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Senate chief declines bid for top role
Sean Lavin decides not to throw his hat in ring

Mark Justice

To the surprise of Student Government Association insiders and close supporters, Speaker of the SGA Senate Sean Lavin announced Saturday that he will not seek the job of student body president.

In a statement to The Orlando Sentinel, Lavin, who was expected to run as a candidate for the United UCF party, said, "Despite the outpouring of support and encouragement from my friends and colleagues, I have decided I cannot abandon my responsibilities to the Senate that I have come to love."

The speaker's decision not to run has United UCF—one of the three major political parties at UCF—looking for another candidate to endorse for the top Senate position with the three-day window for throwing candidacies opening tomorrow.

"If Sean ran for speaker he would do an amazing job, however, he does have a responsibility to the United UCF student body and to the SGA Senate as speaker," Arts and Sciences Dean, Debra Wise, said. "Now not running, he shows his love and dedication to the Senate."

SGA official cleared of all wrongdoing
Senate votes against launching an inquiry

Kate Howell

Bryan Council, a Student Government Association official, faces no more charges of misconduct following an SGA Senate committee decision to throw out an affidavit that accused him of wrongdoing.

In a 3-5 vote, the Senate Legislative and Judicial Rules Committee voted Friday to dismiss an affidavit that accused Council of general malfeasance following an inquiry into an incident in which the meeting was never posted on the floor of the Senate.

Earlier that month the UJC Committee concluded that Council was not involved in the affair brought by Junior Sen. Kevin O'Grattan.

Much of the debate at Thursday's meeting focused on whether to address such an occurrence.

Upperclassmen get chance to live in luxury in new on-campus apartments

Courtney Sutton

Students who missed the Jan. 15 deadline for housing have a second chance to live on-campus—luxuriously.

A peak, seven-story high-rise apartment building next to the Arena, will be available this fall to House 17 students.

Open house meetings were held last week to give anyone interested in moving in on-campus a chance. Unlike the on-campus facilities, students are required to sign an initial six-month lease to live in the apartments, instead of being forced to move out during breaks.

Council meeting

COURTESY PICTURE

Students who missed the Jan. 15 deadline for housing have a second chance to live on-campus—luxuriously. A peak, seven-story high-rise apartment building, near the Arena, will be available this fall to House 17 students.

Open house meetings were held last week to give anyone interested in moving in an opportunity to see the building. Unlike the on-campus facilities, students are required to sign an initial six-month lease to live in the apartments, instead of being forced to move out during breaks.

In a vote, the Senate Legislative and Judicial Rules Committee ruled last Thursday that an affidavit filed against Council, who was expected to run for president, would not go to the floor of the Senate.

Senator Kevin O'Grattan told the committee that he would not run for speaker, he shows his love and dedication to the Senate.
Video-gaming academy joins two similar U.S. institutions

UCF beauty queens never grow old

History reveals school's penchant for pretty faces

SHARON BERNHEIM staff writer

It may be her hopeful onlookers or her self-composed demeanor, but Miss UCF student, for a woman, is a bit of a rarity, in this day and age. Mississippi, and in the parts of the country where women's sports are not commonly practiced, the university has been somewhat of a role model for women's sports. With that said, the university's athletic program is an excellent example of how women can succeed in both sports and academics.

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What more can we say?
Alabama sets stage to ban books for being too ‘gay’

Schools may drop tabo textbooks, plays from curriculum

GINA SCALON
Associated Press

State lawmakers in Alabama are proposing a bill to cut funding that would aid libraries and communities of books and plays with homosexual characters or themes.

The bill is one of the first introduced to this year’s Alabama Legislature and could be discussed when the session begins Tuesday.

“The fact that this is taking place in Alabama makes this threat somewhat realistic, but I would hope that something like this could never happen,” said Peter Gargan, 53, the vice president of the ACLU of Lébanon and Bisexual Student Union. “It makes me sick to my stomach.”

Alabama State Rep. Gerald Allen, who sponsored the state ban on gay marriage last year, has the backing of President George W. Bush on the issue. He has already paid at least five visits to the White House where the two have discussed the bill in detail.

The proposal would ban the use of state funds to purchase any books or other materials that promote homosexuality or present it as natural or normal.

During a press conference at the Alabama state capital, April 21, librarian and education specialist said, “We dig a big hole and dump them in and burn them.”

The bill would ban the sale of specific titles, including titles that make it easier for children to read a theater student one day that he can’t do that on a Hot 7th Day. Allen said:

If this bill becomes popular like November’s multistate ban on gay marriage – which allowed freedom of speech and freedom of the press to disseminate my work.”

“I can’t see why the gay community and more importantly, citizens of the United States...” said Allen. “This isn’t a question of artistic or cultural value. It’s an attack on a large group of people, and it’s discrimination.”

“If the bill passed, theater students like Hould would be restricted from performing certain materials. ‘You can’t just tell a theater student one day that he can’t do that on a Hot 7th Day.’

Whether this law is or is not, homosexuality exists. Plays don’t necessarily glamorize it; they just tell a theater student one day that he can’t do that on a Hot 7th Day. Allen said:

As a person involved in the theater community, the ACLU is opposed to censorship in general. We particularly oppose censorship in centers of learning such as libraries, public schools and universities.”

Others disagree with Allen’s intentions based on a personal standpoint. Whether theater major Gia Vernowitz, who teaches Queer art, television and in the executive director of the ACLU National Head Quarters, said: “The ACLU is opposed to censorship in general. We particularly oppose censorship in centers of learning such as libraries, public schools and universities.”

Some are worried that this could never happen, but I would hope that something like this could never happen,” said Peter Gargan, 53, the vice president of the ACLU of Lébanon and Bisexual Student Union.

The ban on gay marriage last year, has the backing of President George W. Bush.

State lawmakers in Alabama are proposing a bill to cut funding that would aid libraries and communities of books and plays with homosexual characters or themes.

This proposal may challenge the bill’s constitutionality. Barbara Alderman, a UCF librarian, said: “It would make access to information for many people. Think of the effort it would take to interpret and classify all the many, many books, media materials, journals, etc., that currently exist and are being created daily.”

Some are worried that this bill would limit classic works such as "The Color Purple" and "William Shakespeare on the 7th Day" will be seen as cor­rent.

“If books — any books — are banned from the curric­ulum and libraries, then it makes changing people’s per­ceptions on sexuality more difficult,” said UCF English Associate Professor Martha Marzouk, who teaches Queer and Lesbian Studies. “The best method for learning tolerance is through art, film and literature — it would make it even more difficult than it already is to discriminate against.”

Some students expressed disinterest at the proposal. “It’s absolutely ridiculous.”

UCF theater management major Kelly Hould said: “It violates basic rights of the gay community and, more importantly, citizens of the United States... This isn’t a question of artistic or cultural value. It’s an attack on a large group of people, and it’s discrimination.”

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Senator said his complaint should count more since he's in office.

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**Serious Issue:**

"If we really want to do the right thing, we should bring this into new business and vote it down." - Senator

**Senate Foots Bill for Food, Slashes Budget for Activists**

KATE NOVELL
Senior Staff Writer

"Fiscally conservative" was the Senate’s watchword Thursday as members cut a political action group's trendline budget and passed another bill allotting $1,000 for food at Senate meetings. It is highly unusual to cut a bills funding on the third reading. Nevertheless, this is what the Senate did at a vote of 37-25 funding for UCF's National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Legislation chapter to promote marijuana legalization in San Francisco. The bill was not debated. The reasoning behind the cuts was a small but increasing spending. Earlier in the meeting, motion was brought to rescind the $500 fund that was already in the Senate's coffers. It was decided that the $500 fund was to be used to promote a more positive environment in the Senate chambers.

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**United UCF wants to endorse someone**

Faiz Al

"I'm serious with both Lavin and Ellis, and he was always ambitious about running." - Senator

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**Running for office?**

"Though we can officially declare their candidacy by the week provided by law, no candidates have yet to do so," said Cretic. De Vlieger, currently serving as president of the Student Government Association, and Ellis, who is the current SGA vice president, have stated that they will be running for office.

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**Afghanistan war protest**

"I think we have a moral obligation to do something. I am just sickened by the sight of American soldiers in that country." - Senator

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**UCF Student Body President**

"We have a moral obligation to do something. I am just sickened by the sight of American soldiers in that country." - Senator

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and they don't have to move out until graduation. Though the project targets upperclassmen, it will be the best deal for seniors. Both radio and television major Timmy Skiles was interested in living in the new apartments but does not want to pay for the summer after he graduates. “If I was younger, I would love to live here,” he said.

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Men end three-game losing streak with a 60-57 win over Belmont

ANDY VASQUEZ
Sports Writer

Sometimes wins are ugly. But they're still wins. Ugly wins do the job, especially when they help kill a three-game losing streak.

Anthony Williams scored 10 points and grabbed 10 rebounds while the Knights' defense blocked two shots in the final eight seconds at UCF held on for a 60-57 victory on Saturday night at the UCF Arena.

The win ended the Knight's losing streak and moved UCF into a four-way tie for sixth place in the A-Sun.

A lack of consistency has defined the season thus far for the Knights, and this game was no exception. UCF lost a 10-point-second-half lead and allowed Belmont to stay in the game with some sloppy play in the final minutes.

"Gary Johnson had two turnovers in the final 130ths of a second, one of them leading to a Belmont lay-up that left UCF with a 60-57 final with 1:04 to play."

After two Johnson free throws, Belmont's Jarrin Jackson was fouled and went to the line with 1:04 to play. Jackson was fouled again, and again Hare scored off the glass to bring the Bruins within six.
Johnson leads men back from bad half for UCF

UCF COACH KIRK

"The Knights shot much better in the second half, making half of their shots including 46 percent of their three-pointers. They dominated the Bullets on the glass, outrebounding them by a 33-26 margin."

UCF came out of the locker room in the second half, rebounding the lead and holding onto it in points by 15 minutes remaining. Belittle wouldn’t go away though, and crawled back into the game, taking advantage of the 17 UCF turnovers of the night. The Knights added much better in the second half, making half of their shots including 46 percent of their three-pointers. They dominated the Bullets on the glass, outrebounding them by a 33-26 margin.

UCF’s next game comes against Lipscomb tonight at the UCF Arena. UCF lost dramatically to the Allen Knights, who are near the top of the A-Sun standings. The UCF Knights are nearly able to recover from a 3-point deficit in the first three minutes but came up just short.

"We need each and every one of our people to execute every play and make sure we continue to be consistent with that," Striegler said.

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"We need each and every one of our people to execute every play and make sure we continue to be consistent with that," Striegler said.
Tennis off and to a slow start in 2005

Road tied to both the men's and women's programs

History has a tendency to repeat itself.

Four days after the men's tennis team lost to the Houston Cougars, the women's tennis team lost to the Lady Gators by the score of 6-1.

"This team has an extraordinary opportunity," Coach Fordham Allensaid prior to the women's tennis matchup with No. 3 Florida. "We look forward to upsetting teams' games."

Unfortunately for Allens' Knights, the Gators made their look like paperweights, sweeping all three doubles matches and all six singles matches.

With the day's only bright spot, UCF sophomore Rocky Gaiden's win on the No. 1 singles court against a previously unbeaten Florida player, the Gators won the doubles point and took the win 6-1.

UCF captains Kristina Lohmos and Pavana Fernandez both lost when the duo sat on Jennifer Markey No. 1 in the nation and Ashley Burt No. 2 in the nation.

Lohmos and Fernandez as a duo gave the Gators more than they expected when they played the nation's No. 3 doubles team of Francesco and Whit­ney Scibelli, however, the Knights' top doubles team lost, 6-4.

Men still winning first win

After breaking out that not for the Gators, the UCF men's tennis team traveled to Alabama over the weekend looking to rebound.

Now, after losing to both Alabama and UAB, UCF would just settle for its first win.

Ranked No. 77 in the nation, Alabama's Judges defeated the No. 78 Knights 4-0 in the Hard Creek Indoor facility.

"Things began badly for UCF when all three doubles points lost to the Crimson Tide," said the team's best singles player, junior Kevin King. "It was the same story with the second and third singles that UCF played against the Crimson Tide.

"It's a close match up, which is the No. 1 player in the nation, Luigi Gutierrez," King said.

Junior pioneer Gurukey took on No. 37 in the nation himself, but his single was not enough to defeat the Crimson Tide. After a short set, 6-2, came back to win the second set, 6-2, before finally losing 3-6 in the deciding set.

UCF's first point of the season came after the match between Evie Moliar, 7-6, 7-6.

The Knights then traveled to Hollin­ington looking to rebound against UAB. Increment weather forced the match inside and eventually shut down play.

UAB 2-0 swept UCF in the short­est back hand match, 4-3, handling the Knights their third consecutive loss to start the season.

UCF continued its poor double play as all three pairs lost individually to UAB on Saturday.

For the first matches, only Evie Molinar and Jennifer Whetsel lost. Molinar's win in the second set, 6-1, to Sebastian Farkas. Allan retired his match after losing in the first set 6-4 and was trailing 3-0 in the second round to UAB's Adam MacKel.

The other three matches were sus­pended.

When asked about his team's goals, Coach Allen said, "We hope to win the Atlantic Sun championship and improve our rankings into the top 40, and that hasn't changed!"

"It's right to complain about a win in this case, you don't get me upset," Allen said. "I'm espe­cially happy that the team took down the Beavers, who trialed in the conference before we defeated them in the National Championship of Fays."

The win was not like those Eski­mo boots that girls are wearing late­ly. You might think they're good but they're still ugly.

What's the solution to this Oilers二手房? A lot of the energy and momentum it created van­ished into thin air. The careless three-pointers started flying left and right and the inside lane that Anthro­ny Williams had marked (a lot of time) disappeared.

It's right to think about a win in this case, you don't get me upset."

State & Nation

Price Friday to read about the suits and the results of the suits.

DENTON - Caton, Lewis and Marchant, a law firm by former assistant district attorney who lectured allegations who failed a final exam, finally had its lowest in the University of Texas.

"That's one of the reasons we're lectured," said the panel's lead lawyer, by expert, not a former University official.

"The UCF College of Arts and Sciences was moved down in an exam," said the panel's lead lawyer, who added she was named by foot­ball and soccer players who entered an campus party in December.

"The decision was made in a very similar lawsuit," said the panel's lead lawyer.

"I don't think the University of Texas should not be a place for the state Freedom of Information Act," said the panel's lead lawyer.

"I think the University of Texas should not be a place for the state Freedom of Information Act," said the panel's lead lawyer.

"I think the University of Texas should not be a place for the state Freedom of Information Act," said the panel's lead lawyer.

Arkansas State vs. Southern University - From the waiting room at the palace of Sport, Southern's Major Harris and John Harris took on the university from Arkansas State University's Charleston.

Arkansas State, 6-1, easily defeated the No. 68 Knights (0-3) 6-1 at the Hank Crisp Indoor Facility Monday night.

The court filing said Snyder 's testimony should not be thrown out.

"We look forward to upsetting teams' games," Snyder said, "We look forward to upsetting teams' games."

The court filing said Snyder 's testimony should not be thrown out.

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The court filing said Snyder 's testimony should not be thrown out.
Central Florida’s hottest professional sports teams and UCF’s varsity and club teams are joining together at SGU’s second annual Sports Expo. Students, Athletes, and Sport’s Fanatics: this is your chance to get closer to the action. Stop by the Pegasus Ballroom this Wednesday for free giveaways and food and opportunities to become a part of UCF Athletics. For more information log onto www.sgu.ucf.edu.
I life reflects art and art reflects life, then Alabama politicians must be hoping to and should somehow ab­
gather with their fans to bask in hour, basking in hour, hour, hour.

State Rep. Gerald Allen has presented a bill to the 2005 Alabama State Legislature. The bill, if passed, would alter the Alabama Code in a way that could be used to carry

most part it

which could be used to carry

unsuspecting pushcarts and

this e v e n t.

reports on several Islamic extremist Web sites, supposedly

killed three

wounded, and a bus blast that

streets with voters'

Iraq's Interior Ministry.

What Allen is proposing is

ON OUR STANCE

Iraq elections surprise skeptics

The moment has come and

passed with surprising

Iraqis were held over the past
week-end and are now being

were hold over the past

week-end and are now being

reports leading up to the
election were last week con­

and broad­

Polling

nerative groups were involved for everything including the

the moment has come and

passed with surprising

Iraqis were held over the past
week-end and are now being

reports leading up to the
election were last week con­

and broad­

Polling

nerative groups were involved for everything including the

The bill is blatant and horri­

vile propaganda. Homosexu­

ness is real, Regardless of if

or is it. The benefit of the

are not alone, they should

either have to check out Harry or

High schoolers shouldn't suf­

for because of the discrimina­tion of closet-minded land­marks—

they should be able to read

The Color Purple for all its power­ful

people around the world

should be able to sit down and

the classic Oscar Wilde

The Future of Doctor Grey, if

Most of all, people need to

be able to make their own

certain of themselves, "The

people's duty, and inherent

right, to think for a reason.

true, and a country of unthink­

be a cancer.

It's the best way to

so that family tourism is the No.

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BATTLE BOREDOM
A BULLETIN FROM THE OFFICE OF STUDENT INVOLVEMENT

THIS WEEK:

MONDAY 31
SGA Presidential Election
Declaration of Candidacy:
January 31st - February 3rd
Office hours are 9am-5pm
Monday through Thursday in S.U. 214

SGA Sports Expo
11-3pm Pegasus Ballroom

CAB Movie: Donnie Darko
8pm in Cape Florida
Be there or go back in time and be there.

Dance Marathon
Registration
2-5pm Cape Florida 316

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Feb. 5th
- Dance Marathon Yard Sale
- AASU-MSC Black History Month Field Day
- UCF Baseball Opening Day event

Feb. 7th
- UCF Arthritis Foundation Carpool

Feb. 9th
- CAB Lego Event
- AASU-MSC Black History Month Valentine’s Day Gala

Feb. 10th
- Dance Marathon Date Auction
- Arnold Palmer W.A.C.H. Orientation session for new volunteers
- UCF Labor Day Love

Feb. 11th
- AASU-MSC Black History Month Funny Fridays

Feb. 12th
- CAB Spectacular Knights presents the Miss UCF Scholarship Competition

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For More Info

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THURSDAY 03

CAB Comedy & Variety Committee
Brings back your favorite hypnotist
Tom DeLuca,
8pm Pegasus Ballroom

AASU-MSC Black History Month Networking Luncheon
11am-1pm Cape Florida, SU 316

Volunteer UCF
Volunteer Expo
12noon Student Union Patio,
Make a difference! Over 30 community service agencies represented

FRIDAY 04

Dance Marathon
Registration
2-5pm Cape Florida 316
Happy fourth birthday, Broken Speech Poetry Slam!

A geek haven before MegaCon

Spacing out with the Astrological Society

Thanks a Million, Mr. Eastwood
FX show a strong rival for Megacon

Show features guests from films, TV, comics

Michael Lawrence
Staff Writer

Do you like comics? Have you ever given your mother the silent treatment after she dared call one of your action figures a doll? Then come on down to the 16th annual Florida EXtravaganza, also known as “The Coolest Show on Earth” (Take that, Barry Manilow!) running Friday through Sunday at the Orlando Expo Center on 500 W. Livingston St., across from the TD Waterhouse Centre. Anyone who’s no one is going to be there.

Perhaps the coolest guest for comic fans will be the legendary former escape artist, Jim Steranko, whose innovative work in the 1960s on such titles as Nick Fury, Agent of Shield is still looked at with awe these days. With many of our comic corps fading away, it might be good to thank one personally while he’s still here.

Also, check out Ethan Van Sciver, one of the best artists in the industry today (check out his penciling in Green Lantern Rebirth).

Guests from sci-fi movies include such convention regulars as Mark Goddard (Lost in Space), Sid Haig (Capt. Spalding from House of a 1,000 Corpses), Jeremy Bulloch (Boba Fett from the Star Wars series), Walter Koenig (Chekov from Star Trek) and Glen Shadix (the fat dude from Beetlejuice and the voice of the mayor in The Nightmare Before Christmas).

Two real treats appear in the form of fellow Oz castmates Ernie Hudson and J.K. Simmons. Hudson, who does many a B-movie, never ceases to be an entertaining presence in anything he does. Simmons is quickly becoming one of the best supporting actors in Hollywood and is the only redeemable part of the original Spider-Man flick.

On the horror front, you have actor/stuntman Kane Hodder (Jason Vorhees) and Texas Chainsaw Massacre 2 and Night of the Living Dead actor Bill Moseley. Even more random, check out Cindy Morgan, the actress most known for her role as Lucy Underalls in Caddyshack, and washed-up wrestling personalities Jimmy Hart, Johnny B. Badd and Glacier, who will be signing autographs for free at the “Notable and Notorious” booth.

Also, the event will feature more than 750 dealer tables. Tons of toys that you can normally find in stores for retail price will be sold for exorbitant amounts! All the phasing Visions and Unmasked Batmans you’ve been looking for are available for a small fortune. What a country!

The convention goes from 4 p.m. to 10 p.m. Friday and from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. Be there and be square. Go to http://www.fxshow.com for more information.
HAPPENINGS

COURTESY CARRIE MAE WEENS
A sample photograph from Carrie Mae Weens, appearing today at the Crealde School of Art.

CAMPUS

Talent show audition
Jan. 27, 7 p.m. to 4 p.m., free
Student Union
Key West Ballroom 218A
407-823-6471

Free Trade in the Americas forum
Jan. 27, 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., free
Student Union
Room 316
407-823-4195

Malcolm X screening
Jan. 27, 7:30 p.m. to 11 p.m., free
Welcome Center Auditorium
407-823-4195

Malcolm X screening
Jan. 27, 6 p.m. to 10 p.m., free
Welcome Center Auditorium
407-823-4195

EVENTS

Carrie Mae Weens
Jan. 27, 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., $25 to $40
Crealde School of Art
600 St. Andrews Blvd
407-647-3307

John Scott and Horace Boyar
Jan. 27, 7:30 p.m., free
Hungrybird Elementary School
230 S. College Ave.
407-647-3307

Kalamu Yo Salaam
Jan. 27, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m., $25 to $40
Suntrust Bank
251 N. Orlando Ave.
407-740-6300

Sylvia Waters
Jan. 27, 2:30 p.m. to 5 p.m., $25 to $40
Rollins College
Aline Russell Theatre
1000 Holt Ave.
407-647-3307

Woodie King, Jr. & Elizabeth Van Dyke
Jan. 27, 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., $25 to $40
Rollins College
Fred Stone Theatre
1000 Holt Ave.
407-647-3307

Florida Extravaganza
Jan. 28 to Jan. 30, various times, $8 to $35
Orlando Expo Centre
500 W. Livingston St.
407-849-2562

Hurston Humanities Panel
Jan. 28, 1 p.m., $30
Winter Park Civic Center
100 W. Morse Blvd.
407-647-3307

Zora Neale Hurston
Festival of the Arts and Humanities
Jan. 28 to Jan. 30, various times, $5 to $10
Downtown Eatonville
Kennedy Blvd.
407-647-3307

Superbowl of Motorsports
Jan. 29, 7:30 p.m., $12 to $15
Florida Citrus Bowl
1610 W Church St.
407-849-2020

Orlando CD and Record Show
Jan. 30, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., $3
Central Florida Fairgrounds
4603 W. Colonial Drive
352-955-5454

SHOWS

Pedro the Lion, Earlhamart
(Indie)
Jan. 27, 8 p.m., $13
The Social
541 N. Orange Ave.
407-246-2419

Kynda (rock)
Jan. 27, 9 p.m., $5
WVS Pub
1830 N Mills Ave.
407-808-5070

PLEASE SEE CALENDAR ON 4

Orlando’s Only Upscale Vegas Style Lounge

Thursday
XOXO Ladies Night “Hugs & Kisses”
No Cover & Free Drinks till midnight
for all the Ladies (Till Midnight)

Friday
”First Class Friday’s”
UCF “U Can’t Finish” [Giant Martini]
Martini Specials (Till Midnight)

Saturday
”Rain Saturday’s” feat. DJ Storm (Till Midnight)
Rain Vodka Drink Specials & VIP Bottle Specials

Everyday Drink Specials

$1.00 Domestic Drafts
$2.50 Michelob Lite, Michelob Lager, & Michelob Ultra
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**HAPPENINGS**

**CALENDAR**

**From 13**

Audiophile, Distance, Lucid Fly (rock)
Jan. 27, 8 p.m., $5-$7
330 State Ave
407-239-6939

Keller Glass (acoustic)
Jan. 27, 9 p.m., $2
Ballast & Beam
515 W. New England Ave.
407-535-1711

**Suckerpunch, Hedshok, InTension, The Goldminers, Ed Self, GettinDeep, Clayton Hall (rock) for "Emerganza Fest"
Jan. 27, 7:30 p.m., $10-$15
Kiss Booth
37 W. Pine St.
407-999-2370

Jan. 28, 7:30 p.m., $10-$15
Back Booth
37 W. Pine St.
407-999-2570

**Lucid Fly, Midst of Zool, Lost in Progress, Milka (hard rock)
Jan. 28, 10 p.m., $5
Island Oasis
2750 N. Forestry Road
407-657-0047

**A Scissors (electronic)
Jan. 28, 10 p.m., $4
The Phoenix Room
1321 N Mills Ave.
407-228-0048

**Bughead, Rory, Anna Becker, Michael Hanson (rock) for "Tsunami Relief Concert"
Jan. 28, 8 p.m., $10
The Social
54 N. Orange Ave.
407-246-6903

**Gargamel! Canvas (hard rock)
Jan. 28, 9 p.m., $5
W&I Pub
1850 N. Mills Ave.
407-909-5570

**Kieti Urban, Katrina Elam (pop)
Jan. 28, 7 p.m., $15
Harbor Cove
Cypress at Universal Orlando
407-351-5483

**Stone Soup Band, Kaiser Soze (rock)
Jan. 28, 8 p.m., $5
Wall Street Plaza

**Wall and Court Streets
407-819-3904
**Equinox, Daithic Intent, The Absence, Downfall (metal)
Jan. 28, 8 p.m., $6
The Haven
6700 Aloma Ave.
407-978-2732

**Keane, The Zutons, The Redwalls (rock)
Jan. 29, 7:30 p.m., $17.50-$19.50
House of Blues
Downtown Disney West Side
407-934-1821

**Long Beach Short Bus, Whole Wheat Bread (rock)
Jan. 29, 9 p.m., $5-$17
The Social
54 N. Orange Ave.
407-246-1419

**Tom Constanten, Toni Brown Band, Crazy Fingers, funkIt, Bluelegs, Jambingo All-Stars (rock)
Jan. 29, 2 p.m.-2 a.m., $7-$10

**PLEASE SEE CALENDAR ON 15**

**SPOTLIGHT**

**AIDS BENEFIT MUSICAL**

Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS (BC/EFA) is an organization that aims to give theater artists with HIV or AIDS the opportunity to continue working and leading fulfilling lives. BC/EFA strives to pay for the rent, medical bills, medications or anything else artists with AIDS may not be able to afford.

At 7:30 p.m. Sunday, Winter Park Playhouse will link with BC/EFA to do a benefit performance of *Jesus Christ, Superstar*, with all proceeds going to BC/EFA. This is a fantastic opportunity for BC/EFA to raise money and entertain us for a night. For more information or to reserve tickets, call their box office at 407-645-0145. Come out to support Winter Park's only professional theater and artists with AIDS.

**21+ ID Required**

**WEDNESDAYS**

**Speake All Night with Ramaz**

**THURSDAYS**

**Karaoke**

**SUNDAY**

**Blues Jam 4-8 p.m.**

**FRIDAY**

Boulderfield
10pm-closed
no cover

**SATURDAY**

Fin w/ Ramirez, Nasgian & Wynn Bros.
10pm-closed
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HAPPENINGS

CALENDAR

FROM 14

Kate O'Brien's Irish Pub
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Big Ten-4, Ask Me Later, Megaphone, The Band of the Name, Amy Steinberg, Funk U, Ben Bledsoe, Ruth King, Snafu, Skip, Atomic Tangerine, One Drop, The Curve, Band Marino (various) for "Tsunami Relief Concert"
Jan. 29, 3 p.m.-10 p.m., $10-Wall Street Plaza
Wall and Court Streets
407-849-9904

Invisible Ink, Early Next Year, Lynyrd, The Antics, Runnin' Blind, Linda Nunez Band, Bleeding Inc., Wilcor (rock) for "Emergenza Fest"
Jan. 30, 7:30 p.m., $10-$15-Milne's
407-999-2570

The Five Finger Discounts, Mesmer Machine, 3rd Limb, Fifth Avenue Onyx, Whysation, Verloren, Unstable, Danny Morris Band (rock) for "Emergenza Fest"
Jan. 30, 7:30 p.m., $10-$15-Back Booth, 37 W. Pine St.
407-990-2570

The Skepticals, The Corks, Insufficient Numbers, One Pump Chump, The Know How (indie)
Jan. 30, 7:30 p.m., $7-Will's Pub, 1850 N. Mills Ave.
407-898-5070

The Kick, The Hour Unknown, Country Slashers (rock)
Jan. 31, 8 p.m., $5-Will's Pub, 1850 N. Mills Ave.
407-898-5070

Walls of Jericho, Bury Your Dead, Full Blown Chaos, Premonitions of War (hard rock)
Jan. 31, 8 p.m., $10-The Social, 54 N. Orange Ave.
407-246-1419

Kings of Convenience (indie)
Feb. 1, 7 p.m., $15-The Social, 54 N. Orange Ave.
407-246-1419

The Toasters, Supervillains (ska)
Feb. 2, 8 p.m., $10-The Social, 54 N. Orange Ave.
407-246-1419

SPOTLIGHT

WINNIE-THE-POOH LIVE
Who could forget that "silly ole bear?" For the past 80 years, the unforgettable characters of A.A. Milne's Winnie-the-Pooh and his friends have lightened the hearts of the young and old in the pages of their books. Now, starting tomorrow and running through Feb. 20, the honey-coated cast will come to life on the stage in an adaptation by Kristin Sergei. So, if you're feeling fuzzy and a little nostalgic for the lovable teddy, join Pooh, Piglet, Kanga, Roo, Owl, Rabbit and Eeyore in their adventures through Ashdown forest at the Orlando Repertory Theatre, 1001 E. Princeton St., 407-896-7365. Admission is $12.50.

From 14

Evil Ballerina (indie)
Jan. 29, 8 p.m., $5-Island Clerk
2716 N. Syneith Road
407-657-6945

Trick Daddy (hip-hop)
Jan. 30, 10 p.m., TBA
The Club at Firestone, 578 N. Orange Ave.
407-872-0066

Kings of Convenience (indie)
Feb. 1, 7 p.m., $15-The Social, 54 N. Orange Ave.
407-246-1419

The Toasters, Supervillains (ska)
Feb. 2, 8 p.m., $10-The Social, 54 N. Orange Ave.
407-246-1419
Having staked a reputation in two of the most influential independent bands of the 1990s, Dinosaur Jr. and Sebadoh, and having put together successful home-recorded compilations, Lou Barlow comes forth with his third solo record. Titled Enoh and probably a wordplay on everyone’s favorite teenybopper music of the times, this album does work toward many of the goals that most “emo” music does — simple expression of emotions through uncomplicated songs. However, Barlow does this effectively and with plentiful melodies, quiet guitars and strong songwriting.

It seems as though Barlow has continued to calm down over the years. Dinosaur Jr. came out of the gates rocking from the start, and then Barlow’s days with Sebadoh included more songwriting and a great deal of mellowing out. Like his Sebadoh material, this latest record does not convey any desire he might have to be a rockstar. On Enoh, we have a series of solid songs of love, hurt, hope and redemption, some which inspire laughter while others are likely companions for a good cry.

Much like his home recordings, the overall feel to the record is surely lo-fi, but the sounds are clean and well-produced. One aspect that stands out here also is Barlow’s voice. With the familiarity of 1970s folk singer and the steadfastness of a Christian praise and worship songleader, Barlow infuses meaning into lyrics such as “If you love me / tell me with your eyes,” from “Leg­endary.” Pleasant singing may not always be a pertinent feature of lo-fi indie rock, but it certainly works on this album.

The songs on Enoh skim through but don’t really explore varying genres, but are highlighted with some string and piano accompaniment. The record has an overall folky feel, with some alt-country sensibilities to boot. Many of the lyrics are somewhat obvious rhymes and messages, such as “I knew from the beginning / that you would end up winning / I knew right from the start / you’d put an arrow in my heart.” There is also a sweet, surprising little ditty about the Virgin Mary (“Mary, Mary and a veil of stars / you changed the world and broke my heart”) that will likely end up in any listener’s head hours after hearing it.

Barlow is not striving for endless complexity or deep meaning here. In a sense, the album does serve the same purposes as much emo music claims to, except this record actually achieves its goal. These small, lovely, well-crafted songs are not muddied down by anything unnecessary. This album is both fairly upbeat overall and still tranquil and soothing. Barlow displays vestige of the statement “less is more” on this record, and the listener definitely gets more out of this carefully mastered work.

— Emily Jane Scott

To say that the new M83 record, Before the Dawn Heals Us, is a major disappointment is to understate the case. It’s a terrible record. If their previous record, Red Cities, Dead Seas & Lost Ghosts, hadn’t been so good and widely praised, it’s hard to imagine anyone would waste their breath on Before the Dawn Heals Us. Part of what made Red Cities such a fascinating and unique record was how it co-opted the sort of cheesy, faux-majestic synth sounds usually found in fantasy video games and low-budget anime but put them to use making genuinely majestic and emotional music. Before the Dawn Heals Us uses a similar sound palette as Red Cities, but now simply sounds cheesy.

The comparison that got used out the most in reviews of Red Cities was “My Bloody Valentine with synths,” but that influence is mostly gone, seemingly replaced with bad soundtrack music and even occasionally adult-contemporary pop. Only with better synth settings.

Before the Dawn Heals Us reaches its nadir with the memorably bad treacle of “Farewell/Goodbye.” It is no exaggeration to say that song wouldn’t sound out-of-place playing in the weepy part of a Disney movie or even on a new age album. Excessively breathy male and female vocals trade melodically formless lines over swirling synth-strings and an ooh-ing synth chorus, and when the drums and bass enter in the last third, the effect is the same sort of portentously dramatic gimmick that anyone who’s heard a Celine Dion ballad or two will find instantly recognizable.

“Car Crash Terror!” is the most egregious example of the album’s propensity for bloated cinematic moments. A woman reads what sounds like both sides of a dramatic dialogue in her most frightened, trembly voice, and the music is yet more swelling synth strings contrived to create suspense. The effect is neither chilling or suspenseful, merely overwrought and annoying.

The more bearable tracks are those that stick the closest to the formula that worked so well on Red Cities. “Don’t Save Us from the Flames,” for instance, uses the exact sort of propulsive synth arpeggios, throbbing bass and dramatic drums fills as “Run Into Flowers,” Red Cities’ standout track. “I Guess I’m Floating” is reminiscent of Red Cities’ more vertiginous, shoegazer-influenced moments, with its bursts of distortion and woozy melody. While passable, such tracks aren’t nearly enough to offset Before the Dawn Heals Us’ worst moments.

With M83 changing its sound so dramatically and with such apparent purpose, one wonders whether Before the Dawn Heals Us is a mistake or aberration. More likely, instead, is that Red Cities was a glorious one-off, an accidental byproduct of inexpertise, the likes of which M83 will never be able to recreate.

— Bryan Cox

The Duluth, Minn., band Low has been labeled “slowcore” for its haunting vocals and dirge-like tempos. The band’s new album, The Great Destroyer, should do little to shed their image. “When I Go Deaf” (sample lyric: “When I go deaf/ I won’t even mind”), “Broadway (So Many People),” and “Death Of A Salesman” will never be mistaken for teen pop. Not that that’s a bad thing. Low proves to be masters of space and texture to convey genuine emotional feeling, most notably on “Silver Rider” and the album’s first single, “Monkey.”

The album starts to drag a bit near the end but finishes strong with “Walk Into The Sea,” a fuzzy, semi-pop song that brings to mind the Pixies at their best. The Great Destroyer may not be instantly accessible, but repeated listening reveals a rewarding musical experience.

— Nicholas Markovich

If you’ve never listened to … And You Will Know Us by the Trail of Dead before, then the first two tracks on the CD might confuse you or shy you away. With a band like Trail of Dead though, that’s just them being them.

Worlds Apart starts off with an intro that is as random as it is weird. The CD doesn’t really start to pick up until the third track, but even then there are instances of random sound effects in between songs.

It seems to be that they didn’t do it to be odd; they do it because they can. Despite the randomness, the CD offers good indie rock that will be sure to please the fans of Death Cab for Cutie and Modest Mouse.

Even for people that aren’t fans of indie rock, this just might be the CD to get them into.

— Ricky Surillo
The *indy* is giving its two cents on the major award categories; this week, we cover Best New Artist and Short Video of the Year.

**MUSIC**

**TOP 25**

Park Ave CDs Jr.: Top 25 for the week of Jan. 16-22

1. The Game
   The Documentary

2. John Legend
   Get Lifted

3. T.I.
   Urban Legend

4. Killers
   Hot Fuss

5. Soundtrack
   The Life Aquatic

6. Aloha
   Here Comes Everyone

7. Jimmy Eat World
   Futures

8. Talib Kweli
   Beautiful Struggle

9. Radiohead
   · Hot Fuss

10. Soundtrack
    The Life Aquatic

11. Nas
    Street's Discipline

12. Gwen Stefani
    · Love, Angel, Music, Baby

13. Breaking Benjamin
    So Cold

    Passing Afternoon

15. Mae
    Destination: B-sides

16. Eminem
    Encore

17. Straight Fire
    Run

18. Arcade Fire
    Funeral

19. Soundtrack
    Garden State

20. Underneath
    They're Only Chasing Safety

21. Damien Rice
    0

22. The Postal Service
    Give Up

23. Shins
    Chutes Too Narrow

24. Frou Frou
    Details

25. Ocean Floor
    Pearls Are Graceful Hair ...

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**THE INDY**

**GRAMMY PREDICTIONS, ROUND 1**

With the Grammys coming in less than a month from now on Feb. 13, six of the categories and the nominees in them will get a closer look, two each week, plus predictions on who looks to be winning. This week it's Best New Artist and Short Video of the Year.

**Best New Artist**

Los Lonely Boys: A true crossover act if there ever was one, Los Lonely Boys has played on top 40, adult contemporary, country, latino and rock stations across the country.

Maroon 5: It's technically not their first album, but who's keeping track? With three songs that radio had to put a restraining order on, Maroon 5 has made songs about being dumped catchy and cool for the first time since Counting Crows.

Joss Stone: With the personality of an *American Idol* contestant, what this English tart lacks in charisma she makes up for in vocal prowess. With two lucrative albums, Joss Stone is becoming the queen of plastic soul.

Kanye West: This producer-turned-rapper is the toast of the town at this year's Grammys with his overly ambitious and overlong CD *The College Dropout*.

Gretchen Wilson: A protégé of Big and Rich and a member of their esteemed Music Mafia, Wilson showed that she could succeed with party anthems as well as slow ballads.

Prediction: With West's 10 nominations, it seems likely he'll sweep in other categories, and they'll award it to Joss Stone, who's being groomed for big things, though Maroon 5 will definitely put up a good fight.

**Short Video of the Year**

"Take Me Out," Franz Ferdinand: An unconventional video that captures an unconventional song. An excellent way for a band to make a first video. It gives a good, lasting first impression and leaves you wanting more.

"American Idiot," Green Day: An overrated video from an overrated album by an overrated band.

"Flawless," George Michael: It's different but not accessible enough for lasting appeal.

"Walkie Talkie Man," Stereogram: Directed by music video and film genius Michel Gondry, this video has some fun moments but is one of Gondry's weaker efforts. Still beats "Human Nature."

"Vertigo," U2: U2 is the only band that consistently releases albums and still has each one labeled as a comeback. This video rocked and picked up right where the band left off.

Prediction: U2. Grammy voters dig guys that can still rock in their 40s. It gives them hope. Plus, the dizziness of the video matched its namesake.

Joss Stone is a contender for Best New Artist.
Bust a cap into your GameBoy for a good time

Meanwhile, Resident Evil 4 keeps things freaky on the GameCube

IVAN VELEZ
Staff Writer

A after the pre-holiday deluge of major games, this past month has been pretty stagnant on the release front. Xbox, PS2 and PC gamers all received their blockbusters of Halo 2, Metal Gear Solid 3 and Half-Life 2 back in November. The sales of those titles carried over into December, but January hasn't seen any other high-profile games for those platforms.

Luckily, Nintendo has been less stingy this month. Two new games from two of the biggest franchises gave Nintendo gamers something to be happy about this month.

The Legend of Zelda: The Minish Cap
Game Boy Advance

Everyone's favorite pointy-eared, green-vested warrior has returned in yet another hand-held adventure. The Minish Cap returns the Zelda series back to gameplay more reminiscent of the Super Nintendo's A Link to the Past than recent 3-D entries in the series.

The 2-D graphics provide for a vibrant, cartoon backdrop for the colorful characters and monsters that Link encounters. The look was heavily influenced by the cel-shaded visuals in The Wind Waker.

The Minish cap allows players to become smaller than a dime. When players shrink, their environment becomes drastically different and more threatening. Being tiny, however, allows players to interact with the diminutive Minish race. It also allows them to explore inside places where they normally can't fit — they can even attack enemies from within!

Developer Flagship used its previous game The Four Swords as practice dabbling with the classic Zelda gameplay. Now they've produced a game that once again proves that 2-D games are alive and well on the Game Boy Advance.

Resident Evil 4
GameCube

Five years have passed since Resident Evil

3. Since then, a few spin-offs like Code Veronica and Resident Evil 0 have been released. Critics and fans alike praised these games, but Capcom did not deliver a true sequel to the granddaddy of survival-horror. Not until earlier this month.

Resident Evil 4 finally brings new life to the series. Entirely in-game cutscenes, ala Metal Gear Solid, seamlessly mesh the story and action together. Mind-bogglingly detailed graphics envelop players in a world that's terrifyingly alive and after them. These now true 3-D environments replace the archaic, pre-rendered backgrounds of the past games. An over-the-shoulder view and context-sensitive com-
A pool hall fit for dukes

Duke's is 'your living room on steroids'

Marilyn Manno
Staff Writer

I really just wanted to create the kind of place that I would want to hang out at," Jeff Meyers said. At the youthful age of 25, Meyers is the owner of Orlando's newest mutation of the pool bar, Duke's Billiards.

"It's nice because most of the places you would normally go to play pool don't have good food and are usually kind of beaten up and run-down," said Steve Wilson, 35, a loyal patron since Duke's grand opening on Sept. 13 of last year.

With everything gleaming and only a few short months old, it is a long way from being run-down. A traditional pool hall with a few extras added in, Duke's is a streamlined and upscale version of the original idea. Its high ceilings and large rooms are lined with lavish pool tables and plush leather couches—all of which are surrounded by an array of 40 television sets.

"It's kind of like your living room on steroids," Wilson remarked with a smile. "Wow, I've never heard it put like that, but I like it," said Meyers. "I'm not really a big bar person, so coming up with this place in my head I probably did, without even realizing it, create my living room."

True to the hype, the atmosphere, with the help of a team of lovely Duke's girls, does a good job of catering to a wide variety of needs.

Feel like watching the game? Then you can kick back on any of the eight leather sofas or recliners set in front of a 120 inch HDTV screen. The sofas are "the first thing to fill up on game night," according to Meyers. If a game isn't on that night, then the screen rolls up into the ceiling to reveal a perfect stage for live music. You might find the comfortable leather and table service to be a nice contrast from the usual standing rooms, plastic cups and self-service that is typical of any other local music venue.

Hungry? Any one of the girls will be by your table any minute to see if you'd like something to eat from a full menu. Or, if you'd rather drink your dinner, then you can visit any one of two full-liquor bars.

Of course you could always play pool. It is still a pool hall, right?

"I can definitely say, without a doubt, that we have the nicest pool tables in all of Orlando," boasts Meyers of the 15 brand-new Brunswick tables.

Still, at its Lee Road location, Meyers admits that even though Duke's isn't around the corner from the colleges or set in the middle of downtown, he hopes that it will become a popular destination for anyone in search of a beer and a game of pool.

"It would really warm my heart if this place could become that place that everybody knows about," he said. "I would love for it to be that kind of place for Orlando."

Like random violence? Then this game is for you

Mercenaries

By Lucas Arts

Genre: Action

Release date: Available now

You're a lone agent who gets to hijack anything you want, kill people and blow up your surroundings. Sound familiar? It should, it's been done before — and done well (Anyone hear of Grand Theft Auto?).

While nowadays it's hard to find a truly original video game concept, Mercenaries puts its own twist on the genre. There are three different merce to pick from, though it doesn't really matter which one is chosen. Each character can drive the same vehicles and shoot the same guns. The only difference is one can take more damage, one runs faster and one is harder for enemies to spot. Each merc can also speak an additional language, which doesn't affect your gaming experience.

The game is set in North Korea, where the government has been overthrown by General Song. Taking him down will make you an extremely wealthy mercenary. Song has a $100 million bounty on him, but to get to him, you have to get through his 51 "officers." All together they are known as the Deck of 52 — Song being the ace of spades. There are four factions that will give you jobs and bounties; Allied Nations, South Korea, Russian Mafia and China. If you decide to favor one faction over the other, it's not a problem. If you ever get to the point where you become hostile with one of them, you can just bribe them and you'll be ok. So feel free to shoot anyone and blow up anything, since really, that's the point of the game. Sure, you get money from bounties and random contract jobs, but if you decide to blow up, say, a random vehicle or building, go right ahead and get paid for it too.

Mercenaries offers something that other mission-based games don't — supply drops and bomber raids. After all, a building isn't going to get destroyed with grenades and machine guns. That's when you order a surgical strike to take it out. As you progress through the game you get more options available to you, from getting a vehicle whenever you want to an extremely powerful "bunker bomb."

Probably, the best part of the game is the sound, but what else would you expect from a Lucas Arts game? So, bottom-line, as long as you don't care about mindless destruction and the go-here, kill-this-guy type of game set in a war zone, then this is for you. It gets a little old and redundant, but if you ever get bored you can explore the countryside and find hidden goodies and, as always, blow the ever-loving crap out of everything.
Four years of the Broken Speech

Faithful poets keep it alive through three venues, giving themselves a chance to perform at least once a week. By Emily Jane Scott

This is the story of the Broken Speech, a poetry slam at Will’s Pub in Orlando. The first time I attended, it was a little overwhelming. The room was packed with people who had come to witness the poetry slam. There were poets performing and others just there to listen and support them.

The Broken Speech is a poetry slam that has been going on for four years. It takes place on Thursday nights at Will’s Pub, which is located in Winter Park, just outside Orlando. The event is organized by Jay Bradley, who is also one of the poets that performs there.

The Broken Speech consists of three rounds, with each round featuring a different theme. The judges are announced at the beginning of each round, and they are responsible for determining the winners. The winners receive cash prizes of $50, $30, and $20 for first, second, and third place, respectively.

The Broken Speech is more than just a poetry slam; it’s a community event. The poets are often friends with each other, and they come together to support one another. The audience is also an integral part of the event, as they provide the energy and enthusiasm that make the poetry slam so special.

The Broken Speech is open to poets of all ages and backgrounds. It’s a place where anyone can go to share their work and be appreciated for it. It’s a place where creativity flourishes, and people come together to celebrate the power of words.

The Broken Speech is an important part of the Orlando poetry scene. It’s a place where poets can find their voice and be heard, and it’s a place where the community comes together to support one another.

If you’re interested in attending the Broken Speech, you can go to Will’s Pub on Thursday nights. It’s a great way to spend an evening, and you’re sure to leave with a smile and a feeling of accomplishment.
ch Slam

in a place to shout, shout, let it all out

would be surprised to know that a poetry fest mostly by white males have Smith, a select, as their competing representative. such for more diversity at Broken here are our Hispanics? Where are our Here are our gays and lesbians? I know where we need them to come out here.

amiento, there are still great poets to check Broken Speech slam. On this night, get up to recite her last poem for the they got my sons listening to this rare begins. She tells the story of the defi-

denomen in hip-hop culture. As she finishes, the audience and receives thunderous laughs, relieved that she finished. They hang their boards to reveal three perfect performances the scores for the top three poets: Smith, Bradley and Curtis. First-time Ultimate Kennedy said, “Most of the con-

structively awesome tonight, so I went for performance... most of the points I took

formance-based.”

nd poets alike chat and make their way up to the stage to talk. Smith describes and Bradley as “the art within it seems for some reason to be hidden one else, but when you truly discover it, it’s a grand experi-

Broken Speech will be having its fourth party, with specially invited performers. A half-hour block reserved entirely for the event will also serve as a fundraiser for a Massachusetts. The slam will start at 9 p.m.
Raborn asks the Astrological Society questions about Uranus

Stars and moons aren't just for emo Internet names anymore

ROBBIE RABORN
Staff Writer

Last week, I was given one of the most exciting opportunities ever to have graced mankind: I interviewed the president of the UCF Astronomical Society. The president, Miss Erin Landgsdorf, was kind enough to let me meet her in some musty physics lab. I felt quite intimidated as I was surrounded by nerds, dorks, geeks and a trekkie. But not to fear, the interview went swimmingly, quite uneventful. Miss Landgsdorf is great to meet, quite intimidating, certainly was. What kind of people are into that? Astronomy majors are the explorer people.

RR: What are three statements you can make concerning the awesomeness of UCF's astronomy club in two statements or less?
EL: Well, you get to play with green laser pointers. We let you use the telescope. And... wait... Your question is impossible.

RR: Indeed. What kind of students would be most interested in joining?
EL: Astrogear, mostly. Photography majors would be interested as well.

RR: I am assuming that students should learn to speak Klingon if they are even remotely interested in the astronomical society.
EL: Oh, hell yeah!

RR: Ifyajbe'
EL: What?

RR: Oh, that's Klingon for "I don't understand." I figured you would have known since you are the club's president.
EL: Well, I B.S.'d the club entry forms.

RR: How often will meetings be this semester?
EL: We meet at 4:30 p.m. on the first and third Tuesday of every month at the UCF Observatory.

RR: Will there be Moon Pies® and Sun Chips® for snacks?
EL: Yes. Not to mention green cheese. That was a moon joke.

RR: It certainly was. What should students expect to learn from the club's Web site (http://phy.physics.ucf.edu/astronomy)?
EL: The site features pretty pictures of the galaxy taken by club members. There is a calendar of events. And then there is the basic club information.

RR: Somewhere out there, the Heaven's Gate cult is partying on the Hale-Bopp comet. When will it return so that we may join them?
EL: That comet is not annual. In fact, we will be dead by the time it comes around again.

RR: Please talk about the public viewings at the university's observatory.
EL: They happen on the first and third Wednesdays of each month. The next one is February 2 and it starts around 7 p.m. Driving directions are University Boulevard to Gemini, hang to the right, right on Libra Drive.

RR: You sicken me.

FUTURE FUNNIES

The indie now has full access to the Future's archives, so each week we're bringing you an old editorial cartoon. Check out this one from April 20, 1994. We hope it has increased your social awareness of the plight of snakes as much as it has ours. Which is to say, not at all.

REAL LIFE FOR REAL

Fright kicks off '05

demands remedy the old disorienting camera angles and clumsy controls.
And there are no zombies. Deadly, quick assailants swarm on players rather than the stupid, sluggish zombies of old.
Players control Leon Kennedy as he searches for the president's kidnapped daughter in a small, isolated European village. He soon finds himself alone and defending himself against a horde of pissed off villagers, spewing death threats at him in Spanish.
It may have arrived a little behind the rest, but the GameCube's major player stands tall in the beginning of 2005.
After the long wait, Clint Eastwood’s profound, redemptive masterpiece lives up to its Oscar hype

JOHN THOMASON  

The allure of boxing, a paradoxical glamour that gleams beauty and glory from the ugly, bloody faces of its competitors, has never been lost on the cinema. Boxing films have always captivated audiences, with emotions ranging from pitiful sadness (Requiem for a Heavyweight) to triumph (Rocky) to conflicted anger (Raging Bull).

And, much like those films, you don’t have to know a thing about boxing to appreciate Clint Eastwood’s ambiguous poem to the sport, Million Dollar Baby. While providing a bit of all three of the above films’ emotions, it adds another layer of depth to the genre: boxing as a metaphor for faith, or more specifically, redemption.

Redemption is a common theme for Eastwood, best articulated previously in Unforgiven and also playing a part in his last effort, Mystic River. But where Mystic was arguably over-plotted, Million Dollar Baby is spare and simple—a straightforward master/protege story where the master ends up being taught the great lessons. It’s a timeless theme, but with its profound religious undertones, lack of sentimentality and subdued use of music, it feels revitalized like never before.

Washed-up boxing agent and trainer Frank, played by Clint himself, is a quintessential Eastwood archetype. His trademark pragmatism you might hear from The Man with No Name, the Outlaw Josey Wales or Dirty Harry while they train their perennial sidekicks. But there’s an archaic weariness to this statement in Million Dollar Baby that matches the veteran actor’s own haggard appearance. One wonders if the jaded hero can even believe his own aphorisms anymore.

In fact, there isn’t much he does believe in, yet he still goes to mass and sits like a silent rogue, for reasons neither he nor his minister can understand. He’s severed ties with his daughter for reasons unexplained, but continues to write her letters for only his benefit — they always bounce back to his doorstep.

A conservative agent whose last client left him for the quick title shot offered by the competition, Frank is at the end of his rope when he comes across the boundlessly ambitious but dirt-poor amateur boxer, Maggie, played by Hilary Swank. After wrestling with his own dated notions of masculinity (“I don’t train girls,”) he agrees to take her on and literally teach her the ropes. A professional work relationship develops into a genuine friendship, and Maggie soon rises to the top of the boxing world. And then, tragedy.

But even when the tragedy occurs and the film appropriately shifts in pace, the subject is never sentimentalized for saccharine tear-jerking. It’s merely presented in matter-of-fact reporting-style courtesy of Morgan Freeman’s stoic narration.

With hands-down the best lighting in a 2004 film, cinematographer Tom Stern creates a shadowy noir-ish atmosphere, the visual representation of the darkness buried deep in Frank’s soul. If Citizen Kane cinematographer Gregg Toland were to shoot a film today, this might be what it would look like.

And for purely aesthetic reasons, the boxing scenes are a beauty to watch. This kind of intense, visceral verisimilitude has not been seen in a boxing picture since Raging Bull, or possibly in any sports picture of the last 20 years.

But in the end, Million Dollar Baby is not just a movie for boxing fans, or even boxing movie fans. It’s a movie for anyone who’s ever felt lost, guilty or deprived, for anyone questioning the divine power of religion versus the real demands of everyday life, for anyone who’s wondered what it all meant. If you look hard enough, Million Dollar Baby may provide an answer.
Mr. 3000 strikes out as a comedy

Beware of false School Daze advertising on new 2-disc set

BRETT RYAN BONOWICZ
Staff Writer

Mr. 3000

Bernie Mac as a retired baseball player going back to the majors for a few more hits because of some error in counting. Sounds like a winner. Mr. 3000 didn't fair as well as Bernie Mac's other film of 2004, Ocean's Twelve, but then again Mr. 3000 didn't quite have the cast, writer, director, cinematographer, musical composer, grip, gaffer, lighting technician and animal wrangler that Ocean's Twelve had; it's just a different pedigree altogether. The DVD includes deleted scenes with director commentary, sure-to-be-hilarious outakes and extended scenes, including SportsCenter and The Tonight Show featurettes. 'To top it off, Buena Vista has included three more featurettes: Spring Training: The Extras Journey, Everybody Loves Stan and Making of Mr. 3000.

Shall We Dance?

The answer to this rhetorical question is a firm no, and Peter Chelsom has created one of the most excruciatingly bland films of the last century of cinema. Richard Gere single-handedly drops his career down a notch, and Jennifer Lopez phones in her performance as a dance instructor in this remake of a much better film. The DVD tries to excuse the movie from being so bad by including commentary by Chelsom that is sure to be self-gratifying. Deleted scenes include optional director commentary. There is a The Music of Shall We Dance? featurette and a Beginner's Ballroom featurette that puts the spotlight on real ballroom dancing, not the fake stuff Gere and Lopez pretend to do. Then, because they need more featurettes to pad the badness of the movie, Miramax has included a behind the scenes special on the film itself as well as a Pussycat Dolls' "Sway" music video.

School Daze: Special Edition

It's another case of a faux two-disc set in the vein of Easy Rider. Including the soundtrack to your film is not adding another disc. The new set does include a new commentary with the cast and a few other featurettes that don't make this new double-dip worth the purchase price. Shame on the studio. While the soundtrack can be a nice listen, to tout itself as a new two-disc set implies a second DVD, and that is not the case. Beware.

**Difficult Vera Drake poses more questions than answers**

Leigh's film firmly fits into trend of British social realism

JOHN THOMASON

The number of British films we get here in America each year is relatively small. Because of this shortage, we're used to a polarized British cinema: We either get the hip, glossy playfulness of Danny Boyle and Shaun of the Dead, or the dark, moody social commentaries of Mike Leigh, Ken Loach and sometimes Stephen Frears. Leigh's latest effort, Vera Drake, certainly falls into the latter category, a difficult and uncompromising two hours that tackles a controversial issue without ever succumbing to over-the-top preachiness.

In an austere, minimally set England of the 1950s, Vera Drake (an extraordinary Imelda Staunton) is a perfect lower-class housewife (Leigh accentuates the class difference by having Vera clean rich folks' homes for a living), caring for a sickly neighbor and her own mother, while frequently treating her large extended family to elaborate meals and get-togethers. But unknown to her family, she performs illegal abortions—"helps girls out"—on the side, for no pay. When one of her routine operations goes awry and a girl nearly dies from it, the police catch wind of Vera's covert operation, and the film's gripping second half, largely the questioning of Vera and the inevitable trial, more than make up for the slow-paced first hour.

What's most remarkable and pleasing about Vera Drake is that Leigh refuses to take a side on the controversial abortion issue. Prolifers and pro-choicers could watch Vera Drake, and both groups could find fuel for their arguments. We see girls being raped, which certainly a red light. Like a good debate and arguments. We see girls being raped, which...
DiG! a sad and funny look at indie-rock feud

Vengeful documentary finds the real massacre in the Brian Jonestown Massacre

John Thomason

Dec. 31, 2004

Disbelieving the myth that for indie-rock bands, it's "all about the music, man," DiG! shows us that rock-star excess and arrogance isn't limited to the famously volatile Wilcos and Oases of the world. Sometimes, it even affects bands you've never heard of, bands that have neither the clout nor the justification for their self-destructive actions.

DiG! follows a seven-year period in the lives of Portland's The Dandy Warhols (the band you have heard of) and California's The Brian Jonestown Massacre (the band you haven't unless you're firmly entrenched in indie-rock circles). Though Orlandoans may remember the band playing a rather static opening set for Guided by Voices at The Social last January).

There's a reason most people haven't been turned on to the excellent psychedelic cult band The Brian Jonestown Massacre: the erratic, cruel and spotlight-hogging theatrics of its overly ambitious frontman, whose actions on and off stage prohibited the rest of the band from hitting the major-label paydirt they should have. Meanwhile, old friends and touring mates, The Dandy Warhols, took their equally clever band name and became one of the most popular groups overseas while shooting pricey music videos for Capitol Records. The film follows the warm friendship-turned-laughably-bitter-rivalry between the two groups, intercutting crucial scenes in their seven-year evolutions.

Like the other recent D.MAC rise-and-fall story Overnight, DiG! is largely about how the self-destructive behavior of one individual can damage the careers and prohibit the success of others in team efforts, like music and film. Also, like Overnight, we feel no sympathy for the main character, just the hardworking bandmates thrust into his working domain.

But both are also about the fickle nature of the industry and the unfeeling coldness of the money-hungry record companies. References are made to the inconsequentiality of Napster in the grand scheme of things and even the meaninglessness of poor band performance and behavior. The BJM's frontman Antone Newcombe insisting the blame to be wholly on the inhumanity of record executives. While it's easy to say Newcombe's crybaby self-centeredness was a large contribution to the band's unraveling, he also has a point in the "what have you done for me lately?" impatience of the major-label heads.

The film is far from a fair and balanced look at both groups. Narrated by Dandy Warhols vocalist Courtney Taylor, the film is heavily weighted toward Newcombe's spontaneous bursts of erratic behavior, which get far more screen time than the modest and uncinematic success of The Dandy Warhols (what can you do, sensationalism sells). Thus, DiG! partly feels like Taylor's revenge note against his old pal Newcombe, written through the medium of film.

A funny, fascinating and sad film with more complexities than the simplistic formulas of Behind the Music, DiG! is a great rock movie, whether or not you're a fan of either band. Opens tomorrow at DMAC.
NWA = Nannies with Attitude?

Ice Cube loses all credibility in the awful, unfunny family film Are We There Yet?

Michael Ferraro
Staff Writer

B rian Levant, the directorial mastermind that discovered one of the future Anakin Skywalkers in the 1996 Christmas film Jingle All the Way, brings us a new road trip film starring Ice Cube. This is no ordinary Ice Cube film, however. Gone are the days when Cube smoked weed, drank 40-ounce bottles and popped fools who kept stepping on his face. Nowadays, he is doing things the clean and PG way. Surely, one could have predicted this move while rocking out to some old-school NWA records. Maybe he matured a little bit since Friday and decided to make a PG film. But sadly, he picked the wrong film to start with.

To elongate the plotline as much as humanly possible for the purpose of this review, the film tells a story of Nick (Cube), a bachelor who discovers the ultimate way to woo over his new lady friend, Suzanne (Nia Long). She has two kids, Lindsey and Kevin (Aleisha Allen and Philip Daniel Bolden), who need a ride to Canada, for which Nick happily volunteers his time. Of course, as the title suggests, some mishaps happen along the way that this bachelor, and his new SUV with spinner rims, just wasn’t prepared for.

Calling them “kids” is actually doing them a great dis-service. They are actually spawns of Satan. These aren’t like-able kids by any means. These are the kind of kids that if they were burned alive in a fire, you’d probably laugh because they deserved it. For example, in the beginning of the film, they practically kill one of their mother’s potential suitors with a prank involving hundreds of marbles. What is their justification for this? They don’t want their mom to be held up when, and if, their dad comes home to rejoin the family.

Putting some quibbles about the recycled formula and shabby direction aside, other problems lie within the characters themselves. Not only are they the type of children you would not want your kid looking up to, the film also promotes bad parenting. In the few scenes that actually show Suzanne alone with the kids, she does nothing to scold them for their terrible actions. She actually resorts to no disciplinary tactics whatsoever. In fact, she lets her kids walk all over her.

If you are looking for a film involving bratty and spoiled children, the parenting skills of a Nick, or a character-driven drama or even a screwball comedy in the vein of Bringing Up Baby, this is no film for you. This idea has flexibility and that gives it many head and shoulders above all other sequels.

Casablanca 2. Not a remake of Casablanca but a sequel. Rick gets out of Casablanca and finds Ilsa; they get together and start a family only to realize that being together was only the beginning! Cast two modern actors like Ben Affleck and Jennifer Lopez in the roles and, you get one hot biscuit so scrunching to handle, even mitts are provided with every copy of the script!

Family Matters 2: The Movie. Remember Urkel? Remember Urkel’s big screen debut? I don’t either, but that’s the genius of this idea. We’re actually skipping over the first movie! There’s guaranteed sequel potential in this; everyone will want to know what hijinks ensued before all that happens in Family Matters 2. The plot will revolve around the revelation that Urkel has been on a top-secret mission in the Winslow’s home for the last 15 years. He’s been sent to find that long-lost daughter that disappeared from the show that one season. This revelation causes his relationship with Laura to erode and his personal libido to drop. McG will star as Urkel’s partner in the CIA as well as taking the reigns as director.

Blues Brothers 2005. In this updating of the 2000 classic, John Goodman is on life support in a struggle for his own life because of how fat he is. He rediscovers his love for the Atkins diet and spirited dancing in black suits and finds his way back to a healthy 400 pounds. Jesse Dylan will direct the screenplay by the Coen brothers (I assume after Intolerable Cruelty that they’ll write anything).

There you have it. Five new films. Check back in a year. I’m almost certain one of these ideas will be in production. For every Casablanca, a Casablanca 2 isn’t very far behind.
**MOVIES**

**DVD REVIEW**

Thriller *Leon* gets a professional 4th DVD treatment

MATT HEDGECOCK
Staff Writer

Cinephile films of the early 1990s were some of the most over-hyped films of the current generation. While some, like *Pulp Fiction* and *The Usual Suspects*, are modern classics, many like *Reservoir Dogs* are just above-average thrillers, propelled to a lofty status by buzzed-up 20-year-olds. *Leon* (aka *The Professional in the United States*) is one of the latter.

The film is a spin-off of sorts to director Luc Besson’s earlier flash-and-dash Euro-terror film *La Femme Nikita*, and it is filled with the same sort of high-energy exploits as most of his action films.

*Leon* is a fantasy crime film — *Leon* is improbably skilled, every thug is armed to the teeth and the real life DEA has rules against hiring scene-chewing, pill-popping maniacs.

But Besson handles over-the-top scenarios with a wry, entertaining charm, and the film oozes fun and personality.

Oh, and do you like Gary Oldman when he overacts? Buy this DVD, and then go buy *The Fifth Element*.

Additionally, the version on this disc is the extended European cut, which includes some controversial scenes in which Mathilda oozes and serves the two lying in bed together (albeit not in a sexual manner).

The scenes aren’t particularly offensive to someone who understands the context of the film. Mathilda comes from a dysfunctional home where she is openly exposed to sex, and therefore assumes she understands it (the scene is also defused by *Leon’s* frank refusal). The scenes don’t add a whole lot to the final film, but it’s always preferable to have the uncut version.

This latest release marks the fourth time *Leon* has seen DVD in one form or another. And while the extras aren’t anything special, the latest release is the definitive version to own.

The special features include three featurettes — a 10-year retrospective, a spotlight on Reno and a spotlight on Portman. They’re nicely done and informative, but far too short, clocking in at less than one hour of material. There’s also an informative “fact track” that plays with the film, but a commentary of some sort would have been preferred. Oh, and the film itself is the Superbit version, so the picture and sound are first-class.

*Leon* is a great crime picture that has unfortunately been diluted by heaps of hyperactive praise in the 10 years since its release. However, it remains a lively affair that would make a great addition to anyone’s action movie collection. Fans of the film might as well jump in for this double-dip. After all, waiting for the 15th anniversary edition would take way too much patience.

**MOVIE TIMES**

From 113

10:40 12:20
Assault on Precinct 13 (R)
12:20 2:20 4:50 7:00 7:20 9:20 11:00 1:20 3:40 6:00 8:00 9:20
The Aviator (PG-13)
12:00 4:30 8:00 11:30
Coach Carter (PG-13)
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Elektra (PG-13)
7:05 9:15 11:40
Fat Albert (PG)
12:25 2:40 5:50
Hide and Seek (R)
1:05 3:20 5:40 7:40 9:00 10:25
11:25 12:45
Hotel Rwanda (PG-13)
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In Good Company (PG-13)
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Meet the Fockers (PG-13)
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The spirit of *Leon* is the Superbit version, so...
RAMBLINGS

THE GEEK LIFE

It's a surreal reality (television)
The voyeuristic allure of reality TV claims another victim

ELIZABETH FERNANDEZ
Staff Writer

As ashamed as I am to admit it, I have found myself finally giving in to the reality-TV craze. Oh, I think I did a good job for a rather long time of avoiding the dreaded curse. The truth is, I find most of that stuff incredibly boring and stupid. And yet, it even managed to capture my oh-so-elitist interest.

It all started with The Osbournes, a show I still faithfully follow. At first, I didn't think too much of my fascination with the show. Ozzy is like an old friend of mine. I've seen him in concert many times. His silly whiny rockstar voice is indelibly imprinted in my brain folds.

The show was and still is lovely, brash and full of delicious curse words and British accents and spoiled bratty scenester kids I would probably hang out with even if they weren't famous. I have no problem enjoying that show.

Then it happened, The Surreal Life showed up, and I couldn't pull away from the wretched train accident/explosion that is Vanilla Ice. These genius producers decided that the next leap in eavesdropping would, should involve locking B-list celebrities in a mansion and watching the sparks fly.

Well, whenever the ice-man showed his pasty, angry white boy face they will. Somehow, this show made its way to VH1, which is longing to make itself the new celebrity capital of the cable nation. The network

Please See STRANGE

CRAZED INDIE ROBOT

Sidekicks keep flicks kickin'
The indie Robot ranks the all-time best tagalongs

DIANNA ZISMAN
Staff Writer

Sidekicks. We all have them, or else we are them. In movies and TV shows, they can be off-kilter and exuberant at times when the main characters cannot. They tend to not be regarded favorably by those who must endure them, usually looked down upon as "tagalongs," and ending up on the butt of society's jokes. Which is a shame, as sidekicks are, quite frankly, what make the world go round. Here, then, just a few of my favorites. I salute you guys.

"Milhouse, on The Simpsons: From claiming that his mom says he's the coolest kid in school, to randomly collecting ALF pogs, Milhouse has all the hallmarks of a classic sidekick. Bart's best friend rarely got a chance to shine on his own, and his long, unrequited crush on Lisa made him extremely pitiable, but gosh, he sure did try not to suck.

Sean Astin as Samwise Gamgee, in The Lord of the Rings: He fights giant spiders. He carries his master up steep, dangerous mountains. He makes heartfelt speeches at the drop of the hat. And, to top it all off, his chemistry with Frodo makes audiences the world over blush. Is there anything that little hobbit can't do? Not likely.

That Crazy Irish Bastard, in Braveheart: Always talking about "my island" and claiming to have a direct line to God, the Crazy Irish Bastard really adds a healthy dollop of humor to Crazy Mel Gibson's tale.

Harrison Ford as Han Solo, in Star Wars: In the first one, he was the character that everyone in the audience could identify with: the guy who hears about the Force and says, "What is this crap?" He has absolutely no idea what's going on, and doesn't believe in any-

Please See HAIL

NEAR-LIFE EXPERIENCE

Bush, Pimp my country

MICHAEL LAWRENCE
Staff Writer

Well, it's official. Turd sandwich was inaugurated last Thursday to serve his second term as president. I know, I know, it blows more than Superbabies, but what are you gonna do? Poor people will continue to be poor and Blue Collar TV will remain on the air. Congratulations, Bush. But don't worry, it doesn't have to be so bad. Not if Bush elects to listen to my proposition gracefully.

Mr. Bush, I offer you the chance to advance your agenda of manifest destiny and at the very same time entertain the masses. The Department of the Interior meets interior design, advance by loads of crank to give the nation its newest reality sensation, Pimp My Country. It snatches the interest of all demographics, especially the ones you've ignored. The NAACP will instantly forget how you've ignored them when they see this show.

Here's the concept: We send about 100,000 troops into any country (voluntarily, involuntarily, it doesn't matter) with bullets and buckets. Of paint, that is! And we decorate the ever-lovin' hell out of them. We cross over the lines of bureaucratic red tape that keep us from interfering with countries and replace them with designs of red drapes! Each week it's a different country with guest rappers serving as ambassadors of dopeness and Colin Powell hanging along for the ride.

Let's take, for example, the Vatican. That place is beyond old-school. It all started with The Osbournes, a show I still faithfully follow. At first, I didn't think too much of my fascination with the show. Ozzy is like an old friend of mine. I've seen him in concert many times. His silly whiny rockstar voice is indelibly imprinted in my brain folds. Here, then, just a few of my favorites. I salute you guys.

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Harrison Ford as Han Solo,
These people do it on the Internet

CHRISTOPHER SCHWARZ

B

ecause of the Internet’s “anonymous” nature, its denizens feel much more comfortable and less threatened by the mask of a screen name. For the bored, looking through them can be a delicious, guilty pleasure.

Online self-help columns are home to everything that Ann Landers would never dream of printing. Want to find out if cranberry juice is a good lubricant? Need to ask for advice about your tendency to cut yourself? Don’t ask your friends, parents or therapist — ask the Internet!

Group Hug http://group.hug.us/

This site is a doozy. Every time you go, there’s more insanity to check out. It’s your one-stop shop to remind yourself that no matter how weird you are, other folks are much, much worse. At the time of writing, someone has recently confessed to being the creepy guy who hangs out at the pool.

Elsewhere, a girl tells us that she found naked pictures of her sister on the family computer and masturbates to them. Another girl is deathly afraid that she might accidentally fart during sex.

Some other guy has confessed that he wants to break his toe to obtain sympathy and sympathy off from work. Another choice tidbit is someone who has admitted to “liking Mexicans,” but only sometimes.

Yet another guy says he’s never used a toilet in his life because he prefers a sink. It’s a cornucopia of things that decrease your faith in humanity, one reload at a time. What could be better?

SexTips Community http://www.livejournal.com/community/sec/sextips/

Oh, LiveJournal-chans! What won’t you do? This is a sex column for the new millennium. Sure, there’s the usual “How big is the average penis?” and “Why does my crotch smell funny?” but that’s where the normality ends. Remember, this is not just the Internet, it’s LiveJournal.

About one entry per day will ask about a fetish you probably never knew existed. Others will make you sad that its posters are reproducing. None of it could possibly be printed on this page. From reading today’s batch, I’ve learned that some poor dude is wondering what it would feel like to put Listerine strips on his penis. In the “I hope I never have a daughter” department, there’s a girl here asking for advice about how to stay with a man she hooked up with at a movie theater. The catch? She’s 14.

Lesbians will save us all

and none of it ever coalesces with the feuding factions in these countries. So let’s use lesbians! They’re like a shot of whisky. They instantly make anything better! We’ll have a mix of both hot and butch lesbians. The hot ones will go in first and speaking with the dictators. They’ll give them style tips, take them out for manicures and pedicures and watch Sandra Bullock movies. The butchies will just be there as peacekeepers to make sure all goes well. Soon every country will be pimped up by rappers and softened up by lesbians.

Let’s face it: The president could care less about mending Malaysia. Tsunamis are sooo last year. As a former cheerleader, his heart lies in beautifying, not rectifying. This is the way of the future. And hey, if all else fails we can always fall back on Who Wants To Bomb My Country?

Strange Love VH1’s creepiest thing

seems intent on showing the ditzy Simpson girls in our faces as well as dragging every person who was ever the least bit famous all over the screen. The crazier and creepier, the better, of course.

The creepiest thing VH1 has on right now, and the show I of course can’t get enough of, is Strange Love, the bizarre and twisted journey of the heart of tiny-defunct rapper Flavor Flav and European giantess Brigitte Nielsen, the barely famous ex-wife of Sylvester Stallone who is currently engaged to some hot Italian nobody. These two star-crossed freaks of nature met while filming The Surreal Life last season and it seems they really hit it off for those 14 days they were forced to live together. Now Flav is basically stalking her in an effort to win her over. I’m sure things will end well.

My favorite doppelgänger in reality these days isn’t even real. Comedy Central’s hilarious Drawn Together is just brilliant. It combines so many of the things I love into one extreme sizzling pot of madness. It has video-game-character parodies, comic-book heros, lookalikes, internet-cartoon wannabies and a sick little pervert Spongebob spawn, to name just a few.

Just imagine if the networks started making more fake reality shows. Imagine the adventures of Data and Commander Bones of Star Trek, travelling the cosmos in Road Rules style. Being forced to perform extreme sports for points they can use to beat their rivals, the cast of Voyager.

Because those two have cool points in their little fingers than Captain Janeway has in her whole body, my money is on them. They would snowboard off double black diamonds and pull Venn diagrams while shaky cameramen follow them dressed in black.

Maybe, one day in the future, once those gods of Star Trek realize that they have the best times of their lives working for the Federation, they will come together and entertain us all. They’ll be forced to live through false Renegi attacks and eat only replicator foods high in nutrients but low in taste. How long do you think it would take William Shatner to stop being polite? Before long he’ll be singing/speaking karaoke so badly that Michael Dorn, TV’s Worf, will be forced to kill him in a bloody Klingon duel. I would pay real good money to see that, especially if it takes place in some sort of MurderDome where only one celebrity walks out alive.

How many years do you really think it’s gonna take before we are paying celebrities to kill themselves? It can’t be that long. I would definitely pay to watch that happen.

Hail Inigo Montoya!

thing but his own self-preservation until his slightly inexplicable (but satisfying) change of heart at the very end. And, though irritable, he had a clearly defined sense of humor.

Earl the Cyclops, in Kroll: OK, I don’t know that his name is actually Earl. That’s just the name we always call him when watching it. Why is he on the list? He’s a cyclops. Duh.

Jeff Cohen as Chunk, in The Goonies: Poor Chunk. He’s constantly getting into trouble and being picked on by his friends. But then he becomes a movie director by Larry Clark, he’d probably get his revenge by shooting Mikey, Brand, Mouth and Data in the face and by giving Stef and Andy AIDS. But, alas, this is not a movie directed by Larry Clark, it’s directed by Richard Donner, and so Chunk ends up teamed with a deformed giant name Sloth trying to catch up to his adventure-seeking buddies who secretly can’t stand him. At least he manages to keep himself in good spirits throughout.

Ringo Starr as That Other, Weird Looking Guy in The Beatles: He always knew his place, never came close to attention, and yet made crucial contributions at key moments (say, the title of “A Hard Day’s Night”). He got the best expression of appreciation ever sent by a leading man to a sideman, when John Lennon wrote “In My Life” about him.

Mandy Patinkin as Inigo Montoya, in The Princess Bride: My favorite sidekick ever! From his skills with the sword to his revenge quest, he captured my heart the very first time I saw him. Not only are “Hello. My name is Inigo Montoya. You killed my father. Prepare to die,” probably 13 of the most famous and oft-repeated words in cinema history, Inigo dispatches the evil Count Rugen with the awesome: “I want my father back, you son of a bitch. [stabs] It doesn’t get any better than that in sidekick-land, folks. Hail, Inigo!
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