Impeach senator, says SGA affidavit

Documents claim that the Sunshine Law was violated

KATE HOWELL

Joshua Edmundson, a member of the SGA Senate, has formally announced his intention to file an affidavit against fellow Sen. Bryan Voorhees.

The affidavit, which Edmundson said he will file sometime this week, is nearly identical to the complaints from former Sen. Kevin O’Grattan, which was presented last week. This raises the question — will this affidavit prove any new information?

Edmundson, a member of the Activity and Service Fee Committee, said that Council, the committee’s chairman, should be implicated for violating Sunshine Law by holding a Dec. 15 AIF meeting that was not properly posted. No one in the Senate disagrees that the meeting was never posted, but many are claiming the meeting was “unofficial” and believe that it would have been a harsh punishment.

It is now effectively recorded that no meeting was posted for Dec. 15, said Matthew Fisher, chairman of the Legislative, Judicial and Rules Committee, which disallowed O’Grattan’s earlier affidavit.

“These discrepancies was pointed out, and so no official meeting was held. I understand that the budget and agency requests for break campus union head at this unofficial meeting, considering this hadn’t happened before that people would have to endure coming to another meeting.”

Fisher added that notice of an official AIF meeting was later posted, and it was held on Dec. 20.

SGA Attorney General Tyler Van Voorhees took it a step further. “The greatest part of Edmundson’s documentation rests on the purported Sunshine Violation of holding a meeting without adequate posting time. Making a judgment on the chain of events is difficult, though, because Council and others presented other prominent material that was presented at the contest of the Dec. 15 meeting. Therefore, because the meeting itself was on shaky ground, Van Voorhees explained, “I find no fundamental violation of holding a meeting without adequate posting time.”

Legally, the Daytona presentation should never have taken place if it was never posted, he said. “And if they say that the meeting to take place shouldn’t have taken place because the posting is being questioned,” he said.

Members also insist that there is no fundamental difference between the affidavit O’Grattan filed and the one Edmundson is preparing. From a legal standpoint, several Council members who have been around since 1998, have spent a significant amount of time

Second-in-command makes impact

Willie Bentley Jr. wakes up at 5 a.m. so you don’t have to

MARK JUSTICE

At 5 a.m. most UCF students are sleeping, but not Willie Bentley Jr. He’s already awake and starting a day that will keep him in the office of the Student Government Association office until 5 that evening.

Willie Bentley Jr. is a frequent visitor to SGA Senate meetings. During one, when UCF Football Coach George O’Grattan gave the keynote, he looked at the back of Senator Bentley and asked why the vice president wasn’t part of his football team.

Those working in the office with Bentley think highly of him as well. “The best part of that is he’s very respectful,” Student Body President Kevin Peters said. “He’s a very big people person, and everybody just likes him.”

Senator Sean Lavin considered Bentley a “valuable member of Team SGA,” Lavin said. “I have a lot of respect for Bentley and truly feel he is serving in SGA for the right reasons.”

Perhaps the best compliment Lavin paid to Bentley was when the speaker was asked about rumors about Lavin planning a crusade for the presidency later this month. Lavin explained, “I do accept the responsibility of president. I’d strive to be the type of leader Bentley is.”

Peters said that Bentley, who’s excited to be considering running for SGA president this spring, would “be a very strong candidate, and a great president.”

Others working with Bentley in SGA have an equal favorable opinion of him. “He’s a very instrumental Affairs McCuin Woodson commented. “He’s a very involved individual and does a good job at talking to the different entities in a way that will address that Bentley is ‘the best you’ve ever seen.’”

Bentley has left his mark on a number of different organizations at UCF including the Triumns, the John T. Wadocks

Breaking down the numbers at the Trustees’ meeting

3.6

Percent increase in student housing costs approved by the Board of Trustees.

The cost of a faculty study about constructing a new stadium to house the school’s football team sparked by the Board of Trustees. Although the administration rejected requests from local environmental groups, the move was largely unopposed, and the board voted in favor of the study.

However, the UCF administration has already conducted the study — President David Hitt has already signed a memo to do UCF’s stadium search.

About 180 faculty members attended to the Student Senate Cape Florida Ballroom on Tuesday, where the Board of Trustees met. Another 180 faculty members were left waiting outside, the board was not open to the public.

Second-in-command makes impact

While a large group of administrators received raises ranging from 10 percent to 45 percent last year, the United Faculty of Florida say that UCF faculty members have waited for more than two years for raises. The UCF bargaining team declared an impasse in negotiations, ending remaining negotiations for renewable raises.

Other items that created conflict in negotiations include academic freedom, tenure and benefits.

At 2:32 p.m., Rosie Jone, a professor in the English Department, said that the board’s decision was more valid than the last one.

We can respect talk to

$55,000

English professor Steve Reuben signs a song in the Student Union.

Faculty stage a protest with songs, signs and a march to the trustees

Dennis Connaug, a first-year adviser employed at UCF since 1998, spent a semester parking across the street from campus due to the high cost of parking permits, which he said can’t afford on his salary.

He is one of 200 faculty members who showed solidarity with United Faculty of Florida UCF chapter as they protested outside the UCF Board of Trustees meeting on Tuesday. The meeting followed the administration’s November decision to declare an impasse in collective bargaining at SGA salaries and benefits.

Wearing “Respect” t-shirts and blue shirts, members of the group of faculty convened on the Student Union patio at about 1:45 p.m.

UCF negotiated distributes materials concerning administrative raises — which ranged from 10 percent to 45 percent, while faculty members have waited for two years during negotiations to receive comparable raises or benefits. Other items that created conflict in negotiations include academic freedom, tenure and benefits.

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Show unravelled mystery mummy
No corpse too cold, no distance too far to solve ancient forensic riddles

Around Campus
News and notices for the UCF community

A Greek affair
The National Pan-Hellenic Council of America and the Greek Estrogynousa Stop Show at the Student Center Ballroom will include a fashion show. The event begins at 7:30 pm, and is free to the public. For more information, call Emily Willing at 407-823-4799.

Hot rush action
Progressive Council will be holding a "Hot Rush" recruitment drive starting Monday in front of the Student Union. For more information contact Enoch Adesanya at 407-970-3526.

Calling for democracy
"Los Paz Nuestra," a human rights group for Cuba, will be meeting in front of St. Thomas in the Breezeway this Thursday and tomorrow at 10:30 a.m. For more information call Yolanda Dantas at 407-970-2320.

Marketing major meets event organizers
The Society for Marketing Professional Services will hold a meeting to elect officers for the remainder of the year in I.A.I. Room 105. For more information contact Victoria Brown at 407-823-5602.

Tying the knot after this
A career fair workshop will be held today at 4:30 pm in the Student Resource Center Room 205. For information contact Workforce/Workforce Training/Community Services & Employment Information Services.

Brown and Board of Education
The African American Studies Program will present a lecture on "Brown vs. Board of Education" by John Schultz in the Johnson Lecture Series. For more information call 407-823-4769.

A cry for love
The UCF Conservatory Theater will be presenting a comedy about making love not war called "The Love Show" on January 28, in the Theater Building Stage 1. For more information call the box office at 407-823-1900.

Women power
Women's Studies will hold a workshop meeting this Thursday at 11:00 a.m. in the Classroom Building Room 205. For information contact Linda Reddick at 407-823-8555.

Let us know
The future wants to hear from you! If you have a club, organization or event and want your information published in the Around Campus column, please send an e-mail to: aroundcampus@ucf.edu. Please include your name, club name, date, time and place of event at 5:00 p.m. Tuesday for the Thursday issue and 5:00 p.m. Monday for the Friday edition.

Police Beat
I don't know how the beer got in my car

ARMER FOSTER

UCF student Kevin O'Connell was charged with child molestation, firsthand, refused to obey a police officer and resisted arrest. O'Connell was cited with obstructing a roadway and driving without insurance.

Police officers Chris Gavette and Anthony Lopez saw O'Connell with a Miller Lite beer can on the floor between his legs. Upon further investigation, the defendant searched for his rifle. He was the nicely decorated 8,000-year-old human found in 1995 with even his clothes still intact.

"Seeing the discovery of Ironman in the Alps really sparked my interest in becoming an anthropologist," Schultz said. A few years later, he obtained his doctorate in anthropology from the University of Florida, where he presented his thesis on generating-ground radarings. "I guess you can compare the GPR to a CT scan," he said. "You can perform a survey in areas that need further excavation without disturbing the ground."

The super-sensitive radar system works differently in different soil compositions and environments. Schultz has set out to find how a counselor would appear on the radar's screen in the sandy soils of Florida, one, two or 20 years after it has been buried.

And his knowledge of this system has proved to be invaluable. In the fall of 2004, Schultz helped the Orange County Sheriff's Department uncover two bodies that had been dubbed "missing persons" for more than a decade. For that, he was awarded a certificate of commendation from the Sheriff's Office, for his dedication that department, and he also collaborating with the regional medical examiner.

"It was rewarding to analyze ancient bones and remains," Schultz said after seeing a multitude of "modern skeletons." Schultz also teaches an array of classes at UCF that range from forensic anthropology to human biological diversity to anthropological archaeology. He has a lot to bring to the students," said Courtney Matthews, a student in his class. "He makes it interesting and makes it more interesting," she added.

The archeologist professor seems to be happy with what he is doing. "It is always rewarding to do what you want to do for school" he said with a smile.

Central Florida Future
The Student Newspaper Serving UCF Since 1969

2 FREE Boxes of Girl Scout Cookies
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NATION & WORLD

Keep current with headlines you can trust.

Defrocked Catholic priest faces just a single apology
The Rev. Robert S. Lessard, 57, facing three charges of raping a two-year-old autistic assault and battery on a person with a developmental disability. His sentence is life in prison.

New GOP chairman lays out plan for new party
WASHINGTON — White House officials have assumed control of the Republican National Committee, clearing the way for new GOP successes in 2006 by recruiting a new leader to clean up the ranks, GOP officials said Wednesday. The White House has named Ken Mehlman chairman of the RNC.

Bush tapped Mehlman to be the party's top political official with the assumption that he would be tapped for the job for his skills in political outreach to moderate Republicans and independents. The move means that Mehlman, who is the GOP's youngest ever chairman, would take the job as the Iraq war was drawing to a close and the Republicans were running strong in most polls.

United Nations calls for unified global approach to terrorism
RODEO, Japan — With multiple terror warnings and millions of dollars in anti-terrorism projects for a terrorism-wary nation, the United States Wednesday said it would not encourage a "walled-garden" approach globally, but the United States would be able to run such a program. The United States is Mason, a longtime conservative writer who covered the terrorist attacks in the Indian Ocean and Europe, said the nation's outsourcing of support to build and operate the GPT's would amount to an outrageous overpricing agreements.

Speaker tells middle schoolers shipping can be lucrative

FUGERE—The principal of a Palo Alto middle school told a group of eighth-graders at the school's career day the past Wednesday that they could earn a good living as middle schoolers who ship boxes of Girl Scout cookies.

Management consultant William G. Stutzman, his wife and their four children were killed in a car collision in the Student Resource Center Room 205. They arrived in Orlando on Tuesday to do the same, and after each one of his job, the Four, for more infdation call 407-823-2561.

Bruce H. Carthage, 57, from Atlanta was a passenger in a vehicle that was hit by a UCF student.

The Furgale and Anthony Lupo sobriety tests and was taken to the central booking office. O'Connell failed all field chase ended when he lost control of his car at University

The Asian tsunami disaster

WASHINGTON — A recent survey of 400 adults found that 26 percent of people interviewed had watched the coverage of the Asian tsunami disaster, according to a new poll released Wednesday.

The survey, conducted for CNN by Gallup International, was released Wednesday as part of a larger poll that looked at how people feel about the war in Iraq. The survey found that 40 percent of Americans had watched the coverage of the tsunami disaster, and 40 percent had watched the coverage of the war in Iraq.

The survey also found that 30 percent of people interviewed had watched the coverage of the Asian tsunami disaster, and 30 percent had watched the coverage of the war in Iraq. The survey found that 30 percent of people interviewed had watched the coverage of the Asian tsunami disaster, and 30 percent had watched the coverage of the war in Iraq.

Based New Office
2619 Alafaya Trail, Suite 102, Orlando
(3 lights South of UCF, 2 lights North of Colonial)
Plan B pill is up for over-the-counter use

Second time around for emergency contraceptive

Brother Jed offers his views on marriage, sex

JENNIFER AGUIRRE

"Brother Jed" visited the lanes of UCF last week with another evangelical visit aimed at the masses of students engaging in what he deems ungodly behavior. He stood in front of the Library, urging students to accept Jesus in their lives through Christianity.

In his usual tirade calling attention to sinful behavior, Brother Jed also intro­duced Chemicals to Plan B as a moral sin against huma­nity.

Surrounded by naysay­ers, the traveling preacher blamed the use of the morn­ing-after pill to abortion. He said there is no need for Plan B because married couples should be ready for children and that "premar­ital sex is a sin, and those participating in it will be seen in hell."

Leads of glory, he shouted to students, "Stop having sex at all without marriage! And if you are not ready for children, do not hesitate to use marriage!"

Megan Pasquier, Jr., taking Plan B was a Heaven.

Evenベary, an executive secretary at UCF’s School of Nursing, said faculty members could not comment because they did not have a "knowledgeable opinion" on Plan B or any subject involving birth con­trol.

JENNIFER AGUIRRE

Contributing Writer

Brother Jed’s offer on marriage, sex

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Ohio University will help to prescribe hormone set.

CLEVELAND — Ohio University has agreed to pay part of a $300,000 settlement in a lawsuit by a former student who said a photographer focused on her posing topless.

The agreement settles a suit in which students who posed for a photographer were being sought by East Central University in Ada.

The settlement, announced by the university’s spokesman, includes $20,000 for each of the 13 students who sought to attend the university’s law trial.

WILLIAMSTOWN, Mass. — Williams College will reduce the debt burden for some students by waiving the cost of health insurance.

Under the new policy, students who meet the financial aid requirements may choose to reduce the cost of health insurance by $3,000 per year.

DETROIT — Federal Judge Dennis W. Arndt dismissed the lawsuit Wednesday against the state of Michigan, saying the state did not violate the equal protection clause of the U.S. Constitution.

In a 20-page decision, Arndt ruled that the state did not discriminate against the plaintiffs, who are black.

Science Spotlight

MASON SBETHA

Reducing calorie intake and increasing physical activity is the main message of the sixth edition of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

The guidelines are the most comprehensive dietary guidelines ever published in the United States, with the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The 42-page document includes 26 dietary recommendations, the same number as in the previous edition.

These recommendations also mention major key ideas, including physical activity and healthy weight, but it is hard to provide any specifics.

"Clear thinking thing to see..." is the new guideline's the emphasis on exercise..." said breakfast, which the dieticians at the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The recent recommendation noted moderate exercise on "most days" and 60 minutes or more to prevent weight gain, and 60 to 90 minutes "daily" to lose weight.

"But if you set someone who has never exercised before to do 90 minutes of activity for 40 minutes of exercise, they’re going to have a hard time," Wilkins said. "And advice clients to set realistic goals for 30 minutes a day and gradually increase the activity by at least one hour.

Also on the top of the list are fruits and vegetables.

"The government recommends at least 2 cups of fruits and 2 cups of vegetables a day.

"With the emphasis on exercise..." said breakfast, which the dieticians at the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

"An effort to reduce the risk of chronic diseases..." is also the guideline for reducing calorie intake.

"Products with words "whole" or "wholesome" are the only ones that qualify under this group. Popcorn, wild rice, whole wheat bread and oatmeal are some foods in this category.

You can learn more about the guidelines at the U.S. Department of Agriculture website.
Hitt's prepared speech was never read

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Figs 7.

Our message to the board is, "Respect us, talk to us."  
-Rose Jelli,  EDUCATION PROFESSOR

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Bentley key in making legal services available

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They Stand

A-Sun title focusing in as rematch with FAU looms

Ashley Burns

Senior forward Marcus Avant is playing his best basketball as a Golden Knight and he says he owes it all to his teammates. "I'm just happy we won the game," Indian Coach Mike Davis said. "We really appreciate the A-Sun Conference effort to ensure that officiating is at a high level and our coaches have been outstanding." Had Landry made the free throw, Purdue would have won the game. The A-Sun is still trying to get its schedule squared away and is allowing better football players to spend more time on one-on-one with current team members. The university banned the use of new recruits in back-to-back games and released new recruiting restrictions imposed last year amid a sex-and-alcohol scandal. Officials have been trying to lower the profile of the team chemist. "It appears that they're right," spokesman Bruce Heldt said. "We've had no problems with this." While others have done what to achieve their goals, no new player has made greater improvements than Marcus Avant. The senior forward came to campus in his best form after a workout with his teammates. "We have to get ourselves to play hard all the time," Davis said. "We have to get ourselves to play hard all the time." Women looking to win fifth in a row

Hudson and Co. return home after perfect two-game road trip against Campbell, GWU

Matt Runyan

The women's basketball team enters the weekend with a half-game out of first place in the A-Sun standings. The Knights fly under the radar of most coaches and recruits. At least one player said, "I feel like I kind of lacked a point tomorrow." Senior guard Celeste Hudson is looking for the second straight year in a row to win the A-Sun title, according to the conference. Notable players who are back 2005-2006 season:

Four players ended up in double figures for the Knights against GWU last Saturday, toped by 17 points each by guards Celeste Hudson and Francine Houston. "These girls are really starting to find their shot, especially Francine," Striegler said. "She had some struggles but has really picked up her game on both ends of the floor." Forward All Roberts continues to lead the Knights in scoring, averaging 12.5 points per game. Roberts is coming off another strong week, posting a game-high 15 points against Campbell and adding a strong 15 points against GWU. "She (Roberts) has been the most consistent player we've had all season," Striegler said. "She means so much to our team and right now could be the most valuable player in the conference."

State & Nation

Big Ten: Errant officials in game

BLOOMINGTON, Ind. — The Big Ten has become an officiating error that could have cost Indiana a game it won in double overtime against Purdue last weekend.

Purdue's Carl Landry scored and fouled with less than a second left in the first overtime on Saturday but he then missed a free throw that would have given the Boilermakers. Instead, the shot went in the net and the Boilermakers won 75-73 after the second OT period.

The Big Ten said Tuesday that officials incorrectly ruled a basket and a foul on the second basket of the game clock.

"We believe that was the only correct call before the overtime expired," Big Ten commissioner John Denton said. "As a result, the game was called with less than 12 seconds left on the clock, leaving us in the position to come up with a new game clock." According to NCAA rules, the field goal should not have counted, and Landry should have been awarded two free throws, the Big Ten said.

"I'm just happy we won the game," Indiana Coach Mike Davis said. "We really appreciate the Big Ten Conference effort to ensure that officiating is at a high level and our coaches have been outstanding." Had Landry made the free throw, Purdue would have won the game. The A-Sun is still trying to get its schedule squared away and is allowing better football players to spend more time on one-on-one with current team members. The university banned the use of new recruits in back-to-back games and released new recruiting restrictions imposed last year amid a sex-and-alcohol scandal. Officials have been trying to lower the profile of the team chemist. "It appears that they're right," spokesman Bruce Heldt said. "We've had no problems with this." While others have done what to achieve their goals, no new player has made greater improvements than Marcus Avant. The senior forward came to campus in his best form after a workout with his teammates. "We have to get ourselves to play hard all the time," Davis said. "We have to get ourselves to play hard all the time." Women looking to win fifth in a row

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Teamwork paying dividends for men

Edwards stepping up during streak

JEFF SHAHAN Staff Writer

When the ball has the son.

The Knights need to get inside. Cover its past 12 games, UCF has attempted 236 3-pointers in a game, it is 32 percent or worse in three of its toughest games at Stetson and Jacksonville. But where the turnovers are a huge factor in the game, as UCF's top scorer was shut out, going for zero six from the floor. Since then, Johnson was recovering from an illness that forced him out of the starting lineup against the Tho-

shots. This is something that Avant "Purwin's Player of the Year." Mike Bell makes a living off of when he is able to get inside. Couple that with high

lives on WGKN Channel 21, with the parade of players on at 7 p.m., and tip-off at 7:30 p.m. Today, Avant is one of eight players having second-place spots in the A-Sun. He is turning it over 15 times to win the Sun Belt Conference... FAU's... We're distributing the ball well and we've had more assists. We trust each other. "Our chemistry is getting better on and of the court," Avant said. "That's a big part. We work on boxing out and

But whereas the turnovers are hurting the Knights, they're still

Keep your loved one a heart for Valentine’s Day! Place a classified ad in the

Defensive still tops in A-Sun while offense begins to gain momentum as well

INSIDE THE NUMBERS

Consecutive years

With basketball between 4:30 and 5:30 p.m., UCF fans have been

U.S. Army Maui Shootout.

The Knights have a strong second-half team, Johnson said. "We have always been a strong second-half team," Johnson said. "We have always been a strong second-half team."

Guard Jessica Miller is in the top 10 in both scoring and rebounding, putting home 12.5 points per game and 6.0 rebounds per game. Previous

Avant is named the A-Sun presea-

Inside the conference tourna-

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10 days until the start of the UCF men's basketball season

The men and women of UCF basketball Batch teams are trying to extend their winning streaks to five games tonight at the UCF Arena.

The team's chemistry is better than it has been at any season.

Our chemistry is getting better on and of the court... We trust each other.

Thank you for helping the Big Blue! The Big Blue is the football team

Dice roll for Valentine’s Day

The Knights are set to host Mercer in a conference opener on Saturday. Men's tennis faces Georgia State at 2 p.m. Wednesday, and Marcus Johnson. According to Avant, though, adjustment isn't a factor any more as he believes the chemistry is better than it has been at any season.

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Thank you for helping the Big Blue! The Big Blue is the football team

The team's chemistry is better than it has been at any season.

The team's chemistry is better than it has been at any season.
Board of Trustees must trust faculty

If things are so going well, why is it that the polls show the support of President Bush by the voters in Iowa is above 70 percent? Furthermore, I ask - must we not protect ourselves from aggressive national? No, we believe that Bush is the only one to apprise the greatest disaster of the nation.

You may wish to stick a flower in the gun for a moment, but you may not fail to recognize that these animals will short that (along through the nation's back.)

The inauguration of UCF's 10th president is going to be a big deal. People may be starving in the streets - in front of the Board of Trustees meeting will be a big deal. People may be starving in the streets - in front of the Board of Trustees meeting will be a big deal. People may be starving in the streets - in front of the Board of Trustees meeting will be a big deal. People may be starving in the streets - in front of the Board of Trustees meeting will be a big deal. People may be starving in the streets - in front of the Board of Trustees meeting will be a big deal. People may be starving in the streets - in front of the Board of Trustees meeting will be a big deal. People may be starving in the streets - in front of the Board of Trustees meeting will be a big deal. People may be starving in the streets - in front of the Board of Trustees meeting will be a big deal. People may be starving in the streets - in front of the Board of Trustees meeting will be a big deal. People may be starving in the streets - in front of the Board of Trustees meeting will be a big deal. People may be starving in the streets - in front of the Board of Trustees meeting will be a big deal. People may be starving in the streets - in front of the Board of Trustees meeting will be a big deal.
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Student Resource Center Building 37, Rm. 115
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Panelists:
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Date: Thursday, January 27, 2005
2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Location: Cape Florida Ballrooms, 316
UCF Student Union

This forum is free and open to the public.

For more information, please contact the Global Perspectives Office
407-823-0935 - global@mail.ucf.edu
www.ucf.edu/globalperspectives
It may not have an Eiffel Tower, but Club Paris is worth a look.

Ladies say ‘no peace, no sex’

O-Rock’s pranksters get personal

Boardwalk + Baseball = disaster?
UCF opens Lysistrata

Controversial anti-war statement debuts tonight

EMILY JANE SCOTT
Staff Writer

It was March of 2003, nearly two years ago now. Protests against a possible war on Iraq were just beginning. Protestors had been marching on D.C. and in the streets of New York in the prior two months. Filmmakers got involved; musicians jumped on board and celebrities spoke out for the anti-war movement. However, at the same time, a more organized, underground project was taking place in the world of theatre.

It centered around and was named after the Greek comedy by the playwright Aristophanes and was known simply as The Lysistrata Project. On March 3, 2003 (3/3/03), the play was performed in 1,029 theatres across the world. Not only was this an incredible showing for the anti-war movement at the time, it was also an incredible showing for feminists across the world.

Lysistrata is the third and final play in the War and Peace series written by Aristophanes. Taking place in the 21st year of the war of his prior two works, Lysistrata focuses on the efforts of Athenian women to bring peace to their lands. Lead by Lysistrata, the women of Athens decide to force their men to cease war on Sparta by making a bold declaration — their men will be denied sexual pleasures until they vote for peace.

Lysistrata instructs her legions to wear their sheerest silks and to “sit prettily” where their men can see them to help make their cause all the more transparent.

Even in 411 B.C., the Greeks knew that sex sells. Although we’re used to sex selling music, food, television and even sports, here it is used for a more noble cause, proving that women can use their “femininity” for higher purposes. Hence, the play and the 2003 project have been adopted by feminists around the world.

A one-woman show by Kathryn Blume, the co-founder of The Lysistrata Project, premiered off-Broadway in fall of 2004. A musical adaptation of Lysistrata is also currently in the works.

If you’re interested in seeing what all the fuss is about and seeing if the play comes off as liberal as those who have adopted it, you can catch it at the UCF Conservatory Theatre on campus.

The show will run at 8 p.m. from Jan. 20 to Jan. 30, every evening, with two matinees at 2 p.m. on Jan. 23 and Jan. 30. Ticket prices are $12.50 for general admission and $7.50 for students.

For more information, you can call the Conservatory Theatre box office at 407-823-1500.
HAPPENINGS

CALENDAR

CAMPUS
Photography: Living Spaces
Jan. 20, 4 p.m. to 6 p.m., free
Visual Arts Building
407-823-6240

Clarinets and Piano Recital
Jan. 20, 8 p.m. to 10 p.m.
Rehearsal Hall
Room 116
407-823-5116

The Lysistrata Project
Jan. 20 to Jan. 30, various times,
First Unitarian Church of Orlando
407-823-6471

Late Knights
Jan. 22, 7 p.m. to 2 a.m., free
Student Union
407-823-6471

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M OFR

Spike Lee Film Festival
Jan. 23, 3 p.m. to 8 p.m., free
Visual Arts Building Auditorium
407-823-6199

Flute and Piano Recital
Jan. 23, 8 p.m. to 10 p.m.
Rehearsal Hall
Room 116
407-823-5066

Events
Jan. 22, 4 p.m. to 6 p.m., free
Central Florida Fairgrounds
407-823-4240

407-823-1500

IDE Dix Premieure
Jan. 21 to Jan. 23, various times,
512
Orlando Eye Centre
500 W. Livingston St.
407-373-2217

RC Hobby Swap Meet
Jan. 22, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., free
Central Florida Fairgrounds
407-823-4240

Tastebuds ’05
Jan. 22, 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., $22 to $25
The Mercado
8445 International Dr.
407-823-6188

Nikki Giovanni (poetry)
Jan. 24, 8 p.m. to 10 p.m., free
The Plaza Theatre
425 N. Bumby Ave.
407-647-3307

Jan. 25, 5:30 p.m. and 8:30 p.m., $37.50 to $49.50
Stage 1
407-823-6471

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FROM 13

SHOWS

Mofro, The Legendary J.C.'s (R&B)
Jan. 20 and 21, 9 p.m., $11 to $15
The Social
541 E. Hugill St.
407-246-1419

Whole Wheat Bread, Knop, Downtown Singapore (punk)
Jan. 20, 9 p.m., $5
Will's Pub
1850 N Mills Ave.
407-898-5070

Megaphone (rock)
Jan. 20, 11 p.m., $2
Hard Rock Cafe
CityWalk at Universal Orlando
407-373-5483

International Orange, Isenhenius, Plain Jane Automobile, Leah Colmer, Matthew Jon (rock)
Jan. 20, 9 p.m., $5
Back Booth
37 W. Pine St.
407-999-2570

Evil Ballerina (indie)
Jan. 21, 10 p.m., free
Austin Coffee and Film
920 W. Fairbanks Ave.
407-913-3564

Mas Pan (rock)
Jan. 21, 8 p.m., $5
Nuttz Coffee and Tea
12014 College Way
407-802-4000

The Burnin' Smyrns (rock)
Jan. 21, 10 p.m., $5
Wall Street Plaza
Wall and Court Streets
407-849-9904

Snafu, Suckerpunch, Furtimizer (rock)
Jan. 21, 10 p.m., free
Holly and Doby's
501 E. SR 436
407-834-0806

Ces, Aloha, Weather (indie)
Jan. 21, 9 p.m., $5
Will's Pub
1850 N Mills Ave.
407-898-5070

John Bell & Friends, Kevin Kinney, Michael Nichol (rock)
Jan. 22, 7:30 p.m., $35
House of Blues
Downtown Disney West Side
407-334-2500

Lucid Fly, Last Winter, Canvas, Hand to Hand (hard rock)
Jan. 22, 9 p.m., $3 to $5
The Social, 54 N. Orange Ave.
407-735-8400

Truly Sunday, Distance, Irrational (rock)
Jan. 22, 4 p.m., $5
Will's Pub
1850 N Mills Ave.
407-834-0806

Mobius, Mesmer Machine (rock)
Jan. 22, 10 p.m., $5
Copper Rocket Pub, 106 Lake Ave.
407-645-0069

I-Sift, Furious, Grumpy (metal)
Jan. 22, 10 p.m., free
Holly and Doby's
501 E. SR 436
407-834-0806

An Albatross, Cinema Eye, Aqui (indie)
Jan. 22, 6 p.m., $8
Screamos
340 State St.
407-244-0299

I-4 Band (rock)
Jan. 22, 9 p.m., $5
Wall Street Plaza
Wall and Court Streets
407-849-9904

The Band of the Name, HB, Dodger, Gunslinger (indie)
Jan. 22, 7 p.m., $5
Back Booth
37 W. Pine St.
407-999-2570

Gargamefl, Milka, Saint Diablo (hard rock)
Jan. 22, 10 p.m., $5
AKA Lounge
68 E. Pine St.
407-839-3707

Jad Fair, Kevin Blechdom (indie)
Jan. 22, 9 p.m., $5

Please see calendar on 15

POPCORN FLICKS: HIGH NOON
High Noon, a film that some have called the “greatest western ever made,” will be screening tonight as part of the Popcorn Flicks program in Central Park. Winter Park. High Noon stars Gary Cooper as the soon-to-retire sheriff of a western town. On the day of his marriage to Grace Kelly, an enemy has threatened to return, and Cooper, being the stoic face of good that he is, is compelled to stay and repel the enemy even if it’s against the wishes of his new, beautiful young wife. One of the first films to be played out in real time, fans of the show 24 might like to see where the real-time format originated. The film also happens to be former president Bill Clinton’s personal favorite film. Come for the “best western ever made,” and stay for the popcorn and allegorical communist undertones.

21+ ID Required
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**HAPPENINGS**

**CALENDAR**

**FROM**

The Peacock Room
1321 N. Mills Ave.
407-228-0048

Cycoeb, The Flashbulb, Mr. Antonym (electronic)
Jan. 23, 9 p.m., $8 to $10
Screammers
300 State Lane
407-264-0299

Hope and Suicide, Reason to Ignore, A Metric System (hard rock)
Jan. 23, 9 p.m., $5 to $7
Will's Pub
1850 N. Mills Ave.
407-898-5070

Camper Van Beethoven, The Hackensaw Boys (rock)
Jan. 23, 7 p.m., $15
The Social
541 N. Orange Ave.
407-246-3419

Eighteen Visions, Erney, Remembering Never, Misery Signal (hardcore)
Jan. 24, 7 p.m., $17
The Social
541 N. Orange Ave.
407-246-3419

Tall (rock)
Jan. 25, 8 p.m., free
Loaded Hog
11 N. Orange Ave.
407-699-1918

**SPOTLIGHT**

Joe Cocker, Euge Grove (rock)
Jan. 25, 7 p.m., $39.50 to $49.50
Hard Rock Live
CityWalk at Universal Orlando
407-351-5483

Loss for Words, Playground Heroes, Mids in Reverse, Persona (rock)
Jan. 26, 9 p.m., $5 to $7
Will's Pub
1850 N. Mills Ave.
407-898-5070

Joe Cocker

Joe Cocker, Euge Grove (rock)
Jan. 25, 7 p.m., $39.50 to $49.50
Hard Rock Live
CityWalk at Universal Orlando
407-351-5483

**ART**

Artists Painting Live
Jan. 20, 6 p.m. to 9 p.m., free
downtown Orlando
Orange Avenue and Pine Street
407-673-0003

Artist Reception
Jan. 20, 6 p.m. to 9 p.m., free
The Mark
500 E. Pine St.
407-872-0228

Jungles (opening reception)
Jan. 20, 6 p.m. to 9 p.m., free
Southwest Museum of Photography
Daytona Beach Community College
1200 N. International Speedway Blvd.
386-254-3000

U.S. Highway 1 Again, For the First Time (opening reception)
Jan. 20, 8 p.m. to 8 p.m., free
Craven Memorial Art Museum
786 Granada Blvd.
386-679-1347

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Volunteer For Your Future
An evening at O-Rock studios

Indie staffer makes a guest appearance on O-Rock's Jody and Scott variety show

Marilyn Manno
Staff Writer

A good sense of humor and a thick skin for sardonic remarks were the necessary artillery when the indie took a meeting with O-Rock's 105.9% Saturday-night radio duo Jody and Scott.

Once a week, between the hours of 8 p.m. and midnight, Scott Mangan and Jody Vining are two halves of the Jody and Scott Show, a program dedicated to their witty banter, wild antics and reporting of just about everything that is happening in their lives on the air. An interview with the indie was no exception.

"We are joined right now by a reporter from the UCF paper," boomed Vining into the microphone with a subtle smirk as he glanced at Mangan from across the sound boards.

"Alright, we have media here, are we gonna do a press conference now?" remarked Mangan.

"Yeah, let's have a press conference," said Vining with a mischievous smile. "Shoot us a question. Let's get to know Jody and Scott."

It all began about four years ago when the two Orlando natives first started working as promotions assistants for O-Rock.

Over the years and several promotions later, the titles have changed with Mangan, 25, now coming to the station everyday as promotions coordinator, and Vining, 24, getting up early every morning to produce the Howard Stern show.

"Over the time we had gotten to know each other we sort of developed this rapport where we were constantly talking s**t to each other nonstop," said Vining. He switched off the microphones and a Jimmy Eat World song began to play faintly in the background.

"We would do this when we were hanging around the program director, and one day he was like 'I like listening to you guys talk' because we were constantly berating each other," said Mangan, leaning back in his chair.

So, after much begging the pair convinced O-Rock's program director to give them a few hours once a week as they had promised to their listeners.

"We try to make it as non-radio as possible," said Vining as he stood up to stretch. "The whole point is to create something interesting to listen to when you're on your way out Saturday night."

With that in mind, Mangan and Vining make it a point to get up with an idea for the show a few hours before they go on the air. Shows like the one where they decided to send a man to downtown Orlando drunk and dressed as a Christmas tree to beg for money.

"Most of the show is kind of by the seat of our pants," said Vining, putting his headphones back on as the song wound down. "It's bad if it's forced."

The mood of the show that night was relaxed, and it was clear that both Vining and Mangan are quite comfortable with the microphone. Still, the guys admitted to being a little nervous that first night on the air.

"The first show was horrible," Vining said. "Yeah, our first bit was, 'what day is it?'" said Mangan, laughing and shaking his head. "It was so bad."

"That was Scott's genius idea," said Vining sarcastically. "We were answering the phones, 'O-Rock, what day is it?' and we were hoping for some drunken moron to get it wrong."

"But everyone got it right, imagine that," laughed Mangan. "We ended up having somebody call in and pretend to get the day wrong."

When asked how much of the show was real and how much of it was made up, Vining said, "That show was so stupid because we try to avoid doing fake radio," he said seriously. "If we do anything fake it's so over the top."

Mangan agreed, "We once did an indoor fireworks display where we accidentally set the studio on fire," he said. "Was that fake? You be the judge."

"Yeah, did we set the studio on fire and still keep our jobs," said Vining jokingly. "You decide."

A year after that first show the pair were sitting patiently with the indie and awaiting the arrival of their next special guest. A man they had promised $20 to if he would allow Mangan to punch him in the face.

"I just have a craving to punch someone in the face with no consequences," Mangan had explained to his listeners.

After making a plea on the air to anyone interested, they chose one from a few people that were willing to take a punch.

"I get to punch somebody in the face tonight," said Mangan eagerly into the microphone. "That is exciting radio!"

"I can't believe we're really doing this," said Vining as he shook his head and laughed. "Hey indie reporter, when you're writing this article, you think you can leave this part out?"
MUSIC

CD REVIEWS

BILLY JOEL
Piano Man: The Very Best of Billy Joel (Japanese import)
Genre: pop
Label: Sony International
Release date: Jan. 18

Aside from being a religion to the 75% of the Florida population that bails from New York, more specifically Long Island, Billy Joel is truly a legend in his own right. He'd have to be to change $75 as his average ticket price. Granted, the cost of admission must be worth it to see the Piano Man himself in action, but the cost of several Billy Joel compilations and Best Of collections might not be. One way for Joel fans to save money is to avoid buying this compilation, which as of now is only available as a Japanese or British import.

A few years ago, The Essential Billy Joel was released, a two-disc collection of all of the man's biggest hits. Spanning from the early "You're My Home" to 1989's "We Didn't Start the Fire" to two instrumental tracks from his 1999 Fantasies and Delusions release, this collection reaches further and goes deeper into the hit catalogue of one of America's finest songwriters.

However, there were a few things missing from that collection, most notably "Scenes from an Italian Restaurant." Therefore, a fan might hope that this Piano Man compilation might pick up some of the pieces.

Unfortunately, this is not the case. This collection CD begins with some of Joel's more radio-friendly tracks, starting off with the brass-backed "Tell Her About It." While some requisite tunes are included, such as "New York State of Mind," "Goodnight Saigon" and "Anthony's Song (Movin' Out)," the disc is seriously lacking some of Joel's finer, less popular works. Where is our "Miami 2017?" Not even a "You May Be Right" or a "Captain Jack?" "Just the Way You Are" was left off? For shame. The absence of "Allentown" and more inexcusably, "Lullabye (Goodnight My Angel)," will leave Joel fans shaking their heads.

Furthermore, these tracks are not organized in any logical manner. Unlike The Essential, which covers 36 songs chronologically by release, this compilation gets it all mixed up. The second track is 1983's "Uptown Girl"; the third-to-last track is 1994's "All About Soul," followed awkwardly by "Honesty" from the 1978's 52nd Street.

If you are a die-hard fan or you're from Long Island and wish to contribute to his legal fund after all that car trouble, purchasing this album would be a nice show of support. Each one of these songs is outstanding in its own right, and they continue to stand the test of time. But this collection doesn't offer enough of them for the money. If you want to see many of these songs presented in a new light, go see Movin' Out, the Tony Award-winning musical based on Joel's songs - which happens to be playing in Ft. Meyers.

—EMILY JANEA SCOTT

TREMBLING BLUE STARS
The Seven Autumn Flowers
Genre: indie-pop
Label: Bar/None
Release date: Jan. 11

The changes Trembling Blue Stars have made in their nearly decade-long existence are subtle, if even noticeable at all. From frontman Robert Wratten doesn't have much range — often relying on his trademark low-key vocal fade-outs — there is an undeniable sameness permeating each album.

Yet the differences between the band's most recent solo debut Her Handwriting and its 2001 full-length, the overproduced Alive to Every Smile, are severe. The Seven Autumn Flowers serves as a synthesis of TBS's career so far; it represents a return to the sparse 1990s sound while not ignoring the progression (or degression?) of Alive to Every Smile, with enough ghostly melodies to situate fans of that album and enough light whimsy to please fans of the old stuff.

Still, the record doesn't rewrite the past; the greatest asset The Seven Autumn Flowers provides is a reliance much less on the percussion and synthesizers Wratten has previously embraced, focusing more on organic instrumentation. Choir-style backing harmonies act as instruments in themselves, replacing the slick ba-ba-ba's of Alive.

Lyrically, Wratten's picturesque ballads are rather unexceptional (Take Morrissey and replace the sardonic wit with mundanity, but keep the hyperbole on high). But they're buoyed by such earnest delivery and heartbreaking sincerity that their shortcomings are easy to ignore. Besides, while TBS has always been Wratten's baby, it's Anne-Marie Davies' vocal contributions that stand out the most, from the upbeat, danceable opener "Helen Reddy" to "Further to Fall," a sentimental valentine with gorgeous orchestral flourishes.

Meanwhile, "One Prayer Answered" may be the most beautiful song Wratten has ever arranged. Wratten's propensity to haunt listeners with otherworldly echo effects is most prominent on "Sorrow Has a Way." With its progressive structure and Wratten's ethereal call-and-answer with himself, it actually recalls the gloomier moments of Tears for Fears, then becomes a beautiful indie-pop song — an extended jolt from depression to euphoria and back again.

But the question is, who's going to notice this record? This kind of heart-on-sleeve, lovely melancholia is no longer in style amongst the fashionably cool electro-clash surge of today's indie scene. Most of the groups from Wratten's UK Sarah Records collective have either disbanded or are now recording under the radar, with little-to-no distribution in the States.

But with the gradual reissuing of the out-of-print discography of Wratten's old band The Field Mice starting this month, perhaps the legacy of Sarah Records will be preserved, and TBS will remain as relevant as they should be.

—JOHN THOMASON

THE DETROIT COBRAS
Baby
Genre: indie rock
Label: Rough Trade
Release date: Jan. 18

There's a crucial difference that separates The Detroit Cobras from the legion of garage-rock revivalists. While most of today's NME chart-toppers sound like they're channeling 1995 through the slick production and commercialization of 2005, the Detroit Cobras sound like a band that just recently discovered that era and unearthed for our listening pleasure.

Equal parts British Invasion and the proto-punk rawness of Iggy Pop, there's an authentic swagger and irresistable pop sensibility that dominates Baby. Occasional slippages — like the over-the-top sexual innuendoes in the silly "Hot Dog (Watch Me Eat)" — are rare, surrounded by great singalongs like "Everybody's Going Wild" and "Cha Cha Twist," and listen to "Baby Let Me Hold Your Hand" if you ever wondered what it would sound like if Neko Case sang for The Beatles.

—JOHN THOMASON

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Hulse Hein - Gotte L3
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Hive L3 - Rabbits with Glasses

ECOLOGY OF HOLLAND - "Mind Over Matter"
For the love of the game (and $)

Two contests push modders’ skills to the limit for hard cash

IVAN VELEZ
Staff Writer

Video games were born from the daydreams of bored programmers. Some of the first pieces of software hackers experimented on were old Atari video game cartridges. Modifying games has always been around, but the last few years have seen this former hobby turn into a marketable venture.

Half-Life 2 Deathmatch Map Competition
http://steampowered.com/tournament-map_contest

When released last November, Half-Life 2 sold like Beanie Babies. The game included one of the most immersive singleplayer experiences ever. Developer Valve also smartly included Counter-Strike Source, a modern remake of the most popular multiplayer shooter ever. But a true multiplayer game within the context of the sci-fi Half-Life universe was not released until December.

And it came with a paltry two levels (compared to Counter-Strike: Source’s 10 levels).

Rather than tapping their own already-taxed resources for more levels, the people at Valve did one of the things they do best: They asked their fans to produce content for them. They also figured money would be a nice incentive for the dozens of hours of work that go into making a game level. They began a contest Dec. 1, offering prizes of $5,000 for first place and $3,000 for second and third places.

This competition just closed the doors on applications Saturday. Winners will be publicly announced Feb. 28, and their maps will be officially released shortly thereafter.

$1,000,000 NVIDIA Make Something Unreal Contest
http://www.makesomethingunreal.com/

Having a lot of zeroes in your contest’s name is a good way to turn some heads.

Announced June 2003, the contest was Epic Games’ clever way of roping in hordes of game-developer wannabes into producing everything from relatively simple maps and models to full-blown total modifications for their latest games in the Unreal Tournament series.

Because of the enormous amount of work required compared to the Half-Life 2 contest, the Unreal Tournament contest broke down into various phases starting from July 2003 and wrapping up in November of 2004. The long elimination process ensured that all surviving entrants would continue to develop their mods for well over a year, allowing Epic to choose from polished games that rivaled their own professional work.

Last September, Epic re-released Unreal Tournament 2004 in a special “Editor’s Choice Edition,” which included 11 modifications from the contest. Included is the gritty, realistic infantry combat of Red Orchestra, the more fantasy-themed airships and pirate raids of Air Buccaneers and many other various mods. While all of these mods may not end up winners, being professionally published and included in a package that’s guaranteed to sell are goals even real games struggle to accomplish.

Aside from publicity and getting published, mod teams duked it out for cash prizes totaling $900,000, a bounty of computer hardware and a commercial game engine license so that the winning mod team can actually attempt to make a full-blown game and legally sell it.

All that’s left now is the final announcement of the winners.

COURTESY HTTP://WWW.UNREALSEXIPE.COM/PU/ADVENTURES/TALES/SHADOW/
**A club worthy of Paris**

But is it worth your hard-earned dollars?

**SHARON PARE**

Staff Writer

Just as a reminder for the millionth time, it does not cost $200 to get into Club Paris; it was only for the Grand Opening New Year's Eve Bash.

And should you be harboring any fears about it being too exclusive, put those doubts aside. While the club may be high class, this isn’t Miami. As long as you’re nicely dressed, you’re in. The bouncers do not pick-and-choose, selecting only the clientele they want. But this seeming lack of being selective begs the question: Just how upscale is it?

Club Paris is 18-and-up for ladies, while it is 21-and-up for men, pretty much standard admittance for a club.

The club fills the space of the old Orchid Room at Church Street Station, and though the architecture remains the same, the design is drastically different. Pink and purple couches, mirrors, bars, and purple and pink lights to camouflage the old Church Street feel.

Club Paris has a great deal to offer looks-wise.

When initially entering the club, you instantly notice the difference that elevates this dance club above the rest. Instead of bouncers and hostesses collecting the cover charge with dinky little cash registers in the front of the club, you instead are shocked to see an actual admission area. Behind the reception desk, the cash register machines are hidden, where you will also notice the Club Paris paraphernalia and merchandise, such as shirts, hung on the back wall. From there, the whole club is barely visible.

Dual staircases line each side of the wall, leading into VIP areas. The left staircase leads to those VIP parties who have bought bottles (wines and champagnes) for the evening. Mind you, the bottles start at $11 and end at $435 for a bottle of Cristal. Thankfully, upon purchasing these bottles, you have a selection of strawberries and crème, or even strawberries and chocolate.

The right staircase takes you to a VIP area all ladies 18 to 20 automatically have in their cover (for a total of $10), and men and women 21 and older can get for $5 more (for a total of $15).

The general VIP area isn’t anything out of the ordinary. The greatest thing about it is that you can watch everyone downstairs on the main dance floor get frustrated with the overcrowded amount of people, as you stand upstairs in your own bubble.

Toward the back of the upstairs VIP area there is a more exclusive VIP access area. Here, there is a private dance floor with tables and couches to fit your needs. Looking up, there’s a glass dome ceiling. Again, this area is only good if you are looking to get away from the crowd downstairs.

The front upstairs of the VIP area is the A-List VIP Celebrity area. This area is right beneath the 20-plus-foot projection screen. But unfortunately, there were no A-List celebrities on this particular evening. Essentially, the entire second floor is VIP access, including the DJ booth.

Friday and Saturday nights are Club Paris Party Nights. Expect more themed nights to show up later; Fashion Night starts up Wednesday and Latino Night shakes things up starting Feb. 1. DJ Skoop spins the best of Top 40, including dance and techno, a few token pop hits, your typical Lil’Jon and Usher beats, and even “Twist and Shout.”

Don’t be fooled by the illusions of the club, for there are mirrors everywhere. The mirrors essentially become the walls of the club, which gives the illusion that the club is bigger than it actually is. The best thing about these mirrors is that the state-of-the-art lighting system, predominantly of the colors pink and purple, reflects off of the mirrors and gives off more light than there actually is. When standing downstairs and trying to find your own personal space without exchanging sweat with everyone else, those hanging “lights” are actually speakers.

The martinis and cocktails are reasonably priced. Expect to spend about $6 per drink; not too out of step with other clubs in the area.

The names of some of these concoctions are themed with the club’s famous co-owner. There’s The Simple Life (her reality TV show with Nicole Richie), Tinkerbell (her Chihuahua), Orange Ave. (the local drink), Blue-Eyed Blonde (describing her), and the Paris-tini (which is basically vodka splashed with pink grapefruit juice).

All in all, the atmosphere is pure Paris, making the experience a worthwhile one. But there is some room for improvement. The club should be strictly 21 and up to keep a high-class image, and the VIP area shouldn’t be divided in two. If you’re a VIP you’re a VIP, regardless of whether you bought a bottle of wine or champagne for your party.

So take a trip to Paris and just enjoy the view.
Faithful readers of the indie will remember last month when we shone a dim spotlight on Splendid China, one of many Florida attractions that have gone defunct over the years. The failure of Splendid China was due to its lack of appealing attractions. More specifically, it had no rides.

However, some failed parks did have rides — bumper cars, Ferris wheels, even roller coasters. If a park has attractions that tourists might actually enjoy, what else does it need to be a success? In the case of Circus World, aka Boardwalk and Baseball, a 15-mile move to the east couldn’t have hurt.

The history of the failed parks began on Feb. 21, 1974, when the Circus World Showcase opened at the intersection of U.S. 27 and Inters-4, north of Haines City — and 15 miles west of Walt Disney and International Drive. The building, designed to look like a red and white striped circus tent, housed an IMAX theater, a circus museum and a model of the proposed Circus World theme park, which was to open at a later (unannounced) date.

The original owner of the park was Mattel — yes, the GI Joe and Barbie Mattel. Mattel had purchased Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus several years earlier. Barnum & Bailey at the time was considering building a circus-styled theme park, and when Mattel took over, the plans were put into motion.

Circus World failed to draw any crowds during its first years of operation. Mattel
tried to back out and sell the park but failed to find a buyer. Naturally, it did what any corporation would do with a falling attraction — it expanded it. Mattel poured $3 million into Circus World, adding rides in an attempt to increase the property's value.

Mattel would continue to expand Circus World throughout the 1970s, adding a shuttle-loop roller coaster dubbed “The Zooturner” and a wooden coaster called “The Roaring Tiger.” Despite these impressive additions, Circus World continued to swim in red ink. But why didn’t the improvements draw any crowds?

“Is tough enough to compete with the big [parks], but when you have to get people to drive 15 miles to where you are at it becomes even tougher,” said Bob Snow, former owner of Church Street Station.

Mattel gave up in 1984 and sold the park for $10 million dollars to land developer James Monaghan. Monaghan refurbished the languishing park and added a 110-foot ferris wheel and a new looping rollercoaster, but it still failed to make money.

Enter Harcourt, Brace and Janovich. The textbook publishing company had gone theme-park crazy in the 1980s, buying up four Sea Worlds and Cypress Gardens, among others. In 1986 they added Circus World to their family of parks — but it wouldn't be Circus World anymore.

HBJ decided to change the theme of the park to an early 20th century seaside amusement and baseball park. On a cool and windy April 4, 1987, Boardwalk and Baseball officially opened. Hall of Fame slugger Ted Williams was on hand to officially open the gates.

Though the park received praise from guests, some comments proved prophetic — one guest told the Orlando Sentinel that the park was better than Disney because “it wasn't crowded,” a bad sign in the hospitality industry. Others felt the change of theme was a poor decision.

“Boardwalk and Baseball, I didn't think was anything unique, but Circus World I actually liked and I went several times to visit it,” Abraham Pizam, Dean of the Rosen College of Hospitality Management, said.

It was also an expensive decision. On top of the $18 million HBJ paid for the park, an estimated $25 million was paid to fix and change it. In addition, HBJ built a full-size modern baseball stadium, as well as clubhouses and training fields. The Kansas City Royals were enticed away from their existing spring training grounds in Fort Meyers with the promise of huge tourist crowds.

However, HBJ found itself in the same dire straights as the previous owners. In 1987 HBJ faced a hostile takeover by British publisher Robert Maxwell. The takeover was averted, but the company was in debt for $2.9 billion. On Sept. 28, 1989, Anheuser-Busch bought HBJ’s theme park holdings for about $1.1 billion.

The call came over the Boardwalk and Baseball PA announcement at about 3 p.m. on Jan. 17, 1990 — the park would be closing a few hours early. and all guests were to proceed to the entrance for a full refund.

And that was the end. Without warning, Busch decided to axe the park, citing that it had never made any money. The gates closed, the Royals left and the rides were dismantled. The nearly 20-year-old establishment was finally dead.

“Tried to work with the owners but it was always a question of distance,” Pizam said. “When push comes to shove, that is the major, major factor — accessibility. It was not accessible to a major market. It was competing for time and money and it could not.”

Ironically, the location which doomed two consecutive theme parks is now some of the hottest property in all of Polk County. Currently under construction is Posner Park, a $500 million, 365-acre development complex that would house upscale homes, condos, boutiques and restaurants. Construction is in early stages, but the majority of the land has been stripped down to a sandy pit. The only building left from the old parks is the baseball stadium, barely visible from the interstate, shrouded behind a line of trees. It is scheduled to be demolished sometime in the next few months, a Posner Park employee said.

The change in desirability over the plot of land is due to the enormous growth of Polk County, which has seen more than a 24.5 percent increase since 1990, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Despite the increase, it remains unlikely that Boardwalk and Baseball would have survived through the 1990s.

The failure of these parks proves that just because you build it, does not mean they will come.
Villains battle for a floppy data Disc

Identity Disc a wasted opportunity

IDENTITY DISC COMIC

BY MARVEL

Genre: Comic Book/Action

Release date: Available now

MICHAEL LAWRENCE

Forget the Dooms and Lex Luthors of the comic-book world. Given the chance, second-rate muscle can be far more interesting. So the arrival of Robert Rodi and John Higgins' five-part miniseries Identity Disc - a boon for those enthralled with the less-infamous villains. It sports six of my all-time greats: The cantankerous Vulture, Deadpool (a guy who shoots off his mouth as much as his guns), the hulking Juggernaut, the always violent Sabretooth, the elusive Sandman and the marksman Bullseye. Not a slouch in the bunch.

Confrontations are bound to happen whenever supervillains get together. A villain's traitorous instincts will often give in and make him betray other villains or flee a scene when things get too rough. That's what makes them different from the heroes, and it's also what keeps them from winning in the end.

Well, there are no heroes to throw snidely supervillains at in this tale. No, what we get here is a heist story, invoking Bryan Singer's film The Usual Suspects much more so than either of his X-Men movies. The six villains are blackmailed into working together by Valeria Merrick, a woman working for a mysterious crime boss who wants the villains to break into the well-guarded A.I.M. (Advanced Idea Mechanics) offices and steal the fabled Identity Disc, a piece of software that contains the personal information of everyone in the country.

The plot goes through the typical twist and turns of any modern noir tale, but by the end it's hard to care anymore.

While Rodi deserves applause for not just resorting to a typical beat-'em-up story, his characterizations waffle to fit the roles the story requires. He'll often give the villains dull questions to ask for the sake of exposition. Each of these characters has had years to develop distinct voices, but Rodi ditches them frequently. Also, the history some of the characters have is forgotten. Sandman went against the Sinister Six and foiled their plans while Vulture was a member, yet neither makes a mention of it. It is cool to see guys like Deadpool and Bullseye exchanging dialogue while offing a dozen guys, which is exactly the type of thing this story needed more of.

Identity Disc won't make you dislike any of the six main characters. That's the beauty of comics: Even if one writer mucks up a character and his background, there's always the chance someone will go back and make it all better.

Resolutions for more fulfilling dating experiences

FROM 18

the earth.

I resolve to never call a man who is too busy to call me. This is my favorite resolution. I often fail to believe that just because a guy doesn't call, it means he's not that into you. Then I thought about it. If you are assuming someone, you call. If you want to see someone, you call. Hell, I get phone calls everyday from my best friend's pants pocket while he is riding home on his motorcycle. You just can't tell me you are too busy to call. Guys are just like girls. No matter how busy or terrible their days are, talking to you would make their day 10 times better. Just remember: Busy is another word for jackass.

Jackass is another word for the guy you're dating.

I resolve to let go of guys who are obviously trying to let go of me. If he disappeared, it is for a reason. That reason is you. A special attachment to that resolution: Let us strive to not be that girl who calls a hundred times, worrying he is in the hospital because that is the only logical reason for his absence. A highly doubtful scenario.

I resolve to not make excuses for a man who is obviously beneath me. Ladies, let's not be that girl. The one who allows drunken phone calls because "he's drunk." The one who believes that two weeks without a single word from a guy is okay because "he was busy." Reasoning with yourself that a busy week can consist of working one job five nights a week and playing video games in the off time. These men are not worth our time, nor our lame excuses that cause friends to roll their eyes.

It's gonna be a long year, but with these resolutions hopefully this year loser guys actually lose. Good luck in 2005 ladies.
Check your emotional baggage at the Hotel Rwanda

Don Cheadle and cast shine in a powerful true story that sheds light on recent African genocide

MATT HEDGECOCK
Staff Writer

Genocide. Ethnic cleansing. Death squads. Most people would probably associate these words with Nazi Germany and the inhumanity of the Holocaust— a time period which feels distant to many. But these same abominations happened in Rwanda a mere 10 years ago.

Hotel Rwanda chronicles the story of a well-to-do hotel manager who shelters hundreds of refugees while his country disintegrates into insanity that would ultimately claim more than 800,000 lives. Rwanda is powerful and educative film that owes the majority of its weight to inspired performances.

Paul Rusesabagina (Don Cheadle) is the manager of the Mille Collines, a swank Belgian hotel that caters to wealthy foreigners. Paul slyly wines and dines military brass and politicos, trading luxury for favors to raise his family’s status. He’s mildly selfish, primarily concerning himself with the well-being of himself, his wife Tatiana (Sophie Okendo) and their children.

However, the stability of Paul’s life is shattered when civil war breaks out between the Hutu and Tutsi (arbitrarily defined racial groups created by the Belgians during colonialism) factions. After the president is killed by Tutsi rebels, the Hutu Power Radio orders its militia to “cut down the tall trees” — the call to eliminate everyone of the Tutsi.

Paul, a Hutu, is initially only concerned with the safety of his family — Tatiana and her family are Tutsi. But when his Tutsi friends and neighbors turn to him for help, he faces the quandary of leaving them for certain death or risking his livelihood by sheltering them in the Mille Collines. He is initially reluctant, but as conditions deteriorate his conscience forces him to relent.

The situation becomes more tragic as it becomes apparent that the Western world will not send support to stop the killing. Colonel Oliver (Nick Nolte), a beleaguered U.N. officer, provides all the support he can — though his men are not allowed to use their guns. Paul ultimately must rely on his intellect and deal-making ability if he hopes to save his family and the refugees from certain slaughter.

Easily the most accomplished aspect of the movie is Cheadle’s refined, understated performance. Cheadle is widely recognized as an accomplished character actor, but Rwanda is his first major leading role. Paul is an observant, complex man who must shake off his detached behavior and become an active participant in conflicts he would rather avoid. It’s a nuanced and difficult role, but Cheadle fills it flawlessly.

Cheadle doesn’t end up carrying the film, though. Rwanda has an excellent supporting cast. If Cheadle as Paul is the film’s brains, Okendo as Tatiana is the heart. Nolte hands in his usual grunt-and-grumble delivery, but ultimately makes good. Desmond Dube adds soul as Paul’s loyal assistant, while Cara Seymour is extraordinary as an emotionally drained aid worker. The film also features Joaquin Phoenix and Jean Reno in extended cameos, but they add little more than familiar faces to the film. All in all, the casting director did a perfect job.

Rwanda succeeds emotionally, but it also succeeds politically as well. The message that the West is largely to blame for the genocide (Belgian colonialism, the French supplying the Hutu militia) but unwilling to do anything about it (at one point a State Department official debates the definition of “genocide”) is made crystal clear, but it is not harped upon to the point of annoyance. Most audience members will walk out feeling half-uplifted and half-ashamed, which is just how it should be.

The violence of the film feels a little too muted. Scenes of dead bodies or Hutu militia hacking at victims with machetes are usually seen far away or shrouded in fog. While the director faced the challenge of accurately portraying the brutality versus merely grossing the out the audience, Rwanda ends up feeling slightly too clean.

As a chronicle of historical events, Rwanda feels incomplete, but as an emotional story it pushes all the right buttons. Cheadle deserves some serious Oscar consideration for this performance; though don’t be surprised if he gets ignored. Hotel Rwanda isn’t a perfect movie, but it certainly is memorable and helps connect a human face to a recent conflict that has already been largely forgotten.
**FILM REVIEW**

The Woodsman: an honest, sobering look at pedophilia

Kevin Bacon is Oscar gold in this disquietly moving film

JOHN THOMASON

W

ile a film's replay value is usually a plus, it's not always indicative of genius. Take The Woodsman, for example. While no one should be able to watch The Woodsman and remain unchanged, it is a film that can never be watched again.

A chilling, unforgettable look into a man's tortured psyche, The Woodsman packs so many layers of depth and profundity it's hard to believe it clocks in at a scant 87 minutes. A picture of irrepressible grimness punctuated by moments of slow-burning discomfort, it's a daring picture that will certainly alienate a mass audience.

Indeed, The Woodsman is by no means traditionally entertaining, and it requires more than passive participation from the viewer. A film that humanizes a pedophile (Walter, played by Kevin Bacon) without the safety nets of biting comedy (as in Michael Cuesta's Happiness) or over-the-top angst (As in Todd Solondz's Happiness) or over-the-top angst (As in Michael Cuesta's L.L.E.), Nicole Kassell's debut film is difficult to watch, partly because it offers no easy (read: lazy) explanations for the protagonist's condition.

We see the world through Walter's eyes, after his release from a 12-year prison sentence for multiple child molestation charges, as he tries to rebuild his life. The film plays out like an internal battle between Walter's inner demons.

2 villains square off, no one cares

Also, Sky Captain and Metallica's monstrous doc

BRETT RYAN BONOWICZ

**COMING TO DVD — JAN. 25**

Alien Vs. Predator

Keeping the "versus" series alive by a thread, 20th Century Fox has smashed two fledgling franchises together for a movie in which whoever wins, we lose (as both humans and an audience). The DVD evidently features the theatrical version and an extended version with a new beginning. The DVD features commentary by director Paul W.S. Anderson, Lance Henriksen, Sanaa Lathan, Alec Gillis (alien effects), Tom Woodruff Jr. (alien effects) and visual effects supervisor John Bruno. Deleted scenes and a sure-to-be-lame making-of featurette wrap up the normal special features. To add to the mess, Fox has included the Dark Horse comic book cover gallery and some DVD-ROM features that include the first edition of the AVP comic book, an AVP comic book background study and an exclusive 16-page preview of the upcoming AVP graphic novel.

Sky Captain and the World of Tomorrow

One of the biggest releases of the past months will likely see an upsurge of release bonus features in DVD format this week. Indeed, Sky Captain and the World of Tomorrow will possibly go down in history as the film that pushed Sherry Lansing to stir up Paramount Pictures. It could also be remembered as one of the first films to use an all-digital studio to capture its magnificently fake-looking backdrops and Iron Giant-esque robot creatures. The DVD includes five featurettes with background on the film's groundbreaking special effects, the vision behind the film's animation and a look at the original short that catapulted Sky Captain into a major motion picture. The DVD also includes deleted scenes and a gag reel.

Metallica: Some Kind of Monster

One of the better and more revealing documentaries of last year, the blurz year of documentaries, Metallica: Some Kind of Monster follows a crucial two years in the life of the band Metallica. Amidst the band's turmoil, music is made and frequent visits to a very expensive shrink seem to be the only way to turn the band's turmoil into rock gold. The DVD includes 44 additional scenes, exclusive interviews with Metallica about the film, highlights from festivals and premieres, two audio commentaries by the band and the filmmakers, two trailers and a music video.
Cult film remake is an assault on good taste

Assault on Precinct 13 needs subtlety and a better cast; in other words, a good Carpenter

CHRISTY LEMIRE
Associated Press

The phrase “cult classic” has been used to describe the original Assault on Precinct 13, John Carpenter’s 1976 urban Western about cops and criminals banding together inside a police station against a multicultural siege of gang members.

This new Assault on Precinct 13 is a classic, too — a classic example of destroying a movie by remaking it bigger, louder and more obvious. It’s a phenomenon that has stretched across every genre in recent memory: horror (Dawn of the Dead), comedy (Shall We Dance?), sci-fi (The Stepford Wives) and adventure (Around the World in 80 Days).

Actually, calling this a remake isn’t entirely accurate, because it resembles the original in title and little else.

The premise is vaguely similar to that of Carpenter’s film, which itself was inspired by Howard Hawks’ 1959 movie Rio Bravo starring John Wayne, Dean Martin and Ricky Nelson: The good guys and bad guys must join forces inside a police station, on the night it’s about to close, to fight an onslaught from the outside.

The action has been moved from sunny, arid Los Angeles to Detroit in a blinding New Year’s Eve snowstorm, perhaps an attempt by French director Jean-Francois Richet to obscure the muddled action sequences. Rule, playing a jailed street hustler named Smiley?

Part of what gave the original its cult-classic status was its cast of unknowns; it was like discovering something small and unexpected. There’s nothing small or unexpected in this film, with its jump cuts and shaky hand-held camera-work to make you feel as if you’re running through the dark police precinct halls, too.

Richet also takes us inside the dirty cops’ heads to explain to us why they’re doing what they’re doing — especially their leader, played with singular sleaziness by Gabriel Byrne — but the threat was more daunting in Carpenter’s film when it was vague.

One scene was carried over from the original, though an extended attack in which seemingly every window is shot out, and the people trapped inside the precinct huddle for protection. The first time around, the tension had been building slowly to this point, and the barrage itself played out wordlessly and without music — just the steady ping of bullets piercing the building from every angle, which made you hold your breath.

This time around, it’s all deafening blasts, competing with an overbearing, overdramatic score.

Subtlety? That’s just old school, man.

In the background, Drea de Matteo cares for the wounded Dorian Harewood, and in the foreground Ethan Hawke tries his best not to be bored out of his skull in this bloated, obvious actioner.
Daggers fly while hearts soar

House of Flying Daggers a cornucopia of stylish battles and deceptive love

MICHAEL FERRARO
Staff Writer

Following up his near flawless film Hero, director Zhang Yimou creates one of the most visually stunning and unforgettable motion pictures of recent memory. Almost every scene in House of Flying Daggers is a kaleidoscope of rich color and beauty, and it practicallythwart the corrupt government. Mei (the stunning Zhang Ziyi), a new blind dancer at the local “entertainment” parlor, attracts the attention from Leo (Andy Lau), a police deputy, who thinks she has immediate ties with the organization. He sends in his best deputy Jin to investigate, and the two officers devise a plan to both fake her arrest and rescue her from capture, with the hopes that Jin will earn Mei’s trust and lead him to the Daggers. The plan works without complication, but as Jin begins the journey with her, he falls for her and ultimately questions what exactly he is fighting for.

This storyline has similar elements that most of these epic love films have, but what makes Daggers so unique is that once you think you know where it is going or how it will end, it heads in totally different direction, keeping you more intrigued than bored (unlike Cold Mountain).

It is also rare for any film in that genre to include such hypnotic martial arts combat. Just like Hero, the incredible fight choreography of House of Flying Daggers is perfectly composed into view and edited without overdoing it. Tony Scott-style. The movement of the characters is captured in such a way that it almost feels more like a ballet than an actual battle. Rarely before has combat been seen in the midst of such gorgeous settings, making the already fanatical fight scenes just that much more memorable.

With the exception of the brilliant direction and look of the film, comparing this film anymore to Zhang’s Hero would be wrongly unjust. They are more different than similar, and while Hero was a philosophic and political story told in Rashomon form, House of Flying Daggers is a linear love story reminiscent to Ang Lee’s Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon.

This film is sure to please any type of filmgoer, and in these dark days of post-Oscar frenzy, House of Flying Daggers is the perfect escape.

Portman’s Beautiful State

BRETT RYAN BONOWICZ
Staff Writer

The day it came out, I purchased the Garden State DVD. I had seen the film four times in theatres. Three times I loved the movie and the fourth...I just couldn’t see the film.

I had seen the film for the fourth time that one who seemed to love taking the joy from the movies. She had taken everything I enjoyed in the film and sucked it straight from my beating heart.

You see, I was going through a rough patch in my life at that moment; I had broken up with my girlfriend, purchased a car and for some odd reason had gone on anti-depressants. Now Zach Braff might say I was having a quarter-life crisis in the vein of his Garden State character, but being removed enough from the situation now I can say firmly that this was not the case. It was a mid-life crisis and one I have begun to recover from. I’m now in a happy relationship, the car is still running, and I threw those anti-depressants aside after six weeks.

Coming from a completely different perspective months later, I passed the time until midnight of Garden State’s DVD release date by watching the movie Beautiful Girls. It had Natalie Portman in it, so I thought it might be a good thing to watch before I went to buy Garden State. I watched the film in admitted horror.

Not only had it aged like stale urine, Portman’s character matched almost perfectly to her Garden State alter-ego. Let’s line up the facts. In both films her characters have male names: In Beautiful Girls it’s Marty; In Garden State, it’s Sam. Both films involve her ice skating in her younger years, and in both films she is an overly inquisitive youth that causes the main character to revalue his life.

This was fascinating. I figure the name discrepancy can be chalked up to the fact that in Beautiful Girls, when Timothy Hutton first started talking to her, she may have feared for her life (he does look like a pedophile) and therefore lied about her name...to a degree. She subconsciously chose another boy’s name and stuck with it for the duration of the relationship. She does not address anyone else in the film, and no one else addresses her as Marty. Upon watching Garden State again, one can notice the subtle maturities that Sam has gone through from the events of Beautiful Girls. She’s been hurt in her life, she’s been broken and she’s all the wiser for it. By the time the credits rolled, I knew I had become a different person and I had learned to love Garden State again. I had gained the same wisdom Sam had gained through her transition from Beautiful Girls to Garden State.

Now it might not be plausible that Zach Braff went about writing his film as an indirect sequel to a little-known film from the 90s, but who cares? It’s a fun little game to play. See how many movies you can do it with. But for now, see the four-hour cut. Beautiful State: Watch the arc of Portman’s character and know that the next time you go through a life-altering change that it’s already been done. Better, probably.
id — his still-base sexual desires toward 9- to 12-year-old girls — and his dwindling ego, steering his urges back into place. It would be too much for Kassell to demand the audience’s sympathy for the character. In fact, she pulls no punches about the criminal consequences of the character’s freedom (a scene in a deserted yard) with vague speculations and a somewhat normal relationship with another abused soul at the lumber mill. Rather, she asks for sympathy of his than for Kassell is “were” (the breakdown of Walter’s ego in the park with the girl comes after a filmic hour of harassment and testing by just about everyone). Eve’s character represents the country’s paranoia of and double-standard toward child molesters, the same paranoia that made everyone want to capture the Friedmans before adequate evidence and makes police sergeant Lucas (Mos Def) frequently show up at Walter’s apartment with vague speculations and no search warrant.

Because of these harsh surroundings, it’s only a matter of time before Walter explodes from the pressure. And when he does — beating the crap out of the shady molester across the street — we get the impression that he’s really beating up the man he once was and still is inside. Along with a somewhat normal relationship with another abused soul at the lumber yard (Kyra Sedgwick), it’s the closest Walter gets to redemption.

Walter’s attempts to return to relative normalcy are channeled visually through sex scenes with Sedgwick, which start off jarring and edited out of sequence — to show that Walter’s idea of sex is permanently skewed — and gradually evolve to encompass a lyrical beauty.

While Bacon’s bravura performance is Oscar-worthy, Kassell, as director and co-screenwriter, deserves the most credit for pulling off the almost insurmountable task of providing a balanced and realistic look at a pedophile without succumbing to melodrama, letting us sympathize for Walter’s situation while understanding the concern of the outside world.

Opens tomorrow at AMC Pleasure Island.
RAMBLINGS

THE GEEK LIFE

Did you feel that second pass?
As time and distance march on, everything starts to change

ELIZABETH FERNANDEZ
Staff Writer

I’ve been thinking quite a lot lately about distance and time. These factors have a way of changing things—of changing patterns, friendships and attitudes, as well as being the basis of, or at least mentioned in, the bulk of science fiction.

Sometimes, if I pay close attention, I can physically feel the seconds pass, as though the ticking of my plaid wrist-watch mirrors the beating of my heart and the death rattle of the countless millions of cells slowly dying in my body. I swear I’ve never been goth...

Actually, my as-of-late obsession with time and distance isn’t really linked to anything morbid or even slightly depressing. When I think about years passing, the Earth cycling around the sun, just eight light-minutes away in their constant dance, I feel awed. The fact that these moments are passing, escaping our grasp never to return, changing the very universe in ways we can’t even fathom, is such an incredible concept my head grows dizzy trying to hold it all in.

CRAZED INDIE ROBOT

DIANNA ZISMAN
Staff Writer

Dear Ashlee Simpson,

What’s up, girl? You’ve had a rough couple of weeks, so I only ask this to help you: What the hell were you thinking? As if you didn’t embarrass yourself enough with your acid reflux tastiness or the Cotton-Eyed Joe Dance of Doom on SNL, you had to go and get your sorry ass booted off stage at the Orange Bowl. And to make matters even worse, your excuse for getting your sorry ass booted off stage at the Orange Bowl? “Maybe they were booing at me, maybe they were booing at the halftime show ‘cause the whole thing sucked...” I was facing [the Oklahoma Sooners], and I was rooting for USC, and they played a clip of it, so maybe it was that those people didn’t like me...

Oh, my. Stop deluding yourself, dear. I saw the clips. The crowd wasn’t booing your football affiliations. They were booing your relentless, non-stop assault on their eardrums. Whoever’s advising you on damage control and spin, fire them immediately. Then come up with a more believable story. Tell the world that you wanted your performance to bring Trojan and Sooner fans together, and it worked. For one glorious moment, an entire football stadium was united in their hatred of you. Well done, Ashlee. Well done indeed.

I’m embarrassed for you, Ashlee, and I’m speaking to you as a non-fan. Do you know how easy it is to make fun of you now? It’s like shooting fish in a barrel.

I’ve heard people referring to you as the “dumb one” when comparing you to your sister. How do you expect me to hold onto my enthusiasm for ridiculing you when half the globe is stealing my material. Shape up, Ash. I beg you.

Sincerely,
Concerned indie Robot

Dear Prince Harry,

What’s up, buddy? You’ve had a rough couple of weeks, so I only ask this to help you: What the hell were you thinking? As if you didn’t embarrass yourself enough with your “she’s not black or anything” comments in reference to your girlfriend, you had to go show up at a party dressed like a Nazi.

Surely you’re thinking, “What was I stupid enough to go to a party dressed like a Nazi? No way, I’ve got to be kidding me!” Natural reaction but...yes. You went to a party dressed like a Nazi. You’re probably scratching your head now and won’t be able to get a zing.

Sincerely,
Concerned indie Robot

Writing the wrongs of pop culture
The Internet’s most worthless sites

CHRISTOPHER SCHWARZ
Staff Writer

Here’s a lame technology buzzword from the 1990s: Information Age. We’re living in the Information Age! It has computers and the Internet and the entire world is one big happy family living in a global neighborhood, bound together by wires and our universal pool of knowledge. Thank you, EPCOT Center, for spouting forth every possible idealism about the potential of the Internet to save society from stupidity.

In the real world, we have people who actively reject this fantasy. Thanks to the availability of free Web hosting and "easy" page-building tools in the dot-com bubble, this still survives today, thanks to the Internet’s general love of anything random and odd.

HoldTheButton.com
http://www.holdthebutton.com/

Here’s a game where you’re presented with a button. The challenge is, predictably, to see how long you can hold the button down. How? Click on it with your mouse and don’t let go. The timer starts counting when you press. After either your finger goes numb or you realize the utter pointlessness and just stop caring, it shows how your time compares to that of others. As of now, the highest record is two days and one hour... and that’s only the record from within the past week. Cite this if you ever need proof that the Internet contains a lot of losers.

You’re The Man Now Dog
http://www.yourethemannow-dog.com/

Here’s an entire Web site with only one page. It features a tiled, background image of Sean Connery and large text that says, "YOU’RE THE MAN NOW DOG.COM." Most significantly, it has a looping sound clip of Connery’s character in Finding Forrester saying the quote. After other, copycat sites with different quotes from popular culture started to pop up, Max Goldberg created http://ytmnd.com/, an acronym of the original, to house pages done in the same style. Users can create an account and design their own "YOU’RE THE MAN NOW DOG" page with a background, text and an annoying repeated sound clip of their choosing. Statistics track which ones have been most viewed. Current favorites involve such popular topics as Counter-Strike, President Bush and Ashlee Simpson.

This Page Intentionally Left Blank
http://www.this-page-intentionally-left-blank.org

Here’s a page that has been intentionally left blank. It has only a small link to a site explaining its purpose and mission to preserve the old practice of "intentionally blank" print pages and transport it to the Internet. Why? It’s something about zen and relaxing. I don’t know, but it seems like a front for uselessness to me. If you choose to “take part,” they encourage you to create a blank page on your own site. What could be more awesome than that?

Technology shrinking time, distance

basically remember them. Could it be that looking back, my wild college years will seem just as short? Of course they will. For all of us, young-at-heart.

And as we grow, we shall spread ourselves across the globe. I see it happening right now. Many of my closest friends are suddenly miles and miles away, as far away as California and Europe. Only by using the wonderful digital communication devices Earth’s greatest scientists created to keep us connected. Long ago, in the dark ages before the Internet and silicon chips and digital watches, we humans were forced to scribble our thoughts onto scraps of paper and send them out into the void in hopes they would be delivered to our patiently awaiting recipients. Now we type them in, press a button and through the magic of zeros and ones they appear in our inboxes in seconds. These days, sometimes the digital world is necessary to keep us close. There have been many friends I am certain I would have lost forever had it not been for the ease of instant communication via my favorite messenger service. It’s more like meeting someone at a party. It seems easy and random, while talking on the phone seems somehow intimate. For casual acquaintances and friends, it can seem forced to drag out a conversation when only a few words will suffice.

Thanks to advanced technologies like these, we can go online and instantly chat with people continents away in real time, or grab a tiny cellular device and pick up a digital signal from the air. Both time and distances have shrunk.

A hundred years ago, the world was a much larger place. Now we needn’t wait but a second to reach our peers, cousins, families and friends. Yet, as we seem more and more desperate to fill every second and erase the distances that separate us, are we perhaps forgetting about the long term? In our rush to fill every moment, to make things fast and quick and easy, I think we are forgetting the permanence of such things as a simple letter kept safe in a box. The digital world, as much as I do love it, has a real temporary feel. An old newspaper cut-out saved in a scrap book somewhere in a dusty closet will mean more in 50 years than a 120-gig hard drive full of old e-mails, and I would prefer an old bookstore copy of my favorite book than some server somewhere holding a thousand digital pages.

Scott Baio dressed as Michael Jackson?

dering if you were stoned. I know I am.

I’m guessing that there’s some kind of rational explanation, right? Was the theme of the costume party The Sound of Music and you decided to dress up as Rolfe? If so, I commend you on your attention to detail, though you must admit that it wasn’t that difficult to find the Swastika arm band, as Prince Philip probably keeps a few lying around.

What bothers me most isn’t that you dressed up like a Nazi when, as an Englishman, you’d have to know the pain your country went through on account of Hitler’s armies. Or that I knew better than to dress like that when I was 10, meaning that, at 20, costumed Sieg Heils shouldn’t have even been an option. No, what bothers me most is the celebrity trend you’re threatening to set. Many a star have contemplated this scheme as a way of boosting their own publicity. Why, I heard Scott Baio muttering that he should have come to the premier of Superbabies dressed as Michael Jackson, while Rush Limbaugh complained about not having the presence of mind to show up at ESPN headquarters in a Donavan McNabb jersey.

Next time you’re invited to a costume party, Harry, just dress up like an M&M and save us all the trouble, all right?

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