Event drew large crowds aimed at blocking proposal

Mark Justice

Student Government Association officials rallied the student body in front of the Student Union on Thursday, protesting block tuition, a proposal that would require full-time students to pay for 12 credit hours regardless of the actual amount they are enrolled in. An estimated 300 members addressed the crowd on a stage that resembled a Broadway theater, to the cheers of dozens of students who waved signs at the event. At least 500 students signed the petition. (See inside)

Sara DeVinney, who was instrumental in the crusade to prevent block tuition, referred to the faculty as an education still and likened the list of the track induction process as "the embodiment of how students feel they're being treated. "Students feel like commodities," DeVinney said. "The school treats them like a product and pushes them through."

He said that many students are aware of what block tuition is at first but are willing to help others who are educated on the subject. Despite DeVinney's efforts, some students felt indifferent toward block tuition. "A lot of students don't want to be educated," he said. "We'll tell them it's too much, but block tuition will affect everyone."

Senior Speaker Sean Lantry was also on hand gathering support against block tuition. Having the proposal to "refund a charge from a food restaurant and being charged for the value meal, but still only receiving the value meal." You may not want the value meal, you're not getting it, but you'll still be charged," he said. "That's the exact reasoning behind block tuition movement co tax on intellectual curiosity."

Among the throngs of supporter, freshman Stacy Kowalski

2005 SGA Election Coverage

Candid SGA candidates

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

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Progress made in murder case

Trumbull was last seen leaving a party at Pegasus Confection Apartments at 9 a.m. Dec. 28. With the two male suspects now in custody, local police believe the murder that took place in Trumbull Thursday night is over.

A major break in the case was Wednesday when William Balin's brother, John, was found guilty of first-degree murder, and the second man, named only as Bell, was charged with murder.

John is the boyfriend of Trumbull's mother, who had another murder investigation that day.

According to police reports, Balin stated that at 4 a.m. the morning of the murder, he was accompanied by Bell, Boykin and another male, entering the apartment.

The booking sheet states that Bell believed to be blood. On Jan. 4, Trumbull's body was found burning in Lake Popey in Trumbull. Trumbull's mother had reported two fires the day earlier.

Police report an arrest under alias, Trumbull was released.

According to police reports, the conditioning student who told Balin about Trumbull had his name turned up. Wulany said he thought he had a black male.

Petition will be given to state legislature

Leaves legacy imprint on building

John T. Washington Center named after first black professor

Sharnett Bennett

Here in UCF's own Starbucks cafe, Baristas Nicole and Laila Williams are no strangers. The student-run coffee shop, formerly known as the John T. Washington Center, is the latest in a long list of buildings on campus.

The center is named for John T. Washington, the first black staff member and professor to hold a position at the University of Florida. Washington taught at the school from the late 1960s into the early '70s, while commut ing to the University of Florida to complete his doctorate in sociology. As a professor, he's remembered for the work he did, but also for what he taught, often having a conversation with his students dark side of his office.

Wulany said the affirmative action and equal opportunity commission police said they were following this work, even as he continued to offer him. Washington was named to the National Academy of Sciences, where he served as a councilor. He built his church foundations on the simple idea that everyone should be welcomed there and would have no place to go from the community.

Unfortunately the church did not survive after Washington's death. However, the effect he had at the John T. Washington Center and Orlando community did survive. After Washington's death, students, scholarship programs, and annual tournaments to honor Washington's legacy were created.

The Foundation helps keep his memory alive. Washington belonged to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the Orlando Housing Commission, and was on the board of directors for the NAACP. His work also led to new opportunities for his students, and he continued to fight for equal rights for all.

Many Information can be found at the College of Arts and Sciences website (http://www.ucf.edu/arts) under African American Studies.

Let us know

The future wants to hear from you.

It's not too late to voice your opinion, organization or event and work your way into the spotlight. For more information, contact the Box Office at 475-6223.

We want to hear from you.

The Future wants to hear from you.

The Readers Letter is an all-UCF tradition that recognizes the hard work of students throughout UCF. Events will be held throughout campus from various organizations.

Become a mentor

The department of Housing and Residence Life invites student mentors to volunteer as a paid support tool that everyone would be grateful for.

On Feb. 10, officers arrested Michael Mailr, 20, of Orlando, under the name of Bell. Mailr, 20, is a suspect in an April 2008 murder.

Boykin and Battle have been charged with premeditated murder and are being held without bond at the Seminole County jail. At this time, there is no information regarding the identity of the other suspect.

'Hey, it's time to get the ball rolling, you know what I mean?' said the father, who's been involved in the search for years. "I know they're out there, but I think they're just being lazy."

"I know they're out there, but I think they're just being lazy," he said, adding that he was determined to find his son.

"We're going to keep looking," he said, his voice breaking. "I just want my son back."

｢What do you think?｣ asked John, his voice quavery. "It could be blood."

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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 university boards of trustees in 2001, 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 university leadership went on to express optimism 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 we will.”

The appellate court ruled that the state could not “unilaterally terminate its obligations under a collective-bargaining agreement simply by recognizing the executive branch, which the employees affected perform 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 bargaining process.

“UCF has a new concept for a contract... It’s not the dismal situation it was two years ago,” Auxter said. “The good thing is that any place that does not currently have a contract will have the old statewide contract to fall back on.”

“Looks very good for us now,” he said.

The bargaining process typically takes about two years. UCF and UFF have been in negotiations for about 18 months.
San Diego investigates campus' TV broadcast

SAN DIEGO — The University of California, San Diego, is investigating whether a student-produced TV show violated any campus regulations by broadcasting a 10-minute segment showing a student burning a one-third-sized effigy of George W. Bush in a Computing Center.

The show is a video version of The Koala, a satirical magazine distributed on campus that has poked fun at blacks, Jews, Adams, Morn­

Students charged with having weapons, arrested at university

SAN DIEGO — Two Florida Gulf Coast University students were arrested after campus police found a closed-circuit television in Dragon's Toyota MR2. The students were released from jail Thursday after agreeing to take part in a campus policy banning weapons on campus, university spokesman Susan Bruns said.

Students attend rally seeking assistance for higher education

SAN DIEGO — Hundreds of college students attended a rally Wednesday to decry tuition increases.

The students upset legislature leaders and San Diego's mayor, Bob Filner, by putting pressure on them to increase aid and reduce tuition for the 2005-06 school year.

Public universities in Kentucky have requested a tuition increase to make up for state cuts that has remained essentially flat in recent years.

The University of Kentucky announced plans to raise tuition by 14.5 percent for the 2005-06 school year. It would be the third-straight year that UK students were handed a double-digit tuition increase.

Nebraska schools could be forced to return funds by Bush administration

LINCOLN, Neb. — Nebraska's two universities could be forced to return $87.5 million in federal student loans money if one of President Bush's proposed education cuts goes through Congress, school officials said.

The administration's proposed budget would eliminate the Federal Perkins Loan program, a major source of loans for students. Nebraska could be forced to return the money that has been borrowed by students.

Members of Nebraska's congressional delegation have said they will push back Bush's proposal calling the elimination "uncon­"

March 24, 2005 - Central Florida Times

Higher Education

What's in the news at colleges around the country - San Diego investigates campus' TV broadcast - Students charged with having weapons, arrested at university - Public universities in Kentucky have requested a tuition increase to make up for state cuts that has remained essentially flat in recent years - Nebraska schools could be forced to return funds by Bush administration - Members of Nebraska's congressional delegation have said they will push back Bush's proposal calling the elimination "unconv"
Grading scale needs scrutiny, unofficially says Talakala

Talakala:

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

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Rea: Community needs more

substantial ties to university

The fact is UCF students are not

and they should be employed

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STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

ELECTIONS 2005

UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

Presidential

YOU DECIDE

THE

FUTURE

OF

SGA

VOTE ONLINE

Today - Wednesday
RUNOFFS: Feb.28-March 2
http://my.ucf.edu
Student asks: How will hopefuls lobby for UCF?

JOSH EDMUNDSON

Orlando. We have a research line of communication with our much money for the city. Also, time in Tallahassee. Why not have one with the mayor of partnerships.

We're trying to make it happen. They have to make it happen. What has been said and what has been done has been analyzed before and again and again. We're trying to get the students to have someone who pays them off.

Bentley: One thing I think we should do is to keep building better relationships with all the agencies. Let's build new relationships, go with another company. When brands of Advertisers talk to us, we're trying to change so 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 Edmundson

UCF Digital Citizen

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 promises made in this campaign and on platforms.

Trolley: I'm sure that if you try to make this happen you have to have fresh minds because it's what it's all about. It's been analyzed before and again broken promises. It's up to the students, they have to make those promises into actions.

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Candidates close arguments with hopes of visions, futures and possibilities.

"There’s always been this big stigma that student government is this elitist club and that’s not the case." — Wille Bentley, JR.

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Call or visit us online today to register.
The UCF baseball team missed a grand opportunity to take some satisfaction by splitting a pair at home to Notre Dame Fighting Irish this past weekend.

The 3-2 loss that witnessed the Knights suffer a come-from-behind loss against FAMU, but a closer look reveals some highlights for the fans who showed up.

The bottom of the 9th inning set the stage for a dramatic finish. Two consecutive batters reached base to load the bases with two outs. However, FAMU's Mark Jaffe ended the inning with a fly out to center field.

Meanwhile, Newlin continued his dominating performance, giving up six hits and striking out a career-high nine batters.

Knights led by guard Claudia Johnson who scored a career-high 18 points, Johnson canned five of her six three-pointers in the second half.

"Not a lot of our team's scoring reports," coach Gail Striegler said. "I can really light it up and will make plays when she is left open."

Guard Elaine Robinson chipped in 15 points hitting four threes of her own. She also contributed to the Knights' 57-54 win.

Senior guard Ashley Roberts was one of four Knights in double digits Saturday night.

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

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

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

The UCF women's basketball team claimed their third consecutive regular season Atlantic Sun championship with an 89-46 whipping of Campbell on Senior Day last night.

The last UCF home game was the all-time largest victory for the Knights in A-Sun action.

"We've always said that you will go as far as your seniors will take you," UCF Coach Gail Striegler said. "This was a great time for them to solidify their careers in this building."
**Join UCF Gold Team**

Do you love football? Are you committed to being part of the most passionate football program ever? Are you looking for a way to network and meet people in a Non-contact environment? Then this opportunity is for you! It is a unique opportunity that enables the UCF football department to achieve goals in new ways through student assistants. 

**Core responsibilities**

- Be a part of the fastest growing 4-football program in the nation.
- Gain knowledge and experience in Public Relations, Teamwork, Communications & Game Day Football.

**Applications**

Applications are available at the Wayne Densch Sports Complex from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Submit to the UCF Football Office, 1611 West Colonial Drive, Suite 200, Orlando, Florida 32806. Interviews will be held on March 6th. You can sign up for an interview at the Wayne Densch Sports Complex's front desk.

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- **FRIDAY AND SATURDAY**
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- **Call for Info**

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**SUNDAY**

- **3-7 p.m.**

**SMOKE BAR**

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- **407.277.1665**

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**Softball wins three in home opener**

**With ace pitcher out, softball falls in only one game**

**ASHLEY LUMS**

UCF softball opened at home this weekend after spending the first three weeks of the season on the road, but as the Knights learned Saturday, sometimes there’s much turbulence on the ground that there is on a plane.

The home stand started out fine for the Knights as they fed off win against Longwood and North Dakota State on Friday. Saturday couldn’t back that up as the Knights cut the same in the day before as UCF opened with a 3-2 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 Bears had the Knights try extra innings and walked away with a 6-5 victory.

“This was a perfect example if we were to play with the same intensity in day and day out,” UCF Coach Renée Gillispie said. “North Dakota State was looking at us in the same way as we looked at Washington last weekend.”

Knock McGire pitched six innings for the Knights and allowed two runs with two walks in the first game but eventually closed out Meridith.

The open-recruitment division got the Recreation and Wellness Center pumping as a capacity crowd saw The Rams beat A-B Tech, 28-20. The Rams rallied from a 3-0 deficit in the second game to lead A&T by the final score.

The competitive division game lived up to its billing as two sensational teams battled in three sets. Arkansas’ PBA beat the Franchise, 29-21 and 12-11, to take a 2-0 victory.

In the odd game, the Ball State Stampers eliminated the Spikers in straight sets, 25-14 and 25-12.

**Quarterback Challenge competition**

**FROM FRIDAY AND THURSDAY**

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  - Lake Mary, Florida
  - 407.670.9930

- **Heathrow**
  - 407.670.3350
  - GM: Bobby Shomo
  - GM: Kathy Kingston

**New Opening Soon in Altamonte Springs!**

Apple Grove Shopping Center
Corner of SR 434 & Jamestown Blvd.
- ** mailing list for more information.**

**Peppers continues to bloom as men knock off Georgia State**

**Ryan A.**

“Basically we just sucked it up,” Gary Johnson said. “We didn’t play a good first half. Coach told us if we wanted it, it was there for us to get. That’s what we had to do in the second half and play.”

And play the Knights did. UCF out-rebounded the Panthers 25-23 in the second half and allowed 18 second-chance points in the game.

“That’s my main job right there,” the rebounding, Johnson said. “I hadn’t been doing it. I had to step it up tonight.”

Johnson contributed a solid game off the bench, grabbed a career-high 12 rebounds and scored 12 points.

This game was UCF’s last home game as a member of the Colonial Athletic Association. UCF’s next game will be moving to Greensboro, North Carolina for the 2015-2016 season.

The victory was the Knights’ fourth in their last seven games. UCF之心的 Monthly Top 5 hall Thursday. The Knights earned scores of four games, quickly building an 8-point lead in the first half. UCF has had a hard time closing out its opponents, and it is the Bears gain seven points in the second half, but eventually closed out Mer­

The defense has worked to allow UCF to play in the race for the Atlantic championship with only two games remaining. The Knights trail A-Sun leader Gardner-Webb (8-5) in the league.
Florida A&M no match for Irish or Knights

副校长在2020-21赛季的比赛中取得了令人瞩目的成就，他带领FTU队在过去的两场比赛中以65-61胜出。

但Torthy还是回到了比赛，他在过去的两场比赛中以65-61胜出。

在复习了两场比赛的录像后，我开始想到他在比赛中的表现。他像一个真正的勇士，他的存在让观众们感到振奋。

他全神贯注地在比赛中，他的每一个动作都充满了力量。他的每一个投篮都精准无误，每一个传球都恰到好处。

他用他的行动告诉我们，篮球不仅仅是一项运动，更是一种精神的传递。

他让我们明白，只要心中有信念，就没有什么是不可能的。

Torthy在比赛中展现出来的毅力和决心，正是我们所期待的。

让我们一起为Torthy喝彩，为他的努力和坚持点赞。他的故事告诉我们，只要努力，我们每个人都可以成为自己的英雄。
University of Central Florida

Parking Services

Permit Regulations:
A permit is required for all motor vehicles parked on campus.

Permits MUST be ordered online, and can be picked up at the South Garage or mailed to your home.

Daily permits are available.

Vehicle assistance offered by Parking Services:
- Jumpstart your car
- Call a tow truck
- Inflate tires
- Give directions

Parking Services Hours:
Mon-Thurs: 7:30 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Friday: 7:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.

How to get your parking permit

1. Order your parking permit online at www.parking.ucf.edu (complete instructions are online)
2. Pay for your permit
   - Avoid the lines. Pay online with Credit Card and have your permit mailed to you.
   - Pay online and opt to pick up your permit.
   - Pay with personal check, cash, or Credit Card at Parking Services Office.

Your permit must be ordered online!

www.parking.ucf.edu
For info call: (407) 823-5812

Student Escort Patrol Service (S.E.P.S.)
provided by the UCF Police Department
Escorts for students on campus at night.
Call (407) 823-2424
The faculty union and UCF are in the final stages of a new contract agreement. No longer are the two groups opposing issues. He learned that although they are those that teach the students and those that run the university at odds with one another. No longer would the university declare an impasse in their support.

Thankfully, thanks of the UCF administration and the UCF faculty to agree that the differences between the doctors and their agents are something in their support.

What's ironic is that UCF was one of the universities that recognize the United Faculty of Florida before it was considered the state. Back in 2001, the Florida Board of Regents - an all-encompassing group that governed Florida's universities - replaced the university's chief negotiator with a new one. This is also accepted by individual boards of trustees for each of Florida's universities. The bargaining process is something that is not only predictable but also transparent.

The faculty pulled together and showed up in a big show at the Jan 30 Board of Trustees meeting. They held up signs, asking the UCF administration to respect them and to work with them.

The signs may have worked. Because both the UCF and UFF worked past the impasse and are in the final stages of getting out of the contract impasse.

This does mean for UCF students? Well, it means they can look at their professors and their administration with a new sense of hope.

But it also means that faculty who have worked hard and gained the freedoms we are now protected and sexual orientation will be added to UCF's Anti-Discrimination policy - the last addition that should have been in place for more than two years and we're quickly approaching the mark. The negotiations began in September 2002.

Then came the disappointment. The term broke down and the news delivered an impasse - something that the two sides couldn't reach an agreement on and our help was needed. At least, days after news of year negotiations, and UFF had agreed to 32 strikes.

The faculty called together and showed up in a big show at the Jan 30 Board of Trustees meeting. They held up signs, asking the UCF administration to respect them and to work with them.

Starting up again, the signs may have worked. Because both the UCF and UFF worked past the impasse and are in the final stages of getting out of the contract impasse.

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The beginning of February, only to say, "I'm sorry." But the faculty union and those that run the university declared an impasse - something in their support.

President George W. Bush has officially announced his running ticket for president and vice president. Bush and his running mate, John Edwards, have been running for the last several weeks. Bush has been running for the last several weeks. The ticket was more overwhelmingly qualified to hold the office of vice president and vice president.

President and UFF can only mean good things for the students at UCF. In true political fashion, Bush is likely to sign the bill as soon as it reaches his desk. The President has already signed the bill as soon as it reaches his desk. The President has already signed the bill as soon as it reaches his desk. The President has already signed the bill as soon as it reaches his desk.

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I dare you to move, to a place off-campus

READER VIEWS

Ros is a student researcher working on research for highly advanced plasma spray manufacturing techniques. He is also an entrepreneur, working on bringing his research out of the lab and into the market place. His business instincts, skills and drive to succeed have allowed Ros to become the most hated, individually and socially, by those around him. The reason is simple: where am I right, you might actually enjoy the personal bathroom and freedom of those around you. I believe that Keith Rea has demonstrated the potential of every student doing an excellent job of serving his constituents in the College of Engineering and Computer Science. He is vision, leadership and determination, a combination that has done an excellent job of making UCF a place of high-quality education and success. The age-old debate of whether you play your cards in or on, is one that will end up walking out of your life. The movement is about making the smart long-term investment and providing the accountability that will have the most overall impact on student life. I have talked to both of the other candidates with an open heart to hear their views. We cannot have quality leaders without diversity. I have talked to both of the other candidates with an open heart to hear their views. We cannot have quality leaders without diversity. I believe that Keith Rea has demonstrated the potential of every student doing a job for the better of the community. I know that as a team, our destinations are above and beyond yours. With all that being said I have talked to both of the other candidates with an open heart to hear their views. We cannot have quality leaders without diversity. I believe that Keith Rea has demonstrated the potential of every student doing a job for the better of the community. I know that as a team, our destinations are above and beyond yours. With all that being said I have talked to both of the other candidates with an open heart to hear their views. We cannot have quality leaders without diversity.
Discover Something New 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

Monday, Feb. 21

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

CAB Speakers presents Harlen Cohen, Garden Key AB, Bpm

SGA Runoff Elections

Tuesday, Feb. 22

SGA Presidential Elections

Wednesday, Feb. 23

SANGAM Culture Night, Pegasus Ballroom, Bpm

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

PAGES 10-11
HAPPENINGS

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 but 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 all that is nerdy. Rare back issues, underground anime and tabletop gaming are just a small sample of the wonders awaiting those brave enough to venture in. Along with a handful of guest appearances from big names in the comic book, television and film industries, you can bet that every fanboy and basement recluse will be in full force. And thus, the focal point of the impending power struggle will come to a head.

Among the teeming masses of the pale and gangly crowds will be some of the most dangerous and powerful beings to ever walk the earth. Only here is it possible to see a squadron of storm troopers posing for pictures while standing across from the awe-inspiring, yet unusually overweight, Lantern Core. Legends like the Ghostbusters will be on hand, packing an impressive array of proton packs and traps, all the while sporting some uncharacteristic acne and voice cracks. Heroes like Daredevil and Aquaman will be there to keep the peace, while villains like Mystery 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 preparing a very special guide 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 with...
Happenings

Calendar

Campus

Are We There Yet (How Did We Get Here)
Feb. 24, noon to 1:50 p.m., free
UCF Campus
407-928-6877

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

Black History Month Closing Ceremonies
Feb. 24, 7 p.m. to 10 p.m., free
Student Union
Key West Room, 218
msc@mail.ucf.edu

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

Harlen Cohen
Feb. 26, 8 p.m. to 10 p.m., free
Student Union
Garden Key Room, 218A
407-823-1500

EvenT

Peking Acrobats
Feb. 24, 7 p.m., $10 to $24
K kit Center for Performing Arts
9800 International Drive
407-345-9800

U.S. Pro Rodeo
Feb. 25 to Feb. 26, 7:30 p.m., $15 to $25
Ocean Center
800 N. Atlantic Ave.
Daytona Beach
386-254-0435

Orlando Wetlands Park Festival
Feb. 27, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., free
Orlando Wetlands Park
East Colonial Drive and South Fort Christmas Road
407-568-1706

Absolutely Avalon
Feb. 26, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., free
Founder's Square at Avalon Park
13001 Founder's Square Drive
407-928-6877

Rain
Feb. 26, 8 p.m., $20 to $30
King Center for Performing Arts
3905 N. Wickham Road
Melbourne
561-242-2219

Festival Independencia Dominicana
Feb. 27, 11:30 a.m. to 8 p.m., $10
Lee Vista Center
7000 E. Lee Blvd.
407-221-6093

Mini Cooper Car Show
Feb. 27, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., free
UCF Student Union
5980 International Drive
407-248-2838

Shat, The Obsecne, Libyan Hit Squad (punk)
Feb. 24, 8 p.m., $5-$7
Student Union
3865 N. Wickham Road
407-248-2838

Take Notice, Fallen from the Sky, No Harm Done, Fire at Will (punk)
Feb. 25, 7 p.m., $3
Japanese American Cultural Center
407-823-1500

Folly, Another Broken Promise, Cannae, My Bitter End, Roan, Beauty in Chaos (punk)
Feb. 25, 5 p.m., $8
Avalon Ballroom
5980 International Drive
407-345-9800

Please see Calendar on 14
HAPPENINGS

CALENDAR

Foggling 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
407-956-2383

The Legendary J.C.'s (rock)
Feb. 26, 10 p.m., $3-$5
Copper Rocket Pub
108 Lake Ave.
407-685-0009

Still Naive, Atomic Tangerine, Canvas (hard rock)
Feb. 26, 9:30 p.m., $8
The Social
54 N. Orange Ave.
407-246-1419

Brandsten, Number One Fan (rock)
Feb. 26, 5 p.m., $8
With Pub
1830 N. Mills Ave.
407-988-5070

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

Feb. 25, 5 p.m., $13
House of Blues
Downtown Disney West Side
407-956-2383

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

Sloppy Meeatsteers (punk) for "Central Florida Extreme III Action Sports and Music Festival"
Feb. 26
UCF Arena
407-823-6066

The O'Says, Herb Williams & Gibralter (pop)
Feb. 26, 5 p.m., $39.95-$59.75
Universal Studios at Universal Orlando
407-363-8000

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

Dodge, 1994 (indie)
Feb. 26, 10 p.m., $4
The Peacock Room
1321 N. Mills Ave.
407-229-0048

Casey Brewer, Mere Sunrize, Red Dave (indie)
Feb. 26, 7 p.m., $7
0-900 CS
1002 W. Hwy
407-363-8000

It Dies Today, Twelve Tribes, Anterabear, If Hope Dies, Winter Solstice (hard rock)
Feb. 27, 7 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.
407-229-0048

Bill Bellamy
Former MTV vee-joy 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 tired 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.

Spotlight

Elvis Costello

High Society Pipes & Cigars

"Fine Glass Smoking Accessories"

- Pipe Pipes Pipes
- "Detachable" Cleaners
- Hand Blown Glass
- Ceramic/Alloys
- Incense/ Pipe Cleaner
- Body Jewelry

Orlando Jai-Alai and Race Book

LOOKING FOR ACTION?
LIVE JAI-ALAI — NOW THRU MARCH!
MATINEES - THURS, SAT & SUN EVENINGS - THURS, FRI & SAT

College Students Always Free
(With Valid I.D.)

This Ad Good
For 1 Free Program (Any Performance)

Horses

Jai-Alai Simulcasts

Elvis Costello

The Peacock Room
1321 N. Mills Ave.
407-229-0048
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 former Tomahawk 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’Viaquez” which blends in a little flamenco-inspired horn for your dancing pleasure and features the Chill Peppers’ Flea and John Frusciante: it’s reminiscent almost of a missing track on De-Loused. The lyrically dark album concludes with “Cassandra Gemini,” a 32-minute monumental track that is almost Pink Floyd-esque. Digital spoken word accents this song superbly, and the chorus of song (which kicks back in after 20 minutes of just sound) makes the half-hour of your life spent listening to one song actually enjoyable.

The Mars Volta will also release a 15-minute IZ which is to act as a “decoder” to the rest of the album. What’s the definition of ostentations again?

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

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

—CHRIS BOWERS

KINGS OF LEON
Aha Shake Heartbreak
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

ARMS 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 gravelly), 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
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

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 later 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.

SHARON PARE
Staff Writer

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

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

SP: I am a Jacksonville home-girl too, don't we kick ass?
AA: Hell yeah! 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
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 with 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 Meateaters. 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.

COR

2005 TOUR

CHAMPIONS of ROCK

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

FRI FEB 25th @ HOUSE OF BLUES
Tickets $13 - Doors open 5pm - Show Starts 6pm
For Info or Tix - www.ChampionsofRock.com - www.hob.com or call 407.658.6311
In this 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 girlfriends 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 girlfriend 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 Thal and Error.

I can remember every bit about the night: how my date wouldn't let me touch her breast, how the theater next to us was playing The Lost World far too loudly and how the air conditioning isn'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 theater, 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 we felt blest. 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 glazed 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 theater eating away my feelings, come sit next to me. I promise I'm really not that bad of a person.
MOVIES

FILM REVIEW ★ ★ ★ ★

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 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-
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 prevented 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 statute home just yet, 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 *Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs*, Freeman will find himself rewarded for a lesser role to make up for the countless times he's been screwed by the Academy.

Best Animated Film

So the Academy was able to tell that *Shrek 2 and Shark Tale* were animated, big deal. Too bad they didn't tell them apart from what we call "good films."

And the Oscar goes to: *The Incredibles.*

Best Original Score

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

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

And the Oscar goes to: We'll just wait and see.

Best Song

Is it too late to re-nominate "A Kiss at the End of the Rainbow" or "Belleville Rendez-vous?" And the Oscar Goes To: *Believe* — *The Polar Express.* Andrew Lloyd Webber already has an Oscar for his name, and "Oscar Winners The Counting Crows" just doesn't sound right.

Best Original Screenplay

The writing categories have typically been the Academy's consolation prizes to movies shafted out of the Best Picture nod. No surprise, then, to see both *Hotel Rwanda* and *Eternal Sunshine* in this one. And the Oscar Goes To: *Eternal Sunshine,* Show it some love, Academy.

Best Adapted Screenplay

All the films in this category deserved it, and this is one of the few categories this year with a surprise — *Before Sunset.* It was certainly one of the best films of the year, but not one you'd think the Academy would notice. Congratulations 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 indisputably 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 nuts, hair stylists take their jobs way too seriously and Joan 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 claim their gold.

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

She: Throw hissy fits. Case in point: Halle Berry. Berry's melo-dramatic crying spells and hyper-ventilations in 2002's Monsters 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 in tune with their inner psychos for their roles in 2002's A Beautiful Mind and 1999's Girl, Interrupted, they had audience and Academy members alike screaming to nominate these dynamic and complex performances.

Eight: If you're a man, play a woman, if you're a woman ... you get the idea. Case in point: Hilary Swank in Boys Don't Cry in 1999, for her role as the young woman who was posing as a man. The challenge paid off for Swank, who won her 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 people to this day still think she's from the UK.

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

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

Predicting that other Sunday night movie awards show

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

MATT HEDGECOCK
Staff Writer

Around 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 beat-up on most of the year (Battlefield Earth, Gigli, etc.) takes 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 Indic offers up its preferred picks for the worst of the worst.

Worst Picture — Superbabies: Baby Geniuses 2

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

Worst Actor — Ben Stiller for Along Came Polly, Anchorman, Dodgeball, Envy, and Starksy 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 — 'Pitot' for Catwoman

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

Worst Remake or Sequel — Alien vs. Predator

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

Worst Screenplay — Superbabies: Baby Geniuses 2

My fan-fiction Baby Geniuses sequel was way better.

MOVIE TIMES

FROM 11:00

BLEEPS AND BLOOPS

It is past time for an overhaul

Someone, breathe life into coop games

IVAN VELEZ
Staff Writer

T he 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, Gauntlet II 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 control a warrior, a sorcerer or a rogue (who specialized In bows). The newly released Champions lets players control a warrior, a sorcerer or a rogue (who specialized In bows). The newly released Champions lets players control a warrior, a sorcerer or a rogue (who specialized In bows).

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MANNO A MARKO

News flash: your friend might not be right

MARILYN MANNO
Staff Writer

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

No, I am not a yoga instructor, and this isn’t a lesson in tuning into your “chakras.” It’s a lesson in tuning out your friends. Man, they really think they know what’s best for you, don’t they? “You should do this/that,” “call him,” “don’t call her,” “dump him,” are all some of the pearls of wisdom your friends may drop into your cup on any given day. Why? Well because they “know you so well,” of course.

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

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

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

I don’t really know what that thought was, and for some of you, frankly, I don’t want to know, but the point is that you can
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 19-20 — Spring Car Show at Daytona International Speedway
• Innumerable bars and various events

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

UCF students are embracing this MySpace alternative

NICOLE SCHAUB
Staff Writer

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

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

Each member's page 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." Thefacebook contains a list of more than 1,500 groups. Joining a group is a chance for people to talk about their shared interests and to find out who else wants to talk.

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

"I love the group I started called 'Dynamite and Pearls, for the classiest girls,'" UCF junior Maggie Johnson said. "I invited all my close female 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 just go to the search link and type in people's names from my graduating class. I ended up finding over 1,000 members."

Thefacebook also has certain lingo that one must learn once they become a member. For example, if you want to playfully flirt with another member, then you can "poke them." Poking is done by simply clicking a button to the person you want to poke.

"Poking is weird, it's a little guy that pops up and basically pokes at the screen with his finger," UCF senior Stacy McCord said. "It's kinda stupid, but you can jokingly poke your friends to be funny."

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

Another facebook term is "groupies." A groupie is a person in a specific group that is friends with more than half of its members. "I'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 romantic relationships from chatting with other members through messages. "I met a guy through facebook and went on a date with him," UCF senior Kristin Kludjian said. "He goes to UCF and he knew some friends of mine, so I figured it was safe and we ended up having a great time."

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

"If I want to talk to one of my friends then I'll call or IM them," UCF junior Jillian Cruz said. "However, thefacebook forces you to talk to people you may not want to and before you know it your 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

From 113

Don't let friends rule your love life

From 113

Mediocre games flood multiplayer game genre

From 113

Always wear a bear suit for romanticizing

From 113
New boulevard keeps heritage in ZORA! site

Eatonville residents keep tradition alive

JOHNNY 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 figure during the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s, wrote prolifically about the town and based her characters from the people she grew up with.

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

The P.E.C. turned national attention toward Eatonville by putting together the Zora Neale Hurston Festival, which the American Business Association deemed "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 P.E.C.

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 P.E.C., turned lemons into lemonade by creating the "Kennedy Boulevard" Streetscape Project. The project was given a grant of $3 million, with partial funding from the Department of Transportation, and will include underground utilities, sidewalks, light fixtures, median landscaping, red brick pavers and benches. It will take around eight months to complete and will run the length of Kennedy Boulevard from Wymore Road to the eastern boundary of Eatonville, which is approximately one mile.

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

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

The groundbreaking for the "Kennedy Boulevard" Streetscape Project is at 1:30 p.m. this Friday in front of the Town Hall at 3077 Kennedy Blvd., Eatonville, FL 32715. 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.
**RAMBLINGS**

**THE GEEK LIFE**

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, but with adorable Asian features in a little plaid skirt with knee high socks, with pig tails 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 pig tails 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 dangers in the city than that. Perhaps, if I am lucky enough and so full of mischief I am bursting at the seams with trouble, I will fall into a dark hole, a well, maybe into a book or something, and end up in a miracle land of crazy powers and magicians. I would gather a team of heroes and go search for some diamonds of power or dream earrings or something random like that. Against all odds we would prevail in the face of evil demons, sleeping under the stars as we travel.

**CRAZED INDIE ROBOT**

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 motion 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, Keanu's reaction to his "beloved" dying? A weak "oh, no." Not even an agonized or frantic "oh, no." Oh, no. It was the kind of "oh, no" someone might unleash if they just found out they ran out of milk.

**NEAR-LIFE EXPERIENCE**

Hanson's revenge

MICHAEL LAWRENCE  
Staff Writer

Why does Hanson's *The Middle of Nowhere* haunt me so, as I mentioned last week in part one of this tale? It all started in the ninth grade, the spring of 1998 to be exact. Birds and bees were copulating (producing "beards," I assume), my Jewish curly hair was sprouting in places I thought only pedophilic rabbits had, and Seinfeld was about to get cancelled. This is when I met Chrissy.

She was the friend of my friend's girlfriend or something like that. I was given her number, and being an eager gentleman, with loins ever-burning, I gave her a call. We got around to talking about music eventually, and she briefly mentioned that she listened to "weird music." Intrigued, I started dropping names until something would give: "Gregorian Monk chants? Tori Amos? Huey Lewis?" Not a yes to any of the bands or artists I threw at her. Then she muttered it: "Hanson."

"Hanson? The Muppets guy? Do you listen to the Labyrinth soundtrack on repeat? Bowie dancing the magic dance is awesome!"

"Hanson! Those cute boys from Oklahoma." Hanson. Those Midwestern wunderkinds who managed to douse the country in syrupy goodness. Like the Osmonds but without the polygamy.

Being an Offspring/Nine Inch Nails/Screw all authority" at the time, I started laughing. Then she started telling me just how obsessed she was. Posters and magazine clippings, even going to see them live. I hadn't thought of Hanson in the least. That was middle school stuff to me. I admit, I knew half the words to MMMBOP and thought the drummer was cute until I found out it was a guy, but that happened to the best of us, Hanson was history to me. A year in the life of a teenager is equal to that of 20 adult years. At least.

Desperation makes you believe you're in love and love makes you do stupid things. Wanting someone who liked Hanson was one of them. We continued calling on the phone for about two more weeks before deciding to meet each other in person. I had already written her sappy poetry (not unlike Hanson's lyrics) and used the word "heart" in every single way possible during casual speech. What could go wrong?

I was dropped off at her house on a Saturday at 2 p.m. and was picked up at 6:20 p.m. Those were the most painful four- and-a-half hours of my life.

Unbeknownst to me, she invited her friend and fellow Hanson fan to take notes.
Not Proud of KittyCatDance queries

CHRISTOPHER SCHWARZ
Staff Writer

Sometimes, the Internet provides me with enough timely material to make my job easy. This week is simply an outpouring 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-cattendance.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 bandwidth has been predictably exceeded, so I googled another link to the file. In the "foreign people are strange" category, this one features some guy's cat "dancing" to a song he wrote about it. The video is sure to win something at next year's Grammies, but not before the world finds new dimensions within their soul courtesy of lyrics like "Dance/I'm a kitty cat/And I dance dance dance dance dance dance dance." Not since Schnappi the Crocodile have I heard such poetry. Watch, listen and enjoy.

Not Proud
http://www.notproud.com

Remember a few weeks ago when I wrote about grouphug? That was awesome. Still, there's another site that does the same thing. Now you can boost your ego as each click reminds you of how other people are so much weirder than you. Online at the moment are masterpieces sorted into categories. From the "lust," 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 category gives me this gem at the moment: "I truly envy anyone who can raise a single eyebrow. Even more so if they can raise either one without having the other go up or wrinkle at all. My primitive [sic] brow cannot master this." Hurray.

Query Letters | I love http://queryletters.blogspot.com/

This link's for the movie buffs out there. The premise is that this blog's owner works someplace in Hollywood that receives scores of movie suggestions and puts up the massively stupid ones for all to see. It could be fake but I can't resist gems like "Headcase is about angel, an innocent, deformed gypsy boy, who is part of a carnival freak show in the year 1955." or "Aliens are after Mary and try to kill her because of secret about our galaxy. There's a plenty of action and a few romances between young people." Here's another: "SPAGHETTI KID is a coming-of-age story about a 15-year-old loner who dreams of becoming a professional wrestler. One day he discovers a magic breakfast cereal that gives him the super-strength to actually become a pro wrestler." Back in my day, all I ever got from my children's cereal was my daily dose of iron and I was danno happy for it. Finally, here is THE GREATEST STORY EVER TOLD, according to its author: "Broad comedy that centers around how Jesus invents the game of professional football as told by Father O'Reyan in order to prevent the Irish grandfatherly priest from being transferred to Siberia." Heartwarming, isn't it?

Stupid, stupid aliens

From 118

Keau would punctuate Sidhartha's sentences with some air guitar and an emphatic "WYLD STALLYNS!"

The OMGWTAF Award: Arnold Schwarzenegger's Thumb Wrestling Face of DOOM from True Lies (1994). At the denouement of this gypsy caper, Arnold decides to wind down from his adventures by thumb-wrestling his wife and daughter. What follows is a facial expression so frightening, it can only be described using netlsh. An expression that's less "L.2,3,4, I declare a thumb war," and more "I'll eat your soul." Horrifying.

The Only Scene Ever Improved By Rick Springfield Award: Wet Hot American Summer (2001). In the middle of this brilliant comedy, the main characters go on a hilariously expedited drug binge that lasts all of two minutes, in movie and real time. The absurd scene is punctuated by the decision to use Springfield's poppy "Love is Alright Tonight" in the background. Words can't do the sequence justice. Just watch it.

The Great Adventure Of Your Life: High School

From 118

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

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

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

Ha!

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

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

No wonder the idea of being an eternal schoolgirl has such an appeal to me. I thrive on intensity and wither in repetition and boredom. In high school, where everything is so meaningless yet so damned powerful, anything can happen.

And this is the very reason those geniuses in Japan make those poor crazy girls survive so long. I can't and wont do anything but laugh at me was a constant 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 dissolved into nothingness and that was that. But the memory remains. Two years after the incident I purchased the album for a $1.99 in a used CD store. I should have destroyed it by now. But I can't. And I won't. I've always known that being different would cause me to be ridiculed and I would eventually leave me unfilled and ultimately unloved and that thinking Chissy 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. MMBBOP. I'm about to relive it all over again.
Two out of three ain't bad.

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