

Plunging in



Country superstar Reba McEntire performs Thursday at the Coliseum in front of a sold-out crowd. David Mandrell/The Gamecock

UF studio worker finds lost snake

By College Press Service
 GAINESVILLE, Fla. - While it's true that journalists occasionally have been accused of being reptiles, it's not often that they get much media attention just for hanging out with them.
 A Colombian boa constrictor recently was on the lam for three weeks in the University of Florida's College of Journalism and Communications, alternately terrorizing and amusing students, faculty and staff after he escaped his owner's clutches at the college's WUFT television studios.
 Van Gogh's three-week slither came to an end in mid-January when the boa was discovered in the studio's master control room, not far from the spot where he made his break in Weimer Hall, the Independent Florida Alligator reported.
 UF sophomore Jennifer Stanton, the snake's owner, and Rocky Essex, a post-baccalaureate student, were preparing to shut down power in the master control room about 11 p.m. when Essex noticed something strange near the main power transmitter.
 Essex, who is not particularly fond of snakes, said they had been talking about the renegade reptile just before they came across it.
 "I had just read about it in the Alligator," Essex said. "I said, 'I just hope we don't find it when I'm around here.' But she said it was probably dead."
 Then Essex spotted a cable that looked like a snakeskin, which is exactly what it turned out to be. Van Gogh had just shed it. Essex said Stanton started yelling, "It's him! It's him! It's Van Gogh!"
 The elusive snake was huddled in a two-inch space above the transmitter. When Stanton first tried to nab the escapee, Essex said Van Gogh "hissed at her pretty bad."
 But Stanton said the snake was cranky from shedding his skin and from malnutrition.
 "He gets an attitude (when he sheds)," she said. "He didn't want to leave. He was comfortable."
 Not everyone in the College of Journalism and Communications was happy to see Van Gogh depart. Telecommunications Chairman Gerald Smeyak said he was dejected about the snake's exit because it meant the end of Dean Ralph Lowenstein's periodic snake updates.

Student Government Elections

General elections to be Thursday, Feb. 17

Polls will be open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. You must vote at the following locations according to your major. You must present your valid student ID.

- RUSSELL HOUSE - Second floor lobby
 - Criminal Justice
 - Education
 - Health
 - Pharmacy
 - Science and Math
 - Social Work
- GAMBRELL HALL - Beside the elevators
 - Honors College Baccalaureate
 - Humanities and Social Science
 - Interdisciplinary Studies
 - Nursing
- BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION - First floor lobby
 - Business Administration
- COLISEUM - Blossom Street lobby
 - Applied Professional Sciences
 - Continuing Education
 - Journalism
 - Library and Information Sciences
- SWEARINGEN - Main lobby
 - Engineering
- LAW SCHOOL - Main lobby
 - Law School
- MEDICAL SCHOOL - Main lobby
 - Medical School

Gamecock Graphics/The Gamecock Source: Elections Commission

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SGA.
 "Every year, it's politics for the sake of politics and not for the sake of getting something done," she said.
 But SGA does have genuinely concerned people in it, according to Chang.
 "There are a lot of people in student government who really care and are trying to make a difference and give up a lot of their time to it," she said.
 Chang, 20, a political science junior, is a humanities senator and a member of the S.C. Student Legislature and Delta Zeta sorority.

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"We are a diverse group in a sense, even though some people refer to us as a little clique," she said. "But we really are diverse and genuinely concerned about the university as a whole. It's just sometimes our methodologies conflict."
 Wilson, 20, a political science junior, is a humanities senator and vice chairwoman of the senate Finance Committee. She is a member of the Freshman Council, Judicial Board, Gamma Beta Phi and Students Empowering and Educating for Diversity. She was recently selected to join Omicron Delta Kappa.

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"man of any organization, and though he may not always receive the credit, he puts in a lot of work."
 Gilbert said SGA is important because it represents the whole student body.
 "Student government truly is representative of the student body," he said.
 "There are people from all different social groups who are in it."
 However, Gilbert said SGA has one shortcoming.
 "It doesn't have enough power against the administration or the Board of Trustees," he said.
 Gilbert, 22, an international studies junior, is a member of Pi Kappa Alpha, Gamma Beta Phi and Sigma Iota Rho.

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