

Rough holiday shopping season?
Ring in the Cash
 with a great seasonal job

NEWS • PAGE 3

**A World of
Sweetness
Awaits You**

GINGERBREAD VILLAGE • PAGE 15

The '90s Are Back!
 FOR THE HOLIDAYS

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT • PAGE 21

The Schoolcraft Connection



VOLUME 25 ISSUE 07

Serving the Schoolcraft Community for 25 years

December 8, 2011

Ocelot spirit

Men break century mark in win

BY DANIEL PEAKE
 STAFF WRITER

Okay, so let's be honest. Walking into Schoolcraft's PE building Wednesday night, the enthusiasm for most fans wasn't at its highest. Nonetheless Schoolcraft faithful walked out proud to be an Ocelot. After all, isn't that what Spirit Night games are all about? Someone must have clued Coach Randy Henry and the men's team into the theme of the night because the team put on an impressive show for everyone in attendance and those watching on local television. Schoolcraft was paired up against the talented Kellogg Community College Bruins and took full advantage of the home court and energetic crowd.

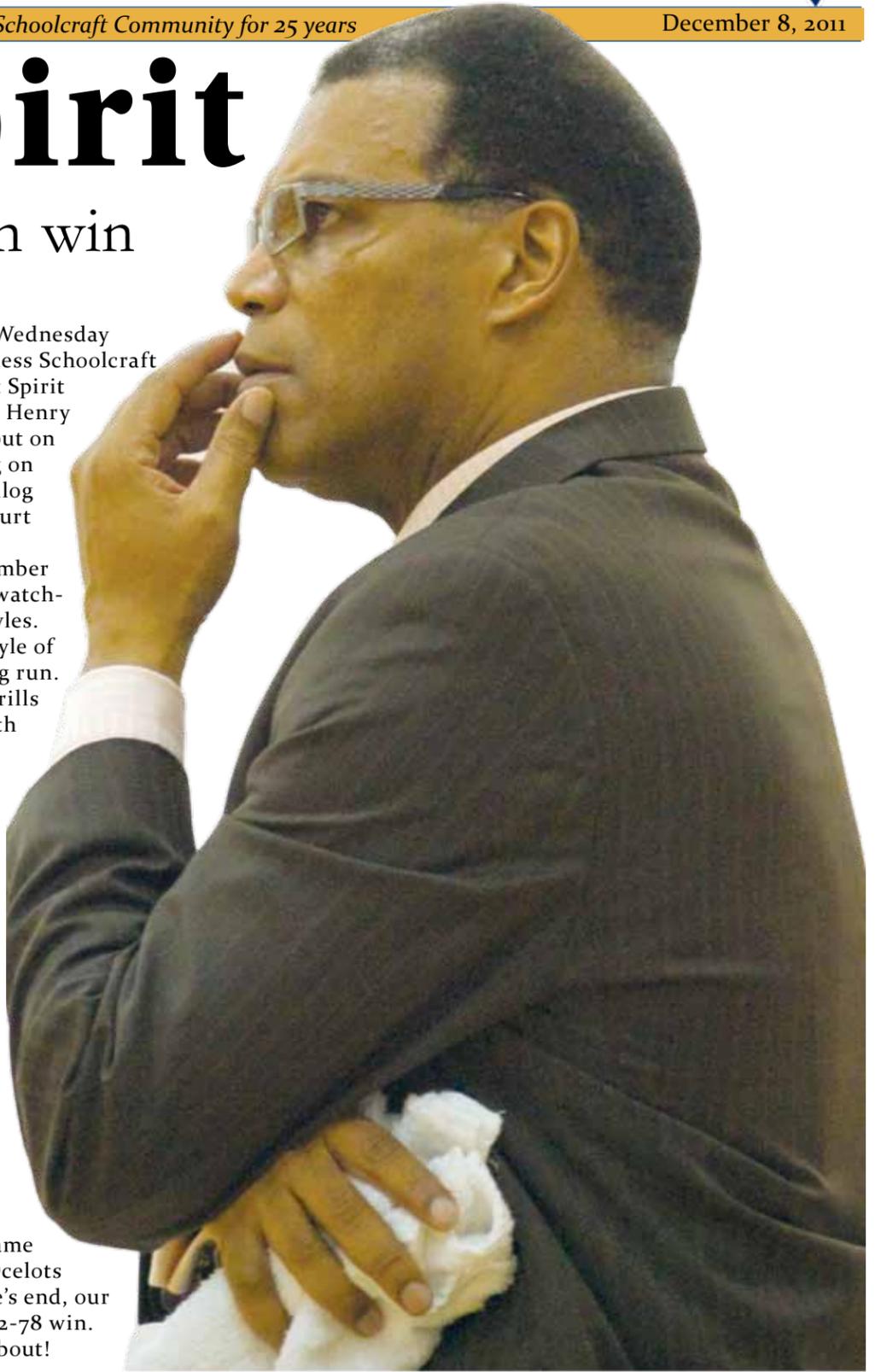
The one thing that truly made this match-up something to remember was the storyline behind it all (Yes, game's have storylines). From watching the two teams warm up, one could see the brewing battle of styles. The flashy, fancy warm-up of the Bruins hinted to their colorful style of play, an aspect which would turn out to hinder the team in the long run. At the other end of the court, the Ocelots performed sprints and drills suggesting a more fundamental play style. It was apparent that both teams would hope to establish their own pace to the game.

Before the game, Coach Henry was succinct about the team's motivation. "We're coming off of a 10-day hiatus. The last game we played we fell short. Our motivation is the hunger to get back on the court and take it all."

That hunger became evident as the Ocelots, led by Karl Moore, began a first-half tear into the seemingly unprepared Bruins. The men transitioned down the court with determination, pushing the ball hard into the paint and meeting success at almost every attempt. By halftime, the Ocelots led 50-32.

When the second half began, the Bruins started a tear of their own. The Ocelots had no answer for the remarkable perimeter shooting of their visiting opponents. This three-point barrage, combined with the absence of big man Moore due to a pair of technical fouls, helped the bruins come within 10 of the staggering Ocelots.

But the game was only entering its most entertaining phase. Out of nowhere a burst of energy and athleticism sparked the Ocelots from the starters to the bench. An offensive onslaught from the entire team, lead by forward Daniel Hill and surprise star of the game guard Sean McCranney, pushed the Ocelots through the Kellogg defense. By game's end, our Ocelots came out victorious with a 102-78 win. Now that's something to have spirit about!



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CONTACT US
 sceditor@schoolcraft.edu
 734-462-4422

INSIDE

News	2
Editorials	6
Campus Life	10
A&E	18
Sports.....	24
Diversions.....	30
Photo Story.....	32



PHOTOS BY MANDY GETSCHMAN & ANDREW KIELTYKA

Operation: Entertain the troops

Bringing cinematic joy to soldiers abroad

BY MONTGOMERY JONES
STAFF WRITER

With America's bravest off serving in the armed forces, it's great to take advantage of any and all opportunities we can to bring the joy of Christmas to our heroes overseas. To bring a bit of Holiday cheer to soldiers, Family Video is putting together "Operation: Entertain the Troops." Family Video will be sending a million DVDs to troops in Afghanistan and Iraq.

"We ask that anyone who has a large number of DVDs and can spare some, bring them to the store to be donated to the troops," said assistant manager Seanna Johnson at the Canton Center location. "This is our first year doing it but, who knows, next year we may do more if this proves successful."

Family Video is the largest privately-owned video rental chain in the United States and second largest overall. They are based in Glenview, Illinois and have many locations throughout the Midwest. They sell new and used DVDs and video games in addition to renting them.

"I think that is great," said Gloria Maria, a Schoolcraft student. "I think I can donate two dollars."

This is the first year of Operation: Entertain the Troops though Family Video is continuing their canned food collection as in previous years. Troops will get the DVDs just in time for Christmas. Customers may also contribute by writing letters to the soldiers and dropping them off at their local Family Video. Originally, Family Video aimed to have all the DVDs shipped by the end of November, but the stores will still accept donations until Christmas.

"I like that they are doing that, I think it is very nice. I will see what I can do" said Brad Wilson, a Schoolcraft student.

In addition to movies there are also many other care packages you can create this holiday season. Websites like Herobox.org allow you to message a soldier and sponsor them. Operationshoebox.com requires that you send a letter to the soldier, hygiene products, snacks and stationary products.

"I think that's really great there doing that," said Chelsea Rose, a student, "I'm sure some of the troops just want to rest and watch a good movie before going to battle again. I think it's a wonderful thing that they're doing that. I don't have many DVDs or money to give them but I would find a way to get something to send as well."

Students all over campus can look for ways to help this holiday season. Giving what you can is key. There are many different reputable services to donate your money and time to this season. It doesn't matter which you choose as long as it gets to the soldiers. Currently, there are over 180,000 U.S. service members serving in Afghanistan and Iraq. Giving DVDs is a small gift compared to what the soldiers have given us.



Into Iraq and back again

Part I: Where it began

BY IAN GALLAGHER
MANAGING EDITOR
& DANIEL PEAKE
STAFF WRITER

Editor's note: This is the first in a three-part series discussing the background, current situation and potential outcomes for U.S. withdrawal from the Iraq region of the Middle East. Check back in future issues for parts II and III of the series.

On Sept. 11, 2001, the nation witnessed the mass murder of nearly 3,000 American citizens on U.S. soil, the worst attack our nation has ever suffered. Mar. 20, 2003, we watched as brothers and sisters, family members and friends left home and were sent off to fight a war that would eventually become one of the longest in our nation's history. Jan. 20, 2009, a president-elect stepped into the oval office with the promise of ending the bloodshed. With candle lit vigils and U.S. bumper stickers, we were there through it all. Moreover, we were there on Oct. 21, 2011, when that same man, President Barack Obama, sent out the declaration that by year's end the decade of devastation would soon be over.

However, what does this mean? Is this long fought out campaign like a book of fiction that one can simply close without repercussion? What will this mean for the stability of our American way of life? Is the region

finally stable? Is the mission truly accomplished?

How it began

The discontentment with Iraq began more than 21 years ago with the first Gulf War. This conflict took place under the presidency of George H. W. Bush. The strife began after Iraqi forces invaded and annexed the state of Kuwait. Although short, the war, fought by American soldiers as well as those of 34 other nations against the Iraqi invaders would, in a series of extremely horrific events, set the stage 11 years later for a war that would consume a nation for almost a decade.

The first Gulf War came to a premature end, in the opinion of some historians with the benefit of hindsight, with the slaughter of a vast number of Iraqi soldiers as they fled on the road dubbed the "Highway of Death." The once-sided massacre was a public relations landmine forcing a quick political end to the conflict. At war's end, Iraq's hostile dictator, Saddam Hussein, was still left in power although greatly belittled and the nation of Iraq was sanctioned under the imposition of the United Nations.

Attack on America

Fast forward 10 years and another Bush, George W., was in the White House. On the morning of Sept. 11, 2001, 19 hijackers from the militant terrorist

group Al-Qaida commandeered four passenger jets. Two of these jets were purposely crashed into the twin towers of the World Trade Center, collapsing the buildings while simultaneously killing 2,606 people. Another jet crashed into the Pentagon killing 125 people including 55 military personnel. The last plane crashed in the fields of Pennsylvania due to a heroic revolt amongst its trapped passengers. This catastrophic event shook the foundations of the country and, to a lesser extent, the world. The United States was left in tears and reeling in utter contempt.

Immediately, after addressing the American people, President Bush called for an investigation to determine the culprits of the attacks. Leading the investigation was the FBI, who began operation PENTTBOM, which was the largest criminal inquiry in U.S. history. This investigation culminated with irrefutable evidence which pointed to Al-Qaida involvement along with Muslim radical Osama Bin Laden. After first denying involvement with the events of 9/11, Bin Laden finally came to admit his participation in the acts. America's wrath was coming into focus on the Middle East.

In a series of seemingly unrelated events, Bush demanded that Iraq disarm itself of all weapons of mass destruction. If Hussein failed to cooperate, war would once again come to Iraq's doorstep.

Hussein refused to back down.

In our news

BY RAMON RAZO
NEWS EDITOR

World news

United Kingdom – This Christmas, the privileged in Britain will take the term "rich taste" to new and absurdly appropriate measures. Long Clawson Daily is introducing a new brand of cheese they are calling Clawson Stilton Gold. The cheese will feature none other than real gold. The cheese is made from Clawson's white Stilton (basic enough). Then it is infused with actual edible gold leaf and gold liquor. Sounds simply delicious, now doesn't it? The cheese will cost roughly 608 pounds per kilo, which is almost \$1000 in American money, a steep price for the cultured among us.

"We wanted to create something special, a unique Stilton cheese, for the Christmas market," commented spokesperson Janice Breedon. She also admitted that the cheese was "just a limited run to hopefully get more people interested in Stilton." So far, a Gulf-based oil sheikh and a "famous pop star" have both shown interest in purchasing it. However, the company is being very silent on exactly who the consumers are.

National news

Illinois – "Twilight: Breaking Dawn: Part 1" is undoubtedly tearing up the box-office as of the printing of these words. But Bella Swan's crazy antics aren't just confined to the big screen as police in Chicago recently found out. Olivia Christina Ornelas was incredibly distraught over hearing that she and her boyfriend would not be in attendance of the vegan vampire flick as he had promised. Destroyed at the news of being denied her date with destiny, 18-year-old Ornelas got "extremely intoxicated" and crashed her car alongside Route 71. She was arrested on charges of underage alcoholic consumption and operation of a motor vehicle while under the influence of said substance. While Ornelas told the authorities one story, her real motive is clear to those familiar with Stephanie Meyer's books. She was trying to get Edward's attention. Obviously.

Sacramento – Have you ever encountered an obnoxious professor with habits so idiotic and bizarre you wonder how they can keep their job? Well, at least they've never asked for food like students in Sacramento found out. That's right, food. Even teachers get hungry.

Sacramento State psychology professor George Parrot has been demanding that students bring him snacks at the beginning of class for the past 39 years. Parrot informs students of this "unique" requirement the first day of class. He claims it is to build teamwork in the classroom. How this actually achieves anything but a high calorie count for the professor is uncertain.

However, in November, Parrot took his snack demands too far by actually leaving the room during the middle of a class (a midterm, no less) because students did not supply him adequate snacks. The university's spokeswoman Kim Nava said that the psychological department has deemed his behavior as unacceptable and asked him to stop.

Breaking the Internet

The unfortunate potential of SOPA

BY RAMON RAZO
NEWS EDITOR

In our fast moving, tech savvy world, the Internet is invaluable. It's hard to imagine a world without Facebook, YouTube and Google. However, with the free and easy access that the Internet provides, as well as the wealth of information on it, the Web opens new opportunities for copyright infringement and the piracy of software, music and movies. In order to counter this, the U.S. House of Representatives has introduced a bill called the "Stop Online Piracy Act" known by the seemingly innocent acronym "SOPA."

How it works

SOPA's main target is "rogue sites," a term used to describe websites that host copyrighted material but have the added headache of being located in another country making them outside our censorship jurisdiction. With SOPA, the U.S. Attorney General would seek to require sites such as Google and PayPal to cease business with them. The act would also require search engines to remove such

sites from their listings. The result would be a blocking of funds and a shutdown of the offending site. The bill also allows property holders (the ones whose copyrighted material is being used illegally) to take legal action against the host sites that have unlawfully been distributing their material.

Supporters of the act

The most intense supporters of the SOPA act have been the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA), the Recording Industry Association of America and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. Judiciary Committee Chairman Larmar Smith pointed out that the theft of copyrighted material accounts for more than \$100 million annually and a loss of thousands of jobs. "[SOPA] helps stop the flow revenue to rogue websites and ensures that the profits from American innovations go to America innovators".

Other supporters for the act have been Netflix, Macmillian Publishers and Viacom. Companies whose marketing relies heavily on movies, music and cable, such as Nike and L'Oreal, have also shown support for the act.

Floyd Abrams, a First Amendment lawyer as well as a former member of the MPAA, claims that SOPA is completely constitutional.

SOPA opponents

A large group of Internet companies (such as Google and Mozilla) have signed a letter condemning the act. It states that the act would open up law-abiding Web users to new liabilities and legal issues that had not been in place before. They also asked for an alternative act that would preserve "the innovation and dynamism that has made the Internet such an important driver of the economic growth and job creation." Many sites also collectively "censored" themselves to show their disapproval of the bill.

According to the Forum for Growth and Innovation, the bill "tinkers" with the very foundations of the Internet. Google Executive Chairman, Eric Scott, went so far as to call the bill "draconian."

Security issues

One of the major issues opponents of the act see is the potential security risk that it presents. The act is incompatible with DNSSEC (Domain Name System Security Extensions) and meddles with Internet encryption. Sites that rely on security for their users, like WellsFargo.com, would experience major security issues.

Another issue is how easily it can be dodged. Simply switching over to an offshore DNS provider would allow copyright pirates to bypass monitoring. It also doesn't have the ability to completely stop access to blocked sites.

What it means for the Web

Protect IP (a very similar act) was approved and is, as of this writing, waiting to be voted on. SOPA will likely experience the same acceptance. Even though the act has the possibility to undergo more House hearings, Chairman Smith says this is unlikely.

The language contained in the bill also has the potential to blacklist sites such as YouTube, Facebook and Wikipedia. The Center for Democracy and Technology said that the bill would target entire websites for one incriminating link, one copyrighted video or other infringing software. This would mean that the next social networking site of tomorrow would experience huge legal obstacle on its way to establishing itself on the Internet.



The Opponents

AOL, eBay, Facebook, Google, Mozilla, Yahoo!, Twitter, Nancy Pelosi, Ron Paul, Zynga, LinkedIn, the European Parliament, Tim McKone, executive VP of federal relations for AT&T, the Sandia National Laboratories, Wikimedia (who's sites include Wikipedia and Wikileaks), and Tumblr.

The Supporters

MPAA, RCAA, NBA, Ford Motor Co., L' Oreal, Netflix, Viacom, Nike, the National Fraternal Order of Police, Revlon, Macmillian, and Acushnet Company.

For more information, check out americancensorship.org.

Christmas cash

Seasonal jobs open plethora of employment opportunities

BY ISHPREET KAUR
STAFF WRITER

With the holidays fast approaching, many retail stores are opening temporary employee positions. In this economy, and especially to us as students, this is a very welcomed move.

Seasonal jobs are short-term work positions that are available during the various holiday seasons that often require higher number of employees than usual. Employers in various industries are always hiring extra employees for assistance during the Christmas holiday season to handle the month-long shopping onslaught that begins on Black Friday. Although many industries are in need of extra sets of hands, the retail, restaurant and hospitality industries make up the largest portion of the seasonal jobs available.

Retailers typically increase their workforce by at least four percent just for the holiday gift-buying rush. The National Retail Federation expects about 500,000 additional jobs in the retail field this holiday season nation-wide, about the same as 2010.

Seasonal jobs are a phenomenal way to gain workplace experience as well as earning extra cash, a welcomed commodity for students looking to do some Christmas shopping. Since seasonal

jobs mostly require employees to work evenings, weekends and holidays, they are a perfect match for college students as it correlates well with their full and ever changing academic schedule. This is also extremely beneficial for students who are looking to earn some extra cash to spend on traveling during the holiday season.

Seasonal hiring for potential jobs in retail typically begins in October and continues into November.

When the infamous Black Friday ends, it marks the beginning of the Christmas shopping season. More sales and more revenue require more helping hands. According to a survey conducted by Michigan Retailers Association, the holiday season is expected to be good or better than 2010 for nearly 9 out of 10 retailers. Additionally, Ed Elko, senior vice president for Human Resources at Boscov's, said that there is an expectation to hire an extra 1,800 to 2,000 among its 40 stores which comparably is about 40 to 50 employees per store than last year.

While plenty of retailers are hiring around the holiday season, one efficient way to search for seasonal employment would be by using the Web. An excellent source of information about local jobs in our community would be to search

at snagajob.com which provides a list of local employers offering positions to seasonal employees. Some of the local companies that are currently hiring include Kohl's, Target, UPS, Toys "R" Us, Express, Jet's Pizza, Culver's and many more. UPS plans to hire an extra 55,000 workers to get through the busy holiday season.

Although the holiday sales look promising as indicated by several economic factors from the National Retail Federation, there is still continued consumer uncertainty. A Federation press release states that factors such as stock market, higher gas and food prices, fiscal policy and an tremendous increase in job growth would play a vital role in how consumers choose to spend their money this holiday season.

Whatever the case, seasonal jobs can be a good way for students to get easy experience and extra money during the Christmas season. Most importantly, it opens up lots of employment opportunities in a time when all people want to find under the tree is a paying job.



Boarding attempt

Schoolcraft student runs for trustee post

BY IAN GALLAGHER
MANAGING EDITOR

John Dalton, President of College Republicans of Schoolcraft College, recently ran for a seat on the Board of Trustees, the governing body of the College. The possibility of having a student trustee is a chance to add diversity and a unique perspective to the seven-member panel.

Members on the non-partisan board often have a business background and strong ties to the community. Usually political unknowns run for the Board as it makes a good stepping stone to higher offices. State Representative John Walsh, Congressman Thaddeus McCotter and Livonia Mayor Jack Kirksey are all former trustees.

"I had [an] advantage [because] I know school issues, ones that pertain to students, and that the Board of Trustees should be more accessible to students and see what things they think the school could improve on," said Dalton, "I thought it was a good idea for there to be diversity on the board with age and a student perspective with issues and someone who actually knows the issues."

The initial vacancy was caused by the departure of Mary Breen, who had served on the board for 28 years. Then, on the day the Board decided on the new trustee, another member unexpectedly resigned.

"The chairman of the Board of Trustees said that he was very happy to see a student that was taking it seriously," said Dalton, "proud that I was seriously trying to get on the Board of Trustees, not just messing around."

Dalton received praise from the entire board. They were glad to see a student getting involved in the governing of the College, especially since Schoolcraft lacks

a student government. Still, it makes one wonder if a student really stood any chance of being appointed.

"I knew it was a long shot," said Dalton, "in an election, I think I would stand a better chance."

Dalton's chances were greatly aided by the sheer amount of time he is on campus compared to someone who spends most of their time working elsewhere.

"I could be here like 12 hours a day with students and professors," said Dalton, "[The Board] did take it as a serious bid, [they] asked me legitimate questions, other questions though because I was a student, such as what issues are facing students."

Even in a losing effort, running for the position allowed Dalton to gain insight into what the Board does.

"Based on the questions I was asked, I got a feel for the types of issues the Board of Trustees deal with and what they need to know about the school as the policy-making body of Schoolcraft," said Dalton. The Board deals with the Code of Conduct, policy, basic rules, the College's President, tuition and spending for the school in general.

John R. Elkins, a member of the Schoolcraft Board of Governors, and Douglas H. Adams, Vice President of Comerica Bank, were both appointed to the Board of trustees. Dalton is strongly considering running for the Board of Trustees in the 2012 elections, when board members must be elected for their six-year terms.

"If I were to be elected, I would focus on school issues before considering anything else," said Dalton, "but one way or another, I do plan on staying active in the Schoolcraft community for years to come."

CAMPUS CLIFFNOTES

Compiled by Ramon Razo • News Editor

Meet Cameron McWhirter

Cameron McWhirter is the author of "The Red Summer: The Summer of 1919 and The Awakening of Black America." He is a staff reporter for The Wall Street Journal. His book is the first narrative written about the summer of 1919, when an unprecedented wave of anti-black riots and lynchings swept the country. Racial unrest rolled across the south into the north and the Midwest, even to the nation's capital. "Red Summer" focuses on the worst riots and lynchings, including those in Chicago, Washington D.C., Charleston, Omaha and Knoxville.

Come meet McWhirter in VisTaTech Center, room 550, on Thursday, Dec. 8 from 1 to 2 p.m. For more information, contact Josselyn Moore at 734-462-4400 ext. 5271.

Gorgeous Graphing

Graphing linear equations is one of those math topics that gives students fits. Well, not anymore. Find out how easy graphing lines can really be, when you become better acquainted with the "algebra student's BFF," and watch your graphing troubles drift away. The class takes place on Monday, Dec. 5, at 6 p.m. It will be held in room 110 of the McDowell Center. For more information, call 734-462-4436.

Christmas Day

On Dec. 25, celebrate the holidays with family and friends! The event happens once a year, and is usually accompanied by gift giving and joyous merry making. Have a great holiday!

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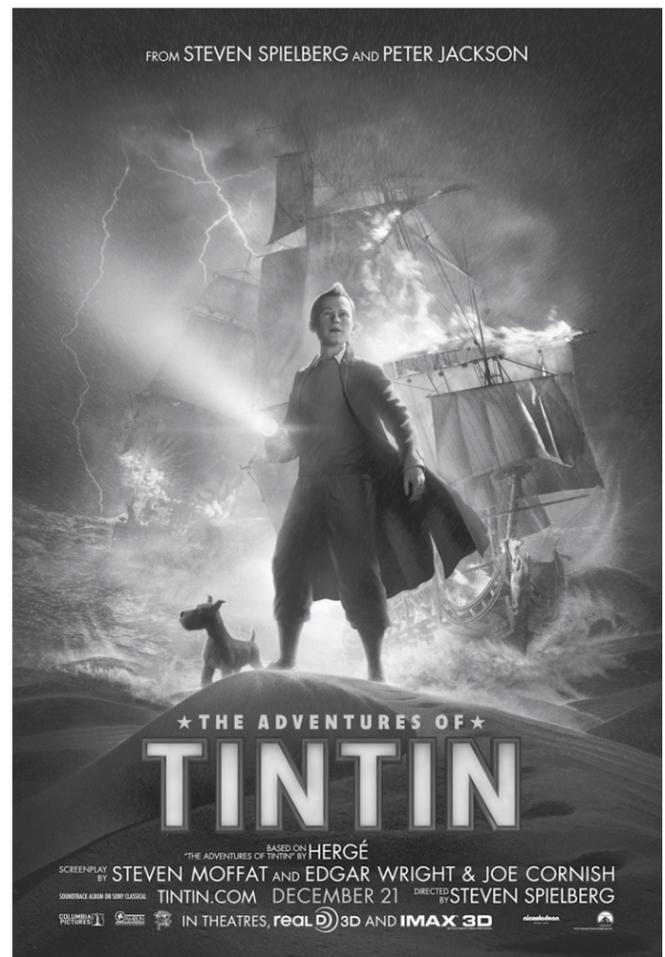
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- The First Amendment to the Constitution



LIKE THE TRUTH, BUT BETTER

By **JONATHAN KING**
EDITOR IN CHIEF
kinetikai@hotmail.com

I made an album (and so can you)

We are living in the future. Want proof? I am holding in my hands my first music album. Not some home-burned CD in a paper sleeve or an Office Depot plastic jewel case with laser printer labels taped on. I'm talking a professionally-printed, cellophane-wrapped, retail-ready compact disc with a bar code and everything. It's available online right now and ready for purchase, both in physical form and as a digital download. Not bad for a kid with little more than a keyboard and a laptop.

Don't worry, this column isn't just about self-promotion. (By the way, you can purchase my fine album, "It Happened In Eight Days," at kinetikai.bandcamp.com. Shame? I don't know the meaning of shame.) The point is that the cost to me to put out an album was a few weeks of my time and about \$200 in equipment and software. Quite a bargain, right? Especially if you consider that, not too long ago, all \$200 bought you was three hours of studio time and hopefully enough gas to get you to your next gig.

The universe of music creation and distribution has changed so radically in the last decade that it's almost incomprehensible. Home studio setups are cheaper and more functional than ever. Sites like Bandcamp offer free music hosting and the ability to set up your own online music-selling business in exchange for a percentage of revenue, while sites like Kunaki do the same thing, only with physical media like CDs and DVDs. To top it all off, social media sites like Twitter, Facebook and Myspace (yes, Myspace is still around and still an amazingly viable tool for musicians) make promotion stupid simple.

Forget bedroom musicians – this is the era of bedroom producers.

The online music scene is now inundated with anyone and everyone from the world-touring professionals to the obscurest cult geniuses to the lowest musical peon with a computer, an acoustic guitar, a \$25 microphone and the audacity to call himself an artist. (My microphone cost \$50, FYI.) Subsequently, there is a lot of substandard material floating through the tubes and, for many, this new paradigm is a serious threat to the world of music as we know it. I strongly disagree. ("Oh really, Mr. Vested Interest? Please, tell us why.")

More musicians producing more material will always be better than the alternative. Think about it: Was it really so much better when we only got whatever had the superlative good fortune to make it through the record industry pipeline? Now we get to be the judge and jury to a sea of music that would previously have been cut off from us. And yes, some talentless idiots will make it to the top through no fault of their own, but it's always been this way.

If you're not one of the lucky ones, being an artist still requires hard

work just like in the old days. My album, for example, is currently selling like hotcakes, if hotcakes didn't sell particularly well. That's because I haven't put a lot of effort into promotion and I currently don't play live gigs. It's a simple give and take just as it's always been. And besides, you still have to produce quality content – you can only fool so many people with your two-hours-fiddling-with-Garageband hack jobs. Those who have the talent and put in the effort receive the benefits. The only difference is now you don't have to spend ten years playing nameless basement clubs for a hat full of nickels. Of course, you still can and maybe you still should.

Regardless, now is the best time to be a musician and, subsequently, the best time to be a lover of music. Average musical hopefuls like me have the kind of opportunities bands would have killed for years ago and the truly great ones can put themselves out there with unprecedented ease. It's astounding and if it means I have to share the stage with all the guitar-wielding peons of the world then so be it.



Don't forget to check what is happening on campus in the Campus Life section! See page 10



STAFF

Adviser

JEFFREY PETTS

Advertising Adviser

TODD STOWELL



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IAN GALLAGHER
Managing Editor

RAMON RAZO
News Editor

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Via Email: sceditor@schoolcraft.edu



KEEP IN MIND

By **KIM POMA**
CAMPUS LIFE EDITOR
kpmail7@yahoo.com

Did you hear?

It's been a busy tabloid year. Ashton Kutcher and Demi Moore got divorced. So did Kim Khardashian – and only 72 days after exchanging vows! Justin Bieber might have knocked up a fan and William and Kate? They got married in a lavish ceremony that some people stayed up to watch at three in the morning.

This is the news that captures our attention more often than not. It's gossip, it's scandal and it's extra juicy. Sandra Bullock's messy divorce from Jesse James (cheater, cheater pumpkin eater) was the top story in 2010 and Brittany Spears' downward spiral kept us all glued to the television. We're addicted. The only question is why.

I have a few theories.

We constantly put celebrities up on pedestals. On some levels, it's extremely shallow. They're gorgeous – flawless skin and the most stylish fashions abound. Then, on other levels, it's hero-worship. Some celebrities become our idols – what they stand for, the roles they take and we look to them with stars in our eyes. But then they make mistakes and we realize they're only human.

And we love it.

Take, for instance, Lindsey Lohan. She started out as a Disney star and quickly worked her way into the hearts of millions. Then she got older, fell into bad habits and now can't seem to spend more than a few months outside of a jail. She has flaws and we're determined to uncover every single one of them.

Celebrities lead the life of the rich and famous. They can lavishly travel wherever they want, visit exotic locations on a whim and spend thousands of dollars on the simplest of things. Kim K's wedding could have paid for maybe twenty years of schooling. Oprah Winfrey splurged on her audience every Christmas.

Our lives? Not so glamorous. The standard day is as followed: wake up, go to work, come home, eat, sleep, lather, rinse and repeat. We take out loans for school and we maybe rely more on "the thought that counts" presents than we should. We're very, sorry to say, boring. That's how we, the unprivileged masses, end up idolizing these chosen few. It's a distraction from our own dull existence.

Finally, we view celebrity news as escapism. Every day on the six o' clock news, it's one depressing story after another. Crimes committed, lives lost, people injured. It's gotten to the point where a happy story is a treat and two are just a miracle. I'm not saying celebrity news isn't all happy-go lucky (the Michael Jackson trial, Amy Winehouse dying), I'm just saying it's a little easier to stomach.

Honestly, I would rather pick up People's Magazine over USA Today and watch TMZ over Fox News any day because when the most important story in the article or on the channel is over whether or not someone is pregnant, cheating or married, it sure beats my boring life.

LET'S BROADEN OUR MINDS



By RAMON RAZO
NEWS EDITOR
misterrazo@gmail.com

Reasons for the season

Well, fellow Scrafters, it's beginning to look a lot like Christmas. Snow has been falling on and off, people are stringing lights on everything and radio stations are already playing non-stop, mind numbing cheer. In this most wonderful time of the year, we tend to hear a menagerie of different "reasons for the season." You have the birth of Jesus Christ, long ago in the little town of Bethlehem. You have ol' St. Nick on his way to deliver Christmas cheer to all the little good boys and girls (especially the ones whose parents have deep pockets). Last but not least, you have the cornucopia of commercialization, money making and all-around consumerism aspect of Christmas. With this plethora of sources of good tidings, what is the actual source of this most festive of seasons? I'm glad you asked. Let's dive in.

The Christian version of Christmas has its origins in the Bible. As the story goes, God sends his son, Jesus, to Earth as a human to be the perfect atonement for our sinful nature. The arrival of Christ is kind of big deal. So big, in fact, that our Gregorian calendar was altered to coincide with his birth. The angels sang his praises. Herod tried to have baby Jesus' head cut off. The wise men followed an abnormal star, so on and such. During Christmas, Christians, such as myself, take time to reflect on the gift of spiritual life that God freely gave to humanity through his son. We also use it as a time to garner support for a ton of different charitable organizations like Operation Christmas Child, which sends gift-wrapped shoeboxes filled with toys, candy, school

supplies and hygiene items to kids in third-world countries.

That's all great, you're saying. But I don't believe in all that Jesus stuff. I believe in Santa. Okay then.

St. Nicolas of Myra was a 4th-century Greek Christian bishop renowned for his generosity. The actual name of Santa Claus is derived from the Dutch form of St. Nicolas, Sinter Klaas. Clement Clark Moore further established the merry Claus mythos with his poem "A Visit from Saint Nick" (more commonly known as "The Night Before Christmas.") Illustrator Thomas Nast further expanded several staple ideas of Santa and the iconic red suit was actual the result of Coca-Cola advertising. Even in his incubational period, ol' Claus was still a product of marketing.

All this talk of the gift-giver himself leads to the actual toy and present, Black Friday, Wal-Mart sale blowout aspect of Christmas.

But wait, you're saying. You've talked about Jesus and Santa and Wal-Mart. You've covered all the bases but what is Christmas actually about?

The answer is all of it.

Not everyone celebrates the Christianity aspect of Christmas. That's to be expected. We have so many varying faiths in this country. However, it does need to be respected that the season has its roots firmly planted in Christianity and it's troublesome when organizations like the ACLU take away private businesses' right to display Nativity sets for fear of offending other faiths. Quite plainly, that offends me. So in that case, the ACLU has failed its job.

While it might seem like blasphemy, the consumerism is a major piece of the Christmas puzzle. Christmas offers people an encouraging time to be generous and thoughtful. We have Salvation Army bell ringers enduring the cold to collect loose change for the poor. There's a surge of donations to charitable organizations because it's just darn festive to do so. We buy other people stuff they might never use and may not even want. But giving someone a goofy, Harry Potter-themed Snuggie will likely bring you more joy than the recipient (unless you find out they return it two days after Christmas).

So as you hang up your stockings and leave Santa some Nabisco 100-calorie cookie packs, remember what the true reason of the season is. Just like fate, it's what you make it. Just remember not to trample on anyone else.

OCELOT OPINIONS

"Did you keep your last year's resolution(s)?
What is your resolution for 2012?"

Compiled & Photos by Andrew Kieltyka



"Save. Save. Save. I'm sick of being poor!"

Danielle Wieczorek

Major: Occupational Therapy



"Lose weight."

Jennifer Magill

Major: Special Education Teacher



"Save money and go to Wayne State!"

Joanna Roberts

Major: Psychology



"To be grateful for the little things in life."

Lauren Markham

Major: Nursing



"To pass my nursing boards."

Lesley Roumayah

Major: Nursing



"Get to the gym."

Sarah Eahrow

Major: Nursing



"Lose weight."

Stephanie Stevers

Major: Special Education Teacher



"Keep good grades and graduate May 5, 2012."

Susan Woodruff

Major: Childhood Development





THE GREAT DEBATE



Michigan, along with several other states, is considering connecting the level of state funding directed to universities with certain performance outcomes, such as graduation rates. Supporters of the initiative argue that there is a need for greater accountability in education and that having measurable outcomes is prudent. Alternatively, critics of the approach point out the vast disagreement on what standards should be in place and the fact that the state legislature slashed university funding by 15% this past year.

Students in Prof. Thomson's political science opted to take on the following question for another installment of The Great Debate"

Should the Michigan legislature tie public funding levels for universities to performance goals?

Untie their hands

By **MARISSA WALKER**
GUEST CONTRIBUTOR

There has been a lot of discussion lately about public funding for Universities. People are deciding whether or not they should tie performance goals into public funding. If the Michigan legislature tied public funding levels for universities to performance goals it could become a big hurdle in getting a good education for some students.

The proposal is for state aid for the universities to be based in part on performance standards. The goal is to create more skilled employees to drive the state's economy. Two of the measurements the state of Michigan is looking at are graduation rates and the number of specialized degrees awarded.

Simply looking at the number of graduates each Michigan university produces could be a place to start but could potentially change the education system. Professors could be told to push students to work harder. In the end, are they creating more graduates or better students? It seems like the outcome could be that universities could lower their educational standards and make their classes easier to get a higher number of graduates each year to increase the funding dollars they would receive.

Another way of measuring the funding could be based on the number of specialized degrees awarded to students. This could lead to one Michigan university being favored over another simply because of the specific field they are studying. It is common knowledge that some universities specialize in distinctive fields.

Performance funding could lead to students not being accepted at a

university because they only will take on applicants with high scores on their GPA, SAT or ACT scores to try and achieve an overall better graduate performance. One of the biggest challenges for tying public funding for universities to performance levels is that a standard set of measures would not work for all the Michigan universities.

This could punish poor institutions with more diverse student bodies and create conflict if colleges reduce their standards. One of the conflicts could be the excessive cost for data collection, analysis and training. Another conflict could be subjecting colleges to shifting state priorities instead of looking at long-term academic goals. Also other points of contention could be the tendency to stress efficiency over quality and the distortion of creating motivation from financial rewards rather than commitment to public purpose. One other pitfall could be producing budget instability and uncertainty when the state of Michigan has already cut 15 percent in state funding this year.

In closing, some people may think that performance funding is necessary but there might be other funding options that could work better. Performance funding does not seem like it would be fair because of how different students work abilities could be measured with the system. One alternative for funding, instead of based on performance could be based on the student's average household income. In other words, the lower the average income is the more funding the school would get. By basing the state and federal funding on average income, it could help to even out the levels of education the schools could provide. In addition, it could produce incentives to actively seek more students.

Tie the funding up

By **JOSH YORK**
GUEST CONTRIBUTOR

The issue of funding public universities in Michigan has been a highly debated topic throughout the government and the public for the past few years. Governor Rick Snyder feels that he has a solution. The governor's plan is to tie university funding directly to performance goals set for the university. This is a highly controversial issue in the state right now because many people feel this plan is unfair to many institutions while others support it fully. The Michigan legislature should tie public funding levels for universities to performance goals because it will increase accountability in college education, making the post-secondary education system in the state stronger.

By tying a percentage of public funding for Michigan universities to performance standards, institutions would be more pressured to increase their educational performance. Naturally, all colleges will want their students to be successful and have them perform well but without any type of incentive to do this, there really is no type of accountability for universities that aren't performing up to par. If the government devised a specific improvement plan and incentive for each public university, each school would have an important reason to strive for excellence and improve the performance of their students. This would also encourage healthy competition between schools for self-improvement in order to receive the extra funding allotment from the state.

Snyder's plan is not just intended for public colleges however. The plan

is designed for the much broader, Michigan community. It has the long-term goal in mind to better the future economic climate of the state. Snyder feels that improving education standards throughout Michigan's public universities and schools would produce more graduates, ideally educating residents, which would provide for a more educated workforce for the future.

One may argue that tying public funding to performance goals may favor the larger schools, such as Michigan State University and the University of Michigan, that have more expendable resources to spend on increasing their students' performance but, if the performance-based funding is a small enough percentage of the school's overall funding from the state (such as the proposed 5 percent) and if the performance goals set by the state legislature are specific and proportional to the size of each school, there is no inequality at all. Each institution is on an equal playing field to improve their performance at a rate comparative to the other public universities. The smaller schools will have their size and current performance stats taken into account when setting their goals for future performance.

No matter what one's stance on this topic is, all can agree that a stronger education system cannot hurt. The Michigan legislature should tie public funding levels for universities to performance goals because it will increase accountability in college education, making the post-secondary education system in Michigan stronger. It is a solution that will better not just deserving schools but also the rest of the state and its future economy.

THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS



By **ALYS DOLAN**
ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR
alysmarie91@gmail.com

The gifts that keep on giving

It's that time of year again and, yes, I do mean it's time to hustle and bustle our way into stores and buy presents

for close friends and family. The time has arrived to give and receive, to enjoy the holiday season with those most treasured and to fill precious time with love and laughter.

For those most special, one must remember that being clever this gift-giving season is what counts. Forget the latest iPod, or new "Harry Potter" Blu-ray set and, instead, think of homemade gifts, ones that show great effort, consideration and come from the heart.

First on the must-have list are the timeless necklaces, tin cups and pictures made from macaroni. Of course, you must be thinking, "I did those when I were knee-high and in second grade." Well, my little elf, don't you think it's time to revive a classic? Remember the look of pure ecstasy your parents had when opening those creations? The time has come to recreate that look and share it with more

friends and acquaintances. Make them for your boss, co-workers, best friends and significant others. Your loved ones will never forget the moment they opened that special present under the tree.

The next hot item on this Christmas gift list is, you guessed it, the coupon books. Whoever came up with these brilliant little booklets is an absolute genius. Simply take index cards, or Post-it notes for the truly frugal, and write a coupon for a household chore. If you take out the trash regularly, slap a lovely coupon in the book for it, nothing says, "I love you, Mom," like a coupon for a chore you already perform. Don't be surprised when the recipients are stunned into silence by your generosity.

Here it is folks, crème de la crème: the strange present grandma got you last year. Every year an older aunt or grandmother mysteriously leaves a

strangely shaped gift under the tree. It was always something entertaining, like a giant, jagged, buggy-eyed stuffed bunny or the Christmas garland with the dead bird on it. It would be extremely selfish of you to keep that joy and happiness all to yourself so I suggest wrapping it back up and sharing it with a best friend or significant other. They can experience the same joy you once did.

There you have it, thrifty shoppers, the three best and greatest presents to give this holiday season. No need to go out and hunt down something unique and clever when the perfect gift is buried in the back of your closet. No one will be asking for the boring game "Legend of Zelda: Skyward Sword" or the useless iPad 2 when they unwrap these clever gifts. So, Santa's little helpers be free, get creative and enjoy this Christmas season. Oh, and you're welcome, no need to thank me.

KICKING
& SCREAMING

By **IAN GALLAGHER**
MANAGING EDITOR
irpgallagher@gmail.com

In Central Africa

In mid October, the Obama administration sent approximately 100 military advisors, beginning with a Special Forces outfit, to Central Africa. They are there to help The Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan and, principally, Uganda in the fight against the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). For more than two decades the LRA, led by Joseph Kony, has terrorized villages and kidnapped children to serve as soldiers, servants and sex slaves.

The LRA has been wreaking havoc in central Africa since the 1980s. They began as a Ugandan rebel force but since have transformed into a cult-like group combining Christian mysticism and political aspirations. Kony is regarded as a prophet by the few hundred LRA fighters, most of whom are child soldiers. In a letter on why he decided to act, Obama wrote that intervention was "in the national security and foreign policy interests of the United States." He also made clear that the military advisors "will not engage the LRA unless necessary for self-defense."

After eight years in Iraq, the U.S. will finally withdrawal all of the troops that remain there. So, naturally, it must be time to dig ourselves into another deep hole. Who decided that more foreign

intervention was a good idea? Was nothing learned over the past decade?

It is common for presidents to frequently use the military for quick, covert operations such as when Bill Clinton did in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Operation Desert Fox in Iraq. George W Bush also contributed to efforts to combat the LRA, sending in 17 military advisors according to the New York Times. None of the troops remained stationed in the countries where they were sent. America's track record since then hasn't been so good – two drawn-out wars remain as ample evidence. And one must not forget that America's involvement in Vietnam began with military advisors during the Eisenhower administration in 1950. 25 years and more than 58,000 lives later, the U.S. finally left the region.

This leads one to wonder what exactly the political and military establishment is thinking. The mission in Iraq is only just coming to a close and involvement in another conflict would be deeply unpopular. Further, this comes at a time where Congress' approval rating is at an all-time low and at a time when the nation has enough issues on its plate. Problems that are closer to home like the economy, a growing deficit and skyrocketing costs from education to healthcare.

The LRA has been active for so long that one has to ask why, after all this time, is the U.S. choosing to get involved now? If immediate action is needed, why is the African Union not taking it? Where are South Africa, Nigeria, Kenya and Ethiopia? (A year ago Egypt would be on that list, but it, like the U.S., has more important things to deal with closer to home.) But most importantly, as vicious as the LRA may be, why does the political leadership in this country feel compelled to send advisors to assist in taking out a group that probably only numbers around 200 people? America has better things to do than worry about a small, ragtag group halfway around the world.

OCELOT DEN



By **EHIMARE ARHEBAMEN**
SPORTS EDITOR
earhebamen@yahoo.com

Headaches for the holidays

Christmas season, the time when families get together to enjoy each other's company and share gifts and stories. Whenever the holiday season comes around, families usually watch sports as it's something everyone can enjoy. We watch these games with our families and enjoy their company but what about the players? What do they sacrifice so the rest of us can relax in front of the tube?

Think of the Roman gladiator, the "hero" of the Coliseum games. He would always try to give the fans what they want at supreme personal sacrifice. Today's athletes are the modern day gladiators. They push their bodies to the point of exhaustion and beyond for our entertainment. The players that want to exceed normal limits turn to science. Thanks to advancements in nutrition and training, athletes are bigger, stronger and leaner than ever before. According to The New York Times, only one NFL player weighed 300 in 1970. Forty years later, 532 at preseason training camps. The size of players is evolving faster than the various professional leagues can adjust.

The problem with the heavy players is not their ability to compete on the field, it's the amount of hurt they end up causing to themselves and others. The human body is not supposed to be 300 lbs. It's unhealthy. Players who are abnormally heavy are more likely to die before they reach middle age. Thomas Herrion, an offensive lineman for the San Francisco 49ers, was 310 lbs and died at age 23 of heart disease. There is a current Ole Miss player who is 6'10" and weighs 377 pounds. This is svelte compared to his 410-lb frame from last year.

When you stop to think about what happens to these guys, it's scary stuff. According to the Scripps Howard News Service of 3,850 professional players that died in the last century, heavy-set athletes are more likely to die than their teammates. One of every 69 players born since 1955 is dead and 22 percent of the players died from heart disease; 77 percent of the players, who died from heart disease, were considered obese.

Not only are these massive players straining their own bodies, their increasing size is causing harm to other players too. Athletes are constantly coming into contact with opponents. Major concussions have been on the rise causing loss of consciousness, confusion, memory loss, convulsions and muscle weakness according to the U.S. National Library of Medicine. These are major traumatic events for most people. For many professional athletes, it's the price of doing business.

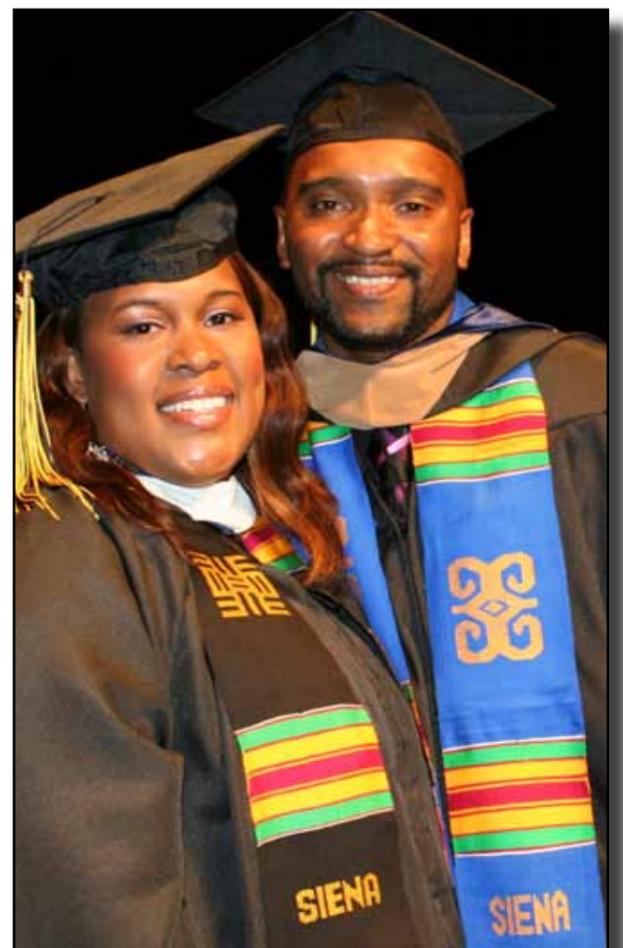
So while you're sitting around the fireplace enjoying the holidays with loved ones, consider the repercussions of the bone-jarring collisions during the big game. Where you're likely to take a nap during the waning moments of the game, there's probably a player or two wondering if they'll be able to remember the names of their kids making the holiday a lot less fun for professional athletes.



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21st century band

Music and technology meet to form the College's most unique ensemble

By JONATHAN KING
EDITOR IN CHIEF

In 1998, the Schoolcraft Synthesizer Ensemble gave their first performance, conducted by Music Professor Bradley Bloom. It was a piecemeal affair for the fledgling group – everything was borrowed, and equipment was balanced on anything that could be found lying around, including catering trolleys. Now, 13 years later, the Synth Ensemble has grown into one of the most distinctive music groups at Schoolcraft College ... or any college, for that matter.

Originally formed as an extracurricular activity, the Synth Ensemble

was eventually taken over by Music Professor Barton Polot, who directs it to this day. Dr. Polot teaches Music Technology and has been enthusiastic about the ensemble since seeing them perform at the College's annual Collage concerts. He recounted, "I used to grab people by the arm and drag them in to the concert to see them." Slowly but surely, the group grew and evolved, and in 2005, it eventually became an official credit-bearing course (MUS 168).

According to Dr. Polot, "The Ensemble provides an outlet for students seeking an alternative to more traditional musical groups." This group is certainly

anything but traditional. Their instrument lineup has included synthesizers, theremins, laptops, vocoders, keytars, electronic drums and more, as well as more familiar instruments such as electric guitars. They have always embraced new technology, and in 2008, the group received their now-iconic uniform: a MIDI-controlled electronic T-shirt that lights up in correspondence to notes being played on a keyboard. This semester, the ensemble demonstrated that they were still very much on the cutting edge, presenting songs composed and performed entirely on Apple iPads.

The ensemble's repertoire is as diverse as it gets, shattering all notions of what a one might think a "synthesizer ensemble" should sound like. In previous performances, they have covered everything from Zappa to Zelda and much more. Classical, jazz, rock, pop, electronica and even video game music are all fair game, making each concert a unique and eclectic experience.

Of course, original student material is always encouraged, and for some students, such as Melina Chiatialis, it's one of the major draws of the group. She said, "I enjoy it because we get to express ourselves as musicians and perform our original songs." Chiatialis has contributed her own material into the group's repertoire each of the three semesters she's played with them. "I get to hear my song come alive, on stage, in real time. And get the experience of performing with an actual band. There's nothing like it. You get that energy between all the members."

The ensemble frequently sees students returning for multiple semesters. Music student Matt Bleggi, who has returned for a second semester with the ensemble,

recounted the impact the group had on him, saying "I almost gave up on music, but the ensemble rekindled my interest. It's unlike any other band I've been in."

This fall was one of the most eventful semesters for the Synth Ensemble. For the first time, the ensemble was split into two groups: Synthesizer Ensemble 1 for those who were enrolling for the first time, and Synthesizer Ensemble 2 for those who have already spent a semester in the ensemble and wish to return. By separating out those students who are dedicated enough to play with the ensemble for multiple semesters, Dr. Polot hopes he can open the door for more professional and high-profile undertakings.

This technique seems to be working, as this semester also marked some of their most impressive gigs in recent history. In September, Synth Ensemble 2 was invited to perform at the Electronic Music Midwest (EMM) music festival in Kansas City, Kansas. Even in front of a room of virtuoso musicians and creative thinkers, the group dazzled with little more than four iPads. In October, the group gave an unforgettable performance at Schoolcraft's 50th Anniversary Gala. In honor of the rededication of the Bell Tower, they played Aaron Copland's "Fanfare for the Common Man," which was accompanied by a stunning synchronized light show that lit up the tower and the night sky.

On Dec. 12, both Synthesizer Ensembles will set yet another milestone by putting on their first ever concert on their own. Taking place in the DiPonio room at 7:30 p.m., this groundbreaking event will feature a number of songs, including a re-creation of the Bell Tower performance. As always, the rest of the set list is anybody's guess, although traditional Christmas tunes are unlikely to appear. It's sure to be a one-of-a-kind experience.

It's uncertain what adventures lay ahead for this ever-changing collection of musicians and technology. But the future is looking pretty bright for this inventive troupe of music-makers, and not knowing what they're going to pull out next is half the fun.



The first ever all-Synth Ensemble concert

On Dec. 12, the Schoolcraft Synthesizer Ensemble will be taking center stage with their first-ever concert all on their own. The event will feature a diverse and eclectic combination of songs played on an equally interesting collection of electronic instruments, including four Apple iPads. It's sure to be night to remember!

Time: Monday, Dec. 12, 7:30 p.m.

Location: DiPonio Room, VisTaTech building

Admission: Free



Cetacean Foundation

Meeting times: Thursdays, 7:00 p.m.

Location: Lower Waterman

Information: Call 734-462-4422

Club Profile: Cetacean Foundation

Students with "porpoise"

By KIM POMA
CAMPUS LIFE EDITOR

Schoolcraft College has a variety of clubs geared toward every passion imaginable. From writing to dancing to video games to political matters, if you have a passion, chances are there's a club for that. Recently, a club started at Schoolcraft that endorsed the passion of saving marine wildlife.

The Cetacean Foundation began with the simple purpose of wishing to shed light on the dolphin massacres occurring in Japan. Cassandra Ratcliff, club president, came up with the idea after watching "The Cove," a 2009 docu-

mentary about a conservationist organization that infiltrated a slaughter cove in Japan and discovered the heartbreaking abuse of dolphins. "It was really mind blowing," Ratcliff recalled. It became the perfect motivation.

After filling out the necessary paperwork, the club was ready to begin with Ratcliff leading and her friend and fellow marine biology major, Sarah Jorgensen, co-piloting. Their first meeting was more successful than they anticipated but they're always looking for more members.

A typical meeting in the Cetacean Foundation involves discussion about ways to raise money or to help spread awareness about the travesties happening to marine life. There's also a plan to show "The Cove" for Schoolcraft stu-

dents so they can see the issue firsthand. There is no cost to join, however, at the beginning of every meeting a donation box will be passed around and those who want to contribute are free to do so.

The club has plans to branch out in the future. There are many types of marine animals in addition to dolphins that are in just as much danger. The whole point of this club is to make a difference in the best way possible. "Why don't we just do [something] instead of sitting here and saying we're going to do something?" challenged Ratcliff.

So long as there is marine wildlife in danger, motivated people like Ratcliff and Jorgensen are here to bring attention to the cause. Hopefully more students will join with them.

Santa Claus is coming to SC



Bringing breakfast, toys, and more

BY PETE BUBLITZ
STAFF WRITER

On Dec. 17, the DiPonio Room of the VisTaTech Center will host what Michael Wisniewski, Jr., President of the Michigan Regional Board of Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society, referred to as a special holiday and a “way to allow our community... access for their children.” That Saturday morning, from 10 a.m. to noon, children and their families will get to enjoy Breakfast with Santa, a multiple-activity Christmas event sponsored by Phi Theta Kappa.

A Schoolcraft College tradition for 25 years, Breakfast with Santa offers pancake and sausage meals and is highlighted with the appearance of both Santa and Mrs. Claus. Elizabeth Machniak of the Student Activities Office said, “When guests walk in they will be greeted on Mainstreet in VisTaTech by Mrs. Claus. When they enter the DiPonio Room, they will see a room transformed for the holidays.” Machniak confided that the setting will be signified by blow-up figures and a fireplace surrounded



by Christmas trees with Santa's chair in front of it.

Upon entrance, the attendees will be served breakfast and, as they finish, Santa will enter to the tune “Here Comes Santa Claus” playing loudly and proudly throughout the room. Once he is settled, children at tables with specific numbers will be called up table-by-table to receive presents that will vary depending on their age and gender. They will also have the chance to be photographed with Santa. The gifts don't stop there, however. The table itself is stocked with goodies, ranging from candy to balloons and topped off with a bag for the kids to haul off all their prizes.

While each table of kids goes up for their gifts, the rest can engage in ongoing games and contests like painting competitions, hockey and a snowman walk for the opportunity to win extra prizes. Early on, however, each participating kid will come out a winner. “At every game the child gets a prize no matter how they do the first time they play it,” said Machniak, “They can play the games as many times as they want and every time after the first, they receive a piece of candy when they play.”

To be part of such activities and taking into account of both breakfast and the wealth of gifts and prizes offered (which might range from dolls and stuffed animals to coloring books and Legos, according to Machniak), tickets are priced at \$20 per child and at \$15 for an adult. Even then, it offers the kind of holiday outreach that everyone can enjoy and that some collegiate attendees can perhaps best afford for their children in such economic times.

Tickets can be purchased only in advance from the Student Activities Office by calling 734-462-4422.



That time I ... Volunteered at a soup kitchen

BY KIM POMA
CAMPUS LIFE EDITOR

Hello once again, loyal readers. After the snore-fest that was composting (I know you all missed my witty remarks and lovely written personality), I have returned to bring you the latest saga in the adventures of your favorite Campus Life Editor.

So, here's the quick skinny: There is a lot more to do at a soup kitchen than I originally thought. The image I had in my head before I did anything was merely standing behind one of those buffet-style serving things you see in school cafeterias. You know, with the lunch ladies that have hairnets and annoyed expressions on their faces. I assumed that I would be doing just that, serving food with a smile and then I would rush home and type this puppy up.

I was wrong. Big surprise. (Not really.)

My day began at 8 a.m. in the basement of St. Leo's Church (where, incidentally, Schoolcraft's PTK chapter volunteers throughout the year). One of the first things

I did had nothing to do with food. There were mountains of clothing on tables off to the side of the basement, all different sizes, for men, women and children. I plowed right into the volunteering gig by helping to fold and organize. Next to the tables was a mini closet where sweatshirts and jackets were hung.

Meanwhile, brown paper bags were being filled with different amounts of food: peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, bags of cookies and handfuls of candy. I, of course, made sure to hit up every station in order to fully experience the whole atmosphere.

Next I made sandwiches. Clever with a butter knife I am not. I feel like I put far too much peanut butter on the sandwich than what was necessary ... and it didn't help when we ran out of jelly. Thankfully those little packets you get in restaurants were found and brought out. Even

more thankfully I managed to slip away from the table so others could share in the tearing and squeezing.

My next two stops were quick and to the point: I filled the bags with their two handfuls of candy

and then passed them over to the sandwich station where they would get

their PB&J work of art and then be topped off with a bag of cookies. A bag, may I add, that I also helped put together. For the record, putting three cookies in a bag trumps putting three donuts in a bag in terms of easiness.

Finally, I stepped into the kitchen, a place I fear to tread even in my own home.

It was the most packed place in the whole basement. People were making spaghetti, dressing rolls, chopping up fruits and vegetables. I managed to find some free space over by a sink before promptly being handed a carrot and a cheese grater. Panic followed. You see, I don't cook. Anything that doesn't need to be microwaved is so beyond my culinary capability, it's not even funny. Eventually,

I realized that pushing the carrot against the grater and making simple up-and-down motions created little carrot shavings. That was what I was supposed to do so another minor victory for me.

My biggest regret was that I was unable to stay for the most important part – the actual serving. However, it was a pleasure enough to help and witness how the whole operation goes down. And the best part was that it wasn't just the PTK there – I met people from different colleges and even a woman who came as part of a volunteering program from her place of work.

It was amazing seeing all the people who put their own lives on hold to come and help those less fortunate. I would love to go back again because I do consider myself very lucky to have a roof over my head. It was the most humbling experience I've had all year and I'm very happy I went.





Hear the Ocelots roar

Schoolcraft spirit night results in double wins

By **KIM POMA**
CAMPUS LIFE EDITOR

The fifth annual Spirit Night rocked Schoolcraft College on Wednesday, Nov. 31. The gym was packed with loyal fans and eager participants, who managed to snag some free goodies on their way in. Tickets and commemorative T-shirts were \$5 a piece and all proceeds went to the Big Brothers and Sisters of Metro Detroit. There were even prizes raffled off at halftime.

The main event of the whole night was the basketball games.

The women's team went first, flattening Kellogg College's team in a move of absolute Ocelot pride. The men's team followed up, and though the pressure was on, they more than met expectations. Schoolcraft could rejoice happily: both teams scored fantastic victories against their respective opponents. Probably from the help of the surprise guest coach, Shawn Loving from the Culinary program.

As exciting and invigorating as the games were, the most memorable part of the night has to lie

in the halftime show. Schoolcraft College's Dance Team hit the floor, executing perfect moves and dancing in fantastic synchronization. They were followed by the college Break Dance Club, who owned the floor, busting out moves that may or may not be legal and should definitely not be tried at home.

All in all, it was an event chock full of school spirit and home court pride with the added benefit of raising money for a worthy cause.

Basketball Men's upcoming games

Friday, Dec. 30
Wednesday, Jan. 4
Monday, Jan. 9

@Glen Oaks C.C
@Kirtland C.C
vs. Delta

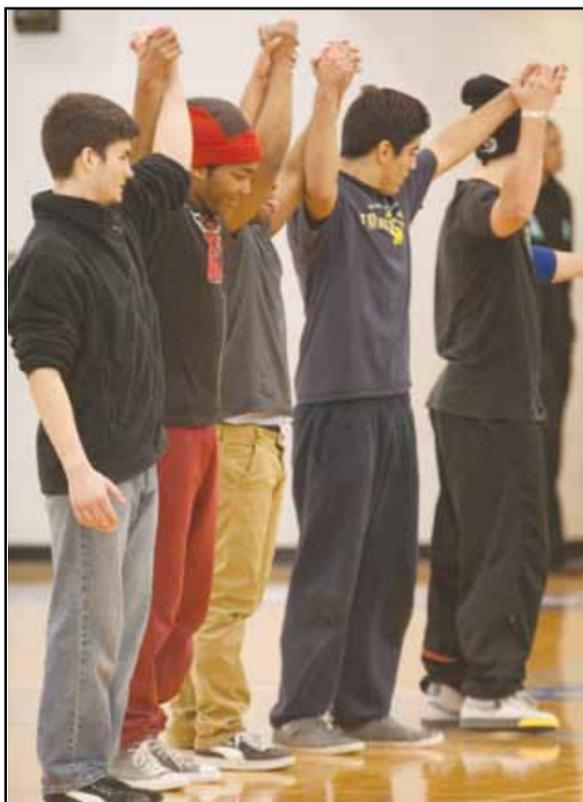
3:00 pm
TBA
TBA

Basketball Women's upcoming games

Wednesday, Dec. 12
Saturday, Jan. 7
Monday, Jan. 9

vs. Owens
vs. Kirtland
vs. Delta

5:30 p.m.
TBA
TBA



Secrets of the Quill

By **LEAH ESSLINGER**
STAFF WRITER

Rise and shine, future leaders of tomorrow! We have officially entered the last week of fall semester, shuffling the doe-eyed uninitiated ever closer to wise professionals. Before my departure, I will attempt to explain the student writer's most formidable foe: the comma. Consider it an early Christmas present that will serve you long after skinny jeans and Taylor Swift fall out of style.

Many students fail to grasp the importance of this humble punctuation mark; however, failure to overcome this hurdle will render your essays average. Initiates must be warned that the comma is incredibly elusive. There are other elements at work that simply cannot be conveyed in one article. What is presented here is a good place to start.

1. Use a comma when presenting a list.

For all the math and science people out there, consider this formula: independent clause + x, y + and z

Example: I received a pair of skinny jeans, a Taylor Swift album, and an iPod.

Notice that the comma that separates "skinny jeans" and "a Taylor Swift album" is included before the "and." Although there is no set rule that requires a comma before the last item in a series, it seems to be a general academic convention to include it.

2. Use a comma to separate two independent clauses (a fancy name for complete sentences).

Formula: independent clause + comma + conjunction + independent clause

Example: Grandma knitted a sweater for me, and Grandpa gave me fifty dollars.

Notice the use of the conjunction "and."

Without a conjunction, the two clauses combined create a comma splice. Don't assume every conjunction needs a comma, however. In the first example, there was no comma before the "and," nor is there a comma before a conjunction that is not followed by an independent clause.

3. Use a comma before and after added information in a sentence.

Formula: subject + comma/extra information/comma + predicate

Example: My mother, a teacher, went to work.

The bit in the middle could easily be omitted and still leave a complete sentence. Understanding this is imperative when trying to master this rule. If any part of the sentence can be omitted, it is likely a comma is necessary. This is the best rule of thumb because it can include introductory statements and transition expression such as *however*, *therefore* and *for example*.

Please note the following variations:

Formula: Extra information/comma + independent clause

Example: Before we start drinking eggnog, I need to put the children to bed.

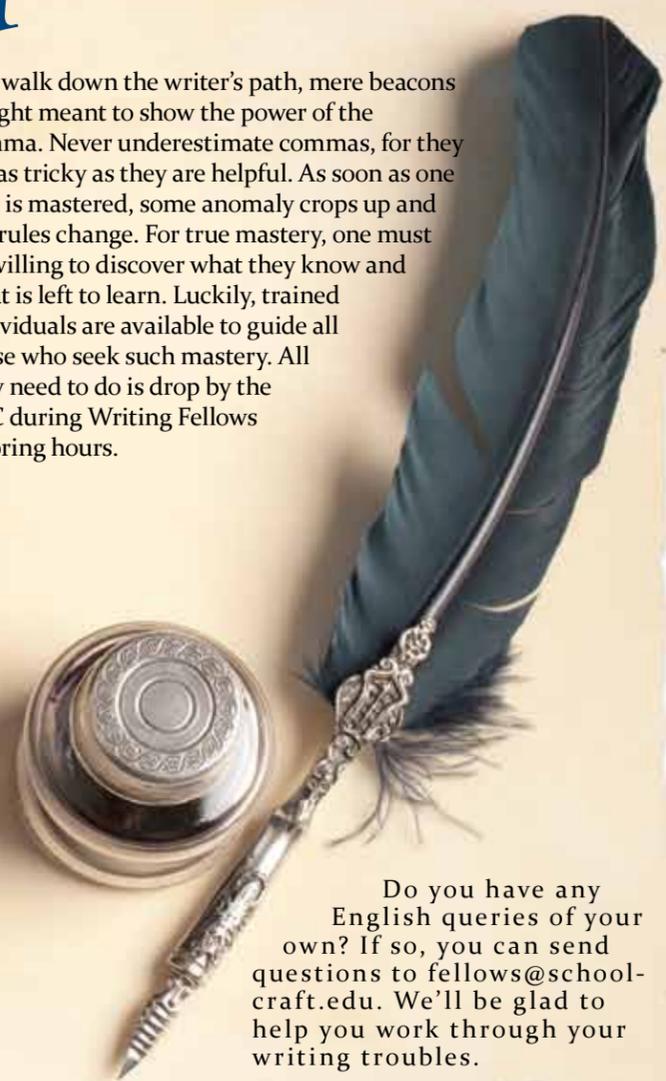
Independent clause + comma/extra information

Anna loved her gift, a brand new car.

Let these three rules serve as guidelines as

you walk down the writer's path, mere beacons of light meant to show the power of the comma. Never underestimate commas, for they are as tricky as they are helpful. As soon as one rule is mastered, some anomaly crops up and the rules change. For true mastery, one must be willing to discover what they know and what is left to learn. Luckily, trained individuals are available to guide all those who seek such mastery. All they need to do is drop by the LAC during Writing Fellows tutoring hours.

Do you have any English queries of your own? If so, you can send questions to fellows@schoolcraft.edu. We'll be glad to help you work through your writing troubles.



Get in the spirit of the holiday

Classic Christmas concert conducted at the College

By **TIERNEY SMITH**
STAFF WRITER

The holidays are upon us and we are all surrounded by decorations, Christmas music and finding ways to entertain ourselves. We're all looking forward to seeing St. Nick, going to ice and light shows and concerts. Thanks to Schoolcraft's very own Professor Jonathan Drake, the music students and guest professional choir, Schoolcraft will come alive with seasonal music again this year.

For the sixth consecutive year, Professor Drake is coordinating another winter concert for the benefit of students in the Music Program and the entertainment of others. The annual concert is a wonderful mixture of classical and traditional holiday songs that regularly draws impressive crowds. The Schoolcraft Wind Ensemble, Chamber Singers and Choral Union will be performing classical hits as well as Christmas favorites. A special guest choir will be performing to the amusement of others. This is a great event for students to attend with family and friends.

Don't worry if you aren't a huge classi-

cal music fan – that's not all that will be playing, Christmas classics shall make an appearance. For those who can't seem to keep quiet and listen instead of singing along, well, you're in luck. One of the biggest parts of the concert is the sing-along. "The audience loves the sing-alongs," said Prof. Drake.

This is a concert that everyone can benefit from and enjoy. Not only is this for the entertainment of the audience but it is for the benefit of the students who are in the music program. All proceeds made will go into a fund for scholarships to be used by worthy music students who love and enjoy playing and have a passion and talent for it. So come and support your fellow students at the Now Winter Night Enlarge benefit concert.

Worried about how much this will cost? Don't – the concert is free, but cash donations will be accepted at the door. The Schoolcraft music students will very much appreciate the donations as it goes toward scholarships for them. So make plans to attend the holiday winter concert and have a good time listening to Schoolcraft's own choirs and wind ensemble.



PHOTO BY MANDY GETSCHMAN

What: Now Winter Nights Enlarge Christmas Concert

Where: VisTaTech DiPonio Room

When: Dec. 9 at 7:30

Cost: Free

Club Events



Compiled by Margie Wisniewski • Staff Writer

Billiard and Table Tennis Club

Do you like to shoot pool or play table tennis? Then this club is for you! Bring a friend and come join us as we just hang out and play. Be sure to keep an eye out for information about our upcoming tournaments. Want more information? Then stop by the Student Activities Office or give us a call at 734-462-4422.

Christian Challenge

Do you want to enrich the quality of your overall college experience ethically, morally, and spiritually by challenging yourself to explore God's word? Then come to our meetings every Thursday from 12:00-1:30 p.m. in the Lower Waterman. The next meetings are scheduled for December 8 and 15.

You can also join us for our Alpha Course on Wednesdays from 1-2 p.m. The next Alpha Course classes will be held on December 7 and 14 in the Lower Waterman.

Beats and Music Faction

Want to make progress in personal musical talent? Then stop by the Beats and Music Faction meetings! During meetings you'll meet, teach, and learn, as well as giving and receiving constructive criticism with those who share the passion of music. The next meetings are scheduled for Wednesday, December 7 and 14 at 1 p.m. in the Lower Waterman located at the VisTaTech Building.

Campus Crusade

Are you interested in learning more about your faith and want to grow spiritually? Then join the Campus

Crusade during their meetings every Tuesday at 11 a.m. in the Lower Waterman.

Eccentric Movie Club

Join SC's Eccentric Movie Club for some of the most odd, puzzling and just plain crazy movies produced by some of the most respected writers on TV. Each session is from 12-6 p.m. Schedules of movies can be provided upon request. Movies are watched in the Lower Waterman of the VisTaTech Center. Their next viewings are on December 8 and 15.

Friends of the Puzzle Piece

This is a club for people with disabilities or people who like to work with people them. Not sure how to deal with people with disabilities? Then come with an open mind and gain a fresh look on what you can do to help, or just be a friend. Meetings are held every Wednesday from 11 a.m.- 12 p.m. For more information, please contact Student Activities at 734-462-4422.

Gay/Straight Alliance

The Gay/Straight Alliance is a social connection for equality-minded individuals who want to create a safe environment to help change, support, and educate our world one step at a time. Meetings are held on Wednesday's from 12:30-1:30 p.m. Their next meetings are on December 7 and 14 in the Lower Waterman located in the VisTaTech Building.

Otaku Anime Japanese Animation Club

The Otaku Anime Japanese Animation Club provides an opportunity for viewing and discussion of Japanese Animation. Their next meeting is on Saturday, December 17 from 5 p.m.-10 p.m.

Math and Physics Club

We want you to come ask us math and physics problems as you meet new people who love math and improve your problem solving skills. Meetings will be held every Friday at 10 a.m. in the Biomedical Tech Center, Rm. 300.

Photography Club

Photography Club provides a welcoming environment for graphically inclined hobbyists, graphic designers, and students majoring in artistic fields. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 15 from 5 p.m. - 7 p.m.

Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society

The PTK meetings will be on Mondays from noon -1 p.m. and Wednesdays from 7 p.m.-8 p.m.

PTK Officers Needed

How would you like to earn scholarship funds, increase your leadership skills, earn trips and have a lot of fun doing it? If this sounds like something that you would be interested in, then come speak to one of our current officers about becoming one of our team for next year. Officer Applications are being accepted now. For more information, please contact the Student Activities Office at 734-462-4422.

PTK/ Bigby Coffee Fundraiser

Help raise money for Phi Theta Kappa by purchasing our specialty mug. It includes several coupons, including one for a free beverage. The mugs are available for sale now in the Student Activities Office for \$8. They are refillable at the new Bigby location in Livonia at the intersection of 7 Mile and Farmington Roads for \$1.25. For more information, please contact the Student Activities Office at 734-462-4422.

Fruit Basket Fundraiser

Phi Theta Kappa is hosting another Fruit Basket fundraiser. Orders are due by Tuesday, December 13. Members will receive one star for every \$50 sold. Baskets will be delivered on Friday, December 16 and can be picked up on that day anytime after 11 a.m. Order forms are available in the Student Activities Office. For more information, please contact the Student Activities Office at 734-762-4422.

Initiation Ceremony

The PTK Initiation ceremony will be on Wednesday, December 7 from

7 p.m. to 8 p.m. Members being inducted are asked to arrive at 6:30 p.m. You need to have completed your stars and/or payed your membership dues in full by this time to be inducted. Please make sure to RSVP for this event by stopping by the Student Activities Office or calling 734-462-4422.

Sports and Recreation Club

The Sports and Recreation Club is a new addition to the Schoolcraft Campus' clubs. They hold open play of any sport every Wednesday from 11:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in the PE Bldg. All events hosted by the club will be available to any Schoolcraft student or faculty member. For more information on joining either the club or one of the tournaments you may contact Ryan Marshall through: SCC.Sport.Recreation@gmail.com.

The Schoolcraft Connection

Want to further your skills in writing, editing, photography and design? Then join the award-winning Schoolcraft Connection, a student-run newspaper! Staff meetings are every Monday at 4 p.m. in the Lower Waterman of the VisTaTech Center.

Student Activities Board

Want to get involved on campus? Then come and see how with the Student Activities Board. General meetings are Thursdays at 4 p.m. in the Lower Waterman of the VisTaTech Center. The Student Activities Board provides students and the college community with a variety of programs and activities that are educational, service-oriented, have entertainment value and provide a social environment where students can meet a diverse group of new people.

Table Top Club

Come and join the Table Top Club every Thursday from Noon to 10 p.m. The Table Top Club is Schoolcraft College's premier location for game players alike. Play a variety of games ranging from Dungeon and Dragons to Solitaire. Students shall learn to develop personal friendships and leadership.



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Schoolcraft just got a little sweeter

Gingerbread house masterpieces grace the VisTaTech building

BY KIM POMA
CAMPUS LIFE EDITOR

As tradition dictates, once the Christmas decorations flood the Lower Waterman Wing, the gingerbread village is showcased upstairs. Every year, the culinary students tackle the task of creating the most unique and extravagant gingerbread house imaginable. Last year's theme was "Children's Christmas Stories," and the winner ("Whoville Holiday") was awarded a scholarship.

This year's theme was "Holidays Around the World" and the lucky winner of the scholarship was Matthew Fisher, the mastermind behind "St. Basil's Cathedral." Second place was awarded to "Sydney Opera House" created by Anna Darwactor, George Magro, and Jodie Austin. Third place went to Joyce Morris, Claire Fuelling and Emily Barnhart for "Chinese New Year at the Temple of Heaven."

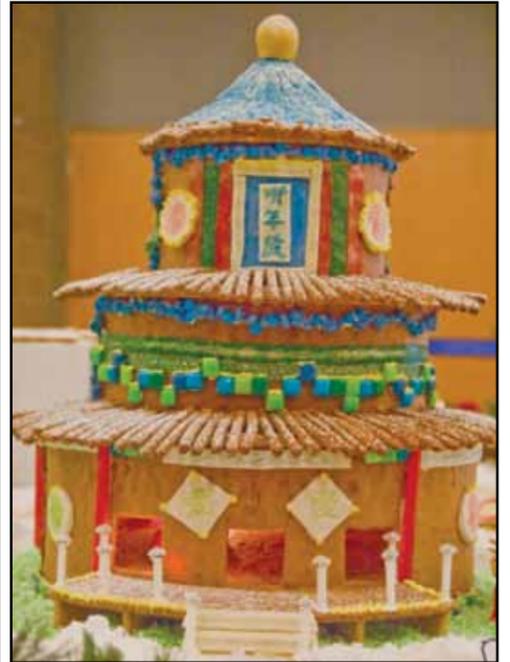
All the houses had to have been created during the students' own time and they were under the direction of Certified Master Pastry Chef Joseph Decker. At least half of the construction materials had to be made out of gingerbread and be totally edible. They must also: have a front entrance and walkway, be decorated on all sides, and they may have electric lights if so desired.

The village will be up in the VisTaTech Center, right outside the American Harvest restaurant until Dec. 14, so go stop by and have a look. (Resist the urge to take a bite, though.)



PHOTOS BY MANDY GETSCHMAN

These culinary delights take the traditional holiday treat to a whole new level.



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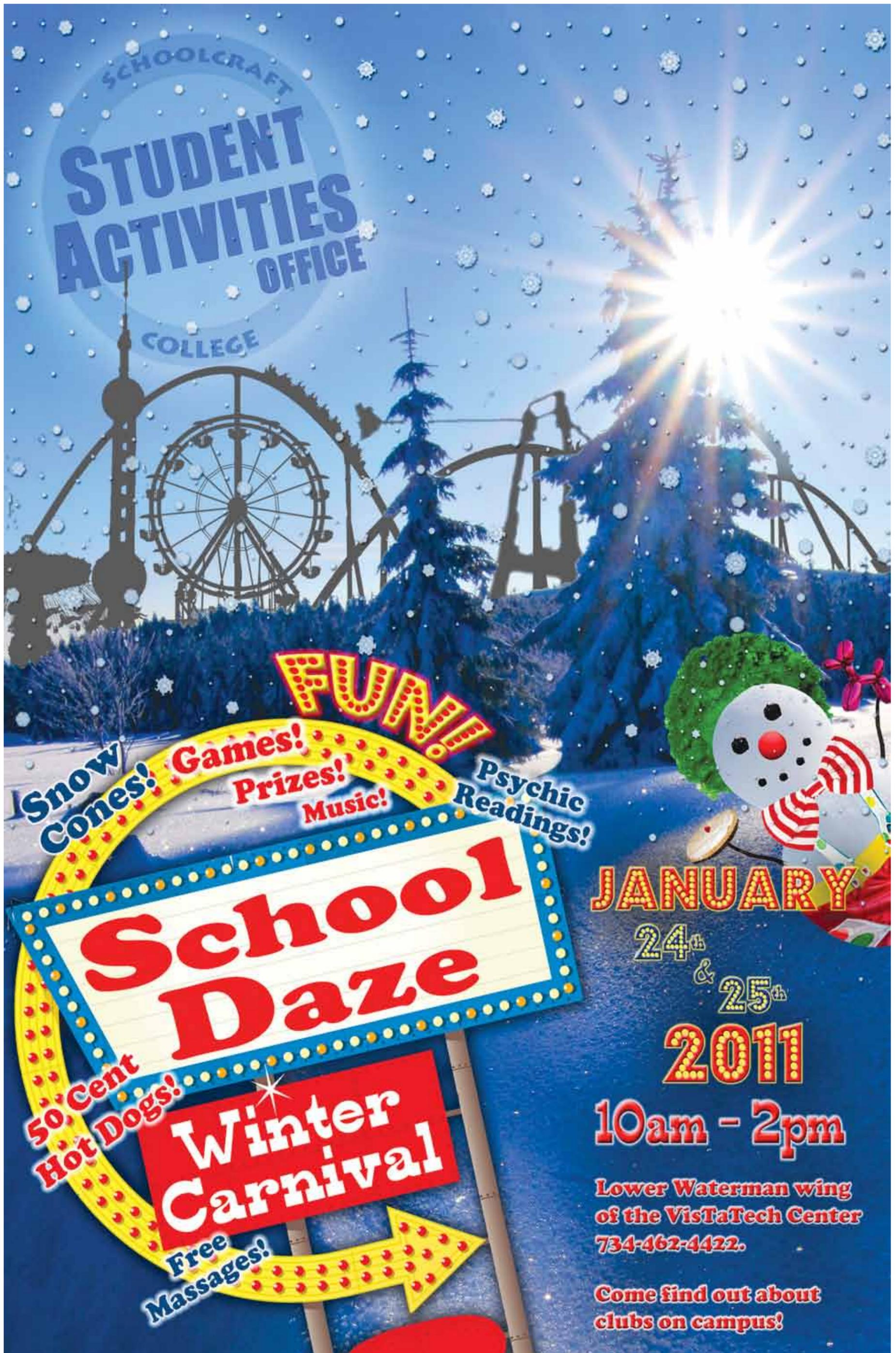
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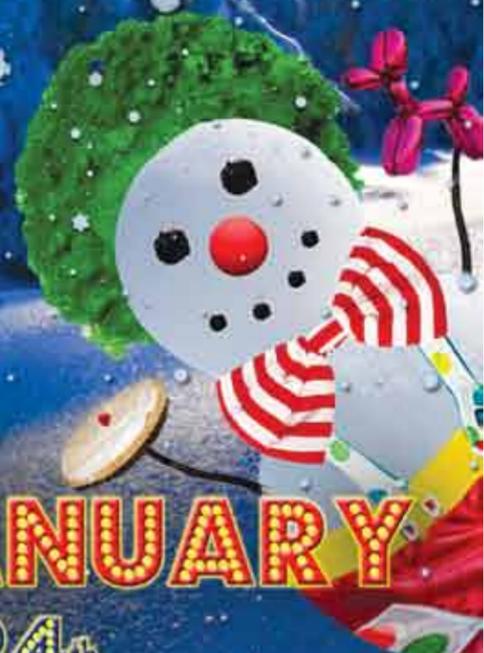
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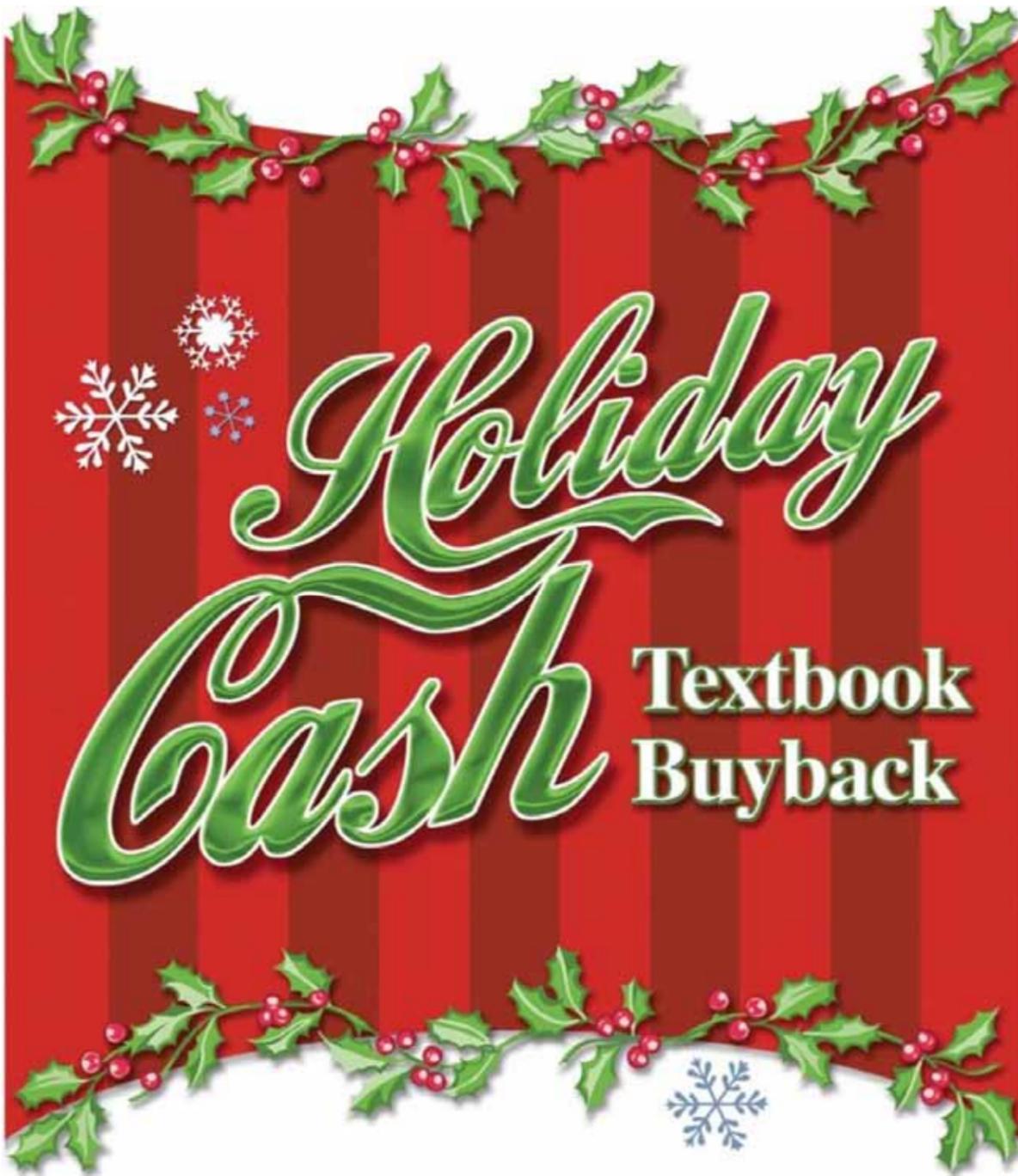
**24th
 &
 25th**

2011

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 of the VisTaTech Center
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 clubs on campus!**



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Contest

- September 2011 - March 2012

Qualifications

- The applicant must be enrolled at Schoolcraft College during Fall and/or Winter Semester of the current academic year.
- The applicant must attend AT LEAST one Pageturners book discussion during Fall and/or Winter Semester of the current academic year.
- The applicant must complete and submit an application by March 19, 2012.
- The applicant must submit a creative essay or an artwork inspired by a Pageturners book.
- The applicant is allowed to submit one entry and in one category only.

Applications

For more information or to obtain an application, please contact:

Ela Rybicka
erybicka@schoolcraft.edu
Liberal Arts, Room 551
(734) 462-4400, Ext. 5685



Pageturners book club is supported by a grant from the Schoolcraft College Foundation.



20 YEARS OF SPEED

SEGA CELEBRATES TWO DECADES OF SONIC WITH AN ALL-NEW ADVENTURE

By JONATHAN KING
EDITOR IN CHIEF

In 1991, a little blue hedgehog ran across television screens everywhere for the first time, to the beguiling chant of "SE-GA!" And the world would never be the same. It was 20 years ago – a number sure to make a generation of '90s kids feel old – that Sonic the Hedgehog first appeared on the Sega Genesis. Since then, he has faced a career that sent him soaring into the stratosphere only to crash down and be forced to crawl out of the murkiest depths of mediocrity. To celebrate two decades of refusing to give up that last gold ring, Sonic Team released "Sonic Generations" – a mash-up of Sonic's past, present and future coated in nostalgia and curiosity.

This new adventure combines the 2-D platforming of Sonic's Genesis days and the 3-D platforming of the new millennium. For the first time ever, you can play as both the short, adorable Classic Sonic and the sleek, talkative, marginally annoying Modern Sonic. Just about every gameplay mechanic ever to appear in the Sonic universe is crowbarred into the experience somehow (save the swordplay from "Sonic and the Black Knight" ... thank heavens). The result is distinctly scattershot but, at the same time, quite entertaining. There are nine worlds, each based on a level from a different Sonic game, spanning the blue one's 20-year history. Here we encounter the first major issue. Instead of highlighting only the series' finest moments, the games chosen to represent the Sonic legacy range from the greatest genre-defining classics to the darkest, franchise-crippling embarrassments ... namely the 2006 "Sonic the Hedgehog" remake. This latter addition – a glitchy, poorly-conceived shell of a game, universally loathed by fans and critics alike – is particularly baffling. Sure it's historically significant – the '06 remake is an important part of Sonic history inasmuch as slavery is an important part of American history – but it's certainly nothing to be proud of.

Timeline quibbles aside, "Generations" does more things right than any of its next-gen predecessors. The level design is excellent – engaging, inventive and visually captivating. Even the black sheep titles are made eminently playable with some modest reinvention. That said, the gameplay is still far from perfect, and every misstep is a sobering reminder that Sonic Team's grasp of what makes a good Sonic game is still lacking. The 2-D, "classic" aspect of the game is staggeringly close to perfect and the "modern" controls are better implemented than any 3-D Sonic offering of the last ten years. And yet, there are still several little niggles that resemble the kind of teething troubles you'd think would have been dealt with years ago. The more-than-occasional glitch disturbs the flow considerably and the range at which your homing attack works appears to be largely dependent on the weather patterns in southern Yemen. And while the major gameplay structures are sturdy and solid, they're decorated with a myriad of tiny, unnecessary additions, such as the unlockables system, which involves ringing a bell after every mission and chasing a musical note around to unlock a song or piece of artwork. It's pointless, and every time it just wastes a few seconds which, after 90 missions, begin to feel like hours.

Musically, at least, "Generations" is generally without fault. The soundtrack is composed primarily of updated arrangements of vintage Sonic themes. Most of the numbers are fairly agreeable, with an auto-tuned synth-pop rendition of "Escape From the City" (originally a pop-punk rocker from "Sonic Adventure") being the only real sound crime. Otherwise, the new motifs do the originals justice and in some cases even prove to be an improvement. Of course, if you are a nostalgic purist, you'll be glad to know that there are dozens of classic, unadulterated Sonic tunes available to be unlocked.

In many ways, "Generations" – a backbone of fun surrounded by a selection of curious choices – is the perfect representation of the life and times of this much-maligned character. After all, the history of Sonic T. Hedgehog is a tumultuous roller coaster filled with towering apexes that are pockmarked with disappointments. Yet, despite its almost pathological obsession with reminding us of the darker times most of us would much rather forget, "Sonic Generations" is fun. Darn fun. It's a satisfying experience – more so than too many of the franchise's previous installments. Just know that, if you are a diehard Sonic fan, the game comes with a distinctly wistful aftertaste. Good times will be had, but fans will be left gazing at the azure spines that once ruled the world and lamenting between smiles, "I remember when you used to change the world. That's not going to happen again, is it..."

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG (1991)

In 1991, a little blue hedgehog made his first appearance on the Sega Genesis and took the world by storm. The fluid controls and now-legendary speed made "Sonic" a landmark title and a household name. Later Genesis sequels would cement Sonic's legacy as the king of 16-bit platforming.

SONIC ADVENTURE (1999)

Sonic's first fully 3-D adventure on the Sega Dreamcast was a major leap, but the blue one pulled it off with grace and aplomb. Fast, entertaining gameplay and a phenomenal soundtrack helped "Adventure" become one of the go-to titles on the short-lived Dreamcast.

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG (2006)

After the lukewarm "Sonic Heroes," the '06 rehash of "Sonic the Hedgehog" truly marked how far the once mighty had fallen. The game was a colossal failure, featuring – among other things – buggy physics, poor controls, ridiculous loading times and creepy human-hedgehog relations. Ick.

SONIC UNLEASHED (2008)

Purporting to be a "return to form," "Sonic Unleashed" was equal parts fun and frustrating. The split between speed-based "daytime" levels and action-based "night-time" levels (where Sonic transformed into a vicious "Werehog") had potential, but the execution was severely flawed. Still, points for effort.

SONIC GENERATIONS (2011)

New and old collide for Sonic's 20th birthday, with the career-spanning "Sonic Generations." Like Sonic's career, "Generations" is fun, but all over the place. In many ways, it's a fitting tribute. Here's to another 20 years of discombobulated amusement!

SONIC

THROUGH THE AGES



Friday Night Rental

Happy Holidays

BY TODD WALSH & CHAD PERKINS
STAFF WRITERS

Christmas songs on the radio, snow falling from the sky and crazy people shopping – it's the holiday season. There is nothing more fun than getting together with family and friends and watching a few holiday classics.

"The Year Without a Santa Claus" (1974)



Watching television specials is the norm during the holiday season and the best holiday specials come from the Rankin/Bass Production Studio. They are famous for their stop-motion animation, officially known as Animagic, and over time they created such classics like "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer" and "Santa Claus is Coming

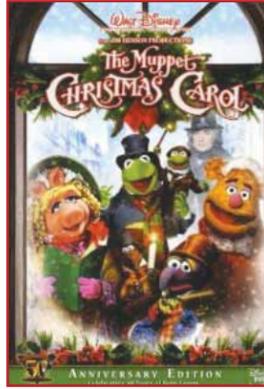
To Town." However, one of the best movies they created is "The Year Without A Santa Claus," where Santa Claus (voiced by Mickey Rooney) has fallen ill and believes the spirit of Christmas has died, so he decides not to deliver presents that year. The two elves Jingle and Jangle agree to travel across the world to find someone with Christmas spirit. The animation is very smooth, and the voice acting is top notch and synchs in perfectly with the film. While the animation is wonderful, it's the music that is the most memorable. "The Year without a Santa Clause" does an amazing cover of a Blue Christmas that almost puts Elvis to shame. It is cute, innocent and fits in the holiday spirit perfectly. However, the best tunes are the Snow and Heat Miser theme. The songs are so catchy that they will keep you humming the tune all year round. "The Year without a Santa Claus" is arguably the best Rankin special. Rudolph might have a shiny nose and Frost might have a magic top, but this film has the Miser Brothers.

"The Muppet Christmas Carol" (1992)

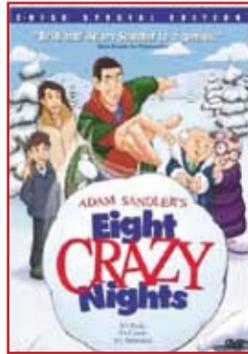
Ever since Rolf the piano-playing dog first appeared on television in the early '60s in a dog food commercial, the Muppets have become a worldwide phenomenon. They have television specials, albums, video games and recently an all-new new movie. In 1992, The Muppets decided to put their own spin on the classic tale, "A Christmas Carol." For those who don't know the story, it follows a greedy and ruthless old man named Ebenezer Scrooge (played by Michael Caine) who learns the true meaning of

Christmas with the help of three ghosts.

The story by Charles Dickens holds the record for most adaptations both in film and in television. What sets this adaptation from the rest are the Muppets. Michael Caine as Ebenezer Scrooge is fantastic. He plays the character so brilliantly, even though he is talking to a bunch of puppets. One of the best parts of this movie is the soundtrack by Paul Williams. The song "Marley and Marley" is performed by the two old grumpy balcony men, Statler and Waldorf. "The Muppet Christmas Carol" is a fantastic movie. It has wonderful humor, a great soundtrack and retells this story in a unique and entertaining way.



"Eight Crazy Nights" (2002)



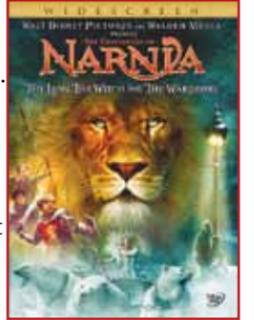
Chanukah is the festival of lights, instead of one day of present, they get eight crazy nights." Adam Sandler pushes the limits in his first animated film, "Eight Crazy Nights." Sandler plays Dave a depressed alcoholic who is forced to perform community service with Whitey Duvall (voiced again by Adam Sandler), a kindhearted old man who tries to take care of the community. "Eight Crazy Nights" plays out like any other Sandler comedy. It's outrageous, juvenile and distasteful. The animation is superb and complex like most Disney films. The animators use the same Disney multiplane approach, which gives some layering and perspective effects. It is a musical, of course, and each song plays out like a big Broadway number. Sandler was able to produce and star in a film that both mocks and pays homage to traditional holiday films.

"The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe" (2005)

Many studios have released fantasy films, but could not capture the epic feel until Disney released "The Chronicles of Narnia: the Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe." The movie is based on C.S. Lewis's book of the same name, where four children named Edmund

(Skandar Keynes), Lucy (Georgie Henley), Susan (Anna Popplewell) and Peter (William Moseley) enter a wardrobe and are transported to the magical world of Narnia. There they meet Aslan, the Lion (voiced by Liam Nesson), who asks them to help stop the evil White Witch (Tilda Swinton) and restore order to the land.

Many would say that the movie is not a Christmas movie. However, Santa does appear (giving dangerous weapons to kids), there is plenty of snow and Aslan is an allegory of Jesus. The movie has great fight scenes, brilliant special effects and a magnificent musical score. The acting is excellent, with a witch that is pure evil and an entertaining faun, Mr. Tumnus. Cinematographer Donald McAlpine was able to capture the majesty of Narnia brilliantly. If the traditional Christmas films get boring, then take a look at this wondrous fantasy film.



"How the Grinch Stole Christmas" (2000)

"How the Grinch Stole Christmas" stars actor and comedian Jim Carrey. This movie is a live action adaptation of the 1966 animated television special of the same name directed by Chuck Jones. Both movies are based off of the book "How the Grinch Stole Christmas" written by Dr. Seuss. When it was originally released, this live action movie received mixed reviews, but stayed at number one in the box office for four weeks in a row. This adaptation is also the second highest grossing Christmas film of all time, the first being "Home Alone."

The original 1966 version was a light-hearted animated movie about small creatures called Whos who live on a snowflake. The story is centered around a mean old Grinch, who hates Christmas for an unknown reason. However, in the new 2000 version the film sheds a little light on the Grinch's past.



This film truly brings every character alive and gives them their own unique personality, making it really appear as if the Whos and the Grinch are real. They have holiday cheer and will warm your heart, though one has to wonder: What do the Whos celebrate during the other 364 days of the year?

Ballin' on a Budget

Christmas events

BY TIERNEY SMITH
STAFF WRITER

It's the holidays and there are all kinds of events going on. There are light shows, concerts and all kinds of parties happening all over. These events are great for families or for a romantic date.

Livonia Events

If you're looking for a new holiday tradition for the family then try the City Tree Lighting and Caroling

Ceremony, on Dec. 6 from 7-9 p.m. at the Livonia Civic Library. Gather the family for some good wholesome fun. The children can make crafts, enjoy a magic show and feast on cookies and hot chocolate.

A great event to take the children and grandchildren to is Lunch with Santa at the Senior Civic Center in Livonia. For five dollars per person, one can enjoy making crafts, playing games and eating pizza, chips and soda. Take a picture with St. Nick, and enjoy it for years to come. Advance tickets must be purchased and are on sale now. For more information, call 734-466-4210. It starts Dec. 17 at 11 a.m.

Hines Park is holding its annual light show. Experience a lovely car ride through the park for the Wayne County Lightfest. It will entertain the kids on the trip home or impress a significant other. This event is great for anyone. Enjoy festive displays of Hanukkah, Christmas and New Year's lights sparkling and dancing for your amusement. The lights are lit till

Dec. 25. The Lightfest entrance is off Merriman road. The price is \$5 per car.

Downtown Plymouth

If you love looking at glitzy decorated Christmas trees, then the Walk of Trees in downtown Plymouth is exactly what you are looking for. It is a pleasant annual event for family and friends who want to do something for free. It takes place now through Dec. 31. Grab the kids, friends and the rest of the family and head to Downtown Plymouth's Kellogg Park and enjoy the spectacularly lit up trees as you stroll by with a coffee from the Bean.

Also featured in downtown Plymouth is the gingerbread house contest. The contest runs through Dec. 23. The children will enjoy the adorable little edible village, while parents enjoy the last-minute Christmas shopping. Check it out and enter to win free movie tickets at Penn Theatre.

Have a free weekend and the small ones haven't seen Santa Claus yet? Santa's house is open Dec. 9, 10, 18 and 23 at Kellogg Park.

For more information about all happenings in Downtown Plymouth, check out their website and calendar at www.downtownplymouth.org.

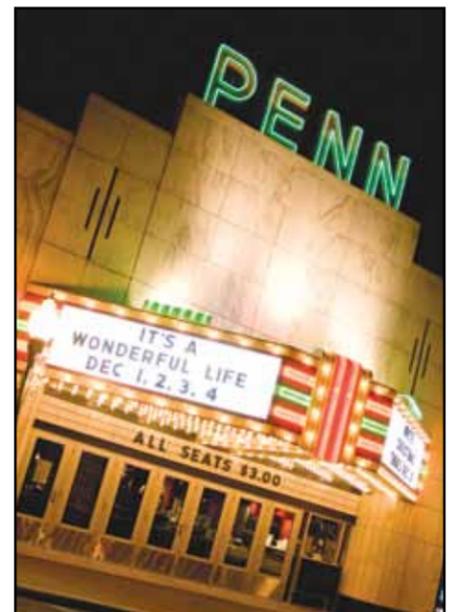


PHOTO BY MANDY GETSCHMAN

All through December, the Penn Theatre will be showing Christmas classics - for only \$3 per ticket.

Alternate Frequencies



Björk

"Biophilia"

Genre: *Experimental Electronic*



BY BRIANNE RADKE
STAFF WRITER

Björk's eighth full-length studio album is far more than a musical composition. The Icelandic singer's concept was to design a musical house – a museum of sorts – in which visitors could wander into the rooms, each with an interactive space and each space dedicated to a song. This musical house idea gave way to an IMAX film notion, but of course, in this digital age, the creation of a suite of apps is the most practical and inclusive means for interaction with the public.

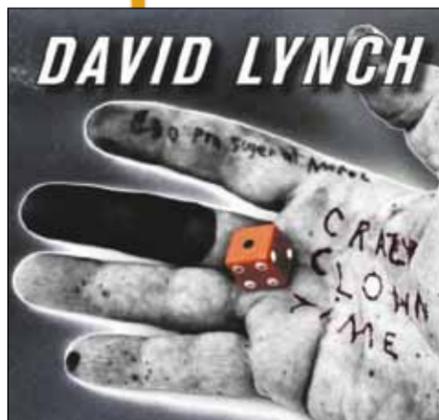
Björk's "Biophilia" apps are available through a "mother" app designed as a map of the cosmos with twelve planets corresponding to the album's track titles. Within an individual song's app, listeners can not only experience the song on an audio, visual and technical level, but also have the opportunity to alter the track, play around and create their own mix. The "Biophilia" project could be seen as Björk's story of creation and evolution, only elevated by her decision to relinquish artistic control to the public, welcoming the evolutionary process to her personal creation.

The album content could not be more fitting for this type of musical experiment. "Biophilia" reveals Björk's deep interest in science as she blends concepts from astrophysics, biology and neurology to create metaphors for common themes like love and rebirth. As usual, Björk avoids the use of typical instruments like guitar and piano, opting for the more interesting sounds of a haunting organ, timpani percussion, turgid bass and even empty pauses as she takes listeners on the most organic journey of her career.

Tracks like "Cosmogony," "Moon" and "Virus" are light with whimsy and heavy with biological metaphor. The album's second version of "Dark Matter" makes use of organ strains and choral harmonies, heightening the foreboding feeling found in the earlier version of the same song, while "Sacrifice" and "Mutual Core" use heavy, driven rhythms to represent the forceful aspects of nature. The most unique and valuable instrument on the album is Björk's matchless voice, it saturates each track and is exquisitely eerie and somehow adds both fire and ice to the finished product.

Bottom Line:

Björk's latest comes highly recommended to lovers of music, science and technology alike. "Biophilia" is a delightfully cohesive project. As always, Björk's accompanying videos are innovative and enchanting. "Biophilia" is absolutely worth some attention.



David Lynch

"Crazy Clown Time"

Genre: *Electronic*



BY PETE BUBLITZ
STAFF WRITER

"Crazy Clown Time" paints a vivid image in the first five seconds – it creates a picture of the lights fading, and yellow dash lines zipping out of the darkness towards the headlights (a renowned image in the 1997 film "Lost Highway"). Feeding off the musical mood of navigating on a dim path at night, "Pinky's Dream" is an appropriate opener for building up nervousness about where the listener will arrive, thanks to the Yeah Yeah Yeah's Karen O. The theme of traveling into more inhospitable regions has highlighted the artistic output of filmmaker David Lynch and signifies his entry into musical plateaus just as unknown.

On "Crazy Clown Time," Lynch doesn't follow a typical lyrical flow. Instead, he often twitches from one vocal character to another in spoken-word fashion. One figure is the supposed multi-dimensional medium in musings like "Strange and Unproductive Thinking" and "Good Day Today."

The tracks of the album seem to follow a pattern which begins to go fully Lynch-ian when the characters become mixed up with opposite styles, with Lynch even drifting between entities on "Stone's Gone Up" and "Speed Roadster." It's a kind of identity confusion that die-hard Lynch fans have always welcomed, but the advantage of films is that they rely on visuals to double up the rate of eeriness.

"Crazy Clown Time" is a daring means of defining the Lynch style in music, and succeeds in introducing a sound that can be imagined as tone poems for any Lynch film encountered. Examples of this are "The Night Bell with Lightning" and the provided bonus track "Sparkle Lounge Blues."

"Crazy Clown Time" has the kind of introduction that's way too mindful of past extremes and comes across as dry and slightly awkward. With all the time spent progressing through each track, one would expect a frequent set of out-of-nowhere jumpers, be they white noise cracks or amplifier squeals. The grand dynamic moment is never quite realized, but Lynch did the right thing in advancing his trademark themes with baby steps.

The Bottom Line:

Lynch's debut album may not be the wild cyclone of macabre absurdity Lynch fans might expect, but then again, this is a director who seeks to reestablish his style to a newer audience in more concise fashion. An intriguing album, if not definitive.



She and Him

"A Very She and Him Christmas"

Genre: *Holiday Pop*



BY RAMON RAZO
NEWS EDITOR

With "The New Girl" making a killing on TVs all over the country, fans of the "adorkable" Zoey Deschanel might be interested to know she actually is part of the musical duo "She and Him." Zoey shares musical credits with musician M. Ward, who plays guitar. Zoey provides piano, vocals and ukulele, and is also the song writer. The band has a very modest, easy-listening quality, with a strange fusion of indie-pop, country, and folk. It's not a treat for all taste pallets, but delicious for some.

Just in time for the holidays, the duo has released their very first Christmas album, "A Very She and Him Christmas." The result is a very mixed bag of equal parts enjoyment and dullness.

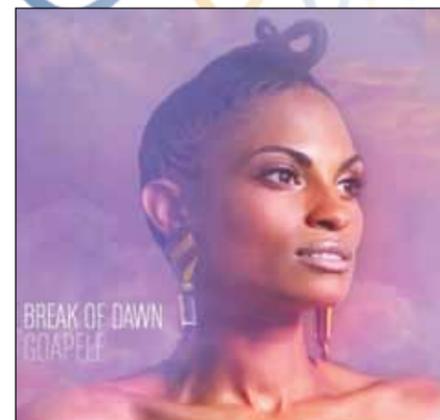
The album does have a decent selection of tunes, but most of the arrangements just aren't that interesting. Tracks like "Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree" and "The Christmas Song" seem more like karaoke renditions than the duo adding their own personal flavor and flair to these holiday staples. In the case of "Baby, It's Cold Outside," the duo does change things up by swapping the male and female parts of the song (most likely due to the fact Deschanel already covered the song for the film "Elf"), and the track as a whole does have a more upbeat feel than most covers. But it's too little too late, really.

However, some tracks do shine through. The first track, "Christmas Waltz," is a nice, calming opening number. "I'll Be Home for Christmas" has a unique tempo that is very "She and Him." "Silver Bells" is simply Deschanel and her ukulele, and is one of the more effective tracks. And surprisingly, "Blue Christmas" is the track in which Deschanel pours in most of her soul.

That brings us to the album's biggest sin. Quite simply, Deschanel doesn't sound like she is having fun. In their first album (creatively titled "Volume One"), her joyful tone permeates many of the CDs delightful tracks. Here, she sounds dreary, and at times she just sounds bored. That is no good, especially coming from a singer who doesn't have the chops to drive a song home on vocals alone.

The Bottom Line:

"A Very She and Him Christmas" is a decently festive album that fans should check out. However, they might be disappointed by the lackluster effort put into the arrangements. Those who aren't a fan of the duo's style would best look elsewhere.



Goapele

"Break of Dawn"

Genre: *R&B*



BY BRIANNE RADKE
STAFF WRITER

"Break of Dawn" marks a departure from other work by this Bay Area musician who emerged onto the scene eleven years ago, fresh out of Berklee College of Music and determined to be taken seriously as a female artist. Even so, the six years that have passed since Goapele's last album release have not affected the precious subtlety that the vocalist is known for. Goapele's beautifully simple sound and demurely suggestive lyrics are a welcomed respite from the tricked-out, overproduced, blatant pop du jour. "Break of Dawn" is primarily comprised of poignant ballads, soulful and smooth.

The very first track is a perfect example of her notoriously delicate seduction and proof of the impact of Prince's stylings on her work. "Play" is stormy, steamy and sensual, measured by snapping fingers and sung with whispered longing. Goapele projects from a very different place in "Tears On My Pillow," which follows "Play."

The title track, "Break of Dawn," is accessible and relatable, but fails to even scratch the surface of original. This is a disappointment from an artist who began her career with such a resolve to break the mold and remain unfettered of any particular genre, especially given the subject. This song about triumph in the face of challenges unfortunately tastes watered down compared to the powerful anthems by Goapele's predecessors – Aretha, Diana and Whitney – all of whom Goapele has cited as influences.

"Hush" may be the most beautiful song in this collection. A lullaby to her four-year old daughter, it is easily Goapele's most heartfelt expression on the album. It may be too percussive to lull anyone to sleep, but it is set to a perfect rocking rhythm. The up-tempo and lyrically relevant "Money" comes as a funky surprise. It is carried by the kind of gritty bass line that makes the listener long for a live performance in a dimly lit blues club. "Pieces" is most memorable for providing a lovely venue to showcase the prettiness of Goapele's voice. The final track, "Milk and Honey," is evidence of this goal to be less inhibited. It serves as the perfect bookend to the album's sensual start.

The Bottom Line:

While this album is far from groundbreaking, Goapele's voice is reason enough to lend an ear to "Break of Dawn." Her charm is the smile that you can hear in her intonation, even when she is singing of struggle. Goapele's joy is contagious.

'90s Cartoon Christmas Special

A salute to classic '90s cartoons

By COLIN HICKSON & TIERNEY SMITH
STAFF WRITERS

"Hey Arnold!": "Arnold's Christmas"

Do you remember the blonde boy with the football shaped head? Of course you do. When watching all of your favorite '90s classic TV holiday specials, one must never forget about "Hey Arnold!" As with most Christmas specials, the show is focused on exploring the meaning of Christmas, and the importance of taking care of the ones most special to you. Arnold teaches Gerald that there is more to Christmas gift giving than buying something generic. Helga learns that it is better to help those in need. The boys make sure to help the man in the records hall get his shopping done. Helga ends up giving away the boots that she so desperately wanted for Christmas to help out our favorite football head. Arnold reached out to one of the tenants in his grandparents' house by finding his long lost daughter for Christmas. Everyone learns a lesson, and ends up feeling the joy of Christmas.

"CatDog": "A Very CatDog Christmas"

CatDog teaches the value of sharing, and that holidays are supposed to be spent with friends and family. Cat learns this the hard way when he decides to sell himself and dog to Rancid, the mayor, for his niece, Rancine, as a Christmas present. Santa becomes very angry upon seeing this and decides to cancel Christmas. Nearburg, the town they live in, decides to hunt CatDog down to punish them for ruining Christmas. They are wrapped in a box and given to Rancine as a present, and after being opened become her prisoner. Cat finally sees the light, and they attempt a great escape. When they return home they run into Winslow, Eddie and the Greasers awaiting their return. After seeing the angry mob, Dog makes a big heartfelt speech about the traditions of Christmas and how people need to come together and share the joy. Santa Claus sees how much CatDog has learned, and how they spread their happiness to Nearburg, so he decides to return all of the presents to the town's people.

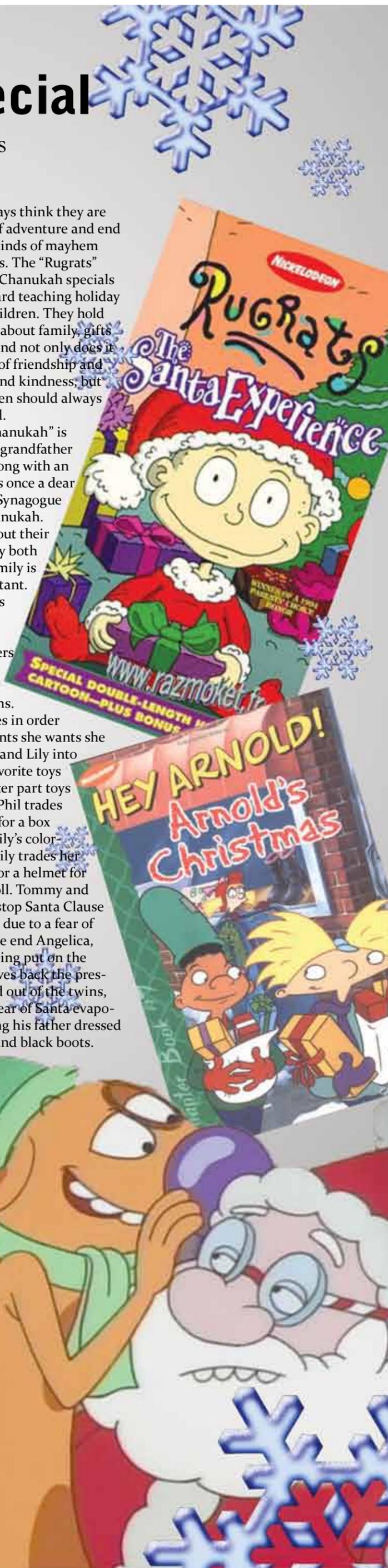
"Rugrats": "The Santa Experience" and "A Rugrats Chanukah"

One of the best cartoons from the '90s was "Rugrats." The show followed talking

babies that always think they are on some kind of adventure and end up causing all kinds of mayhem for their parents. The "Rugrats" Christmas and Chanukah specials are geared toward teaching holiday traditions to children. They hold a valued lesson about family, gifts and kindness, and not only does it give the lesson of friendship and family, caring and kindness, but also that children should always be well behaved.

"A Rugrats Chanukah" is about Tommy's grandfather Boris getting along with an enemy, who was once a dear friend, at their Synagogue for the play Chanukah. When they lay out their differences, they both find out that family is the most important.

In the Rugrats Christmas, the parents of the famed youngsters decide to take the children up to the mountains. Angelica decides in order to get the presents she wants she must trick Phil and Lily into trading their favorite toys to get the counter part toys for each other. Phil trades his Reptar doll for a box of crayons for Lily's coloring book, and Lily trades her coloring book for a helmet for Phil's Reptar doll. Tommy and Chuckie try to stop Santa Clause from coming in due to a fear of Chuckie's. In the end Angelica, out of fear of being put on the naughty list, gives back the presents she conned out of the twins, and Chuckie's fear of Santa evaporates after seeing his father dressed in the red suit and black boots.



Whats the BUZZ

COMPILED BY HEATHER GREENSHIELDS
STAFF WRITER

Concerts

The Verve Pipe

This '90s alternative rock band is making a comeback with their third holiday reunion tour, and are playing in the old haunts that they came from. Ticket prices are \$20 without convenience fees. They will jam the Magic Bag in Ferndale on Dec. 16. Doors will be open at 8 p.m. Adults over the age of 18 are welcome to attend.

The Night 89X Stole Christmas

An annual tradition for 89X, this year the tour co-headliners are Rise Against and Taking Back Sunday. Rise Against has gained quite a fan base in recent years because of their powerful views in their alternative music and lyrics. Taking Back Sunday are influenced from the dark alternative scene and they continue along that same vein. Ticket prices range from \$35-\$45 with no convenience charges. The show will be held at the Fillmore in Detroit on Dec. 17. All ages are welcome, and doors will be open at 6:30 p.m.

The Suicide Machines

Every now and then, these Michiganders decide to surprise their hometown with a concert. This year they have decided to perform at the Majestic Theater in Detroit on Dec. 29. Their signature ska and skate-punk sound has only improved over the years. Remember to get tickets quickly, for this show is most likely to sell out quickly. At \$22 a ticket, this is a steal of a deal. The Suicide Machines will be sharing a stage with fellow ska bands: Flatfoot 56, Mustard Plug and the Parka Kings. Doors will open at 6 p.m.

Casey Jones

This will be a farewell tour for Casey Jones, the hardcore metal band. On Monday, Jan. 16, these straightedge boys will play their last show in Michigan at the Magic Stick in Detroit. They will be touring with long time pals Death Before Dishonor and Hundredth. Tickets are on sale for \$10, and doors will open at 8 p.m.

Comedy

Cedric the Entertainer

Cedric the Entertainer will be showcasing his newest stand-up comedy at Redford Theatre in Detroit on Dec. 9. He is best known work to date was while on the Kings of Comedy Tour - he may just make this his King of Comedy solo tour. With surefire jokes that make any crowd laugh, this show will not disappoint. Tickets range from \$52-\$147. Doors will be open at 8:30 p.m.

Jeff Foxworthy, Bill Engvall and Larry the Cable Guy

Jeff Foxworthy, Bill Engvall and Larry the Cable Guy have reunited for a new comedy tour. They will be visiting The Palace of Auburn Hills on Saturday, Jan. 28, and you will see the southern charm these boys are famous for. Following the excitement from their show that once aired on Comedy Central, these three comedians had a long journey to make it where they are now. This comedy trio will have you laughing from their brutal honesty. Ticket prices range from \$60-\$92 depending on seating. Doors are at 8 p.m.

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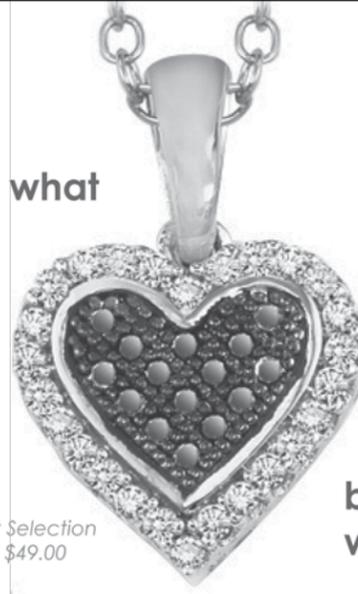


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In Theaters December 9



Mistletoe and Mary Jane

Harold and Kumar return for a hilarious Christmas adventure

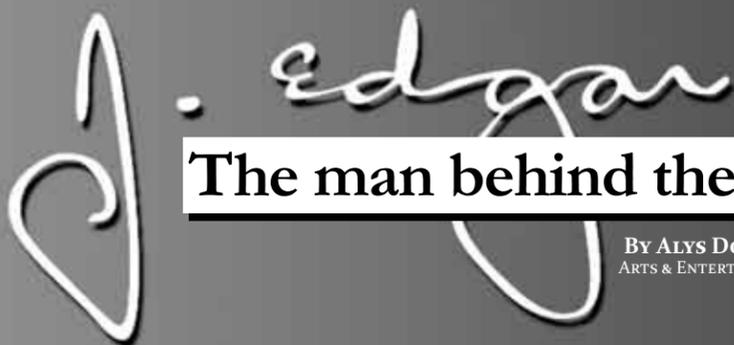
By COLIN HICKSON
STAFF WRITER

After questing for White Castle and becoming Guantanamo Bay fugitives, one would think Harold and Kumar have learned their lesson by now. However a new escapade ensues in "A Very Merry Harold and Kumar 3D Christmas," and like the first two movies, mayhem follows in their wake.

Set after the events of "Escape from Guantanamo Bay," the audience right away learns that Harold (John Cho) and Kumar (Kal Penn) have gone their separate ways. Harold is now a giant in the business world. He is also married to his girlfriend Maria (Paula Garcés), and desperately trying to get the approval of his father-in-law (Danny Trejo). Kumar, on the other hand, is still as lazy and nutty as ever and lives by himself in the duo's old apartment. He, fittingly, still does nothing but smoke weed and watch TV. The two are reunited when a package for Harold shows up at the apartment and Kumar decides to deliver it in person. Harold, however, wants nothing to do with Kumar or the package, which contains – of course – a large weed cigar. In the typical style of a "Harold and Kumar" flick, things take a turn for worse when the cigar accidentally burns down the father-in-law's Christmas tree. The two spend all of Christmas Eve searching for a replacement before the family returns. Mayhem ensues when Kumar gets the infant daughter of Harold's neighbor, Todd, addicted to drugs. Then Neil Patrick Harris appears, somehow still alive, and the duo becomes the targets of a Ukrainian crime boss after a severe misunderstanding. Add all this together and you've got one demented Christmas movie.

As with the first two movies, "3D Christmas" contains gross body humor, plenty of drug-based comedy and enough foul language to fill a dictionary with. Audiences will love the return of Neil Patrick Harris, especially with his musical number, as he portrays the womanizing, arrogant, rude slime ball who only pretends to be gay so world doesn't know what kind of jerk he really is. The 3-D helps the movie's plot greatly, making the audience feel like they're part of the movie. The scenes that most benefit from the 3-D are the claymation sequence, where Harold and Kumar are being chased by a giant monster snowman, and NPH's fantastic renditions of classic holiday songs.

This movie is certainly not for children or those who get queasy from humor involving bodily functions. However, to everyone else "A Very Harold and Kumar 3D Christmas" is just the thing to see if you're tired of red-nosed reindeer, Red Ryder BB guns and annoying snowmen with magic hats.



The man behind the FBI

By ALYS DOLAN
ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR

A name that is simply on a page in the history books now was once "the most powerful man in the world." His control spread through the Federal Bureau of Investigation and was a driving force in the creation of what the FBI is today. He was a complete mystery to his peers and there is much speculation behind the man that was J. Edgar Hoover.

Leonardo DiCaprio, under direction of the legendary Clint Eastwood, captured this man's essence and projected it onto the big screen. DiCaprio exposes the side of Hoover many never knew and his performance is absolute perfection. He mimics Hoover's accent impeccably and is so captivating it's hard to look away.

The movie is very long and can seem dry in the beginning, but it does pick up. The film is mostly a flashback with Hoover explaining his life and career to third party writers. He painted the glorious beginnings of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, how he was appointed Director and the first major case for the FBI: the kidnapping of Charles Lindbergh Jr.

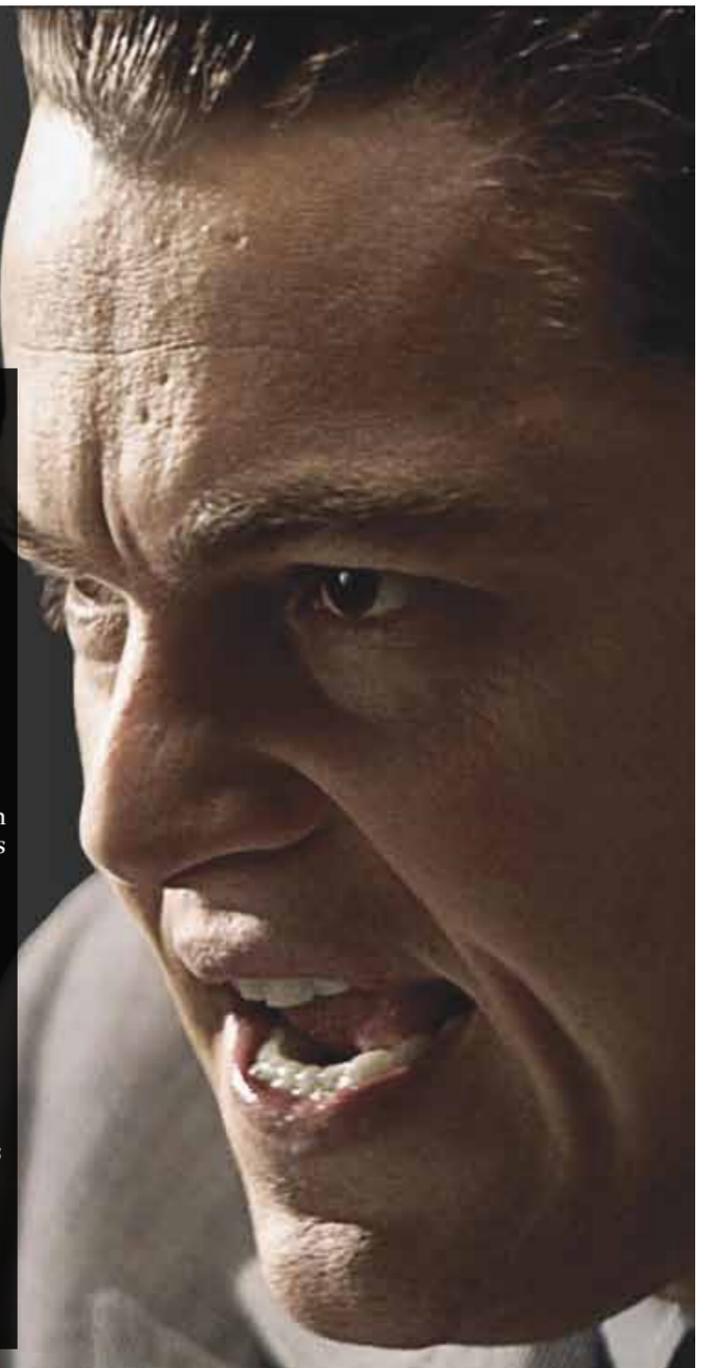
The supporting cast is also impressive. Josh Hamilton is a perfect match as Robert Irwin to DiCaprio's Hoover. The movie details the ambiguous personal life of Hoover, including his struggles with his mother and his sexuality. Eastwood portrayed the feared leader of the FBI as somewhat soft in his personal life and expertly illustrated his deep love for his right hand man, Irwin. He also explored the profound love, fear and respect Hoover had for his mother.

Eastwood was able to show just how much control Hoover had over the eight Presidents elected during his years as director. He was able to force many of the Presidents' hands with all the information he gathered about them. The film explores the hatred and fear Hoover had for communism and how he found even Martin Luther King Jr. to be a communist threat.

DiCaprio does a stunning job as J. Edgar and most likely will be up for the Academy Award for Best Actor. Even though he has an accent throughout the film, not once does he sound hokey. He is able to convince the audience of the inner struggles Hoover had with being depicted as an American hero, when his hidden lifestyle would have made him an outcast of his society.

The flashback style of the film leads the audience to the last days of J. Edgar Hoover's life, and how he struggled with his health. He called for a doctor daily to inject him with medication to make it through his workday. The last few days of Hoover's life were very sad. He knew Nixon was going to change the Bureau forever, which he had spent his whole life building. However, Hoover would never see that day for he died shortly after Nixon was elected.

The movie is a beautiful work. Though long (around 2 hours 15 minutes), it is something worth watching. If you have ever wondered about gangster wars or the FBI, this will be a great film to watch.





PHOTOS BY MANDY GETSCHMAN



New beginnings

SC men's and women's basketball turning heads

BY DANIEL PEAKE
STAFF WRITER

For the past couple of months in the NBA, with squabbling between millionaires and billionaires over unimaginable amounts of money, basketball fans have been left searching for ways to get their round-ball fix. Here at Schoolcraft we're notorious for having some of the best in the junior college circuit and, with the compilation of talent on the men's and women's squad this season, the NBA hype shouldn't at all be missed.

Last year, fans were impressed by the perseverance and determination shown by both Ocelot squads. The Lady ocelots roared their way into an impressive 28-4 record along with national recognition and, although the record for the guys was a little lopsided, it provided freshman players with an opportunity to gain valuable experience. Now, the outlook for this season is much more promising.

New look

For 2011-12, the Ocelots boast an almost entirely different look with new players as well as new staff facilitators. For instance, the new men's coaching assistant, Brandon Matthews, has experience coaching at U-M Flint in addition to a collegiate history playing for Oakland County Community College.

Kevin Brathwaite and Randy Henry, the head coaches of the women's and men's squads, were more than confident as they addressed the new lineups of staff and players while still shining a special spotlight on the returning veterans who will altogether enable the Ocelots to be a far greater threat than they have in recent years.

Coach Henry is looking to move the men into a run-and-gun, fast break style of play. Although he likes the perimeter game, Henry is orchestrating this team to go into the paint, tough it out, draw the foul and break the opponent down with a tough, physical game. Henry compared this year's style to that of the playoff savvy San Antonio Spurs. This style of play has led the Spurs to three NBA championships, a pattern of success the Ocelots have emulated and found success so far with a 5-2 record.

Similarly, Coach Brathwaite has an impressive game strategy up his sleeve for the Lady Ocelots this year. Although the team lacks a big defensive player in the paint (due to the departure of last year's star forward Kimberly Bee), Brathwaite has transitioned the team into what he calls "a hybrid offense." He says, "We are looking to start with suffocating defensive pressure and turn that into transition points quickly. Our set offense

is based on player and ball movement and effective shot selection." This new decisive plan of action has pushed the girls ahead of the pack with a 7-2 overall record.

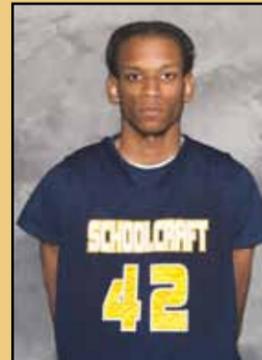
Fast start

The 2011-12 season has been a sensational start for the men's and women's teams. The men have taken on several well-respected clubs in the MCCA and local community such as Marygrove College, Lorain County C.C. and Kellogg College. More importantly, the Ocelots trampled over all of these overmatched squads outscoring them by double digits each game.

The women have also blazed a trail through prominent opponents with playoff accuracy and precision. With remarkable defensive pressure and offensive transition, the women have continued their winning ways from previous seasons. The women have two games up under their belt with point deficits as great as 30 and even 40 points!

Relying on their new styles of play, both Ocelot squads have busted the doors open on the season in a big way. If both Ocelot teams keep playing with this type of discipline and intensity, the teams are certain to make a dent in the MCCA and Region XII.

Men's key players



Karl Moore
Forward
24.1 PPG, 14.9 REB
Last year Moore was named All-Conference and named Top 30 in the NJCAA Region XII division.



Mohamed Elhaj
4.0 ASST, 1.9 STLS
Elhaj's on-the-court intellect is his greatest asset and Coach believes that if Elhaj can lead by example than he may undoubtedly be the glue that fortifies this team.



Zachery Childress
Guard
33 3-PT FG%, 4.1 ASST
Childress is to push the ball down the court and into the paint relying heavily on his speed, athleticism and physical tenacity.



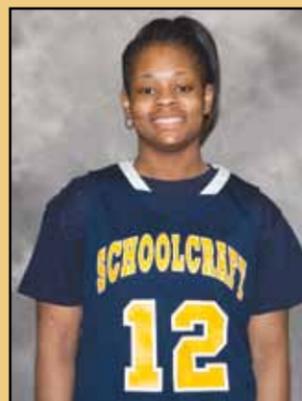
Daniel Hill
Forward
12.1 PPG, 8.7 REB
Coach Henry is relying on his basketball smarts and defensive boards to empower the Ocelots defensive presence.

Women's key returning players

Charlise Slater
12.0 PPG 1.9 STLS

Shawnicka Thomas
12.4 PPG 6.6 RPG

Diamond Tolliver
8.4 PPG, 2.3 STLS



Kings of the West

Upcoming Plymouth Whalers home games	
Friday, Dec. 9	vs. Belleville 7:05 p.m.
Saturday, Dec. 10	vs. Sarnia 7:05 p.m.
Wednesday, Dec. 28	vs. London 2:00 p.m.
Friday, Dec. 30	vs. Saginaw 7:05 p.m.
Saturday, Jan. 7	vs. Saginaw 7:05 p.m.
Saturday, Jan. 14	vs. Mississauga 7:05 p.m.
Monday, Jan. 16	vs. Windsor 2:00 p.m.

Whalers climb into top spot in division

BY CONNECTION STAFF

It's hard to believe, but Plymouth, Mich. is the heart of the Wild Wild West. No, not the 1999 Will Smith Hollywood vehicle, but where the top team resides in the Ontario Hockey League's West Division. For a team that spent much of October looking to find its way, November and (hopefully) December are proving to be full of more than just holiday cheer. Since an Oct. 28 loss at Sault Ste. Marie, the Whalers have vaulted to the top of the division standings because of a 12-3 run (with one of those losses coming in a shootout).

Boasting the second-most-potent offense in the OHL, Whalers centers Rickard Rakell and J.T. Miller have led the balanced offensive attack that catapulted the team through the standings. During this exciting run, goaltender Scott Wedgewood has provided consistent workhorse production in the crease. When Wedgewood has been granted rest, Matt Mahalak delivered spectacular goaltending in relief including a .939 save percentage and 1.99 goals against average.

Moving forward, the Whalers hope to pull away from the second-place Sarnia Sting and build an insurmountable lead in the division. Be sure to catch any of the upcoming games over the holiday break as the Whalers continue their winning ways.



Whalers center #15, Mitchell Heard, races the Peterborough player back into enemy territory during the Nov. 25 game. PHOTO BY MANDY GETSCHMAN

Schoolcraft College - Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society

Breakfast with Santa

Saturday, December 17, 2011
10:00 a.m. - Noon

\$20.00 per Child
\$15.00 per Adult

Tickets must be purchased in advance.

The event includes a pancake and sausage breakfast served family style at your table. There will be games and prizes. Each child gets a visit with Santa and will receive a photo and special gift from Santa himself!

To purchase tickets, or for more information, stop in the Student Activities Office, lower Level, VisTaTech Center, or call 734-462-4422. Cash, Check, Visa, MasterCard and Discover.

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Are you an anchor? A ringer?

SC bowling is looking for you

By DANIEL PEAKE
STAFF WRITER

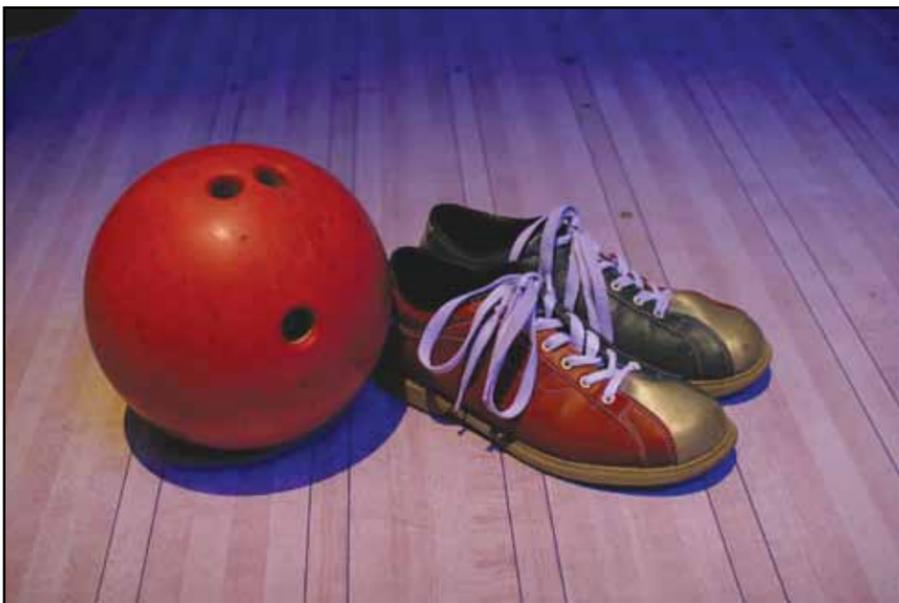
It's that time of the year again! The 2011-12 bowling team tryouts are here as Schoolcraft looks for students with pin-sniping accuracy. It doesn't matter how good you are - whether you're a novice or a wannabe pro - there's no discrimination against your average.

For Schoolcraft bowlers, the home alley is Merribowl Lanes in Livonia and Vision Lanes in Westland. However, those aren't the only lanes where you'll do battle. Collegiate bowling is a chance to travel all over

the area. There are multiple competitions that you can partake in as well. Last year, both the men and women went to Nationals in Buffalo, NY, and this year they're looking for a return trip.

The bowling coach is well-known campus security officer Greg Colling. Students must be enrolled in at least 12 credit hours and be in good academic standing. Practices will be held Monday through Thursday, 2-5 p.m. at the start of the winter semester.

Come on out and be a part of the best bowling club the College has to offer!



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February 10-12

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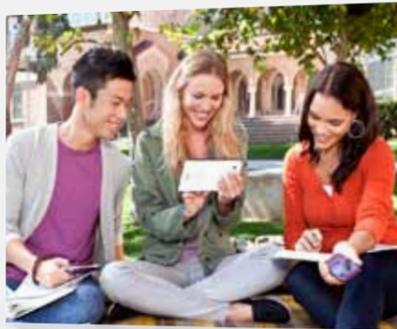
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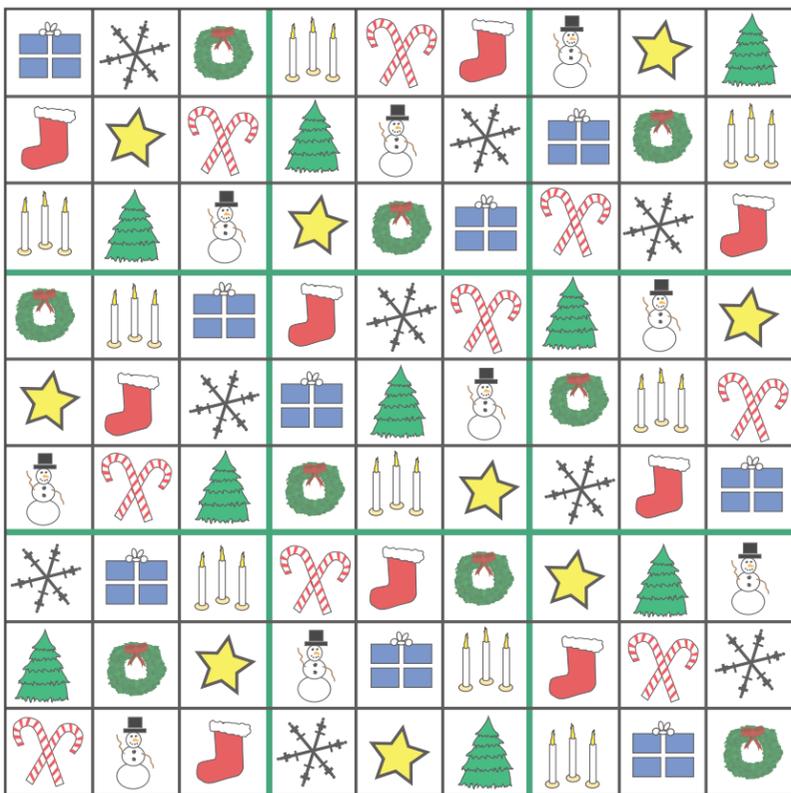


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SOLUTION

Sudoku - Page 30



Bridging Barriers: Unity in Diversity, Child and Family Services Department, and the Student Activities Office invite your support for the first

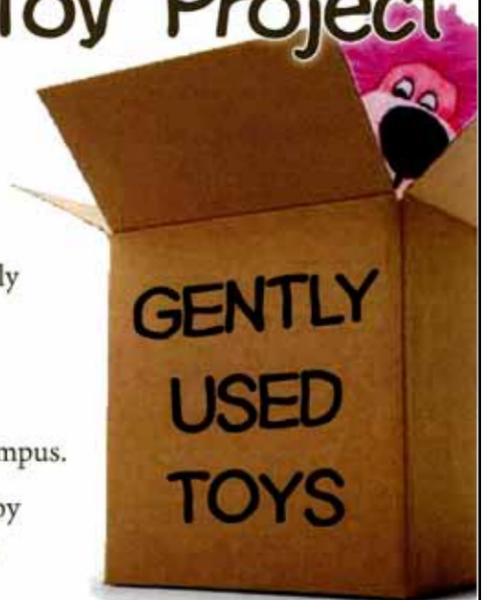
Abandoned Toy Project

We are collecting gently used toys* for a Toy Sale to be held in conjunction with Schoolcraft's Fall Garage Sale.

All proceeds from the sale will go directly to Cass Community Services to battle homelessness.

Toy Collection Boxes are located in the Student Activities Office and around campus.

For more information or to schedule a toy pick-up, please contact Elizabeth Grace, egrace@schoolcraft.edu, 734-462-4400 ext. 5267.



This project is inspired by the true story, *Only One Toy Allowed*, by Sharon Ottenbreit (© 2010 lulu.com).

*Toys must be clean, include all the parts, and in good working order.



CHRISTMAS SHENANIGANS

The pesky Christmas raccoons are at it again. Ralphie and his pals were told to pose for two identical pictures, but they decided to rearrange themselves before we could snap the second picture. Silly Raccoons! There are at least eleven things out of place. Can you spot them all, and inform the cooky raccoons to put them back?

The first person to correctly circle all 11 differences will receive a festive Christmas gift!



HOLIDAY SUDOKU

SEE SOLUTION PAGE 29



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HOLLY-SCOPES

BY STAFF ELVES

Baby New Year

December 22 to January 19

The problems that are facing you now may seem significant, but you should know that I saw your mommy kissing Santa Claus.

Rudolph

January 20 to February 18

Your Christmas season looks to be foggy, but keep that giant red nose radiating and you will guide that sleigh to a happy Christmas. By the way, you might want to get that nose looked at, just to be safe.

Santa Claus

February 19 to March 20

I know what you did last Christmas. This year try to be more careful flying that sleigh. Grandma's still missing.

Heat-Miser

March 21 to April 19

You'll have no problem staying toasty this winter, you're at 101 (degrees that is). Maybe you could pass some of that heat our way.

Snow-Miser

April 20 to May 20

While you may be Mr. Ten Below, try to keep the temperature a bit higher for the rest of us this winter, thanks.

The Pathetic Tree from Charlie Brown

May 21 to June 21

You know the true meaning of the season. Although you might be small and sparse, you still have the power to bring joy to many this season.

The Abominable Snowman

June 22 to July 22

Even though you find your family to be Abominable, you should still stop in this season. The time for holiday fun isn't over Yeti. (You try coming up with a better Yeti pun.)

Frosty the Snowman

July 23 to August 22

Commitment issues are tough. When you find that special someone, don't respond "no sir" to questions of marriage. If you do, a lonely Christmas you will have.

Gingerbread Man

August 23 to September 22

Be on the lookout for small chil-

dren trying to decapitate you this holiday season. It's not because you're a ginger, it's because you are a delicious baked good.

The Grinch

September 23 to October 22

While most people would not want to touch you with a 29 and a half foot pole, we know that your heart can grow three times its' size this season. You might want to see a doctor about the heart thing though.

Scrooge

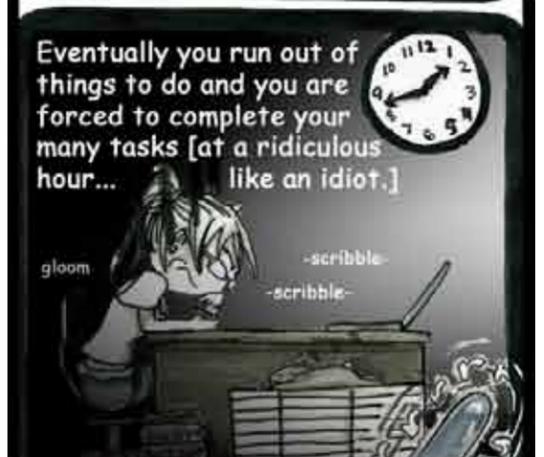
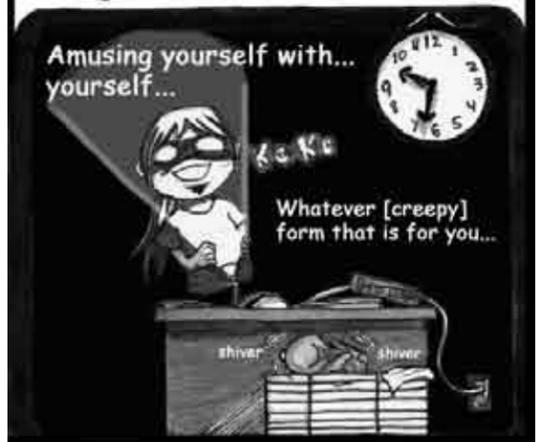
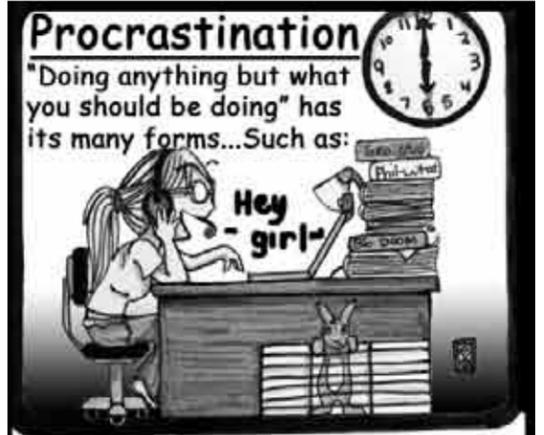
October 23 to November 21

We foresee that you will be visited this Christmas by three strange forces. They are your cousins from Ohio. Knowing that, you may want to spend the holidays with the Cratchit family. Be sure to bring a turkey.

Snowplow Man

November 22 to December 21

He sees you when you're sleeping, he knows when you're awake, so don't go through with that bank heist you've been planning. Santa will not be pleased.



DETROIT'S Eastern Market



For decades, Detroit has been a leader in industry and technology, packed with grand architecture and modern amenities. Despite the bustle of urban life, an oasis of rural simplicity thrives in the heart of the Motor City in the form of an old-fashioned farmer's market. Known as Eastern Market, Detroit's farmer's market is a hub for vendors from miles around to sell fresh produce, meats, flowers, and more. Many a local family has made a tradition of visiting the market to sample the flavorful market fare. Whether you come to shop or just to people-watch, a visit to the market is always a pleasant trip.

