Weekend: Focusing on the Students in the Community.

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 make their cases prior to the opening of today’s election. What follows is an edited transcript of that forum.

Moderator, Brent Flemer, elections supervisor: On the topic of enrollment, with the demand on classes 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 offer the same validation factor? Web-based classes does provide another alternative, it was started in engineering and it’s come to the point where we can have video service where all the classes are like that, but as an alternative, it was started in engineering. I really enjoyed the opportunity to re-watch the classes I took last year.

Keith Rea, presidential candidate: I agree with Mr. Bentley, I think it’s good and it’s a good idea. It means they’re working, they’re earning. So I think it’s definitely a benefit to our university.

Pavan Tulakala, presidential candidate: I think it’s definitely a benefit to our university. It’s definitely a benefit to our students. In the future, it will .

Moderator: On the topic of the grading scale and Master Plan.

Keith Rea: President Trouard said, “I’ve run into people I haven’t seen in a while, including people I haven’t seen for months because of this bargaining process, and everyone’s saying I look transform­ed.”

Pavan Tulakala: I think it’s definitely a benefit to our university.

Moderator: The Student Government Association will hold their first forum today. What are your thoughts on the forum?

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Pavan Tulakala: I think it’s definitely a benefit to our university.
Progress made in murder case
EILEEN HUBERT

Three suspects believed to have plotted a part in the toad shooting of 36-year-old Trumai
were arrested at the Seminole County Jail.

On Friday, Feb. 10, officers arrested Michael Boykin, 18, of Orlando, and Ronaldo Brito, 16, of Orlando.

Boykin and Brito have been charged with premeditated murder and are being held at bond without bond at the Seminole County Jail.

Trumain was last seen leaving a party at Pegasus Convec-
tion Apartments at 9 p.m., Dec. 29, with the two male sus-
pects. Conflicting stories by the three suspects, while inter-
viewed by authorities, the boy's last, but unconfirmed, believe, were involved in Tru-
men's death.

A major break in the case is what we believe, Brito's brother, was brought to for questioning and told

police he believed the murder that Trumain was

Tatum's body was brought to Ashley Funeral
Home to be

The Visit,

Petition will be given to state legislature
John T. Washington Center named after first black professor
SHANNON BERNARD

Here in our UCF scat-

ers cafe, Barnett and Noble, is the home of our student

copy center, the Student Ser-

vice. Barnett is now formally

the John T. Washington

center, preserving the most used buildings on the
campus.

The center is named for

John T. Washington, the first black staff member and pro-

tected in his honor in 1984, of the university.

Washington taught from the school from the late '40s to the early '60s, while commis-

sioner of the Florida

to com-

peter in the arts in society. As a

professor, he's a mem-

ber of Phi Beta Kappa, what he taught, often a part of the university's outside of his office.

Washington was a firm advocate of affirmative action and equal opportunity. He would point three

where officer were actually sought in the event, even as he continued to offer himself and his name to the public.

Washington was also involved in a race-related matter in his position as the director of the African American Support Service, which is now the Barbara Ying Center, and the Office of Equal Opportu-

nity and Affirmative Action.

The role of campus, UCF was a crucial

hospital for the community.

Washington's firm stand on issues such as the National

of the Seminole

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Union wins court battle and university recognition

You All three UFF chapters at other campuses around the state have been newly empowered to negotiate contracts for their faculty negotiations. After two years in court, the University of Florida, Florida State University and the University of West Florida must finally be recognized, following the terms of a Feb. 21 ruling by the Florida Appellate Court.

When the Florida Board of Regents was abolished and replaced by Individual Intens­ity Boards of Trustees in 2004, the UFF lost its state-wide status as the organization to represent faculty in negotiations with universities. The change required each school's board of trustees to individually recognize the UFF on its respective campus. At the time, eight universities, including UCF, voluntarily recognized the UFF. The UFF sub­sequently went to court in hopes that the other three schools would have to recognize it. "They haven't gone through the motions for appeal yet, so I don't know if it's going to stick," said Tom Auxter, the president of UFF. "But I think it will.

The appellate court ruled that the state could not "unilaterally terminate its obligations under a collective-bargaining agreement simply by reorganizing the state without knowing the employees affected performs the same work, in the same jobs, under the same supervisors, by operating the same facilities, carrying on the same enterprise, providing the same services." The three universities affected by the ruling may now begin the negotiation process. "UCF has a new concept for a contract...it's not the status quo as it was at two weeks ago," Auxter said. "The good thing is that any place that does not currently have a contract will have the old state-wide contract to fall back on. "It looks very good for us here," he said. The bargaining process typically takes about two years. UCF and UFF have been in negotia­tions for about 18 months.

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Students charged with having weapons, arrested at university

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WHY

The Associated Press

A rare strain of HIV that has caused a confirmed death and has raised fears of an outbreak in South Africa is now being studied in U.S. researchers. The virus has been detected in New York and is thought to be spreading in the U.S.

Michael C. Vlahos, a doctor at the University of Florida, said the virus — known as HIV-1 subtype B — is a serious concern because it is highly resistant to many drugs and has caused deaths in South Africa.

"We've found that patients who are infected with this virus are more likely to develop AIDS and die from the disease," Vlahos said. "It's important to monitor these cases closely and to develop new treatments."
Grading scale needs scrutiny, uniformity says Talakala

The plus/minus grading system … definitely depicts the real caliber of the student.

Tulakala: incremental steps, and I think the best first step we take would definitely be a plus-only system because it definitely depicts the real caliber of the student. For example, a student who gets an A and a student who gets an A+ also end up standing at a B. It’s fine to think that if we have the plus/minus minus system we can have the students 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 awarding them a B-minus and another member of the faculty may give them a B. Obviously, they’re going to be hurt because the transcript doesn’t depict what the letter grade stands for and it’s going to go against them when applying to graduate school or for jobs.

UCF needs a plus-minus grading system, unless all across campus. We can also add an A-plus to the present system used at the university, which is good for the students who work hard and should be awarded for their hard work.

Bentley: 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 work in and reward one teacher’s class but not the other teacher’s. It’s hard for the students’ grading and being able to compare for a highest level of education.

One of the things that we’re going to do is have the grading system and make sure that the faculty does make a decision on how they are going to grade the students. We’re looking for students’ grading and being able to compete for a highest level of education.

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The plus/minus grading system … definitely depicts the real caliber of the student.
Rea: Community needs more substantial ties to university

Tulakala: We went through that process, so we're not going to go for that.

Alanna: Would you like to speak?

PlaIL: As you know, student government has become a controver­

sial issue. What would you say to someone who is against for­
giving of favor. (and) what would you say to someone who is opposed to its implementation?

Tulakala: I don't really think that the students should be granted the money. If they are in favor of going forward, [and] if the club or organization is approved, then they can bring back to the university.

SGA: If a person who is against student government has become a controver­
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Tallahassee. Once we're in office we want to make sure that it's made an agency in student government and to make sure that the premises made in this campaign and on platforms.

Also, if you go to Tallahassee this year you have to fresh new employees that have been done. What has been said and what has been done has been analyzed and after eight broken promises. It's to the students that they have gone onto offices. Billones: One thing I think we should do is to build better relationships with all the agencies.

Billones: Let's build new relationships, let's go with another campus. When branches of Adventure tell us they're going to change over three times the amount this year.

We can also lobby through Florida Student Association not just as UCF but as students in the entire Florida state university system.

John Bentley: We should at least have an internship with Sen. Constabile because we have one with the mayor of Orlando. The government officials can have one of the campuses, can have the city council members, can have the state council members.

Also, let the city of Orlando know that the Orlando community even UCF provide so much revenue for the city of Orlando. We have a research park on campus we generate so much money for the city. Also, let them know that we're probably doing research for them and pretty much if we work together now we can help foster better relationships so that when students do join that the workforce, they're not approaching people from the city of Orlando, they're going to stay right here and we can help shape the community as it's been given to them. So these are pretty much the reasons we should expose Orlando to the whole community.

Rosa: How do you accomplish the fact that you don't see UCF? Anyhow or local area and in the shops? The fact that UCF students are not employed and they should be employe at those local places of business.

We have a governmental affair opportunity that is very ineffective in my perspective in student interest, and we want to spend a lot of time on that. This is in a business ofFlorida Health & Medicine.

We are a government affair opportunity that is very ineffective in my perspective in student interest, and we want to spend a lot of time on that. This is in a business ofFlorida Health & Medicine.

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accessibility of our education in general making quality.

Talakala: We do lobby for all those policies that we make, especially block tuition and fighting tuition hikes. But also bringing more resources through the state government and the universities. This is possible through a committed effort toward what you want to do. I don't think you should hide behind policies that fail, so once you do we will take action and make sure we have the season as possible. That's a promise.

Bentley: Sen. Edmundson formally criticized this current administration on its lobbying efforts and one thing we definitely have to do is lobby the legislature. On March 8 we were going to have UCJ Day at the capitol and a lot of students are coming up with us. We're also lobbying through the Florida Student Association. When you have all the universities come together on the steps of the capitol as a united front, it makes a larger impact.

McClain: Senator, we're going to go into our concluding statement.

Talakala: What have we been at and why have we been those states running for SGA because we have video. A vision for a university that can address the concerns of all students. We have realistic plans that can provide only answers, no actions, to our most important issues. Plans that can make sure we can bring a new unifying grading policy on campus with an Aplus fight against the rising tuition hikes, fights against this block tuition plan, which is ridiculous and also bring student privileges on campus.

We also like to expand the opportunities that we have. We want to bring in resources in situations where we want to make sure that every student who wants to run for position there is able to have a shot or by making sure policies, which would make them right to run for those positions.

Finally, my dear Golden Knights, I ask you to give me an opportunity to lead this student body.

Edmundson: Well, I'd like to expand on that. Our vision is that we can make a difference in the lives of students. And I think the opportunity to lead this great group that benefits from these programs is important. And so far as vision, there's one thing that you'll see, this big thing that student government is the only body that can decide who's a member of a certain group and that's not the case at all.

Our membership right now consists of more than 755 members from several Greek organizations members from the UCF trial team.

There's actually been this big stigma that student government is this elitist club . . . that's not the case."

I think that at UCF we are going to continue to grow and it's not about being for or against a certain group. Making sure that when those two sides come together we are creating a solution, that's good for everybody.

Bentley: Just by closing, the things that I think make McCauley and myself the two most qualified candidates are just because of the things we've come up with experience, integrity and vision.

Those three things are still important. Experience is definitely there. We've only the only ticket that has legislative and executive experiences, and when you're running an organization that's key to having the experience.

Neither one of us has ever been in judicial but we've both had the opportunity to sit on the Student Conduct Board, which helps issues and determines whether or not it fits the rules.

So in some instances we've had the opportunity to be involved in all aspects of administration.

As far as integrity, it's just so important. When you put a part of an organization that allocates about $85 million it's not a decision that someone who has integrity.

And experience is definitely there. We've had a lot of students and programs and it's important that someone that can help choose these programs so that the students benefit from these programs.

So as far as vision, there's one thing that you'll see, this big thing that student government is the only body that can decide who's a member of a certain group and that's not the case at all.

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Women secure second A-Sun regular season title in a row

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

HATTIE DOWNEY
McDonald's

Senior Day was extra special for All Roberts and Tashim Allen.

The UCF women's basketball team claimed their third consecutive regular season Atlantic Sun championship with an 85-45 demolition of Campbell on Sunday afternoon extending the winning streak to seven games.

The last A-Sun home game was the all-time largest victory for the Knights in A-Sun action as the opponent was limited to four points.

"This is what we've been trying to do all year long," said Coach Gail Striegler. "We've always said that you will not go as far as your victories will take you. UCF Coach Gail Striegler said. "This was a great day for everyone in our program to celebrate their successes in the building."

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

"She was not on a lot of teams' scouting reports," Striegler said. "I can actually light up in and will make plays when she is left open."

Guard Kristin Howard chipped in 12 points hitting four threes of her own, while forwards Karina Miles and Roshelle Jones had squares. UCF (25-7, 16-4 A-Sun) cruised the Campbell (10-17, 5-11 A-Sun) in the first 10 minutes, starting the half on an 18-4 run in the opening 6:16 of the half. The Knights kept going, and used the next 6:51 putting the advantage to 43-24 in a lay-up by Miles with 7:05 remaining.

Campbell (51, 64-8) was held to 30 percent shooting and hit only two of 10 three-pointers. Guard Eirseth Walsrude carried the Panthers with six points, but was dinged-off from the floor.

"Our defense is what has been carrying us all season," Striegler said. "And that's what we will have to continue to carry us if we want to make the NCAA."

The Knights opened the weekend with a 90-67 win as Pfeifer was Pfeifer.

Legendary coach easy to praise

Players and fans take time to recall Torchy

MOUHTING OFF
ASHLEY BROWN

The term old school is thrown around a lot lately, especially among high school seniors. I had two old school because I was born and raised in the old school. But when it comes to UCF athletics there is no other person who the flame is still burning in the old school. One man stands above all others in the formation of UCF sports and he was honored at halftime of the UCF men’s basketball game this past Saturday.

Gene "Torchy" Clark is the man who started it all, he was the very first basketball coach at UCF — actually Florida Tech University — and he was the school’s first legend. He created the foundation for the basketball program that thousands of UCF basketball fans have come to love. And his influence was so great that his name lives on as a part of the school’s heritage by being honored at halftime of the UCF men’s basketball game this past Saturday.

"We were able to withstand, hold our ground and get stops defensively until our offense could light up for a few minutes of a rhythm," Spence said. "Hopefully that’s a sign of a maturing basketball team."

UCF’s defense forced the Panthers to miss 17 of their first 22 shots. In their credit, the Knights recovered from their poor start in style. Will Basko was the very first basketball coach at UCF — actually Florida Tech University — and he was the school’s first legend.

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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 as much turbulence on the ground as there is on a plane.

The bounces started out fine for the Knights as they fed off wins against Longwood and North Dakota State on Friday. Saturday looked bright until 2-5 cut the same in the day before as UCF opened with a 1-2 loss to Boston University in the morning game.

But then the Knights' plans of maintaining their opportunities at home fell apart with a huge upset loss to NSU in the afternoon game. The Hilltoppers took the Knights into extra innings and walked away with a 2-1 victory.

"This was a perfect example..."
Defence comes through as usual

knocked all three runners home, extending his lead. In the 2-1 victory over Florida A&M no match for Irish or Knights during Torchy’s tenure, said the FTU team never played in the DSL.

The game went back-and-forth in the third inning. After Horwath walked and a sacrifice bunt, the Knights loaded the bases. The Irish rallied to knot things up in the seventh, but the Knights finish the regular season. Prather said the honoring of Torchy was. He never gave up his son, Kingsley Edwards or Marcus Avant in a five children.

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Torchy preached family and God above sports. He would find a way to help their own cause at the classroom either. Torchy

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The faculty union and UCF are in the final stages of an agreement over a new faculty contract.

No longer are the two groups opposing terms. He learned that there are those that teach the students and those that want the university at odds with one another. No longer would the administration and the faculty be in their support.

Thankfully, thanks of the UCF administration and the UCF faculty have agreed to show their strength in the fact that their lives are not the same in the past.

What's ironic is that UCF was one of the universities to recognize the United Faculty of Florida chapter before it was considered the state. Back in 2008, the Florida Board of Education was an all-encompassing group that governed Florida's university system. The united faculty of Florida was replaced by individual boards of trustees for each of Florida's universities.

The faculty, according to themselves, have decided to their own, including UCF voluntarily accepted UFF as their representative.

Then began the UCF contract negotiations, which ultimately led to the university's contract negotiations. When "there's a brand-new agreement, it generally takes two years and we're quickly approaching the mark." The negotiations began in September of 2008.

Then came the dampening. When Brantly Brown and the faculty officially declared an impasse — that is, a point that the two sides couldn't reach an agreement and thus, the strike was needed. After class, days after day of negotiations and a meeting of over 312. The faculty called together and showed up, in a show at the Jim Beal of Trustees meeting. They held up signs, asking the university to respect them and to work with them.

The signs may have worked. Because while there was some hard UCF and UFF work and the impasse got the spirit of the magistrates and are in the final stages of having the strike called off.

That does mean this for UFF students? Well, it means they can look at their professors and their administrative with pride.

But it also means that faculty and the university administration will be protected and sexual orientation will be added to UFF's Anti-Discrimination policy — the last addition that a faculty union has been working toward for more than a decade.

This is a good time for UFF to be on the way back from closing a deal that would have pushed it to the wayside. Finally the statewide UFF charter has wound up around the flag will form the University of Florida, Florida Atlantic University and the University of West Florida.

The more than 90 percent of faculty members at each institution that are unionized have not been making many friends at the bargaining table.

TTalks broke down and the universities have no plans to visit will be accompanied by negotiations.

TTalks broke down and the universities have no plans to visit will be accompanied by negotiations.

TTalks broke down and the universities have no plans to visit will be accompanied by negotiations.
I dare you to move, to a place off-campus

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Let us help you with living expenses, medical expenses, counseling, and the attention you deserve.

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STUDENT LEGAL SERVICES
Currently, enrolled students are entitled to consult with program attorneys about legal matters and receive advice. In addition, legal representation, up to and including all stages of trial, may be provided in certain types of cases, such as the following:

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- Consumer problems confronting individual students.
- Traffic cases
- Uncontested dissolution of marriage
- Bankruptcy

www.stulegal.ucf.edu

The 2nd Annual Showcase of Diverse Student Research
UCF Orlando Campus, Student Union
Hosted by the UCF Division of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Student Association, the Graduate Research Forum will include poster displays and oral presentations of student research and creative projects. The forum is open to UCF graduate students in all disciplines and the community is welcome to attend.

The submission deadline is Friday, February 8, 2003.

Visit www.gra.ucf.edu for details.

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at the Office of Student Involvement

President Hitt, Provost Hickey, Vice Presidents Merck, Huddleston, and Interim Vice President Ehasz will host an OPEN FORUM for students from 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. in SU, Key West, 218AB.

SGA Presidential Elections
For more info go to http://www.sga.ucf.edu

Tuesday Knight Live Open Mic Knight, Wackadoo’s, Bpm

Knight 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 Harlan Cohen, Garden Key AB, Bpm

SGA Run-off Elections

Monday, Feb. 21
Tuesday, Feb. 22
Wednesday, Feb. 23
Saturday, Feb. 26
Monday, Feb. 28
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

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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 end is fast approaching. Already one can see the dark tides rising, paving the way for the inevitable. Born from a humble beginning, unfathomable powers will soon collide in a grand spectacle, shaking this very world to its core. Be prepared, for Megacon cometh, and Orlando is ground zero.

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 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 characteristically acne and voice cracks. Heroes like Daredevil and Aquaman will be there to keep the peace, while villains like Mysterio 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 such 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 within the battle zone of Megacon, risking life and limb to get the job done. Just hope that no one steps on his tail ...

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

**CALENDAR**

**CAMPUS**

- Are We There Yet (How Did We Get Here)
  - Feb. 24, noon to 1:50 p.m., free
  - UCF Campus
  - 407-928-6077

- 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
  - msctmail.ucf.edu

**CULTURE NIGHT**

- Feb. 26, 8 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 AB
- 407-823-1500

**EVENTS**

- Peking Acrobats
  - Feb. 24, 7 p.m., $18 to $24
  - King Center for the Performing Arts
  - 3865 N. Wickham Road
  - Melbourne
  - 321-242-2219

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

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

- 9800 International Drive
  - 407-345-9800

- U.S. Pro Rodeo
  - Feb. 25 to Feb. 26, 7:30 p.m., $15 to $25
  - Ocean Center
  - 101 N. Atlantic Ave.
  - Daytona Beach
  - 386-249-4045

- Orlando Wetlands Park Festival
  - Feb. 26, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., free
  - Orlando Wetlands Park
  - East Colonial Drive and Southport Christmas Road
  - 407-823-1500

- Absolutely Avalon
  - Feb. 26, 7 p.m. to 10 p.m., free
  - Founder's Square at Avalon Park
  - 13001 Founder's Square Drive
  - 407-928-6077

- Rain
  - Feb. 26, 8 p.m., $20 to $30
  - King Center for the Performing Arts
  - 3865 N. Wickham Road
  - Melbourne
  - 321-242-2219

- Festival Independencia Dominicana
  - Feb. 27, 11:30 a.m. to 8 p.m., $10
  - Lee Vista Center
  - 7600 Bl. E. 2000 St.
  - 407-231-6093

- Mini Cooper Car Show
  - Feb. 27, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., free
  - Florida Orlando
  - 9101 International Drive
  - 407-248-2818

**SHOWS**

- Badfish, The Burnin' Smymans (rock)
  - Feb. 24, 8 p.m., $5
  - The Social
  - 544 E. Orange Ave.
  - 407-248-2818

**ADDITIONAL EVENTS**

- Take Notice, Fallen from the Sky, No Harm Done, Fire at Will
  - Punk
  - Feb. 25, 7 p.m., $5
  - O Zone Compact Discs
  - 1020 W. Hwy 436
  - 407-802-1002

- Folly, Another Broken Promise, Cannae, My Bitter End, Rodan, Beauty in Chaos
  - Punk
  - Feb. 25, 5 p.m., $8
  - Busch's Booth
  - 37 W. Pine St.
  - 407-999-2570

**PLEASE SEE CALENDAR ON 14**

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HAPPENINGS

CALENDAR

FROM 13

Pain Principle, Response Negative, NDIR, Persuad (metal)
Feb. 25, 8 p.m., $6
The Tavern
6700 Aloma Ave.
407-673-2712

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

Centro-Matic, The Baptist Generals, Sugar Oaks (indie)
Feb. 25, 9 p.m., $8
With Pub
1830 N. Mills Ave.
407-888-5070

Seven Nations (rock)
Feb. 25, 9 p.m., $5-
6
The Social
541 N. Orange Ave.
407-246-1419

Ze Band Rocks, Stemmm Cell, Priapism, Luid Fly, Pulse
Nein, Gott 13, I-4 Band, Fireflight, Nine 13, Rabbits
with Glasses, Eternal Rhythmix (rock)
Feb. 25, 5 p.m., $13
House of Blues
Downtown Disney West Side
407-999-2570

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., $17.50-$19.50
House of Blues
Downtown Disney West Side
407-999-2570

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

Still Naive, Atomic Tangerine, Canvas (hard rock)
Feb. 26, 9:30 p.m., $6
The Social
541 N. Orange Ave.
407-246-1419

Branden, Number One Fan (rock)
Feb. 26, 5 p.m., $8
With Pub
1830 N. Mills Ave.
407-888-5070

Skeleton Key, Landing on Land, Loss for Words (indie)
Feb. 26, 9 p.m., $8
With Pub
1830 N. Mills Ave.
407-888-5070

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

Matchbook Romance, Motion City Soundtrack, From First To Last, Scatter the Ashes, Whole Wheat Bread, Buxelder
Sloppy Motesaesters (punk) for "Central Florida Extreme III Action Sports and Music Festival"
Feb. 26, 5 p.m., $12
UCF Arena
407-823-6000

The O'Byes, Herb Williams & Gibraltor (pop)
Feb. 26, 5 p.m., $9.95-$12.75
Universal Studios at Universal Orlando
407-363-8000

Toxic Black Rose, Koal Us, Jam Lab, Daggers Within Smiles, Delusional the Platinum Punk (punk)
Feb. 26, 8 p.m., $5-
5
Orlando Island Oasis
2716 N. Farnsworth Rd.
407-657-6047

Dodger, 1984 (indie)
Feb. 26, 10 p.m., $4
The Peacock Room
1321 N. Mills Ave.
407-229-0540

Casey Brewer, Mere Surmise, Red Dave (indie)
Feb. 26, 7 p.m., $7
D-Block CFS
1002 W. How 416
407-662-1002

It Dies Today, Twelve Tribes, Antterabees, 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.
407-229-0540

EVLIS COSTELLO

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 tribe 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

High Society Pipes & Cigars
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MUSIC

CD REVIEWS

Ida
Heart Like a River
Genre: indie-rock
Label: Polyvinyl
Release date: Feb. 22

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
Frances the Mute
Genre: psychedelic
Label: Universal
Release date: Mar. 1

It’s hard to consider 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 lead singer and sound manipulator Jeremy Ward, apparently from a drug overdose. The remaining members decided to become drug-free, oddly resulting in a more abstract album than De-Loused.

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’Viaque” 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 Floyd-esque. Digital noise are a little excessive? This 32-minute monumental track that is almost Pink Floyd-esque. Digital spoken word acccents 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 EP 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 nature, 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.

—SARA STOCK

The Kings
Youth and Young Manhood
Genre: alt-rock
Label: RCA
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 sputtering 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.

When the Kings (following Metallica) cut off their trademark beards, it seems they left their southern rock with it. Aha 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.

—JON CROOK

Armor for Sleep
What to Do When You Are Dead
Genre: emo
Label: Equal Vision
Release date: Feb. 22

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.

—RICKY SURILLO
MUSIC

TOP 25

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
    I'm Wide Awake, It's Morning

11. Bright Eyes
    Digital Ash

12. Various Artists
    Police: A Tribute to The Police

13. John Legend
    Get Lifted

14. Unwritten Law
    Here's to the Mourning

15. Jack Johnson & G. Love
    Some Live Songs

16. Soundtrack
    The Life Aquatic With Steve Zissou

17. Sage Francis
    A Heafthy Distrust

18. Chemical Brothers
    Push the Button

19. Anberlin
    Never Take Friendship Seriously

20. Ai Di Franco
    Knuckle Down

21. Fallen From the Sky
    Tune Out the World

22. Green Day
    American Idiot

23. Killers
    Hot Fuss

24. The Game
    The Documentary

25. Ed Harcourt
    Strangers

FEBRUARY 12 - MARCH 1, 2004 • The Indie

WHOLE WHEAT BREAD

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 Dirtee Skeet and Mr. Whitefolks emerge.

With genuine punk rock followed by bonafide 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! DUUUVAL!

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

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MUSIC

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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MOVIES

FILM REVIEW

Merchant of Venice: decent Bard film

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

MIKE FERRARDO
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 The 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 ways 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, “Aattle!” in Dog Day Afternoon and “Woo-hoo!” in A Scorn 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 Enzian.

CINESCENE

Some movies are a bit dated

BRETT RYAN BONOWICZ
Staff Writer

T his past Saturday, I went on a quasi-date with a person who already has a boyfriend.

I say quasi because I’m sure if you asked her if it was a date, she would reply “no.” As per the usual standard of my being, we saw a movie — Assault on Precinct 13. She picked it.

Before the film we decided to grab a bite of food at a local eatery, where we discussed relationships of the past. She spoke about how she couldn’t remember why she broke up with her boyfriends, and I became nauseated by the fact that continually throughout my life I have associated boyfriends and movies with being able to factually recall my life in any sort of order. The sad fact was that I couldn’t simply remember dates or when people died or any other marker people normally use. I could only mark my life by my boyfriends and the movies I saw with them.

And the thing was this: I don’t remember every film I’ve seen, especially the movies I see alone, but I could still remember the first film I ever saw with a girlfriend of mine, a film I shouldn’t remember at all: the Michael Richards/Jeff Daniels comedy Thial and Error.

I can remember every bit about the night: how my date wouldn’t let me touch her breast, how the theatre next to us was playing The Lost World far too loudly and how the air conditioning wasn’t working in the lobby.

From 2001-2004 I dated one person. Seeing as how I never had a relationship break two years previous to this, it was the high water mark of a career with women and film. In this span of my life I saw over 200 films in the theatre, had sex an equal (or greater) amount of times and had never had a happier time in my life. I saw films like Minority Report and Catch Me If You Can. Sidewalks of New York and the E.T. re-release. I spent a lot of money on candy with her, and we ate it until our ulcers bled. I saw three years of Best Picture winners with the love of my life. Sadly, that relationship died when I stupidly ended it in September.

For the rest of my life I’m going to associate all those theatre-going experiences to those girls. I can chart dates and places I’ve been by who I was dating and what films I had seen.

From my first kiss to 9/11 to graduating high school and starting college, all these watershed marks have been grazed with a feeling of beauty — the beauty of the movies and the women I’ve had the pleasure to share my life with.

I’m currently single as I write this, but who knows what is in store for a person with such character, such merit and the ability to buy a steak dinner for whoever chooses to accept a date with me. As for me, and what I’m thinking as you read this … well I’m probably going to go to a movie tonight, alone. If you see me in the theatre eating away my feelings, come sit next to me. I promise I’m really not that bad of a person.
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 one-liners about how she ain't afraid of the po-po.

If only it were that simple — or that focused. Kimberly Elise's character could be talking about the film itself when she writes in her first diary entry, "Looks can be deceiving."

Diary of a Mad Black Woman is indeed a bawdy comedy. It's also a domestic drama and a love story, wrapped up in Christian proselytizing and gospel music and peppered with jokes about flatulence and marijuana.

Oh, wait — there's also a subplot involving a drug kingpin on trial. And a shooting that leaves a key character paralyzed.

In short, it's the diary of a mess.

Longtime music video director Darren Grant, making his first feature film, shifts between all these elements with such jarring frequency and disjointed randomness, it sometimes feels as if the reels have been shown out of order.

Example: A character (whom we won't name) is shot in a crowded courtroom. Screaming and chaos naturally ensue. Cut immediately to Elise as Helen, sharing a tender, intimate kiss with her boyfriend, Orlando (Shemar Moore), the factory worker with a heart of gold who has restored her faith in men.

The transition is almost funny. Except it doesn't mean to be.

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 some-one'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 Fox, 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 Scorsese 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 Scorsese, even though he deserved it for far better films (see Raging Bull or Goodfellas).

And the Oscar goes to: Martin Scorsese.

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 prevent Clementine from turning into a caricature, a very real possibility 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 Giamatti 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 everything 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 Sunshine, Show it some love Academy.

Best Original Screenplay
The writing categories have typically been one of the hard categories to win, but this year there’s a real possibility of it happening. Million Dollar Baby might have the edge but The Aviator and Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind might also have a chance.

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.
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 nutsy, 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 to sick of seeing her stuff and starve 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 Wolf 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.

Six: Throw hissy fits. Case in point: Halle Berry. Berry’s melodramatic crying spells and hysterical meltdowns in 2002’s Monster’s Ball caught the Academy’s eye and resulted in a historical breakthrough win.

Seven: Visit a psychic ward to get into character. Case in point: Russell Crowe and Angelina Jolie. Crowe and Jolie got so into their inner psychos for their roles in 2000’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: If you’re a man, play a woman, if you’re a woman ... you get the idea. Case in point: Halle Berry 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!

COMING TO DVD — MARCH 1

Sponge absorbs more on DVD

Also, classic screwball comedy gets 2-disc set

BRETT RYAN BONOWICZ
Staff Writer

The SpongeBob SquarePants Movie

The most experimental film to be released by a major studio last year, The SpongeBob SquarePants Movie was one of the more breathtaking achievements of 2004. Now available on DVD, its features include a making of called The Absorbing Tale Behind The SpongeBob SquarePants Movie. The SpongeBob SquarePants Movie Animate features the writers and creator Stephen Hillenburg. Saving the Surf and Case of the SpongeBob are both features that will surely save the case of both SpongeBob and Surf. The inclusion of the film’s submarine teaser trailer is sure to please those who first witnessed this glorious example of marketing in theatres.

Bringing Up Baby

One of the last of the AFI Top 100 to be released on DVD, director Howard Hawks’ comic masterpiece has finally arrived in a two-disc special edition. Disc one features a digitally remastered transfer with commentary by writer/director Peter Bogdanovich. The only other feature on disc one is a Howard Hawks movie trailer gallery. Disc two includes two documentaries about the star and director of Bringing Up Baby. First up is a feature-length film about Cary Grant entitled Cary Grant: A Class Apart. And for those who can’t get enough of Hawks, The Men Who Made the Movies: Howard Hawks documentary is sure to fill that void.

As an added treat, two vintage vault treasures: the comedy short Campus Cinderella and the cartoon A Star Is Hatched.

My Own Private Idaho (Criterion)

The latest from the Criterion Collection, Gus Van Sant’s sometimes ignored film My Own Private Idaho has been given a deluxe two-disc once-over by the folks who do DVD right. See a young Keanu Reeves and a still breathing River Phoenix before that fateful night at the Piper Room. Included in the extras are an exclusive new audio conversation between Van Sant and filmmaker Todd Haynes and The Making of My Own Private Idaho, a new documentary featuring interviews with key crew members.

Also, check out a new video interview with film critic Paul Arthur on the adaptation of Shakespeare in My Own Private Idaho, a video conversation between producer Laurie Parker and Rain Phoenix and outtakes.

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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 past 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 beaten-up on most of the year (Battlefield Earth, Gigli, etc.) take home the most nominations.

This year's whipping boy 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. 26.

And, of course, because no awards show can go unpredicted, The indie 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.

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**MOVIE TIMES**

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**CINEMARK 20 AT FESTIVAL BAY**

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<td>Being Julia (R)</td>
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**DIARY OF A MAD BLACK WOMAN**

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**THE INDIE**

**FOUR CHILD ACTORS**

you've never heard of star in Superbabies and act the hell out of Jon Voigt and Scott Baio, Ouch.
Bleeps and Bloops

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 let players control a warrior, a wizard or an elf archer. Diablo let players control a warrior, a sorcerer or a rogue (who specialized in bows). The newly released Champions lets players

Manned A Marko

News flash: your friend might not be right

Marilyn Manno

Staff Writer

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 psych 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
It's almost that SPECIAL time of year

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 colleagues

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 of 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 "Napoleon Dynamite is Flippin' Sweet" to "Greeks" to "Every hour is happy hour."

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

"I love the group I started called 'Diamonds 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 rekindle 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 "groupie." A groupie is a person in a specific group that is friends with more than half of its members. "I'm 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. "It 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 Boy (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 more than a story, 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 superhero 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 school called the Hive on Titans, and he's just as vicious and powerful. The battles between him and Cyborg are brutal. Slade (Deathstroke the Terminator in the comics), a treacherous mercenary who was the central villain in the first season, has come back this season with entirely different motives and powers. And they've slowly been building toward the coming of the Titans' most dreaded enemy, Trigon.

The suspense has been stellar, and with the way the fight scenes have become intense and void of the cheesy clichés that plagued them earlier on in the show, you know that when the Titans

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 inspired by 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 you now 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.

Always wear a bear suit for romanticizing

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 samin'. 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.
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 established itself 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 heritage and was where author Zora Neale Hurston hailed from. Hurston, a major 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.

"[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 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 is 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!

ELIZABETH FERNANDEZ Staff Writer

I wish I was a little Japanese high school girl. Imagine me, 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 seems 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 movie 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 aren’t any words.

The Shut Up and Die Award: Trinity in The Matrix Revolutions (2003). She had just been impaled 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, Keane’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 ran 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: Keenu Reeves as Siddhartha in Little Buddha (1993). Casting Sofia Coppola as Mary Corene in Godfather III doesn’t hold a candle to the blunder that is choosing Keenu 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...
Web Less Traveled

Not Proud of KittyCatDance queries

CHRISTOPHER SCHWARZ
Staff Writer

S

ometimes, the Internet pro-

vides me with enough timely

material 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 been going around for a bit.

It's apparently from a g-

shack.com, but that site's band-

width has been predictably

exceeded; it's apparently from a

foreign site that does the same

thing. Now you can boost your
ego as each click reminds you

of how other people are so much

weirdier than yourself. Online at

the moment are masterpiece

sorties into categories. From the

just section, we have the sad but

common: "I'm still a virgin at 26 ...

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

primaive [sic] brow cannot mas-
ter 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 have been worse, but I can't

resist gems like "Headcase is

about angel, an innocent,
defomed gypsy boy, who is part of

a carnival freak show in the year

1983" 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 cere-
am was my daily dose of iron and I

was darned happy for it. Finally,

here 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'Ryan in order to

prevent the Irish grandfathe-

rly priest from being transferred to

Siberia." Heartwarming, isn't it?

Part Deux: Bop harder

from 118

about me. There I was, sweating

like an Amazon, and there they

were, scribbling and giggling.

A lump in my throat the size of

presurgery John Popper formed and

continued to expand in size. All

the while Middle of Nowhere

was playing on an endless loop in

the background, making me wish

I could teleport to that titular locale

and be away from the humiliation

I was experiencing.

I spent that night clutching a

pillow, turning turns crying in it

and trying to suffocate myself

with it, but I was so weakened and

devastated that I had a better

chance of giving myself a sodium

overdose from the saline in my

tears than I did in finding the

strength that would put me out of

my misery.

I talked to her a few times

afterward, but things quickly dis-

solved into nothingness and that

was that. But the memory

remains. Two years after the ini-
cident I purchased the album for a

$1.99 in a used CD store. I

should've destroyed it by now. But

I can't. And I won't. I've always

known that being different wouldn't

cause me to be ridiculed and

would eventually leave me unful-
filled and ultimately unloved and

that thinking Chrissy could ever

do anything but laugh at me was

an act of futility. And anytime

I hear a reference to Hanson or hear

one of its songs, I'm taken

back to being a laughingstock in

that bedroom. And those songs

are playing, and they grow louder

and louder. And they always will.

Such is my curse. MMBBP: I'm

about to relive it all over again.
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