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Independent - Nov. 3, 2015

Rut Ortiz

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NORTHEASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

Vol. 35 Issue 6

Photos by William Castro

[illegible]

Talent Show
Brings Stars to
NEIU Stage
Page 13

Letter From the President

Our message is simple: Solve the impasse

Dear students, faculty, staff and friends,

It is easy to think that when government officials determine policy — be it in Chicago, Springfield or Washington, D.C. — that there's not much we can do to influence that decision-making. Those who ascribe to that belief are wrong.

Last month, I along with the other presidents of Illinois public universities went to Springfield to advocate for students, urging legislative leaders and the governor to solve the current budget impasse that has kept our

respective institutions without a state appropriation since July. We held strong to our beliefs that Illinois public higher education is an economic engine and that requiring us to operate without state funding is unsustainable. They listened, and we were encouraged that they understood the difficulties and they are committed to public higher education.

I've always believed that joining forces can be far more impactful than working individually. So, when members of the Northeastern community ask me what they can do to help, I refer them to one of these

collective efforts that I and the other presidents endorse.

Sign the petition: We've created an online petition at change.org that will be sent to the Illinois governor, as well as members of the Illinois State House and Senate. If you haven't signed the petition yet, you can do so at: www.change.org, with the search: "Protect Higher Education in Illinois"

Contact your legislators: Let those who represent you in the General Assembly know how you feel about this situation. If you don't know who your state

representative or state senator is, you can find out at:

<http://www.elections.il.gov/districtlocator/addressfinder.aspx>.

You can find some helpful talking points to make your case here: https://illinois.edu/emailer/files/81838/2015_oct__ipu_budget_talking_points.pdf.

Write a letter: Many local newspapers allow their readers to submit letters to the editor to shed light on a particular issue or topic. Getting your letter published in a newspaper like the Chicago Tribune (ctc-tribletter@tribune.com) or the Chicago Sun-Times (letters@suntimes.com) can help give public higher education the

attention it deserves.

Stay informed: The budget stalemate between the executive and legislative branches of our state government has been widely publicized. Illinois public higher education must be a priority in this state, and citizens can hold lawmakers accountable by paying attention to how they manage our state.

Thank you for your ongoing support of Northeastern and Illinois public universities.

Sincerely,
Sharon Hahs
President
Northeastern Illinois University

Illinois Public University Presidents go to Springfield

Meetings with Rauner and Legislative Leaders; A follow-up with President Hahs

Rut Ortiz and Steven Villa

President Sharon Hahs and eight other state university presidents traveled to Springfield, Illinois to discuss the effects of the budget impasse upon state-sponsored higher education with the legislative leadership and Gov. Bruce Rauner.

The university presidents met with Senate Democratic President John Cullerton, Senate Republican Leader Christine Rodogno, House Republican Leader Jim Durkin and House Majority Leader Barbara Flynn Currie — in place of Democratic House Speaker Mike Madigan — on Tuesday, Oct. 20.

They met with Gov. Rauner on the following Thursday.

Illinois State University President Larry Dietz opened the meeting with the legislative leaders,



President Hahs and her colleagues from across the state stressed the importance of higher education for Illinois and its troubled economy.

as he explained what it was he cared about and what the agenda was from his point of view.

"He began with the concern that businesses are leaving Illinois," Hahs said. "He said, 'I

them."

In their conversation with the legislative leaders, University of Illinois President Timothy L. Killeen spoke of a notion he called "the value proposition," as a

"This is investing in Illinois' future, the way we're going to grow economically is to have more educated people — we are an economic engine." - President Hahs

calling the lack of appropriations "untenable."

Gov. Rauner invited the presidents to meet in small groups. Hahs was grouped with Northern Illinois President Doug Baker and four community college presidents. Each meeting lasted 45 minutes.

When asked how her meeting with Rauner went, she said, "I would say the meeting was certainly a pleasant conversation. There was one other person in the room besides the governor — a woman named Linda Lingle and she is what has been defined as the governor's chief operating officer."

Hahs said that at the beginning of the meeting with the governor, she and her counterparts listened

support public higher education. I particularly support the community colleges."

Rauner touched on how every student does not need a four-year degree. People with vocational certifications can find jobs due to a lack of trained individuals needed to fill them.

Hahs told Rauner she appreciated that his want to bring business back to Illinois. However, she told him that her main concern is to keep students in the state.

"One of the concerns for public universities is that we're losing students to other states," she said. "We want to make sure our students stay here, graduate and that the job market is good for

reminder of the economic worth of public higher education.

"This is investing in Illinois' future," Hahs said. "The way we're going to grow economically is to have more educated people — we are an economic engine."

So what does the future look like in terms of receiving funds from the state of Illinois? Did the governor give an estimated date or time of arrival?

"No," Hahs said. "That would be glorious."

Council of Clubs

Student Activity Fee Allocation
October 2015

Student Organization	Event	Date of Event	Amount Received
Indian Student Organization	Diwali Garbanight	10/23/15	\$2,409.50
Generativity Club	Generativity Conference	11/18/15 11/22/15	\$1,240.00
Student Veterans Club	Veteran's Day Ceremony and Luncheon	11/11/15	\$1,446.25
Omega Delta Phi Fraternity, Inc.	7th Annual Toy Drive	11/19/15	\$1,447.62
Northeastern Polish Student Association	Polish-American Heritage Celebration	11/06/15	\$2,700.00
American Marketing Association	AMA Induction Ceremony	10/23/15	\$139.50
NSHMBA	NSHMBA National Conference & Career Expo	10/07/15	\$585.78
Psi Chi Psychology Honors Society	Black Lives Matter, White Lies Madder, How the Arts can Help Us	10/22/15	\$500.00
Psychology Club	Art in Response to Violence	10/22/15	\$447.50
French Club	Passport to France	11/19/15	\$660.00
Pre-Law Society	Alumni Panel	10/22/15	\$780.68

New Clubs October 2015

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Model UN

Golden Eagles Dance Crew

Presidential Scholars Student Association

For more information on student organizations visit Collegiate Link at <https://neiu.collegiatelink.net/>

With questions on how to start a new student organization email the Office of Student Leadership Development at SLD@neiu.edu

Winds of Change: A Resounding Call For Revolution

Kate Hilliard

A diverse group of students and academics gathered at NEIU's Alumni Hall to observe a series of panel speakers and to engage their peers in roundtable discussions.

The notion of revolution was a recurring theme — A revolution for adjunct educator rights; single-payer health care; a departure from institutionalized education; an end to domestic violence; an end to student hunger; a revolution for housing rights and public access to research, among many more.

Divided into morning and afternoon sessions, The Second Economic Inequality Initiative event, held on Oct. 29, was organized through a collaboration between the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) and the Division of Student Affairs (DSA). The event served to encourage students to confront, through critical discussion, the roots of economic inequality — and to challenge students to adopt an active role addressing their solutions.

"The whole idea behind the initiative is to get students engaged and thinking," said Kris Pierre, Senior Director of Academic and

Community Partnerships.

During the afternoon's roundtable discussions, one table of activists discussed economic disparity and hunger in students in K-12 and in college. As the day's events were focused on action, the campaign to reduce growing hunger epidemics in children and college students was fueled by questions raised by attendees.

A general yet profound question they asked was: "How are students still hungry?"

One participant of the afternoon roundtable discussions chimed in. Though food pantries and other efforts to reduce hunger may be positive initiatives, the participant said, they may be "Just the Band-Aid on a bigger issue."

Laura West, Student Academic Service Specialist in STEM, explained their table's vision to engage the community and higher education in the identification of untapped and sustainable potential of natural areas. Collection and analysis of bio-indicator data in natural areas can be cost-effective and foster community cohesion, while providing a means for monitoring and reducing pollution and promoting safe, happy communities.



Photo by Kate Hilliard

Roundtable discussions heat up at the Economic Inequality Initiative event.

"Though many of these programs do exist," West said. "Most programs are targeting K-12."

Jason Olson, a psychology major, and Robert Fidis, a biology and chemistry double major with a minor in applied mathematics, said they both observed an underwhelming level of student participation at many university events.

Both agreed that academic stress, added to any number of economic disparities stemming from inequality, could play a major role in a student's motivation and, ultimately, their final decision to attend and participate. Busy schedules, among other priorities, may limit students enough to prevent them from acting to facilitate social change. A lack of

hope, or looming college debts, are only some factors limiting the potential for student activism for equality.

Olson said he often notices students pass up events and opportunities to voice their opinions.

"They may not even disagree with the cause," Olson said. "But how do we break down that wall? Because I'm pretty sure students do care."

Three years ago, NEIU President Sharon Hahs challenged the College of Arts and Sciences and the Division of Student Affairs to identify and implement an innovative way to engage students and to give back to the community.

The community garden just off St. Louis Avenue was among the

first of their collaborative efforts. Since then, it has only grown with the partnership.

"Our partnership grew kind of organically," said Dr. Katrina Bell-Jordan, Associate Dean of the CAS. "Food kept coming to the table."

This year's Economic Inequality Initiative event offered the NEIU community and its partners an opportunity to promote social, economic, environmental and humanitarian change. Actions triggered by the conversations at the Economic Inequality Initiative Event represented a complex web of interrelated efforts of relentless educators and academics, whom collectively strive to promote a brighter future, for the greater good.

ONE VOICE

A Common Agenda. A Common Purpose.
Every student deserves a voice.

NORTHEASTERN Illinois University
Student Government Association (SGA)



NORTHEASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

Minutes (Pending for Approval)
October 20, 2015

GOALS FOR YOUR STUDENT GOVERNMENT 2015-2016

Financial Aid Office

- ✓ Explore delays in processing payments
- ✓ Create better channels of communication
- ✓ Ensuring student representation in decisions regarding financial aid

SGA Representation on the NEIU Faculty Senate (voting member)

- ✓ Input into campus life
- ✓ Provide student perspectives on decisions that affect them
- ✓ Student input into decisions on course cancellations

Course Scheduling and Cancellations

- ✓ Surveying students' needs for advising the administration
- ✓ Ensuring student representation in course scheduling discussions
- ✓ Working with faculty and advisors to inform them of student concerns

A.) Call to Order 3:17

B.) Roll Call

1. Executive Board Members: President Nick Martinez, Vice President Ricky Gutierrez, Secretary Yessica Garcia, Treasurer Max Caviness, Student Trustee Pedro Nungaray, IBHE-SAC Representative Emily Hosman
2. Senators: Anna Augustyn, Arnold Garcia, Christopher Vazquez, Edwin Ramirez, Elizabeth Nieto, Laura Ayala, Lily Butler-Ludwig, Luis Arriola, Roger Byrd, Thomas Montbriand and Tremayne Housto

C.) Approval of Minutes

1. Minutes 9-22-15
 - No objections to the approval of the Senate minutes on September 22nd, 2015.
2. Minutes 10-6-15
 - No objections to the approval of the Senate minutes on October 6th, 2015.

D.) Approval of Agenda

1. Agenda 10-20-15
 - No objections to the approval of the Senate agenda on October 20th, 2015.

E.) Executive Reports

1. Due to space constrictions, this portion was exerted. The official minutes can be found on the Student Government Association collegiate link page.

F.) Audience Participation and Announcements

1. Dr. Lopez
 - Discussed on how the university has shifted gears and offers more opportunities to the undocumented student population at NEIU.
 - Scholarship opportunities, programs, events, advisers and an effortless application process is now offered to the undocumented population at NEIU.

G.) Old Business

1. Senate Bill 16-29: A Bill to Appoint a Bill of Rights Commission
 - Senate Bill 16-19 passes with acclamation.

H.) New Business:

1. Senate Bill 16-30: A Bill to Establish Case Assessments
 - Treasurer Max Caviness motion to table to move to next meeting
1. Senator Ana Augustyn seconds the motion.

I.) Senate Reports:

1. Due to space constrictions, this portion was exerted. The official minutes can be found on the Student Government Association collegiate link page.

J.) Adjournment at 4:15

NEIU Among Six State Schools to Receive Credit Downgrade

Luis Badillo

Moody's Investor Service downgraded NEIU's credit rating for the second time in two years. The downgrade comes from an Oct. 26 report released by the bonds rating agency, which measures risk when investing in a business or government institution. The school now carries a rating of Baa2, downgraded from Baa1.

According to a Moody's report, NEIU's downgrade comes from "significant exposure to the State of Illinois (Baa1 negative), which contributes a large portion of its operating revenue."

The report also cited declining enrollment as one of the reasons for the downgrade.

Illinois has not had an operating budget since July 1, putting institutions that rely on state appropriations in a financial tight spot. The lack of a budget comes from a stalemate between Gov. Bruce Rauner and the Democrat controlled state assembly. Among other proposed cuts, Rauner sought to reduce state funds for public universities by 31.5 percent.

Several credit agencies, including Moody's and Fitch Ratings, have downgraded the state's rating. According to

multiple news sources, Illinois has the lowest rating of any state.

Moody's outlook on NEIU is marked as negative, with "expectations that future state budget pressure or additional material declines to enrollment could lead to further deterioration of the university's finances and liquidity."

The report also explains what factors could contribute to an upgrade in the rating. These include "reduced reliance on state support, combined with stronger cash flow," as well as increased student enrollment.

Though the contents of the downgrade report may be news to investors, university administrators and trustees have talked openly about the school's monetary issues.

An Oct. 15 meeting of the school's finance committee was largely about the diminishing funding from the state.

The committee is considering recommending a tuition increase anywhere from 6 to 10 percent, though it could only be applied to new students, graduate students and students who have been enrolled at the university for more than six years. However, a majority of board members and administrators acknowledged that

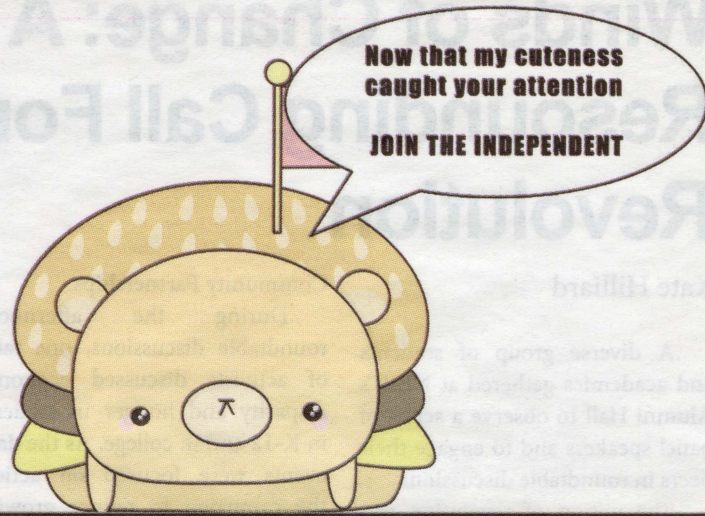
decreasing NEIU's reliance on state funding and finding other more stable forms of income would be a more viable long-term plan.

Five other schools, Eastern Illinois University, Governors State University, Northern Illinois University, Southern Illinois University, and Western Illinois University have been downgraded in the absence of a state budget.

Both Illinois State University and University of Illinois kept their ratings, but were given negative outlooks.

According to an NEIU spokesperson, "No institution is pleased to be downgraded by a ratings agency like Moody's. However, this downgrade is clearly tied to the state's financial condition more than any changes in Northeastern's particular financial situation."

"We continue to await our state appropriation. We hope that a budget will be passed in the near future, and that it will provide the resources for the state's public universities to deliver a quality education."



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Photo by Laura Rojas

The expansions to the Angelina Pedrosa Center are near completion.

Coming Soon: Pedrosa Center Expansion

Laura Rojas

An addition to the Angelina Pedrosa Center at NEIU will soon bring more space for students and faculty.

Still under construction, it is expected to be completed in November — progress was held back a few months since construction began in March due to poor weather conditions.

According to Diane DiMaso, an administrative assistant working for the Angelina Pedrosa Center, the expansion will add six new offices to the Pedrosa Center — though, since construction began, three of the original offices were demolished or repurposed. Essentially, three new offices will be available with the addition of a lounge space for students and staff.

DiMaso said the new lounge is primarily for the students who gather at the Pedrosa Center to hang out or study.

"We're not as quiet as the library — but we're not as loud as the Student Union," she said. "It draws students in because we want to give them an opportunity to experience different things."

Among the structural changes to the Pedrosa center, one of the original offices is going to be converted into two separate rooms reserved for student use.

One will be a gender-inclusive bathroom. The other is going to be a lactation room with full

amenities such as a sink, counters, a comfortable chair and a refrigerator for storing any pumped milk.

There is a lactation room in the library, but, according to DiMaso, it is not as well furnished as this one will be and is not equipped with a refrigerator. And as for the gender-inclusive restroom — another is currently open now in the Pedrosa Center but it is only available when the center is open.

These two rooms will be available to students or staff whenever the school is open. DiMaso said, for security purposes, a swipe-card lock will be installed for the lactation room. Students and staff would be able to unlock the door with their ID's after they have them registered at the campus police office.

The additional space brought by the renovations will allow the entirety of the Pedrosa Center's staff to work entirely from within the center itself. The offices of the women's resource center and the LGBTQA resource center, currently housed in separate offices in the B-building, will be moving their offices to the Pedrosa Center after the completion of its construction.

The expanded lounge area, DiMaso said, will afford the Pedrosa Center staff more space for its programming. The lounge will have room to host more speakers, give more presentations and screen a greater number of movies.

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#9 ITALIAN NIGHT CLUB
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#10 HUNTER'S CLUB
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#13 GOURMET VEGGIE CLUB
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The Editor-in-Chief is responsible for the content of the *Independent*, and views presented do not necessarily represent those of the administration, faculty or students.

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Sexual Orientation Mediates Your Access to Some Public Health Resources This Year

Kate Hilliard

The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) remains the authority on immunizations throughout the state. These are the folks who send available vaccines to NEIU when they're requested by Student Health Services. According to the IDPH website in response to the question "Who Should Get Immunized?" the IDPH answers, "everyone."

Before my first year of college at Iowa State University, I was required to be vaccinated for meningitis. I was thankful for it after tragedy struck while I was visiting friends back home. At eighteen years of age, my friend passed away from complications due to undiagnosed meningitis.

Meningitis occurs in several forms, both viral and bacterial. Roughly 600 viral cases of meningitis are reported annually in Illinois, many of these affecting the stomach or small intestine. Though antibiotics do not fight viral infections, the majority of individuals who are vaccinated are thereafter equipped with the tools to mount an immune response when the virus attempts to infect their system.

Policies for distribution of the vaccines for viral meningitis by the Illinois Department of Public Health require that students seek meningitis vaccinations through independent health-care providers, as implied by the lack of available vaccines to NEIU students.

The meningitis shot can be administered at NEIU student

health center under certain circumstances. The meningitis vaccine can only be distributed to males who have sex with other males. This is part of a city-wide campaign targeting the Men Who Have Sex With Men (MSM) community based on their behavioral and immunological risk factors.

Individuals must belong to this category, males that have sex with males, to be entitled to a meningitis vaccine. The IDPH will send the meningitis vaccines to the university upon the request of the student health department when an individual identifies themselves as a part of this cohort, and who wishes to be vaccinated.

Some may jump to the conclusion that this is an effort to single out homosexual men, but information regarding the contraction of meningitis may speak to the rationale behind what seems like some rather odd factors mediating the distribution of meningitis vaccines by the state.

So why are men who have sex with men considered to be the highest risk individuals for meningitis?

Though meningitis can be transmitted through the transfer of viral particles through mucus membranes, the form of transmission for the disease is sharing saliva. Behavioral risk factors associated with transmission, in combination with a higher risk of having lowered immunity due to HIV or other immuno-compromising viral infections, seem to be the main criterion for this year's delegation of

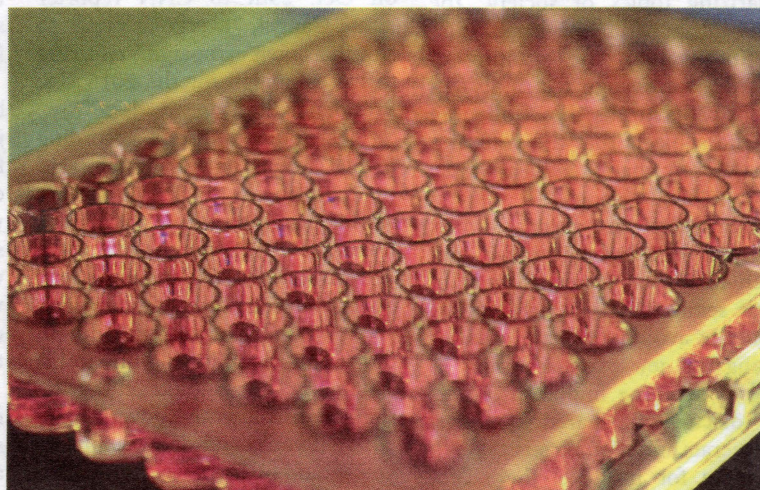


Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

Meningitis can occur in both viral and bacterial forms.

meningitis vaccines by the Illinois Department of health. In general, stress, age and behavior are major factors to consider when evaluating the potential for contraction of meningitis in individuals.

Though questions regarding availability of public health resources in Illinois for post-secondary institutions are begging to be asked, the biggest question for now is perhaps: is anybody really listening?

University settings with dormitories or student housing have required residents to be vaccinated for meningitis in the past, so why is it that students at NEIU (who are about to be offered student housing) are not entitled to a vaccine for meningitis unless they are a man who has sex with other men?

My understanding is that perhaps there is a limited number of vaccines being produced that are intended for post-secondary

institutions or that perhaps these public health issues are being overlooked in lieu of other very pressing issues in budget allocation. With Springfield in gridlock and objectives of career politicians and large development entities being centered on campaign funding and profits, it's difficult to avoid pessimism on the public health front.

The Illinois Joint Committee on Administrative Rules last updated the vaccine requirements in the state of Illinois for post-secondary institutions at the most recent date of...2012.

The big picture is something we must take initiative to seek ourselves, and the answers are often much less fun than celebrity gossip (if you are into that). We must independently seek the meningitis vaccine this year (if we are not currently vaccinated and are actively engaged in a college setting).



Photo courtesy of Pexels

The Peeple app was created to spread positivity and anti-bullying.

Meet People on Peeple

Alejandra Franco

Choices. Life is full of them. For example, sometimes one may crave sushi, but doesn't know where to go. Luckily, there's Yelp. Yelp can help sway the decision about whether or not the California Roll in one place is better than the other. This app has proven to be helpful for food, but what if there was an app that helped people deciding on... other people?

People, and its founders, are aiming to do just that. Late in September, social media went into an uproar when this new app was introduced. And it hadn't even launched yet.

It was pitched as an upgrade of Yelp because there was no anonymity and once you're rated — regardless of having the app or not — you were in the system and there was no deleting your information.

Of course people panicked at the thought of having no power to manipulate or delete what people were publicly saying about them. There are apps and websites to rate just about anything, including professors, so why not people?

It was an interesting idea, being able to rate people. It would be cool to have an idea about the sort of person someone is before actually getting to know them. If we consider

this in a romantic scenario, I'm sure a lot of people would agree that having an app such as Peeple would have helped them avoid a lot more heartbreak.

However, the biggest flaw in the plan is the fact that every human encounter is different. It's just like when submitting a restaurant review to Yelp: The experience varies depending on the person. For example, one of my favorite Mexican restaurants got a bad review on Yelp. As I said, it's my favorite restaurant food, service and all. I know this place and regardless of what others say, I'm going to continue going there. This is more or less the same with people. Just because you've had a bad experience with someone, it doesn't mean every single person who meets them will.

It turns out that the creators of the Peeple app, who said they intended to spread positivity and anti-bullying through their product, were victims of just that. They caused such an uproar that they ended up redoing the app, and per the Re/Code website, it's now more like LinkedIn where good things are said about people, only without the anonymity because Peeple users must have a registered Facebook account. After the uproar, the Peeple creators have been more secretive about the way this app (due out in Dec.) will function. It will be interesting to see if people can be rated, and just how many people actually use the app. It might be a flop or it could change the way humans interact.

Voting When it Matters

Pablo Medina

One of the most important building blocks to a functioning democratic government is the expression of one's stance to polarizing topics of society. The right to abortion, the legalization of immigration, the granting of previously unrecognized rights to a minority of citizens; these and more are the subjects that the vote of a Senator can change with a simple "yea" or "nay" response.

However, in recent times, that privilege has become a tool often taken for the self-benefit of some senators. This is achieved by regularly avoiding Senate calls for voting on new proposed bills, as well as avoiding important points of discussion shared amongst democrats and republicans.

Take for instance, the recent inactivity of Marco Rubio, U.S. Republican Senator of Florida. According to govtrack.us, a website dedicated to tracking the actions and progression of Congress members in the United States, Rubio has missed 11.8 percent of all roll call votes in Congress, coming at a whopping 91.7 percent votes missed in all of October. His absence in all votes has been noted

since January 2011. In comparison, the median of votes missed in a Congress member's lifetime is currently 1.6 percent.

Rubio has missed votes recently because, according to his statement on Oct. 25th to CNN reporter Jamie Gangel, "Everyone needs to run their own campaign," referring to his campaign for the 2016 U.S. Presidency Election.

Just four days prior, according to the Huffington Post, Rubio said the following in the Senate hearing for his proposed bill involving the Department of Veteran Affairs: "If you work at the VA, and you aren't doing your job, they get to fire you."

It wouldn't be so bad if Rubio didn't add the following line to his statement: "This should actually be the rule in the entire government, where if you're not doing your job, you should be fired."

So, according to Rubio's logic, it is okay for him to continue missing potentially important votes and roll calls in the Senate, a position in which the Florida chose him to represent his birthplace. But when the congressmen with whom he converses do the same, he believes they should be fired for not doing their job.

There's a word in the English vernacular for beliefs such as that.

It's called: Hypocrisy.

Rubio is proving himself to be nothing more than a textbook example of what a dirty and biased politician is like. The icing to this cake of lies appears when he reasons that the attendance of his party's staffer ensures that he receives the full story of the Senate hearing.

"We do all the intelligence briefings," Rubio said. "I was just there this Tuesday. I got fully briefed and caught up on everything that's happening in the world. I'm fully aware. We have a staffer that's assigned to intelligence who gets constant briefings. I think votes, of course, are important, but unfortunately, too many of them today are not meaningful."

Here's a little tip for Rubio and his aspiring followers: Just because someone else attended the meeting and you ask them to look at their notes, it doesn't mean you attended the meeting, let alone actively participated in it.

The citizens of Florida are paying for a representative that thinks the sole aspect of his job, which is to represent his state by voting and participating in important federal business, is "not meaningful."

Why else is every single citizen of this nation given the opportunity

to engage in the political process through the simple act of casting vote and opinion? They have the opportunity so that they can make a difference and collaborate alongside others with similar and contrasting reasons — not so they can squander it and let others take over the vote that they disagree with.

Perhaps Rubio is right that his vote would not matter in the sea of votes from all other Senators on the floor and maybe it would be right for him to bow out of Senate to let the real professionals of politics handle the debates and votes. However, for him to ignore his primary duty as Senator to chase an already difficult dream of becoming the next U.S. President is a complete joke.

So what exactly is Rubio telling the American public with his actions and his words?

What we are being told is that his presence does not matter in the Senate among his peers. I don't know about you, but if I was given a six-figure salary to sit in a room full of hard-boiled politicians passing the next SOPA bill, I would think that my presence does matter, at least a little bit.

The reality of democracy is that not only does everyone get to speak, but that everyone is encouraged to do so: To share similar or

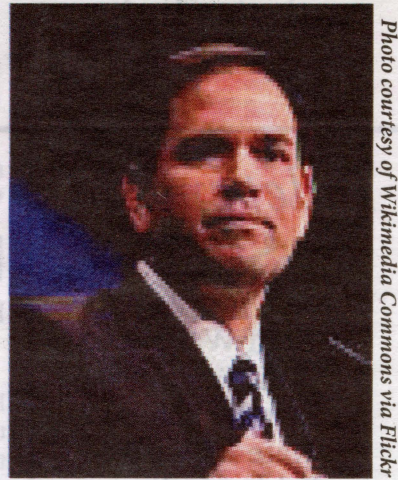


Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons via Flickr

Republican U.S. Senator Marco Rubio skips Senate vote meetings on his campaign touring.

contrasting points that challenge moral issues and social injustices. When a representative abandons his or her responsibilities by failing to vote, citizens are left remaining silent on the issues that matter — the same issues that others can take advantage of.

The lesson to be learned from this spectacle of deceit and tomfoolery: if you are elected to represent your state and are expected to advocate for the wants and needs of that state: Do your job.

Don't call in sick and say you'll catch up whenever you want.

MPAA Ratings Are Bulls@#\$\$%

Hailey G. Boyle

I can't fathom how many times I've seen "The Breakfast Club." It is THE quintessential film on the teenage experience. And yet, teenagers can't see it. Why? Because it's rated-R.

Yep, the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) has a long history of shutting all teenagers under 17 out of movies about teenagers doing things normal teenagers do and say. "The Breakfast Club" is rated-R because they say "the F-word" just a little too much. About 30 times actually. But that's not the only reason. See, any movie that uses the F-word more than once gets an automatic R-rating. Meaning, IF "The Breakfast Club" had only said the F-word just once, they could have garnered a PG-13 rating. But because Molly Ringwald says that magical word more than once — automatically rated-R.

PG-13 movies have an allowance of one F-word per film, as long as it is non-sexual reference. Can I just say — what is the point of that rule? Little Timmy has already heard the word? How does only hearing it once protect his under-17 sensibilities?

Now, to be fair, the teens do smoke marijuana in the film, but that's still PG-13 territory by 1980s standards.

Since the violent nature of "Indiana Jones and the Temple Doom" inspired the MPAA to create the new rating, (by the way "Temple of Doom" is rated-PG) the rules of PG-13 movie have been vaguely defined. Largely, no explicit nudity, no sex and only one, repeat, ONE non-sexual use of the F-word. But violence? No problem. In fact, the more, the merrier.

As long it's not too gory, a movie can basically kill as much as it wants. For some reason, *cough, money, cough* movie studios tend to skim over this one. Studios can't alienate the demographic that funds these trillion dollar franchises. Films like "The Hunger Games," "World War Z," and "The Dark Knight" are all brutally violent, yet PG-13.

"The Hunger Games" depicts children murdering each other. You

could argue that even though they were playing 16, Jennifer Lawrence was 22 and Josh Hutcherson was 20 and most of the 'kids' in the actual games, were over 18, that it's okay for them to be violent; they're technically adults. Except for Amandla Stenberg, she was 14-15 at the time of filming.

She is a part of, arguably, the most horrific scene in the film. Spoiler: Stenberg plays the 12-year-old Rue and in her death scene, she pulls a six foot spear out her own body and is left with a bloody torso. Granted, you don't see the spear enter her body but it's still a gruesome sight.

"World War Z" is your basic zombie movie, with the undead being mowed down with machine guns, fire and smashing their heads into windshields. These scenes are massacres. I guess since the ones beings taken are undead zombies, even though the violence on screen could rival "Die Hard." I guess the MPAA left to go get popcorn during a grisly scene where an Israeli soldier cuts off her own arm in makeshift amputation and her blood-curdling screams were mistaken for joyous laughter?

And finally "The Dark Knight." I love Batman. He's Batman. And he's going to be violent, but "The Dark Knight" REALLY pushes the boundaries of how much violence is acceptable in a PG-13 movie.

Most of the chaos is attributed to Heath Ledger's Joker, where he hangs people, mauls people, burns people and even rigs a bomb to explode INSIDE a guy.

Oh, let's not forget the "magic trick" where he impaled a guy with a pencil through the eye! Yay, Dark Knight. Fun for the whole family.

I'm not saying that kids under 13 can't see these movies. Heck, I watched the Terminator films at age seven and I turned out fine. But when movies like "Hunger Games" and "Dark Knight" are PG-13, yet movies like "Breakfast Club" and "Boyhood" are rated-R, (yes, even "Boyhood" is rated-R, for "language including sexual references") it just boggles the mind about how inconsistent the whole thing is.

Winter Is Coming

Robin Bridges

Temperatures are dropping and pumpkins are everywhere. Turkeys are piling up in freezer sections at a grocery store. This can only mean one thing to a girl like me — snow! I have had a love/hate relationship with snow since I was a young girl in knee high socks and plaid skirt in that private grammar school so long ago. Cold, wet, snowflake kisses, warm drinks and plenty of indoor activity. Could life get any better?

Alas, the snow greets me on my windows in the bright morning sun — plop! That was the sound of me falling or slipping or tripping in that horrible wet, cold white-ish grey stuff outside! I am among many other things, clumsy. The best of weather conditions trip me up for a great deal of the calendar year. I am also a pedestrian. A CTA riding, down the city street walking, summer-time biking kind of pedestrian. Snow is my friend and my enemy. So when I heard two weeks ago that the city was possibly raising fines for those homeowners and business owners alike who do not shovel their sidewalks promptly or at all, I got a little giddy.

On Oct. 28, Mayor Rahm Emanuel and the City Council of Chicago made my day. While these ordinances technically do not go into effect until November 7 of this year, I was very excited at the news nonetheless. The city council members passed a proposal to change city ordinances 4-4-310, 10-8-180, 10-8-190 and a few others pertaining to removal of snow from sidewalks and liability. These changes are really just minor changes in wording for the most part.

They clarify who is supposed to maintain the sidewalks, ramps and crosswalks, how much of them should be cleared, how quickly they should be cleared, and who is at fault if they are not maintained. In my opinion, the biggest contribution



Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

The familiar scene of unkept sidewalks in the wintertime.

that was made to these ordinances is a clearly defined consequence for those failing to do so.

The clear definition of who will be fined and how much is a vast improvement to these set of ordinances which previously seemed more like suggestions to a lazy home or business owner. According to documents made publicly available on the Office of the City Clerk's website the new ordinances state, "Any person who violates this section shall be fined not less than \$50 nor more than \$500 for each offense and each day such offense shall continue shall constitute a separate offense."

This simple addition not only makes the fines up to \$500 but \$500 per day of un-shoveled snow. Music to my ears and knees and butt. And any other body part that I don't injure from snow related slippage this winter.

Some would argue that there are citizens among us who do not possess the ability to go out and shovel snow. Well, dear readers, our mayor has thought of it all. Enter the Snow Corps Volunteers, available for request by simply dialing 311 from any phone in the city of Chicago.

A network of willing and able volunteers who, with their own equipment, clear snow for those who cannot. No tipping, no entering participant's homes and no shoveling driveways are the main rules for this group of non-city employees. A bunch of average Joe's from the sound of it, out to do good deeds for those who can not clear snow as well as those who can not stand up straight in it.

Although the city has not currently updated its handy-dandy printable flyer or door tag available at cityofchicago.org, I'm sure once these ordinances go into effect they will. I can't wait to print a bunch of brand new picture-filled flyers to hand to those who can't be bothered to shovel more than a six or seven inch path from their front door to the gaping hole where their nice warm car once was.

It's getting colder outside and winter is coming. Holiday greeting and glad tidings be damned. I will proudly shout, "Shovel your snow-laden sidewalks, peasants! This pedestrian queen is conveying herself down the sidewalk with ease at last."



EL

RONEDDEPENDENT



Photo courtesy of House of Torment



One of the many creatures that awaits inside the house.

House of Torment: Pleasantly Terrifying

Hailey G. Boyle

I'm a total pansy. I admit it. "Fright Night" made me pee my pants. But haunted houses generally suck. Unless they're House of Torment.

Now, while the name may sound like a 70s B-movie, House of Torment is a really good haunted house. It's perfect for someone like me who gets scared a little too easily, because it's not too scary. But according to my friends who aren't complete scaredy cats, they too were scared.

House of Torment is split into two attractions, each about ten minutes long, and unlike most haunted houses, I was genuinely scared. My heart raced, my palms sweated, I actually hid behind my

boyfriend, clutching onto him as my human meat shield so the monsters that chased us down a realistic subway car didn't get me.

Since I am an admitted lily-livered jellyfish, you're probably thinking, "Why should I trust you? You get scared easy."

Well...because I have been to my share of haunted houses and they suck. There I said it. They suck. I went to Rob Zombie's experience last year. And it was bad. I didn't scream once. It was cheesy, the makeup was lame and the sets were boring. Fright Fest was scarier.

House of Torment was incredible. The props and sets were beautifully constructed; I mentioned the subway car right? Now add the perfect amount of fog to a bookcase maze where you can kind of see the exit but you

have goblin zombies chasing you. Terrifying.

Bryan Kopp, general manager at House of Torment Chicago, described the first half, subtitled Contagion, as a "post-apocalyptic Chicago ruined cityscape where the undead and monstrous Nemesis has once again begun terrorizing planet Earth".

The Abandoned, the second half, is an old abandoned high school crawling with nasty creatures ready to pull you into eternal detention.

And the make up; A. Maze. Ing. It was Hollywood quality and perfectly applied and genuinely scary. The haunters, someone who works in a haunted house Even the people who were standing in line with the patrons were dedicated, offering plenty of entertainment

while we waited in line.

I was scared, but I wasn't so scared that I had nightmares after. After we got out of the first half, I was disappointed. I said, "Wait, it's over?" It wasn't done.

Then we got in line for the second half and I was back doing my happy dance.

It was the perfect balance of adrenaline-pumping scary and just plain old fun.

House of Torment is a nationally acclaimed haunted house brand and deservedly so. With only a half an hour wait, it offered reasonably short lines, fairly priced tickets at \$30 a pop and plenty of treats with their tricks.

Located in Morton Grove, we can expect House of Torment to return next year, for an even more wickedly devious attraction.

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Girl World

Rut Ortiz

Fall is a time for festivities. The season is a crisp autumn wind and nearly every coffee shop makes a drink with something pumpkin flavored. For a lot of people, the main part of fall is Halloween and what to dress up as in terms of a costume. This brings me to a question I've always asked, since I heard a quote that could be construed as both idiotic and true.

There's a scene in the movie,

"Mean Girls" where Regina George (Rachel McAdams) comes out on Halloween night in what can only be described as a Playboy Bunny costume. The protagonist, Cady Heron (Lindsay Lohan) then said, "In 'Girl World,' Halloween is the one night a year when a girl can dress like a total slut and no other girls can say anything about it."

I never saw Halloween in that light until I heard that quote. So the questions that remain with me are: Is Halloween the one night to forsake all inhibitions? And are

women who choose to dress in a provocative costume indeed sluts?

Unfortunately, I do not see cut and dry answer to my first question — solely because I've witnessed events and occasions where people disregard any inhibitions they may harbor on a regular basis, and those events/occasions were not Oct. 31.

So, by mere observation, I must come to the conclusion that, no Halloween is not the "one night a year when a girl can dress like a total slut and no other girls can say anything about it." Because people (not just women) can be total sluts all year long and believe me: Other girls can and will say something about it.

Which brings me to my second

question.

We live in an age where "sex sells," and every day, everywhere, the proof of that marketing gimmick stares consumers in the face. When Halloween rolls around, women have a choice whether to dress up as a "sexy nurse" or a nurse who is not so sexy.

The way I see it, a costume is donned out of pure preference. And there could be various reasons as to why a woman would want to dress as a "sexy pirate hooker" as opposed to Anne Bonny who, by the way, was an actual female pirate.

I've seen nearly everything from a sexy firefighter — which is basically just a leather leotard with a red hard hat — to a sexy

Little Red Riding Hood to a sexy Avengers costume. And just for the record, a red, white and blue super tight, mini dress with an "A" on the front does not really depict Captain America but then again, he is a character wearing a red, white and blue super tight body suit and no one bats an eye at him.

The truth is: A very conservative woman may want to be less conservative and choose a costume on Halloween night that shows a bit more skin or a brazen woman may want to be less brazen on the same night and attend a party as a the Hunchback of Notre Dame.

Either way, it's a matter of personal choice.

Photo courtesy of nick la via Wikimedia Commons



Bulls star Derrick Rose has had his share of injuries during his NBA career.

Spencer Jones

Fans of the Chicago Bulls haven't had much to cheer about since the team's last title run back in the 97-98 season. To go from watching players like Michael Jordan and Scottie Pippen to a

young inexperienced Metta World Peace formerly known as Ron Artest, then Eddie Robinson made it difficult to be proud of the team.

All of this changed when Chicago-native Derrick Rose was drafted with the team's number one pick in the 2008 NBA Draft. In his

The Curse of Derrick Rose

first few years in the league he won Rookie of the Year, made the All-Star team three times and won the Most Valuable Player award. With Rose at an elite level, the Bulls' next dynasty was definitely in sight.

Now, a little over five years since Rose's 2010-2011 MVP season, most fans have either joined the LeBron James bandwagon or have completely turned their backs on Rose. Some fans would argue that the "kid from Chicago" is cursed. Since that spectacular MVP season, Rose has dealt with at least 15 different injuries, most were minor and didn't result in him missing a lot of time, but Bulls' fans will remember the injury that would change everything.

It was Game 1 of the opening round of the 2011-2012 NBA Playoffs. Rose had dealt with a few minor injuries during a season that was shortened due to a lockout, but the Bulls stayed consistent enough to gain the number one seed in the Eastern Conference. The team had the win in hand against the young and inexperienced Philadelphia 76ers. With one minute left on the clock Rose did one of his traditional hop-steps, and in his own words, "heard something pop." It seemed

that the injury wasn't a serious one because he was able to walk off the court. A few days later, it was confirmed that he tore his ACL and required surgery.

During Rose's absence the Bulls held their own, for the most part. Head coach Tom Thibodeau continued playing a defense-first style while they waited on Rose to return. A few bright spots came from the injury though. Joakim Noah and Jimmy Butler emerged as suitable All-Stars and they relieved Rose of the burden of carrying the team through an 82-game season.

Rose returned to action in the 2013-2014 season, only to suffer another setback 10 games later. The Bulls were on their annual circus road trip and they were going against the Portland Trail Blazers. By the time Rose returned, younger point guards such as Kyrie Irving, John Wall and Damian Lillard blossomed and Rose fell to the wayside. Through the first few games his play and conditioning was off, something to be expected from a player who had missed the past year and a half. Rose tore his meniscus in his right knee during the second half of the game. What makes this troubling is this injury

came from a non-contact move, just like his ACL injury. However, Rose elected to have his meniscus repaired instead of it being removed.

Last season, the Bulls announced Rose had torn is right meniscus against and required surgery. Rose managed to return, again, in time for the playoffs. As bad luck would have it though, the Bulls faced LeBron James in the second round of the playoffs.

On a positive note, Rose would have the entire offseason to rest, and didn't have to recover from surgery.

The most recent strike of the curse came as a surprise for some. For other fans, it was expected. During the first day of training camp, Rose suffered an eye injury after being elbowed during practice. Rose would go on to have surgery on a broken left orbital bone and miss most of the preseason. When he did return to the court, he played for ten minutes in the last preseason game and posted eight points and four for six shooting. No injury is ever good, but considering this last one was small, maybe it's safe to say Rose's curse is wearing off. Maybe now his biggest curse will be shaking off all the negativity.

Cubs Curses Alive, Or Just Bad Luck

Christian Gralak

The Chicago Cubs definitely exceeded expectations this season. While in the chase for a spot in the World Series, they faced a Mets team whose young and talented pitching outplayed the Cubs' young talented hitters. Despite this fact, there are many people who believe the Cubs lost the series because they have a curse on them. But where does the talk of these curses come from, and how did it originate?

The Billy Goat of 1945

1945 - the year the Cubs were last seen in a World Series. The Cubs were playing the Detroit Tigers and seemed to have a favorable chance at bringing home a championship. With a Game 1 and Game 3 win, they led the series 2-1 and looked to take a commanding 3-1 lead by winning Game 4, but Game 4 was where everything started to go downhill.

Thinking it would bring the Cubs some luck, William "Billy Goat" Sianis, owner of the Billy Goat Tavern, planned on bringing his pet goat Murphy into Wrigley Field to watch the game. Now, there are two different theories on what actually happened when Sianis arrived at Wrigley. The first is that when Sianis came up to the entrance of Wrigley Field the ushers told him he couldn't bring Murphy in because animals weren't allowed inside the ballpark - even though Sianis had purchased a ticket for Murphy. P.K. Wrigley, who owned the Cubs at the time, went near the entrance and told Sianis he couldn't let them in because "the goat stinks." A very an-gry Sianis then threw his arms up in the air saying, "The Cubs ain't gonna win no more! The Cubs will never win a World Series so long as the goat is not allowed in Wrigley Field." Thus giv-ing birth to the legend of the Billy Goat Curse.

The second theory actually says that Sianis and Murphy entered the field and watched the game - well most of it. In the late innings, Sianis was approached by ushers and was

asked to leave. Apparently, other fans were complaining that Murphy was stinking up Wrigley Field after a brief rain delay. The order to have Sianis and Murphy leave the ballpark had come directly from P.K. Wrigley. Sianis angrily left the stadium. Some say it was then when he issued the curse. Others have claimed that Sianis sent in a telegram that said, "You are going to lose this World Series...you are never going to win the World Series again because you insulted my goat." The Cubs went on to lose Game 4 and ultimately lost the series. Allegedly, Sianis "lifted" the curse in 1969 before passing away a year later.

The Black Cat of 1969

The 1969 Cubs, known as one of the greatest Cub teams of all time with stars like Ernie Banks, Ron Santo, Fergie Jenkins and Billy Williams had started off the season with one of the best records in baseball. They won their first 11 of 12 games and held a two and a half game lead over the Pittsburgh Pirates in the newly reshaped National League East. The Cubs were in first place by nine games in mid-June and still held that lead into late August when they were 31 games over the .500 mark. Ironically, it was the New York Mets who caught fire down the stretch and won 39 of their last 50 games. The Cubs started losing late in the season and would end up finishing eight games behind the Mets for first place.

Some people argue that this unforgettable season was cursed when the Cubs played at Shea Stadium on Sept. 9, 1969 and a black cat came out onto the field and started circling around Ron Santo in the batters box. Allegedly, it looked up into the eyes of then Cubs manager and Hall of Famer, Leo Durocher, and walked back under the stands. In the cat's defense, the Cubs were already on a five-game losing streak. Needless to say, the Cubs did not win a championship that year and the



Photo courtesy of guano via Flickr

William Sianis and Murphy, the goat allegedly denied access to Wrigley Field.

1969 Cubs season is one that will never be understood.

The Mishap of 2003

2003 is the most current curse allegation. 2003 was the year! No really, the Cubs had the World Series in the bag in 2003. It was on Oct. 14 when the Cubs held a 3-0 lead in the eighth inning and were five outs away from the World Series. Marlins infielder, Luis

Castillo, hit a high-fly foul ball near the left-field wall and as outfielder Moises Alou went in for the catch, fans attempted to make the catch as well. The ball accidentally defected into the stands and fan Steve Bartman was blamed. It also didn't help that Alou had a fit about the interference. It changed the momentum of the game. So when Cubs shortstop Alex Gonzalez, who let a hard-hit grounder - a possible double play ball - land in the dirt

after trying to field it too early, the talk of the curse rose again. The Cubs ended up losing that series to the Marlins who then went on to win the World Series.

Whether or not you believe in these so-called curses, it can't be argued the Cubs have had some pretty bad luck. However, all of these are in the past. Considering the Cubs had a great 2015 season, maybe it's time to start believing in fairytales.

On A Corner Cursed?

Laura Rojas

What makes a place constantly change—to never have a business last more than a couple years at a time—and for over half a century? Is it bad luck, poor business choices, bad location? Or is it possibly, something, a little more paranormal?

The corner of Caldwell Avenue and Touhy Avenue has been described as a prime business location. Loopnet.com, a site for finding commercial properties, describes it as “a four stop lighted corner (with) heavy traffic on both Touhy and Caldwell,” and explains that the “traffic on all streets is terrific.” They even deem it perfect for several different types of businesses as well as restaurants.

If you flip a coin you have a fifty-fifty chance of getting heads or tails. If you want heads and land a tails 10 times in a row you might just have bad luck. But how much bad luck can there be for several different owners in the span of 55 years for just one place?

After a Howard Johnson’s restaurant that had opened in 1952 and closed around the 1960s nothing else seemed to stay open

for long according to David H., a citizen of Niles who has lived in the neighborhood for around 60 years.

David recounts that there has always been some sort of restaurant that would open up at the corner and usually of Greek cuisine. He said that it may be bad choices made by the various owners who have tried to open shop only to find they are out of business in a short time.

Mark Freedman, owner of the new restaurant called Wildwood Tavern that just opened up at the corner on August of 2015, said that he had been told by several people not to buy the location because it may be cursed. He said that it’s the person running the restaurant that makes the place, not the place that makes the restaurant.

In the past five years there have been at least three different restaurants opened at this location. After closing, they also stood vacant for at least a year in between. A hotel behind the restaurant was recently closed and demolished according to George K. from The Edgebrook Motel across the street on Touhy Avenue.

Also a restaurant called Caldwell’s Kitchen & Tap, which



Photo by Laura Rojas

Is that a trick of light or ghost?

had been open for roughly three years, in the beginning had some fairly decent reviews. The majority of the time being four stars on Yelp. Mark E. wrote, “This place is the DREAM!” and gave a five star review. While another customer named John F. wrote, “Ribs are extraordinarily tender here and salads and sandwiches are first rate.”

Even with the decline in good

reviews it maintained an average of three stars. And on Fudio54.com, another website for restaurant reviews, it was given four and a half out of five stars from 30 reviews.

If people liked the place at first, what made it go bad enough to shut down? The following two restaurants, Aegean Isles and Christopher’s Off the Bone BBQ Char House, didn’t stay open more

than a year each before they closed and remained vacant.

It may be happenstance that so many owners decided to open restaurants at the corner of Caldwell and Touhy only to have them fail for one reason or another. However; one could say that once is an accident, twice is a coincidence, but three or more times... might just be a curse.

Sacrificing Virgins on Halloween



Photo courtesy of www.rockyhorror.com

Viewers will find a houseful of wild characters in this cult classic.

Robin Bridges

It started with a dance party. The line to get in the intimate theatre moved quickly. The virgins had been marked for sacrifice and nervously awaiting their fates. 50 or 60 audience and cast members danced in the aisles to 70’s classics.

On a street nearby others drank and danced to their modern hits and wore pop culture costumes. As the dance party raged, the different costumes in the crowd became clear. More and more people filed in joining the dance party after carving out a seat or two. As is neared midnight the crowd grew and the experience really began.

A man with a microphone called the assembly to attention with a smattering of swear words and other colorful language. He laid down the rules for the crowd. “Rule one: no lighters or open flames of any kind. Flaming is fabulous!! However, don’t set s@#\$ on fire.”

After the rules, a costume contest and then a selection of virgins were ‘sacrificed’ for the greater good. After the sacrifice, the real show could begin.

The midnight madness presentation of Rocky Horror Picture Show at the Music Box theatre has been a tradition for many for the last 14 years. However, the audience participation portion of the show dates back to about 1976. Shortly after its U.S. premier in 1975, it went from satirical science fiction to cult classic phenomenon.

The film, Rocky Horror Picture Show, starring Tim Curry, Susan Sarandon, Meatloaf and so many others celebrates its 40th anniversary this year. Those who have either never seen the movie or only seen it on DVD or video are called Virgins. At the Midnight Madness presentation Virgins are marked upon entering with red lipstick “P’s” on their cheeks.

The cast and crew sell prop kits in the lobby and promote audience participation throughout the show with call backs and a floor show. Each kit includes everything you’ll need to throw, pop and glow during the show. The movie is essentially about sex crazed aliens living in a spaceship shaped like a castle.

This year I took my boyfriend who never ever watches movies or television shows. I gave him no clues at all as to what was going to happen or what to expect. I’m almost positive he thought we were going to see a scary movie until he walked in on the dance party. He was marked and sacrificed with the other virgins. All in good fun and, of course, for the greater good of mankind.

The floor show was made up of a completely volunteer cast and crew. They put on monthly performances at the Music Box and collect donations afterward from giddy and titillated audience members. I enjoy Halloween performances better because when you go outside the theatre it’s almost as if the party from inside is still going. The walk to the train seems less lonely when you’re not the only one on the street in costume.

As the doors to the theatre released the excited crowd on to the streets, many of the area bars were releasing their own captive audiences on to the street. The collective march to the CTA and beyond made for instant friends between dressed up city dwellers. Everyone had clearly had a good night.

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Thursday Night Live: Halloween Edition

Pablo Medina

In a spot lit corner of the Student Union, bands projected their unique and trembling sounds through the halls and through WZRD's airwaves.

Thursday Night Live displayed the talents of the Tooth_Eye, glitch and breakcore artist; Panq Ng, a progressive hardcore band of many musical influences; and Fat Kid, the final act to the night of spooks and jams.

Tooth_Eye, whose given name is Christopher Will, was equipped only with a mini DJ set and a laptop, but good things come in small packages. Tooth_Eye dispersed remixes of sound bites and dissonant music to display the unsettling yet entrancing nature of breakcore. Breakcore is a style of electronic dance music influenced by hardcore, jungle and industrial music known for its use of heavy kick drums played at high tempos.

During his performance, pop music, news media sound bites, chiptune samples and white noise transitioning into each other, with

sudden and seamless changes.

"Whenever I perform live, I'm jamming out to most of the stuff," Tooth_Eye said. "I have particular things that I think about doing when I perform, like certain tricks, but it's not a very conscious thing; it's like live editing."

Though his live performances date back to 2009, Tooth_Eye's appreciation of the genre began in 2000. He started to build his presence as Tooth_Eye in 2005.

After Tooth_Eye's performance, Panq Ng, pronounced "Pank - ang" began setting up, clad in humorous and admirable costumes.

Drummer Lucas Black performed in a baby blue Hornets cheerleading costume and wig, sans pom-poms; bassist Sam Fike laid the low notes in a green witch outfit, complete with a long paper nose and one pink stocking; keyboardist Brandon Reichman tapped into his Jesus Christ look with a tan robe and red sash, along with image perfect beard and long hair; and guitarist Greg Conrad rocked out with his ode to the Brawny Towel Man, complete with red flannel and jeans.

The band played intense songs from their material. One song perfectly detailing their quirky songwriting was titled 'Apple Sharks,' displaying raw and sharp vocals from Black, as the bass pounded to a waltz rhythm.

Upon hearing their setlist, it was difficult to pinpoint a specific genre of music, but in a good way. The band showed versatility in the style and expression of each song, while staying consistent in their characteristic sound. Aspects of progressive, punk, hard and psychedelic rock were prevalent in their music, showing strength in their complex rhythms.

Panq Ng gave a lovably cheesy and charming mention of how they created their band name.

"We all had the same dream collectively, and someone came to us upon a flaming pie and said 'You shall be called Panq Ng,' and the name stuck," Fike said. "Funny enough, this was during our three year hiatus, and it brought us all back together."

After finishing their performance with drum bashes and guitar kerrangs, Fat Kid performed



Panq Ng performs during WZRD's Halloween celebration.

Photo by Pablo Medina

the final act of Thursday Night Live's event. Fat Kid plays a mix of punk and ska, with great fluctuation on tight rhythm and loose growling metal. The members of Fat Kid include bassist Doctor Z, guitarist Big Snore, vocalist Qlondorp the Great, and drummer Vladimir Exodus Bizmark III.

During each band switch, some WZRD DJs partook in a radio play called "Vinyl of the Dead": five vignettes, connected by ominous vinyls, written by

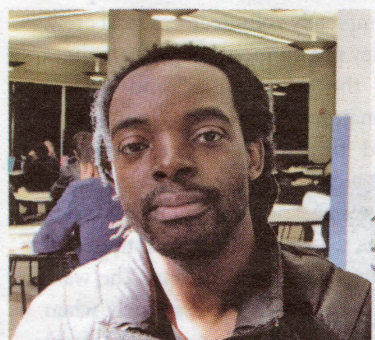
one lone wizard. The remarkable humor of the passages derives from brilliantly written scenarios, such as a musically biased talking mold that aspires to be a disc jockey for the station, and a perplexing conversation between an anthropomorphic horse and a country man.

From beginning to end, WZRD and the bands captured the true terror of Halloween, while expressing the jolly fun and insanity of their acts.

Man On The Street

In preparation for Halloween, *Independent* reporter William Castro asked NEIU students:

"What are some of the things that you are afraid of?"



Maurice George, Senior

"I guess I'm scared of the unknown. There are not too many things I'm afraid as far as things that are associated with Halloween or any type of spirituality. I've studied a lot of different cultural practices and things that seem to scare a lot of people."



Lorie Fuentes, Sophomore

"I'm terrified of rats and snakes ever since I was little. It's just the feeling, the texture of the skin, just thinking about it makes me nauseous. The first time I saw a rat, when I was smaller, it was just horrible. I couldn't deal with it and I panicked. I couldn't breathe. I had to leave."



Sharon Hernandez, Junior

"I don't really have superstitions just because I go by a Mexican household and all these traditional things. I used to believe it at one point. Then, I actually crossed the black cat, and went under the ladder, and then I'm like there are no statistics that prove this. My fear would be as cliché as this sounds people getting out of hand just because it's Halloween, they feel the need to go out and party to the extreme."



Alejandra Arietta, Senior

"I am super scared of spiders. I hate seeing them — anything about them. They are super creepy, they have a million and one eyes. Like pictures come up on Facebook of spiders, and I have to move the text so I don't see the spider. Also, I am superstitious about Ouija board and ghosts. Like I don't know if they're real or not, but I'd rather not mess with what's beyond this world."



Sarah Younan, Sophomore

"Imagine being in a pitch, black room, where you can't see anything in front of your face. And you're alone, and like you're in there for a really long time, and you don't know where anything is, and if someone is in there with you, it's terrifying. Pitch black dark, but I'm more scared of what's in it."

Photos by William Castro

Sports

More Than Economics: A Lesson From Dr. Wenz

Christopher Starnawski

The *Independent* caught up with NEIU economics professor, Dr. Michael Wenz, who has professional insight of sabermetrics. According to the online dictionary, sabermetrics are the statistical and mathematical analysis of baseball records. He may claim he's no "rainman," but after my discussion with Dr. Wenz I learned he's much more than an economics professor.

Going into the interview, I'd say I had a basic understanding of what sabermetrics was or how it's used. Although it's used in the baseball leagues, I wanted to know if these metrics could be incorporated in football and help Chicago's struggling football team.

Independent: What are sabermetrics and is it possible to implement a similar data tracking system in other sports?

Wenz: Sabermetrics is the term for the 'Society of the Advancement of Baseball Research.' The goals of 'saber' are to develop ways to analyze and quantify performances as they happen and try to predict what people are going to do in the future. It gives credit where credit is due which is something that can be done in all sports.

Independent: So it's possible for these advanced metrics to make a splash in football?

Wenz: Certainly in football. I think the good teams are already using them. Over the last few years, teams have learned which positions are more valuable. A good left tackle is worth a whole lot more than a position like running back. It's a

lot harder to replace a good tackle than a running back because there's a better chance that other running backs will find similar success.

Independent: How accurate are these stats and how do they show a player's progression?

Wenz: The ability to collect data with software and player-tracking has come a really long way. Soon you won't have to rely on a player's forty-yard dash time or cone drill performance to determine how well they move; you'll be able to measure that on the field. I remember when I collected data for the Kansas City Chiefs during the time I worked for Stats LLC, a company that tracked the analytics of baseball, football, basketball, and hockey. For each play, you'd come up with twenty questions to try and answer why the play happened the way it did. One of the popular athletes that played for the Chiefs was Dale Carter, a Pro Bowl defensive back. The first year he was fantastic, the second he was good, and then after that it seemed he got progressively worse. After the third season, he was traded to the Arizona Cardinals where he turned out to be a bust. Although the statistics remained consistent, he was a Pro Bowl player that was falling apart.

Independent: When did people start using metrics in baseball?

Wenz: The first meaningful paper that started sports in economics came out in the early '70s by James Quirk and Mohamed El-Hodiri. It was called the 'Economic Model of a Professional Sports League' and was the first of its kind. Bill James came along later

that decade and really popularized analytics. Even before them though, baseball tracking really dates back to when they started putting stats on the back of baseball cards.

Independent: Now that we're on the topic of baseball, how are you feeling about the Cubs after their loss?

Wenz: The one thing that I'll say is that they're in a position to spend money like it's nobody's business. What they want to find is twenty-five guys that can make an impact. The Cubs have so many people on favorable contracts. It's time to narrow the window and find people who have a high probability of paying off.

Independent: When Theo Epstein was hired in 2011 it was well known that he was a numbers guy from the time he spent in the Boston Red Sox organization. Did you buy into him right away because you're a numbers man yourself?

Wenz: Absolutely. The things Theo picked up on were things that were undervalued. He was ahead of the curve for the need of drafting advanced hitters. The steroid era sucked hitting out of baseball like a vacuum. I think Theo recognized that there would be this vacuum and there would be a need to find people that could hit right off the bat. He's also really good at finding someone who is a good candidate for a bounce-back and trading them for prospects to restock their farm system. A great example of this was the trade with the Baltimore Orioles in which we received Jake Arrieta and Pedro Strop for Scott



Photo courtesy of Intel Free Press via Wikimedia Commons

Sabermetrics changed how teams are put together and puts stock in players who don't have flashy stats.

Feldman.

reliever.

Independent: Now that Chicago fans have seen their Cubs become an MLB powerhouse with the help of sabermetrics, is this as good as it gets or is this just the tip of the iceberg?

Wenz: This is a big offseason. I think that the Cubs are about a year ahead of where Theo and Jed thought they were. The recipe to win is to stockpile an organization with bats and buy pitching when it's healthy. Right now they are set up to start buying.

Independent: Anyone in particular that you're excited about next season?

Wenz: I think Jorge Soler bounces back and is better next year. He could take the lead next year as Cubs players go. Watch what happens to Jason Hammel next season, he has potential to turn into a Clayton Richard or Travis Wood. I bet he becomes a pretty good long

Although it seems that the NFL and other sports are years behind the MLB, as far as tracking stats go, there's still a lot of data out there that people don't know what to do with yet. Each sport is uniquely different, so how information is applied will be better understood in the years to come. Dr. Wenz's insight painted an image of brighter things to come for the Cubs' organization, a sigh of relief a lot of people needed following the National League Championship Series elimination. While other sports teams try to understand how to implement data and create a winning culture, the Cubs already have a blueprint that showed they were a year ahead of what the numbers predicted. Even though 2015 wasn't Chicago's "magical year," next year certainly looks very promising for the city that never says never.

Keith Injury Provides Early Obstacle for Hawks

Brett Starkopf

The Blackhawks encountered an early test of character and strength against the Florida

Panthers Oct. 22, their first game without defenseman Duncan Keith. The reigning Conn Smythe winner, and the team's best defender, will be a spectator for the next four to six

weeks after undergoing surgery to repair a torn right meniscus.

He was placed on long-term injured reserve Oct. 21, and will be out a minimum of 10 games and 24 days.

Keith, the Hawks' leader in ice-time at 24:21 a game, has notched two assists in six games so far this season. Last year during the playoffs, he averaged just over 31 minutes of ice time per game for a team that was thin along the blue line.

The loss of Keith is a mammoth blow for the defending Stanley Cup champs. Not only is he one of the top defenders in the league, he also proved to be a work-horse game after game leading the team in average ice time since 2005-2006, his first year in the Blackhawks' organization.

The Hawks have remained strapped defensively and financially sending both their top defensive prospects — Stephen Johns and Michael Paliotta — to Columbus and Dallas, respectively.

Placing Keith on Long Term Injured Reserve (LTIR) opens up more than \$5 million in cap space allowing the Hawks to acquire

reinforcements if they so choose. There have been rumors floating around that they are interested in another defenseman after Trevor van Riemsdyk, David Rundblad, newly acquired Trevor Daly and rookie Viktor Svedberg have shown signs of inconsistency.

However, head coach Joel Quennville told Chicago Sun-Times' Mark Lazerus on Oct. 21 he doesn't foresee them making any moves.

"Not likely," Quennville said to the Sun-Times. "I think we've got a good group here right now. That's what we're expecting to go with right now. I don't think there's anything really brewing as far as we're concerned, or know about."

The Hawks still have some defensive depth with Ville Pokka and Kyle Cumiskey — the latter logged some minutes last postseason — so making a move this early in the season might be jumping the gun a little bit, unless the deal is right. Prior to the game against Winnipeg Oct. 29, the Hawks recalled defenseman Erik Gustafsson from the Rockford Icehogs, the local affiliate. He was active against Minnesota the

following night and recorded an assist.

Keith's presence is sorely missed as the Blackhawks are struggling with their transitions from defense to offense, which is hindering their chances at setting up their zone attacks effectively. Failure to clear the puck out of the defensive zone is a reason why they lost to Winnipeg.

Well, that, and their inability to score at even strength. With 9:13 left in the second period against Minnesota, Oct. 30, Toews netted his second goal of the night, ending a 5-on-5 scoreless drought that lasted 266 minutes, 45 seconds. The previous goal scored, when both teams had all men on the ice, was during a loss against Washington on Oct. 15.

The Hawks are 3-2-0 through the first five games of Keith's absence. Coach Q will continue to juggle lines and assign players different roles throughout Keith's injury. The one benefit of this injury is that it happened early in the season while teams are still searching for their identity.

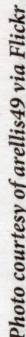
If the Hawks can pass this test, they will continue to be a force in the NHL.



Photo by Lisa Gansky

If the Blackhawks can stay afloat during Duncan Keith's absence, they should be able to continue the push for a championship season.

Poisonous Picks and Potential Outcomes in Daily Fantasy Sports



Christopher Starnawski

As a result of instances such as these, and the possibility that a DraftKings' employee used insider information to win 350 thousand dollars on FanDuel, the FBI launched an investigation into daily fantasy sports websites. It was later determined that the DraftKings' employee didn't receive the information until

In hindsight, these were not

At this point, the outcome of daily fantasy sports is still up in the air but state representatives will soon decide where they stand in terms of regulating the websites. It doesn't appear that another "Black Friday" is on the horizon, but if Nevada sets the table for the rest of the nation it is still a definite possibility. Fantasy football is awesome. The popularity of these sites can't be overlooked; the proposed regulations would improve the experience and make for a healthier participation.

The Unbalance of the Basketball Scale

Spencer Jones

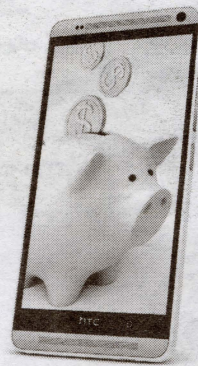
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Arts & Life

Northeastern's Got Talent

Hailey G. Boyle

The lights dimmed in the auditorium. Silence throughout the dark stage. Suddenly the Star Wars theme blares and host Aaron Schiffman enters. Along with his co-host Tara Shedor, a "volunteer" from the audience, they are ready to begin the 2015 NEIU talent show.

With 14 diverse acts, the evening provided something for everyone. Sponsored by the Northeastern Programming Board, the show featured spoken word, original dance, singing, original music, instrumentals and something called animated anointing. Unfortunately due to a family emergency, the fifteenth act, Ribbon 4 Cure was unable to compete.

While all the acts were great, I mean it, all the acts were wonderfully talented, a few stood out. Student Alex Brown performed what he called animated anointing to Donnie McClurkin's "Stand." In traditional mime makeup, his act was a powerful combination of interpretive dance and mime.

Josh Friedberg performed his original song "Some People Say," a funny song that included some self-deprecating humor like the first line "Some people say that I smell" and "I won't hurt you unless you hurt me first – so don't ever hurt me first" which garnered laughs. But then it turned positive with lines like "Some people say that I will change the world."

"[It's] my story about having

Asperger's Syndrome," he said.

Mia Blixt-Shehan proved that chicks can rock with her rendition of Queen's "Brighton Rock." She had the audience screaming as she shredded down the guitar's neck and when she was done, she threw her pick into the audience.

There was sadness too. Yahtzeni Gonzales, brought the audience to tears with her original poem "Dear Father." A letter she could never send to her own father, she had asked the audience to hold out the glow sticks she had the NPB pass out if they related to a line she spoke. Gonzales accused the "father" of never being there, of beating her mother and had three of her friends hold candles in honor of all the women and children who have suffered domestic violence.

The energy was lifted by band Normal Enough, led by student Zac Coleman. Audience members sang and clapped along to their cover of "Tear in my Heart" by Twenty One Pilots.

"I love this song!" the girl in the front row shouted.

Tevin Rice kept the energy going with his original dance to a medley of songs he entitled "Boss." Mixing hip hop, ballet, modern, contemporary, jazz and cheerleader moves seamlessly into the routine; Rice made it look easy and the passion he held for dance was clear.

As the judges deliberated over the winners, local rapper BGI performed two songs, one entitled, "This Is not Iraq" saying "I don't appreciate how we call this [city]



Photo by Hailey G Boyle

Tasiana Villalobos and her partner perform a flamenco dance titled Bellamente Roto.

Chiraq."

Once the judges returned, there was a nervous energy among the contestants and the crowd. A lot was on the line. The entire cast of the show started doing a drum roll using their feet.

In third place, was Yahtzeni Gonzales with \$250. Second place went to Student Steven Cristi and his musical trio for their acoustic rendition Bruno Mars' "Just the Way You Are." I'll admit it, I fell a teeny bit in love. They won \$500.

First place, with prize of \$1,100, went to Tevin Rice. Rice nearly fell to the floor as fellow performers

cheered him on along with the crowd.

The five judges were a mix of students and staff from the Student Development Office. The playbill that was passed out to the audience said that contestants would be judged on "talent, originality, audience appeal, presentation and 'other.'"

Other was defined as "that special something that makes them stand out!"

Judge Brenda Young, a Public Information Specialist in Public Relations said "[Tevin] showcased all the different points we were

looking for – talent, originality. He was very original in movement and conveyed the song very well."

As Rice walked to receive his certificate, the audience demanded "SPEECH! SPEECH!"

The hosts offered him a mic and he thanked the judges and the audience.

"There is incredible talent here today," he said as he pointed to everyone onstage. "I doubted myself."

He jumped into his friends' arms and celebrated a deserved victory.

What a Wild Tavern



Photo by Laura Rojas

The Wildwood Tavern at night.

Laura Rojas

Mark Freedman had lost both his father and his father's restaurant on the same day. Now the son of the owner of the famous Chicago restaurant Myron and Phil's has opened his own restaurant at the corner of Touhy and Caldwell Avenue called Wildwood Tavern.

Freedman's father had died at age 95 after struggling with dementia for the last five years of his life. The day he died, an electrical fire caused the restaurant

to burn down. Freedman had only discovered of his father's death after the restaurant fire.

Freedman said that opening his own restaurant has given him "a fresh start."

Wildwood Tavern has very welcoming and attentive staff. One in particular, Frank Goetz, was friendly and eager to offer his recommendations of the entrées served or help the customers to decide what to order. Goetz was also accommodating of any change or request to any dish.

Though the menu is a bit pricey,

the portions are quite substantial and some fairly large. Most dinner plates range from \$18 to \$19 but some go as high as \$28.

The BBQ chicken—that can be served with mashed potatoes or fries, coleslaw or a side of broccoli as well as a slice of homemade cornbread—was a large half chicken on the plate made with house-made BBQ sauce.

They have two kinds of brisket, braised and smoked with BBQ sauce, both of which are great but if you want something a little tender, go with the braised. They are both served with fries or mashed potatoes that are topped with gravy. It is also served with a choice of soup or salad.

Myron and Phil's was known for a more sophisticated menu but Freedman wanted to expand and have family options and far lower prices than his father's restaurant. So he has added more casual dinner items such as sandwiches and pizza.

One of Freedman's friends walked in his restaurant before it opened and said, "I'm going to teach you how to make a pizza." Now pizza is a big part of Wildwood Tavern's menu.

They still have a famous dish that was served at his father's restaurant called "The Supper Club Starter Platter" which is now an appetizer at Wildwood. There are

also a few other items on the menu that honors his father's restaurant such as "Myron & Phil's Braised Brisket of Beef" and "The Original Myron & Phil's Skirt Steak" which have also been incorporated into sandwiches.

Drinks here may run up the bill so if you still want something to quench your thirst that's full of flavor, try "Charlie's 'Left' Out in the Cold Mocktail" which is non-alcoholic and costs only three dollars. It was named after Freedman's youngest son who is only 15.

There are two ways Charlie's drink can be made but for convenience they usually serve the simple version which is composed of lemonade, cranberry juice, and Sprite. However the original drink was made with pineapple, cranberry, orange juice, grenadines and a splash of Sprite which has more of a punch and almost tastes like a real cocktail.

Freedman said that he has been excited since they have opened and that Wildwood's staff is making progress every day. He said they always try to accommodate to their customers requests as much as possible.

Stop by Wildwood Tavern for great BBQ, pizza and other delicious dinner items, as well as friendly service.

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Half a Life, but a Whole Heart

Stacie Polk

"Half a life ago, I killed a girl," began internationally-bestselling writer, Darin Strauss, as he read the first line from his memoir, "Half a Life."

Published in 2010, "Half a Life" details the far-reaching ramifications of the tragic moment when a female classmate riding her bike, swerved in front of Strauss' car and he killed her. Although police determined that the accident was unavoidable, much of the book follows Strauss as he spends much of his life blaming himself and coming to terms with his responsibility.

"The temptation with a memoir often, is to forgive yourself on every page," answered Strauss, when asked about the craft of writing a memoir. "You have to sort of be the opposite. You sort of have to be the prosecutor and ask yourself at every turn, you know—'Was I doing the right thing? What was I doing wrong with my character there?'—because you have to see yourself as just a character."

The cathartic process of writing the book helped Strauss heal the guilt and shame he carried for decades about the accident.

The idea for the book grew out of an appearance of "This American Life." In 2008, Strauss guest starred on an episode entitled "Life After Death" where the writer talked about the effects the accident had

on his life. In the book, he expands on that and in 2011, "Half a Life" won the National Book Critics Circle Award.

Strauss is best known for his novels "Chang & Eng," "The Real McCoy," and "More Than It Hurts You." His work has been recognized by "Newsweek," the "Los Angeles Times," the "Chicago Tribune," "NPR," and even the "New York Times" prestigious column "Notable Books." His books have been translated into 14 languages and published in 19 countries.

He is an associate professor at NYU's creative writing program.

Strauss' reading was part of the Visiting Writers Series, a popular event where bestselling authors from around the world come to NEIU to read their work and partake in a discussion. This year marks the fourth anniversary of the event that grows in popularity with each semester.

The series is curated by NEIU assistant professor in English Alicia Erian, author of the novel "Towelhead," sponsored by Academic Affairs and produced by the Office of Cultural Events with promotional support from the NEIU Art Department.

Strauss was the second writer to appear this year, out of six, each seemingly more powerful than the last.



Darin Strauss reads from his book.

Photo by Stacie Polk

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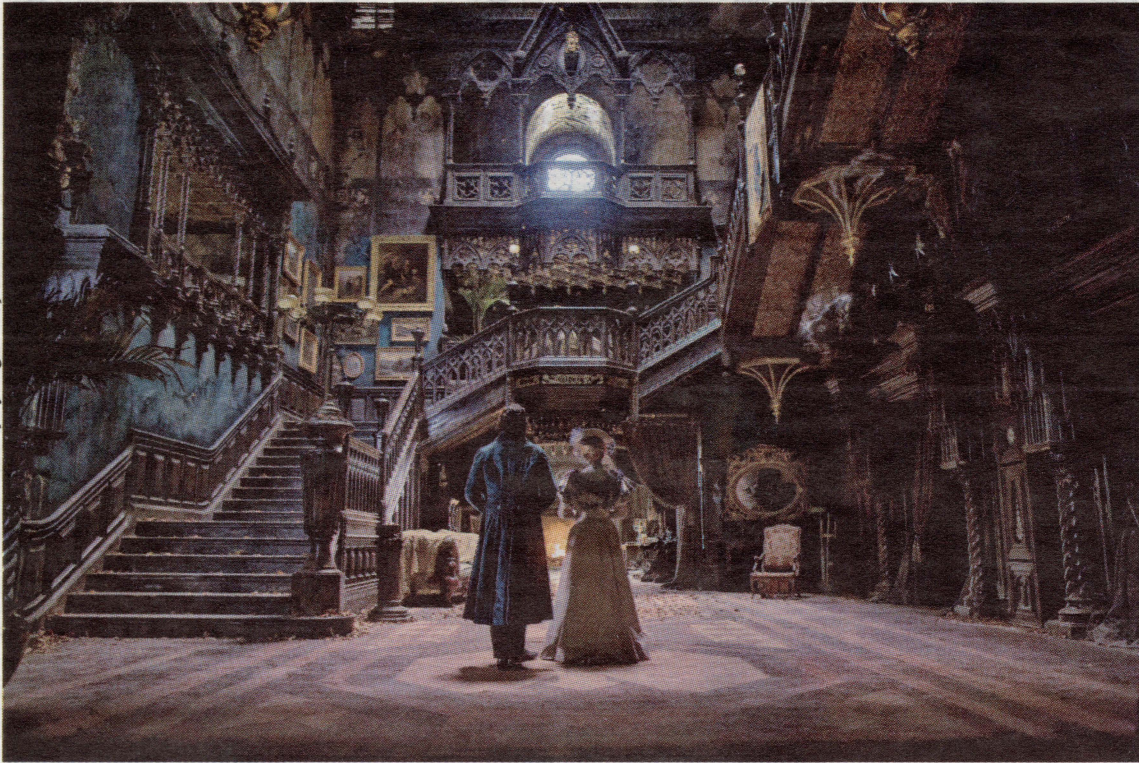


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Thomas Sharpe and Edith Cushing step into Allerdale Hall, a massive three story set with a working elevator.

Crimson Peak: A Gothic Fantasy

Hailey G. Boyle

From the moment the opening credits roll, it is very clear that you are watching a Guillermo del Toro film.

Like his visually stunning "Pan's Labyrinth" a decade earlier, "Crimson Peak" feels like a classic story we should already know. Edith Cushing (Mia Wasikowska) is the daughter of an American business man and aspiring author who prefers ghost stories to romance in the Victorian era.

From a young age, Edith could see ghosts and her mother's ghost visits to give her warnings about the mysterious crimson peak. She meets an English baronet, Sir Thomas Sharpe (Tom Hiddleston) and his sister Lucille (Jessica Chastain.) She marries Thomas and they go to live at his decaying estate, Allerdale Hall. Edith is soon haunted by the ghosts of Thomas' murdered wives that roam the home and wrapped in a mystery about her new husband and sister-in-law that results in a bloody and truly horrific fantasy.

What I loved about "Crimson Peak," and there was a lot to love, was how familiar it felt. It felt like a

story that had been written long ago that everyone was forced to read in high school. Anyone who read and loved Emily Brontë's "Wuthering Heights" or Bram Stoker's "Dracula" by candlelight would recognize those elements in "Crimson Peak." The only downside was the, for lack of better phrasing, simple plot. And what I mean by that is, if you have never read a book or seen a movie before, then you will be shocked by the ending. The good news: no crazy M. Night Shyamalan-level twists.

What really made "Crimson Peak" stand out were the intricate costumes and gorgeous cinematography. The costumes are so detailed and beautiful, Hot Topic will have copies ready for purchase soon.

The visuals are second to none, they are a marvel to look at; it's like gothic candy. I expect no less from del Toro. The scenes in the snow with the red clay look amazing and make up for the modest plot.

What helps elevate this film from dark fantasy into pure horror are the performances. Chastain is terrifying, a quintessential Victorian villain, while Wasikowska is a classic Victorian heroine, up

there with Lizzy Bennet and Jane Eyre, with a few modern additions. Hiddleston is charming as ever and it is nice to see him play a character other than Loki. Please can Tom Hiddleston be in more movies?

The ghosts also don't help make this film anymore lighthearted. They are terrifying smoke creatures that look like decomposing zombies. Again, expect no less from del Toro. I'm still forming theories about why the ghosts are different colors; red, white and black. So far, I think it has to do with the manner of their death and their willingness to pass on or stay put.

But the one thing that's been nagging on my brain: I concede that the house is decrepit and sinking into the ground, but they couldn't fix the damn hole in the roof? There's a massive hole in the roof right as you enter the home. If the Sharpes were only marrying for money, and then murdering the spouses, why couldn't they fix the hole in the roof? Was it so del Toro could have an absolutely stunning set piece that allows snowfall inside? Beautiful as it is, it is the least realistic aspect of this movie; and there are ghosts wandering around.

Seeds Corner

Forest Girl

By Diana Sirb

A child with dark silk hair and bright amber eyes,
full, lush lips and porcelain skin,
young as a fresh doe,
conceived in a forest,
grew up with the forest,
she knows the heart and secret of every tree,
they whisper to her stories and tales of their long, long
lives,
they tell her about the boy,
the wild child that eternally lives among them,
they tell her to keep away from him,
they hide her, hide her from his hunger,
they show her what berries to eat and where to shelter
when it rains,
they raise her heart and mind to grow wise,
until one moonless night,
the boy finds her,
he finds her and he watches,
his coal black eyes looking,
watching her stare back,
they say nothing,
only minutes roll by without a word being said,
only their hearts are in conversation,
one beat after another,
he vanishes,
the trees,
the birds,
the earth holds its breath,
everything stills,
and the girl wanders towards a stream,
sits,
and thinks about the boy's eyes,
days pass by,
the trees whisper to her no more,
only one,
a young pine shudders to itself rather than her,
"Keep away, keep away",
the girl,
fearless, straightens her back,
holds her head up high,
and turns facing the boy,
the boy with a hunger so great,
it could melt her bones,
it could rip her flesh into pieces,
but she takes a step,
and another,
and another,
and takes the boy's hand,
and smiles,
leading him to the shuddering pine,
and places his hand on her weak branch,
his fingertips touch the bark,
and he turns his head towards the girl,
and the tree stops shuddering,
and the trees begin to whisper again,
and the boy,
the boy with the great hunger, simply smiles.

Diana Sirb is currently a student aid at NEIU. Her inspiration motivates her to write pieces that change the way people feel in reading a person's writing. Her dream is to publish a book, but not just any book. Sirb's dream is to publish a book that enables the reader to feel like they were a part of the story. As for her Artistic History: she has collaborated with After School Matters Improv for four years and plans to continue to write short stories, poetry, and create art (drawings, paintings, and photography).

From poetry to prose, to sculptures and photography, SEEDS hopes to provide a medium through which the members of the university community and beyond can showcase their talents in the visual and literary arts. We are the avenue to diversity at NEIU in artistry; it is embraced and encouraged.

Full pdf versions of recent Seeds journals can be found at <https://seedslitjournal.wordpress.com/>.

For information about submission guidelines and deadlines, membership, officer positions and/or available editor positions, please email us at- Seeds.neiu@gmail.com.

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