

Pink snail makes its way to campus

by ASHLEY MARTINEZ on Feb 26, 2012 • 8:17 pm No Comments



Wellness center workers, Diego Donna, senior, Krysten Vazquez, sophomore, and Ashley Kristiansen, junior, attempt to plank on the pink snail while fellow staffers, Michael Kjelson, junior, and Leona Zahlan, senior, watch on. The snails are famous for moving around Miami and appearing in a new location without warning. Cayla Nimmo//Assistant Photo Editor

The 8-foot tall pink snail is now at the University of Miami.

Now located in the front of the Wellness Center, the snail first appeared in front of the BankUnited Center by request of the women’s basketball team, said Carol Switzer, the gallery director who runs Galleria Ca’ d’Oro Miami.

The snail was placed in front of the BUC to call attention to the players who wore pink in honor of Kay Vow, the former North Carolina State women’s basketball coach who died of breast cancer.

Some students were confused by the snails at first.

“I was like, ‘Why there is a huge big snail here?’” freshman Rachel Frisch said. “There should have been a sign.”

The snails were created by the Cracking Art Group, six European artists who create public art out of recyclable plastic.

The snails were first seen in Coral Gables last January for about two months, in places including Merrick Park, City Hall and the Coral Gables Library.

Miami is just one of the many cities worldwide that have been invaded by the giant, colorful creatures.

Prague had yellow penguins, Paris had red rabbits and Milan had gold dolphins.

Switzer said the pink snails are perfect for Miami.

“The pink snail is my favorite,” she said. “Pink is fabulous and a great color in so many ways. It looks great at night and looks even better in the sun, but it doesn’t have to be lit because it gives off its own light.”

Beneath those vibrant shells lies a deeper message.

Switzer said the snail’s shape resembles the human ear, which represents taking the time to slow down and listen. The shell is the snail’s home, so it symbolizes getting involved with the city you live in.

There is also a theme of embracing technology because the word for the “@” symbol used in email addresses translates as “snail” in Italian.

“I was shocked when I first learned about all of the deep metaphors the snails represented,” said junior Daniella Salvatore, an intern at Galleria Ca’ d’Oro. “A lot of people look at the sculpture and go, ‘Wow, a big pink snail.’ But for others who are aware of the deeper meanings of the snail, it means a lot more to them.”