

Though an unexpectedly lucrative venture, Trader Joe's is still a sore subject for Ohanian.

"It made me brave," she said. "But needless to say, I won't walk into that shop."

**A bittersweet goodbye:** Residents in one of the three homes behind the property, which will also be demolished to make room for the new grocer, supported Ross's decision to sell after he was reportedly approached by the company.

"It's his retirement and investment money," said Lauren Martin, relative of Ross and former resident of the block. "He bought the property with retirement in mind."

She acknowledged the sale won't be an easy band-aid to peel off.

"It's bittersweet [for him] to see Ringside go. He met his wife there ... He even fought to save the oak trees on the property." -- **Raven Rayne Martinez, Crow's Nest Correspondent**

## the crow's nest

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### Editorial

# Hooking up: destructive or different?

If you've ever had a casual sexual experience with someone, taking part in what our moms' therapists are now calling "hookup culture," you're at risk of never finding love. This is according to Towson University English professor Andrew Reiner, who believes hooking up and hanging out leads to the inability to express intimacy.

In a piece for the *New York Times*, Reiner cites a report by the National Marriage Project, which found that, on average, women are waiting until they're 27 to get married, while men are waiting until 29. The report said people are beginning to view marriage as a "capstone" on their lives rather than a "cornerstone."

Reiner does not argue against the decision to establish oneself in a career before getting hitched, but warns that those who engage in emotionless sex, may have trouble expressing emotion when the time is right. He cites author Donna Freitas who, claims millennials are the "first generation in history that has no idea how to court a potential partner, let alone find the language to do so."

Reiner says casual relationships eliminate emotional vulnerability -- what he touts as the

"golden rule" to making marriage and love work.

But do casual relationships really make one less vulnerable? What's more emotionally tolling than engaging oneself in a series of relationships where love and intimacy are so variable?

Reiner discusses how feeling the need to "play it cool" in hookup culture leads to a fear of vulnerability and causes one to become devoid of emotion.

The desire to "play it cool" in order to not freak out a potential romantic partner by seeming needy is, admittedly, completely backwards. But if anything, trying to feign a blasé attitude toward sex leads one to become even more vulnerable.

Hookup culture can be destructive, but there's more to it than what Reiner describes. Young people are not taking longer to settle down because they don't know how to express the proper emotions. We have not lost our ability to properly seek a romantic partner and our courting practices are not ineffective. They're just different.

The world is changing and so is the way we date.

Reiner claims millennials are the first generation ever that will

need to be taught how to love. The 20- and 30-somethings of today -- of the most liberated and open-minded generation ever -- are the ones who don't know how to express an emotion as uninhibited as love. Not our grandparents who got married at 18 to hide an out-of-wedlock pregnancy, or their parents who got to hold hands on the front porch a few times before tying the knot, or anyone else in our families who married for money, prestige or the approval of society.

It's us. We're the ones who are incapable of love. Our generation, which has more decision-making power about our own futures than any other before us, is the one that needs help. If you haven't caught the tone yet, boy is that ironic.

Reiner's solution is education. Not sex education (we get enough of that in middle school gym class), but education on how to love. Because, apparently, that's teachable.

He suggests colleges offer classes about love on topics such as the biology of intimacy, the multicultural history of courtship and the psychology and sociology of vulnerability. USF St. Petersburg offers something similar in its course "Sex in Today's World." The class is

popular, especially among giggling 18-year-old freshmen. But it's not a rulebook for love, and should never evolve into one. The idea of being taught how to experience an emotion from a textbook is disturbing, dystopian even.

Reiner makes valid points in his case. But he, and the professionals he references, are lacking one major credential -- they're not millennials, they're not growing up in the same world we are.

And, really, how much better were things 20 to 30 years ago? Was dating life that much simpler? Were things easier because everyone was afraid of sex and married out of fear of being shamed? If so, why are half of our parents and grandparents divorced?

Hookup culture does have potentially negative implications, but it also opens doors for our generation. We're not restricted to experiencing sex within the confines of an intimate relationship. We can engage without being in love, and doing so isn't going to hinder our abilities to find love in the future. Our tactics have flaws, but in looking back at previous generations, we're doing it better than anyone else (and having more fun).

## The beauty in Coke's commercial



By AMANDA STARLING  
STAFF COLUMNIST

It starts with a child's voice. Then, alternating children sing the words most Americans have memorized: "America, the Beautiful." It's uttered in multiple languages and gorgeous scenery flash before a viewer.

In one minute, Coca-Cola exposed the world to the beauty and horror of a nation at war with itself.

Activists clapped at the acceptance of mixed races, cultures and sexual preferences. Conservatives condemned the notion of a nation that does not speak English.

Wasn't the first language in America a native dialect?

English, if we are to be literal, was founded and is spoken in England. The thoughts of #speakAmerican

and #f\*\*\*coke echo a series of individuals who have lost touch with their history lessons.

So *these* are the people my history teacher in high school rolled his eyes and stomped his feet at.

The English were not the first to conquer America. In fact, it was the Spanish. Christopher Columbus represented the Spanish Empire in 1492. Hernan Cortes would seize the modern area known as Mexico. The Dutch would arrive later to seize parts of Canada, and the English were the *last* to buy into the whole colonization of America game.

Why is it that our vocal minority of anti-Coke ranters exactly loathe the notion of a language aside from English? Don't they realize that, in fact, their portion of the population is on the decline?

The Pew Research Center indicates more than 37 million Spanish speakers in the United States. By

2020, the nation is projected to house a total of more than 40 million. Ladies and gentlemen, I recommend you start to take your Spanish courses seriously.

Why is the notion of different people living in one nation so horrifying? What does an atheist do to harm a Christian or Muslim? What does a gay, lesbian, transgender, bisexual do to endanger a heterosexual? What does a facial feature, a skin tone or hair garment do to threaten the sanctity of life?

Those who hate, in America, in Africa, in Asia, in Europe, all who *hate*, are the real terrorists.

Coca-Cola did not take aim to attack conservatives but to showcase that "people make America beautiful." Instead of striking back at the opponents, Coke showed videos of the American girls who sung and starred in their video.

Brenda Wood, a reporter for NBC Channel 11 in Atlanta,

responded to the firestorm with a series of poignant reminders, including the actual purpose of the Statue of Liberty and that, indeed, "America the Beautiful" was penned by a historically lesbian writer, Katharine Lee Bates. Her intention then, and her intention now, is reflected by Coke's call for diversity.

Look into the eyes of young children, of middle-aged couples of any kind, of individuals who practice different religions, of people of different skin. If you closed your eyes and just listened, to any language, you could never deny the beauty in their voices.

Amanda Starling is a senior majoring in mass communications and news editor. She can be reached at [astarling@mail.usf.edu](mailto:astarling@mail.usf.edu) or on Twitter @starlingaj.

### Throwback

Feb. 14, 278— Emperor Claudius II of Rome orders St. Valentine to be beheaded. The emperor put a ban on marriages and engagements, believing men weren't willing to join the military because of their attachment to their wives and children. St. Valentine defied the emperor by continuing to perform marriages in secret.

Though the exact origins of St. Valentine are unclear, it is said that he wrote a letter to his friend, signing it "From your Valentine." Valentine was named a saint after his death.



# The truth 'evolves'



BY CHELSEA TATHAM  
STAFF COLUMNIST

For the first 14 years of my life, the stories of the Bible were the only foundation for my beliefs. I refused to believe anything else because I was never taught anything else.

When I was young, I took the stories of Moses and Noah as pure fact and memorized the Book of Psalms and Proverbs word for word. Not the "Song of Solomon," though. It's too "inappropriate" for youngsters.

As I aged through Christian

school, I began to question the stories. How could Noah have possibly fit two of every species of animal on one boat? Did he bring sea creatures too, or just leave them to fend in the floodwaters? How did he feed them all for 40 days and 40 nights?

Since entering public school for high school and continuing my science education in college, I still question those stories, but I have a better grasp of how the world works and where we came from.

The debate between Bill Nye and Ken Ham last week reinforced my views. While Ham, founder of the Creation Museum in Kentucky, cited mainly the Bible as a source

of historical evidence, Nye, the Science Guy, presented facts and statistics almost impossible to discount.

Ham claimed evolution and natural laws are "man's ideas" of the origins of the Earth and claimed the Bible as a literal source of history. But wait, wasn't the Bible written by men thousands of years ago? The words of God, possibly yes, but still recorded by men.

What angered me more than Ham's claims of the Bible as literal history was his discussion of students being taught immoral ways of thinking in school. I could listen and almost understand his

reasoning behind a belief in creationism, but when he started talking about marriage as being "designed for a man and a woman" and the immorality of abortion, I wanted to turn off the TV.

Thank goodness Nye stepped in with his adorable bowtie reassuring all of us that plenty of religious people still believe in science and even evolution, and kangaroos explain everything. Nye claims if kangaroos were on the ark, we would have found their bones between the Middle East (the supposed landing area of the ark) and Australia.

Some scientific data gathered

and interpreted by those who are evolutionists may be flawed and could possibly be skewed to reflect the views of the gatherer. But "because the Bible said so" is not an educated answer to my questions about the origins of the world.

*Chelsea Tatham is a senior majoring in mass communications and the managing editor. She can be reached at [chelsea11@mail.usf.edu](mailto:chelsea11@mail.usf.edu) or on Twitter @chelsea91t*

op-ed

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## A case for creation



BY ERIN MURPHY  
STAFF COLUMNIST

"Is creation a viable model of origins in today's modern scientific era?"

In a debate last week, Ken Ham, an Aussie and the CEO of Answers in Genesis, defended the Biblical view of the world's origins, while Bill Nye (the Science Guy!) spoke of science.

Ham, a born-again Christian, stressed early on in the debate that science is an essential part of our lives. To illustrate his point, Ham cited many Christian scientists who had contributed extraordinarily to the field, such as Dr. Raymond Damadian, who invented the MRI Scanner.

What Ham did combat were the connotations and the vague nature of the word "science" used today. He spent a portion of his

presentation defining the word in terms of "observational science" and "historical science."

The difference between the two terms is that one concerns the evidence we see in front of us now (observational science), and the other relates to the events that actually occurred in the past (historical science).

Ham used these definitions to explain how evolution is merely a guess at how we were made. And often, evidence is misinterpreted.

Science is vital to understanding our world. It is an essential tool. It's when people take God out of science, or make science out to be an enemy of God, that things tend to get a little sketchy.

Schools are teaching our students a *theory*. We have to remember that evolution is but a theory, and many scientific theories have been wrong.

There are those who believe we simply crawled out of nothing

one day, with no way to know why we're here, or what will happen afterward. In that line of thinking, really, we're all just accidents, and although we're alive, we don't know why.

Some argue teaching creationism goes against the logical thinking of science, that the world is in fact billions of years old. But Ham stressed there's "nothing in observational astronomy that contradicts a young universe."

A case for creation: Say we stumbled upon a watch (or some kind of mechanical device unfamiliar to us) in a field.

When pondering the watch's origins, we wouldn't wonder, "Hmmm...I bet this item evolved slowly over time. It probably just grew out of a speck of matter and slowly became wonderfully detailed, and complex. And then somehow found itself here."

Instead, we'd say, "I wonder who made this. What does it do? Who

created it, and what is its purpose?" We'd assume intelligent design (a creator) because we see the care and detail of the creation.

We do the same thing when we look at great art: We marvel at the creation before us, the glorious, blue brushstrokes of Vincent van Gogh's "Starry Night." We don't imagine that something that well-thought-out just *happened*. It was designed.

If you met someone who thought "Starry Night" grew out of nothing, who thought the painting became a magnificent masterpiece all on its own (over a period of billions of years, mind you), you'd probably think they were crazy.

Whether we are atheists or Christians or scientists, all of us put our faith somewhere. And those who back the evolutionary theory are no more "religious" than Christians.

I remember watching Nye's silly science videos back in eighth grade.

I grew up watching this man make learning look cool. Yet during the debate, it was hard to watch someone so intelligent, someone so intent on seeking out answers, someone who felt familiar, simply miss the truth.

Nye didn't even have an answer for the biggest argument posed against evolutionary theory -- where did the atoms that created the Big Bang come from, anyway? He admitted his own lack of knowledge drove him to continue the search for truth, through scientific investigation.

Is creation a viable model of origins in today's modern scientific era? You bet.

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## Indifference and the origin of Earth



BY SAM OUIMETTE  
STAFF COLUMNIST

Last Tuesday, an evolutionist and a creationist got together to talk about how they disagree on how the universe came into existence.

Haven't we done this before?

Despite how tired this particular debate is, the meeting was watched by more than three million people and received a great deal of media attention. Bill Nye, the quirky scientist that '90s kids grew up watching on PBS, engaged in a formal debate with Ken Ham, a young-Earth creationist and evangelist. The debate streamed live on YouTube for the public to watch, comment on, tweet about, etc.

However, all I could think to myself was, "Who cares?"

I am religious. Catholic, to be exact. I attended a private Southern Baptist school from preschool through 12th grade, and was taught a literal interpretation of the Book of Genesis. The only thing I was ever taught about evolution is that it is wrong, and I will be the first one to admit that I am willfully ignorant on the subject.

Because, for me, faith is not dictated on whether or not the earth is 6,000 or six billion years old.

Despite all its faults, Catholicism is fairly progressive in certain areas. It is the only Christian denomination that reconciles science with faith, with Pope John Paul II recognizing that there is no conflict between evolution and the doctrine

of faith. But there are plenty of Christians who accept evolution as a fact while maintaining their faith.

And, much to my surprise, this was a point Nye made during his presentation.

Though I did not watch the entire debate, I watched enough to see both sides make a considerable case. As an objective observer, I think Nye was far more convincing. It is difficult for me to listen to someone whose answer cannot be expanded on. For Ham, that answer was consistently, "It says so in the Bible." How are you going to convince people your point of view is correct when your primary evidence comes from a book they don't believe has any scientific value?

You can't. You won't. Ham didn't.

But I suppose neither Nye nor Ham were trying to convince someone like me. My mind is fixated on the far more spiritual side of religion; my soul and my personal relationship with God are the most important aspects of faith to me. The age of the Earth is near the bottom of the list, coming in between, "I wonder if I'll get to chill with lions in Heaven" and "Why didn't God want people to eat shrimp back in the day?"

I try to avoid apathy as much as possible, but when it comes to this subject, I can't help but feel it. Evolutionists might call me ignorant, and creationists might tell me that I'm not actually a Christian because I don't interpret Genesis exactly as they do.

But I guess it's a good thing that

I don't really care what either side thinks about me.

So the next time this debate happens, I know I'll have the exact same reaction. But beyond that, I'll wonder why we're devoting so much time and energy into debating a topic there will likely never be a definitive answer to. Until someone can give me an answer to that question, my response to things like this will remain the same.

*Samantha Ouimette is a Junior majoring in mass communications and the community correspondent. She can be reached at [ouimette@mail.usf.edu](mailto:ouimette@mail.usf.edu) or on Twitter @samanthasports.*



8 sports

**Knight and day against UCF**

On the football field, Central Florida had USF's number. The Knight beat the Bulls for the first time ever on the gridiron. But on the basketball court it is a different story. Both the men's and women's basketball teams had wins over their in-state rival. The men needed overtime to win.

**Softball off to slow start**

USF opened the season hosting the Wilson DeMarini Tournament and it didn't go as well as planned. The Bulls opened with a 10-3 loss to Florida and a 3-2 loss to Michigan. Bulls did beat Bethune-Cookman 9-0. Two games in the tournament were also cancelled

**Let's play ball**

Don't forget that USFSP baseball opens their home schedule next Saturday at Al Lang. Mayor Rick Kriseman will be on hand to throw out the first pitch.

**USFSP Baseball**

**Weekly Schedule**

Feb. 15  
USFSP vs. USF Tampa, 2 (at Al Lang)

Feb. 16  
*Doubleheader at Huggins Field*  
Game 1: vs. USF Tampa, 12:30  
Game 2: vs. USF Tampa, 3:30

**Men's Basketball**

**Weekly Schedule**

Feb. 12  
USF at UConn, 7 (ESPN2)

Feb. 8  
USF vs. UCF, 1:30 (ESPNNews)

**Last Week's Results**  
Feb 5  
USF 79, UCF 78 (OT)

Feb. 8  
Rutgers 79, USF 69

**Conference Standings**

	CONF.	OVERALL
	W-L	W-L
Cincinnati	11-1	22-3
Louisville	8-2	19-4
SMU	8-3	19-5
Memphis	7-3	18-5
UConn	6-4	18-5
Houston	4-7	12-12
Rutgers	4-7	10-14
USF	3-8	12-12
UCF	1-9	9-12
Temple	1-9	6-16

**Women's Basketball**

**Weekly Schedule**

Feb. 16  
USF vs. UConn, 4

**Last Week's Results**  
Feb. 5  
USF 71, Memphis 58

Feb. 8  
USF 89, UCF 54

**Conference Standings**

	CONF.	OVERALL
	W-L	W-L
UConn	12-0	25-0
Louisville	11-1	23-2
Rutgers	9-3	18-5
USF	8-4	13-10
Temple	6-6	12-11
SMU	5-7	14-9
Memphis	4-8	11-13
Cincinnati	2-10	9-14
UCF	2-10	9-14
Houston	1-11	5-18

**Tommorrow starts today**

By MIKE HOPEY  
STAFF REPORTER

Willie Taggart was hired in early Dec. 2012. That gave him only a couple months to assemble his recruiting class. A year later, Taggart has had an entire season to recruit players and the extra time seems to have payed off. South Florida's 2014 recruiting class, which was signed last Wednesday, was one of the best in the American Athletic Conference.

When Taggart was hired to replace Skip Holtz he made recruiting players from the talent-rich Tampa Bay area one of his top goals. In year two, 11 of the 28 recruits who sent USF letters of intent were from the Tampa Bay area, six of the recruits are from Hillsborough County. Three players were signed from Taggart's native Manatee County.

Overall the Bulls had the 40th best recruiting class, according to ESPN. USF was the highest ranked team in the AAC. The next closest school in the rankings is Central Florida 12 spots behind at 52. Defending AAC champion and soon to depart for the Atlantic Coast Conference, Louisville, was

ranked 51st.

The high ranking comes after the worst season in Bulls history. USF's 2-10 record was also their second 10-loss season in a row. That is another first for the program. Recruits, especially local recruits, indicated that it was a belief in what Taggart is trying to build.

The caliber of a recruiting class is based on the number of stars out of five that scouting services, like ESPN and Rivals.com, give players. Of the 28 players the Bulls signed last Wednesday, six were rated four stars with the other 22 being three star recruits.

In addition to rating and ranking the players by position, ESPN also ranks the top 300 players in a given year regardless of position. The Bulls were able to sign one player from the ESPN Top 300, wide receiver Ryeshene Johnson from Fort Myers.

Area recruits for the Bulls included OLB Josh Black from Sickles, DE Rohan Blackwood from Nature Coast, Tajee Fullwood from Tampa Bay Tech, OLB Juwan Brown from Jefferson, CB Mazzi Wilkins from Plant and CB Devin Abraham from East Lake.

USF also signed a quartet of junior college players on Wednesday. Junior college players have a bit more experience than their high school counterparts. The best junior college prospects for USF are Demetrius Hill, a defensive end, from Kankakee, Ill., and Safety Jamie Byrd from Dade City.

Rounding out some of the top recruits were Marlon Mack, a running back from Sarasota, ranked 26th by ESPN, and Benjamin Knox, the 18th ranked offensive tackle. The Bulls also signed local four-star recruit, Vincent Jackson, from Jesuit in Tampa.

National Signing Day has been held the first Wednesday in February since 1981. Beginning in the morning, recruits fax a signed letter of commitment to the school. The commitment legally binds the player to the school.

Before 1981, some conferences like the Southeastern Conference and the ACC used to hold conference signing days earlier in December but other conferences complained saying that it was unfair.

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**Putin on a show in Sochi**

By DANIEL FIGUEROA IV  
CROW'S NEST CORRESPONDENT

What would Brian Boitano do if he were here right now?

'Tis a question many of us have pondered since, when in 1999, Matt Stone and Trey Parker tunelessly posed it to us in their film, "South Park: Bigger, Longer & Uncut." To Mr. Stone, Mr. Parker and the viewing audience of NBC's Olympics Opening Ceremony telecast, President Barack Obama now has an answer: He would lead the American delegation to the Sochi Winter Games. And so, the openly gay former Olympic figure skating hero has done just that.

There has been much controversy surrounding these games, a topic frequently alluded to by the ceremony's commentators Matt Lauer and Meredith Vieira. Chief among these controversies has been Russian Federation President Vladimir Putin's hostile attitude toward gays and his views (or lack thereof) on human rights.

Those, and myriad other issues, have prompted many countries, like Lithuania, to refrain from sending heads of state or political leaders to Sochi. Other countries, like our own, have said that there is no political motivation behind such decisions.

Though, the smirk that seemed to be slowly forming behind President Obama's visage in his pre-ceremony interview with Bob Costas, and the fact that Mr. Boitano waited until being announced as part of the delegation to officially come out as gay and replace tennis legend Billie Jean King, another openly gay athlete, as the head of the delegation, could lead some to speculate otherwise.

But I digress. As newly elected president to the International Olympic Committee, Thomas Bach, said in his speech during the ceremony, let's check our political baggage at the door and focus on what is important, celebrating the coming together of the world's pinnacle of athletic achievement and national pride in cold weather-related sporting events ...

*To read the rest of this column visit crowsneststpete.com.*

**Olympic Roundup: what to watch**

The 22nd Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia are underway. The Tampa Bay region will be well represented at the games. Players from the Tampa Bay Lightning will represent their countries at the games. USF St. Petersburg will have a representative in Sochi with Felicia Zhang competing in the pairs figure skating.

Zhang will compete beginning on Tuesday with the Short Program and finishing on Wednesday with the Free Skate (or Long Program). Both events will be live on NBC Channel 8 in the Bay area. Tuesday will begin at 10 a.m. and Wednesday's competition will begin at 10:45. Viewers unable to watch the event live will be able to tune into NBC's primetime coverage which will replay the event without giving anything away.

Bolts' captain Martin St. Louis was originally a snub from the Canadian men's hockey team. But with the Lightning's Steven Stamkos unable to participate because of his broken leg suffered on Nov. 11, St. Louis will make another

appearance. Don't expect St. Louis to replace Stamkos and play the same role, that will most likely be Chicago's Patrick Sharp, but St. Louis is still a dynamic player who can play a big role for the Canadians. Canada will play in Group B with Norway, Austria and Finland. Here is Canada's preliminary schedule: Thursday, Feb. 13 vs. Norway, noon Friday, Feb. 14 vs. Austria, noon Sunday, Feb. 16 vs. Finland, noon

Lightning rookies Radko Gudas and Ondrej Palat will suit up for the Czech Republic in Sochi. Palat scored twice for the Bolts in their last game before the Olympic break. Palat has the chance to boost a Czech offensive that features NHL legend Jaromir Jagr and Boston's David Krejci. Gudas who is third in the NHL in penalty minutes will add some physicality to a weak Czech defense core that boasts five NHL players. The Czech's aren't expected to medal coming out of Group C. Here is the Czech Republic's schedule: Wednesday, Feb. 12 vs. Sweden, noon Friday, Feb. 14 vs. Latvia, 3 a.m.

Saturday, Feb. 15 vs. Switzerland, noon

Lightning veteran defenseman will make his third appearance at the Olympics for Finland. In 2010, the Finns took home bronze and won silver in 2006. Salo will be a Top-4 defenseman in the tournament. His fellow defenseman will be aided by having Boston's Tuukka Rask, one of the best goalies in the world, in goal. Finland is expected to make it out of Group B but not medal, but that's what analysts say every time about Finland. Here is Finland's schedule: Thursday, Feb. 13 vs. Austria, 3 a.m. Friday, Feb. 14 vs. Norway, noon Sunday, Feb. 16 vs. Canada, noon

Forward Richard Panik will suit up for Slovakia in Sochi. In 39 games this season for the Bolts, Panik has 2 goals and 9 assists. Slovakia will play in a tough Group A with the United States, host Russia and Slovenia. Here is Slovakia's schedule: Thursday, Feb. 13 vs. United States, 7:30 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 15 vs. Slovenia, 3 a.m. Sunday, Feb. 16 vs. Russia, 7:30 a.m.