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Andrea Zelinski

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ILLINOIS

JAN 12 2005

A profile in courage

Defiant student recovers as her family seeks the hit and run driver that left her for dead on Christmas Eve

by Patrick O'Brien
Opinions Editor

"I saw her there lying on the street, and I thought she was gone," said Rick Ernst, father of Northeastern student Sarah Ernst, in the aftermath of a hit and run accident in Chicago's Wrigleyville neighborhood on early Christmas Eve. How police are handling the crime has angered Sarah's family, who have been investigating the crime themselves.

At approximately 3:00 a.m. on Dec. 24, Ernst was crossing the street near 1224 W. Addison St. in order to enter her home on the opposite, south side of the street. Allegedly, as Sarah crossed, a black, a late model Pontiac Grand Prix, that was traveling westbound at a speed of at least 50 miles per hour, struck Sarah. Police estimated the speed of the car by judging the impact it had on Sarah and the tire tracks on the street.

Sarah landed approximately 75 feet away, in the middle of the intersection of Magnolia and Addison, in front of her family's home. The hit and run also occurred adjacent to Holy Trinity Lutheran Church on the corner of Magnolia and Addison. At the speed the car was traveling, the driver may have run the red light at Addison and Racine, a half-block east of where Sarah was struck by the vehicle.

Sarah was taken to Illinois Masonic Medical Center in Chicago in serious, but stable condition. She had a fractured skull, two pelvic fractures, two broken bones in her left leg that required a metal rod to be inserted, a broken right arm that may require surgery, soft tissue damage in her neck, and a fractured sinus cavity.

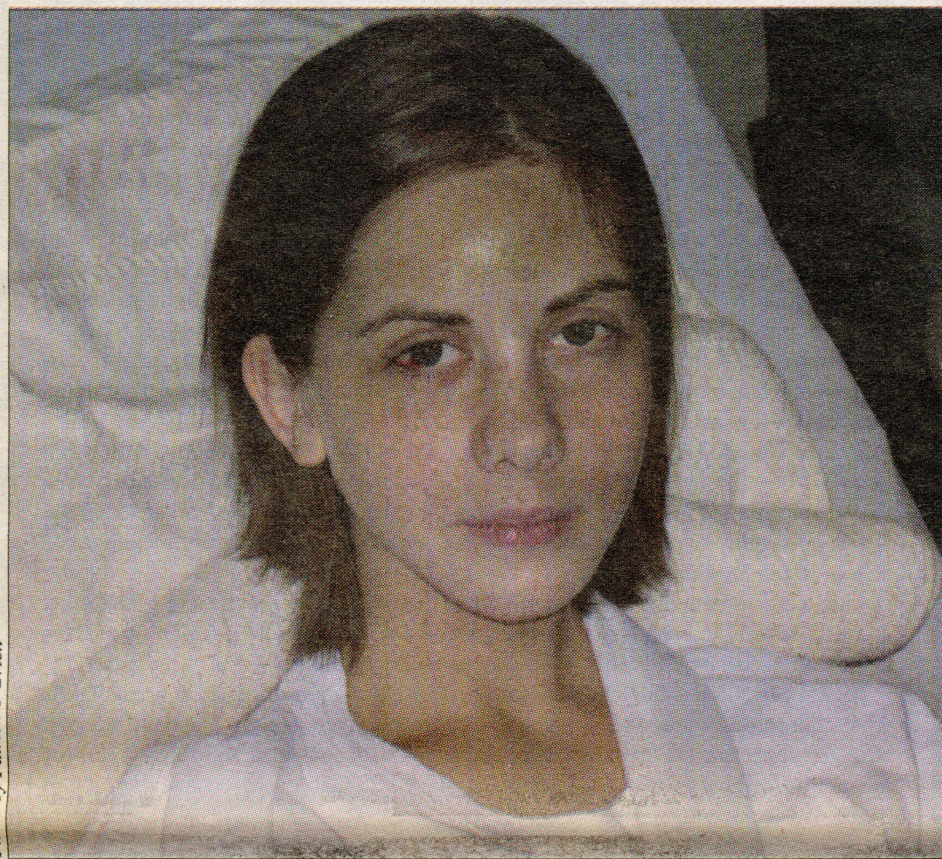
The driver who hit Sarah is still at large, and the Ernst family is concerned that the Chicago Police Department (CPD) is not doing enough to investigate the case. Their concern began at the crime scene the night of the accident.

Is it evidence?

Sarah's mother Sharon reports that as Sarah was being stabilized in an ambulance at the scene, a police officer was asked if debris that had fallen off the car as a result of the hit and run should be collected as evidence. Mrs. Ernst reports that the officer kicked a piece of the car, and said that the debris was not evidence and would be left at the scene.

The Ernst family collected the debris from the front passenger side of the Pontiac Grand Prix, and left it sprawled on their dining room table. Original descriptions of the vehicle that struck Sarah Ernst, gathered from witnesses who saw the accident, described the car as possibly being a Honda Civic.

See Hit and Run, page 2



Sarah Ernst, junior, was victim to a hit-and-run early Christmas Eve morning.

Truth in Tuition may hurt wallets

Cost of attending Northeastern may rise as much as 10% for 2005-06 school year

by Patrick O'Brien
Opinions Editor

The Northeastern Board of Trustees will hear a proposal of tuition increase at their next meeting on Feb. 10. This increase, which could be as much as 10%, almost doubles the increase of previous years, according to Vice President of Finance & Administration Mark Wilcockson.

Though Wilcockson was unable to give an exact number to what the increase will be, he described the hike as likely to be significantly higher than previous years. The last two years, tuition increases have been

5.26 percent and 4.5 percent.

A preliminary estimate of a 5.2 percent tuition increase was given at the Board of Trustees meeting last September, but the faculty strike put the cost of tuition issue on the backburner, according to Wilcockson.

When asked if the recent settlement with the University Professionals of Illinois (UPI) will have any effect on tuition rates, Wilcockson replied, "What do you think?"

There is another reason why continuing students, those who were enrolled before the fall of 2004, may feel a larger

burden of the tuition increase.

Public Act 093-0228, called the Truth in Tuition Act, guarantees first-year students at all Illinois' public universities a tuition level that is constant for four years.

Under 093-0228, students beginning in Fall 2004 are charged \$124 a credit hour. Continuing undergraduate students, who are not covered by the act and have been enrolled prior to the Fall 2004 semester, are being charged \$115 a credit hour in 2004-05, with no guarantee against a large increase in tuition.

If there is an increase of eight percent or more in tuition for continuing students, students who have been here 2,3,4,5 years or more, will be paying more to attend Northeastern than a student who has been here for only one school year. "I'm not sure what we're going to end up with," Wilcockson said when asked how continuing student tuition would rate with those protected by 93-0228.

Wilcockson described the Truth

See Tuition, page 3



Rev. Senator Meeks at post settlement press conference.

UPI contract settled

Both sides agree upon 3.5% after \$400,000 donation

by Andrea Zelinski
Chief Editor

After months of negotiations and three weeks of a faculty work stoppage, a \$400,000 donation by the Chairman of the Board of Trustees helped settle the labor contract dispute between the University Professionals of Illinois (UPI) and the university.

The agreed upon contract includes a 3.5 percent increase across the board, in addition to minima increases. The contract does not involve a workload increase and will hold for four years.

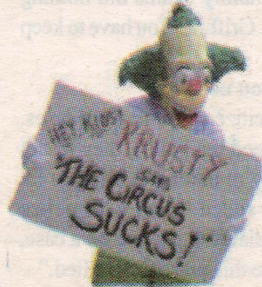
Daniel Goodwin, chair of the Board of Trustees, donated \$400,000 of his personal funds towards the end of the impasse between the two parties. One hundred thousand dollars per year will be dispersed

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Profs on the picket-lines from Nov. 19 through Dec. 8.

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for the annual increases for the four years of the contract.

It all started in May of 2004, when both the administration and union began negotiations. The union decided to draft a new contract from scratch instead of renegotiating the old version. Such a venture resulted in a 150 page proposal.

After alleged stalled negotiations over the summer, the UPI started the semester with rallies every Tuesday for three weeks in a row in an effort to push negotiations further and faster. Fliers with the words "No Contract No Peace" and "We don't want to strike but we will," accompanied demonstrators at all three rallies. The third week involved a total of about 300 participants.

Other rallies and demonstrations persisted as the UPI filed for federal mediation and a 10-day intent to strike, after negotiations went sour on Sept. 13. Both sides met with the federal mediator, Don O'Brien, on Oct. 15.

"We are hopeful that a third party can assist both sides in focusing on what's important and resolving our outstanding issues," said University President Salme Steinberg, in her Sept. 23 State of the University address. At her address, hundreds of students and union members protested, holding signs with the words "We are NEIU," which became the unofficial slogan of the UPI.

On Oct. 20, Steinberg sent a memo to the university community detailing the administration's side of the table. "Rather than roll up their sleeves and work with the federal mediator and with us to help make the mediation process a success, the UPI leadership has asserted that the process was, and is, a waste of time — after only one meeting," read part of her memo.

The memo was met with hostility by the UPI and further pushed the organization to "take up the President's challenge," said Edmund Hunt, President of the local UPI chapter. The union adopted a "24/7" slogan, pledging to be available to negotiate 24-hours a day, 7 days a week. Both sides then met for extensive periods of time until Nov. 9, when the UPI gave Steinberg a 10-day notice for a cancellation of the contract. Both sides continued to negotiate through the 10 days. After 16 hours of negotiations on Nov. 18, the union went on strike the following day.

The strike lasted 14 school days and 20 calendar days, leaving 30 percent of faculty still working the first day. Over time, many members of the union returned to class during the middle of the work stoppage.

Both sides continued to meet during the strike, and around the clock on Dec. 5 and 6, as a contract settlement became more imminent. Continuing on Dec. 7, both sides came to an agreement with the help of a \$400,000 donation by the Chair of the Board of Trustees, Daniel Goodwin. Efforts made by Rev. Senator James Meeks and Senator Ira Silverstein also contributed to the final agreement, which was made by select members of each party, singling out leaders from the union and the administration.

The union membership ratified the agreement with a ratio of 286 to 4. The Board of Trustees further ratified the contract, allowing classes to resume Dec. 9. According to Steinberg, Dec. 7 was the last day to settle the contract without resuming classes again after the holiday break from Dec. 23 to Jan. 3. The make-up classes resulted in seven additional days at the end of the semester.

First Things First...



Patrick O'Brien
firstthingneiu
@ yahoo.com

Students supported you, now you support us

Last month, the University Professionals of Illinois (UPI) signed a new four-year contract that includes at least a 3.5% raise in each of the next four years. On a totally unrelated subject, the university will soon propose to the Board of Trustees (BOT) that tuition for the next school year is raised, possibly by as much as ten percent.

Vice President of Finance and Administration Mark Wilcockson proposed to the BOT in September that the increase in tuition would total 5.2 percent. That was before the strike. Now, there are no guarantees, only that Wilcockson kept mentioning that the increase would be significantly higher than the five percent yearly increase that has become the standard at NEIU.

Wilcockson was asked if the significant upcoming raise in tuition rates had anything to do with the contract that the UPI signed in December, which was more money than the university claims it can afford. Wilcockson replied very plainly, "what do you think?" The strategy then is to pit students against professors, only this time, students can't afford to lose.

Student leaders were at the forefront when the faculty was in negotiations with the university, and students sacrificed their academic careers and reputations speaking out for the faculty. Even those who did not directly support the strike did so by staying away from campus. Now those students, and the entire student body, will feel the pinch.

Bottom line, Northeastern is a bargain by comparison with other public universities in the state, and ranks near the bottom in tuition, with full-time students paying less than \$4,000 a year in tuition and fees.

Even having said that, there are many poor and working-class students who may not be able to bear the burden of constantly rising costs at school, and may lose their chance for an education. This is an urban campus that attracts students who economically would not otherwise be able to attend college, with many working full-time jobs to be able to attend Northeastern.

A ten percent increase in tuition would be almost three times the rate of inflation, at a time when the economy is showing growth without producing more jobs. This combination will be too difficult for some students on the margins to overcome.

Higher education is only a dream for some without the means to fund it, and this is where our respected professors come in. Students delivered for you, supporting your struggle, peppering the President of the university with questions, refusing to cross the picket line to show solidarity, and showing the world that professors had the support of their students.

Will professors do the same? Will the union speak out against the rising price of college education, or has our faculty already satisfied it's hunger for justice and quality education by signing their names on the dotted line last month?

If the UPI and faculty in general decide not to help students in this case, it will only prove true the words spoke by Salme Steinberg in November, when she told students they were being hoodwinked by union professors, who were out for their own good.

Are professors going to answer the call? Or should students send their tuition bills to profs homes?

Hit and Run from page 1

News coverage brings action

Jenny Scherr, Sarah's older sister, found an identification number which was used through a series of phone calls to auto dealerships to identify the car as a 1997-2003 Pontiac Grand Prix. At this point, Scherr and Mr. Ernst contacted NBC5 News.

NBC5 showed up at the family's home, and contacted the Major Accident Investigation Unit from there. According to Mr. Ernst, the lead investigator on the case, Officer John Griffin, arrived to find television news cameras already there. The police took the material from the Pontiac as evidence at a later point.

NBC5's coverage centered on the stalled police investigation, and why the Ernst family wasn't told who the lead detective was until several days after the accident occurred. There was also footage of the car parts collected on the family's dining room table, and pictures of Sarah before and after the accident.

According to Mr. Ernst, the detective was annoyed that the family had contacted the news media, and asked Mr. Ernst why he had done so. Griffin also responded skeptically to the family's insistence that they had narrowed down the description of the vehicle.

According to Mr. Ernst, the detective quipped that there could be fifty thousand vehicles that matched the description that Scherr had been able to obtain.

Officer Griffin said, "We just don't have the manpower," referring to calling bodyshops to see if the vehicle in question was serviced since the date of the hit and run. Scherr has contacted as many as 200 bodyshops via email and postal mail so far. Griffin also said that he understood the family's concern, but said this type of investigation was a "Long, drawn-out thing."

Playing detective

Sarah's family then informed the detective that Wrigley Field surveillance tapes had become available could help identify the car, which they

later did. Scherr had done her own investigating of the Wrigley Field connection, and gave the information to Griffin.

The tapes from the night of the hit and run were released by Wrigley Field to aid the investigation. They were reviewed by investigators, who took the low-quality video and attempted to identify the car, which is visible on one of the tapes, according to Scherr. Griffin told the *Independent* that the tape did not provide enough information to identify the car.

The decision to undertake their own amateur detective work has upset the Ernst family. "The only one doing any police work in this case is my daughter," said Mrs. Ernst about Scherr's effort to find the driver who struck Sarah.

According to Rick Ernst, Griffin on Sunday, Jan. 9 said that without a plate number or more specifics on the car, there was nothing more the police could do.

Officer Griffin has been on the case since Thursday, Jan. 6. There was another officer, Investigator Toolis, who briefly questioned Sarah while she was in intensive care and medicated on Dec. 25 but the Ernst family claims did nothing more to pursue the case. Griffin: "You have to keep turning over rocks."

Finding a cop when you need one

"We're law-abiding citizens, we pay our taxes, and the one time we need the police, they're not there. I don't think they're putting in a whole lot of effort," Mrs. Ernst added. Even with police downplaying the potential charges in such a case, "I would still like to see this person identified."

Charges that could be facing the driver of the black Pontiac Grand Prix that struck Sarah include



Looking for a black '97-'03 Pontiac Grand Prix.

leaving the scene of an accident and speeding, though other charges are possible. Sarah's friend, Samantha Plencner, a senior majoring in Biology, believes that the slow reaction and skeptical attitude of the police is to blame for the lack of progress: "How is that serving justice?"

Prologue

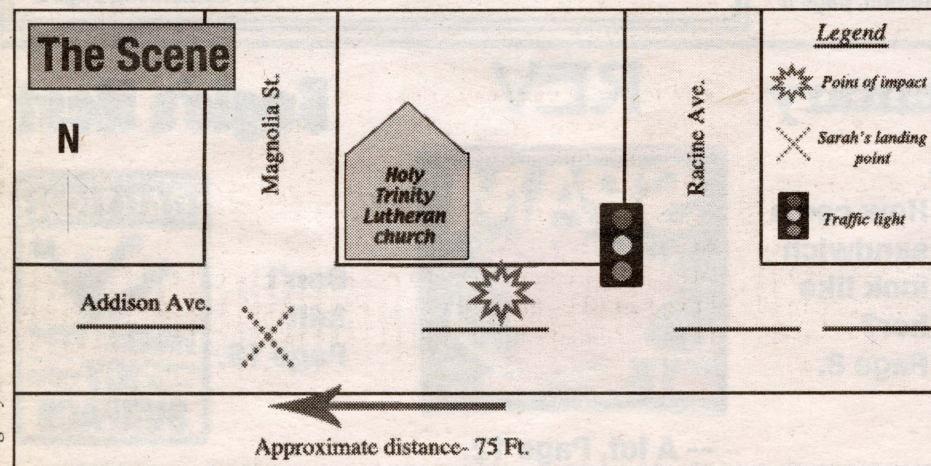
Sarah, a 22 year-old junior majoring in Biology and Secondary Education, is undergoing physical therapy while she recovers from her injuries, and is in good spirits: "It feels like I've been here for months. I want to go home."

Sarah intends to try to attend class this semester and is currently enrolled in two classes. Her parents plan on contacting the school to make arrangements so her physical therapy can continue on schedule.

Rick Ernst was proud of the way his daughter was facing her injuries. "She's tough, she always has been."

Sarah also had a message for the driver who hit her: "Don't do it again. If they would leave me lying in the middle of the street, what would they do to somebody else? That's my biggest fear, that something like this happens again to someone else. I can walk away from this, I'll heal. The next person may not be so lucky."

Anyone with any information about the hit and run should contact the Major Accident Investigation Unit at 312-745-4524, and ask to speak to Officer John Griffin.



Pell Grant program cut 1.3 million

Students possibly affected, as early as this fall

by Tom Robb
News Editor

The Pell Grant program of the federal Government will cut awards by as much as \$300 Million dollars. They will be recalculating the Pell Grant tax tables, and re-qualifying what a given income level would receive for a grant. Department of Education (DOE) spokeswoman Susan Aspey says that it is necessary due to an increase in the number of students receiving Pell Grant awards.

Terry Hartle, senior vice president of the

American Council on Education told CNN, "we estimate about 1.3 million students will see reductions in their grants from \$100 to \$300 per year."

Aspey of the DOE in Washington D.C. released a statement to the *Independent* in which she justified the changes to the grant tables due to an increase in students receiving awards. "Our Projections show an increase in the number of students receiving Pell grants next year and nearly half of Pell grant recipients are eligible for the maximum award and won't be affected."

Financial Aid Director Marshal Jennings

spoke about the impact on NEIU students. Jennings stated that his department is doing an impact study on the changes and will not have further information on the impact to students until the study is completed.

The DOE announced the changes on Dec. 23 of this year. The changes by law were supposed to have been issued on July 1 and have not been updated in 15 years. Harle said, "It's always regrettable when federal student aid to individuals is reduced, this shows the perils of not updating formulas for 15 years."

Aspey defended the date of the changes,

telling the *Seattle Times-Intelligencer* that the DOE had to wait on a study and could not complete the changes until they had reviewed it. "We're required by law to do this and we can't pick and choose which parts of the law to follow," she said.

The new Pell Grant tax tables use only federal tax data and do not reflect increases or decreases in local, state, or property taxes. The data is based on 2002 tax returns which, according to Aspey, are the most recent available.

The changes will go into affect for the fall semester of 2005.

Display in memoriam for U.S. casualties in Iraq

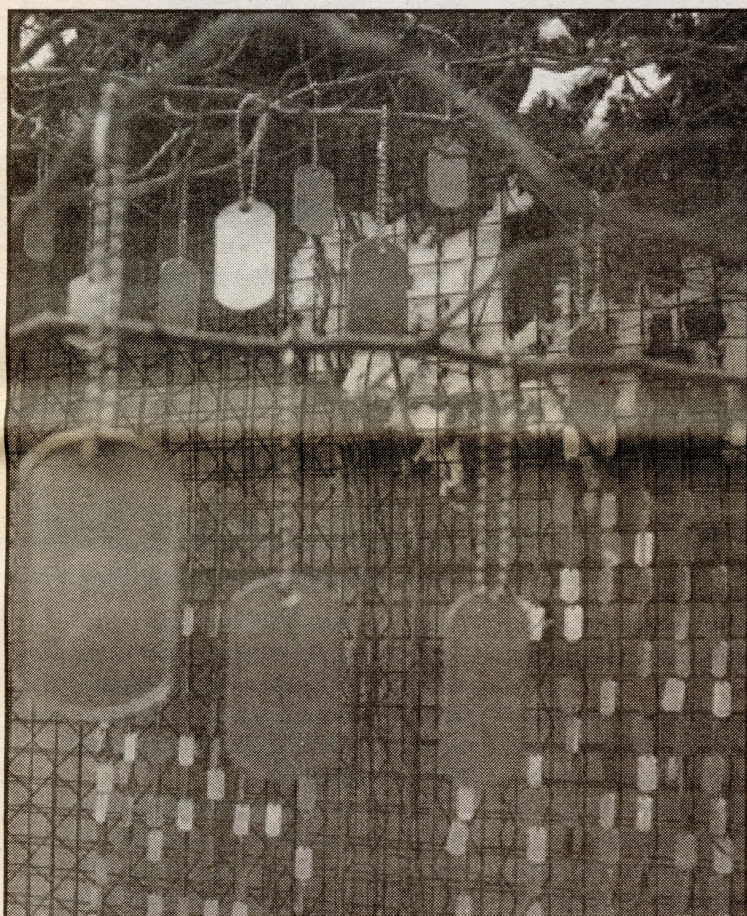


Photo by Azucena Beltran

The memorial currently holds about 1,350 dog tags.

by Patrick O'Brien
Opinions Editor

On the east wall of the Fine Arts Center, on the latticework outside the food court, there is an art piece in tribute to soldiers who have died during the current war in Iraq.

The display consists of about 1,350 blank dog tags, each tethered to the wall and representing a life lost in the war. The piece was designed and installed by student Joe Hertel.

Hertel served in the Vietnam War and is a Theatre Arts major. As of this printing, about 1,300 American soldiers have been killed in the war in Iraq since last year. There is a dog tag representing each of these soldiers.

The piece is entitled "Whispers in the Wind." According to Hertel, the art is "Not meant to be a statement for or against the war in Iraq, or of any specific political views pertaining to it."

It is a representation of the number of American lives lost and give the viewer an idea of what the number

means through the number of tags displayed."

Art Department Chairman Mark McKernin was happy the installation was outdoors, rather than in a gallery. "I believe it's very personal and provoking," he added.

McKernin compared the work to a display at the National Vietnam Veterans Museum, honoring those lost in the Vietnam War.

Installed prior to the spring, the display will be covered by foliage during warm months, but will become visible in fall and winter. Hertel said, "Other times, glittering in the sun, the tags call attention to the possibility, just as the garden will bloom again in Spring, of eternal, or new life."

The installation is scheduled to run until April 2005. No student or university funds were used on the project, but donations for the materials are welcome. Contact Joe Hertel at OldManNEIU@aol.com.

A ceremony will be held on Thursday, Jan. 20 during Activity Hour, 1:40 p.m. to dedicate the piece.

Tuition, from page 1

in Tuition Act as "good politics, but bad policy." For a student attending for four years beginning in Fall 2004, the four-year average for tuition is \$124 per credit hour. The four-year average for continuing students won't exceed that number, according to Wilcockson. Continuing students paid \$110 per credit hour in 2003-04 and \$104.50 per credit hour in 2002-03.

Wilcockson was adamant that NEIU has been able to keep tuition low compared to other state schools, arguing that it has cost the university. "We have kept our tuition very low, but we are way below other public universities,

and we're paying for it." Northeastern has the lowest tuition in the state for a four-year school.

When asked if the recent settlement with the University Professionals of Illinois (UPI) will have any effect on tuition rates, Wilcockson replied, "what do you think?"

University President Salme Steinberg issued a statement this past fall that warned tuition would be increased significantly if UPI's demands were met.

Wilcockson will bring the proposal before the Student Government Association (SGA), as a way of introducing the proposal to the student body. Check the *Independent* for more on this story as it develops.

Rally to end strike

50 students and teachers gather at Thompson Center Dec. 7

by Dorian Barrios
Staff Writer

At around 4:00 p.m. on Dec. 7, just as word of a tentative agreement was coming out on the NEIU main campus, students were gathering at the Thompson Center to rally in support of the teachers. While the crowd was positive on news, the participants expressed their dissatisfaction with President Salme Steinberg, and other politicians.

The rally was organized by the

Students for Faculty Rights as part of their continued support of the NEIU faculty. Drawing a crowd of 50 participants, including teachers and students, the crowd was pumped despite the drizzle and rallied for about an hour.

"I think that we should be really, really proud that we have a victory at our school," said Samantha Jordan, student. "But also there's lots and lots of things that we need to do" With cheers resembling those of a pep rally the students called

for Steinberg's resignation.

"We really want Steinberg to step down, because I believe she's still going on sabbatical next year with Northeastern money and the way she treated students," stated one student.

The rally was organized to put pressure on the NEIU administration and other local leaders. "We felt that education is under attack," said the student. "We wanted to come out her to let them know that we want our education and we won't stop our fight."

One book per semester

Col. of Business Management says plan will work for students

by Jessi Moen
Staff Writer

The College of Business Management (COBM) is trying to create a new method of study for their students. It involves reading only one book per semester in addition to course's required book. The participating faculty will agree upon these classes.

The COBM also hopes to expand their new program. Akbari said, "We're hoping that the program will be adapted by other colleges. Our vision is for it to become institutionalized."

Hamid Akbari, with help from Roger Reinsch and other COBM staff, tested their newly formed program on students in the fall 2004 semester and found it to be just as they hoped. "I was caught by surprise! I never thought it

would be such a success," said Akbari. Through questionnaires taken by the students, they found that most agreed that they would prefer the text to be non-mandatory and that it should be a choice to read it.

The COBM adapted this idea in the hopes of getting students to better understand business courses by examining one book intensively for a long period of time, as opposed to several, lengthy textbooks for small periods of time. They choose only books that are readable, and preferably well-known best sellers. The book will be different every semester.

Not only is there one book throughout the whole semester, but it is also not required reading; instead, it is only "highly recommended." Akbari, who is one of the founders of

this program, said that if the books were not mandatory, then students would be more likely to want to read them.

The text used this semester will be Louis Gerstner's "Who Says Elephants Can't Dance?" It will be used in all business courses and each class will focus on the material that pertains to their course. For instance, the management department will deal with only the management portions of the book, while other portions will be discussed in other classes.

Akbari also believes that with proper classroom discussions, students will take home plenty of ideas and theories that they would not have had if they had not read it. "The students don't have to agree [with the text], they only have to understand it," said Akbari.

Continuing campus construction

Projects include the completion of Parking Facility, Building C, Stage Center entrance



Photo by Azucena Beltran

The Jerome Sachs Administration Building, otherwise known as Building C or the Beehive, will be reopened by the end of February. The building has been closed since 2003.

by Patrick O'Brien
Opinions Editor

As the spring semester begins, students may notice that the Parking Facility has been completed. There are also several other improvements on campus, as well as many construction projects underway, including the long-awaited remodeling of Building C, known as the Beehive.

Parking Facility

The parking facility has been under construction since last summer. According

to Vice President of Facilities Management Joseph Kish, as of Jan. 7, the elevator was functioning after undergoing final inspections. Kish said there were some delays last week.

Those delays were because city-building inspectors had not been working the week prior to Jan. 7. Now that the inspections have concluded, the double elevator encased in glass is now fully operational.

The north half of the parking structure opened on Monday, Jan. 10, the entire structure is now accessible to cars. The top level of the structure will not be utilized, a decision that

was made earlier in the building process due to the cost concerns of upkeep and snow removal on the fifth level.

Kish reiterated that the facility could hold more than enough cars even without the top level available: "we're not going to need it," was how he described the situation. A barricade will make the top level inaccessible.

"Bottom line, based on weather conditions, we'll have as much open as possible. Sometimes, [the parking facility is] not going to be fully available. We built the capacity, down the line, for more than five years from now," said Kish.

Kish added that chemicals used to remove snow and ice from the top level will increase deterioration of the concrete, which would further drive up parking costs. "What I'm trying to do is minimize what we're paying for parking."

Construction on ground floor offices in the northwest corner of the facility, to house Public Safety and the Parking Office, will begin this summer. Bids for the contract are being submitted this month.

Public Safety/Stage Center Entrance

There are currently no plans for what will be done with the current Public Safety offices near Bryn Mawr Avenue. There is still a blocked entrance near Public Safety, where students and visitors who sign-in after hours enter the building.

This entrance has been under construction since Oct. 11 when signs were posted saying, "The corridor linking Buildings E and F will close for several weeks beginning 11 October 2004, while a new entryway is being constructed." A memo from

Kish repeated the same message.

Kish described the delay with a chuckle, saying that it was due to some problems with the flooring being replaced. No timetable was set for when the work will be completed.

Building C/Beehive

The Jerome Sachs Administration Building, Building C, which was closed in 2003 for asbestos removal and remodeling, will soon have its former inhabitants back, including President Salme Steinberg on the second floor, as well as a host of other administrators on the 1st, 3rd and 6th floors. "We expect to move the first elements in the end of next month," Kish added.

The Building B offices that are now occupied by administrators will go back to the Graduate College. These moves will be completed by the end of the spring.

Campus Commons

The area encompassed by Building B, the Science Building, the Student Union, Fine Arts Center, and the Library will be transformed over the next several years into an amphitheater, which Kish envisions holding outdoor commencements in as well as several other projects.

A statue has been commissioned by Northeastern from famed sculptor Ruth Duckworth. It will be placed in the grassy commons area between Building B and the Science Building, facing west. The granite sculpture will be of two figures, one female, one male, and will be decidedly minimalist in its rendering, according to Kish.

Kish also stated that he thought the statue would be very controversial, though he was not specific as to why it would be.

Another part of the plan in the commons was to eliminate the parking there to build the amphitheater, as well as an outdoor classroom. All the projects in the Campus Commons area are subject to funding from the state.

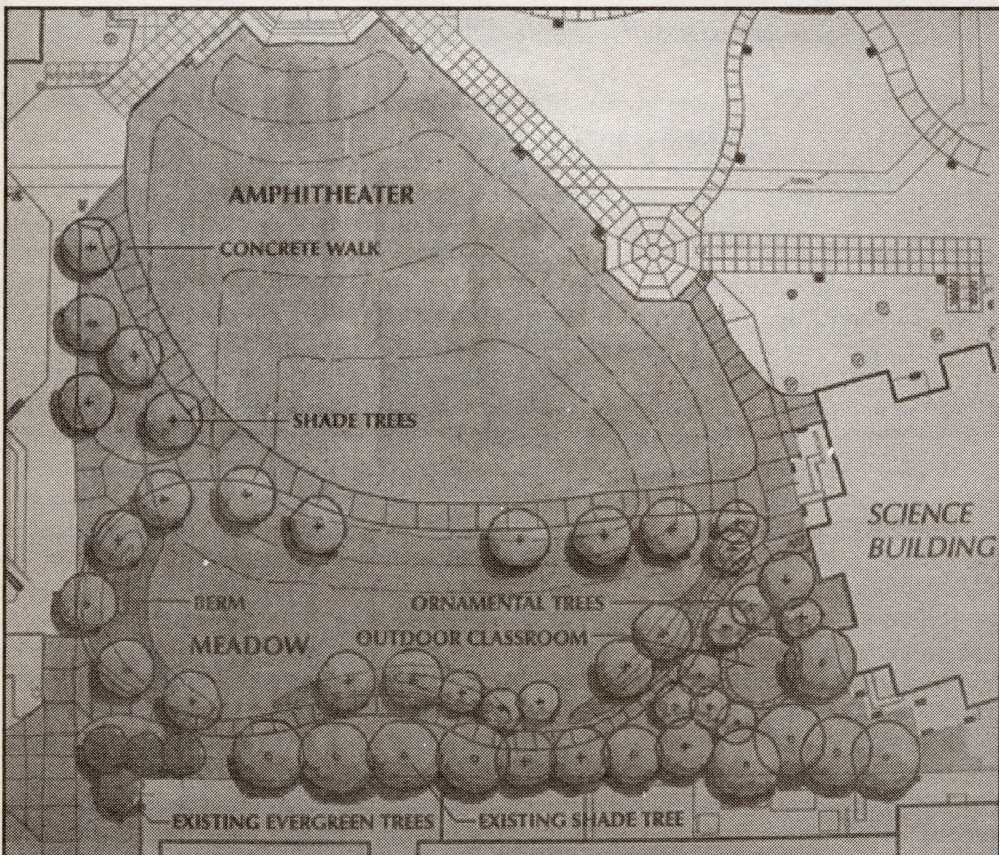


Image courtesy of Facilities Management

A projected rendering of the Campus Commons area, to be finished by Summer of 2006.

University changes:

Department alterations to keep in mind

by Amir Jamali
Special Contributor

Below is a list of completed new and improved implementations by various departments and offices aimed to better serve students.

Office of Enrollment Services (Admissions Office, Records, and Registration)

- A course demand option for closed classes was implemented to record a student's interest in a closed class. The course demand information is used to assist the deans with course scheduling, enrollment planning, and decision-making.
- The course authorization process was revised. This change allows students to register, without authorization.
- A General Education Audit for Native Freshman was implemented. It streamlines the educational planning process for advisors and students. It provides students and advisors with a summary of university requirements, accomplishments, general education requirements, coursework in progress, and listings of courses that meet specific general education requirements.
- The Enrollment Services Office, the Cashier's Office and Financial Aid Office extend service hours to include Saturdays at the start of the spring semester.
- Students can access grades on-line by visiting www.neiu.edu, click on Admissions/Records, then click on Registration Records, and scroll to access grades link.
- The Schedule of Classes is now available on-line.
- PIN numbers are mailed to newly admitted students.

College of Arts and Sciences

- The College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) has restructured and improved pre-law advising. CAS now has a committee of ten advisors from across the University. They are arranging field trips, pre-law programs, and other hands-on experiences for students interested in careers in the legal profession. The Pre-Law Advising website can be found at <http://www.neiu.edu/~casdept/pre-law.htm>.
- Additional courses are being offered on Friday and

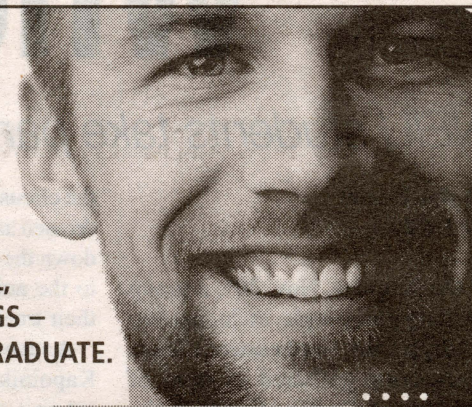
Saturday so that students can take advantage of weekend scheduling when more classrooms and parking are available. CAS has also increased the total number of general education courses offered.

- CAS posts all faculty office hours on its website and provides other student related info there: <http://www.neiu.edu/~casdept/home.htm>.

Student Affairs Office

- A Student Affairs Assessment Committee was developed and implemented to improve and coordinate assessment and planning in all offices in Student Affairs.
- The Placement Office's services and programs were reviewed and assessed by a committee of student affairs' staff, faculty, administrators, and students. They followed the guidelines outlined by the Council for the Advancement of Standards which is a national organization concerned with quality standards and program improvement in Student Affairs.
- The Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) process for Federal Stafford Loans was implemented to facilitate faster delivery of student loan funds and allow the Financial Aid office to credit student accounts more quickly.
- Student Health Services begin offering HIV testing via the rapid method; students can find out their HIV status in 20 minutes.
- Hours for the Nurse Practitioner in Student Health Services were increased to expand gynecological services to students.
- New recycling bins and receptacles have been purchased for the Student Union building as the first step in developing a more effective recycling program.
- Student Union staff has expanded ticket sales and other services made available through the Information Center just off Village Square.
- The University's First Year Orientation program went through a major re-structuring and has been expanded to eight summer sessions along with one mid-year offering.
- The Office of Scholarships/Retention now administrators the Chuck Kane Arts and Sciences Scholarship, the Chuck Kane College of Education Scholarship, and the Schneider Family Scholarship for Special Education.

Josh Taber, RN
Graduate, Rush College
of Nursing



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Nazario-Rose speaks at a Hispanic Heritage month commemoration

by Benny Boyas
Staff Writer

Evelyn Nazario-Rose, NEIU's Illinois Board of Higher Education Student Advisory Committee (IBHE-SAC) Representative, addressed Defense Contract Management Agency (DCMA) Employees on Nov. 30, 2004, during their annual Hispanic-Heritage Month commemoration. The event took place at DCMA's regional headquarters, located in Arlington Heights.

The theme of this year's observance, "Making a difference in our communities and our nation," highlighted the impact of Latinos in the labor force and the importance of the involvement of Hispanics in areas of education. Nazario-Rose, the keynote speaker, spoke about a vast array of issues plaguing the Hispanic community with regards to success and access to higher education.

"I'm not a theorist," she said, "but I do have some suggestions." Family support, mentors, and education about college admissions and financial aid processes were amongst the concepts outlined throughout her speech.

The event was originally scheduled for October. Postponement was due to a high volume of employees being away on official business. Among the guests were numerous NEIU alumni who currently serve as DCMA employees. For her efforts, Nazario-Rose was presented with a Commander's Coin on behalf of Air Force Col. Jeffrey E. Smith and a Certificate of Appreciation.

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When elephants fly

NEIU students take part of circus protest on Nov. 20, Ringling Brothers deny animal cruelty

by Joe Hertel
REV Editor

On Saturday, Nov. 20th, a group of thirty plus people, including two students from Northeastern Illinois University, gathered in front of the United Center to protest the treatment of animals in the Ringling Brothers Barnum and Bailey Circus, which was appearing inside.

Facing cold winds and frigid crowds, the demonstrators, mostly members of PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals), passed out flyers, brochures and carried placards denouncing the circus' use of animals and urged persons and families to show their concern for the animals by not attending the event being held inside.

"After I explained about the animals, I actually saw people turn around and leave," exclaimed Gayle Ivy, a member of PETA. Helen Pollock, another member, stated, "Out of over one hundred flyers I handed out (so far), only two people refused to take one."

As the crowds formed waiting for entrance to the event, Dieter Aulig, another demonstrator, donned a home made elephant costume, complete with leg chain, and began mingling with the crowd.

There was also a costumed Krusty the Clown carrying a placard that read, "Hey, hey kids, Krusty says

the circus sucks!" Another woman, dressed as a panther, paraded up and down the sidewalk calling attention to the animal's inability to protest their treatment.

Azucena Beltran and Heather Kapolnik, students at NEIU, had set up a table in the village square the week prior to the protest in the hopes of gaining additional support for the demonstration and PETA. Although they obtained around thirty names on the roster, and had sent out information about it to those who signed and gave their email address, no other NEIU students were seen at the event.

"We are hoping that there will be enough interest among students to form a (animal rights) club here on campus," stated Beltran, who plans to continue to draw student interest through displays and handouts.

As the lines dwindled and the circus performance began, PETA members began packing their material and leaving, confident that they had reached many people who otherwise would not be aware of the alleged conditions that circus animals are exposed to.

Ringling Brothers, however, on their website www.ringling.com/animals states in detail that the circus is "subject to comprehensive animal welfare regulations" on all governmental levels. Further, it "adheres" to CITES (Convention of International Trade in Endangered

Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, passed by the United Nations and adopted by Congress in 1976.

Ringling Brothers also comments on "specially designed trains" with "stock cars custom built to meet the needs of each animal species" in the show. The site also details housing, training, and animal care in a "relationship built

on respect, trust, affection and uncompromising care," which even includes a "retirement" home for its elephants.

As Beltran and Kapolnik walked west on Jackson Blvd. toward their vehicle, they noticed a tent flap open, and inside could be seen a young elephant, leg shackled to a post. Beltran took her camera

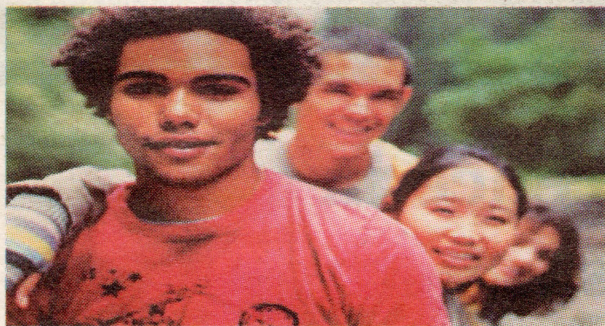
and took pictures from behind a chain link fence. When the trainer noticed her taking the photographs, he removed the shackle from the elephant's leg. "Did you see that!" Beltran said turning to Kapolnik, "when the trainer came over, the elephant lifted its (chained) leg!" With tears in her eyes, Beltran commented, "I'm glad we came."



photo by Joe Hertel

Persons of all age participated in rally in front of the United Center.

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Commentary

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Editorial Stolen Semester

The dust has settled, the contract has been signed, and the 20 days that shook this university to its very core, are over. On the other side of the faculty strike that dominated the past semester, the one group that seems to have gained the least is the students themselves. If your math is shaky, here's a crash course: track the amount of days lost to the strike, and then see if your class, or classes, were accounted for, class for class.

When students pay their tuition at the beginning of a semester, they enter into a contract. That agreement guarantees 16 weeks of instruction and a final exam, or some equivalent.

This contract is with Northeastern Illinois University, and it is the university's responsibility, financial and otherwise, to ensure the completion of the agreement. This did not occur in the Fall 2004 semester. Classes were lost, and that is an immutable and unfortunate fact. The question then becomes, how will students, in the lingo the faculty union loves to use, "be made whole again?"

The university was steadfast in giving the campus a holiday break and ending classes on Dec. 22, but at what cost? Students lost class time, and grades most likely do not reflect a full semester's work. If they did, they were artificially inflated, or did not reflect the students' body of work.

In either of these scenarios, students lose. It does not matter if grades were higher or lower than they would have been in the case of an uninterrupted semester. The integrity of the academic setting has been violated, and all the lofty words from the University Professionals of Illinois (UPI) about where education is heading, seem hollow when the UPI has made no public effort to ensure it.

Were any of these things discussed when the fall semester was put to bed so hastily? Students were relieved the strike was over, and few voices questioned openly the way professors handled the post-strike schedule.

There were ripples of discontent, of students who didn't simply rejoice at the return of the striking faculty. Those students who cared enough to question the way professors bragged about trips abroad, or how class finals were scheduled around professors' vacations, made sure that amidst the celebration of returning to class, some students went against the grain and protested.

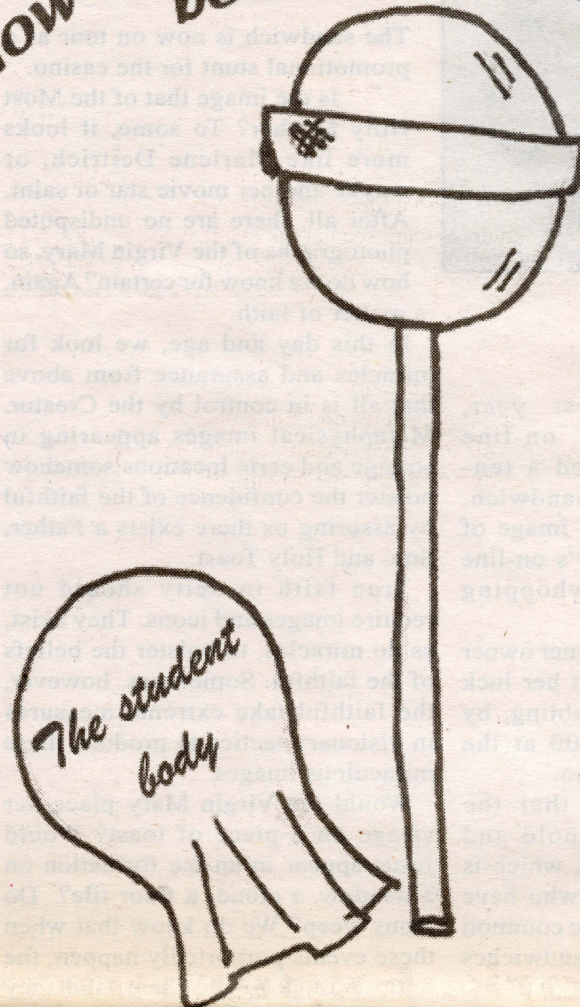
Those who stood up for the integrity that our faculty and administration seems to have so easily brushed aside with the hasty end to the academic semester, have redeemed the student body in part. However, more needs to be done to make students "whole again."

The call goes out to Ed Hunt and Salme Steinberg: take students' rights seriously, in act and in fact, not in platitudes and empty promises. Investigate whether professors treated students unfairly in December, and address this situation.

Students may fear retribution from faculty, as so many did during the strike and its aftermath, but that makes the truth they speak all the more important. They will find a voice in these pages to reclaim what has been stolen from them.

Drawing Board by Andrea Zelinski

How many times will students
be screwed over?



The world may never
know

Ban to protest, ban to include

by Jonathan Gronli
Production Editor

The American military always had a special place in our culture. It protected those causes that were just. It fought to protect others, and us, from our enemies. When the need arose, even the people who were discriminated against by the military were welcomed in with open arms.

However, that is not always the case. They always had a special place for homosexuals. That place for them is on the outside unless they hide their preference. Not even having the ability to protect the nation they live in and love will allow them to come in. One of the questions when you talk with recruiters used to be and for some still is a three word little catchphrase: "Are you gay?" This is flat out wrong.

Some colleges now have taken this as a reason to protest the military's recruitment techniques. How are they protesting it? They ban military recruiters from their campuses in protest of the exclusion of homosexuals from military service. The right of homosexuals to protect the nation they live in and the ideals of the flag—that symbol of freedom that they would be willing to die for just about as much as any straight person would.

Is it right to send a person away from serving their nation because of the type of person they want to be with when they head to the bedroom? No. They are as much a part of this nation and maybe have more love for the ideals that harbor the American dream than a lot heterosexuals who may take them for granted each day.

Does it make you more American to be a guy waking up next to a beautiful woman...or for that matter any woman? Does it make you more American to be a woman waking up

next to a guy? Does sexual orientation truly play into being an American at all? No.

Being American doesn't mean being gay or straight. Being American doesn't mean being anything but being a freethinking, free speaking (unless it fans the flames of hate) type of person that loves the freedoms given to you by the Constitution. Being American means loving the USA, its symbols of freedom, and its ideals. Being an American is being able to stand up and say, "I don't agree". Being an American means you stand up for the ideals that this nation believes in, whether it is in peaceful debate or when you are sent off to war. Being an American is putting in your part to the society you live in while you can. Life is short and these freedoms we have shouldn't be taken for granted, neither should those who are willing to fight for these freedoms.

Therefore, it is right that some colleges have taken to banning military recruiters from their campuses. It is a just reason. It is a fight for equality. Gays and lesbians deserve to fight for the freedoms given to them by this nation. If you are a part of this nation, if you live and work here, if you contribute in anyway to the economy, you have the right and the duty to fight for that which you support—these freedoms that you live under and may take for granted or cherish.

More colleges should ban military recruiters until they realize that the fighting American spirit is within all of us, whether we are gay or straight. It doesn't matter the sexual orientation as long as you have the patriotic sense to fight and be willing to die to preserve those freedoms given to you and others.

While under President Bush, not a lot of people might want to serve in what may become a pseudo-Stalinist Russia without the mass murder of our own citizens on our own soil (we already go elsewhere for the mass murder), but hey, they should still have the right to serve the nation they live in.



Image by Cecilia
Carboni

Blessed Lady of the Grilled Cheese Sandwich



Left: The "holy" toast
Below: Ebay actually was willing to auction off this sandwich.



The sandwich is now on tour as a promotional stunt for the casino.

Is the image that of the Most Holy Mother? To some, it looks more like Marlene Deitrich, or maybe another movie star or saint. After all, there are no undisputed photographs of the Virgin Mary, so how do we know for certain? Again, a matter of faith.

In this day and age, we look for miracles and assurance from above that all is in control by the Creator. Metaphysical images appearing in strange and eerie locations somehow bolster the confidence of the faithful by assuring us there exists a Father, Son, and Holy Toast.

True faith in deity should not require images and icons. They exist, as do miracles, to bolster the beliefs of the faithful. Sometimes, however, the faithful take extreme measures in visionary tactics to produce these miraculous images.

Would the Virgin Mary place her visage on a piece of toast? Would Jesus appear in an ice formation on a window, a cloud, a floor tile? Do icons weep? We do know that when these events purportedly happen, the faithful flock to see them, and they are usually not disappointed.

For a gambler to assert that her winnings are blessed by a stale sandwich with divine power is one thing. But for a casino to pay \$28,000 to put that grilled portrait of the Blessed Virgin on tour is a bit cheesy, to say the least.

by Joe Hertel
REV Editor

In November of last year, GoldenPalace.com, an on-line gambling site, purchased a ten-year-old grilled cheese sandwich, which allegedly shows an image of the Virgin Mary, off eBay's on-line auction service, for a whopping \$28,000!

The sandwich, claims former owner Diana Duyser, has brought her luck over the years in her gambling, by bringing her over \$70,000 at the Seminole Hard Rock Casino.

The amazing part is that the sandwich is free from mold and decay after all these years, which is of interest to all students who have recently purchased the more common variety of grilled cheese sandwiches in our food court area.

One would have to assume that the whole concept of the Mother of God appearing on a toasted sandwich and blessing its owner is a matter of faith. The owners of the Golden Palace Casino evidently thought it was worth having for a sum that would pay for most of our education here at NEIU!

"I'm your God, their's too"

by Tom Robb
News Editor

"We are God's Chosen People," "There is no God but Allah and Mohammed is his Prophet," "You are going to Hell unless you accept Jesus Christ as your personal Savior." These familiar phrases are from many who believe strongly in their chosen religion. These statements give the impression that their religion is the only path to find salvation, nirvana, Heaven, or paradise. For some, the message is simply, "Join us, or you're going to Hell."

The message here seems to be "My God is better than yours." Then, the politicians come along and says "God said 'Do this' and don't question it." Many are tolerant of other religions, but for those who would use religion for their own political ends, this message is for you.

Several weeks ago, the Muslim Student Association held an event originally billed as a "celebration" of the late founder of Hamas. As one might expect, members of Hillel had a bit of a problem with the event as they, and many others, do consider Hamas a terrorist group. The event resulted in protests, letters criticizing the *Independent's* coverage of the event, and even the involvement of the Dean of Students. This reflects a larger conflict between religions.

In truth, or at least it is my interpretation, the big three religions, Christianity, Judaism, and Islam, have more in common than many realize. If people would look to these similarities, rather than the differences, things could actually be peaceful in the world. I'm sure the politicians and those who use religion for personal gain would work hard to see that never happens.

Christianity is an offshoot of Judaism. Therefore, at their roots, Jews and Christians are not so different. Generally, but not always, they get along both personally and politically. Western society is even often called "Judeo-Christian." Muslims, on the other hand, have a history of conflict with Christians and Jews. However, Islam, Judaism, and Christianity have more in common than many realize.

All three religions can trace their roots and their leaders, King David, Jesus, and Mohammed, to Abraham. One man who, according to the Bible, was told by God "I

will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name so famous it will be used as a blessing" (Genesis 12:2). "Look up at the heavens and count the stars, such shall be your descendants" (Genesis 15:2). Many look at this as just an endorsement of the lineage of Abraham and his wife, Sarah, to Jews and Christians. However, there was another woman, another son, and the lineage of another faith, Islam.

Sarah was old and thought she could not give birth, though she later did. Thus, she allowed Abraham to marry Hagar, a slave girl who bore Ishmael. Then, when Sarah bore Isaac, she became jealous and requested Abraham banish Hagar and Ishmael to the desert. God said to Hagar, regarding Ishmael, "I will make him a great nation" (Genesis 21:19, continued in the Quran). Mohammed, the founder and Prophet of Islam, traces his lineage to Abraham and Hagar. At 5 Billion people, they are indeed a great nation. Further, in the Quran, Abraham traveled to what is now Saudi Arabia, and built the Kaaba in Mecca—the holiest site in all of Islam.

Mohammed was almost assassinated and was run out of Mecca because he questioned the exploitation of pilgrim travelers going to the Kaaba (now Islam's holiest site). Mohammed and other Muslims went to Medina and lived in peace there with Jews. He honored the "people of the book," which are the Christians and Jews.

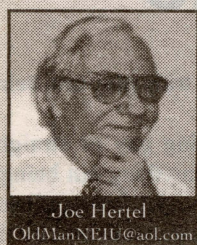
Jesus was executed for overturning the money changer tables in the Temple because they were exploiting pilgrim travelers. Pharaoh in Egypt ordered all first-born children killed because it was told that a first-born (Moses) would challenge him and free the Israelites.

Mohammed said "As you do unto the least you do unto Allah (God)." Jesus said, "As you have done unto the least of these you have done unto me."

Politicians through out time have sought to, and continue to, use religion to justify their policies. They have committed many heinous acts in God, Allah, and Yahweh's name. So next time you want to hold yourself literally holier than thou, thinking your religion is better, remember they are all the same God. And remember what God said, "Judge not lest you be judged."

Is it getting warm in here?

Old Man on Campus



Joe Hertel
OldManNEIU@aol.com

"... of misnamed "public information" offices that churn out blizzards of (press) releases filled with self-justifying exaggerations and, occasionally, just plain damn lies." —Bill Moyers (from his address on media reform, 2003)

The quote above reflects how many of us at the *Independent* felt as we tried to get the facts about what was happening during the teacher strike. As the negotiations progressed, the information we received from both sides became more confusing, misleading, accusatory, and vague.

NEIU administrators and union officials became what Moyers described as "...a culture of official sealed lips, opened only to favored media insiders: of government by leak and innuendo and spin..." The university administration ignored student concerns, teachers would not share information, and the union told its members not to talk to us.

There will be a bitter aftertaste from the strike for some time to come. Just because we are back in class does not mean that things have returned to normal. That will take a while longer. We all lost more than anyone may have gained from the strike.

As an observer of the actions from both sides during the strike, and not being one

of the "favored media insiders" to behind-the-scene activities of the administration and the union, one can only comment on how the situation presented itself to the student body. We were all outsiders, not to be trusted or included, for fear of damaging the negotiations.

Several people had commented that students were like children during the divorce proceedings of their parents. We were in the middle, yet could do nothing but wait while they battled it out behind closed doors.

That is unfortunate. A few of us "children," however, spoke out. Around a hundred students out of 12,000! That's not very many, and one has to ask why, but it won't be me asking. I'm disappointed in the student body as a whole. My December column talked (a bit harshly) about the lack of response from the student body in the matter, and how students might have been effective in ending the strike earlier.

It has been said time and again that the student body had the power. The old cliché, "In unity there is strength," was not coined for naught. There is truth in that statement. We, as a student body, could have prevented the strike from proceeding if we had banded together as a strong voice on campus. But we didn't, save for a few—and certainly not enough to matter.

Even while the strike was in progress, only a few concerned students went to the

picket lines, organized demonstrations, and showed support for striking faculty. While most students stayed home, a few with no social life to speak of, crossed the picket lines just to hang out in the student union or cafeteria. Others continued to attend class, intimidated by the fact that non-union faculty members were still teaching (and many of those teachers demanded their students attend). And they said, "What else could I do?"

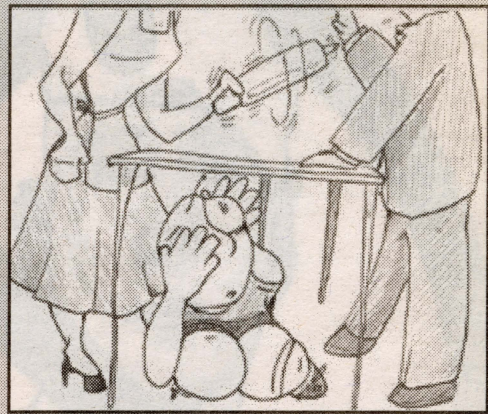
Well, one thing, even if you "had" to be in class during the strike, teaching or learning, you could have spent some time on the picket line or attend one of the demonstrations. You *could* have done something!

My respect is given to the non-union teachers and students' yeoman efforts. Those who refused to cross picket lines, thus jeopardizing their academic careers. Let us hope that the powers that be are not so petty as to seek retribution in the matter.

Well, anyway, the strike is over and I have digressed. So why muddle around in what could have, should have, or might have been done. We're back in class. Is everybody happy? I don't think so.

You watch and see. The atmosphere in your classes will be different than before the strike. There will be an air, a heaviness, hanging over the campus. It will take some time to get back

Divorced education



Drawing by Cecilia Carboni

in the groove, and it won't happen during these early weeks of the new semester. Something will be missing, something we call trust.

Everyone: students, faculty and administration, by their own perspective, feels betrayed. We, as a university and a family, have failed as a group to support each other. The chasm between "us" and "them" has widened, and we no longer feel the closeness we once had.

It's sort of like that divorce analogy. Even though the parents have decided to stay together for the sake of the children, the kids feel the animosity and lack of love. They know in their hearts that the parents no longer care for each other, and it hurts. It becomes a family in name only.

So it has become at Northeastern.

Mail Bag

Blasting Old Man

Dear Editor,

I am writing in response to your December 7, 2004 Issue's "Old Man on Campus," by Joe Hertel, which blasted NEIU students, labeling them as "moaning, groaning, whining, spoiled, self-indulgent, self-righteous, vacuous, self-centered, hedonistic, sheltered, oblivious, and uncaring." How nice for you to have a public platform from which to spew the same old rhetoric that the old codgers of your era used to spew. Thank you for revealing who you really are. Criticisms of others reveal more about the critic than those criticized.

Alienation of the younger set is something the world is tired of. Maybe you have heard of *Pink Floyd* and the album *The Wall*? Humiliation from the "older, wiser" instructor does nothing for the younger generation. Congratulations to you; you are living proof of what *The Who* sang about, "Here comes the new boss / Same as the old boss."

Get with it Gramps. You say in your article that you were once a spoiled ingrate; don't project that onto others. The problem with the world is not everyone else, but with ourselves. Mother Theresa said, "Be the change you hope to see in the world." So shut up, and keep your communication commensurate with your principled actions. And don't slide back into that immature attitude that judges and slights others based on the shallowness of one's own personal experience.

Actions that don't match words indicate hypocrisy, and we have had our fill.

Nancy L. Dahl
Old Student on Campus

Mail Bag

Basic rights

Dear Editor,

I must say I was disappointed with Nick Gaudio's article, "Israel and Palestine." In one paragraph he says, "The United States decided to take the country of Palestine and make it a state for the Jews." However, then he says, "The Palestinians have made numerous attempts to have a country of their own. The problem with this is that Palestinians want the territory for their country carved out of Israel's borders." You yourself say the Palestinians lost their land because America decided to give it to Israel, but then you say the Palestinians are trying to take Israel's land. I guess what your really trying to say is that Palestinians are trying to take back their land!

Here is a point to ponder: most of the people who live in Israeli settlements are naturalized citizens or first generation citizens from Europe and America. Most of the people living in refugee camps are Palestinians who can date their existence back to the land through their forefathers. Also, most Israeli neighborhoods, although plagued with the fear of suicide bombings, are very affluent and developed. While most Palestinians, if not all, live in ghettos and refugee camps in the state of poverty and desperation.

The only way peace can be achieved in Palestine/Israel is when we learn to see the truth and give blame where it's due. Yes, suicide bombings have to stop and non-state actors in the Palestinian region need to subject themselves to a unified authority, but the basic human rights of Palestinians and the disparity they live in needs to be acknowledged first! The Israeli government needs to step up and take the blame for the atrocities they have committed, and journalists need to leave their personal prejudices aside when trying to educate their readers about political issues.

S. Fatima Quadri

Mail Bag

Accusation from HOME

Dear Editor,

Going over an editorial in a back issue of the *Independent*, (Nov. 9, 2004), I read that "Hate speech would have to contribute to a climate that would make individuals targets of greater abuses, like gay-bashing."

Does that mean that homosexuals who emotionally and vociferously label others "homophobes" and "haters" and "bigots" and "Nazis" are engaging in so-called "hate speech"? We at H.O.M.E. have been called that and more, which has contributed to some people over-reacting and actually subjecting us to mild (so far) physical abuse at some places.

I am continually stunned at the obvious hypocrisy of so many "liberal" people. The fact that they can't see it is sobering. The innocent are being fed a pack of lies and they are naively and almost unthinkingly sucking it up, becoming in the process what they condemn----becoming intolerant, censorious, judgmental, hate-filled, and prejudiced against truly moral people [yes, morality does exist----if it didn't liberals would have no basis on which to judge us]].

One can only hope that someday they will wake up and see how they are being played, manipulated, led around by the nose by the liberal media (e.g., Hollywood, rock and roll, etc.). Use drugs like marijuana (promoted by certain musicians and actors), negatively impact your mind or reasoning ability, then expose yourself to the emotional manipulation of professionals (e.g., professional actors, musicians, etc.). You well-intentioned liberals who don't think you are being used or exploited by highly trained professionals are incredibly simple.

Wayne Lela

Mail Bag

How bad is it really?

Dear Editor,

The teachers got a new four-year contract and three weeks of back pay while on strike. The administration saved face and got the teachers back to work after months of dismal negotiations. What did the students get?

They received a lesson on negotiations and propaganda from both UPI leadership and administration; a very long line at the cashier's office on Dec. 9th, the last day to make an initial tuition payment and the first day back, plus the cashier clerks with attitudes telling us it's our fault for waiting until the last day to make payments; three weeks of classes and assignments crammed into one; some instructors telling us that we should have been reading and finishing our assignments during the strike---sorry, we didn't sign up for independent studies; and a confusing revised calendar for conclusion of fall semester.

What we didn't get is two weeks of tuition reimbursement since only one week of classes were made up. Hey, NEIU Student Government, how about a class action suit? What we really got is a harsh reminder that students are and always will be at the bottom of the totem pole. Don't believe it when someone tells you they are doing it for the behalf of students.

George Wong

Mail Bag

Veteran suffering

Dear Editor,

With disgust and trepidation I have been following the recent Sun-times articles regarding how currently wounded and sick veterans are being treated, and what those who will be eventually injured in service to their country have to look forward to, concerning their earn benefits and medical treatment.

I guess I was one of the lucky ones, having been wounded while in a combat zone and then expeditiously receiving very attentive and expert medical care, first at a makeshift military field hospital, then at Danang NAV and finally at Great Lakes Naval Hospital. For eight months my open wound, with nerve and artery damage was treated and repaired as best possible at those facilities.

I was under the impression that such attentive and well meaning care was still considered an obligation that this country and the VA staff had to those who have earned their veteran benefits and medical care.

What has happened? Why has this one time grateful and obligatory consideration for veterans been disavowed? If zealous individuals working for the VA are more concerned about this country's Treasury, maybe they should go to work for the Treasury Department and leave the mandated benefits and care of veterans to understanding VA officials who are doing the job they were hired to do. And to the qualified doctors who have competently diagnosed a veteran's medical/psychological needs.

This is one of the wealthiest and most generous countries on the face of the earth, no matter what these self-imposed, anti-benefit, anti-medical care for vets scrooges think and are doing behind the scenes to betray veterans.

Without veterans, there would be no U.S.A., as we know it, let alone the U.S Treasury.

We send people off to war based on what our elected officials deem to be good and sufficient cause or to protect the interests of this country (including financial interests). For those of us safely enjoying the way of life this country offers (and it must be pretty good, seeing that many of those living in other countries are risking their lives to gain entry), we need to remember that those serving to protect our way of life, are very possibly taking our own place in harms way.

These veterans are and have served us bravely and honorably (sparing not their life or limb), now it is our turn to show some honor in return.

Semper Fi,
Kevin D. Lehmann

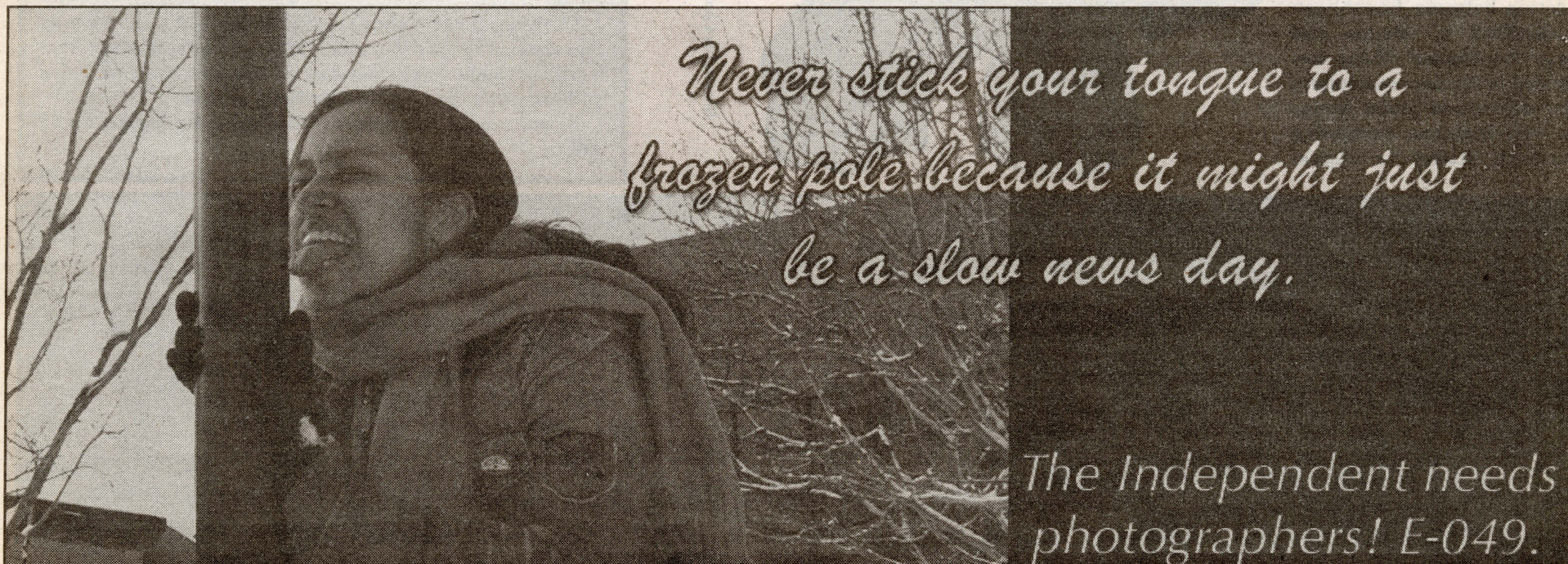
"M" Co.3rd. Bat. 1stMarDiv. I Corp Area, 1967
Alumni 2000/Student-at-large NEIU 2004

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Modern Republi(KKK)ans

by Patrick O'Brien
Opinions Editor

Imagine, if you could, an idea so strong, so pervasive, so determined, that over a course of many years, this idea transformed, transferred, transmogrified itself, and became expressed in many venues by many speakers. This idea found voice in the halls of American politics, and lives with us, in power, to this very day. The idea is white supremacy, and it has found its voice in the modern Republican Party.

In the year 2000, a mysterious phenomenon in Florida disenfranchised thousands of black voters, whose names showed up erroneously on lists of convicted felons. The state is run by prominent Republicans, who engineered the lists; this is a known fact. But read on knowing this, I am no Democrat, and I despised John Kerry. This tale is about American racism, not party politics.

In the United States Senate, there was not a single senator, Democrat or Republican, who would sign on to an objection to the election discrimination against black citizens, despite the fact that news reports during the Florida recount in 2000 carried many stories of voters denied the right to cast a ballot.

To understand why this was possible, one must understand that in the history of this country the rights of African Americans are always the first casualties in any political battle.

The election of 2004 showed some resemblance to the 2000 disgrace. Voters in urban precincts in Ohio and elsewhere reported a shortage of voting machines and lines that were hours long.

In population centers like Cleveland, where there should have been a voting machine for every 100 voters, there was one machine for every 300 voters, according to CNN. Cleveland has a large black population, and the city went heavily against the Republican candidate. American history tells us this is no coincidence.

In 1877, the presidential election between Republican Rutherford B. Hayes and Democrat Samuel Tilden was decided in another compromise that destroyed black hopes for real freedom, relegating southern blacks to virtual

slavery and a reign of terror, full of lynching and violence, which ran unabated until the 1960's.

The Republicans were given the election that year, even though Tilden had more electoral votes, because the Republicans promised to abandon Reconstruction. Southern racists, and groups like the Ku Klux Klan (KKK), proceeded to "redeem" the South with the poll tax, white primaries, and the oppression and murder of black voters.

In the 21st century, rope is no longer needed. In Florida, you can push a button on a keyboard and eliminate thousands of voters, without leaving blood on your hands.

Clarence Thomas once used the term "high-tech lynching." As a Supreme Court justice in 2000, he voted to uphold the Republicans' presidential victory, ignoring the pleas of thousands of African American voters in Florida. Again, blacks were sacrificed for a "greater good."

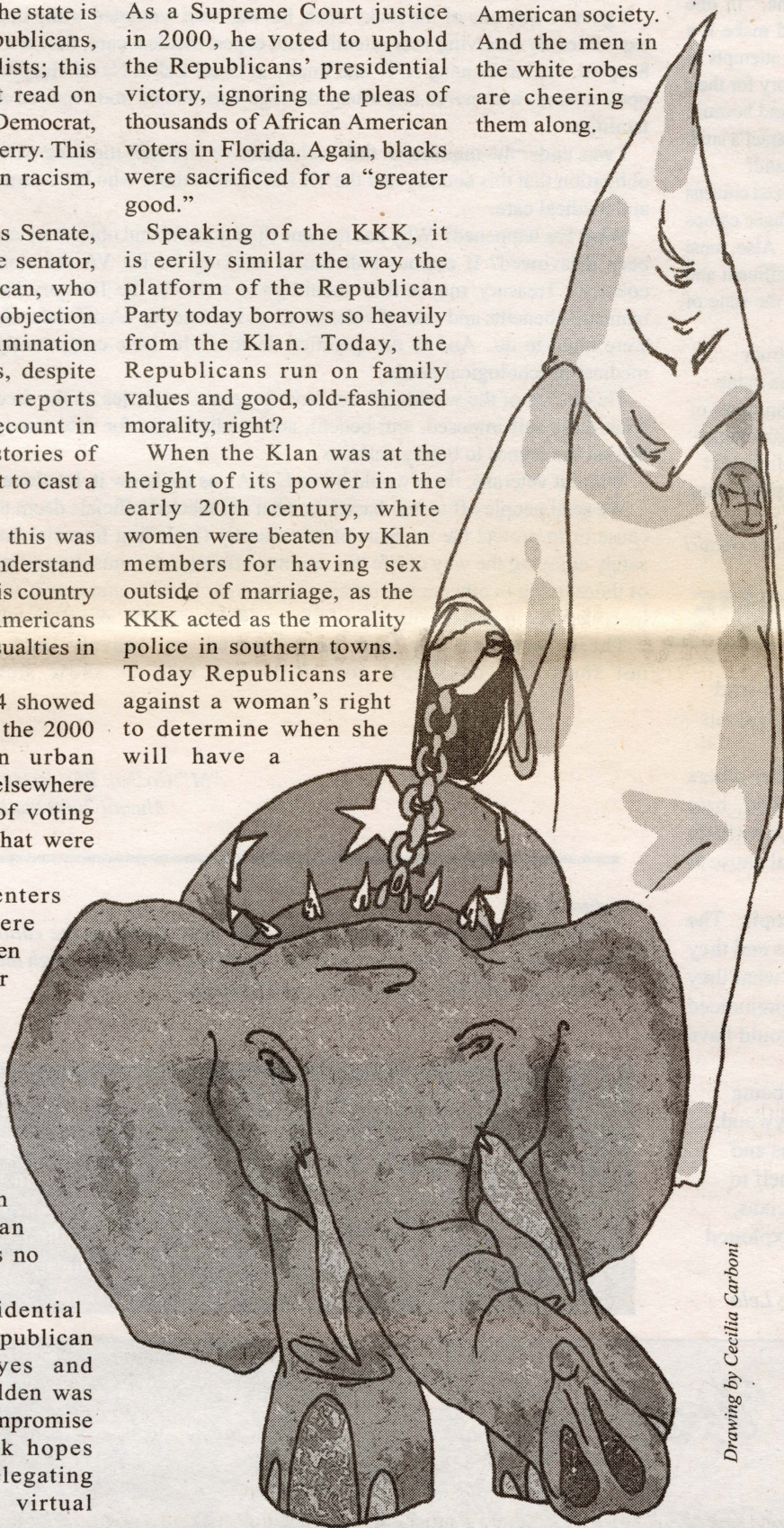
Speaking of the KKK, it is eerily similar the way the platform of the Republican Party today borrows so heavily from the Klan. Today, the Republicans run on family values and good, old-fashioned morality, right?

When the Klan was at the height of its power in the early 20th century, white women were beaten by Klan members for having sex outside of marriage, as the KKK acted as the morality police in southern towns. Today Republicans are against a woman's right to determine when she will have a

baby. The Klan undoubtedly supports restricting the rights of women as well.

Nowadays, they call it the Christian Coalition. In 1920, the men in the white robes called themselves god-fearing Christians, and they used their Christian values to attempt to wipe black people off the face of the earth. Is it no coincidence that the Republican Party today has found its most loyal supporters in the South?

The South is a place where fear, fear of African Americans, fear of gays, fear of empowered women, and fear of differences, has always been an easy sell. The Republican Party of today has merely taken up the mantle of the southern racists, and has sold morality as a cure for American society. And the men in the white robes are cheering them along.



VOICE OF THE CAMPUS

Never drive-write drunk



CECILIA CARBONI
new.yoc@hotmail.com

HE CRIES. HE SPITS. HE KEEPS ME UP AT NIGHT WITH HIS INCESSANT HOWLING, AND THROWS WHATEVER YOU PUT IN HIS TINY HANDS RIGHT BACK AT YOUR FACE, FULL FORCE.

Sure he's fun to play with because he's new and energetic, scurrying around with those little legs and that cute little toothless smile. He might even get you down on the floor to play along, but I get tired so fast.

Baby New Year is a little brat.

Ushering out my nicely established anxieties with a roll of the eyes, he signals to me that those worries are "so last year." My calendar goes in the trash before I can even cut out the cute firemen (I'll miss you Mr. February!), and Baby New Year has just begun to make his presence felt.

For years, it was as if at 12:01 I was magically in some new skin, and electrified with endless possibilities. A new year wasn't just a moment to stop smoking or lose weight, it was a mystical reinvention of who you were. Everything you had done that you were unhappy with, or that you hadn't done that you wanted to do, that was your moment to rectify the situation.

Of course, I always went back to being myself after a couple days. Pretty boring, very much flawed, unpunctual, and argumentative. I never smoked, but I could take it up so I'll feel good giving it up—that would be easy.

Even though I lost that mystical view, Baby New Year still comes to haunt me. I baby-sit for a while. Soon, though, he will mature. By the time he gets old, he's a stoic, bitter, old man who leaves me well enough alone when I don't finish that painting I said I'd finish eight months prior.

But for now, I have the mashed carrots of renewal being flung into my hair! I shall read all the books I acquired in the last year and never read! I shall pay my overdue library fines, after I return the books! I shall cover more topics in my reading! I'll take up Yoga! Aikido! I'll weight lift five times a week! I'll keep up on my Duetsch and Latin! I will start my online comic, after I finish five unfinished paintings and learn the violin. No more fluffy columns (after this one, of course)! I can always keep track of it all with a brand new 2005 Hunks of Anthropology calendar. According to my last one that was up, it was still June.

I'm not the only sucker for the concept of "starting over." Everywhere, people are talking about either quitting or taking up some thing or other. From giving up drinking, smoking, gambling, taking classes you don't need, doing that thing that annoys your boyfriend (*you know-that...thing*), arguing, nasty habits in general, dieting (Atkins is bad for you), helping others, spending more time with family, or simply focusing more on work or studies.

Will my teachers mind if I bring Baby New Year to the first day of class? Probably not. He's very well behaved in classes—overly enthusiastic, even. Eager to learn everything, he'll take incredibly patient and neat notes for me. Don't expect him later in the semester. Don't expect the notes, or the notebook paper either. I hope my classmates all carry plenty of extra pens with them.

Will they mind him at the gym? He'll carry my bags all the way there. Probably sit quietly by, water bottle in hand, as I run the treadmill. He will be ready to bite my ankles if I stop before the countdown is over.

The problem is that we all forget about our own goals as the semester drags on as we find ourselves weighed down by everyday pressures. "I can't write my novel right now, I have twenty pages to read for class." "I spent the whole day on my feet at work, I don't need to go run." "I'll spend time with my little brother when I get home...three nights from now." We're always wasting time somewhere; being anxious doesn't help on top of that.

This year, if you made a resolution, don't let it slip by. And regardless of if you did or didn't, try to just look at things from a different angle before you start the semester, and maybe that will carry through long after the Baby is gone.

Be enthusiastic. Be optimistic. That's what Mr. January would say.

First I'll conquer the Entertainment section...
then the WORLD!

We need staff writers!
Come to E-049 and express yourself.

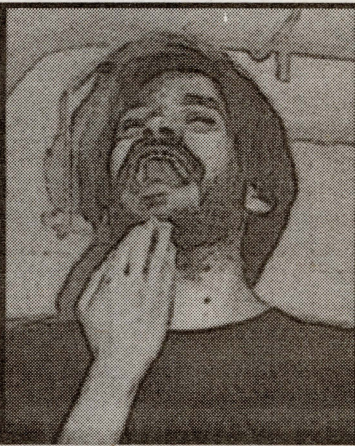


Photo courtesy of Johnny Knight

COMEDY SPORTZ



Everybody say, "Oooooooooo!"



by Joe Hertel
REV Editor

It was a dark and rainy night. I didn't feel at all like going to see an Improv performance on the evening of Saturday, December 18, but it was an assignment I had to accomplish. So, muttering under my breath, I scraped the forming ice from the windshield and hopped in the car, sliding southward on the slush covered streets to my destination.

I chose the ComedySportz Theater, 2851 N. Halsted, for my evening's improvisational comedy experience. The available, adjacent parking lot put me in a good mood, and within a short time I was rocking with the audience in an evening of high-energy, well executed improv from seven very talented individuals.

The audience, mostly teenagers, was boisterous, loud and in any other theater production would have been consigned to the outer lobby. Here, however, they fit right in with the evening's entertainment, as participation was not only encouraged, but also highly sought after by the performers. We, the audience, even got points for our participation! But, as Drew Carey of *Whose Line is it Anyway?* would say, "The points don't matter." And they didn't (except the winning team got a chintzy trophy).

There were two teams in the 8:00 p.m. performance: red and blue (no relation to the electoral states the actors were from). Three people on each team competed in a selection of improv situations suggested by the audience. Their results were electronically posted on a scoreboard, stage left.

Referee, Tara DeFransisco, wearing a black and white striped jersey, informed us that she was "not a Footlocker employee." She warmed up the audience and kept us at an enthusiastic level of participation throughout the one and a half hour performance. Her energetic bounding

across the stage and prompts, resulted in a scene reminiscent of a high school assembly just prior to coming to order. Our enthusiasm required Ms. DeFransisco to blow her whistle several times to get us to quiet down.

After the audience participated in the singing of the National Anthem (a preliminary I was impressed by), the games began. There were no slow or dull spots throughout the night.

The first set was where the teams had to guess the titles of songs, through pantomime. Three of the songs were, "Girls, girls, girls," "Jesus Loves Me," and "Drop it Like it's Hot." Joanna Buese, one of the performers, was delightful as she came so close to guessing "Girls, girls, girls" several times, that the audience groaned in mock disappointment (she eventually guessed correctly).

The teams also acted out scenes using the techniques of famous writers' styles with certain emotions, like hysteria, again suggested by the audience. This was followed by an enjoyable set of gibberish games as the teams acted out a foreign movie using a member of the audience to do so. This game was followed by another in which a member of the audience supplied assorted sound effects into a microphone, as the actors presented situations in need of such oral talent.

There was an amazing burst of creativity as Jay Sukow, leader of the Blue Team, had to guess what kind of sport was being presented in both gibberish and action by the team. Not only were the members of the team creative in presenting the clues, but also Sukow amazed the audience by guessing correctly four out

of five of the situations (which were not at all easy) in five minutes, and he would have gotten the fifth (he came close) had he not run out of time.

Sukow was sent outside while audience members suggested the outlandish and ridiculous sports events, including: basketball played against N-Sync with the head of George W. Bush as a ball and a sea shell as a hoop; wrestling in a thong, on a bed of nails, with Madonna; and playing baseball in a jock strap with a wolverine as a bat and a monkey as a ball. The audience was highly impressed with Jay's ability to correctly guess these fantasies, as were his fellow teammates.

In all of these presentations, our referee, DeFransisco, kept the energy flowing by encouraging audience participation, with such demands as, "Everybody say, 'Oooooo!'" Which we did.

Points were awarded to teams based on the applause-o-meter, activated by audience response from polite clapping, foot stomping, and rousing shouts of approval.

There was an elimination game where team members had to continue an improvised story as the referee pointed to them. Anyone who messed up, missed a turn, or repeated a word, was sent to the sidelines with an audience response of, "You're outta here!"

Dr. Know-it-all was another skit where team members had to answer an audience question one word at a time. An audience member was chosen to assist the team. This gentleman had an uncanny resemblance to the late Chris Farley, which reminded me of Chris in his early days at the

ImprovOlympic.

This was followed by a movie trailer skit, "Little Tortilla Boy" and "World's Worst," in which team members had to come up with the worst use for a common product. The one I liked best was "Gasoline...now with lemon!" Mike Enriquez, another performer, brought the audience to its feet, especially all the young girls, as he performed what I would call a PG rated pole dance minus the pole.

As the points were totaled (I believe it was 27 to 21; the audience had 13 points—did I mention we got points also?), the winning team was announced (Red) and the cast went into a slow-motion celebration to the tune of *Chariots of Fire*.

The evening's entertainment on stage was enhanced by the booming "Mr. Voice," Matt Elwell, whose comments descended on the audience from overhead speakers. Also, Doc McCullough provided the instrumental keyboard sounds for the skits.

As I left the theater and proceeded to clear the accumulated snow off of my vehicle, I reflected back on the cheerful atmosphere of ComedySportz. From the ever helpful Chris Anderson at the box office to the dedicated, family-orientated comedy of such creative people like Robyn Norris, Erin Davidson, and Ben Johnson, whose energetic antics on stage kept me laughing throughout the evening, I decided I had a damn good time.

As I skidded down Lake Shore Drive, in spite of the lousy weather, I was glad I went. I have not had such an enjoyable time in a long while and without reservation, can state this was the best group of artistic improv performers I have thus far seen. The use of audience interaction was superb and a greater scale than others venues I have seen. Go see them. It's only ten dollars with a student ID. You'll be glad you did and ... you may wind up on stage!





And now for something completely different

by Elana Barron
Associate Editor

Only Monty Python can take the typical Broadway musical genre and make it into something completely different. The play, *Spamalot*, rips off their movie, *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* (1975), yet remains fresh, and yes, completely different. It will still please their diehard fans.

Monty Python's Eric Idle has transformed the *Holy Grail* into a Broadway musical. While he did have input from the other Monty Python members, for the most part they maintained their distance. "If it flops, they can just blame me. They can walk right away: 'Well, Eric [messed] it up.' If it succeeds, though, they'll be there opening night," Idle explained.

Based on the sneak preview I attended, the Monty Python crew will be in attendance opening night ("Know what I mean? Nudge nudge"). However, despite the Monty Python crew's reluctance to participate, John Cleese did lend his voice to be used as God in the play. The other actors are Tim Curry as King Arthur, Hank Azaria as Sir Lancelot, David Hyde Pierce as Sir Robin, and Sara Ramirez as the Lady of the Lake (a new character).

Spamalot does adhere to the *Holy Grail*'s basic storyline. At times, it is practically verbatim. Idle kept most of the favorite scenes out of fear of upsetting millions of Monty Python fans. He used the three original songs from the movie, and not to

fear, you will still receive a lesson on swallows, learn about the science of ducks floating in water, and hear French insults as dirty as a Hungarian phrase book.

As the Monty Python crew each had numerous roles in the original production, the actors in *Spamalot* also take on a myriad of roles. They even managed to replicate the Black Knight losing all four limbs. At first, said Idle, "We thought we'd be able to get a pair of dwarfs, but it was prohibitively expensive. You'd think you'd be able to get them for half price, but no." Despite such difficulties, they were able to solve this problem, as easily as they solved the problem of horses. Even Terry Gilliam's cartoons were not lost in the transition from the film to the stage.

Those who greatly enjoyed the *Holy Grail* for its spoof on Arthurian legend may be somewhat disappointed over the switch in focus. *Spamalot* does maintain much of the mockery of Arthurian legend, and it even adds a song titled "Run Away!"—so much for the old, brave battle cries of Arthur. However, *Spamalot* deviates from the Arthurian legend and focuses some of its mockery on Broadway musicals, particularly through song. Despite this slight switch in focus, it brilliantly mocks the formulaic Broadway musicals, with songs such as "Once in Every Show There Comes a Song Like This" and "You Won't Succeed on Broadway if You Don't Have Any Jews." Ramirez' ballads, beautifully executed, are the primary means used to

mock Broadway musicals.

The second act deviates even further from the *Holy Grail*. Die-hard fans may be somewhat displeased with *Spamalot*'s change in ending. However, technically, the *Holy Grail* did not actually end—it just sort of stopped when the British police arrested the Arthurian knights. While the ending is different, it is a more satisfying ending, albeit corny. However, it beautifully enforces the theme of mocking the typical, sentimental Broadway musical.

While there are some additions that are inaccurate according to Arthurian legend, but in a play that uses coconuts for horses and claims that coconuts migrate, who is to question such inaccuracies?

For the long-loyal Monty Python followers, Idle included many references to their other works, leading fans to smile at each other knowingly (nudge nudge) and pat themselves on the back for being such knowledgeable fans. Be on the lookout for references to the *Flying Circus* and the *Life of Brian*.

With the cult following of Monty Python, any major deviation from the original film would somewhat disappoint loyal fans. Idle needed to find a way to please both Monty Python fans and the typical Broadway crowd. He kept enough to please even the most die-hard Python groupies, and added fresh material which incorporated the Monty Python style to entertain both crowds. Both avid Monty Python fans and those who are unfamiliar with this unique style will greatly enjoy the play.



"Oh, but you can't really expect to wield supreme executive power just because some watery tart threw a sword at you!"

OCEAN'S TWELVE

A predictable tale worth sitting for

by Dino Pollard
Staff Writer

Ocean's Eleven, starring George Clooney and Brad Pitt, did something that is generally considered to be impossible. It was a remake that surpassed the original film. Remakes, even if they are good, tend to fall short of the quality the original had. But thanks to the efforts of the cast and director Steven Soderbergh, *Ocean's Eleven* broke the mold.

Now, the team that made a better remake than the original, attempted yet another feat—to make a good sequel.

It has been three years since Danny Ocean (George Clooney) and his ten partners-in-crime (including Brad Pitt, Matt Damon, and Don Cheadle) stole 160 million dollars from three casinos owned by Terry Benedict (Andy Garcia). Danny is now attempting to live an honest life with his wife, Tess (Julia Roberts), when Benedict comes calling one day. It seems he has finally tracked down all of Ocean's Eleven, and he wants his money back—with interest. The crew gets back together to perform jobs in order to make up the money they need to appease Benedict. Unfortunately, since they're too hot to pull any jobs in America, they have to go across the Atlantic to Europe.

While in Amsterdam, the team attempts a

job, but finds they were beaten to the punch by Europe's greatest thief, the Nightfox (Vincent Cassel). The Nightfox offers a challenge to Ocean—if his team can steal a Faberge egg before he can, then he'll pay off the group's debt to Benedict. Danny accepts the challenge, so Ocean's Eleven now has to contend with the Nightfox. They also have to avoid Rusty's old flame, a cop named Isabel Lahiri (Catherine Zeta-Jones).

Ocean's Twelve has some particularly amusing moments. Brad Pitt's character, Rusty, takes center stage this time around. At times, it seems as if he has a larger role than Clooney (some may argue that the film should be called *Rusty's Twelve*). The comedic moments have become more of the focus in this film, such as losing grease man Yen (Shaobo Qin) in a bag, or Danny's shocked expression at how old his crew thinks he is.

But one gets the feeling that in exchange for the humor, Soderbergh sacrificed the style of the previous film. In *Ocean's Eleven*, we were treated to an eleventh-hour plot twist that no one saw coming. In *Ocean's Twelve*, they've increased the plot twists. This could possibly be a good thing—if not for the fact that I was able to accurately predict each and every one.

Now, don't get me wrong, *Ocean's Twelve* does have its moments, and there are quite a few of them. But if you compare it to *Ocean's Eleven*, or other recent caper flicks, such as *Confidence* or *Heist*, *Ocean's Twelve* falls short of its intended goal.

America's most wanted...CD

By Jenni Lada
Features Editor

The Killers' new CD, *Hot Fuss*, is an incredibly energetic collection of catchy rock songs that work their way into your head and get stuck there for days on end. The single that almost everyone is familiar with, "Somebody Told Me," is easily one of the best off the album and is representative of most of the songs presented by the Las Vegas band on their new release. It has a great beat, fun lyrics, and is well written. You can also tell from most of the other songs on the CD that *The Killers* were influenced greatly

by the hit rock songs from the 80's, and they incorporate the best techniques from those hits in their music.

In fact, most of the songs on this CD possess the same qualities as the single, "Somebody Told Me," played on the radio. The second single, "Mr. Brightside," is a tad more laid back, but still possesses the same energy, life, and style that draws you in and doesn't let you go.

In all of the songs, you really feel as though the band is enjoying themselves and having fun; writing the songs and performing them seems effortless and joyful for *The Killers*, and this rubs off on the listener. Even the songs that are slower

and more like ballads, such as "Everything will be Alright" or "Smile like You Mean It," are infectious and upbeat, making you want to bob your head along with the beat.

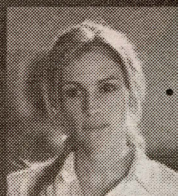
Listening to *Hot Fuss* makes you feel happy—plain and simple. These energetic and lively songs make you want to get up and dance, or take a drive with the speakers blaring, just appreciating being alive. *The Killers* succeed in creating a new release filled with music that is well-written and just plain fun. If you enjoy listening to *Jet*, *Dashboard Confessional*, or *Third Eye Blind*, then chances are you might enjoy listening to this new CD from *The Killers*.



Image by Cecilia Carbone

CLOSER

The way people are



Anna

Alice



by Patrick O'Brien
Opinions Editor

"Where is this 'love'? I can't see it, I can't touch it, I can't feel it. I can hear it. I can hear some words, but I can't do anything with your easy words." This line epitomizes the film *Closer*, which opened last month.

Closer is an adaptation of a Patrick Marber play about the complexities and cruelties of love, and just how sadistic "lovers" can be to one another, played out in modern London between four love-struck and brutal adults.

That first line belongs to Alice, played by Natalie Portman. She spends most of the 100 minutes of this film trying to win and keep the affections of Dan, a mediocre obituary writer, played by the always-obnoxious Jude Law.

Alice spends a long time chasing that ubiquitous love, before she casts Dan aside. On the way to that happy ending, Dan falls for Anna (Julia Roberts), a conflicted photographer. Smitten with Dan, Anna juggles her torrid love affair with Dan and her marriage to Larry (Clive Owen), who seems oblivious to her discontent.

I describe these love affairs and all these emotions on display, only because director Mike Nichols tends to not actually show most of the interplay between the four characters. By allowing the audience to fill in the blanks, Nichols opens *Closer* up to many interpretations. The problem is that under almost any interpretation, no one ends up being very likable, or even very human at the end.

This film seems to scream that to love someone, you have to hurt them or betray them first. Dan seems most capable of this, and out of all four characters, he is the easiest one to focus animosity on.

Maybe it's because Jude Law is so conniving in appearance and in action. He perfectly embodies a man so focused on his own feelings, he forgets that others exist.

Alice is initially fascinated with his facade of being a troubled writer, but it's apparent to the audience that Dan is auditioning for a new love every time he leaves the house. Anna, of course, is looking for a reason to escape the boredom of her marriage to Larry.

Dan shares the gazing eye with Larry, who wags his tail happily at Anna, whenever she comes near. The imbalance in the relationship between Anna and Larry is crystallized when she remarks that he resembles "a cat that won his catch and then forgot to keep cleaning himself." This kind of acid tongue shows just how far Roberts has come as an actress. *Mystic Pizza*, anyone?

Was it mentioned that Alice is a transplanted American who starts stripping to make ends meet? The film fails to make light of this until an appalling little scene in a strip club where Alice loses her metaphorical innocence under the watchful eye of super-pervert Larry, while he stuffs her knickers with cash. Natalie Portman should have gotten hazard pay for that scene; she might have pulled a hamstring.

With her legs cast wide and his grin even wider, it becomes apparent that *Closer* isn't a movie that is going to leave a settling feeling in the pit of your stomach. If you entered the theater wanting to feel good about your relationship or love in general, you may have squeezed your lover's hand just a little tighter every time another betrayal was revealed. But if you had any idea just how badly people can treat one another in the name of love, *Closer* was an affirmation.



Larry



Dan



Image compiled by Azucena Beltran

Photos courtesy of google.com

Josh Groban live at the Greek

One of the last to sound good live

by Jenni Lada
Features Editor



The new *Josh Groban Live at the Greek* DVD and CD set is clearly designed and created for fans. The CD itself is fairly small for a recording, offering only eight tracks, most of which are covers or performances of existing music. Only two of the tracks are actually written by Groban himself. In fact, the CD itself is more of a bonus, as anyone buying this set would clearly be buying it for the 18-song DVD. Of course, when you consider that if you check channel 11 you can see the entire performance from the DVD, with the only cost being the annoyance from the fifteen-minute pledge breaks.

The DVD truly shines, with guest performances and Groban performing renditions of songs from the CDs of *Linkin Park* ("My December"), Richard Marx ("To Wear You Are"), and Paul Simon ("America"). It even includes some special extras for fans to enjoy: a performance of the song "Believe" from movie *The Polar Express* and small snippets showing Josh Groban on the road. He is an amazing performer, and one of the few who actually sound the same live as they do on the CD.

The combination of classical, adult contemporary, and cover songs create a concert everyone can enjoy.

The CD, however, is strictly for classical and adult contemporary fans. The first four are foreign language classical performances.

The second four are adult contemporary classics. The CD is very relaxing though and very conducive for studying or relaxing after a long day.

The DVD is exceptional, but the CD is just average. If you're a huge Josh Groban fan, the set is a good deal. However if you're only mildly interested, consider checking one of his prior CDs.

We're always
looking for
brilliant
minds to
light
up the
basement
office.
E-049

Join the
Independent

Photo courtesy of google.com

the goo dolls

July fourth will
never be the same

by Jonathan Gronli
Production Editor

The Goo Goo Dolls are an interesting group with a fascinating history. Their July 4 2004 CD/DVD combo personifies this.

The Goo Goo Dolls live in Buffalo. They started off as a bad-ass punk group. With time, they slowly evolved into what they are now—a formidable musical force. They gained more of a conscience and sensitivity, with such hits as “Naked,” “Slide,” “Think About Me,” “Name,” “Cuz You’re Gone,” “Sympathy,” and “Iris.”

The front man, John Rzeznik, writes most of the punk songs and power ballads from the group. His boyish charm and life experience makes each song even more believable. VHI’s *Behind the Music* portrayed Rzeznik’s life experience in coming to terms with love, loss, and addiction—experiences that can be found throughout his music. Having heard stuff off of nearly every single one of *The Goo Goo Dolls’* CDs, I can honestly say that his voice is as passionate on stage as it is in the studio.

To add to the mix, Robby Takac (bass and occasional vocalist), on the CD with a live recording, was incredible. The only gripe that could be found is that on the DVD, the mixing seemed a little rough. You have to strain to hear Takac—even when the two guitarists, Rzeznik and Greg Suran, are playing electric acoustics (still acoustics, you just plug ‘em into an amp) and Takac is using an electric bass. In terms of how he looked while performing, even though you had to strain to hear him, it looked like he hit each note accurately, even though that is just a guess. It looked like he had a lot of fun doing it.

Suran’s guitar work was masterful, even when he was just playing rhythm. Not only that, but the times he played a mandolin in “Sympathy” and “Iris,” he did it in such a fashion that it sounded more personal. With a great sound that blends with the rest of the group and with a semi-personal sound, you can see that each of these people potentially have a longer and greater future in line for them.

Mike Malinn (drums) and Jason Freese (keyboard, percussion, sax, and if I wasn’t going crazy when watching “Sympathy,” the accordion as well) also did great jobs. Listeners and watchers alike must hope for more music from *The Goo Goo Dolls* soon. As a whole, or if they do solo projects—unless Mike Malinn is a lot like Ringo Star—they all have a longer, greater, and brighter future ahead of them. Therefore, readers, if you haven’t gotten the message yet, go get this album.



Image by Cecilia Carboni

Lords of evil arise.

by Jonathan Gronli
Production Editor

Behemoth’s new CD, *Demigod*, shows how hard they could be. It also shows that even through horrible vocals, they can still be a cohesive musical force to be reckoned with.

Demigod’s big fault is the vocals. It sticks to the death metal stereotype of growling into the microphone or just sticking the microphone in your mouth and trying to talk. This is the only bad thing about the CD; it sounds like a captured hellhound being beaten against a wall in a burlap sack. It’s just not pretty, in any sense of the word.

Musically, the first track explodes into the ears of the listener. It sounds like sitting at ground zero of a nuclear blast. The brutal riffs from the first second to the last, tear through time and space to say, “SCREW YOU. WE’RE HERE TO STAY.”

Generally, the guitar work, as with most death metal, is faster than normal hard rock. You like *Slayer*? You like vintage *Metallica* or *Megadeth*? These groups’ speed and general ferocity is dwarfed by the speed of *Behemoth*—I won’t even get into the ferocity of it all. To play this type of stuff, you would need the dexterity of God—if you play it right, and the guitarist goes above and beyond in terms of playing it right.

Drum work is simple, but brutal. It’s a beating of the damned down the highway to righteousness and retribution. The general sound of the drums is like Gar Samuelson (*Megadeth*) on speed. It gets frantic, and even just the kick bass work sounds like Gar Samuelson dancing down a road of acid.

The bass is reminiscent of Cliff Burton (*Metallica* from *Kill ‘Em All*, *Ride the Lightning*, and *Master of Puppets*). The brutal, but melodic sound of the bass, the unholy, savage, yet godly sound of the guitar, and the frantically righteous beatings from the drummer, made it a cohesive, yet chaotic symphony of destruction.

Alas, it must be the foreign groups that perfect a style made by either Britain or the USA, with the exception of the band *Europe* (a horrible 80’s hair-band, but I must get back on topic). *Behemoth* is the first Polish group I’ve listened to in my life of musical study. Either way it’s music. It’s one of the few pure death metal groups that are out there, and that is what makes them so appealing.

Once you get around

the sound of the vocals, and the incredibly messed up lyrics, you can find a deeper meaning for it is at least written in a way that is honest, pure, and full of emotion.

Even though they’ve been around for a couple of years, there is already a bright future in store for them; especially if the vocalist gets the damn mike out of his mouth or stops growling so we can at least pretend to understand the lyrics.

Simple-
but ferocious

Image courtesy of behemoth.pl

IT BEGINS ON THE STREETS.
IT ENDS HERE.

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Eagle's Nest

Lifestyles of the Northeastern Community



Winter Wack-tivities

by Joe Hertel
REV Editor



Images by Cecilia Carboni

When was the last time you went sledding down an embankment in an inner tube?

Sound strange? Unlike normal sleds or discs, inner tubes have no sense of direction or safety features. Skimming over the snow, these tubes bend and sway with the terrain. Occasionally, when there is a bump or mound in the way, it will take flight, hurling you through the air and landing you somewhere near the closest ambulance.

You can also try skitching. If you haven't heard about this, you probably are new to Chicago. Skitching is when the streets are covered with compacted snow and you wait between parked cars for a slow moving vehicle to pass. You then run out behind the auto and grab the rear bumper. Crouching down, you hang on for dear life as the auto's unwary driver drags you down the street. If your gloves are wet from snow, you will probably freak out the driver who, days later, will find the pair attached to the bumper since you had to leave them affixed when you dislodged yourself. Also, you must wear street shoes. Booties and galoshes cause friction and will not allow you to ski along the frozen street to meet your demise under the vehicle's rear wheels when the car skids.

Then there is the old "Christmas Story" dare. Get a few friends and dare them all to stick out their tongue and place the tip of it on a lamppost or street sign. With the exception of the chosen party, everyone else knows not to do it. As the unfortunate rube realizes he/she is joined as one with the pole, you can taunt your friend for being chemistry-challenged.

Sorry ladies, but this is for the men: urinating your name in the snow. It takes practice, so drink a lot of water before you go outside. Script writing is a lot easier than printing since it is accomplished through a constant flow. I need not go into detail on this, other than to say, "Don't eat yellow snow." It is stressed that one should not spend too much time in this activity due to the danger of frostbite.

Also, if you don't have an inner tube handy (which shows you how old this writer is), you can update the thrill of reckless sledding by finding an old box large enough to contain you. Cover the bottom using duct tape and waxed paper (yes, they still make it). You then have a vehicle that will stop for nothing except an immovable object such as a boulder, tree, or signpost that says, "no sledding." Unfortunately, this will cause the box, on impact, to crumple up along with anyone inside.

Or you can just play it safe and make snow angels, or as some more creative individuals do, grotesquely formed snow-bunnies.

Lend Mother Nature a helping hand

NEIU puts out the recycling bins

by Amir Jamali
Special Contributor

There are new recycling bins in the Student Union. Now, paper only goes into the blue bins and not into the trash bins. This is a basic way for everyone at Northeastern to avoid causing additional harm on our already damaged environment. Yet, many people that attend classes and work at NEIU do not seem to notice the bright blue bins, or feel it is a bit of a hassle to walk a few extra steps to recycle paper. For some at NEIU, this is perplexing human behavior. Here is an opportunity to discuss the basics of recycling at NEIU.

Students from the Northside Learning Center, a Chicago Public High School that serves students with cognitive disabilities, collects the paper a few times a week. NEIU has forged a partnership with the Center to provide life experiences for the students.

Gina Lettiere, a member of the NEIU Sustainable Land Use Group (SLUG), acknowledges this "...great contribution from the Facilities Management department for being creative and establishing the partnership. It is one of the most successful recycling efforts on campus." However, Ms. Lettiere expresses her frustration with those individuals that dump food waste and other trash items in the blue bins. "What people at NEIU don't realize is that the Northside Learning Center students have to wear gloves for health purposes due to the rude and ignorant behavior of some people at NEIU. I have heard from people, that recycling is not important, nor is the environment. An interesting yet ignorant perspective, but that is no reason to expose students from the Center to trash that belongs elsewhere."

NEIU recycles 100 tons of mixed paper a year—but they could do much more. According to Ms. Lettiere, who observed a few hours of NEIU's waste audit, saw that large amounts of many different types of paper were in the trash. Also found were that "plastic containers, aluminum cans, and some glass were tossed into the trash," said Ms. Lettiere. This leads to the subject of the new recycling receptacles in the Student Union building.

Members of SLUG met with Felicia Keelan, Director of the Student Union, to discuss ways to improve recycling. As a result of the meetings, recycling bins with improved lids to assist with sorting can now be found in the Student Union building. "Another positive step towards better recycling and educating the campus. We are truly appreciative of Ms. Keelan's support of this issue," said Lettiere. So far, each receptacle is filled with the appropriate recyclable material.

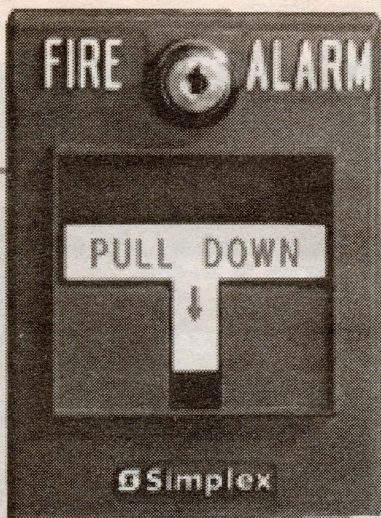
The average U.S. citizen generates five pounds of trash a year, and most of this ends up in landfills. The resources that can be obtained from recycling paper, plastics, cans, and aluminum are lost once they enter a landfill. There are two different ways of collecting recyclable items: either one can initially separate these items before one's trash is disposed, or one has to sort through the trash to remove these items. The latter is not as cost effective. Recognizing this, SLUG would like to see NEIU have pickups for other materials, such as plastics.

please recycle

PLEASE RECYCLE

PLEASE RECYCLE





Getting burnt not an option

by Tom Robb
News Editor

Recently, the LaSalle Bank building downtown caught fire, bringing the largest fire department response since the Great Chicago Fire. How a person should react in a fire depends on how big the fire is and what type of building it is in.

If a fire is discovered when it is small, and a fire extinguisher is available, attempt to put the fire out—ONLY AS LONG AS IT IS SAFE TO DO SO. Pull the pin on the extinguisher, aim, and sweep at the base of the fire. If the fire gets too big, run away, and call for help.

Different fire extinguishers are used for different types of fires. Before using an extinguisher, know what kind of fire it is and what type of extinguishers are

available. The most common are “ABC” extinguishers that can be used on most fires. For example, many fire extinguishers in the halls of the Science Building on campus are water based, or “A” extinguishers. However, in the labs there are additional chemical based extinguishers (“BC”). Do not use a water-based extinguisher on a chemical fire. Not all chemicals react well to water.

Most of the buildings at Northeastern are low-rise buildings. In a story on fire safety written for the Independent, Acting Chief of Public Safety Jack Baker said, “If you hear the alarm get out [of the building].” There have been a few minor fires at NEIU over the past few years, but because of quick evacuations, there have been no injuries.

High-rise buildings are another matter all together. In a high-rise building, people may be trapped above the fire floor. Until the aftermath of the Cook County Building fire, many high-rises had stairwells that locked from the inside. In the case of the County Building fire, many tried to evacuate, but became trapped in the locked stairwell above the fire floor. Six died of smoke inhalation. In a room filled with smoke, stay low because smoke rises and low to the ground there may be more breathable air.

The Chicago Fire Department’s general rule in a high-rise fire is for people to stay where they are, as long as it is safe to do so, and wait for instructions. All

high-rise buildings in Chicago are required to have an emergency plan on file with the city. Most high-rise buildings have public address systems. Further, the 911-emergency call systems have been improved to get information from people’s cell phones to fire fighters on the scene. These are the best ways for people in a fire to receive information from the fire department. Follow their instructions and chances are quite good that things will turn out well.

There are additional steps that can be taken to ensure one’s safety in a fire. The first thing to do is to communicate with the fire department, or security department of the property, that a fire exists. Help cannot arrive if they do not know they are needed. Before going through any doors, feel the door with the back of the hand. If it is hot, chances are the other side of that door is on fire, so don’t go in.

A bathroom is one of the best places to take refuge in. Fill the tub with water; if the fire ends up engulfing the bathroom, being in a full tub may provide some protection. Place wet towels at the base of the door. This may help cut down on the amount of smoke getting in. In a high-rise building, do not open windows unless that is the last source for air. Open windows may allow the fire to jump floors.

Finally, keep the batteries in the smoke detector fresh and never go back into a burning building to get stuff; stuff can be replaced, lives cannot.

The best & worst of 2004

by Amir Jamali
Special Contributor

Have you ever wondered about the instructor that you may register a course with? Well, many students, particularly new students, have asked such a question.

Unless you have friends who are familiar with that professor, no one else will be able to provide you with a sufficient answer either—until now. The NEIU instructor poll, held by the Independent, will be able to give you at least a hint of what the student consensus is regarding certain instructors.

This is not a sure measure of

the qualifications of any particular instructor. It is merely a means by which experienced students can convey their reactions to other students. There were no open-ended questions asked (besides the name of an instructor to be entered by choice), nor were the participants asked to expound on their answers. Although, it’s expected that students would consider the classroom performance of their instructor and the quality of education received, they are entirely free to use their own reasoning and

assessment in making a choice.

A student may in fact consider a certain instructor as a favorite because he/she got an easy A in that class without learning much. There is no way to regulate such decisions. A student can easily give such a favorable response during administered department evaluations as well. In fact, every educational department’s evaluation form here at NEIU may be insufficient to make an accurate judgment of any instructor’s performance. These

evaluations are not always accurate or helpful in distinguishing the highly qualified instructors from the poor or incompetent ones. Even worse, some instructors do not receive regular student evaluations; other instructors are only evaluated by department personnel.

In contrast, the Independent is interested in unconfined and direct student feedback. One may argue that students are free to make comments on the evaluation forms. However, there are very few students who attach a pre written note to their evaluation form. Even if students were encouraged to note their grievances or to place formal complaints, many may feel

that it would not affect departmental decisions. Numerous students complain about the lack of reform in

response to their evaluations.

On the other hand, there are many great instructors who may not be receiving the recognition that they deserve. Thus, the published list awards (non-formal, yet more credible and glorious) the student-chosen favorites.

These surveys are not designed to be perfect indicators. That would be impossible. For example, an instructor may fall under a particular level (i.e. third or fourth) in both “Best” and “Worst” lists, making it difficult to assess student consensus. In fact, some instructors may be equally liked or disliked by a number of students. Some instructors teach more classes than others. One also has to consider the imperfections regarding the survey sample. Therefore, it is ultimately up to students/readers to make their own determinations.

The Best

College of Arts and Sciences

- 15 Okosun, T.
- 10 Grossman, R.
- 10 White, B.
- 9 Miller, P.
- 9 Pedrosa, A.
- 8 Bacino, L.
- 8 Lindquist, L.
- 8 Qutub, M.
- 7 Cannon, E.
- 7 Casey, J.
- 7 Hoberg, T.
- 7 Scherman, T.

College of Business & Management

- 5 Balsara, N.
- 5 Hietapelo, A.
- 5 Shub, A.
- 3 Hofler, H.
- 3 Powers, D.
- 2 Akbari, H.
- 2 Neal, P.
- 2 Stonebraker, P.

College of Education

- 11 Makris, E.
- 5 Chakonas, E.
- 5 Meiners, E.
- 4 Benson, S.
- 4 Giacobbe, G.
- 4 Kondellos, B.
- 4 Wolk, S.
- 3 Hendrieths, E.
- 3 Mushi, S.
- 3 Quinn, W.

The Worst

College of Arts and Sciences

- 14 Trott, J.
- 11 Brewton, A.
- 10 Spaeth, V.
- 9 Rizik, J.
- 7 White, H.
- 6 Ready, M.
- 5 Deleon, R.
- 5 Dolezal, H.
- 5 Silverman

College of Business & Management

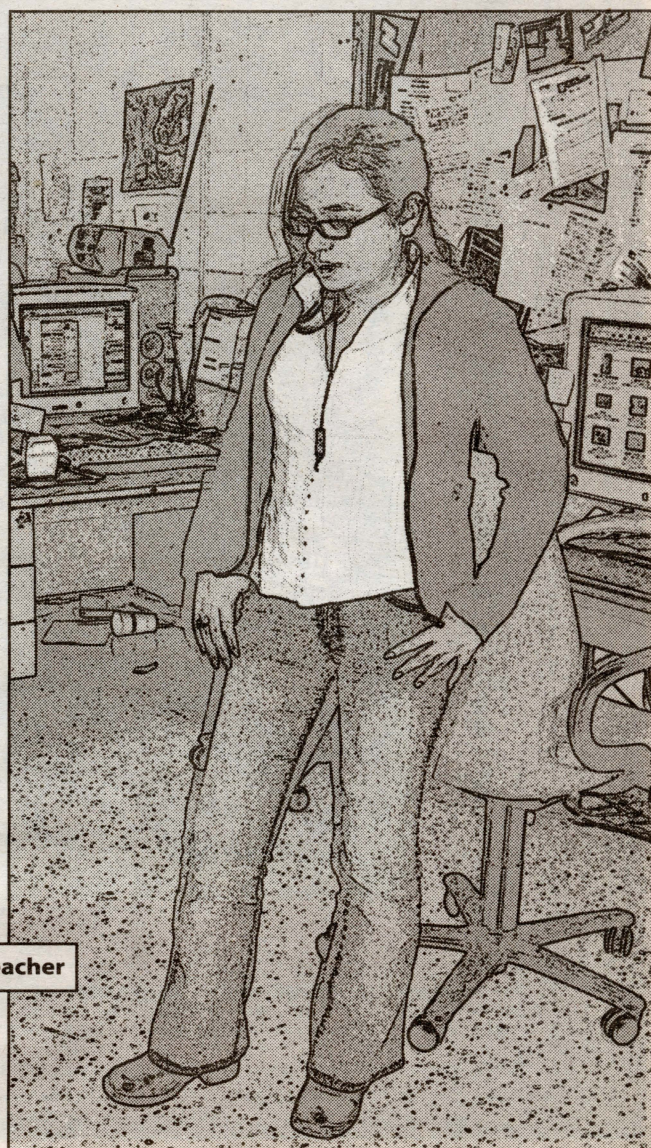
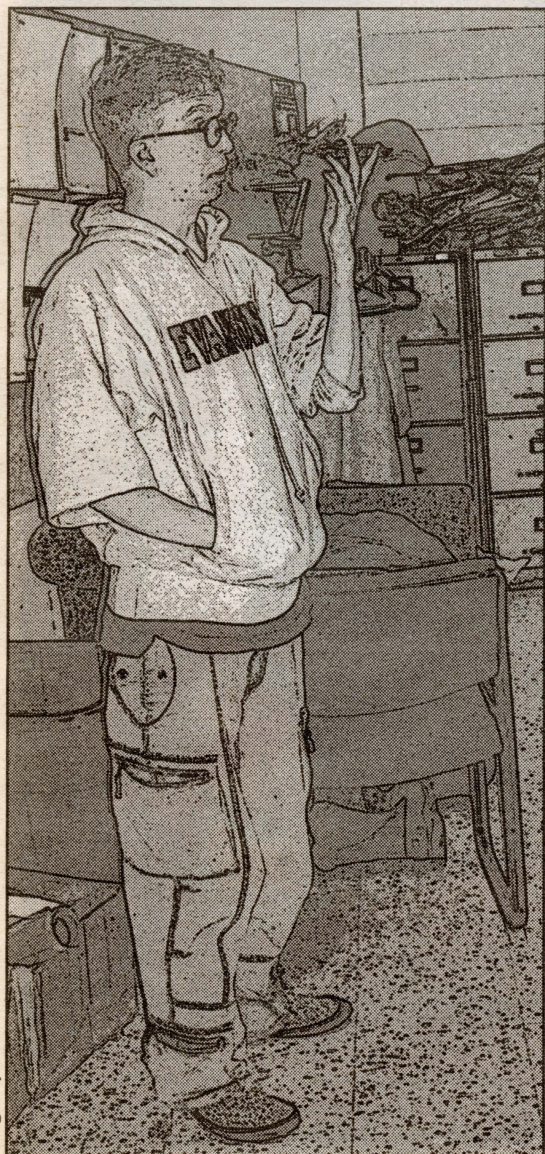
- 5 Afifi, R.
- 5 Chen, H.
- 5 Krissek, T.
- 2 Akbari, H.

College of Education

- 25 Whitaker, A.
- 6 Karr, J.
- 5 Odisho, E.
- 2 Adeon, R.
- 2 Ardies, C.
- 2 Composta
- 2 Meiners, E.
- 2 Smith, K.

of votes included with each teacher

The battle of our time it's not. Deciding on favorite professors relatively easy.



Jack Frost nipping on my nose:

The troubles of winter;

Frostbite

by **Conor Heybach**
Staff Writer

Frostbite occurs when skin tissue and blood vessels are damaged from exposure to temperatures below 32 degrees Fahrenheit. It most commonly affects toes, fingers, earlobes, chin, cheeks, and nose—body parts that are often left uncovered in cold temperatures. Frostbite can occur gradually or rapidly. The speed with which the frostbite progresses, depends upon how cold or windy the temperature conditions are. It also depends on the duration of exposure to these conditions.

Frostbite has three stages of progression. The first stage is “frost nip.” In this stage, the individual experiences a “pins and needles” sensation. The skin turns very white and soft, but no blistering occurs. Soaking in warm water or breathing warm breath on the affected area may reverse this stage. In the next stage, “superficial frostbite,” the skin feels numb, waxy, and frozen. In this stage, blistering may occur. The third stage, named “deep frostbite,” is the most serious. In this stage, blood vessels, muscles, tendons, nerves, and bone may be frozen. This stage can lead to permanent damage, blood clots, gangrene, and severe blistering. However, even with deep frostbite, some frozen limbs may be saved if one receives medical attention as soon as possible.

Frostbite risk can be reduced if you are careful. Wear several layers of clothing when in extremely cold conditions. The air pockets between the layers will retain warmth. Limit the use of alcohol and tobacco, as alcohol causes the blood to cool quickly and tobacco inhibits circulation to extremities. Avoid going outdoors during extremely cold weather. If you need to go outside, shield your face and other body parts from the cold wind and temperatures by wearing protective clothing. Wear waterproof skin moisturizer on parts of the body that are exposed. Do not spend extended periods in extreme temperatures when exhausted, intoxicated, or under the influence of certain drugs.

There are certain symptoms of frostbite people should be aware of: skin swelling, loss of limb function, absence of pain, drastic skin color changes, blisters, slurred speech, and memory loss.

If the frostbite victim cannot be transported to a hospital immediately, the following warming techniques may help until medical help arrives. Bring the patient indoors as soon as possible. Apply warm towels, or immerse the area in circulating lukewarm water, for twenty minutes. Hot water should not be used and the area should not be rubbed in any way. If blisters are present, leave them intact. Do not hold the affected area near a fire because the area may get burned due to reduced feeling in the area.

If the patient is alert, offer them coffee or tea, but never alcohol. Keep the affected area elevated. After applying these warming techniques, a superficial frostbite will redden and become painful as circulation resumes in the area. Blisters are likely to form within 24 hours. A deep frostbite injury will remain hard, cool to the touch, and may turn blue. Blisters may form and the area can turn black. Skin surrounding the affected area may become swollen, and remain swollen, for over a month. If gangrene develops, amputation may become necessary.

While a frostbite injury is healing, you need to take great care in treating it. First, avoid infection by leaving any blisters intact. Second, watch for signs of infection such as redness, swelling, fever, oozing pus, and red streaks on the skin. Third, take all medications prescribed by your doctor. Lastly, do not expose the affected area to cold temperatures unless your physician tells you otherwise.

& hypothermia

If you are outdoors enjoying your favorite sport, you must be careful to not unintentionally jeopardize your life through hypothermia. Hypothermia is the progressive mental and physical collapse through the chilling of the inner core of the human body. Hypothermia is caused by exposure to the cold. It is aggravated by wetness, wind, and exhaustion. It can be a deadly killer to those who participate in cold and wet recreational activities.

There are four main steps to take in avoiding hypothermia. First, stay dry; when clothes get wet, they lose about ninety percent of their insulating value. Wool loses less of its insulating value, as do many of the new synthetics. Wet cotton and down are worthless. Also, beware of the wind. A slight breeze carries heat away from bare skin much faster than still air. Wind drives cold air under and through clothing, refrigerates wet clothes by evaporating moisture from the surface, and multiplies the problem of staying dry. If you have been in the water and are wearing a T-shirt that is wet, remove it and you will retain more heat. Direct sunlight on the skin helps in the warming process.

Understanding the cold is another way to avoid hypothermia. Most hypothermia cases develop in air temperatures between thirty and fifty degrees. Most outdoor enthusiasts simply can't believe such temperatures can be dangerous. They fatally underestimate the danger of being wet at such temperatures. Fifty-degree water is unbearably cold—and potentially deadly. The cold water running down your neck and legs removes body heat from the surface of your clothes.

If someone is suffering from hypothermia, immediate action is necessary. Get the victim out of the wind and rain and strip off all wet clothes. If the victim is only mildly impaired, give him/her warm drinks (only small amounts). Get him/her into dry clothes and a warm, dry sleeping bag. Placing well-wrapped, warm (not hot) rocks or canteens by the crotch, under the arms, and wherever the main arteries are close to the surface of the skin. This will hasten recovery.

If the patient is semi-conscious or worse, then try to keep him/her awake. Do not feed the patient any hot liquids. Leave him/her stripped and put him/her in a sleeping bag with another person (also stripped) to transfer heat. If you can put the victim between two “body-heat donors”—skin to skin contact is very effective treatment. Build a fire to warm the canteens and rocks. The most important step is to take the victim as soon as possible to the closest hospital for monitoring. It takes a very long time to warm the inner core, and only a rectal hypothermia thermometer is long enough to find out what the inner core temperature really is. Don't delay!

Image by Cecilia Carboni



45,000 Bikers ride for the Holidays

by Tom Robb
News Editor

For some, the Christmas season starts the day after Thanksgiving. For some 45,000 hearty motorcyclists, the Christmas season starts the first Sunday of December.

For these motorcyclists participating in the Toys for Tots Motorcycle Parade, it begins with a nice, leisurely drive down Western Ave., from 83rd to Foster. The sight of that many large, burly bikers clad in black leather vests, chaps, jackets, and a red Santa hat, holding a stuffed animal or Tonka truck, actually does typify the giving spirit of the season.

Started in 1945 by a US Marine Reserve unit, it became a nation wide program in 1948. In 1979, one motorcyclist and two others drove a van half full of toys and a Harley Davidson Sportster from a South Side motorcycle shop to the Marine Corps reserve base on Foster and Kimball. That was the first Toys for Tots drive.

In a statement issued by the 2nd Battalion, 24th Marines, on December 7th 2004, commanders estimated that there were about 45,000 bikers in the parade.

Although the count of toys is not in for 2004, Marine Corp. and Toys for Tots collected 143,463 toys in 2003—plus \$57,007.33 in donations to buy toys, which were distributed to 149,415 children. As of 2003, 298,000,000 toys have been collected and distributed nationally by the Toys for Tots program since its inception. Those numbers are expected to be exceeded this year.

According to the Marines, the toys are distributed both by the Marines directly, and by other charitable organizations and religious groups. These groups are screened before being allowed to take part in the distribution. This year, due to Marine Corps deployments overseas, the Marines are short handed, and are asking for help from the public in distributing the toys.

The Parade, now grown significantly from its

humble beginnings in 1978 in Chicago, is given Chicago and Suburban Police Department, Fire Department and Marine Corps escorts. Riders leave the Dan Ryan Woods down Western Ave. in "tiers" of 5000 bikes at a time, and travel north on Western to Foster then west to the Marine Corps Reserve Base. Some have complained that it is very difficult to cross or turn on Western all day during the event.

The 2004 Toys for Tots parade did see one casualty in 2004; a motorist who pulled out into the parade near Roscoe and Western struck an off duty Illinois Corrections officer who did not survive.





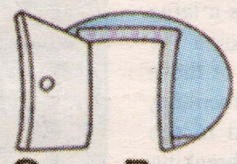



Image courtesy of google.com



Photos by Cecilia Carboni



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Places to study

by Andrea
Zelinski
Chief Editor

Looking to find a nice, comfy spot to crack the books this semester? You might have a little trouble deciding exactly where to settle down if you're out of touch with the nooks and crannies of Northeastern. Feel free to visit any of these fine locations -- they all have different atmospheres, so which one fits you?

Student Union Building- there are a few studying areas hidden in this building. Your best bet is a seat in the Reading Lounge, otherwise known as the sleeping lounge. Shhh, no talking, eating, or drinking, but this area is filled with gigantic and comfortable chairs. Unfortunately, they usually lead to falling asleep.

Another little niche is located on the second floor. Up there you'll find a number of chairs surrounding coffee tables. There are two standard worktables up there perfect for small study groups or a space to spread out.

Library - Undoubtedly the best place to study with plenty of locations, depending on personal preference. The floors vary in degree of noise with absolute quiet study in the basement and third floor, quiet conversations on the first and second, and the fourth floor reserved for group study. Beware; those caught blabber mouthing on a quiet floor will feel a very cold response.

Building E- While this spot is a little hard to find, it's a good place to sit down and read for your class. There is a little bit of traffic in that area, but there are about four worktables and lines of chairs. This spot is best used when cramming before heading up to a class in the Classroom Building.

Building A- The building running side by side to Bryn Mawr has about 20 perfectly good study cubicles along tall glass windows. However, these cubes are along the hallway, and have a potential for noise pollution. Lucky for you, most people don't know there is a Building A, let alone go there to make noise. You'll likely find this spot quite peaceful.

Building B- The newest looking building on campus has a rather open seating area. Unfortunately, it has a very lounge-like feel that lends itself to distraction. However, it is close to several vending machines, bathrooms, and the computer lab. There are only a couple tables in this area good for small study groups.

Science Building- On the bottom level of the Science building is a large area with vending machines and a microwave (which may or may not still work). This is a great place to eat and study since most don't provide you with that convenience. The light is a little dim though, which makes reading a little difficult, but most abide. There are also little, well lit benches cut out of the wall or in between areas that perfectly seat one person and a mound of books. Studying here makes you really feel like a cool college kid, especially when your back hurts a little from poor back support.

Aside from the first floor, each level of the building has some picnic tables, chairs, and/or cushions to study at. These are great spots to cram for an exam or finish last night's homework, but going out of your way to study here isn't recommended.

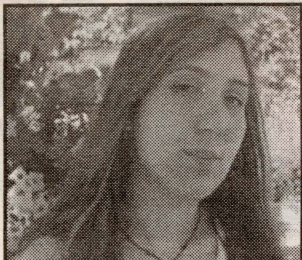
Building D - When walking from the Classroom Building towards the Cashier's office, you'll find to your left and right a number of big square cushions accompanied by big square tables. These too are rather conveniently close to vending machines, the bookstore, and a copy machine. However, they don't provide great back support, but if you pull a couple extra cushions your way, you'll find it quite comfortable on lay on.



Photos by Azucena Beltran. Images by Cecilia Carboni

Let's Get Personal

Facets of an anthem



Andrea Zelinski

He stands in the middle of the field, diamond, or court, looking up at thousands of people he'll never know, but somehow, shares an unmistakable connection with almost every person in the stadium.

The wind blows, and the crowd cheers. At just the right moment, Gerald Chaney pulls the microphone towards him and sings the most well known song in the history of the United States of America.

Gerald, a Northeastern student and professional cabaret singer, sings the national anthem at major sporting events, including Bears, Bulls, Sox, and Fire games. When he looks up at the thousands of people in the stadium, "what I see is more of a sea of humanity, with all ethnicities, all genders... with their hands over their hearts." The once tiresome anthem was rejuvenated after Sept. 11, as Gerald recalled one of his most life-changing and moving performances ever.

It was the first Bears game of the season, and the first since the attack on the Twin Towers.

The usually thin crowd was thick. "I'm standing there waiting at the 50 yard line," he recalled. From his peripheral vision, he could see black helmets under Chicago fire and policemen to his side--some of which had just returned from aiding the efforts in New York.

"All of the sudden ... the rumble turned into a roar... It was one of those moments you just get goose bumps," he said, as a large American flag stretched over the entire field. "It was one of those moments where you see men cry, but you're not supposed to see them cry... they weren't breaking rank, but they were just unified in everything they were doing then and there. It's one of those moments I will never forget."

Now on the wrong side of 35, Gerald has been performing the national anthem since he was 17-years-old. His first major gig was singing at boxing matches. Now, he has performed for Chicago sports teams, the Indiana Pacers, New York Mets and Knicks, L.A. Lakers, Cincinnati Reds and Bengals, U.S. Olympic fund raising events, Chicago Lung and Cystic Fibrosis walks/runs, N.C.A.A. men and women's basketball, track & field and swimming finals, and the International Amateur Athletic Federation Track and Field Championships.

Gerald's dedication to the

national anthem is inspirational as he explained his relationship and meaning of the anthem. "I am actually telling a story, and it's a story of triumph, of deliverance. It's a story of overcoming obstacles. It's a story of bravery. It's all based on what Francis Scott saw. He was looking for our flag. He was looking to see if that our flag was

still waving at Fort McHenry" in the war of 1812.

Having performed the song professionally over 300 times, Gerald was also involved in national musical theater tours for three years performing in "Tap Dance Kid," "To Kill a Mocking Bird," "Big River," and "Alegba."

Currently pursuing a degree in

education and English, Gerald is a second semester, full-time student at Northeastern Illinois University.

He reflects back to the anthem and the flag and elaborates one last time about its significance. "Respect for our symbol... puts me in a frame of mind.... that's all we have."



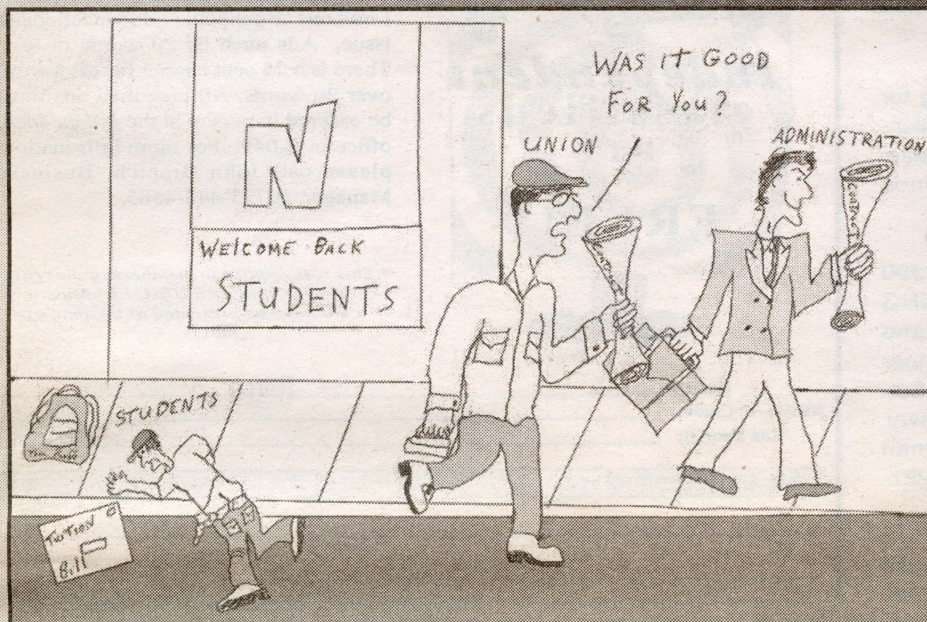
Image courtesy of Gerald Chaney

Side Splitters

Marxism

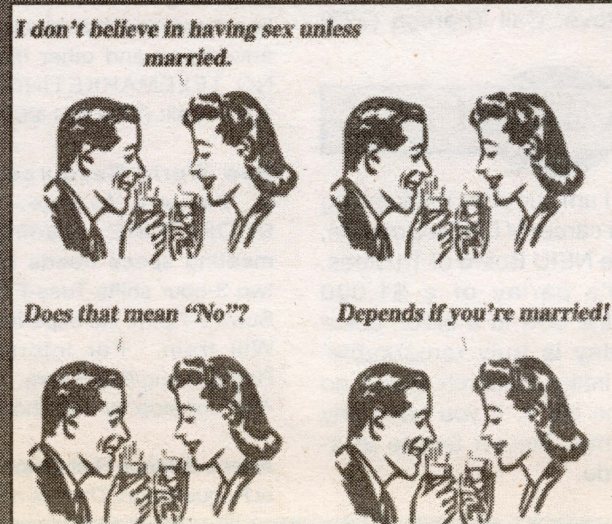


by A. R. Lopez



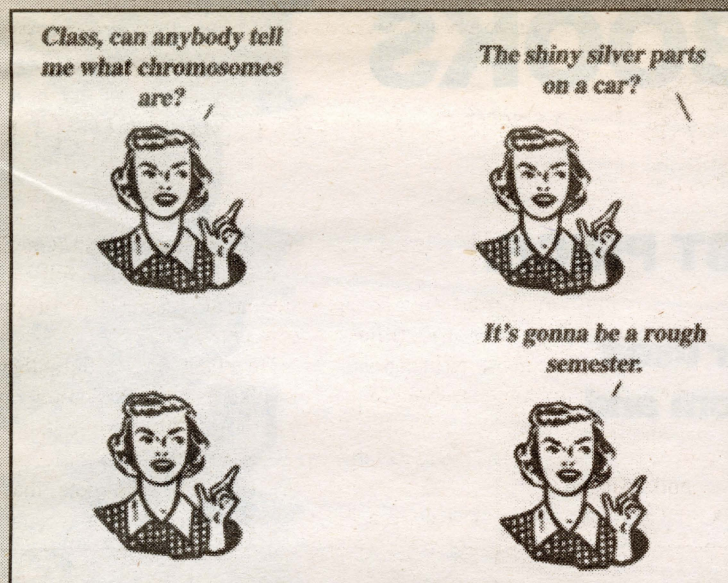
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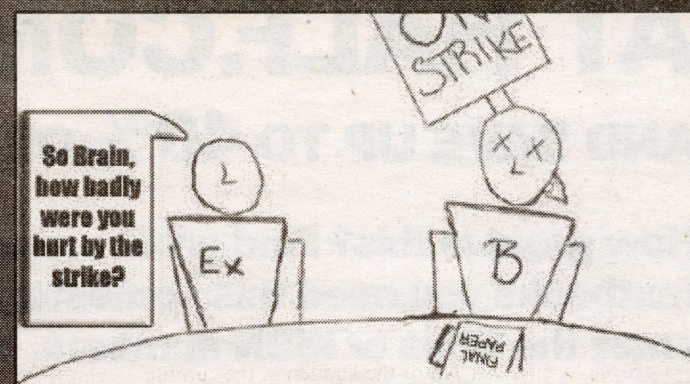
by Joe Hertel

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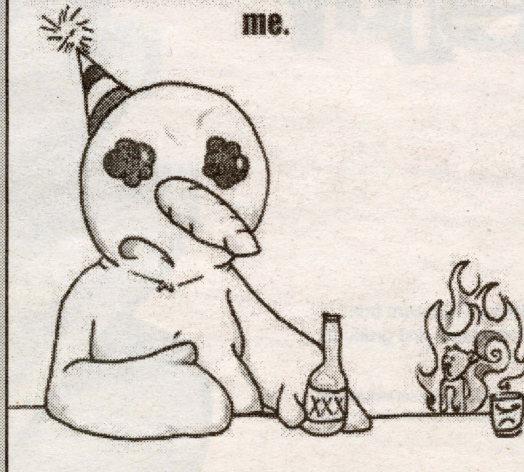
by Joe Hertel

Existentialism and the Brain

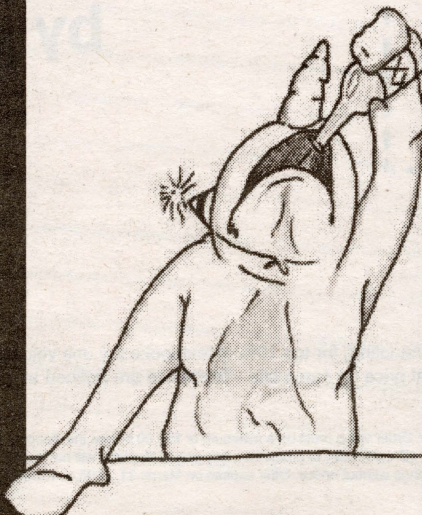


by D. Gordon Macnab

You know what I hate about New Years... the drinking. Well, it's not the alcohol per-se- it's just that being a snowman deprives me of a liver to wreck, and that somehow just ruins the fun. Besides, it all just runs straight out of me.



Gulp... Gulp... Gulp..



Just the fact that I'm sitting here in a pool of freshly drunk beer talking to a squirrel on fire worries me as well... the carrot for a nose business, however, is a whole other story.



by Cecilia Carboni

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Bryn Mawr/Western 2 Bedroom apt. 2nd floor. Laundry facility. Available now. Call Marianne Lee at (773) 761-0236

Augusta/Western: 2 Bedroom Apt. 2nd Floor. Very clean, includes only heat. Fridge and stove. Call Theresa (773) 278-1401.

Wanted

Info. needed. I am currently researching the spectacular career of Daniel Goodwin, president of the NEIU Board of Trustees. Mr. Goodwin's parlay of a \$1,000 investment in the 60's to a billion dollar enterprise today is truly remarkable. However, my initial research sheds no light on how he did it. If you have any clue, contact me, Steven Searle at ssearle@neiu.edu.

Looking for a roommate for apartment near lake.\$350 includes all utilities, female, easy going. Available immediately, e-mail for more info. yasodhara_saj@yahoo.com.

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Egg donors Needed. Please join us to learn more about egg donation. Donor compensation is \$5000.00 for qualified women between the ages of 20 and 30. Wednesday, December 1, 2004. 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. at Marriott Oakbrook, 1401 W. 22nd Street. Oakbrook, IL 60523. R.S.V.P: (847) 656-8733

Services

"HEALTH and FITNESS"
Exploding new company is looking for health-minded individuals for promotion, advertising and other marketing areas. NO TELEMARKETING!!! Reference 1099. Call: (773) 631-2616

New World Resource Center-1300 N. Western Avenue. LEFT-WING BOOKSTORE, reading room, and meeting space needs help! Volunteer two 3-hour shifts Tues-Fri 3-9 p.m.; Sat-Sun 12-7 p.m. No experience necessary. Will train. For information E-mail Rob.Bunting@uop.com, call (773) 227-4011, or stop by and check us out.

Arlene Eridach Hair Color Models Wanted at Rogue Salon. There is a \$20 product fee.

Appointments on Thursdays with Leah. Call (312) 863-7678

Tutor for ENG 101-2, ESL, test prep (IBST, TOEFL), pre-credit English. Contact Diane at kiwi_gigi@hotmail.com.

Does God matter? Video with discussion hosted by Inter varsity Christian Fellowship. Tuesday 5p.m., 2nd floor student union. Contact c-aguirre@neiu.edu for info.

Are you a Seventh-day Adventist Christian on campus or know someone who is? Please call Shree at (847) 414-7159 or E-mail eshree@hotmail.com. Thank you. God Bless.

Spring Break

Spring Break 2005. Travel with STS, America's #1 Student Tour Operator. Jamaica, Cancun, Acapulco, Bahamas, Florida. Hiring campus reps. Call for discounts: 800-648-4849 or www.ststravel.com.

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Oh, goody gumdrops!!



Limit one ad per person/organization per issue. Ads must be 20 words or less. There is a 25 cent charge for each word over 20 words. All classified ads must be ordered in person at the *Independent* office in E-049. For more information, please call John Bracich, Business Manager, at 773-442-4585.

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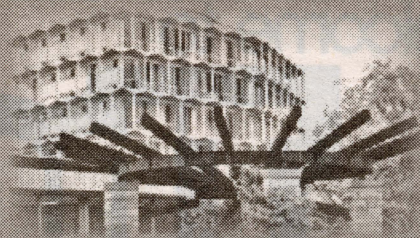
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Around Campus



Events through: Tuesday, December

Reflections of a man

Tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. "A Leader for Peace and Human Rights". Keynote address by Rev. Dr. B. Herbert Martin Sr. Musical Presentations by the Evangelical Christian School. Thursday, January 13, 2005. 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

For further information, please contact the Office of the Dean, Academic Development, 773/442-5449

Attention students

Microsoft-One Note, Note-taking software, is available free of charge in the following locations:

Information Desk, Village Square

Campus computer labs

Financial Aid Reception Area

Cashier's Window, Bursar's Office

Admissions Desk

Dean of Students Office

Students Activities Office

-Quantities are limited.

-Software available upon request beginning Jan. 10th

-One disk per student

Guitar Master Class

Famous Assad brother guitar duo will hold a guitar master class Friday January 21, 2005 in the Recital Hall at 10:00 a.m. Come learn music and techniques of the Latin American music world from two of the best.

Jazz Master Class

Cuban superstar clarinetist Paquito D'Rivera will hold a Jazz master class Friday January 21, 2005 in the auditorium at 12:00 p.m. Learn the techniques and just general tricks of someone who has been one of the biggest stars in the Latin Jazz scene since 1978.

Paquito D'Rivera & The Assads

Cuban superstar clarinetist Paquito D'Rivera and the Brazilian guitar duo of the Assads to perform in the NEIU Auditorium on Friday January 21, 2005. Styles played will be the Cuban "ritmo de clave," Brazilian "bataque," and Trinidad's "calypso," along with tango, rumba, mambo, and more.

Jazz Piano Night at NEIU

Ed Baker, Jodie Christian, Jeremy Kahn, and Karl Montzka. February 4, 2005 at 8:00 p.m. Tickets \$15 and \$10 for students (free to NEIU faculty, staff, and students)

Strike back ceremony/party

The ceremony and party are on February 28, 2005. The ceremony starts at 5:30 p.m. in Alumni Hall. The party begins at 8 p.m. and ends at 2 a.m.

Orientation

The Graduate College invites graduate students to the Spring term Orientation.

Date: Saturday, January 15, 2005

Time: 10:00 a.m.-12:00 a.m.

Place: CIS 1001

RSVP: 773-442-6015 or a-pennamon@neiu.edu

Important dates

January 15-Saturday: First day of Saturday classes

January 17-Monday: Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday Holiday

January 24-Monday: Last day for a 100% refund/credit of tuition and fees for complete withdrawal of ALL courses via TTRS from the Spring Semester (less \$10.00 withdrawal fee)

February 7-Monday-9:45 p.m.: Last day for a 50% refund/credit of tuition and fees for complete withdrawal of ALL courses via TTRS from the Spring Semester for students officially reducing their credit hour load to zero (less \$10.00 withdrawal).

No refund/credit for reduction of credit hour load.

February 11-Friday: Lincoln's birthday

February 28-Wednesday-7:00 p.m.: Second deferred payment due. Spring Extension and Distance Learning course payment due for students who registered the first class session.

March 8-Tuesday-9:45 p.m.: Last day for a 25% refund/credit of tuition and fees for complete withdrawal of ALL courses via TTRS from the Spring Semester for students officially reducing their credit hour load to zero (less \$10.00 withdrawal fee).

No refund/credit for reduction of credit hour load.

March 16-Wednesday-7:00 p.m.: Third deferred payment due.

March 18-Friday-9:45 p.m.: Last day to drop a course or completely withdraw from Spring via TTRS (no financial/refund).

March 21-26: Spring recess. No classes.

April 29-Friday: Last day of classes.

April 30-Saturday: Final exams for Saturday classes.

May 2, 3, 4-Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday: Final exams. Refer to the final examination page of the Spring schedule of classes for further information.

May 6-Friday: Final exams for Friday only classes.

May 9-Monday: Spring Semester ends. Grades due 12:00 p.m.

May 10-16: Semester break.

May 15-Sunday: Commencement

Look out for our next issues

Here is a list of the upcoming issue release days.

Tuesday January 25

Tuesday February 8

Tuesday February 22

Tuesday March 8

Tuesday March 29

Tuesday April 12

Tuesday April 26



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The Chief Editor is responsible for the content of the Independent and views presented do not necessarily represent those of the administration, faculty, or students. The Independent is a member of the Illinois College Press Association.

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Welcome to

The Cheap Seats

Intramurals and fitness for the Northeastern sports fan

Season surprises of

2004

by Patrick O'Brien
Opinions Editor

There are a lot of reasons to watch the NFL, but the best reason is the surprises. There are always a few teams every year that defy expectations and win more than they should have. There's always a sizable group of players who have the season of their life, despite all evidence to the contrary. This is an incomplete list of those players who were scraping the bottom of the barrel, only to find it lined with gold.

Drew Brees

San Diego Chargers (QB)

You knew the kid from Purdue could throw the ball, but who thought he would do a Dan Fouts impression with a highly touted Philip Rivers watching his every move? Anyone who throws only 7 picks starting the whole season, deserves the Comeback Player of the Year.

Curtis Martin

New York Jets (RB)

He's always been a superstar, but if you bet before the season that his 31-year-old body would win the rushing title with almost 1,700 yards, you'd be a millionaire right now.

Willis McGahee

Buffalo Bills (RB)

After suffering a horrific knee injury to finish his college career, all McGahee did was run Pro Bowl teammate Travis Henry out of town, on his way to over 1,110 yards rushing and 13 TDs in 11 starts. The Bills were 9-2 with him in the lineup.

Jerome Bettis

Pittsburgh Steelers (RB)

The "Bus" was supposed to be stalled after Duce Staley hit town, but Staley came up lame half the season. Bettis was a short yardage god, rushing for 13 scores and nearly 1,000 yards.

Mark Fields

Carolina Panthers (OLB)

All Fields did was recover from Hodgkin's disease to register 62 tackles and 4 sacks for a Carolina defense in desperate need of his leadership—on and off the field.

James Farrior

Pittsburgh Steelers (ILB)

Farrior anchored the NFL's best defense, and along the way, collected 4 sacks, 3 fumbles, 4 picks, and 94 stops, earning him a Pro Bowl berth.

Donnie Edwards

San Diego Chargers (ILB)

All Edwards did was spearhead a turnaround that saw the Chargers go from the bottom five in defense to the top ten. He collected 150 tackles, 5 picks, and 3 forced fumbles.

Mushin Muhammad

Carolina Panthers (WR)

After Steve Smith's injury, Muhammad went on a tear, finishing with 93 grabs for over 1,400 yards and 16 TDs.

Reuben Droughns

Denver Broncos (RB)

After starting the season fourth on the depth chart, all Droughns did was continue Denver's tradition of producing 1,000 yard backs—to the tune of 1,240 yards, a 4.5 yard average, and six scores.

Ben Roethlisberger

Pittsburgh Steelers (QB)

The kid with the unmistakable last name pulled a "72 Dolphins" and didn't lose the whole year. His 13-0 mark was accomplished with a 98.1 QB rating, 17 touchdown strikes, and two-thirds of his passes were completed.

Antonio Gates

San Diego Chargers (TE)

The former basketball player with limited football experience simply redefined his position on the way to catching 81 passes for 13 TDs, the most scores ever for a tight end in a single season.

January

Rush

Hours

Tues. 11th - Thur. 13th

8:30 - 8:30

Fri. 14th 8:30 - 7:00

Sat. 15th 8:30 - 1:00

Sun. 16th - Mon. 17th Closed

Tues. 18th - Thur. 20th

8:30 - 7:30

Fri. 21st 8:30 - 4:00

Sat. 22nd 8:30 - 1:00

*Last day for full refunds is
Wednesday, January 20th, 2005*

*Receipts are required for all refunds, returns,
and exchanges.*

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