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Independent - Feb. 26, 2019

Robin Bridges

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NORTHEASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY'S INDEPENDENT

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2019

WWW.NEIUINDEPENDENT.ORG

Student-run newspaper since 1962

VOLUME 38 ISSUE 13



CHICAGO TRIBUNE'S HEIDI STEVENS AND BEST-SELLING AUTHOR, DAVID CULLEN, TALK ABOUT PARKLAND AND HOW REACTING TO MASS SHOOTINGS HAS CHANGED SINCE COLUMBINE AT THE SWEDISH AMERICAN CENTER IN CHICAGO ON FEB. 21. | PHOTO BY AMARIS E. RODRIGUEZ

AUTHOR TALKS PARKLAND, HOW MASS SHOOTINGS CHANGED SINCE COLUMBINE

Amaris E. Rodriguez
OPINIONS AND CO-MANAGING EDITOR
NEIUOPsEditor@gmail.com

New York Times bestselling author, David Cullen, sat down with Chicago Tribune columnist

Heidi Stevens on Thursday, Feb. 21, to discuss his new book, "Parkland: Birth of a Movement," at the Swedish American Museum.

Cullen, who is a New York Times Best Selling author for his previous work on the first mass school shooting to rock the nation

"Columbine," has written for Vanity Fair, BuzzFeed, Politico Magazine and The Washington Post about tragedy.

The event was coordinated by Women & Children First, an independent bookstore in Andersonville, but due to the

overwhelming support, the event had to be moved to a bigger space.

Stevens led the discussion, asking Cullen about his work specifically with the students of Parkland, who started a movement regarding gun control across the nation after the mass shooting at

their high school that killed 17 people on Feb. 14, 2018.

Cullen discussed that the difference between Columbine and Parkland was that the students knew

PARKLAND / PAGE 8

INSIDE NEWS

The Independent newspaper won three awards at the Illinois College Press Association convention. SEE PAGE 3

NEWS

NEIU is now using kiosks to ask students questions.

SEE PG. 2

OPINIONS

Let's talk about nipples.

SEE PG. 9

ARTS AND LIFE

The Smokey Norful photo-spread is divine.

SEE PG. 14

ONLINE EXCLUSIVES

Visit neiuindependent.org for more news stories and exclusive event coverage.

LET US KNOW!

NEXT ISSUE IS OUT MARCH 12. Our office is located in E-049 at the main campus.

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The Independent is a public forum for all of Northeastern Illinois University's campuses and surrounding community. The Independent is entirely student-run and is published bi-weekly, except during summer and semester breaks. The editor-in-chief is responsible for the content of the Independent, and views presented do not necessarily represent those of the administration, faculty and students. The Independent is a member of the ICPA, CMA and ACP. For further details email: theneiuIndependent@gmail.com.

NEIU'S KIOSKS WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

Amaris E. Rodriguez
OPINIONS & CO-MANAGING EDITOR
NEIUOpsEditor@gmail.com

On Feb. 4, NEIU's Division Student's Affair launched their new "student interaction survey" kiosks in hopes of receiving feedback from students. The program, which had been in the works since the fall semester of last year, began with wanting to get a sense of student interactions with departments.

The Division Student's Affair initiative is through Vice President Lopez, who created a committee led by Doug Lawson, director of Student Disability Services.

Kyle Burke, director of Student Union, Event and Conference Services, is also part of the committee.

"We wanted these to be super quick interactions. We all know people get survey fatigue, we all know people will stop taking the survey if it is too long. I was at the post office one day and as I was leaving there was a little kiosk that was like 'How was your experience?' and you just touched one of the emojis.

"And I was like, that is pretty much what we need, just some sort of device where people will take a quick- less than 30 seconds- basic feedback... It is important for various reasons, we wanted anonymity, we didn't want enough to identify unless they wanted too," said Burke.

There are 10 survey kiosks throughout the main campus at all of the main student affairs offices including student leadership development, career counseling, health services, the welcome desk, the nest and the Pedrosa Center.

Lawson said, "This kiosk is attempting to measure the experience students have when interacting with the various DSA offices. Later in the semester we will be rolling out our Student Satisfaction Survey to go even deeper into the student experience when using Student Affairs services programs."

The survey kiosk welcomes students with: "Ready to start? Participation is 100% voluntary and confidential!" The instructions then ask students to choose a thumbs up or thumbs down. Picking between emojis that represent "terrible," "bad," "good" and "excellent," students answer how their interaction with the staff from that department went that day.

Questions also include if the staff was able to assist in a professional manner and if the student felt like they were helped. The survey also gives students the phone number for the Student Affairs direct line should they need further assistance.

As of Feb. 21, 596 surveys have been completed. According to Lawson, over 80 percent of the data that has been measured has been positive.

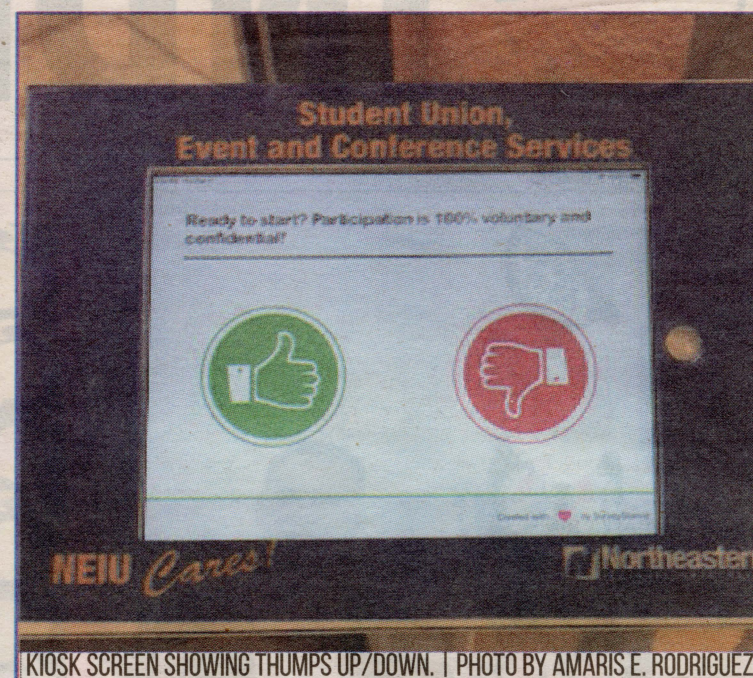
The "pilot program" as referred to by Burke, will run through the end of this semester in hopes of setting a baseline of data. "It is a pilot program of will students interact with us and talk to us?" Burke said, "We want students to feel that their voices are heard."

Lawson says the program is a starting point to find ways to move forward.

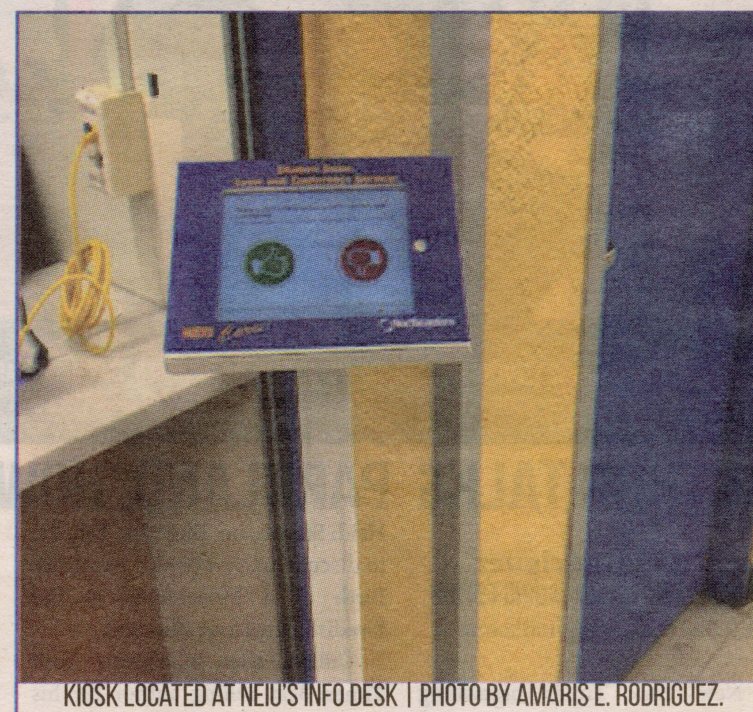
He says, "We will use spring 2019 semester as a baseline for our data. We don't know what numbers we will get. We've never done this type of survey before. Once the semester is over. We will suspend the program over summer to see what the data is telling us. We will pair it with the Student Satisfaction Survey we are rolling out."

The kiosks, however, aren't free. According to Burke, each kiosk cost \$45 per month to maintain.

Regarding where the money for the rentals came from, Lawson said, "Each Director from each Student Affair department had to allocate money from our respective budgets toward the rentals; to show our commitment to this program."



KIOSK SCREEN SHOWING THUMPS UP/DOWN. | PHOTO BY AMARIS E. RODRIGUEZ.



KIOSK LOCATED AT NEIU'S INFO DESK | PHOTO BY AMARIS E. RODRIGUEZ.

The survey kiosks aren't the only ones that will be installed at NEIU. Lawson said there are future plans to bring more opportunity for student feedback. He says, "Also, there are a couple other surveys coming out from other departments in other divisions as well. In the fall 2019, NEIU will have the University Campus Climate

survey as well. All this data will help us form a better conversation within the Division of Student Affairs and from there we discuss what changes need be made. We will re-roll it out in Fall 2019 to see if the changes we've implemented had the desired effect."



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: ARTS AND LIFE EDITOR, ROBERT KUKLA; OPINIONS AND CO-MANAGING EDITOR, AMARIS E. RODRIGUEZ; EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, ROBIN BRIDGES; NEWS AND CO-MANAGING EDITOR, NICOLE F. ANDERSON; AND WRITER AND COMIC ARTISTS, JOANNA VAKLIN POSES WITH THEIR THREE AWARDS AT THE ICPA CONFERENCE.

INDEPENDENT WINS THREE MORE AWARDS

Nicole F. Anderson
NEWS AND CO-MANAGING EDITOR
NEIUNewEditor@gmail.com

NEIU's student-run newspaper, the Independent, took home three awards at the Illinois College Press Association, (ICPA) convention in Chicago, Illinois, on Saturday, Feb. 15. Opinions Editor, Amaris E. Rodriguez, received honorable mention for headline writing; former Editor-in-Chief, Cecilia Hernandez received honorable mention for best opinions story; and the staff as a whole placed for best front page.

Independent Opinions Editor, Amaris E. Rodriguez, said, "This year we took as many editors and staff writers as possible to be able to submerge ourselves in the world of journalism... I was surprised to have won an honorable mention for headline writing and honored to have been able to contribute to our ever increasing number of awards."

ICPA is where journalists and advisers from two and four year colleges in Illinois attend sessions in varying array of journalism topics led by professional journalists and experts. These sessions are another way to teach student journalists

how to become better at their craft and excel in their careers after graduation.

Joanna Vaklin, a writer and comic artist with the Independent, said, "The ICPA conference was filled with passionate students of journalism, and it invigorated me and the rest of the Independent team. ICPA was my first journalism conference, so I was inspired when I saw all of the schools that put time and dedication into the creation of their newspapers."

"The workshops allowed us to have a peek into the journalism career with speakers that work for big time newspapers. The conference made me motivated to be part of making the Independent important and engaging to NEIU and the community."

This year, ICPA held sessions such as: Covering City Hall (in Chicago or on your campus); Becoming a Campus Watchdog with Data and Public Records; Sales for a New Era; Landing a Meaningful Internship; Everyone Has an Opinion; amongst others. Along with the sessions and awards, the student newspaper staff members are given the opportunity

to have their paper critiqued by a professional journalist to receive insight on what does and doesn't work.

Independent Arts and Life Editor, Robert Kukla, said, "Conventions are important because it gives students who are pursuing a career in journalism or publishing a chance to network and build connections with fellow students around the country, and potential employers...The more you have up your sleeves in skills, the better chances of getting ahead in the industry."

Every year, the Independent competes against two and four-year college newspapers at ICPA such as the Columbia Chronicle (Columbia College Chicago); the Daily Egyptian (Southern Illinois University Carbondale); DePaulia (DePaul University); Chicago Flame (University of Illinois-Chicago); amongst others. Within the next three weeks, the Independent staff will attend the Associated College Press convention in La Jolla, California, and the College Media Association in New York City, New York.

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OPINIONS AND CO-MANAGING EDITOR, AMARIS E. RODRIGUEZ, POSES WITH HER AWARD AND THE FORMER NEIU MEDIA ADVISER, TRAVIS TRUITT, AT THE ICPA CONFERENCE.

STUDENT V. NEIU LAWSUIT UPDATE

Nicole F. Anderson
NEWS AND CO-MANAGING EDITOR
NEIUNewsEditor@gmail.com

In July 2018, NEIU student Curtis K. Jackson Sr. filed a civil rights complaint against NEIU and more than 12 employees on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) violations. As reported by

the Independent on Jan. 22, several of the defendants were dropped from the suit, leaving only three. Currently, there are no updates on the case. There have been several documents filed with the Illinois legal system requesting more time.

The next status hearing has been reset for March 12, 2019 at 9 a.m.

The Independent will continue to keep the community up-to-date on this issue. For more information about the lawsuit, please visit the NEIUIndependent.org to read the Jan. 22 article or use the following QR code:



ATTENTION NEIU COMMUNITY: IF YOU HAVE A
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ERIN BROCKOVICH AT NEIU

Nicole F. Anderson
NEWS & CO-MANAGING EDITOR
NEIUNewsEditor@gmail.com

The auditorium on main campus, opened to the public on Feb. 25 for a talk led by environmental activist, Erin Brockovich, as a part of the fifth installment of the Daniel L. Goodwin Distinguished Lecture Series.

Brockovich received national attention after leading an investigation which discovered the Pacific Gas and Electric company had been poisoning water in Hinkley, California, for more than 30 years.

The Hinkley townsfolk suffered major health problems due to the water contamination. The story of

Brockovich's findings was picked up by Hollywood and made into a film, where Julia Roberts played Brockovich.

To read about the event, visit our website: NEIUIndependent.com to view the full article.



STUDENT LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

EVENTS APPROVED FOR FUNDING BY COC FEB 7TH AND FEB 14TH

Sigma Gamma Rho
Women's Worth
Conference
\$1500

Pre-SOMA
Social
\$119.34

Muslim Students
Association
Islamic Glass Art
\$500

SACNAS
Women in STEM
Panel
\$179.46

Omega Delta Phi,
Theta Chi Omega
Back to 90s Prom
\$173.39

H&PE
SHAPE Conference
\$1,040.61

CSS
Computer Science
Alumni Panel
\$349.10

Alpha Psi Lambda
Stroll Competition
\$295.29

Black Heritage
Gospel Choir
Performance
\$945

Gamma Phi Omega
Borderless Dreams
\$2475

Gamma Phi Omega
Mr. GPhiO
\$393.07

STUDENT LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

THURSDAY, FEB 28
Freshmen Meetup
Pedroso Center
3pm-4pm

MONDAY, MARCH 4TH
Diversity Week Kick Off
Village Square
12pm-4pm

COBM-SAC

MARCH 4 AND MARCH 5
International Business Conference
Alumni Hall • All Day

NORTHEASTERN PROGRAMMING BOARD

MONDAY, MARCH 11TH
Flower Empower
Village Square • 12pm-4pm

TUESDAY, MARCH 5TH
Hands Up for Diversity!
Village Square
12pm-4pm

WED, MARCH 6TH
Diversity Film: Spiderman:
Into the Spider-Verse
Alumni Hall
5:30pm-9pm

THURSDAY, MARCH 7TH
Diversity Food Fest
Village Square
12pm-4pm

SENATE UPDATES

Student Government Association members are part of various committees aimed to better NEIU. If you have any concerns or issues please visit the SGA offices located in the lower level of the E building near Health Services.



If you need accommodations to attend these or any University event, please contact Student Disability Services within 48 hours of the time of the event at (773) 442-4595 or SDS@neiu.edu.

JOHN FOUNTAIN POURS OUT WISDOM TO NEIU STUDENTS

Kenisha Hoskins
WRITER

John W. Fountain is a man of many hats: a Chicago Sun-Times journalist, professor, author and publisher.

On Feb. 20, Fountain held a talk titled, "Our Stories Matter," at NEIU's Jacob Carruthers Center for Inner City Studies in Bronzeville in honor of Black History Month.

This date was no coincidence. Feb. 20, 1895, Frederick Douglass, known as the Lion of Anacostia, died.

Douglass was a historical figure known for his powerful evolution from a fugitive slave to famed orator and author of "My Bondage and My Freedom." This date was used as a precedent to help set the tone for his intended message, "Our Stories Matter."

In the beginning of the talk, Fountain stated, "Until the lion learns how to write, every story will glorify the hunter. We must tell our own stories. Tell the story. Let our voices resound; Let it ring from the depths of our souls, wet with the tears of our ancestors, that it may fertilize the ground."

In the above quote, Fountain demonstrated and appreciated the historical power of Sankofa. He expressed the importance of knowing one's cultural history, reaching back and connecting with ancestors, and understanding the importance of telling our own story.

Fountain said, "Let not our dreams of writing be deferred to fester and run. Tell our stories in the fullness of their redemptive splendor; filled with the myriad complexities of life, love, and tender. Memories of rhapsodies and countless subtleties of our world, and our time; pungent with the fragrance of our music; our rhythms, and our rhymes of what obstacles we face, of those we embraced, of those who obstructed; and of those who denied us justice. Tell the story of how we overcame."

He described how despite

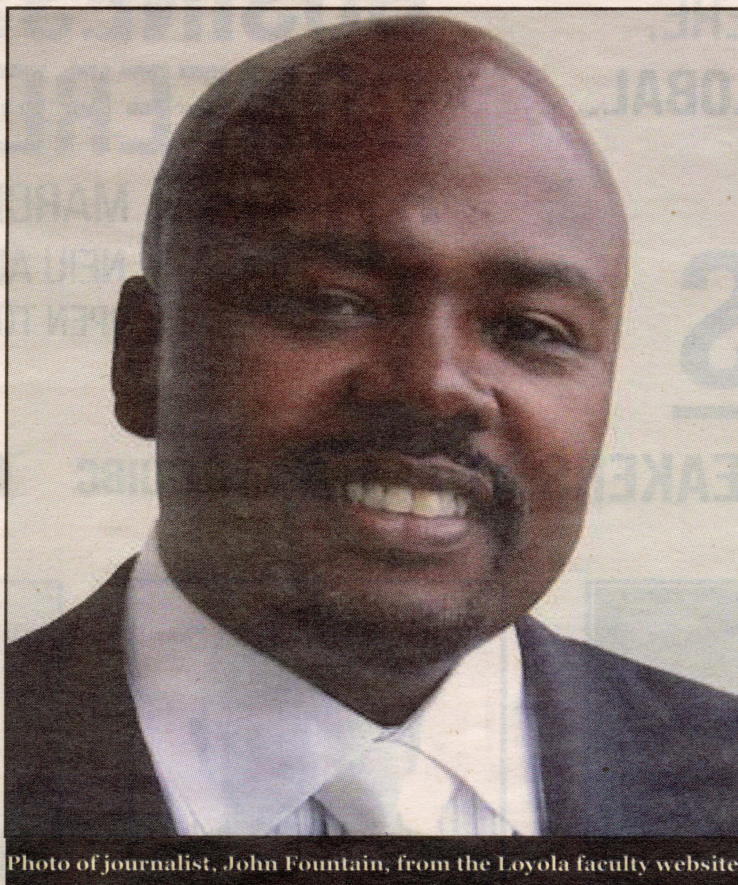


Photo of journalist, John Fountain, from the Loyola faculty website.

stereotypes, media and false literature used to stagnate and marginalize a people; the tools of writing, reading and voice must be used to uplift and motivate us to tell our stories correctly.

"I was inspired to become more vocal about my story and where I come from while supporting other cultural backgrounds doing the same," Vice President of Inner City Scholars, Andrew Calderon, said.

Fountain covered three important subtopics in his talk; why our stories matter, why we must tell our own stories and how we can effectively tell these stories.

During the talk, Fountain vented about his frustration with trying to report crime in specific areas while working as a crime reporter for the Chicago Tribune.

Fountain said, "Truth is, murder and other crimes that occurs in certain communities are not

considered news but the norm."

He explained we must tell our stories because we don't need anyone else to write our story; editors decide what stories go in the newspaper. There are few editors of color. Fountain said, "No outside tongue gifted in eloquence, can tell our story."

In order to effectively tell a story, Fountain argued one must first realize there is a story to tell: your story. Once this is realized, the next step is to hone and be proud of your story.

With a short PowerPoint presentation with slave narratives playing loudly, Fountain used historical context to support the importance of our story and why it actually matters. Even the most marginalized voice can be heard; it's about being brave enough to open it, despite consequences.

The event concluded with a small Q & A.

"I was inspired to hear how John Fountain aspired to become a journalist. It was very moving and inspirational. It was warming how relatable and conversational he was," Administrative Assistant Barbara Stovall said.

Born and raised on the west side of Chicago, Fountain's a true Chicago native.

Despite his upbringing and economic instability, Fountain graduated from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

He's the author of several works including "True Vine: A Young Black Man's Journey of Faith, Hope, and Clarity," and "Dear Dad: Reflections on Fatherhood." He's a journalism professor at Ro

osevelt University and writes Sunday columns for the Chicago Sun-Times.

Fountain has been a reporter for some of the nations top newspapers.

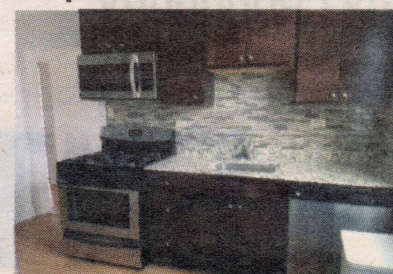
He was a staff writer at the Washington Post, chief crime reporter at the Chicago Tribune and national correspondent for the New York Times.

Throughout 25 years of journalism, Fountain has done most of his work reporting on the murders in Chicago and has prided himself on speaking on behalf of those marginalized and silenced.

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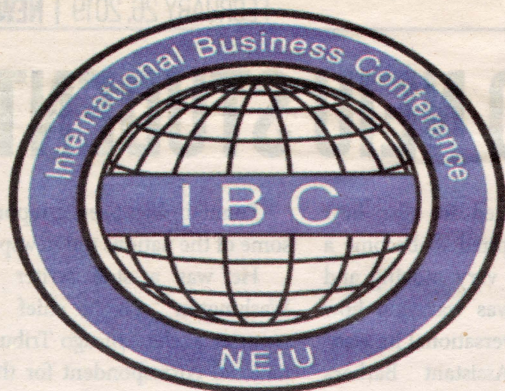
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SPEAKERS

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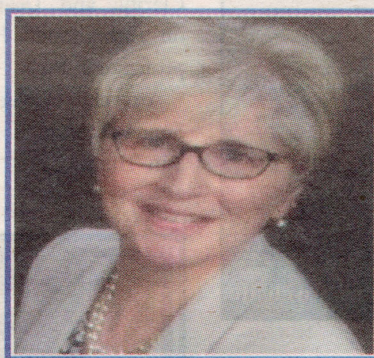
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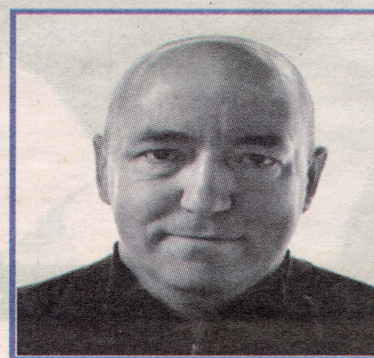
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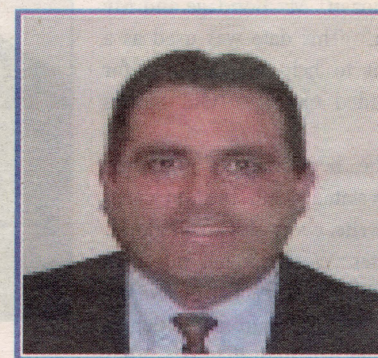
RAJA ROY CHOUDHURY



BETTY FLASCH



JOSE IGNACIO SORDO
GALARZA



BRIAN BUTLER

ENTERTAINMENT

BLACK HERITAGE GOSPEL CHOIR



THE UPS AND DOWNS OF NEIU ELEVATORS: GETTING TRAPPED, LATE CERTIFICATES

Luísa Soares
WRITER

People use the elevators every day at NEIU to get to their classes, jobs or study groups. On Feb. 11 at 8:05 p.m., an elevator in Bernard Brommel Hall (BBH) building on NEIU's main campus short-circuited due to a burnt transformer behind the north elevator's room, smelling of smoke and setting off the fire alarm. The incident happened at BBH while it being occupied by students, professors and staff members. The Chicago Fire Department arrived at the scene and determined there wasn't any fire or injuries. According to Director of Strategic Communications, Mike Hines, the university has ordered a new motor to put the elevator back in service. Hines also confirmed that NEIU has an annual service contract for maintenance that includes weekly visits. "Our most recent inspection at all locations of NEIU took place in the fall of 2018 but we have not received yet the certificates to check them out," Hines said.

When asked about the reason behind the equipment shorting out, Hines said that there was no apparent reason because sometimes components just fail. NEIU's Police Superintendent, John Escalante, believes that this kind of problem happens dozens of times in

elevators across the city. "I mean it's just either electrical or mechanical and it's just like anything else — like your car burning out at times. Occasionally, you are going to get a transformer that burns out," Escalante said.

The certificates are posted in the elevators and according to the university, they're inspected at least once every 12 months by the Chicago Department of Buildings. An issue the university has is waiting to receive the certificates; however, while documenting all of NEIU's elevator certificates, one was found in the Jerome M. Sachs Administration Building that had two certificates: one stating it was last serviced in 2001 and the other stating it last serviced in 2010. This elevator in particular wasn't working on the day the certificate was checked. Hines said that the university is waiting for the new certificates and that "the delay is not uncommon."

Another frequent problem of NEIU's elevators are people getting stuck, especially in the Ronald Williams Library elevators, Escalante confirmed. On Nov. 1 2019, according to the NEIU police blotter, several students were stuck but were released before officers arrived. It also happened on Nov. 12 at the Nest, where a girl was trapped inside and needed the staff's help to get out. "Don't panic if you get stuck

FIRE ALARM		
Report Disposition	Method of Reporting	Related Number:
Report Recorder	Manager/Supervisor On Duty	2019-02-11-06008
JOSEPH EVERSOLE	SCHULZ, JOHN	Manager/Supervisor Notified
Incident Occurred Date	Incident Occurred End Date	YES
02/11/2019 at 8:05 PM	02/11/2019 at 8:30 PM	Incident Discovered / Called In
Location	Specific Location	02/11/2019 at 8:07 PM
BERNARD BROMMEL HALL	5450 N ST. LOUIS AVE CHICAGO, IL 60625 (NOT SPECIFIED)	
Report Synopsis/Overview		
*** Dispatch Information ***		
Dispatch Initial Call Type: FIRE ALARM		
Dispatch Final Call Type: FIRE ALARM		
Officer Times (userid: dis/enr/arr/ldr):		
PAUL WHITFIELD (70026): 08:07 PM//08:32 PM		
JOSEPH EVERSOLE (70020): 08:12 PM//08:32 PM		
Dispatch Notes:		
HONEYWELL FIRE ALARM STATING "SCIENCE - NOTIFIER FIRE ALARM SYSTEM"; OFC WHITFIELD EN ROUTE, TC STICKEL NOTIFYING ENGINEERS		
2/11/2019 08:10 PM OFC EVERSOLE STATES CFD TURNED ON ST LOUIS HEADING TO BBH, BUILDING ON CITY TIE; OFC EVERSOLE EN ROUTE; OFC WHITFIELD ON SCENE WITH ENGINEERS, STATES SMELL OF SMOKE NEAR 1ST FLOOR PANEL		
2/11/2019 08:13 PM OFC EVERSOLE ON SCENE WITH CFD ENGINES 56 AND 89		
2/11/2019 08:18 PM SOURCE IDENTIFIED AS BBH-196A ELEVATOR MACHINE ROOM, CFD INVESTIGATING		

A PORTION OF THE NEIU POLICE REPORT REGARDING THE ELEVATOR INCIDENT. NEIUPD REPORT 2019-0051 PROVIDED BY NEIU'S VICE PRESIDENT AND GENERAL COUNSEL AND FOIA OFFICER, MELISSA REARDON HENRY.

in the elevator because occasionally it happens, although it's not an everyday occurrence," Escalante said.

He also stated that people should use the emergency phone

located in the elevator and if that is not working, call the NEIU police at (773) 442-4100 or use their mobile app 911 Shield. The Independent attempted to interview Anderson Elevator, the company that services

the main campus each week to perform elevator maintenance, but weren't able for comment at time of print.

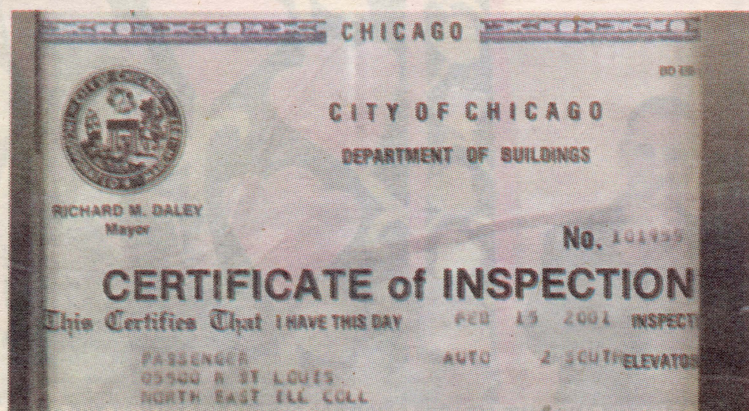


PHOTO OF EXPIRED ELEVATOR CERTIFICATE DATING FROM 2001. CERTIFICATE WAS PHOTOGRAPHED BY LUÍSA SOARES IN EARLY FEB. 2019 IN THE SACHS BUILDING.

MARCH 4, 2019
10:00AM AT ALUMNI HALL
OPEN TO THE PUBLIC. COMPLIMENTARY BREAKFAST.

ANDREW SWINAND
Leo Burnett
CEO, LEO BURNETT NORTH AMERICA
CO-FOUNDER, ARDENT VENTURE PARTNERS

NEIU POLICE BLOTTER: 02/08-20

THE FOLLOWING HAPPENED ON THE NEIU CAMPUSES FROM FEB. 08 TO FEB. 20, 2019:

Feb. 8 - El Centro: A power outage in the area caused the fire alarm to go off. The fire department and NEIU police responded. There wasn't any smoke nor fire found.

Feb. 10 - The Nest: A resident snuck

in an unauthorized guest and refused to let them leave when asked. Subject eventually complied and guest left without incident.

Feb. 10 - Access Road by P.E.B.: A driver issued two state citations and a I-Bond for failure to stop at a stop sign and driving on a suspended license. A court date was issued.

Feb. 10 - Station Information: Player injured after accidentally colliding with another player during a soccer match. Players were offered EMS but refused assistance.

Feb. 11 - Bernard Brommel Hall: Fire and police department responded to a fire alarm that was set off by an issue with a hydraulic pump in an elevator. No smoke nor fire was

found; the alarm was reset.

Feb. 14 - Parking Lot C: NIEU officer responded to a report of a damaged parking meter in the lot. Damage appeared to be damaged due to weather and ice that knocked the meter out of place.

Feb. 20 - NEIU Police Office: An NEIU employee walked into the

police station upset about a work-related suspension notice. Employee was given information on steps to take with the union representative. Employee eventually calmed down and left.

Feb. 20 - Bernard Brommel Hall: Student was very distraught over losing their backup and laptop.

PARKLAND

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

regarding gun control across the nation after the mass shooting at their high school that killed 17 people on Feb. 14, 2018.

Cullen discussed that the difference between Columbine and Parkland was that the students knew what to do and reacted differently than from previous incidents. Cullen recalls seeing an interview with David Hogg, a student who survived the shooting at Parkland, who said, "I watched the whole thing on the elevator and my first thought was: 'This is not a day one survivor. They aren't like this.' I was amazed like everybody the first time they saw him but I thought 'that's one in a million.'"

Incidents like Parkland are becoming more prevalent and casualty numbers due to mass shootings are rising. According to The Washington Post, since 1966, there have been 1,153 people killed in mass shootings in the U.S. This number includes the victims of the Henry Pratt Company shooting in Aurora last week when a disgruntled employee opened fire for being terminated.

Gun violence in Chicago has been a topic of great controversy for years. In August of last year, 66 people were shot in one weekend: 12 of them died. Students from Parkland embarked on a nationwide tour to aimed to curb gun violence, making Chicago their first stop on June 15. Cullen talked about why the Parkland students focused on Chicago and aimed to bring

awareness to the lack of attention the media has given local teenagers regarding gun violence, some of whom ended up being in his book.

As Cullen discussed with Stevens, this is also a testament with how media savvy people are now and how that has pushed the movement forward. "Hoggs started filming his documentary while he was in lockdown, interviewing people and getting commentary. He got home and decided he needed B roll. He went back," said Cullen.

"The reason he did that documentary is because he decided: 'If I die in here, I want help to make sure this doesn't happen again and I am going to leave a powerful record of what it is like to die, to await your death and be gunned down,'" said Cullen.



HEIDI STEVENS AND DAVE CULLEN SMILE FOR THE CAMERA AFTER THE TALK. | PHOTO BY AMARIS E. RODRIGUEZ.



DAVE CULLEN'S BOOK, "PARKLAND" IS NOW AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE. | PHOTO BY AMARIS E. RODRIGUEZ.



HEIDI STEVENS AND DAVE CULLEN CONVERSE DURING THE TALK AT THE AMERICAN SWEDISH CENTER. | PHOTO BY AMARIS E. RODRIGUEZ.

THE INDEPENDENT IS THE STUDENT VOICE, WHY NOT USE YOURS?

Nicole F. Anderson
NEWS AND CO-MANAGING EDITOR
NEIUNewEditor@gmail.com

There's a gold mine of interesting stories to tell at NEIU. Every person here, whether they believe it or not, has an interesting story waiting to be told. It's not the facilities, the classes or campuses that make NEIU special, it's the students and faculty.

But here's the thing: we need you to talk to us so we can tell those stories. In every issue of the Independent, we put in ads to become a part of the student voice by joining the newspaper or sending us story tips. As the news editor for the Independent, the most common complaint I receive is that the news section is not diverse enough because we're not covering enough of

main campus, El Centro or the Carruthers. My response is always the same, asking the person if they would like to write about something going on at main campus, El Centro or the Carruthers and send it to me. This is when I'll receive the excuse that they don't have the time to do it.

Things that matter take time and I believe that if you're upset enough to complain about an event, person or topic not being covered, it deserves your time. Trying to cover the different campuses, expansive the range of topics, events and organizations is a constant struggle. Our newspaper staff is on the smaller side and we can only be in so many places at once.

This is where the NEIU community comes in: to inform you, you need to inform us. The Independent is the student voice and in order

to maintain the aforementioned statement, we need you to communicate with us. Stop into the office or send us an email. Talk to us about how you made a few thousand dollars on cryptocurrency, about the five full-marathons you've completed or the twelve dogs you have. Tell us about your professor who has changed your life and made you love a subject that you once disliked, about how compassionate they are towards their students. We want to hear about it and meet you and them.

If your organization is hosting an event, send us an email, preferably a few days beforehand, stop in the office or even slip a flyer under our door. We want to go. Perhaps you're upset about something that happened on campus or have questions on an NEIU related topic and want us

to look into it. While we can't write about every single event, organization or person, letting us know means you are on our radar and that's important. We can't write about what we don't know is happening.

We would love if more students joined the newspaper to cover these things because it's so much more important and beneficial than just adding an extracurricular activity to your resume. You get the opportunity to document NEIU history, build relationships with people on campus, challenge yourself, learn new things, experience what it feels like to see your name printed on a byline and most importantly, you become a part of the student voice.

We can't be the student voice of NEIU if you don't voice yours.

MEN VS WOMEN: EVERYONE HAS NIPPLES. WHY CAN'T WE SEE HER'S?

Rebecca Denhem
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR
NEIUNewsEditor@gmail.com

On Feb. 3, Maroon 5 played the halftime show at Super Bowl LIII. At the end of the performance, lead singer Adam Levine ripped off his weird rug-patterned tank top and exposed his torso to the crowd. The female fans went wild and there were many subsequent repostings of his tattooed abs.

But I recall a much darker time, filled with low-rise jeans and Justin Timberlake - post N*SYNC. The year was 2004 and during the halftime show of Super Bowl XXXVIII, Janet Jackson's breast was exposed during the duet of Timberlake's "Rock Your Body."

In what was later referred to as a wardrobe malfunction, Timberlake ripped away her costuming, Jackson's nipple was not actually seen because she was wearing a decorative nipple shield.

While there was controversy over whether or not the nipple slip was intentional, it sparked large outrage at the time. The FCC attempted to fine CBS \$550,000 for Jackson's performance because it violated their regulations on indecency in broadcasting.

Granted, there is 15-year difference between the performances. But I still find the reactions



to each singer's exposure jarring. Why is it okay for Adam Levine to rip his whole shirt off, but not for Janet Jackson to have a supposedly unintentional wardrobe malfunction?

If anything, I think that Jackson's performance was ahead of its time. The "Free the Nipple" campaign was started in 2012 as a protest to bring attention to the double standard in our society regarding breast exposure. Women's breasts are not allowed to be seen in a public place, risking legal repercussions for indecent exposure or the shame associated with

from showing their breasts, when our nipples actually have a purpose. It is the part of our body that feeds our children. Men's nipples do not serve any sort of utilitarian purpose. The topic of breastfeeding in public has also recently gained more national attention, once again bringing up women's nipples and how many don't want to see them if it is not for sexual reasons.

According to the CDC 19 percent of Americans are not comfortable seeing women breastfeed in public. However, just because someone is not comfortable seeing a mother breastfeed, the laws are on her side. All 50 states have laws protecting a mother's right to breastfeed in public according to the National Conference of State Legislators.

All this, boiled down to two very different endings of the same narrative. A celebrity goes on stage at the Super Bowl to entertain. Both celebrities expose their nipples. One is shamed and threatened with legal retribution; one is cheered for and raved about, despite the fact that he created the worst song ever: "She Will be Loved."

While I am pleased with how far we have come since 2004 in the acceptance of a woman's autonomy, I think we still have a way to go.

breaking social code. Yet, by the same standards, men are allowed to go almost anywhere without a shirt on.

Sure, some establishments have a "no shirt, no shoes, no service" rule. However, men are frequently seen without tops in media at large, and are often praised for it. The media has represented shirtless men as powerful and strong for many decades, but whenever a shirtless woman appears, it is in the context of either shame or sexual promiscuity.

I think it is wild that women are dissuaded

GOLDEN PERSPECTIVES

WHAT DOES KINGDOM HEARTS MEAN TO YOU?

PHOTO BY CHUCK SIBBS



PHOTO BY CHUCK SIBBS

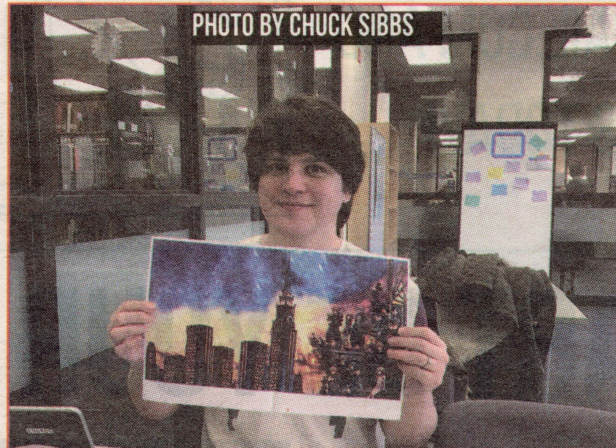


PHOTO BY CHUCK SIBBS



THAT'S A VERY COMPLICATED QUESTION. IT'S A VERY FUN SERIES THAT HAS A STORY THAT DRIVES ME TO INSANITY. IT TO ME SYMBOLIZES THE MINDSET OF BEING A MIDDLE SCHOOLER. I FELT A BIT OF RELIEF THAT KH3 (KINGDOM HEARTS III) CAME OUT, AND A LITTLE SADNESS THAT I CAN'T MAKE FUN OF IT FOR NOT ENDING ANYMORE." **-LUCAS DA CRUZ, SENIOR**

"KINGDOM HEARTS TO ME REPRESENTS CHILDHOOD. SO, FOR MYSELF, I GREW UP PLAYING LOTS OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF VIDEO GAMES AND WHEN I WAS 12-YEARS-OLD, I GOT "KINGDOM HEARTS II" FOR THE FIRST TIME. I WAS NEVER A BIG DISNEY FAN OR ANYTHING LIKE THAT, BUT FOR WHATEVER REASON, THIS GAME REALLY HOOKED ME IN, AND I WOULD PLAY FOR HOURS UPON HOURS UPON HOURS UNTIL I BEAT THE GAME. ONCE I BEAT THE GAME, I DECID-ED TO KIND OF MOVE BACKWARDS AND I GOT "KINGDOM HEARTS I" AND CHAIN OF MEMORIES FOR THE GAMEBOY ADVANCE. SO, FOR MYSELF, IT REPRESENTS A TIME OF INNOCENCE AND A TIME OF KIND OF DISCOVERING WHO I WAS AS A PERSON." **-ROBERT ARMSTRONG, SENIOR**

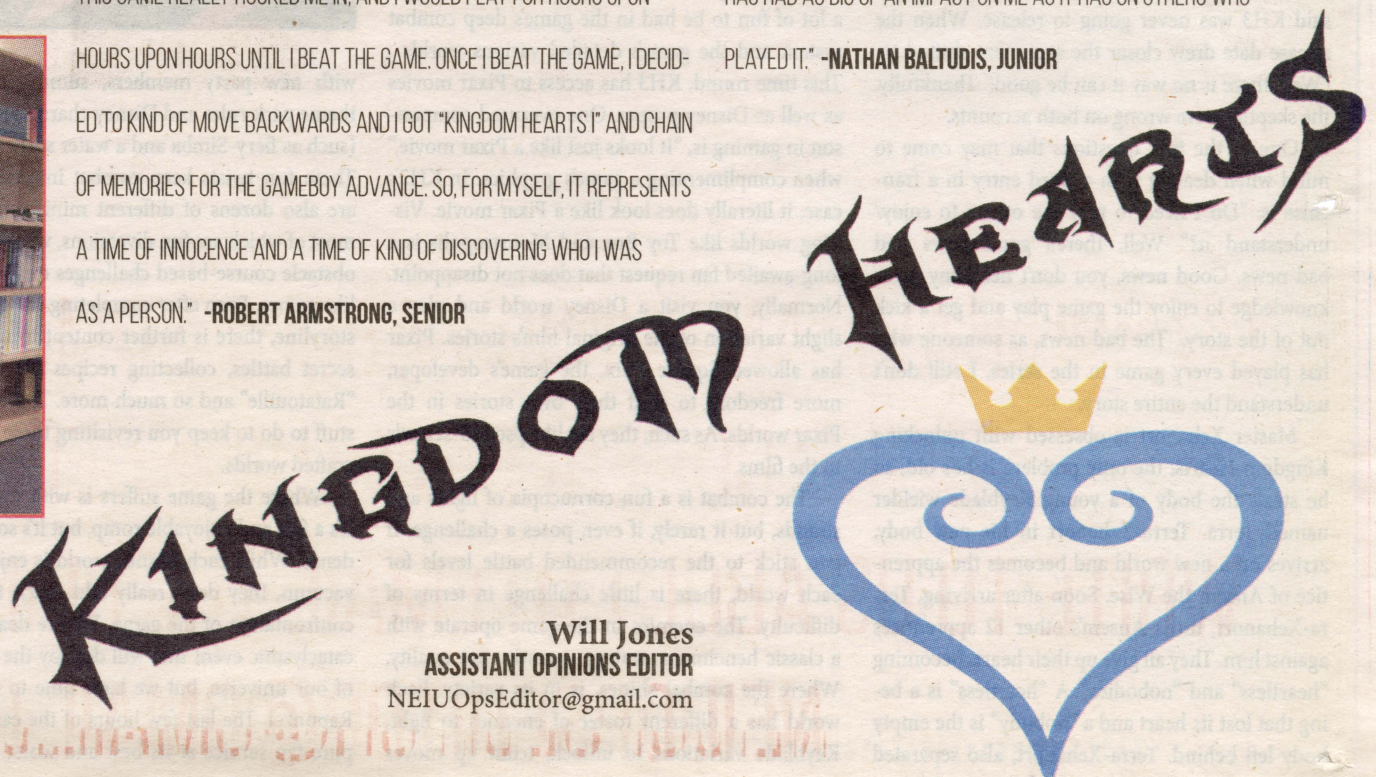
"WELL, IN THE BLUNTNESS OF TERMS, IT'S SORT OF THE FUSION OF TWO, RATHER NICHE FANDOMS, COMING TOGETHER TO FORM SOME, I WOULD SAY LEGACY OF ENTERTAINMENT, OF STORYTELLING. AND TO SOME, IT REPRESENTS QUITE A SIGNIFICANT PART OF THEIR CHILDHOOD. I CAN'T SAY IT HAS HAD AS BIG OF AN IMPACT ON ME AS IT HAS ON OTHERS WHO PLAYED IT." **-NATHAN BALTUDIS, JUNIOR**

PHOTO BY CHUCK SIBBS



"IT'S EPIC, KIND OF EDGY AT THE TIME, LIKE PREPUBESCENT TEEN-AGE DEEP DISNEY THING THAT MAKES NO SENSE AT ALL WHEN I SAY IT OUT LOUD, BUT YOU KNOW THAT'S KIND OF WHAT IT IS."

-HAL MASSEL, SENIOR



Will Jones
ASSISTANT OPINIONS EDITOR
NEIUOpsEditor@gmail.com

WHAT ARE YOU CURRENTLY READING?
 WRITE A REVIEW FOR THE INDEPENDENT!
 SEND THE ARTS AND LIFE EDITOR AN EMAIL
 AT NEUIARTSLIFEEDITOR@GMAIL.COM AND
 PITCH YOUR REVIEW IDEAS TODAY!



LET YOUR HEART BE YOUR GUIDING KEY

Chuck Sipps
 WRITER

"Kingdom Hearts III" (KH3) is a game 14 years in the making. For 14 years, fans have waited with bated breath for the next entry in the franchise. Yes, there have been mobile games and spinoffs, but not a proper sequel. When KH3 was first announced in 2013 there were many skeptics. They said KH3 was never going to release. When the release date drew closer the argument shifted to: "Well, there is no way it can be good." Thankfully, the skeptics were wrong on both accounts.

One of the first questions that may come to mind when dealing with a third entry in a franchise is: "Do I need to play the others to enjoy/understand it?" Well, there's good news and bad news. Good news, you don't need any prior knowledge to enjoy the game play and get a kick out of the story. The bad news, as someone who has played every game in the series, I still don't understand the entire story.

Master Xehanort is obsessed with unlocking Kingdom Hearts, the only problem is he's old, so he steals the body of a young Keyblade wielder named Terra. Terra-Xehanort in his new body, arrives on a new world and becomes the apprentice of Ansem the Wise. Soon after arriving, Terra-Xehanort, turns Ansem's other 12 apprentices against him. They all give up their hearts becoming "heartless" and "nobodies." A "heartless" is a being that lost its heart and a "nobody" is the empty body left behind. Terra-Xehanort, also separated

his heart from his body creating Ansem his heartless, and Xemnas, his nobody. Ansem and Xemnas both try to conquer Kingdom Hearts, but are defeated. Xehanort somehow learns to time travel, so he gathers up a bunch of past and future versions of himself to form 13 darkness, so they can clash with seven warriors of light. Whoever wins gets control of Kingdom Hearts. Make sense? Good, cause Donald Duck is here and he's a wizard.

Confusing and nonsensical story aside, there's a lot of fun to be had in the game's deep combat system and the game's detailed various worlds. This time round, KH3 has access to Pixar movies as well as Disney proper. One overused comparison in gaming is, "It looks just like a Pixar movie," when complimenting a game's graphics. In KH3's case, it literally does look like a Pixar movie. Visiting worlds like Toy Box and Monstropolis is a long-awaited fan request that does not disappoint. Normally, you visit a Disney world and play a slight variation of the original film's stories. Pixar has allowed Square Enix, the game's developer, more freedom to craft their own stories in the Pixar worlds. As such, they act like pseudo-sequels to the films.

The combat is a fun cornucopia of lights and sounds, but it rarely, if ever, poses a challenge. If you stick to the recommended battle levels for each world, there is little challenge in terms of difficulty. The enemies in the game operate with a classic henchmen strategy, quantity not quality. Where the combat shines, is in its variety. Each world has a different roster of enemies to fight, Keyblade variations to unlock, team up moves



SCREENSHOT OF KH3 PROVIDED BY CHUCK SIPPS.

with new party members, summoning Disney theme park rides and Disney characters summons (such as fiery-Simba and a water sprite like Ariel). These fun twists keep combat interesting. There are also dozens of different mini-games to play, most of which are fun diversions, whether they are obstacle course-based challenges or Candy Crush like games. Even after completing the games main storyline, there is further content to unlock with secret battles, collecting recipes for Remi from "Ratatouille" and so much more. There's plenty of stuff to do to keep you revisiting these beautifully crafted worlds.

Where the game suffers is with the storyline. It's a fun and enjoyable romp, but it's so needlessly dense. While each Disney world is enjoyable in a vacuum, they don't really add much to the final confrontation of the game. We are dealing with a cataclysmic event that will destroy the very fabric of our universe, but we have time to dance with Rapunzel. The last few hours of the campaign are pure fan service at its best and worst. If you're a

fan, you'll love that each thread is tied together in a satisfying way. If you're not, then you'll probably ask why Donald is still a wizard. That's not to say you can't derive any enjoyment from it however as a fan of the series, many story beats left me scratching my head just as often pumping my fist with excitement.

Overall, Kingdom Hearts III is an entertaining game that would probably have been better served by coming out a few years earlier than it did. In many ways, it feels like a last generation game that was continuously punted into this generation. The hints littered throughout KH3 for future installments is exciting. Hopefully it doesn't take another 14 years to come out. Despite its flaws, KH3 is a stand out game for fans of the series and of action role-playing games. For a franchise that is nearing 20 years since its first release, Kingdom Hearts III is proof that at its heart, it still has the same magic as the original.

'HAPPY DEATH DAY 2U' PROVES SEQUELS DON'T HAVE TO SUCK

Amaris E. Rodriguez
OPINIONS AND CO-MANAGING EDITOR
NEIUOpsEditor@gmail.com

CONTAINS SPOILERS

Released the day before Valentine's Day, "Happy Death Day 2U" is the presumed unnecessary sequel to "Happy Death Day," a horror-comedy released in 2017 written and directed by Christopher Beau Landon, who created "Paranormal Activity," and a surprise comical hit.

I didn't have high hopes when purchasing my ticket through AMC and was preparing myself to eat overpriced theatre food while watching a bad horror movie.

In case you slept on the first movie, the premise is about a college girl who is murdered on her birthday and lives the same day over again until she can find a way to stop her killer. She succeeds, which is what left many wondering why a sequel was necessary.

"Happy Death Day 2U" doesn't start

off strong, teasing the audience and pretending it's going to focus on Ryan (Phi Vu), a minor and unimportant character from the first film but then shifts over to Tree (Jessica Rothe), once again making her relive her birthday.

The shift from main characters is what saved the movie for me. While Vu might have made an interesting character in a different movie, he wasn't a strong enough comedic actor to carry on the franchise. Rothe, who has appeared in other movies such as "La La Land" and "Forever My Girl," proved to have the comedic style needed to star in a black comedy such as "Happy Death Day."

The movie takes a turn as well when it reveals that the continuous loop of events is caused by Ryan and his friends, who accidentally built a quantum reactor that sends Tree into a different dimension, changing everything she knew about who the killer was and causing her to start all over again. Surprisingly, the movie places Tree in

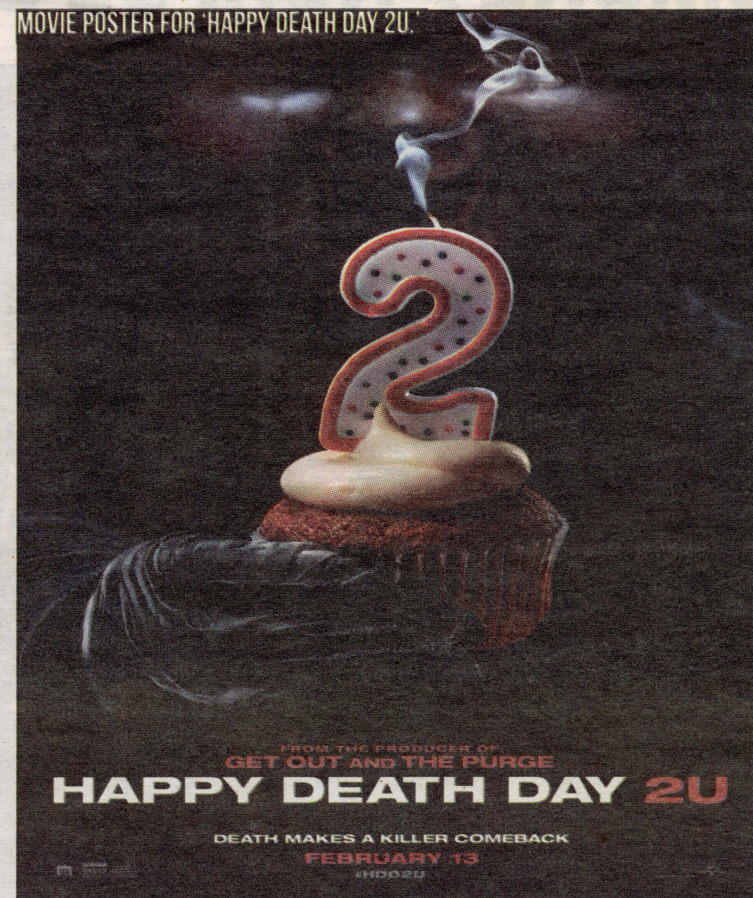
an emotional turmoil having to choose which dimension to stay in, driving the plot of the movie and simultaneously allowing for hilarity as well as deep emotional scenes.

While the movie found an interesting way to continue having Tree relive her days, a trigger warning should be given as it shows Tree committing suicide in many multiple ways in order to try to find out who the new killer is.

According to the Hollywood Reporter, Landon has ideas in mind should there be a demand for the franchise to continue with a third film. Considering the shift and differences made from the first movie to "Happy Death Day 2U," if a third is produced, audiences have no idea what to expect.

"The third movie I know is going to be a little different. It's going to be really bonkers and really fun," he told The Hollywood Reporter.

Here's to another year and hopefully another killer birthday.



SEEDS CORNER: POETRY BY ANGELINA MARTINEZ

OKAY

I was walking down the
 stairs yesterday,
 The bright yellow ones
 With the pretty little flow-
 ers,
 When I saw him float by.
 He looked the same
 Even after all the time we
 spent apart.
 His dark hair seemed to
 glow
 In the light of the fading
 sun
 And his brown eyes looked
 more honey like than ever.
 He wore that red hoodie,
 You know, the one he al-
 ways wore,

The one that had the big
 white words on the chest.
 The one that scream him
 and drew me in.
 He looked the same
 Except he didn't.
 His eyes, while full of color,
 were devoid of life.
 I guess I had changed him.
 His once neat hair
 Was messy and uncombed.
 My guess is he hadn't slept
 in days.
 He looked at me, flashing
 me a tender smile
 One that reminded me of
 last summer.
 But it was over much before

it really began.
 "You look happier." He
 began.
 I guess it was true. I was
 happier.
 I had my glow back, but it
 was his fault I lost it
 I had my smile on, and it
 wasn't fake.
 I had a certain pizzaz
 about me that I had lost.
 But it was his fault that it
 took months to get back.
 I looked at him, and de-
 spite all the hate I held for
 him, I smiled.
 "I am."

I hear it all the time.
 Every single day
 The same question
 Over
 And over.
 How are you?
 How are you feeling?
 How is your day?
 And my answer has always been
 Okay.
 It's an automatic response now
 I'm okay
 I'm wonderful
 I'm just fine.
 Truthfully I'm not fine
 And I haven't been in a really long
 time.
 I don't remember the last time I was

Okay.
 It isn't about how my life is going
 Or how I'm doing at work or school.
 It isn't about what I've been up to
 Or how much fun I've been having.
 Because it has nothing to do
 With the fact that I'm not
 Okay.
 Because being okay, means that
 Mentally
 And physically
 You're happy.
 But with all the judgment in the
 world
 And all the expectations
 How could I be
 Okay?

SMOKEY NORFUL BROUGHT THE HEAT AT NEIU

Derisha D. Rouse
WRITER, PHOTOGRAPHER

On Feb. 15, NEIU organized a concert featuring singer Smokey Norful as part of its Black History Month events occurring the entire month of February. The performance spoke life into the crowd. Speaking to the difficulties that college campuses have including financial and mental challenges. Though students may struggle there is hope for a breakthrough. The concert was so powerful there were tears in people's eyes and shouts of praise. Smokie Norful sang his Grammy winning song "I Need You Now." Norful said he was honored to be at NEIU and thanked the campus leaders for providing him the opportunity to praise and worship. The auditorium was transformed into a place of worship. NEIU student Alex Brown said, "When it comes to Black culture, people tend to forget that faith and spirituality are historically the foundation of how descendants of the African diaspora have endured for centuries. The Black Heritage Committee wanted to ensure that spiritual experience was exemplified here at NEIU and I'm happy it was well received."



GROUP PHOTO OF THOSE INVOLVED WITH THE PERFORMANCE. | PHOTO BY DERISHA D. ROUSE



LEFT TO RIGHT: CHERITA WARREN, JAMIE LYNN HARRIS AND SANDOVIA GARRETT. | PHOTO BY DERISHA D. ROUSE



SANDOVIA GARRETT AND CHERITA WARREN. | PHOTO BY DERISHA D. ROUSE

TORIAN ON PIANO WITH CHERITA WARREN AND SANOVIA GARRETT. | PHOTO BY DERISHA D. ROUSE



TORIAN WITH SANOVIA GARRETT GETTING THEIR GOSPEL ON. | PHOTO BY DERISHA D. ROUSE



NEIU STUDENT DESTINEI MARSHALL PERFORMING IN SIGN LANGUAGE | PHOTO BY DERISHA D. ROUSE



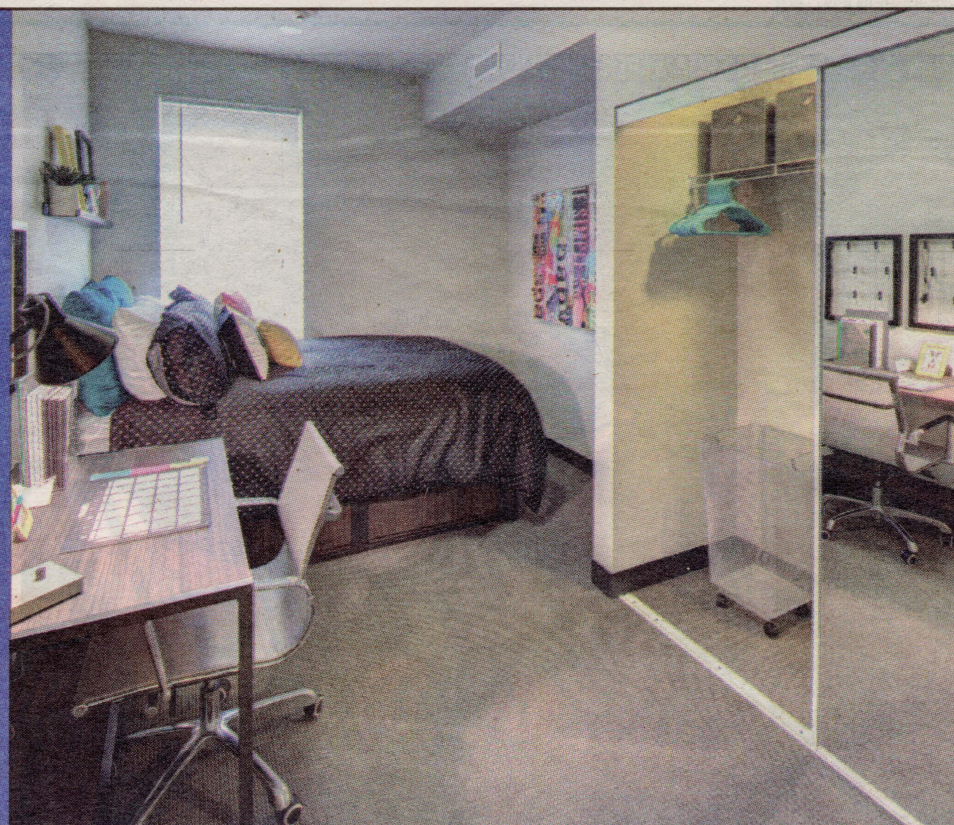
JAMIE LYNN HARRIS STRIKING A POSE. | PHOTO BY DERISHA D. ROUSE





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