

Redefining Bronco pride by going green



FSU students throw away recyclable items despite the appropriate bins being available.

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Voice Staff Writer

"We're going in the wrong direction!"

That's how H. Jay Blausler, facilities project manager and sustainability coordinator, described the student body's efforts regarding recycling. 62 tons were recycled by FSU in fiscal year 2010, but in fiscal year 2011, that number dropped to 58 tons. Mr. Blausler, stated the "FSU Pitch In!" movement has "picked up, but still has room for improvement."

Mr. Blausler says the quantity of green-wheeled recycling containers throughout campus has grown to 63 and will continue to increase with necessity, just as multi-can locations like those near the Butler and Taylor buildings have. They weren't planned target areas, the staff simply saw an increase in recycling activity and placed additional cans to accommodate.

Each can is labeled with a complete list of acceptable single stream items, which can

also be found on the FSU Sustainability Office's website where they promote the 'FSU Pitch In!' initiative. They also provide recycling drums donated from Coca-Cola, seen in the Capel Arena, in addition to the green cardboard and single stream dumpsters behind the Student Center and one in Lot P, near the Facilities warehouses.

Despite all these resources, students continue to ignore their duty as Broncos and fling their waste, often times recyclable, all across campus. Perhaps the saddest displays I witnessed included food wrappers just a few steps away from trash cans. It's bad enough that students blatantly disregard the recycling cans, but to lack the decency to take three steps and ensure garbage enters a trash receptacle provides irrevocable evidence of an appalling student body.

I can't count the endless flyers of past social events strewn along the sidewalks. Who could imagine a 3x5 card would require so much effort, apparently unbearable by most students to carry more than 10 seconds to

nearby recycling cans? And why would student organizations allow their names smeared by the disfigured posters left along light poles? Obviously taking these posters down after events would require more energy than was necessary to tape them up.

Trash taped to light poles, seen by potential students touring the campus, advertises Bronco Pride in a very distasteful fashion. As these words go to print, remnants of Homecoming decorations still litter the FSU Gazebo.

Unfortunately, this behavior does not improve indoors.

Staff sources in the Student Center described multiple instances of neglect. In the lobby there used to sit a small, blue recycling bin between the ATM's. Two trash cans also occupy the lobby, one next to the copy machines parallel with the ATM's and one next to the elevator. Students were "using it as a trash can!" so staff members relocated the recycling bin in their office for proper utilization.

"It doesn't stop there." Evidently when

food-drive boxes and other humanitarian containers were placed in the Student Center in the past, "they received the same treatment, littered with students' trash." Why some students can't tolerate a few extra steps to toss garbage in the appropriate canister escapes conventional wisdom and shames Bronco Pride.

If there's any hope for the student body, it's The Green Team, of which Mr. Blausler advises. A student organization founded in the fall of 2008, The Green Team (TGT) was started by about six students, led by founding President Tamikka Portee, who expressed general concern for their community and campus. TGT developed a mission similar to the UNC Sustainability Office's, "advocating student involvement in green initiatives and striving to educate FSU students on recycling, reducing & reusing."

TGT has hosted a 'Recyclone-Residence Hall Recycling Competition' in 2010 during Earth Day week, volunteered in clothing drives, and conducted countless community cleanup events, most recently the campus-wide cleanup on Oct. 27.

Residence hall students as well as those located in University Place Apartments should have noticed the induction of small, blue recycling bins into individual rooms recently. This installment directly resulted from the efforts of TGT. While hall staff members express concerns of having to watch students more closely to prevent misuse, there's generally a favorable reception.

Continuing to focus on their mission, TGT currently plans to integrate scheduled residence hall meetings in the spring 2012 semester, promoting recycling and raising awareness. Since their small start of just six members, TGT has grown to more than 50 members, with more than a dozen actively participating at each event.

Mr. Blausler also added the new blue-wheeled 68 gallon containers will replace the 65 gallon green ones around campus by early spring semester. This uniformity should help students identify where they can recycle their personal waste basket contents. Let's hope this blue initiative achieves green results and helps redefine our tarnished Bronco Pride.

(The Green Team can be located on Bronco Advantage under T and membership is free.)

LETTER TO THE EDITOR Something to consider about homicide

To My Brother's Keeper,

I agree with you in your article, "Homicide, leading cause of death among African-American youth," in The Voice, Sept. 21, 2011, as one of the most accurate depictions of this, nearly ignored, American crisis. Although, I don't believe you considered a different American crisis that claims even more African-American lives than homicide, and that is abortion. Abortion rates have been dropping in the past twenty-five

years from 29.3 per thousand in 1981 to 19.4 per thousand in 2005, resulting in 1,200,000 abortions in 2005. Thirty-seven percent of these abortions were obtained by black women. That is approximately 440,000 abortions in one year (gutmacher.org). We cannot ignore the murder of our youth, but must also address and speak for those who have no voices.

These atrocities in our society, in my opinion, are a result of our population moving more and more away from the roots of which our country was founded on, Judea Christian values.

We have become a country with diminished values, morals and ethics resulting in many of the socio-economic problems of today. We must become more socially conservative and look to our God for the answers.

My Other Brother's Keeper,
Robert Lavallo
FSU Student