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Proud Peace Run Participants after the race

1st Annual Peace Run Raises Over \$600 for Amnesty International

By Amanda N. Brown

Editor

nsunews@nova.edu

It was a crisp and chilly Saturday morning on December 6, 2003 at Nova Southeastern University. The morning started at around 7:00 a.m. for core organizers of the 1st Annual Peace Run, such as Amanie El Haddad, President of OASIS (Organization of Arab-American Students Instituting Solidarity).

"We put so much work into it," said El Haddad, with a sigh of relief.

Preparations for the event began months in advance, and the buzz of this event was swirling around campus organizations since the beginning of the '03 school year. A large tent packed with bagels, cream cheese, and water awaited the runners before the race, and a DJ played loud music proclaiming the righteousness of peace and harmony, mostly from the 60's.

The flag was raised, and the race began. Grunting runners displayed a blend of competitiveness and a yearning for worldwide peace as the runners strained against the bit-

ing wind for the simple purpose of fundraising for peace organizations. Over \$600 was raised and donated to *Amnesty International*, an organization concerned with the non-partisan protection of human rights worldwide.

The runners made their way around a course, which was set up to be run twice, a combined distance of three miles. The first to finish was eighteen-year-old male winner Christian Toepfer, with a time of 20:02. Toepfer won a \$35 gift certificate to *Foot Locker*. After accepting his praise and award, he stated that the race was, "fun and easy."

Second to finish overall, and the ladies' first place winner, was twenty-year-old Kara Baca, with an overall time of 22:10. Baca was given a manicure and pedicure gift certificate to the local *Nail Trix*. Kara had a similar response to the race, but didn't find it quite as easy. "[The race was] fun and windy."

"This is one of the most successful fundraisers we've ever had," proclaimed Steve Wetstein, a member of the Miami Chapter

of *Amnesty International*. Wetstein not only appeared as a representative of *Amnesty*, he also was a participant in the race. "[*Amnesty* is] extremely grateful to all the students and faculty that put this together," he added.

Among those who collaborated in making the race were OASIS, the Premedical Society, Amen Always Ministries, Social Action Social Awareness, Varsity Christian Fellowship, and the International Muslim Student Association. Also in attendance to support the Peace Run was Paul Lefrak, member of the Broward Anti-War Coalition.

"We had a great turnout, and hopefully next year it will be a lot smoother," said El Haddad over the engagingly loud Arabic music while the post-race celebration unfolded.

"It was worth it because it was for a good cause," said El Haddad.

www.antiwarbroward.org
www.amnesty.org

Same-Sex Marriage Oppositionists Give No Good Reason: An Editorial Opinion

By Amanda N. Brown

Recent newspaper headlines have frequently included the word "gay." Most of these articles touch on same-sex marriage legislation, opinions, and stories related to the issue. After reading polls pertaining to America's opinions on homosexuals, I am very disheartened.

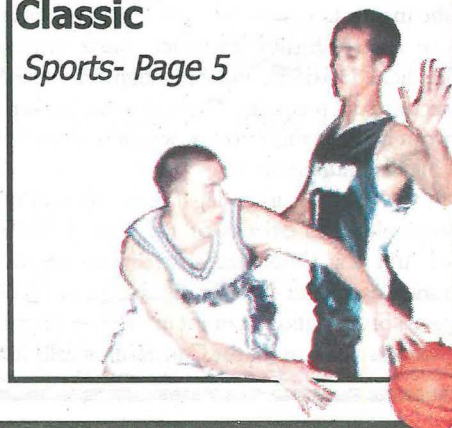
A recent NY Times front-page article read, "Strong Support Is Found for Ban on Gay Marriage." The poll included opinions from only 1,057 adults. But reports show that 56% of the 18-29 age group favor a law allowing homosexuals to marry. This may prove to influence marriage legislation in the future. Unfortunately, the poll found that 61% of people 65-years-old and over feel that "homosexual relations between two adults" should be illegal. That's almost incomprehensible to me—to go so far as to outlaw homosexuality.

The activist organization *Concerned Women for America* has spoken out about same-sex marriage, abortion, women in the military, and the recent 10 Commandments displayed on an Alabama Judicial Building. Representatives have been heard across the country through various media outlets on all of these topics. I invite you to visit the web page, www.cwfa.org. You'll soon see that opinions here are very conservative, fearful of any progress or change. The top of the web page reads, "For we have seen His star in the East and have come to wor-

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Knights finish strong in Palm Beach Hoops Classic

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Editors' Notes

By Todd Collins

Early last spring, I had a conversation with a friend in which he and I discussed the practices of news media. I pointed out that, for virtually any story, journalists have a vast pool of information from which to draw facts. The individual or organization presenting a news story chooses *which facts*, out of the vast pool of *all pertinent facts*, to present in covering the story. Too often, I claimed, journalists select facts in a subjective, unsystematic fashion while assembling a news story, resulting in a skewed presentation that injects opinion into the reconstruction of the event.

"Yeah, but you're the media now," my friend reminded me, "what are you gonna do about it?"

Looking back, I see that what I've done was to relay the *other side* of some issues, the ignored, sometimes unpopular side, in an attempt to achieve some balance. But again, I freely admit that skewed, opinionated presentations were the result.

I've had similar conversations on the theory of journalism with Amanda Brown, my classmate, associate in the newsroom, close personal friend, and new Editor-in-Chief of the Knight newspaper. She maintains that the goal of the journalist is to cover issues in an impartial fashion, that is, to create balance *within* a story. "Coverage of a story should be devoid of opinion," Amanda explained to me, "But there is still a place for opinion pieces presented as such." We agreed that to give accurate, complete, and impartial coverage to an event is a difficult task to achieve. If any journalist is capable of accomplishing this goal, she is Amanda Brown.

As I graduate, I wish to welcome Amanda as the new Editor-in-Chief of the Knight newspaper. Her capability is reflected by her NCAA Academic All-America status in Golf, as well as her well-deserved reputation as an outstanding member of the NSU community. She will lift this periodical to new levels of excellence and professionalism.

By Amanda N. Brown

I'd like to send my deep appreciation to outgoing Editor-in-Chief, Todd Collins. He successfully tackled an intricate goal of improving *The Knight* and enforcing professional direction. Most importantly, he sought out and hired a fabulous staff, which I now have the honor to work with on a more intimate level—issues concerning the paper, rather than advertisements and bills. I'm ecstatic to be moving from Business Manager to Editor-in-Chief. I truly enjoyed being Business Manager because I learned valuable business skills that I will use for a lifetime, but being Editor allows me more time to focus on enhancing the quality of the newspaper and improving my own journalistic skills. This is where my heart is.

A special thanks is due to our newly appointed faculty advisor Jennifer Reem and our administrative supporters, Terry Weech and Dean Brad Williams. Thank you all for your encouragement and dedication.

MARRIAGE

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ship Him." The opinions of this group stem from fundamentalist Christianity. Therefore, the representatives never give a good *logical* answer for why marriage should be restricted to man and woman, other than the fact that it is "immoral, counterfeit, and socially destructive." They ramble on about morality, religion, and tradition. But they never give any tangible reasons for their assertions, other than the evidence based on biased and stereotypical information.

Same-sex marriage isn't a moral or religious issue at all, if it is broken down to its fundamental elements. It's basically a social issue; it's the fight for equality.

Consider the consequences of not allowing homosexuals to marry. Marriage is the means to completely insure that partners can receive health insurance, make crucial medical decisions, and hold rights to social security and property. These benefits are kept from homosexual citizens, which is indisputable discrimination.

Marriage, in its legal form, should be available to all citizens of the United States of America. Of course, any religious organization can reject same-sex marriage, but religious organizations cannot interfere with the judicial system, since the Constitution calls for

a separation of church and state.

What exactly is *Concerned Women for America* so concerned about? What makes them so afraid? Why do people even care which sex marries which? Plainly, same-sex marriage does not harm anyone; it's not "socially destructive."

If same-sex *civil unions* were optional, insuring that the united couple would have the same legal benefits as a married couple, this would likely satisfy most partners. The difference in names would ease the mind of traditionalists, who see "marriage" as *traditionally* between a man and woman. But supporters of civil unions, such as the governor of Vermont, Howard Dean, M.D. (D), are seen as radical.

Activists supporting same-sex marriage should move slowly, just as the feminists did during the women's suffrage movement. It took over 70 years (1848-1920) of pushing for women to gain the right to vote. The same may be true for homosexuals. But if the NY Times poll holds true, within 20 years this argument will be seen as quite obvious.

I welcome any other opinions regarding this issue to be sent to nsunews@nova.edu.



Nova Southeastern University
3301 College Avenue
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33314-7796
(954) 262-8455

www.knight-online.nova.edu

Editors-in-Chief

Amanda Brown

Todd Collins

nsunews@nova.edu

Business Manager

Amanda Brown

knightad@nova.edu

Copy Editor

Christie Bailey

Layout

Alisha VanHoose

Arts and Entertainment

Carly Critser

Sports Editor

Alicia Winslett

Webmaster

Earl Tinsley

Faculty Advisor

Jennifer K. Reem

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The Knight reserves the right to edit.

Crystal Meth: Emerging Drug Epidemic in South Florida

Community Alert meeting held at NSU's East Campus to discuss new trend

On November 5, 2003 at Nova Southeastern University's East Campus, close to 400 people attended the Community Alert Meeting, organized by Dr. Joel Kaufman of the United Way of the Broward County Commission on Substance Abuse, to discuss the newly emerging drug epidemic in the outbreak stage in South Florida: Crystal Methamphetamine. National statistics illustrate the significant impact that this drug - once used to turn Hitler's troops in World War II and Love Child Charles Manson into alert, crazed, and violent killers - has had across the United States. The meeting focused on the physiological short-term and long-term effects of this drug, as well as on its abuse; its manufacturing and distribution; its relationship with domestic violence, child abuse, sexual addiction, and the spread of STDs and HIV; its personal, family, and community impact; and the local response to a world-wide problem.

Local and national trends and statistics underscore the need for a proactive approach to address this emerging drug epidemic in South Florida. One third of all new HIV infections reported Crystal Meth usage. Congressman John Boozman of Arkansas states that 75% of all crime in his district is

related to Methamphetamine. Congressman Ed Case of Hawaii notes that 44% of homicides and 90% of child abuse cases in his area are due to this drug. Manufacturing that once took place in laboratories in the desert is now close to home; people use highly explosive chemicals in small rooms where families reside, using over-the-counter products. Youths from families manufacturing this drug have been tested and found to have toxic amounts of chemicals in their system.

As Florida becomes further inundated by Crystal Methamphetamine production and use/abuse, local authorities and support groups look to find ways to cope with and address the growing problem. Fort Lauderdale and Miami are listed as two of the top five drug infested areas in the State. Both Eladio Paez of the City of Miami Police Department and Detective Ligouri of the Fort Lauderdale Police Department agree, "Zero Tolerance in South Florida."

Treatment for Crystal Meth requires total abstinence from all drugs, as well as ongoing support, individual and group therapy, and a 12-step program. David Fawcett, LCSW of Archways and South Florida Center for Counseling and Therapy adds, "They can't

control any of it until they abstain from all of it." Last year, Crystal Meth Anonymous in South Florida started with less than 15 people. Now the group in South Florida has fifteen meetings a week for over 200 people. Street outreach programs, Internet outreach programs, social marketing programs, neighborhood mini anti-drug coalitions, and a website are also available to assist with the problem. "What's really needed is increased public awareness of the problem and a crack-down on the manufacturing and distribution," says Ralph Page, Chairman of the Broward County Commission on Substance Abuse Board and Broward County Crime Stoppers.

The Alert meeting was primarily sponsored and organized by the United Way of Broward County Commission on Substance Abuse and co-sponsored by Broward County, the Drug Enforcement Agency, United Foundation for Aids, City of Fort Lauderdale Police Department, Broward County Health Dept., Positive Healthcare, and Aleman and Associates. It was free, and this first Alert meeting was for "front-line" professionals in the South Florida community. For more information, statistics, and a database of speakers, contact Dr. Joel Kaufman, at 954-760-7007, ext. 204.

Crystal Meth Facts

✓ Meth has been called the "crack cocaine of the new millennium." Much like crack, Methamphetamine use has increased dramatically in the US in the past several years. Across the South Florida region, it is an emerging drug epidemic in the "outbreak stage" (as per Epidemiological Trends in Drug Abuse -South Florida, 2003).

✓ Use, abuse, and manufacturing of Methamphetamine has continued to spread from west to east across the United States. There is now a growing problem in South Florida.

✓ In South Florida, use/abuse has been centered in MSM (men having sex with men) populations in Broward and Dade counties, but is spreading to the non-MSM community.

✓ Methamphetamine can be snorted, injected, taken orally or anally, or smoked.

✓ The Street names for Methamphetamine are Crank, Crystal, Speed, Meth, Tina, Bump, Ice, and Yaba.

✓ Adverse reactions: extreme addiction, convulsions, heart irregularities, high blood-pressure, fear, fatigue, depression, restlessness, tremors, wasting, skin lesions, impotence, hallucinations, desire to self-mutilate, paranoia, and insomnia. It may also cause coma and death, and exposure to HIV/STDs.

✓ Meth is easy and cheap to produce. It is easily manufactured in a backyard or bathroom with common household items such as batteries and cold medicine. The chemicals used to make it are usually toxic and highly volatile.

✓ Its use is intertwined with sexual activity, since users say it significantly enhances the experience. As is true with other drug use, it facilitates unsafe sexual practices.

✓ Both Broward and Miami-Dade Departments of Health are reporting that Meth is a factor in the increase of new STD and HIV cases.

✓ An increasing number of Methamphetamine labs are being discovered by investigators across the US. In fiscal year 2002, the DEA reports there were 127 Meth labs seized in Florida, compared to 28 labs seized in all of 2001. For the first two quarters of 2003, there have been 100 labs seized throughout the state of Florida.

✓ There is increasing concern about children living at home-based clandestine Meth labs due to the physical, developmental, emotional, and psychological damage that these children may incur.

✓ There was a significant increase in Meth cases worked by the BSO crime lab in 2002. There were 88 cases worked in 2002, up from 39 in 2001, and 30 cases in 2000.

✓ In 2002, the Emergency Dept. at Broward General Medical Center has seen the number of Meth cases more than double from the previous year.

--Broward County Commission on Substance Abuse

Resolving Grade Issues Without Conflict

By Spencer Gaines

Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences

Many students feel uncomfortable approaching their professors about a possible grade discrepancy. Students feel that if they question the professor, they are questioning the professor's competence. On the other side of the spectrum are the overly vocal students who voice their unhappiness for all to hear. What the silent student fears will happen if something is said will happen to the student who is outspoken and does not follow the proper protocol. How, then, do we as students address such a sticky issue?

I presented this issue to Dr. Charles Zelden, Associate Professor at the Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences. The key to working through grade issues is to first understand that grading, for the most part, begins and ends with the professor. Present your concerns in such a manner as to not negatively affect the relationship you have with this person. Dr. Zelden took the time not only to explain working through this problem, but he also gave me great insight

into the professor-student relationship. "Many students forget that their grade does not consist primarily of one factor," says Dr. Zelden. The grades are assembled according to criteria that are set out by the course syllabus. Further, essays and exams, as well as term papers, have to meet a certain standard. It is a standard that each professor feels will allow the student to make the transition to both graduate school and into their chosen career field. Dr. Zelden went on to say, "When we speak of academic writing, context and content both carry weight." In general, although the themes, subject matter, and understanding of the material are important, the mechanics and construction of the material are significant, too. The other key areas that affect a student's grades are attendance and classroom participation. The best way an instructor can ascertain one's understanding of the material is through classroom participation, and the only way a student can participate is by showing up to class.

Let us now examine the best way to

challenge a grade. Start by arranging a private appointment with the professor. Nothing can be settled with hostile or inappropriate statements being made across a crowded classroom. Arrive at this meeting with a fair, welcoming attitude. Dr. Zelden made it clear that you will not achieve your goal if you are coming to fight. He suggests that you attempt to negotiate and explain your position. In addition, bring evidence to compare or challenge the discrepancy. The professor was honest when he said, "There may have been a grading mistake because of mis-calculation or an ambiguous question on an exam." Professors are human too. Finally, you must understand that a university is not a democracy. When we speak of grades and grading practices, the administration stands behind its faculty.

Do you have a comment about this article or need advice about a conflict? Email me at Bpgaines@nova.edu. Until next time.

HOMOPHOBIA

What are its effects?

By Jason McGuire
NSU GSSA, PSI CHI

Homophobia, as defined in the Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, is:

Main Entry: ho mo pho bia

Pronunciation: "hO-m&-fO-bE-&


Function: noun


Date: 1969


: irrational fear of, aversion to, or discrimination against homosexuality or homosexuals


An irrational fear, aversion, or discrimination against homosexuals is a fine way of describing what homophobia is in words. However, let us look at how one might define it through the actions of those who are homophobic and how homophobia affects the victims of it.


(source: <http://www.now.org/issues/lgbt/stats.html>)


 The vast majority of victims of anti-lesbian/gay violence - possibly more than 80% - never report the incident, often due to fear of being "outed." -New York Gay and Lesbian Anti-Violence Project Annual Report, 1996.

 Due to sexual orientation discrimination, lesbians earn up to 14% less than their heterosexual female peers with similar jobs, education, age and residence, according to a study by the University of Maryland. -Badgett, M.V. Lee, "The Wage Effects of Sexual Orientation Discrimination," Industrial and Labor Relations Review, July 1995.

 42% of homeless youth identify as lesbian, gay or bisexual. -Orion Center, Survey of Street Youth, Seattle, WA: Orion Center, 1986.

 75% of people committing hate crimes are under age 30 - one in three are under 18 - and some of the most pervasive anti-gay violence occurs in schools. -New York Gay and Lesbian Anti-Violence Report, 1996.

 Lesbian, gay and bisexual youth are at a four times higher risk for suicide than their straight peers. -Gibson P., LCSW, "Gay Male and Lesbian Youth Suicide," Report of the Secretary's Task Force on Youth Suicide, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1989.

 A survey of 191 employers revealed that 18% would fire, 27% would refuse to hire and 26% would refuse to promote a person they perceived to be lesbian, gay or bisexual. -Schatz and O'Hanlan, "Anti-Gay Discrimination in Medicine: Results of a National Survey of Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Physicians," San Francisco, 1994.

Why the blood?

The actions of those who are homophobic can have *terrible* consequences on innocent non-heterosexual persons - from economic loss, family rejection, and drug & alcohol abuse, to self-esteem issues so deep that suicide seems to be the only out. Many other devastating realities occur, such as contemptuous murder by a hater. For example:

May 13, 2003

(Newark, New Jersey) A 15 year old girl waiting for a bus in Newark, Jersey was murdered after telling two men who had made sexual advances towards her that she was a lesbian.

The teen and another girl aged 17 had taken the train from Manhattan to Newark's Penn Station after spending Sunday night in Greenwich Village.

The girls were waiting for a bus when two men drove up around 3:30 a.m. and attempted to proposition them. The teens said they weren't interested because they were lesbians. The men then began taunting them and when a scuffle broke out Shakia Gunn was stabbed. <http://365gay.com/NewsContent/051303njMurder.htm>

For more facts on hate crimes, go to: <http://www.baptistwatch.org/content/hatecrimes.html>

Want to know more?

A discussion on homophobia
and its effects
January 21st
12:00-1:00pm
Outside Parker

Join us in a consortium of concerned clubs, organizations and individuals at NSU where we discuss homophobia and its effects in an open forum. Bring yourself, a friend, and questions, and open your mind to a world that is *not* beyond you, for it is likely that you know someone who is not a heterosexual. Your thoughts, words, and actions impact them. It's time to learn sensitivity, and open discourse is one of the best ways to begin.

Jason McGuire
NSU GSSA, PSI CHI



Adult volunteers are needed for a research study of an approved medication to observe recurrent genital herpes outbreaks. Qualified participants must be 18-65 years, and had four or more outbreaks within the past year. All study-related care is provided (doctor visits, physical exams, laboratory tests and investigational medication.)

For more information, please call:
Lisa, Study Coordinator
at (954) 452-5850

Palm Beach Hoops Classic Hosted by Lynn University

The Knights Finish strong, 2-1 in Classic

By Alicia Winslett
Sports Editor

Lynn University hosted the Palm Beach Classic December 17-19. Francis Marion topped NSU with a score of 69-56 the first day. In the second day of play, the Knights' came through in the second half to beat Virginia State 59-52. Wimbush, Campbell, Jenkins, and Kirchgassner each scored in double-figures to pull the Knights to a victory. As the third day rolled around, the Knights blew out East Central University by a score of 72-50 to finish strong, winning 2 games of 3.

The eighteenth-ranked ranked Patriots overcame NSU the first day. Throughout the first half, the lead changed hands 13 times, which kept the game very close. As the first half came to an end, the Knights trailed by five points. The Knights were 12 for 17 while the Patriots were 17 for 29.

Francis Marion opened up the second half with an 11-4 run to gain a 12-point lead. The Patriots increased the lead to 14 points and the Knights came within three, but never took the game over.

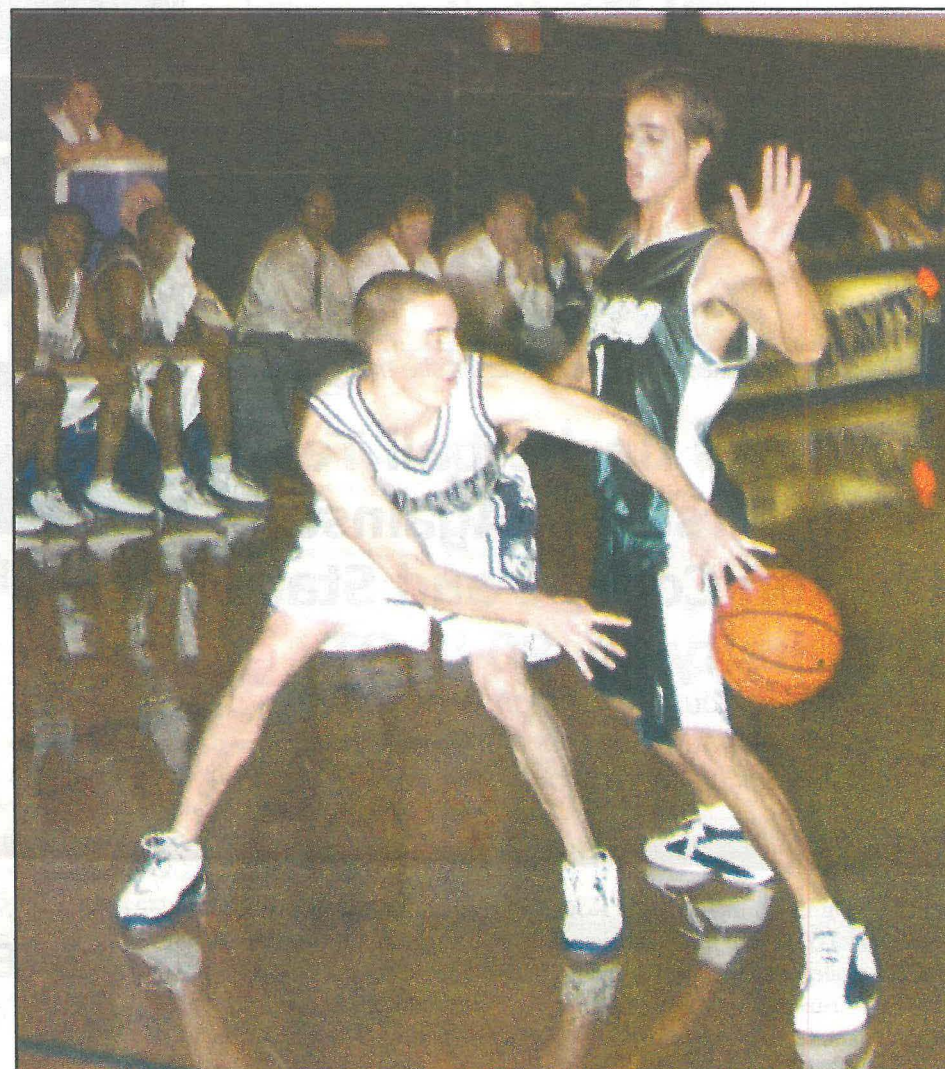
Senior guard, Zak Kirchgassner (Lawrenceburg, IN) had a season high of 16 points in the first 40 minutes of play. Junior forward Garth Campbell (Miramar, FL) also posted a double-double, with 13 points and 6 rebounds – along with sophomore Calvin Jenkins (Germantown, MD) – for NSU.

The Virginia State University Trojans came into the second game 4 and 2, but the Knights' beat them in a 59-52 battle.

NSU shot 20 for 58 from the field, while Virginia State shot 22 for 68. The Knights went 13 for 17 (76.5%) from the free throw line. They also overtook the Trojans rebounding 51-40. In the final 14 minutes of play, NSU went on a 31-12 rally to overtake the game, and the Trojans would never recover. Brian Henderson and Rodney Henry led Virginia State with 13 and 10 points, while Kanandi Hall grabbed a game-high of 11 rebounds and eight points.

Junior Guard Kluis Wimbush, (Ft. Lauderdale, FL) lead the Knights with 16 second half points, including three-point field goals. Garth Campbell, Calvin Jenkins, and Zak Kirchgassner also scored in double figures. Campbell scored 14 points and 10 rebounds. Jenkins had 12 points and 9 rebounds. And Kirchgassner led the offense for the Knights the full 40 minutes, putting in 10 points, 3 assists, and 3 steals.

In the last day of play against East Central University, NSU shut them out 72-50. Many of the players were strong and scored many points. NSU finished strong in the Palm Beach Hoops Classic, winning 2 games out of 3.



Knight Guard Zak Kirchgassner making his moves on the court

Jessie Pate Earns a Place on All-Tournament Teams While Also Recording a Double-Double

The Knights fall to Arkansas-Monticello in Qualchoice/QCA Classic 75-51

By Alicia Winslett
Sports Editor

Jessie Pate, NSU senior (Kissimmee, FL) scored a game-high of 18 points and 13 rebounds. This is her fourth double-double of the season. She also earned All-Tournament honors in this event. Senior guard Kiara Wallace (Tampa, FL) also scored a season-high of 11 points and 8 rebounds.

In Conway, AK the women's basketball team was out-scored by the University of Arkansas-Monticello. The Blossoms are strong, being 5 and 2 this year. The women's team played in the Qualchoice/QCA Classic on December 6th.

The team started out strong with a 6-point lead. The Knights slipped and let the

Blossoms take advantage by the half, giving them an 11-point lead.

UAM was 26 for 50 in field goals, while NSU was 18 for 59. Weak shooting from the field kept the Knights out of the game. Neither one of the teams were strong from the free throw line. UAM was 19 for 36, while NSU was 14 for 25.

The Knights went on an 11-2 run to close within 8 points after the half. However, UAM amplified their lead to 17 points very early to bring the Knights down. What ended the game for the Knights was their seven-minute scoreless streak. This would open up a 21-point lead for the Blossoms.

Men's Basketball loses to Jacksonville University 72-51

Team Puts in Strong Effort, Doesn't Finish

By Alicia Winslett
Sports Editor

"Calvin Jenkins (Germantown, MD) had a game high with 13 points, and Jeff Ardizon (Miami, FL) had a game-high of 14 rebounds. They were both very strong," said Coach McAndrews.

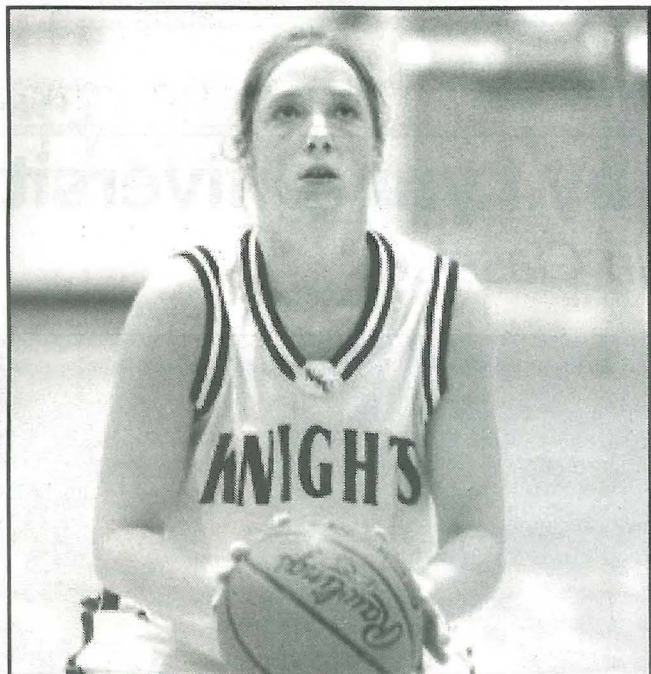
The men's basketball team is 3 and 4 so far this year, while Jacksonville University is 3 and 2.

The Knights battled back and forth with the Dolphins, having been behind by as many as 10 points in the first

half, but they came back to tie the score at halftime. Early in the second half, Jacksonville University ran a 26-4 break, which gave them a 22-point lead. They opened up this run after being behind NSU 30-28.

The Dolphins outshot the Knights 42.4% (25 for 59) to 36.0% (18 for 50.) and out-rebounded the Knights 40-39.

"Our guys put in a strong effort in this game; we just didn't finish it," Coach McAndrews said.



Jessie Pate locked on to the basket as she prepared to score

Women's Basketball Team Earns First Win Against Clayton College and State University 86-80 in OT

Marvelous Washington leads with 24 points and 6 assists along with three other players in double-figures

By Alicia Winslett
Sports Editor

On December 18th, the Nova Southeastern women's basketball team (now 1-7) earned their first victory of the season in overtime against Clayton College & State University (6-2). This was in the final contest of the 2003 Cruzin Classic. "We beat Clayton State and College, who were 5-1, and received votes to be nationally ranked. The players all stepped up and played the way they are capable of, and it was a great team win," says Coach Rule.

At the half, NSU trailed by three. They battled back to take a one-point lead with 25 seconds remaining. Senior Jessie Pate (Kissimmee, FL) converted a lay-up on the offensive glass. However, a free throw by CCSU's Jamika Hindsman tied the score, and with only four seconds remaining, neither team scored, ending regulation time and sending the game into overtime.

The Knights controlled the overtime, never giving up the lead. They got ahead of CSSU by as many as seven points in overtime. They went eight for eight at the free throw line, which ended the game strongly.

"Jessie Pate and Marvelous Washington have both played well throughout the first half of the season, providing much of our offense. We had four players score double figures for the first time this year. Jessie had 19 points and 10 rebounds, and Marvelous had 24 points and 6 assists. Kiara Wallace also stepped up and had a great game at both ends of the court. She scored 21 points and had 6 rebounds," explains Coach Rule. The point guard, Mechelle Jones, also had a great game. "She handled the pressure very well and also contributed 12 points including 2-4 from the 3 point line as well as 4-4 from the free throw line. Jennifer Havens, who is now back from an injury, gave us some quality time as did Selena Auguste, Cathy Lynch, and Jennifer Heath," proclaimed Coach Rule.

"In the first half of our season, we have played against 5 teams who have been ranked in the top 25 in the nation. So our strength of schedule speaks for itself," says Coach Rule. Our record might not reflect it at this time being 1-7, but we are making great progress and getting better as a team, she explains. "As I keep telling our team, our schedule will help us prepare for our Sunshine State Conference opponents. [The win] was the best Christmas present the girls' could have given me!" says Coach Rule.

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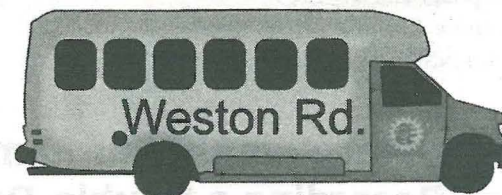
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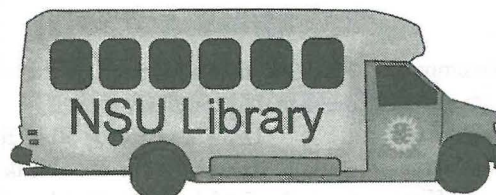
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For more information call:

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TRI&RAIL

And the Word Count is . . .

National Novel Writing Month is long over. So how did our intrepid journalists do?

I CAME. I WROTE. I CONQUERED.

By Christie Bailey

Well, it's over. It's seven o'clock on November 29th as I write this, and National Novel Writing will come to a close tomorrow. I have completed 50,000 words in one month, and I am still alive and in one piece.

After writing what was for me a universe-shattering 10,500 words in the span of five straight hours, I crossed the finish line at *exactly* 50,000 words, then added an extra hundred or so just to "pad" it in case the 'bots over at NaNoWriMo used a different mathematical equation to tally word counts, or whatnot. (It would be just my luck, heh.) Honestly, I don't think I've ever written that many words in one day before. My bum is sore from sitting in the computer chair all day, and my finger joints are ever so slightly achy, but my wrists are surprisingly unaffected. (Catch me in about ten years and I'll probably be singing a different tune, though.)

Sadly, the novel itself is nowhere near being finished. I actually abandoned that goal at about 25,000 words when I began to just write random *anything*. I still plan to finish it, but for now, I'm going to let the story rest and develop in my mind before I pick it back up again. The second half of my NaNo is a lot of random rambling and philosophical blathering — basically, I journaled. But still, considering I usually have trouble sitting down and writing *anything*, I'm proud even of that non-fictiony drivel. So, there!

Would I do it again? Definitely! Now that I know it's possible to write 50,000 words, I plan to participate again next November and actually finish a complete novel. In the meantime, however, I have a New Year's resolution to keep my writing gears greased: one hour of writing every day, no excuses. (I'm shooting for one thousand words in that time.) Even though I didn't get anywhere near finishing my sorry excuse for a novel, NaNo taught me something invaluable: I can write — I can move my fingers over a keyboard and plug words into a word processing program. It gave me the confidence I need to just plop my butt down and pound out a thousand words in an hour, no matter what the quality.

Because remember: bad prose can always be worked with, but an empty Word file can't be.

THAT'S THE WAY THE WORD COUNT CRUMBLES

By Alisha VanHoose

Well, this whole thing is over, and I still haven't broken 10,000 words. Am I surprised by this?

No, not really.

I've been saying all month that I probably wouldn't hit 50,000 words, so at least I lived up to my own expectations. But was my sad and pathetic failure a self-fulfilling prophecy? Was I doomed to failure simply because I said I would fail?

Now way, man; I'm just a very busy girl.

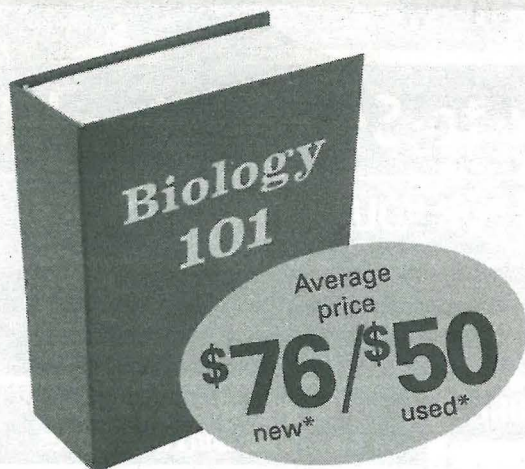
And my failure wasn't that sad or pathetic, either. I got a whole nine-thousand-and-something-or-other words done (although I haven't typed up the last thousand or so and my spiral notebook doesn't come with word count options, so I'm not sure of the exact figure). That, in itself, is something of an accomplishment since I normally wouldn't have written a thing, so I'm still proud of myself. My story isn't finished by any means, but it's moving along better than any of my other attempts, and that says something. To me anyway.

So I didn't finish. But I'm a college student. I'm allowed to put most of my writing effort into newspaper articles and essays that I have an obligation to turn in rather than fiction that no one else may ever see. I'm allowed to be sidetracked by work and finals and math homework and finding a new apartment. I'm allowed to say "I could work on my NaNo, but I got 3 hours of sleep last night because I was up studying, so I deserve a nap!"

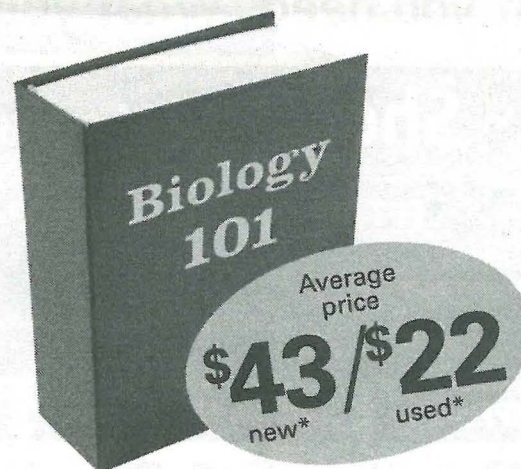
Next year, though— next year, I'm going to make 50,000 words; just watch me.

Or at least a few more than I did this year, anyway.

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Capricorn (December 22-January 19) – Something's happening, but you're not sure what. Whether you're just glad to be moving past this semester or you've got something groundbreaking ahead of you, it may be making you just a little bit nervous. Don't worry though, change is good.

Aquarius (January 20-February 18) – Your ambivalence in regard to something may be put to the test when you are called upon to settle a dispute. You've probably got all the information you need already, so you'll be relying on your own good judgment.

Pisces (February 19-March 20) – Feeling busy and distracted may be a setback, but you're not going to let it get in the way of what you're doing, especially because you know it's temporary. You know what you're trying to do, even though you may be a bit unsure how to go about it at times.

Aries (March 21-April 19) – You've been more or less content with things up to now, but at this point it's time for a break. Now is the time to step back and just do your own thing for a little while, otherwise you're going to have to deal with the stresses that come with "all work and no play."

Taurus (April 20-May 20) – Some unexpected news may bring a measure of peace to an otherwise hectic life, but watch out to make sure you're not just in the eye of the storm. Ensure that things are as settled as they look, and you should be set.

Gemini (May 21-June 21) – Inspiration has hit and you're feeling good about it. So good, in fact, that you're ready to put most of your focus into that inspiration as your "next big thing." Be careful, though, if you have trouble making important decisions, your "next big thing" won't go far.

Cancer (June 22-July 22) – It's time to move on, even if it's not the most pleasant of leave-takings. Perhaps you're seeking more substance or just something more stable, but in the end, you'll probably settle into something a little more business-like than what you were doing before.

Leo (July 23-August 22) – You may have been getting mixed messages in the past, or even just messages that have been unreliable. Don't lose heart, though, because good news should be on its way and your frustration should lessen once things change for the better.

Virgo (August 23-September 22) – Impatience and hard work probably aren't the best combination, as it leads to wondering when the rewards will come. Be careful of attaining so much that you can't enjoy it, because things are generally what you make of them.

Libra (September 23-October 23) – You're usually good at taking a subjective view of a situation and work it out, but lately you may have been slacking off a bit in that respect. It's time to focus on that a bit more to keep conflicts to a minimum.

Scorpio (October 24-November 21) – You may be inciting jealousy from some with a certain lack of moderation. Slow down with your spending or at least your show of it, and you'll be much more likely to attract the kind of attention that you want.

Sagittarius (November 22-December 21) – You may want someone else to take over some of your responsibility so that you no longer have to deal with it, but sometimes that's not the best idea. Living an 'ideal' that doesn't require you to make decisions could lead to materialism or disappointment.

T. 954.294.1127

F. 954.389.8076

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