Block tuition

How many credit hours are you taking this term?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Percentage of students</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 or less</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<td>4 or 5</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<td>6 or 7</td>
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<td>8 or 9</td>
<td>18%</td>
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<td>10 or more</td>
<td>10%</td>
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SGA rallies support for block-tuition movement

Event drew large crowds aimed at blocking proposal

Mark Justice

The Student Government Association officially rallied the student body on Thursday protesting block tuition, a proposal that would require full-time students to pay for their education based on the number of credit hours regardless of the actual amount they are enrolled in.

An electric bulletin addressed the crowd on a stage that resembled a factory, where several speakers among hundreds of students who attended the event at least 150 students signed the petition.

Mark DeVogler, who has been instrumental in the crusade to prevent block tuition, referred to the factory as education still and likened it to a factory to produce more students felt indifferent toward block tuition. A lot of students don’t want to be working, they’re afraid of. Some feel that because they’re graduating, they will block tuition will affect everyone.

Speaker Senator Sean Latty was on hand gathering support against block tuition. Having the proposal “edging a burden from a food research and being changed for the value meal, not really nothing the budget.”

You may not want the value meal, but you’re not getting it, but you’re still being charged,” he said.

DeVogler likened its satirical fast-track graduation movement as “tax on intellectual curiosity.” Among the throng of supporters, freshman Stacy Kozelinski was

2005 SGA Election coverage

Candid SGA candidates

Those running for president debated over the merits of the grading scale and Master Plan

A forum last Thursday allowed the three slates for student government to debate their views prior to the opening of today’s election. What follows is an edited transcript of that forum.

Moderator, Brent Fleer, elections supervisor

On the topic of enrollment, with the demand on campus and student rooms at an all-time high, departments are turning to more web-based classes. Do you feel that a web-based class can deliver the same educational benefits as a face-to-face class?

Willy Bentler Jr. — Current SGA vice president/monitor — Member, UCF Trial Team — Former SGA senator — Senior business

McTainn Wooley — Current SGA director of the Student Affairs Committee — Former SGA senator — Senior business

Keith Raif — SGA senator served four terms — President of the Materials Research Society and the UCF Research Society — Graduate student, material science and engineering

Josh Trouard — SGA senator served two terms — President of the Materials Research Society and the UCF Research Society — Graduate student, material science and engineering

Pavan Talwalkar, president of SAGA — Graduate student association where he is involved in the student government — Senior engineering

Winwood Trunt — Senior, pre-med — President of SAGA — Student Senate association where he is involved in the student government — Senior engineering

WOMEN TAKE TITLE MONTH OUT CAMPBELL

SEE SPORTS, A10

3 SUSPECTS NABBED MURDER CHARGES FOR 2

SEE NEWS, A2

Faculty contract includes raises, gay protection

UCF and faculty union coming close to agreement

HEIDI A. DE WEESE

After a year and a half of negotiations, the contract between UCF administration and the UCF faculty is finally close to being signed. UCF’s chief negotiator Thomas Koon said, “We’ve decided to have better negotiations before going to a formal impasse,” said Koon, the dean of the College of Business Administration. “We came to a general understanding on the tenets of the contract; the remaining terms will be worked out.”

Koon said the negotiations for faculty contract create a stronger sabbatical policy and provide faculty with a better way to gain access back-up classroom and support. The contract also will add “terminal orientation” to the university’s non-discrimination policy, thereby officially ensuring gay rights and protection. Rights of academicians have been solidified, and pay for teaching summer courses has been increased.

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Progress made in murder case

Florida's justice system is an annual UCF tradition that recognizes students throughout UCF. Events will be held throughout campus from various organizations.

Become a mentor
The department of Housing and Residence Life invites student mentors. For information about mentorship, the information session will be held at 3 p.m., today, in the Residence Life Union Garden Room 22A.

Image reader
Great students interested in changing theirMajor's orientation or someone who likes images can attend a presentation at 2 p.m. today in the Student Union Garden Room 22A.

Tater tot
A workshop that will show participants the opportunity to develop and enhance leadership abilities and to participate in creative exercises. For more information, contact Mrs. Prodell at 407-447-2005.

Petition will be given to state legislature

Legacy leaves imprint on building

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Union wins court battle and university recognition

You'll

three UFF chapters at other campuses around the state have been newly empowered to negotiate contracts for their faculty in negotiations with university boards of trustees in...
...and more

**AMERICAN COMIC**

**GUEST LIST SUBJECT**

**THE INCREDIBLE HULK**

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Grading scale needs scrutiny, uniformity says Talakala

This grading system shows that one student has a couple of A’s and a student who gets an F also ends up standing at a B. It’s fine to think that if we have the plus-and-minus system we can have the students depicted where they stand.

This is already initiated, so what we want to do is have this system spread all over the campus. Right now, some students may have the faculty assigning them a B-minus and another member of the faculty may assign them a B. Obviously they’re going to be hurt because the transcript does not depict what the letter grade stands for and it’s going to go against them when applying to go into the Golden Rule Review Committee and change and figure out how we can work it.

There does need to be a running mate: I’d just like to invite you to double-check the grading system with all of the faculty that you want to put a group of students together, nothing is guaranteed. As long as we have the support of our students, and even help from other university people, we can even have a plus-only grading system throughout the state so that one school isn’t competing against them when applying to graduate school or for jobs.

We definitely need a grading system that’s universal, and against them when applying to graduate school or for jobs. UCF needs a plus-and-minus grading system for all across campus. We can also add an A-plus in the present system used at the university, which is good for the students who work hard and should be awarded for their hard work.

Students: One of the biggest problems we have here, I think, is that we have some teachers who have a plus-minus system and some teachers who don’t have a plus-minus system. We want to unify and unify in one teacher’s class but because the student knows that one teacher doesn’t have that system, and that’s the kind of competition we don’t want to have here.

We definitely need a grading system that’s universal, and sometimes a plus-minus system is better. It definitely helps when a student has a couple of areas that he or she has that minus hurts in. This year we’ve been working with the present and this is an issue that’s been brought in front of the faculty senate, but the biggest thing the administration has been hanging on is, in the academic freedom that they grant teachers here at UCF and that’s something that’s in the Golden Rule, so that’s something that we actually have to go into the Golden Rule Board and change and figure out how we can work it.

One of the candidates says that a plus-only system is something when you put a group of students together, nothing is guaranteed. As long as we have the support of our students, and even help from other university people, we can even have a plus-only grading system throughout the state so that one school isn’t competing against another because the minus hurts all of our students.

Rea: There does need to be a sense of uniformity on the grading system with all of the faculty having their, what you like to call academic freedom. We feel that there should be academic freedom, but not at the cost of the students’ grading and being able to compete for a higher level of education.

One of the things that we’re going to do is build the Faculty Senate and make sure that the faculty does make a picture where they are going to grade the students here. Build a plus-minus scale in some classrooms and having it in A, B, C, D is it other classrooms really does hurt some students.

Talakala: We want to reinstate things that right now we have been promised for four years now, Ms. Keith has held, for a plus-only grading system, which is probably one way we could do things, but it’s not

In the Name of God, Most Merciful, Most Compassionate

Muslim Student Association

would like to invite you to

“Islam, More in Common than You Think”

Presented by Former Christian Minister Yusuf Estes

Follow up presentation by converted Muslims titled “Why I Came to Islam”

If you are interested in learning about Islam, please contact MSA at MSAUCF@yahoo.com

Islam, More in Common than You Think
Monday, February 28th at 4pm in the UCF Student Union Cape Florida 316 CD

Why I Came to Islam
Tuesday, March 1st at 4pm in the UCF Student Union Key West Room 218 B
the fact UCF students are not employed and they should be employed at those local places

UCF COMMENCEMENT Spring 2005

DAYS
THURSDAY, May 5, 2005
9:00 AM College of Arts and Public Sciences (1125) 1:00 PM College of Business Administration (15) Ticket: $20.00
FRIDAY, May 6, 2005
10:00 AM College of Arts and Public Sciences (1125) 1:00 PM College of Business Administration (15) Ticket: $20.00
COMMENCEMENT DATES
Thursday, May 5, 2005
9:00 AM College of Arts and Public Sciences (1125) 1:00 PM College of Business Administration (15) Ticket: $20.00
FRIDAY, May 6, 2005
10:00 AM College of Arts and Public Sciences (1125) 1:00 PM College of Business Administration (15) Ticket: $20.00

TICKETS TO BE PURCHASED AT THE UCF BOOKSTORE OR AT THE GATE (DAY OF THE COMMENCEMENT) AT THE GATE (DAY OF THE COMMENCEMENT)

UCF COMMENCEMENT SPRING 2005

MARCH

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the Master Plan.

ELECTIONS 2005
UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

Presidential
YOU DECIDE
THE FUTURE
OF SGA

VOTE ONLINE
Today - Wednesday
RUNOFFS: Feb.28-March 2
http://my.ucf.edu
Student asks: How will...
"There's always been this big stigma that student government is this elitist club and that's not the case." - Wayne Bentley, Jr.

"I think that at UCF we are going to continue to grow and it's not about being for or against a certain group, it's making sure that when these two sides come together we are creating a solution, that's good for everyone." - Bentley Jr.

"The issue on university that can make it a University that can address the concerns of students and lobbying to the appropriate people. Making sure we have effective efforts and one thing we definitely have to do is lobby the administration on its lobbying behind promises but do actions, make sure we have quality assurance," - Paul Talakala.

"We want to make the student body eligible to run for student body. We'd also like to expand the multicultural center. We also want to bring in students in student government. We also want to bring in students in student government because we want to make sure that every student wants to run for position there is able to have a shot at it. By making sure in student governance, which would make them right to run for these positions. Finally, my dear Golden Knights, I ask you to give me an opportunity to lead this great student body." - Edmundson.

"I think that we've had the opportunity to be involved in all aspects of student life. As far as integrity, it's just so important. When you're part of an organization that allocates about $2.5 million it's not one that someone who has integrity isn't important to have. We're running with a lot of students and programs and it's important that students that help choose these programs so that we have the proper group that benefits from these programs." - Edmundson.

"So for an issue, there's been some big stigma that student government is this elitist club and you have to be a certain group and that's not the case at all. Our membership right now consists of members that represent the students from the UCF trial team." - Edmundson.

"We want to lobby student privileges on campus. We had when it came time to lobby for Bright Futures. We also lobby for the capital and a lot of students are definitely have to do is lobby the administration on its lobbying behind promises but do actions, make sure we have quality assurance," - Paul Talakala.

"I think that if I think we McClaiss and myself the two most qualified candidates are but because of the slogans we've come up with experience, integrity and vision. Those three things are still important. Experience is definitely there. We're the only ticket that has legislative and executive experience, and when you're running an organization that's key to having the experience." - Edmundson Jr.

"We always been this big stigma that student government is this elitist club and you have to be a certain group and that's not the case at all. Our membership right now consists of members that represent the students from the UCF trial team. Be a Hero to Our Soldiers. Donate Plasma Your plasma donations can directly save the lives of our troops wounded in combat. Your plasma is manufactured into a derivative called Albumin. This critical fluid is used to treat battlefield injuries including shock, burns and blood loss. Earn up to $170 a month donating regularly. When you donate plasma, you are helping save lives. Take being a hero to another level. Donate Now! New and Return Donors: Bring this ad and receive an extra $5 on your 2nd and 4th donations. *not donated in over 6 months"
Baseball splits two matchups with Irish
Newlin rolling with win over Notre Dame

JEFF SHARON

Sun, the Knights are No. 30 in the nation. But the UCF baseball team missed a grand opportunity to raise some eyebrows by splitting a pair at home to Notre Dame Fighting Irish this past weekend.

The 3-0 loss that witnessed the scores could have seen it coming, based on UCF's poor-but-robust performance Friday night. The Irish scored three times on two hits and a walk in the second inning.

UCF CF Roman started the weekend on the right foot with an 0-4 day against RANU, but a closer look reveals a few glints in the armor.

The Batman came in 0-4, having already lost 18-3 to the Irish that afternoon. The story of the day for Newlin was the German, giving up seven earned runs on seven hits, walk and hit batter.

Players and fans take the fifth inning, the Knights tabbed an unearned run on three hits, walk and hit batter.

Dominating performance, giving up eight hits, no walks, no errors and a hit batter.

A 12-7 victory over helpless Johnson scores career-high in blowout victory over helpless Campbell women's hoops

HATTIE DOWKAY

Senior Day was extra special for Ali Roberts and Takira Allen.

The UCF women's basketball team claimed their third consecutive regular season Atlantic Sun championship with an 80-57 demolition of Campbell on Saturday afternoon extending the winning streak to seven games.

The last A-Sun game was the all-time largest victory for the Knights in A-Sun action as an independent.

"I've always said that you will go as far as your seniors will take you," UCF Coach Dawn Staley said. "This was a great day for them to close their careers in this building.

Four players posted double figures for the Knights led by guard Claud Johnson who scored a career-high 18 points, Johnson canned five of her six triples in the second half.

"She isn't on a lot of teams' scoring reports," Staley said. "I can easily light it up and will make plays when she is left open."

Guard Kristin Hannah chipped in 14 points and 13 points hitting four threes of her own, while forwards Kennetha Mills and Roberta Johnson had 20 and 18 points, respectively. UCF (17-7, 15-2 A-Sun) crushed the Camels (7-16, 5-11 A-Sun) in the opening 6:41 of the half. The Knights kept it rolling for the remainder, outscoring Campbell (7-16, 5-11 A-Sun) 30-20 in the second half.

Knights; diving for loose balls and leaping for rebounds.

With two A-Sun games remaining, the men are a game out of first place

ANDY VASQUEZ

In order to win without incident, Marcus Arroyo, the Knights knew someone would have to make a big move.

Will the real Marcus Johnson and Justin Ross please step forward.

Johnson and Ross preceded the sparkles, and sparkles. The victory Irving Knights (6-7, 7-5 Atlantic) overcame a slight deficit to beat Georgia State (6-5, 4-5 A-Sun) 70-65 in the UCF Arena Saturday night.

Peppers tallied a career high 18 points for the second straight game and led the team when the Knights needed them most. Johnson and Ross proved to be the heart and soul of the Knights, driving for their baskets and leaping for rebounds.

Johnson scored 15 points and hauled in 11 rebounds, and Ross had nine points and eight rebounds.

In a tight game that featured ties and lead changes to the final minutes, the turning point came with 6:05 remaining. Peoples grabbed an offensive rebound and dribbled to the baseline, trying the game at 70-65.

Moments later, Peoples capitalized on a turnover with a strong drive to the basket, and gave UCF a 70-65 lead which it would not relinquish.

It was a game it had to have and UCF simply out-running the Panthers, scoring in bunches and grabbing rebounds in the second half.

UCF Coach Kirk Spencer called it a "gutty" win.

The injured Arroyo cut out with anailing back, watched from the sidelines in a wheelchair.

"I think I know a few things about pain," he was whoome the pain was coming from.

"Hopefully that's a sign of a maturing basketball team." UCF's defense forced the Panthers to make some of their first three shots.

In their credit, the Knights recovered from their poor start in overtime, and they were able to withstand, hold their own and out run the Panthers.

"Hopefully they are out of the way and we can really light it up and will make plays when she is left open."

Guard Kristin Hannah chipped in 15 points and 13 points hitting four threes of her own, while forwards Kennetha Mills and Roberta Johnson had 20 and 18 points, respectively. UCF (17-7, 15-2 A-Sun) crushed the Camels (7-16, 5-11 A-Sun) in the opening 6:41 of the half. The Knights kept it rolling for the remainder, outscoring Campbell (7-16, 5-11 A-Sun) 30-20 in the second half.

Knights; diving for loose balls and leaping for rebounds.

With two A-Sun games remaining, the men are a game out of first place
Softball wins three in home opener

With ace pitcher out, softball falls in only one game
ASHLEY BURNS

UCF softball opened at home this weekend after spending the first three weeks of the season on the road. But as the Knights learned Saturday, sometimes there’s much to celebrate on the ground and then some.

The host was out with a first-half rout of Gardner-Webb to start its A-Sun season. But eventually closed out Meridian with only two runs in the game. The win was a perfect example of what we had to do: suck it up and get it done," Johnson said.

Gary Johnson said. He decided to go with his A-Sun team later, the rebounding," Johnson said. This game was at 408 & Colonial (A at 2103 Collegiate Way).

He grabbed a six points in the second half closing out its opponents, then the Knights learned Saturday, "We just sucked it up and got it done," Johnson said. 'That’s what it took to win the first ever IM Sports Softball Championship."

Johnson said. "We just sucked it up and got it done," Johnson said. "That’s what it took to win the first ever IM Sports Softball Championship.

The open recreation division game got the Recreation and Wellness Center pumping as a capacity crowd saw The Rams beat A-Tech, 20-3 and 20-2. The Rams rallied with a three-run bottom of the ninth inning, "Andrea Austin led the team in offensive flair with a two-run double and eight innings for the Bison, also.

"We just sucked it up, Coach said if we wanted it, it was there for us. That’s what it took to win the first ever IM Sports Softball Championship."

Peppermis continues to bloom as men knock off Georgia State

SUNY A

"Basically we just sucked it up," Gary Johnson said. "We didn’t play a good first half. Coach said if we wanted it, it was there for us. That’s what we had to do, step it up and play." And play the Knights did. UCF out-rebounded the Panthers 25-24 in the second half and had nine second-chance points in the game.

"That’s my main job right there, the rebounding," Johnson said. "And I haven’t been doing it. I had to step it up tonight." Edwards contributed a solid game on the floor, grabbing a career-high 11 rebounds and scoring 12 points.

The game was UCF’s last test before launching into the conference schedule. The Knights will be moving to Colonial (A at 2103 Collegiate Way) for the 2005-2006 season.

The victory was the Knights’ sixth in their last seven games. UCF, led by senior forward Gary Johnson, tied the second half and had nine second-chance points in the game. But eventually closed out Mercer to win the game.

"We never have enough scorers. We don’t have it when we go out in our first conference game at home. We’ve been struggling," Coach said. Before that crucial game, the Knights will focus their attention to non-conference opponents South Dakota State and North Carolina. That game is at 7 p.m. at the UCF Arena, said is UCF’s last home game of the season as well as senior Kimi.

Join UCF Gold Team

Do you love football? Are you committed to playing a part in the future of a growing campus program? Are you looking for a way to network and meet people who share your interests? UCF is looking for you to join its football program. The win was a perfect example of what we had to do: suck it up and get it done," Johnson said.

Sneak peek: Gary Johnson will play his best home game at UCF Monday night.

Q: How bad is this injury? A: It’s not a big deal. UCF’s schedule for the weekend is.

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Join UCF Gold Team

Do you love football? Are you committed to playing a part in the future of a growing campus program? Are you looking for a way to network and meet people who share your interests? UCF is looking for you to join its football program. The win was a perfect example of what we had to do: suck it up and get it done," Johnson said.

Sneak peek: Gary Johnson will play his best home game at UCF Monday night.

Q: How bad is this injury? A: It’s not a big deal. UCF’s schedule for the weekend is.

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Defense comes through as usual

Torchy preached family and God above sports

Florida A&M no match for Irish or Knights

knocked all three runners home, extending the winning streak to 7-1. In the very same inning, the Knights scored the lead-off run thanks to a base hit by Dee Brown, who in turn launched a triple to score three more runs.

UCF reliever Donavon Peters closed the book on Florida Atlantic with two quick strikes, lifting the score to 6-1.

Saturday brought 1,565 fans to see the Beacons follow up their 15-killer win at the University of Illinois with a 6-1 win over the Knights. The比分 in the seventh inning was 6-1 with six outs remaining.

Leader batter Courtney Pearson led off the inning with a single and 2nd out with one run. Matt Horvath, playing in his second game as a Knight, knocked in the eventual run with a 2-run single.

The Irish tallied 6 runs on 5 hits in the top of the 7th, with 2 outs remaining. Down six. Despite throwing 3 options, UCF eventually scored 3 runs on a singles rally.

Tuesday was the kind of coach who made it simple for his players. He did not make a lot of requests, very specific, scoring Ray and giving in his 8-run lead. Billes got the decision, pitching a score from the 6th inning, ending the game 3-0.

Sunday exposed UCF's offensive weaknesses, particularly in late innings, as the Irish held off the Knights for a 4-2 victory. UCF refused to help its own cause with a string of run-scoring opportunities.

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That era to tell you about Tom Thornton and the Bulldogs. Tom Thornton was a nice person, and a good baseball player. He never relinquished the throne for a single moment during his tenure, said the Tennessee native to tell you about Tom Thornton and the Bulldogs. Tom Thornton was a nice person, and a good baseball player. He never relinquished the throne for a single moment during his tenure, said the Tennessee native.
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President George W. Bush said today, for the first time ever, that he was hopeful the negotiations between the United States and Iraq would result in a peaceful resolution to the war. Bush's statement came after a meeting with Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, during which they discussed ways to accelerate the process of de-escalation and the transition to a democratic government in Iraq. Bush said that he was committed to working with the new Iraqi government to achieve a stable and prosperous future for the Iraqi people.

Bush also announced that he would be sending additional U.S. troops to Iraq in the coming months to help secure the country and prepare for the withdrawal of American forces. He indicated that the new troops would be used primarily for training and mentoring Iraqi security forces, as well as for counterterrorism operations.

In other news, Bush's visit to Iraq was met with mixed reactions from around the world. While some countries welcomed the U.S. leader as a bringer of peace, others expressed concerns about the long-term stability of the region. The United Nations Security Council voted to extend the mandate of the U.N. mission in Iraq, which originally expired in December, for another six months. The move was seen as a sign of international support for the U.S.-led effort to stabilize the country.

Meanwhile, in the United States, the debate over the war continues to rage. The latest opinion polls show that the public is divided on whether Bush's strategy is working, with some polls indicating that the majority of Americans favor pulling troops out of Iraq. The situation is closely watched by events both within the U.S. and abroad, as the outcome of the war will have significant implications for the global political landscape.

In summary, President Bush's visit to Iraq and his comments about the war reflect both the complexities of the situation and the need for continued diplomatic efforts to bring about a peaceful resolution. The world awaits developments in this ongoing crisis, as the United States and its allies work to achieve a stable and prosperous future for Iraq and the broader Middle East.
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SGA Presidential Elections
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Tuesday Knight Live Open Mic Knight, Wackadoo's, Bpm
Knights of Magic brought to you by SGA; free tickets plus transportation to an Orlando Magic Basketball game. Register online at http://www.sga.ucf.edu/

SGA Presidential Elections

CAB Comedy presents Dane Cook at the Arena. Doors open at 7. Free to UCF students with ID and $20 for non-UCF students at arena box office

SANGAM Culture Night: Pegasus Ballroom, Bpm

CAB Speakers presents Harlen Cohen, Garden Key AB, Bpm

SGA Runoff Elections
We'll help you prepare for the 77th annual Academy Awards

Three days you'll want to get Conned

Rock sandwiches on Whole Wheat Bread

Retaining heritage in Zora's town

PAGES 10-11

Vol. V, No. 21, Feb. 24 - March 2, 2005

THE INDIE

Happenings ... 2 | Music ... 5 | Movies ... 8 | Life ... 13 | Ramblings ... 18
All your dignity are belong to us

Geeks, anime lovers, sci-fi fanboys and cross-dressers amass in one place at annual Megacon convention

ANDREW LEGGETT
Staff Writer

The annual showcasing of everything from movies and comics to anime and video games will be arriving at the Orange County Convention Center Friday through Sunday. For a mere $20, patrons will be treated to a wide variety of all that is nerdy. Rare back issues, underground anime and tabletop gaming are just a small sample of the wonders awaiting those brave enough to venture in. Along with a handful of guest appearances from big names in the comic book, television and film industries, you can bet that every fanboy and basement recluse will be in full force. And thus, the focal point of the impending power struggle will come to a head.

Among the teeming masses of the pale and gangly crowds will be some of the most dangerous and powerful beings to ever walk the earth. Only here is it possible to see a squadron of storm troopers posing for pictures while standing across from the awe-inspiring, yet unusually overweight, Lantern Core. Legends like the Ghostbusters will be on hand, packing an impressive array of proton packs and traps, all the while sporting some uncharacteristic acne and voice cracks. Heroes like Daredevil and Aquaman will be there to keep the peace, while villains like Mystero and Deathstroke will be sure to stir up some chaos. Even such obscurities like the sixty billion double dollar man and a group of super-powered school girls can be spotted among the rabble. And if all of these super powers in one room isn't enough to be classified as a powder keg, the annual cheerleading competition held a few rooms down will be just the match these desperate, hormone-induced, geekified super-humans need to ignite.

The ensuing fireworks will be both exciting and deadly to behold, yet we here at the indie are dedicated to ensuring our readers have a front row seat. Therefore, we have gone to great lengths in procuring a very special guest to help cover this event. A being of immense power that only he can withstand the potential wrath of Megacon and return to us safely with a story. Who is this dark-haired warrior both brave and powerful enough to breach the front lines? Find out next week, when our reporter goes deep with this story. Who is this dark-haired warrior who has come and gone, leaving a trail of discount tentacle hentai in its wake.

With a little luck, this coy, sexy Sailor Scout, seen in 2004, will be back in 2005 to titillate and terrify. Rrrrrrrrrrrrrr...
HAPPENINGS

CALENDAR

CAMPUS

Are We There Yet (How Did We Get Here)
Feb. 24, noon to 150 p.m., free
UCF campus
407-928-4087

UCF Conservatory Theatre
Presents: The Visit
Feb. 24 to Feb. 27, various times, various prices
Theatre
Main Stage
407-823-1500

Black History Month Closing Ceremonies
Friday, Feb. 25, 7 p.m. to 10 p.m., free
Student Union
Key West Room 218
msu@ucf.edu

Culture Night
Feb. 26, 8 p.m. to 10 p.m., free
Student Union
Pegasus Ballroom
407-823-1500

Harlen Cohen
Feb. 28, 8 p.m. to 10 p.m., free
Student Union
Garden Key Room 221 A8
407-823-1500

EVENTS

Peking Acrobats
Feb. 24, 7 p.m., $18 to $24
King Center for the Performing Arts
535 N. Wickham Rd.
Melbourne
321-242-2219

Hotrod Kats and Kool... Kool Kitties
Feb. 27, 7 p.m., $5
AKA Lounge
68 L Pine St.
407-839-3707

MegaCon
Feb. 25 to Feb. 27, various times, $17 to $45
Orange County Convention Center

U.S. Pro Rodeo
Feb. 25 to Feb. 26, 7:30 p.m., $15 to $25
Ocean Center
1111 N. Atlantic Ave.
Daytona Beach
386-221-3313

Orlando Wetlands Park Festival
Feb. 26, 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., free
Orlando Wetlands Park
807 N. Mills Ave.
Orlando
386-221-3313

Absolutely Avalon
Feb. 26, 7:30 p.m., free
Founders Square at Avalon Park
13001 Founders Square Drive
407-928-6877

Rain
Feb. 26, 8 p.m., $20 to $30
King Center for the Performing Arts
3955 N. Wickham Rd.
Melbourne
321-242-2219

Festival Independencia Dominicana
Feb. 27, 11 a.m. to 8 p.m., $10
Lee Vista Center
7000 Lee Vista Blvd.
407-282-6003

Mini Cooper Car Show
Feb. 27, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., free
Palm Beach International Airport
5200 International Drive
407-282-2818

SHOWS

Badfish, The Burnin' Smyrnans (rock)
Feb. 24, 9 p.m., $8
The Social
54 N. Orange Ave.
407-246-1419

Shat, The Obscene, Libyan Hit Squad (punk)
Feb. 24, 8 p.m., $5-$7

PLEASE SEE CALENDAR ON 14

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HAPPENINGS

CALENDAR

Pain Principle, Response Negative, NOIR, Persona (metal) Feb. 25, 9 p.m., $6 The Haven 6700 Central Ave. 407-673-2712

Divine in Nature, Kilijoy, Dopeamean, Outer Darkness (metal) Feb. 25, 8 p.m., $5 Orlando Island Oasis 2716 N. Forsyth Rd. 407-657-6047


Keb’ Mo’ (blues) Feb. 25, 7:30 p.m., $20 House of Blues Downtown Disney West Side 407-934-2583

Flogging Molly, Hot Water Music, The Riverboat Gamblers (punk) Feb. 26, 7:30 p.m., $17 M-50-$19.50 House of Blues Downtown Disney West Side 407-934-2583

The Legendary J.C.’s (rock) Feb. 26, 10 p.m., $3-$5 Copper Rocket Pub 101 Lake Ave. 407-645-0009

Still Naive, Atomic Tangerine, Canvas (hard rock) Feb. 26, 9:30 p.m., $6 The Social 54 N. Orange Ave. 407-718-0019

Branden, Number One Fan (rock) Feb. 26, 5 p.m., $8 With Pub 1850 N. Mills Ave. 407-884-5070

Skeleton Key, Land, Low For Words (indie) Feb. 26, 9 p.m., $8 With Pub 1850 N. Mills Ave. 407-884-5070

The Woggles, The Evidents (rock) Feb. 26, 7 p.m., $8 Scrampers 315 State Lane 407-244-0209

Matchbook Romance, Motion City Soundtrack, From First To Last, Scatter the Ashes, Whole Wheat Bread, Bovelder, Sloppy Mesteaters (punk) for “Central Florida Extreme III Action Sports and Music Festival” Feb. 26, 5 p.m. UCF Arena 407-823-6000

The O’Says, Herb Williams & Gibralter (pop) Feb. 26, 5 p.m., $39.95-$59.25 Universal Studios at Universal Orlando 407-363-4000

Toxic Black Rose, Kool Us, Jamm Lab, Daggers Within Smiles, Delusional the Platinum Punk (punk) Feb. 26, 6 p.m., $5-$7 Orlando Island Oasis 2716 N. Forsyth Rd. 407-657-6047

Dodge, 1994 (indie) Feb. 26, 10 p.m., $5 The Peacock Room 1321 N. Mills Ave. 407-229-0404

Casey Brewer, Mere Sumrise, Red Dave (indie) Feb. 26, 7 p.m., $7 O-Coast CS 1022 W. Sunny 407-962-1002

It Dies Today, Twelve Tribes, Anterabees, If Hope Dies, Winter Solstice (hard rock) Feb. 27, 4 p.m., $9 Back Booth 37 W. Pine St 407-999-2570

Gestalt, Side Project (indie) Feb. 27, 10 p.m., free The Peacock Room 1321 N. Mills Ave. 407-229-0404

ELVIS COSTELLO

SPOTLIGHT

BILL BELLAMY

Former MTV vee-jay and current stand-up comedian Bill Bellamy will be performing in Orlando this weekend at the Improv. A native of Newark, NJ, 39-year-old Bellamy is a veteran of several Def Jam comedy specials as well as a few movies of note, including Any Given Sunday and How to Be a Player. Bellamy’s stand-up comedy consists of mostly well-trodden stereotypes (I was born a poor black kid in the projects …), but it’s still pretty funny. And at $25 for one show, it had better be.

So if you have daddy’s gold card or a trust fund or you just haven’t blown all of your student loan money, go see this show. If for no other reason than Bellamy is actually Shaquille O’Neal’s cousin. Shows are Feb. 24 at 8 p.m. and Feb. 25 and 26 at 8 p.m. and 10:30 p.m. at the Improv.

From 13

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**MUSIC**

**CD REVIEWS**

Ida is a band with a name that leads itself well to puns. Ida is a band with a sound, however, that does not. Had a band such as Good Charlotte been named Ida, this review would be full of such classic lines as "Ida like to recommend this, but I'd be too worried about the resting place of my eternal soul."

Furthermore, had Ashlee Simpson's first name been Ida, I could easily include lines like "If I were forced to listen to this, Ida probably jump out a 16th story window."

This is where the problem with Ida lies — the music is simply too good. The band has blatantly denied the critic the joy of crafting such witty puns and chuckling to himself as he writes them down. This could have been the bad review that every critic, at some level in the darkest recesses of his soul, longs to write.

The Mars Volta's sophomore release, *Frances the Mute*, without acknowledging its twisted backstory. Of course, the band's first full-length album, *De-Loused in the Comatorium*, was inspired by the death of a long-time friend, but the most recent blow to the band was the death of former TMV co-lyricist and sound manipulator Vismund Ward, apparently from a drug overdose. The remaining members decided to become drug-free, oddly but I'd be too worried about befuddle lyric-writers and, apparently, Bono, who invited the Kings to open a show.

The five-song epic, meant to be played in a continuous loop, tells the story of a man searching for his biological parents and is based on a diary found by the late Ward in the back of a car while working as a repo man. From the very beginning, with the teeth-grindingly busy "Cygnus... Vismund Cygnus," The Mars Volta launches into a 77-minute, unbroken journey documenting the search of Cygnus' birth mother, whom is later discovered as the murdered title character of Frances.

One of the most diverse songs on the album is the Spanish-sung "L'Via L'Viaquez" which blends in a little flamenco-inspired horn for your dancing pleasure and features the Chili Peppers' Flea and John Frusciante: It's reminiscent almost of a missing track on *De-Loused*. The lyrically dark album concludes with "Cassandra Gemini," a 32-minute monumental track that is almost Pink Floyd-esque. Digital spoken word accents this song superbly, and the chorus of song (which kicks back in after 20 minutes of just sound) makes the half-hour of your life spent listening to one song actually enjoyable.

The Mars Volta will also release a 15-minute "I2" which is to act as a "decoder" to the rest of the album. What's the definition of ostentations again?

Don't expect the rest of the album to sound like MTV's scaled-down version of "The Widow." What you can expect, however, are minutes, several minutes comprised mostly of background noise and random guitar. Yes, song breakdowns are good, in fact essential to albums of this stature, but can we agree that eight minutes of slamming screen doors and highway noise are a little excessive?

Omar Rodriguez-Lopez and Cedric Bixler-Zavala (both of At the Drive-In fame) claim that this album is not a continuation to their critically acclaimed *De-Loused in a Comatorium*, but rather its own entity. That was probably their first mistake with *Frances the Mute*. The major flaw of the album, though it is actually pretty amazing, is that it couldn't live up to the hype created by its own members.

Kings of Leon's debut *Aha Shake Heartbreak* is the next step after a stunning debut, a musical exploration that draws on different genres, including blues and indie rock.

When the Kings (following Metallica) cut off their trademark beards, it seems they left their southern rock with it. Ah, was cut live, with no overdubs, and definitely lives up to their comparison to The Strokes.

Caleb's incomprehensible vocals still befuddle lyric-writers and, apparently, Bono, who invited the Kings to open U2's U.S. tour. Caleb boasts, "I still bring it when I got to bring it." They just bring it differently.

**Ida**

*Heart Like a River*

**Genre:** indie-rock

**Label:** Polyvinyl

**Release date:** Feb. 22

The Kings' 2003 debut *Youth and Young Manhood* was hailed as the best thing to happen to southern rock since Lynyrd Skynyrd. With twangy guitar and spatting vocals, the three Followill brothers and their first cousin brought a fire to your speakers.

*Aha Shake Heartbreak* is the next step after a stunning debut, a musical exploration that draws on different genres, including blues and indie rock.

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**The Mars Volta**

*Frances the Mute*

**Genre:** psychedelic

**Label:** Universal

**Release date:** Mar. 1

In the world of dime-a-dozen emo bands, Armor for Sleep does its best to rise above the rest but falls just short.

There is nothing outright to complain about; the guitars and drums sound great, the singing is on-key (even if the singer's voice is grainy), the lyrics aren't too cheesy (except for the song "Stay on the Ground") and it's mixed well. The problem is that there is nothing that makes this CD stand out either. While they are still better than a lot of the bands out there, you feel like they aren't pushing themselves.

There are a few songs that stand out more than others, such as "Remember to Feel Real" and "The End," but for the most part, there's nothing too memorable. It's a good CD, but it's not as catchy as their first album. So it ends up being just average — nothing great, nothing horrible, but a good middle-ground album that leaves room for improvement.

**Armor for Sleep**

*What to Do When You Are Dead*

**Genre:** emo

**Label:** Equal Vision

**Release date:** Feb. 22

**JoCROX**

**Chris Bowers**

**Sara Stock**

**Ricky Surillo**
Park Ave CDs Jr.: Top 25 for the week of Feb. 13 - 19

1. Various Artists
   Drive-Thru Records: Pure Volume Concentration

2. Goldfinger
   Disconnection Notice

3. Lagwagon
   Live in a Dive

4. The Game
   The Documentary

5. LCD Soundsystem
   LCD Soundsystem

6. Eisley
   Room Noises

7. Postal Service
   We Will Become Silhouettes

8. Pepper
   Kona Town

9. Chris Rock
   Never Scared

10. Bright Eyes
    Im Wide Awake, Its Morning

11. Bright Eyes
    Digital Ash in a Digital Urn

12. Various Artists
    Policia: A Tribute to The Police

13. John Legend
    Get Lifted

14. Unwritten Law
    Here's to the Mourning

15. Jack Johnson
    Get Lifted

16. Sage Francis
    A Healthy Distrust

17. 21. Fallen From the Sky
    Tune Out the World

18. Green Day
    American Idiot

19. Killers
    Hot Fuss

20. Chemical Brothers
    Push the Button

21. Ed Harcourt
    Strangers

Whole Wheat Bread may not look the part, but this punk-rock trio has the hooks and the melodies to vie with the best of contemporary pop-punk.

**Punk rock's not all white-bread angst**

Whole Wheat Bread proves not only that Minority Rules, but it rocks hard as well.

**SHARON PARE**
Staff Writer

Whole Wheat Bread, also known as Jacksonville's Ghetto Punks, is a "dirty south punk rock / American crunkrock" band. These few words entirely describes what this punk-rock group is all about.

The trio is composed of Aaron Abraham, 20 — vocals/guitar, Nicholas Largen, 22 — vocals/bass/guitar, and Joseph Largen, 23 — drums.

Abraham, a native Trinidadian, met Nicholas Largen (brother of Joseph) to originally pursue a rap career together. But Abraham soon found out that Nicholas played bass, and things fell further into place when Abraham learned that Joseph played the drums.

Whole Wheat Bread (WWB) has only been together a short while, but since releasing its debut album Minority Rules in late January, the band has already received impressive reviews and remarks from critics (their album is available nationwide).

Minority Rules features 11 searing punk rock tracks, but by the last three bonus tracks, WWB's "alter-egos" Nasty Nigga Fleetwood, DJ Dirtree Skeet and Mr. Whitefolks emerge.

With genuine punk rock followed by bona fide rapping to a hip-hop beat, these guys prove to be a band that can mix it up when called for. If you couldn't figure it out yet, this band is made up of black musicians, which is fairly uncommon in the punk genre.

Abraham took time out of the band's current touring itinerary to answer a few short questions about WWB.

**SP:** I am a Jacksonville home-girl too, don't we kick ass?

**AA:** Hell yeah! DUUUUVALL!

**SP:** For the fans that have never heard or seen your band, what is the usual reaction you see when you hit the first few notes and start punk-rockin' out on stage?

**AA:** People don't know how to react. Jaws drop, heads turn.

Please see WHOLE on 17
Whole Wheat Bread is ready to return to hip-hop roots after acclaimed punk record

From 16

SP: I want to congratulate you on the new record you just released. What is your favorite song on that record, and why?
AA: My favorite is "Scar Your Lungs," because it's the most personal song on the album.

SP: When WWB first got started after giving rapping the boot, were you ridiculed by other peers because of the music you were playing?
AA: I wasn't really ridiculed, but I was questioned. A lot of my friends didn't really understand the punk side of me at first, but they're all about it now.

SP: What have you heard about the University of Central Florida thus far?
AA: I heard there's a bunch of hot Puerto Rican chicks.

SP: Who has been the best act you have staged yet on your tour?
AA: This band from Atlanta called El Pus who are coincidentally also all black. The Suicide Girls were cool. Locally, we like One Drop.

SP: For those who haven't heard your stuff before, who would you primarily compare yourselves to that has had the heaviest influence on your music?
AA: Green Day

SP: Tell me more about these 3 bonus tracks! Have you decided to come out with an "alter-ego" CD and have one totally punk-rock and one strictly hip-hop?
AA: Yes, it's in the plans. It's more than alter-egos though. It completes the circle. It's another side of us that's just as real.

This urban punk group will be performing with headliners such as Matchbook Romance, Scatter the Ashes, Motion City Soundtrack and From First to Last on Saturday at the UCF Arena. Tickets range from $12-$17. This collaborated music and sports event will feature extreme sports such as skateboarding, BMX and freestyle Moto X. Local bands will be playing the outside venue, which starts at 5 p.m. (free), with Through You (who has a 12-year-old drummer), Boxelder and Sloppy Meataters. The main event starts at 8 p.m. Purchase your tickets through ticket master or at the UCF arena. For more information on WWB, go to: www.wholewheatbread.net or myspace.com/wholewheatbread.

Whole Wheat Bread will be performing Saturday at the UCF Arena - be sure to get there early.

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**COR 2005 TOUR**

**CHAMPIONS of ROCK**

Ze Bond Rocks - Stemm Cell
Priapism - Lucid Fly
Pulse Nein - Gotti 13
I-4 Band - Fireflight
Nine 13 - Rabbits with Glasses

FRI FEB 25th @ HOUSE OF BLUES
Tickets $13 - Doors open 5pm - Show Starts 6pm
For Info or Tix - www.ChampionsofRock.com - www.hob.com or call 407.658.6311
Merchant of Venice: decent Bard film

But when it comes to Shakespeare, either you care or you don’t

MIKE FERRARO
Staff Writer

A ll too often these days, filmmakers love to turn Shakespeare plays into modern-day high school affairs. They are more interested in garnering a bigger audience than they are in keeping the original work as it has been for hundreds of years. Ten Things I Hate About You and O were some of the latest retellings of his works, and not only was the language of Shakespeare torn away, the mood was missing as well. Director Michael Radford keeps his version of Merchant of Venice in the time period it is supposed to take place in, with the dialogue Shakespeare had intended.

The film takes place in the late 16th century in Venice, when religious intolerance finds its way into the laws of the government. Christians rule over the Jewish community, and there are actual laws that condition Jews to identify themselves with a red cap. They are also forced to live in ghettos. How hypocritical some of these fine Christians are though — when they need something (like money for instance), they have no problem going to their side of the city to ask for a loan.

Two such Christian citizens, Antonio (Jeremy Irons) and Bassanio (Joseph Fiennes), find their way to Shylock (Al Pacino) and ask him for 3000 ducats. Bassanio needs such a fee so that he may try to venture to his love (Portia) and earn her hand in marriage. Since money-lending is the only profession Jews are able to perform (stupid laws), Shylock obliges.

Should the loan not be paid in three months time, Shylock doesn't demand interest. Instead, perhaps due to all the years of humiliation he and his people have suffered through, he demands a pound of Antonio's flesh.

The direction and cinematography in The Merchant of Venice are absolutely astounding. Every shot is just as beautiful as the last, but you'll wish the story is just as great. As with a lot of Shakespeare's work, this story is vacant of characters one should sympathize with. When Shylock doesn't get his money or his flesh, a trial ensues and Shylock becomes so demanding, you almost don't want him to be paid anything. Nor do you feel any compassion for Antonio, since the loan was never paid back.

Al Pacino's performance is the finest amongst the cast. He transforms perfectly into the Shakespeare realm, never reminding the audience that it was he who screamed, “Aiccal” in Dog Day Afternoon and “Woo-ha” in A Scosc of a Woman. He gets the best dialogue too, especially during the final court trial, where he questions the act of slavery and reminds them that they are human beings as well.

While the story lacks certain elements, this is one of the finest adaptations of Shakespeare yet. Drama fanatics that love Shakespeare (and this play) will thoroughly enjoy themselves here, while non-Shakespeare fans may find The Merchant of Venice yawn-inducing.

Opens tomorrow at Eastran.
Trust us, this film is just as bad as its atrocious title

Diary of a Mad Black Woman a disjointed, cliche-ridden mess

CHRISTY LEMIRE
Associated Press

The ads for Diary of a Mad Black Woman suggest a re-envisioning of the Martin Lawrence cross-dressing comedy Big Momma’s House, or perhaps Mrs. Doubtfire tailored specifically for black audiences.

There’s Tyler Perry, the film’s co-star and screenwriter, dragged up in grandma duds, a wig and a fat suit, waving a gun around and whipping out sassy one-liners about how she ain’t around and whipping out sassy character could be talking about drag up in grandma’s duds, a also a domestic drama and a love story, wrapped up in one’s wife for most of her life.

Helen laments while telling her mother about her failed marriage. “He was my everything.”

Surely some filmgoers will find affirmation in the film’s message that any obstacle or heartbreak is manageable through faith.

Good for them!

And if anyone can sit through this experience for two hours and come out with something positive, good for them, too!

Perry, who has two other roles in the movie, based the script on his play of the same name, and intended Helen’s story to be a source of inspiration.

Helen is living a life of opulence at the film’s start as the wife of powerful Atlanta lawyer Charles McCarter (Steve Harris). Superficially, they seem to have it all; privately, he treats her with a cruelty that is shocking.

On their 18th wedding anniversary, Charles coldly kicks her out of the house, literally, to allow his longtime mistress (Lisa Marcos) to move in. (The fact that he rejects the beautiful, classy, thoughtful Helen for a bossy hoochie mama in tight, trashy clothes is the least of the movie’s problems).

And so Helen embarks on a journey of rediscovery, finding out who she is on her own after marrying young and deriving her identity from being someone’s wife for most of her life. She gets a job as a waitress. She reconnects with the family members and the old neighborhood from which Charles forced her to distance herself.

She also learns how to trust again with the help of the sensitive Orlando, who is truly too good to be true, even though his beard, cornrows and perpetual bandanna scream out “bad boy.” (Despite the make-under, the Young and the Restless star is a gorgeous creature to behold. It’s no wonder she falls for him — though he does seem to be stalking her at times, and he tries to romance her with cheesy lines like, “I know you don’t believe in fairy tales, but if you did, I’d be your knight in shining armor.”)

If the filmmakers had stuck to this storyline, by the way, they would have been just fine. They would have come up with a made-for-Lifetime movie, but they would have been fine.

“I don’t even know where to pick up the pieces of my life,” Helen laments while telling her mother about her failed marriage. “He was my everything.”

Diary of a Mad Black Woman tries to be everything too, and ends up getting nothing right.
Seriously, we’ll kill ourselves if we see Joan Rivers

The Oscars: Who’s snubbed and who’ll win

MIKE FERRARO AND DIANNA ZISMAN
Staff Writers

Best Picture

Million Dollar Baby likely confused too many people who thought it was the sequel to The Next Karate Kid (and wondered where Pat Morita was). Sideways may be considered too subtle, middle-aged, and wine-y to Academy voters who prefer fiery explosions and maritime tragedies. And although Ray is riding high on nostalgia and a fantastic performance from Foxx, the movie itself isn’t what most people would call “good.” That leaves Finding Neverland and The Aviator and, of the two, Aviator has the panache and typical Hollywood flair that warrants the award.

And the Oscar Goes To: The Aviator

Best Director

Where is Michel Gondry’s nomination for his marvelous work in Eternal Sunshine? Any film that Eastwood or Sorceese seem to put out these days earns them a nomination automatically. Remember Gangs of New York? Thankfully the Academy doesn’t feel that way about George Lucas. Since Clint got it last year, the Academy may feel the need to finally award Sorceese, even though he deserved it for far better films (see Raging Bull or Goodfellas). And the Oscar goes to: Martin Sorceese.

Best Actress

Most of the nominees did excellent work (particularly Hilary Swank and Catalina Moreno), but Kate Winslet absolutely owns this category. Her nuanced performance in Eternal Sunshine helped carry the film and prevented Clementine from turning into a caricature, an extremely possible in lesser hands. If she doesn’t walk away with the Oscar, something’s rotten in the state of Hollywood.

And the Oscar Goes To: If there’s any justice in the world, Kate Winslet. Realistically, Swank.

Best Actor

Everyone has already come to the conclusion that Paul Giannetti got robbed of a nomination; let’s talk about another shaft. The Academy obviously watched Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind (even though it was snubbed in many categories), but what about Jim Carrey? Kate Winslet wasn’t working alone, you know. And stop with these “make-up” nominations (Johnny Depp and Clint Eastwood). Give them nominations when they deserve it.

And the Oscar Goes to: Since everyone else is predicting Jamie Foxx, we’re going to pull for Don Cheadle.

Best Supporting Actress

Natalie Portman proved — between Garden State and Closer — that she does indeed have talent, unlike her performance in Star Wars: Episode II suggests. Sophie Okonedo can now thank her lucky stars that people can finally forget that she was in that wretched Ace Ventura sequel. Linney got the only nomination for Kinsey and, while she earned it, where are the others for that film?

And the Oscar Goes to: Cate Blanchett. She played Katherine Hepburn and managed to embody everyone about her.

Best Supporting Actor

That Alan Alda received a nomination for his blink-and-you-missed-it performance in The Aviator will likely astound people for generations to come. Don’t expect to see Thomas Haden Church bringing the statue home just yet either, as the Academy won’t be inclined to reward someone who starred in George of the Jungle 2 quite so easily.

And the Oscar Goes To: Like Sorceese, Freeman will find himself rewarded for a lesser role to make up for the countless times he’s been screwed by the Academy.

Best Animated Film

So the Academy was able to tell that Shrek 2 and Shark Tale were animated, big deal. Too bad they couldn’t tell them apart from what we call “good films.”

And the Oscar Goes to: The Incredibles.

Best Original Score

2004 graced us with two beautiful and haunting scores from Jon Brion (Eternal Sunshine and 1 Heart Huckabees), yet the Academy didn’t recognize his skills.

Clint Eastwood pulled a John Carpenter and scored Million Dollar Baby and even he didn’t earn a nomination.

And the Oscar Goes to: We’ll just wait and see.

Best Song

Is it too late to re-nominate “A Kiss at the End of the Rainbow” or “Belleville Rendez-vous”?

And the Oscar Goes To: “Believe” — The Polar Express.

Andrew Lloyd Webber already has an Oscar to his name, and “Oscar Winners The Counting Crows” just doesn’t sound right.

Best Original Screenplay

The writing categories have typically been the Academy’s consolation prizes to movies shafted out of the Best Picture nod. No surprise, then, to see both Hotel Rwanda and Eternal Sunshine in this one.

And the Oscar Goes To: Eternal Sunshine, Show it some love, Academy.

Best Adapted Screenplay

All the films in this category deserved it, and this is one of the few categories this year with a surprise — Before Sunset. It was certainly one of the best films of the year, but not one you’d think the Academy would notice. Congratulations are in order for the Academy, for noticing this small yet grand picture.

And the Oscar Goes to: Sideways. Since it will no doubt get the shaft in every other category, this will be the only one it will indubitably win.

MOVIES

THE BIG AND HIGH SATURDAY AND EVERY MONDAY

U.S. movie revenues for Feb. 18-21
All dollar figures in millions
Rank Film — Studio/producer
Gross to date — Weeks in release — Screens
1. Hitch — $19.7
   $99.0 · Two weeks · 3,575
2. Constantine — $33.6
   $33.6 · One week · 3,006
3. Because of Winn-Dixie — $13.2
   $13.2 · One week · 3,188
4. Son of the Mask — $9.1
   $9.1 · One week · 2,366
5. Million Dollar Baby — $8.1
   $8.1 · One week · 3,571
6. Are We There Yet? — $8.1
   $7.1 · Five weeks · 1,571
7. Boogeyman — $6.1
   $6.1 · Three weeks · 2,529
8. Poor Hufflepuff Movie — $5.3
   $5.2 · Two weeks · 1,719
9. The Aviator — $4.9
   $8.9 · 10 weeks · 1,566
10. The Wedding Date — $4.5
    $4.5 · Three weeks · 1,100

SOURCE: AP

MOVIE TIMES

REGAL WATERFORD LAKES
541 N. ALAFAYA TRAIL, 407-977-1107
Andrew Lloyd Webber's The Phantom of the Opera (PG-13)
12:00
Are We There Yet? (PG)
12:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:00 12:00
The Aviator (PG-13)
4:00 8:00
Because of Winn-Dixie (PG)
12:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 10:00 12:00
The Boogeyman (PG-13)
7:00 10:00
Constantine (R)
12:00 1:00 4:00 6:00 7:00 9:00 10:00 1:00
11:00 12:00
Cursed (PG-13)
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Hide and Seek (R)
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Hitch (PG-13)
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Man of the House (PG-13)
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12:00
10 tips for actors to take home an Academy Award

GINA SCANLON
Staff Writer

It's that time of year again, kids, for the biggest award show of the season. Stars primp for days and put their best egos forward. Designers go nutty, hair stylists take their jobs way too seriously and Jean Rivers makes everyone want to barf in a bag and pray for her termination.

The Academy Awards have also reached an unhealthy level of dangerously serious Oscar parties that involve gambling and a red carpet. Why is this political fashion show so intriguing to so many people? After all, Hollywood (especially actors) tends to play by the rules in order to snag a golden guy.

Here are 10 rules, based on recent trends, that eager aspiring thespians can follow to someday get up on that stage and thank their agent... and their mom.

One/Two: Gain or lose a whole lot of weight. Case in point: Renee Zellweger. Her nomination for playing the over-indulgent Bridget Jones in 2001 got people talking, although it didn't resolve in her favor. However, after getting people's attention, she lost the Bridget fat and more for Chicago (2002), which also got her a nomination. The following year, the Academy seemed so sick of seeing her stuff and stare herself that they decided to grant her the Oscar for Best Supporting Actress (Cold Mountain). Smart, Renee.

Three: Wear prosthetics. Case in point: Nicole Kidman. As soon as she slapped on a fake nose to play Virginia Wool in 2002, her disguise was 10 times more believable, and she brought home the gold. Not to mention she also had a biographical role, which leads to...

Four: Play a real person. Case in point: Almost all of this year's Best Actor nominees. Leonardo DiCaprio in The Aviator, Johnny Depp in Finding Neverland, Don Cheadle in Hotel Rwanda, and of course, the most buzzed-about performance of the year, Jamie Foxx playing Ray Charles, who is also blind, which leads to:

Five: Lose one of your five senses. Case in point: Samantha Morton. For Sweet and Lowdown in 1999, she played Hattie, a young deaf girl who succeeded in being one of the very few nominated actresses who spoke no dialogue.


Seven: Visit a psychic ward to get into character. Case in point: Russell Crowe and Angelina Jolie. Crowe and Jolie got so into tune with their inner psychos for their roles in 2002's A Beautiful Mind and 1999's Girl, Interrupted, they had audience and Academy members alike screaming to nominate these dynamic and complex performances.

Eight: Be yourself. If you're a man, play a woman. If you're a woman... you get the idea. Case in point: Halle Berry playing herself in 2001. However, in point: Hilary Swank in Boys Don't Cry in 1999, for her role as the young woman who was posing as a man. The challenge paid off for Swank, who won in the same year Annette Bening was nominated for her critically acclaimed performance in American Beauty.

Nine: Speak with a British accent so well that people think you're really British. Case in point: Gwyneth Paltrow. In 1998, she wooed the academy in Shakespeare in Love, winning the Best Actress Oscar. Her accent was so believable that some people to this day still think she's from the UK.

Ten: Play a bitch who deserves to be a bitch. Case in point: Julia Roberts as Erin Brockovich. In 1999, Roberts finally walked away with the statue for being a tough cookie single mom battling a hefty civil case.

Now that you know a handful of the rules, go get that Oscar!
MOVIES

Predicting that other Sunday night movie awards show

Superbabies, Catwoman, Stiller and Dubya top bets at your 2005 Razzie party

MATT HEDGECOCK
Staff Writer

A round this time every year, there comes an award show that recognizes incompetence, idiocy and lack of invention.

No, it's not the Grammys. It's the Razzies, an annual "event" saluting and denigrating the worst films of the year. Coming right before The Academy Awards, the Razzies serve as a reminder of the crap that Hollywood churns out every year, as though our minds were not scarred enough already.

Believe it or not, this year actually marks the 25th anniversary of the Razzie Awards. The first film to receive the ignominious Worst Film of the Year award was the 1980 film Can't Stop the Music, a musical comedy starring The Village People.

The Razzies have gained notoriety over the past several years thanks to the proliferation of the Internet, which was created in 1969 by the Department of Defense for the purpose of mocking bad films.

The nominations are usually fairly predictable — the movie which has been beat-up on most of the year (Battlefield Earth, Gigli, etc.) takes home the most nominations.

This year's whoppin' lgrol is the atrocious Halle Berry vehicle Catwoman, with seven nominations. Following close behind is Oliver Stone's bloated biopic Alexander with six. Michael Moore's anti-Bush documentary Fahrenheit 9/11 was also nominated — more specifically President Bush for "Worst Actor." Razzie "winners" will be announced at 7 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 20.

And, of course, because no awards show can go unpredicted, The Indic offers up its preferred picks for the worst of the worst.

**Worst Picture — Superbabies: Baby Geniuses 2**

In truth, this film actually deserves about 12 Oscars. However, since those liberals in Hollywood refused to nominate it for anything, we'll take anything it can get.

**Worst Actor — Ben Stiller for Along Came Polly, Anchorman, Dodgeball, Envy, and Starsky and Hutch**

Despite his small roles in the mildly amusing Anchorman and Dodgeball, the rest of the films were sheer trash. Stiller deserves this award for being the biggest male whore in Hollywood right now.

**Worst Actress — Shawn and Marlon (the Wayans Sisters) for White Chicks**

Despite Halle Berry's Catwoman badness, at least she doesn't look like the hideous Chernobyl freak troll-babies from White Chicks.

**Worst Screen Couple — George W. Bush and Condoleezza Rice for Fahrenheit 9/11**

Complete lack of chemistry. I wanted sparks, people! Sparks!

**Worst Supporting Actress — Sharon Stone for Catwoman**

Casting Sharon Stone as an evil cosmetic product queen seems like a recipe for success, but somewhere it all went wrong.

**Worst Supporting Actor — Jon Voight in Superbabies: Baby Geniuses 2**

He was much better in The Karate Dog.

**Worst Director — 'Pitof' for Catwoman**

I'm sorry Pitof. If you direct Catwoman you are not allowed to have a snooty one-word name. Thems the rules.

**Worst Remake or Sequel — Alien vs. Predator**

This isn't so much a film as it is a good reason to launch Paul W.S. Anderson into space. Very few directors can claim to have ruined two classic movie monsters.

**Worst Screenplay — Superbabies: Baby Geniuses 2**

My fan-fiction Baby Geniuses sequel was way better.

**MOVIE TIMES**

*From 110*

12:30 6:20 7:00 9:40 12:30
Meet the Fockers (PG-13)
12:30 3:30
Million Dollar Baby (PG-13)
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Pooh's Heffalump Movie (G)
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Sideways (R)
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Son of the Mask (PG)
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The Wedding Date (PG-13)
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COLONIAL PROMENADE 6

4672 E COLONIAL DRIVE, 407-988-8224
Blade: Trinity (R)
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9:50
Darkness (PG-13)
1:10 4:10 7:10 10:15
Fat Albert (PG)
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Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events (PG)
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The Motorcycle Diaries (R)
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Oceans Twelve (PG-13)
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The Polar Express (G)
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The SpongeBob SquarePants Movie (PG)
1:20 5:20 8:20
White Noise (PG-13)
1:55 4:55 7:55
La MOVIES AT WEXIVA RIVERWALK 8

2141 N SEMORAN BLVD, 407-988-7420
Raven (PG)
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00
Son of the Mask (PG)
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00
CINEMARK 20 AT FESTIVAL BAY

5150 INTERNATIONAL DRIVE, 407-351-7171
Are We There Yet? (PG)
12:30 2:30 4:30 6:30 8:30 10:30
Are We There Yet? (PG)
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Because of Winn-Dixie (PG)
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The Aviator (PG-13)
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Because of Winn-Dixie (PG)
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Being Julia (R)
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Boogyman (PG-13)
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Coach Carter (PG-13)
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Constantine (R)
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Finding Neverland (PG)
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Man of the House (PG-13)
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Son of the Mask (PG)
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00
The Wedding Date (PG-13)
12:35 5:10 9:45
ENZIAN CINEMA CAFE

1300 S ORLANDO AVE, 407-626-1088
The Merchant of Venice (R)
3:45 6:45
DMAC

3955 MAGNOLIA AVE, 407-992-1200
Fear and Trembling (NR)
Friday and Saturday: 3:30 5:30 7:30 9:30
Sunday: 3:00 7:00
All listed times are for the weekend and subject to change.
It is past time for an overhaul

Someone, breathe life into coop games

IVAN VELEZ
Staff Writer

The latest cooperative big-name multiplayer video game is this month's underwhelming Champions: Return to Arms. Champions added more or less cosmetic features to last year's attempt to translate the Everquest franchise into an accessible four-player hack-and-slash game. But this new sequel hasn't taken any chances with the genre's tried-and-true formula.

Before Champions did four-player fantasy hack-and-slash with swords and magic, Diablo did it in 1996. And before Diablo had four players huddled together closely as they looted dark caverns and battled the undead, Gauntlet had already done the same thing in arcades in 1985.

The difference between those games and Champions is that those games defined the genre while Champions merely rides on their coattails.

Somewhere along the evolution of multiplayer gaming, cooperative gameplay took a wrong turn and got stuck going in circles.

Deathmatch turned into team play and then into large-scale virtual warfare.

Text-based multi-user dungeons turned into multiplayer RPGs and then massively multiplayer online RPGs.

Cooperative multiplayer games haven't changed much in two decades. Gauntlet lets players control a warrior, a wizard or an elf archer. Diablo lets players control a warrior, a sorcerer or a rogue (who specialized in bows). The newly released Champions lets players

COURTESY SONY COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT AMERICA INC.

MANNO A MARKO

News flash: your friend might not be right

Marilyn Manno
Staff Writer

S that your eyes and put your hands over your ears. Tine out the world for a second and just listen to yourself. For some reason, you'll be able to think more clearly, and it's easier to trust your instincts without the outside distractions.

No, I am not a yoga instructor, and this isn't a lesson in tuning into your "chakras." It's a lesson in tuning out your friends.

Man, they really think they know what's best for you, don't they? "You should do this/that," "call him," "don't call her," "dump him," are all some of the pearls of wisdom your friends may drop into your cup on any given day. Why? Well because they "know you so well," of course.

Do they? I mean how well does your best friend really know you? Do they know everything? Because when it comes down to it, the person who knows the most about what's going on in your life is the last person you will go to when you need advice yourself.

Now I know I'm getting a little philosophical and maybe even a little cliché, but gimme a minute to warm up. I might eventually make a point here.

Remember our little breathing exercise? Aside from the fact that you probably looked like a total lunatic with your eyes shut and your hands cupped over your ears in the middle of your psyche class, you really did manage to have a clear thought, didn't you?

I don't really know what that thought was, and for some of you, frankly, I don't want to know, but the point is that you can

MARKO A MANNON

Proposing: a public enemy?

The potential backfires of PDA outweigh the benefits

Nicholas Markovich
Staff Writer

A couple of weeks ago I was sitting in class when the gigantic bear from Kanye West's The College Dropout opened the door and walked in. Needless to say, everyone in the room froze. My first thought was that this creature was about to pull out the heavy artillery and commit the 2005 Valentine's Day massacre. "Paint the room red with love?" is what I envisioned him screaming as he closed the curtain on 30 future broadcasters.

Maybe I'm more paranoid than I thought. Or maybe it's my New York upbringing.

Anyway, it didn't happen. In Fuzzy the Love Bear's hand was not a weapon of any sort, only a bouquet of flowers. Turns out that he (no doubt inspired by my last column) decided to surprise his girl mid-class by delivering flowers in a gigantic teddy bear suit. She seemed flattered. The professor got a kick out of it. The class loved it. I was impressed (tempered slightly by a desire to kick him in the nuts for having a girl worth the ordeal for). Great moment all around. And it is for his actions that I deem this guy the column's first Love Superstar of the Week. For his efforts, his triumph gets recorded for posterity in this column, and I'm sure his girl would give him something infinitely more wonderful that evening.

But before everyone gets all excited about the potential rewards of sticking your romantic neck out in public, let me flip the coin. I have always been fascinated by guys who propose at sporting events. I believe this practice has been going on since the invention of the Jumbotron, and I always considered it a particularly peculiar practice. Raymond James Stadium may be sacred and holy ground to you, but perhaps she was thinking more toward the beach, a great restaurant or "that special place" that the two of you first met.

The fat guy with B-U-C-S scrwed across his chest and a wicked case of B.Q. might not provide the ambience she has envisioned since she began dreaming of this day 15 years ago.

At halftime of a Magic game, some guy here from here on known as "The Arbiter of Sadness and Misery"—proposed to his girl on the floor of the TD Waterhouse Centre. The ticket gate for this game was 12,497 people. That is 12,497 people more than needed to see what happen next.

The Arbiter tells his chick — from here on known as "Evil Heartless Shrew" — to close her eyes. He gets down on one knee. Goes into some uber-romantic heavy stuff (just speculation; I have no idea). Waits for the greatest moment of his life. She puts her face in her

Please see MEDIOCRE on 116

Please see DON'T on 116

Please see ALWAYS on 116
March 12 to March 20: Spring Break. Make the most of it.

MATT HEDGECOCK
Staff Writer

Orlando Events
- March 18 — Kenny Rogers at the UCF Arena
- March 19 — Elton John at the TD Waterhouse Center
- Various games — Atlanta Braves Spring Training at Disney's Wide World of Sports Complex
- Downtown boozin' — Head down to Orange Avenue any day of the week and partake in the crazy drink specials.

In State
Daytona Beach events
- Daily — Ocean Deck Sand Bar and Plaza Ocean Club parties with live music
- March 19-26 — Extreme Sports Skateboard Exhibition at the Oceanfront Bandshell
- March 18-20 — Spring Car Show at Daytona International Speedway
- Innumerable bars and various events

Key West events
- March 12-13 — Key West Fishing Tournament Kick-off Event
- March 19 — 43rd Annual Conch Shell Blowing Contest
- Bars and great beaches

Miami Events
- March 4-14 — Miami Carnival — biggest Hispanic street party in the U.S.
- Various games — Miami Heat at the American Airlines Arena
- Nikki's Beach Bar, Pump and various other hot nightspots

Panama City Beach
- No. 1 Spring Break destination in the United States. Beach and bar areas feature pretty much never-ending parties throughout March.

Tampa Events
- Various games — New York Yankees Spring Training at Legends Field
- Ybor City bars and clubs

Out of State
Acapulco, Mexico — Known as the "Western Jewel" of Mexico, this city is famous for its ultra-deluxe, multi-million dollar nightclubs.

Cancun, Mexico — The world's most popular Spring Break destination — a Mecca for beer and casual sex.

Mantego Bay, Jamaica — Favored spot for vacationers seeking a more natural spring break — but night spots still abound.

Nassau, Bahamas — Close to Paradise Island, home to The Atlantis Resort and Casino.

Negril, Jamaica — One of the more recently discovered Spring Break "hot spots," Negril is famous for its coral cliffs.

New Orleans, La. — Though Mardi Gras is long gone, The Big Easy is still a haven for sin-seekers.

Discount Spring Break vacation packages for any of these locations are available from a wide variety of travel agencies.
Facebook Web site connects collegiates
UCF students are embracing this MySpace alternative

NICOLE SCHAUB
Staff Writer

Forget IMing, chat rooms or member profile searches. The newest craze to hit the Web is thefacebook.com. Thefacebook is connecting college students from all over the world through a social directory containing pictures and profiles in a more convenient and fun way.

Thefacebook, created by five Harvard undergrads last year, currently has over 1.5 million members from more than 300 colleges and universities all over the world. The Web site contains photos, interest groups and profiles with information about each member from their major to their relationship status.

Each member's page on thefacebook contains a list of "my groups," "my friends" and "my messages." Members can join "groups," which range from categories and interest groups such as "The Bob Marley and Reggae" group to "Napoleonic Dynamite is Flippin' Sweet" to "Crews:" to "Every hour is happy hour."

Joining a group is a chance for people to talk about their shared interests and also make new friends from other schools online. These groups are created by members and allow them to invite anyone and join anything that applies to their interests and personality.

"I love the group I started called "Diab" odems and Pearls, for the classiest girls," UCF junior Maggie Johnson said. "I invited all my close girl friends from UCF and my high school to join, and now it has over 30 members."

Thefacebook is also a great way for people to reconnect past friendships from high school and find out what those classmates are doing now. "I like talking to people from high school that I wouldn't normally have kept in touch with," UCF sophomore Julie Bream said. "I'll just go to the search link and type in people's names from my graduating class, I ended up finding over 1,000 members."

Thefacebook also has certain lingo that one must learn once they become a member. For example, if you want to playfully flirt with another member, then you can "poke them." Poking is done by simply clicking a button to the person you want to poke. "Poking is weird, it's a little guy that pops up and basically pokes at the screen with his finger," UCF senior Stacy McCord said. "It's kinda stupid, but you can jokingly poke your friends to be funny."

Something else that might seem strange to the non-facebook member is the meaning of a "friend," according to the site. Although members may invite the people they know from classes, high school or other organizations to join, members may also invite people they met online to be their "friends." Inviting someone to be your friend is done by sending them a message to their account. They may either accept or reject your friend invitation, and it is done completely through messaging and email.

Another facebook term is "groupies." A groupie is a person in a specific group that is friends with more than half of its members. "I am a groupie of the 'I love the KD Ladies' group because all the girls in the group are my friends," UCF senior Jaime Planells said.

Some members have even found potential relationships from chatting with other members through messages. "I met a guy through facebook and went on a date with him," UCF senior Kristin Kludjian said. "He goes to UCF and he knew some friends of mine, so I figured it was safe and we ended up having a great time."

Although many college students are taking advantage of the new Web sensation, there are others that are less excited about it and feel that it is a waste of time. "I think it's a creepy way of stalking people," UCF senior Ryan Fagan said. "I really want nothing to do with it and don't want other people to know all my information, but my girlfriend loves it."

"If I want to talk to one of my friends then I'll call or IM them, " UCF junior Jillian Cruz said. "However, thefacebook forces you to talk to people you may not want to and before you know it you're talking to Ronald Forkner from ninth grade English. But, hey, maybe I'll join it once I figure out how to sign up."

The signing-up process for thefacebook is simple and only requires a student's college/university e-mail address and password. Once you find that out, then you're on your way to joining groups, chatting with old friends and meeting new ones.
A Titan of a Show appeals to all

Michael Lawrence
Staff Writer

Teen Titans was one of the most popular comics of the 1980s. Every month the highly detailed art of George Perez combined with the multi-layered and at-times humorous writing of Marv Wolfman to form one hell of a dynamic duo. Each member of the team was given his or her own moment to shine but also played off each other brilliantly. The troubled Raven would clash with the goofy Beast (also known as Changeling), the serious Robin formed the oddest of odd couples with the naïve alien Starfire, while Cyborg would always try to prove to himself that he was worthy of taking charge of the team. It never ceased to be entertaining which is why the the faux-anime stylings and goofiness of the Cartoon Network Teen Titans cartoon appeared to be so ill-fitting. That is, initially.

The show used to be bubbly and kiddy. Now it's dark and more accurate to the feel of the comics. The show isn't 100% faithful to the comics, but it gets the important stuff right. There's enough of a balance to appeal to everyone from die-hard fans to 8-year-olds. Yes, the show is geared for children, but the scriptwriting goes beyond that, and the writers fill the show with cameos from the DC universe to appease comic geeks.

Second-rate villains like Dr. Light (in non-rapist form) and former Green Arrow sidekick Speedy (a former Titan member) are only two of the many characters who make appearances. As good as that sounds, you can't have a super-hero show without some worthy adversaries. They have tweaked some of the villains from the comics to fit the standards and style of the show and it works.

Brother Blood, a centuries-old European cult leader in the comics, runs a gothic cult sisterhood that is to say... well, it's just as vicious and powerful. The battles between him and Cyborg are brutal.

Second-rate villains like Dr. Light (in non-rapist form) and former Green Arrow sidekick Speedy (a former Titan member) are only two of the many characters who make appearances. As good as that sounds, you can't have a super-hero show without some worthy adversaries. They have tweaked some of the villains from the comics to fit the standards and style of the show and it works.

Mediocre games flood multiplayer game genre

From 113

Choose a barbarian warrior, an erudite wizard or a wood elf ranger. The setting for all three games is heavily detailed art of Dungeons and Dragons, which is to say everything resembles Lord of the Rings — adventurers, magic and monsters.

Unfortunately, similarities run in more than just cooperative games that share fantasy settings.

Diablo taught that monsters often drop red potions which refill health and blue potions that restore mana for magical spells.

Enemy soldiers in last year's X-Men Legends often drop red health packs or blue packs that restore mutant energy.

In Hunter: The Reckoning Wayward, players blast their way through ghosts and gargoyles while collecting new weapons, ammunition and spells and developing their characters into pure death machines.

In the previous sentence, change the enemies to raiders and mutants and the game title to Fallout: Brotherhood of Steel and now you have yet another derivative cooperative game.

It's a sad situation when an entire genre is so utterly saturated with cookie-cutter, mediocre games. Cooperative games need new life because they provide such a vastly different gaming experience from competitive multiplayer games. Coordinating strategy or even accidentally throwing your teammate over a cliff in X-Men Legends makes for a much more light-hearted multiplayer experience than talking smack and getting frustrated by having your head repeatedly blasted off in Halo 2.

Cooperative games give a team a sense of progress not just through a story, but also through the improvement of their characters via new abilities and more effective equipment.

It's been nine years since Diablo established the standard for cooperative multiplayer games — we're about due, for an overhaul.

Don't let friends rule your love life

From 113

Think. You have the inalienable and God-given right to make your own decisions, and I wanted to show it to you in case you had forgotten.

Here's where I start to get cliché. Ever heard of the expression "too many cooks spoil the broth?" Well, too many friends giving you advice on any romantic decision can turn out exactly the same way, and these "cooks" aren't very qualified to know exactly what's stewin' in your pot, if you know what I'm sayin'. Still, just because they don't know the whole story about your relationship, it won't stop a friend from giving you advice.

Your friends mean well, and sometimes I'll give it to them; they really do know what's up. They might know that yellow is absolutely not your color or that you shouldn't have that fifth shot of vodka because after all, you are the designated driver.

It's times like that when it's really great to have friends, but when it comes to relationships their advice can be intrusive, distracting, or just... bad.

Your friends will tell you the textbook answer, what is generally expected of you in a given situation, or whatever they read in the latest book of relationship propaganda. What's the new one called? He's Just Not That Into You, or Men Are Stupid, Let's Kill Them? (Who can keep track anymore?) Resist the urge to consult with them on every romantic decision. Make a few of your own. Otherwise, a relationship between two people can start to resemble a group game of chess, each team collaborating on the player's next move.

Always wear a bear suit for romanticizing

From 113

Hands and runs off the floor. Guy contemplates the most joyous suicide in human history (speculation again).

Wow. My heart is bleeding for this guy. No one should endure this. I want to marry this guy just to dampen the pain. So what's the moral of the story? Always wear a gigantic bear suit whenever you're trying to bring the romance. Duh.
LIFE

New boulevard keeps heritage in ZORA! site

Eatonville residents keep tradition alive

JOSH STRASSNER
Staff Writer

Urban sprawl has been swallowing Central Florida like kudzu since a certain theme park establishment here decades ago. But along with the development comes growing pains. In a culture where "out with the old and in with the new" appears to define progress, a few small communities have been fighting to keep their identities and heritage intact for future generations to build upon and learn from. One of these communities is the oldest black-incorporated municipality in the United States, Eatonville, Fla.

Eatonville has a rich history and was where author Zora Neale Hurston hailed from. Hurston, a major figure during the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s, wrote prolifically about the town and based her characters from the people she grew up with.

In 1987, the town council was informed that the county planned on building a five-lane road directly up Kennedy Boulevard, right in the middle of the community. Seeing the potential devastation that such a project could render upon the citizens' family-owned businesses and the culture itself, members of the community took action to protect their proud heritage from going the way of fast food chains and strip malls. One of the people who stood firm by the Eatonville legacy was NY Nathiri, the General Manager for the Association to Preserve the Eatonville Community (PEC), Inc.

The PEC turned national attention toward Eatonville by putting together the Zora Neale Hurston Festival, which the American Business Association deemed as "one of the top 100 events in America." The event spotlighted the historical significance of the cozy community and the potential peril of the five-lane highway. Then, along with the Friends of Maitland — another small, neighboring community that was under duress brought about by the road project — came years of lobbying, petitioning, and compromise. Through these years, the ZORA! Festival was growing to over fifty thousand visitors a year and collecting over $1 million dollars in revenue for the membership-based, tax-exempt PEC.

Finally, a compromise was reached for all parties. A medianed four-lane road would saunter through the heart of the municipality. In true Eatonville form, the community, with the help of the PEC, turned lemons into lemonade by creating the "Kennedy Boulevard" Streetscape Project. The project was given a grant of $3 million, with partial funding from the Department of Transportation, and will include underground utilities, sidewalks, light fixtures, median landscaping, red brick pavers and benches. It will take around eight months to complete and will run the length of Kennedy Boulevard from Wymore Road to the eastern boundary of Eatonville, which is approximately one mile.

"The [Kennedy Boulevard] Streetscape project will be an example of civic pride and good planning," NY Nathiri said. The project will also keep Eatonville from being a "drive-through" community by taking into account the integrity of the residential areas and the town's small businesses, and allowing them to keep their identity.

In other words, one would still feel compelled to stop off and enjoy a cup of coffee or visit the ZORA! Museum despite having to cross a couple of lanes.

The groundbreaking for The "Kennedy Boulevard" Streetscape Project is at 1:30 p.m. this Friday in front of the Town Hall at 3707 Kennedy Blvd, Eatonville, FL 32751. The public is invited.

Show addictive and annoying

From 116

meet Trigon, it'll be a battle for the ages.

If you're looking for a fun-filled 22 minutes of solid superhero action, it doesn't get any better than the Teen Titans right now. It's more than mere kids stuff. It's fine episodic storytelling, with a compelling ensemble of heroes who aren't sure of anything but the trust they have for each other (and even that fades at times).

Who knows how long this streak of quality will last, but if you're a comics fan, you should be there till it's over. New episodes air Saturdays at 8 p.m. with repeats showing all week long, so there are plenty of opportunities to catch up. This show is as addictive as its theme song is annoying.
Let me be a Japanese schoolgirl
Blouse, knee-high socks and plaid skirt spell adventure!

Elizabth Fernandez
Staff Writer

I wish I was a little Japanese high school girl. Imagine me, but with adorable Asian features in a little plaid skirt with knee high socks, with pigtails and a shy little smile. It would certainly make at least some of my dreams come true. I would live a life of stress in tiny cramped conditions, because I would live in Tokyo for sure; I am a city girl at heart. There would be crazy school sessions, activities and constant pressure, but I could always blow that off and become a rebellious little punk girl dying my pigtails red just to break my family's heart.

All the bad boys would want me, and all the good girls would hate me. Just like in all the romance manga, there will be one evil girl who ruins my social life and before you know it, all the girls will be teasing me yet the cutest and most popular boy in school will realize he's madly in love with me and come to my rescue.

Then again, I may face even more dangerous adventures than that. Perhaps, if I am lucky enough and so full of mischief I am bursting at the seams with trouble, I will fall into a dark hole, a well, maybe into a book or something, and end up in a miracle land of crazy powers and magicians. I would gather a team of heroes and go search for some diamonds of power or dream earrings or something random like that. Against all odds we would prevail in the face of evil demons, sleeping under the stars as we travel.

The awards not seen on TV
Redundant title gets Manos flick its first victory
DIANNA ZISMAN
Staff Writer

With the Oscars almost upon us, I can think of no better way to celebrate than to look back at a few of cinema's finest moments. That's right; this column will attempt to narrow more than 100 years of modern pictures down to a handful of really random awards.

The Premio for Redundant Titles Award: *Manos: The Hands of Fate* (1966). Manos is Spanish for hands. So what we have is, *Hands: The Hands of Fate*. Sometimes... there just ain't any words.

The Shut Up and Die Award: Trinity in *The Matrix Revolutions* (2003). She had just been impealed by, like, every metal pole in existence but somehow found the strength to ramble on to Neo for about five hours. Seriously. She was able to recite the Complete Works of Shakespeare Unabridged (three times) before finally croaking. As if that wasn't bad enough, Keanu's reaction to his "beloved" dying? A weak "oh, no." Not even an agonized or frantic "oh, no." Oh, no. It was the kind of "oh, no" someone might unleash if they just found out they run out of milk.

The Just Because You Have Chiseled Abs and Stunning Features, It Doesn't Mean That You Too Can't Die In a Freak Gasoline Accident Award: *Zoolander* (2001). If there's a death scene more brilliant than one featuring three male models getting into a gasoline fight and inadvertently blowing themselves up, I have yet to see it.

The What Happened? Award: *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (1920). Am I really going on the record as saying that an 85-year-old movie has the best twist ending ever? Yes, I am. Forget The Usual Suspects or Sixth Sense, Caligari's final revelation is more affecting than all of the "thrillers" out there today. Rent it and see for yourself.

Think of the fun you can have seeing a silent, non-Vin-Diesel-starring, German expressionist film from the 1920s!

The Graduate of the Marion Barry Casting School Award: Keoni Reeves as Siddhartha in *Little Buddha* (1993). Casting Sofia Coppola as Mary Coreone in *Godfather III* doesn't hold a candle to the blunder that is choosing Keoni Reeves to play Buddha. There was, at least, a reason (nepotism gone horribly, horribly wrong) for the Coppola decision. The casting directors for *Little Buddha* on the other hand, defied all logic with their choice and were responsible for bewildered audiences the world over.

They should have realized that
RAMBLINGS

WEB LESS TRAVELED

Not Proud of KittyCatDance queries

CHRISTOPHER SCHWARZ
Staff Writer

S
ometimes, the Internet pro-

vides new and timely ma-
terial to make my job easy. This week is simply an out-
pouring of a bunch of links that lack any coherent theme, yet fit together anyhow by all being fit for your amusement. Read on!

KittyCatDance
http://www.rephlex.net/files/kitty-
catdance.wmv

Here's a stupid little movie that's going around for a bit. It's apparently from a g-shack.com, but that site's bandwidth has been predictably exceeded, so I googled another link to the file. In the "foreign peo-

ple are strange" category, this one features some guy's cat "dancing" to a song he wrote about it. The

video is sure to win something at next year's Grammies, but not before the world finds new dimensions within their soul courtesy of lyrics like "Dance/I'm a kitty cat/And I dance dance dance dance dance dance dance dance dance dance dance dance dance." Not since Schnappi the Crocodile have I heard such poetry. Watch, listen and enjoy.

Not Proud
http://www.notproud.com

Remember a few weeks ago when I wrote about groupugus? That was awesome. Still, there's another site that does the same thing. Now you can boost your ego as each click reminds you of how other people are so much weirder than yourself. Online at the moment are masterpiece

sorts into categories. From the "lust," section, we have the sad but common: "I'm still a virgin at 28 ... I'm a little overweight and women don't like me ... jerking off loses its fun after a while ..." The envy cat-

gory gives me this gem at the moment: "I truly envy anyone who can raise a single eyebrow. Even more so if they can raise either one without having the other go up or wrinkle at all. My

primitive [sic] brow cannot master this." Hurray.

Query Letters | I Love http://querylet-
ters.blogspot.com/

This link's for the movie buffs

out there. The premise is that this blog's owner works someplace in Hollywood that receives scores of movie suggestions and puts up the massively stupid ones for all to see. It could be fake but I can't resist gems like "Headcase is about angel, an innocent, deformed gypsy boy, who is part of a carnival freak show in the year

1958" or "Aliens are after Mary and try to kill her because of secret about our galaxy. There's a plenty of action and a few romances between young people." Here's another: "SPAGHETTI KID is a coming-of-age story about a 15-

year-old loner who dreams of becoming a professional wrestler. One day he discovers a magic breakfast cereal that gives him the super-strength to actually become a pro wrestler." Back in my day, all I ever got from my children's cereal was my daily dose of iron and I was darned happy for it. Finally, there is THE GREATEST STORY EVER TOLD, according to its author: "broad comedy that cen-

ters around how Jesus invents the game of professional football as told by Father O'Reyan in order to prevent the Irish grandfatherly priest from being transferred to Siberia." Heartwarming, isn't it?

Stupid, stupid aliens

FROM 118

Keenan would punctuate Sid-

dhartha's sentences with some air guitar and an emphatic "WYLD STALLYNS!

The OMGWTF! Award: Arnold Schwarzenegger's Thumb Wrestling Face of DOOM from True Lies (1994). At the denouement of this gypsy caper, Arnold decides to wind down from his adventures by thumb-wrestling his wife and daughter. What follows is a facial expression so frightening, it can only be described usingネット修. An expression that's less "L.3.4.1, I declare a thumb war," and more "I'll eat your soul." Horrifying.

The Only Scene Ever Improved By Rick Springfield Award: Wet Hot American Summer (2001). In the middle of this brilliant comedy, the main char-

acters go on a hilariously expediti-

d drug binge that lasts all of two minutes, in movie and real time. The absurd scene is punctuated by the decision to use Spring-

field's peppy "Love is Alright Tonight" in the background. Words can't do the sequence jux-

tice. Just watch it.

The These Aliens Are Dumber

Than Tara Reid Award: Signs

(2002). The "heroes" in Shym-

alam's 2002 "thriller" are able to fend off their hostile alien invaders using a substance that's toxic to the ETs' water. So, let's get this straight. These technologi-

cally advanced aliens have decided
to land on and make trouble for a planet where 75 percent of the surface will kill them. A planet where this fatal substance rou-

tinely falls from the sky. Isn't that like humans deciding to colonize a planet where the air is made entirely of hydrochloric acid and razors frequently tumble out of the clouds?

The great adventure of your life: high school

FROM 118

from village to obscure village in our pursuit of the sacred items.

It would be great. I loved high school, I really did. It just felt so very important while I was liv-

ing it. Everything I did took on this oh-so-special meaning. Every glance was soaked with secret meanings. We all dripped emotions and hormones as we walked the halls. That crush in third period was suddenly the most important thing in your life for 32 weeks. That imagined enemy was always plotting and needed to be destroyed, their social stature torn from them and left to rot in the dumpster near where the teachers took their smoke breaks.

I would be the happiest girl on Earth if only I got the lead part in the school play, and if I didn't I would be a shattered wreck for weeks because it was all of such great consequence and magnitude.

Ha!

If they had told me back then that all that stuff was insignificant, small and forgettable, I never would have believed them. For good reason, I think, too. All the stuff that happened back then, while it may have had very little direct effect on most of our present daily lives, has made us whoever we happen to be at the moment. Decades may pass, but by just thinking of some of the drama we all suffered through we will imagine ourselves back then in such vivid ways.

Thanks to the struggles and heartache and cattiness we learned to live in this real world where, though they may not be to such an intensity, are much more relevant and destructive.

No wonder the idea of being an eternal schoolgirl has such an appeal to me. I thrive on intensi-

ty and wither in repetition and boredom. In high school, where everything is so meaningless yet so damned powerful, anything can happen.

And this is the very reason those geniuses in Japan make those poor crazy girls survive so long because high school truly is such a great adventure already.

Who's even going to notice a dragon or two?
Two out of three ain't bad.

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CHOOSE ANY TWO of the following selections for only $6.79!

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