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## Independent- Mar. 25, 2008

Jonathan Gronli

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# INDEPENDENT

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Tuesday, March 25, 2008

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## Student killed in hit and run

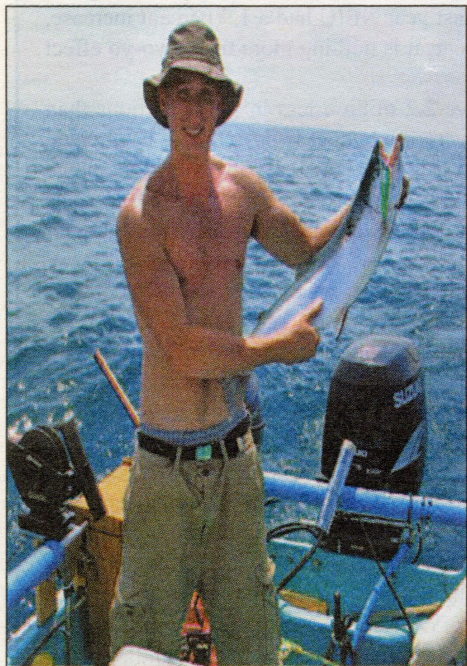


Photo courtesy of Harry and Marybeth Dalof

by Mike Arch  
News Editor

Tom Dalof, 26, was starting his spring break just like all Northeastern Illinois

University (NEIU) students. He was out with friends on the night of Friday, March 14, when his school break ended abruptly and tragically. He was killed by a hit and run driver. Dalof was a business major and a senior at NEIU, with only five classes left until graduation. According to his mother, Marybeth Dalof, "He was finally a senior; that took awhile."

Marybeth described her son to the *Independent* as, "an intelligent and sensitive boy. Tom would gravitate to little animals. He would stop everything to take care of his turtle." Dalof was recently accepted into the Chicago Fire Department Academy and into the stage-hand crew union.

One of Dalof's accomplishments was that he played baseball all his life and he had played for the NEIU Eagles' baseball team. "He was a dedicated player" said Eduardo Arabu, fellow teammate. "He did a lot to help improve the team."

Professor Leslie Kleinmuntz had Tom in her advertising class. She said, "He was a terrific student and had a really cute personality. On our last day of class before break, the class gave group presentations. He stuck around after class to find out when grades

would be posted on Blackboard. That showed a lot of character."

Officer John Mirabelli of the Chicago Police Department said Boubacar Bah, 24, was driving at a high rate of speed, according to witnesses, when Bah hit Tom Dalof at the 6200 block of North Lakewood Ave. Bah fled the scene, and police later found the vehicle, a red Buick Skylark, wrapped around a utility pole. Bah later turned himself into police and was charged with reckless homicide and leaving the scene of a fatal accident.

"My son would have been a leader," Harry Dalof, Tom's father, said emotionally. Marybeth explained that Tom had 6 or 7 friends that he had been close to since grammar school, and that he was the leader of the group. These were the friends that were with Tom in the hospital after the accident.

His mother recounted how, just the day before his death, he called and talked to his father and said, "Dad, I am happy." Marybeth said, "[Tom showed the] fine qualities he got from his father. He had intelligence of the heart. He was a heart-felt person. He was well liked, because he could get along with anybody."

## Emergency Management Plan: The secret is out

by Mike Arch  
News Editor

In recent years, NEIU has experienced hazardous material spills, two fires, a blackout and a large flood. Since 2003, the university's Emergency Management Plan remained a work in progress, a document in draft form that was shrouded in secrecy.

In the wake of the February 14 shooting at NIU, however, Director of NEIU Public Safety Chief James C. Lyons, Jr. allowed an *Independent* reporter to look through the plan.

"One of the things that I was concerned about after Northern happened was all these questions about people in the university feeling safe. I want to make sure the university community feels safe on campus," Lyons said.

The university's plan sets out guidelines on how things will be handled in the event of an emergency. Chief Lyons said, "It talks about how different

SEE SECRET OUT, PAGE 5



Image by Mike Nguyen

## Unprecedented open forum

by Kelly Lucia  
Senior Copy Editor

President Sharon Hahs did something that was unprecedented at NEIU; she conducted an open forum with students to hear about their concerns and shed some light on certain issues.

On March 4, President Hahs hosted a student Town Hall meeting in Alumni Hall. She opened by telling the audience she was "tickled to have a forum for students." She called the meeting "experiment 102," in reference to the recent teachers' Town Hall meeting (Jan. 11) that was deemed "experiment 101."

Hahs started with some opening statements before turning the attention over to the audience for questions. She said the main reason for holding the meeting was to create a dialogue

between the administration and the students in order to strengthen further communication. She also said she wants to know what's on students' minds.

The meeting was informal, and Hahs said she welcomed any questions or comments, as long as they were presented according to the university's values, i.e. integrity, diversity and community.

She got straight to the point by telling the audience that she has hired a consulting firm in order to assist with planning and budget for the fiscal year 2009. Hahs also said she is currently working on putting together a strategic planning committee, and that a mass email would be sent out shortly to all students with information about it.

Hahs leveled with the audience and informed them that when the university sent the

budget to the Illinois Board of Higher Education for fiscal year 2009, the governor recommended level one, which is no budget increase. In fact, it is a slight decrease in budget. After that was out of the way, the forum opened up for questions.

One of the first questions asked in the meeting was, "Did we raise tuition too much?" Hahs responded quickly. "Let's tackle that. In some ways, yes," she conceded. But, she backed up her response by informing the audience that she is hoping to generate money from tuition increases in order to pay salary increases for employees, and also to pay for increasing utility bills.

Hahs was then questioned about the possibility of a teachers' strike when the contract between the University Professionals of Illinois (UPI) and the university runs out. The

contract is four years long, and this is its final year. A student asked how Hahs expects to prevent a teachers' strike. She responded by saying, "Most teachers want a reasonable process." She assured the audience that both her administration and the UPI are preparing for negotiations.

A student from the Campus Anti-War Network asked Hahs a question regarding the lack of recruiters on campus this semester, and if it was a result of the Network's efforts to keep them away from the university. She said that she does not know why there are less recruiters on campus now, and that there is no direct effect between the efforts of the Network and the lack of recruiters.

Vice President of Student Affairs Melvin Terrell

SEE TOWN HALL, PAGE 3



President Sharon Hahs speaking during the meeting with students on March 4.

Photo by Kelly Lucia

## NEIU receives high honors at Model Illinois Government

by Duncan Macnab  
Production Editor

Set to bring NEIU influence to Model Illinois Government, student Al Cordero won the Governor's seat for 2008-2009.

Model Illinois Government (MIG) is a state-wide, student operated organization which coordinates and manages the annual governmental simulation.

Along with Cordero, the NEIU delegation brought home the Secretary of State, Comptroller and Chief Justice. NEIU's Student Government Association (SGA) Vice President Kimberly Murphy won the Comptroller seat that was previously

held by Cordero. SGA Senator Jason Garcia won the Secretary of State. Former SGA President Eron

McCormick is the new MIG Chief Justice.

"Historically, NEIU



Photo by Peter Michalczyk

The NEIU delegation poses for a photo.

had, for years, been disgraced and embarrassed as to how the delegates had behaved during past simulations," said Cordero. "That is until three years ago when a small group of leaders, including myself, set out to change all that."

Though this was a simulation, Cordero felt that this was the closest to experiencing real government.

NEIU also received one of the highest honors with the Outstanding Large Delegation Award. Kimberly Murphy received the Donna Lennon Award for being an "outstanding house committee member." Also, SGA Senator Paul Harris received the David Hunt Award for being an "outstanding

house committee chair."

For Cordero, winning the Governor's seat meant overcoming adversity because last year's MIG tried unsuccessfully to impeach him. With a 56 - 43 vote, the Senate echoed, "We love Cordero," a statement that was yelled across the assembly to acquit him of his charges.

Cordero could not remember the last time NEIU held this many executive board members. "Four [executive board members] is just amazing," he said, getting off the bus after returning from MIG.

MIG simulation was held February 28 - March 2, in Springfield, IL.





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The *Independent* is a public forum for the community and university around Northeastern Illinois University.

The *Independent* is completely student run and receives no prior review of its content by anyone other than its student editors.

The *Independent* is published every other week except during summer and semester breaks. Deadlines are nine (9) days prior to the issue in which a contribution is to appear. Views expressed in letters are those of the university community and not those of the Editorial Board.

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.

The *Independent* is a member of the Illinois College Press Association and Associated Collegiate Press.

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## News Briefs

### 'Voting with your dollar'

'Vote with your dollar' is the message of the Politics Club's latest event, *Resisting and Reforming the Corporation*. The discussion is on how citizens can resist and reform corporations with their dollars. The event will review positive and negative information on U.S. corporations. It will feature Bernard Dolan of knowmore.org and Strange Famous Records. Dolan is an activist, performance artist and poet, known for his maverick reputation and his commitment to social justice. The event will be held on Thursday, April 10, from 7-9 p.m. in Alumni Hall (SU-115). The entire university community is invited.

- Mike Arch, News Editor

### Bags tournament

This backyard game is now an intramural sport! Compete in this one-day tournament. Equipment will be provided. Registration is April 14-24 and the event takes place Friday, April 25, at 2:00 p.m. Both registration and the event will be at the PE Complex.

-Campus Recreation



### Green film festival

NEIU's Green Cycle Group (GCG) will be holding its first ever Green Film Festival to celebrate Earth Day.

According to a press release from the GCG, the purpose of the festival is not only to provide a venue where students and faculty members will be entertained and educated, but a forum where ideas can be shared and discussed.

In total, the festival will be held over four separate dates, beginning on March 13 and ending on Earth Day, April 21.

There will be three film showings on campus, all of which will be followed by group discussions. The last day of the festival will feature the Director of Nuclear Energy Information Service, David A. Kraft, as guest speaker.

For dates, show times or more information about the Green Film Festival, visit [www.neiu.edu/~gcggroup](http://www.neiu.edu/~gcggroup)

-Rolando Ithier III, Senior Staff Writer

SGA Election April 5-11  
Vist  
[www.neiuindependent.com](http://www.neiuindependent.com)  
for candidate profiles

## Distinguished teaching rewarded

by Thelma Coleman  
Opinions Editor

Teaching is a labor of love. Many educators never see the fruits of their labor. From disrespectful students to tensions concerning contracts, teaching is not an easy profession. It takes someone who has been in the profession to understand the plight of teachers, and Dr. Audrey Reynolds understands that plight.

The first Audrey Reynolds Distinguished Teaching Award will be presented at the December 2008 Commencement Ceremony. Audrey Reynolds is a professor emeriti in linguistics to Northeastern Illinois University. The annual award amount is \$5,000 and has been instituted as a gift to the university from Reynolds.

NEIU is first and foremost a teacher's college. Reynolds believes this award will set an example that quality teaching is admired and rewarded. "NEIU is a teaching university and considers good teaching a high priority," said Reynolds. As a first generation college student, Reynolds attended an undergraduate institution

similar to NEIU.

Reynolds began her teaching career at NEIU in September of 1969. The linguistics professor retired from the institution in June 2005. Reynolds gleams about her 30-plus years spent at NEIU. "I loved teaching at NEIU. I loved the diversity," said Reynolds.

Teachers must be nominated for the Reynolds Award by students, faculty members, administrators or alumni. It should be known, self-nominations are not acceptable for award eligibility. The instructor must be tenured, full-time and have six years or more of teaching experience at NEIU.

Teachers are screened for the award by a committee, which is appointed by the president. Finalists must complete the appropriate steps for final screening. From there, the committee recommends a teacher to the provost. The provost will make a recommendation to the president, and the president will award the teacher. Ten years after winning the award, teachers are eligible to win the award again.

## The Deep End

# Yo-yo funding

by Mike Arch  
News Editor

My niece has a college fund and she is 18 months old. It may sound strange to some and smart to others, but the grim reality is, if you plan on your child attending college, it is necessary to start that plan early.

In Governor Blagojevich's proposed budget, funding has been cut year after year. Last year NEIU had a 1.9 percent increase, but funding was cut this year; it is nothing more than a yo-yo effect not amounting to much.

NEIU will receive 2.2 million less in appropriations than they did in 2003 if the governor's budget is passed. He has treated higher education like taking candy from a baby and all college administrators are left to do is cry. If the UPI's press release is correct, it hit the nail of the governor's attitude toward higher education on the head. "[Blagojevich's] suggestion that Illinois' public universities should not be included in 'education' spending is deplorable."

The problem comes in that the governor can keep cutting higher education funding until there is nothing left to cut. This could spell disaster for state colleges. He refuses to raise income taxes. Instead, he keeps proposing get-rich-quick schemes to find the money for capital development. Remember Keno? Expanding the Lottery? The latest is a Chicago casino. I would gladly pay an extra .5 percent in income taxes just to hear the end of these idiotic ideas.

The other issue is the profile of the typical, regular, income-generating gambler. It is the poor person that is looking to get rich quick. In essence, instead of distributing the burden across the state evenly with a raise in the state's flat income tax, he is finding ways to persuade the poor of the state to pick up the burden of the schools. While the governor's idea for funding lies in gambling, there comes a point where you have to just throw in the towel and realize Chicago should not be Las Vegas.

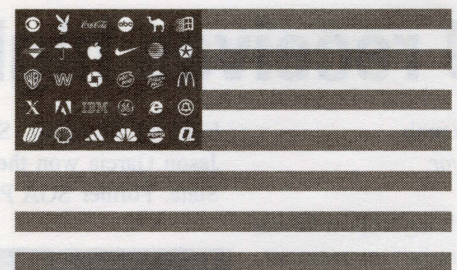
The capital development funding is only vaguely linked to education. It is used to build and restore state-owned buildings, the only thing that Governor Blagojevich is concerned with in regard to education. His concern is not to put test tubes in science labs and teachers in the classrooms. He is concerned about building a new education building at NEIU and tearing down the perfectly good Cole Hall at Northern Illinois University (NIU) in order to build a new building in its place.

There is a silver lining in all this. It could be worse. What about funding going down to zero? If you were to enroll as an incoming freshman at NEIU starting next fall, the annual tuition is estimated at \$5,280 for a resident student. NEIU has a population of about 12,000 students. If you compare it to a private college in the Chicago area, the one that comes closest is Columbia College. Columbia is a commuter school in downtown Chicago with a student population of about 11,000. The annual cost in tuition is \$17,354, a difference of about \$12,000 a year.

When will the governor stop playing games with education? His attitude toward higher education is sophomoric. The idea of \$17,000 a year in tuition is not that far-fetched with regard to the governor's current trends. If he stopped trying to tear down and rebuild perfectly good buildings like Cole Hall at NIU, or consider a small income tax increase, some funding could be found to give Illinois' college teachers decent wages, and keep college tuition affordable for the average Illinois resident.

Knowmore.org and NEIU Politics Club  
Present

## RESISTING AND REFORMING THE CORPORATION



Thursday  
April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2008  
7-9 pm  
SU-115 (Alumni Hall)

**BERNARD DOLAN** (Knowmore.org and Strange Famous Records) will be discussing how you, the citizens of the United States can resist and reform the corporation by "voting with your dollar".

Dolan is a renowned activist, performance artist, and poet known for his maverick reputation for both his passionate independence and commitment to social justice. In 2005, Dolan started knowmore.org, a comprehensive clearinghouse where corporate information could be compiled and easily reviewed by socially responsible consumers. In 2006 Dolan published 'Understanding American Apparel' through knowmore.org; a 76-page document which still serves as the most comprehensive report available on the controversial LA garment company. The report is now evidence in an ongoing case. In 2007, Dolan released "The Failure", his debut album, on Strange Famous Records.



**Independent Embedded**

by Felicia Maxa, Sgt US Army National Guard, *Special Contributor*

# Things are different

While NEIU is covered with snow and experiencing the veritable rainbow that is Chicago temperatures, the majority of Iraq is rather spring-like, bordering on summer temperatures at mid-day. While calling home usually leads to conversations covering the average precipitation in terms of water, we have had about four or five sand storms in the last two weeks. It is quite a difference in weather and quite a difference in perspective. While those at home don't want to go outside because it's just too darn cold...we don't want to leave because sand being whipped at the face tends to sting a little.

The difference in your lives at home, compared to my life and others like me, is that here it doesn't end with the weather. If your boss or your job muddles your brain and interferes with your life, you can quit. Unlike those in the military, who simply can't.

It's not that we don't have days where we want to quit, when our jobs and our leadership drive away any sense of sanity we may have. Heck, being pulled out of a nice comfy home to jet across an ocean and half the European continent is enough to justify quitting! But just how does one quit on America?

There are soldiers and marines that are on missions 'out the wire' all the time. No one ever pulls to the side of the road and says, "I quit." The combat soldiers, the infantry, EOD (Explosive Ordnance Destruction), combat engineers, transportation and wrecker teams are the guardians of the cargo and supply lines that the military has running all through Iraq and Afghanistan. These convoys don't only carry necessities to troops all over these countries, but carry aide items such as food and water to outlying villages as well. American soldiers and Iraqi citizens alike need these men and women to be loyal and perform their duties. Should these brave troops decide to quit, where would that leave the convoy?

This goes for those left on the FOB (Forward Operating Base): the mechanics, the cooks, the administrative personnel, the post doctors, all those in the background that ensure the success of the missions and mission personnel. Where would an infantry unit be if their mechanics all quit on them? Their gun trucks would be less than mission-capable, and that would be detrimental to the success of their missions.

Teams out here (and

at home) are only as strong as the weakest link. Just being in a combat zone really puts things like weak links, and such, in perspective. As a citizen soldier, it's easy to get caught up in life outside of the military; family career, school...until a mobilization. From the moment a trooper's boots hit foreign ground, the importance of duty and loyalty is truly realized.

When this column first appeared in the *Independent*, the topic was about all the values those in the military are trained to believe in, to trust in. And, as is everything else in life, the importance of training is never fully grasped until it is needed.

Loyalty and duty are the first of seven Army values. In a war zone, regardless of who, when, where, why or how, people cling to each other. Then, men and women of a unit become brothers and sisters. They know that what each does individually affects every other person in theater.

Troops quickly learn to rely on each other for everything from emotional support to oil changes. That is the reason military personnel don't quit, why we can't! Quitting a job out here is like quitting on your family.

America has begun to

experience an economic crisis. There is a general lack of loyalty and duty in the work place, both from the employer and the employee. There is a general lack of loyalty and duty in schools from K thru 12 and beyond. And, this lack of loyalty and duty has been spilling over into the general populous in terms of how American citizens feel about the country in general for several decades now. Does anyone still love this country for what it stands for? Does anyone even remember the basic American fundamentals? Does anyone remember when 18-year-old men joined the military because they wanted to give back to their country?

This article is not meant to cause hurt or angst to the readers, but merely to inspire the reader to ponder some simple questions. What has happened to the prioritization of loyalty and duty in this great country of ours? Do these values exist in the general populous anymore? What happened to loving our country and the patriotism that Americans used to be renowned for? Where has the American sense of duty gone?

Most of us 'over here' know the answers to these questions...do you?

## NEIU print advertising

by **Thelma Coleman**  
*Opinions Editor*

Northeastern Illinois University is ready to distinguish itself among Chicago's higher educational frontier. The university has recently placed print advertisements in several local news publications. Advertisements have run in the *Chicago Sun-Times*, *Hoy*, *Chicago Defender*, *Red Eye* and *Diverse Issues in Higher Education*, to name a few. The push for publicity is crucial for NEIU among the influx of schools taking advantage of new ways of attracting prospective students. Dr. Carla Knorowski, Vice President of Advancement, believes one of NEIU's greatest strengths is diversity. NEIU chose to run print advertisements in publications such as *Hoy* because it wants to perpetuate its multiculturalism.

"We chose the publications; their readerships reflect the diverse composition of NEIU. We want to build on our diversity and certainly these publications, as well as others, can help us do that," said Knorowski.

NEIU's new admissions director, Dr. Eric Hilton, will also play a critical role in the print advertisement campaign. "NEIU has a great story to tell and it's time for more people to hear it," said Knorowski.

Reaching prospective students is crucial for NEIU. However, cost is a serious consideration. "Print advertisements vary in price depending upon a publication's circulation, the size of the advertisement, placement, timing and other variables. So there is no one set price. We are very thoughtful in our approach to print advertising and while cost is a factor, the other variables such as audience and reach, which are tied to circulation, timing and ad placement are also factored in," Knorowski said.

Advertising at NEIU does not have its own budget. It is a part of the marketing and communication budget. "There is not a specific line item in our budget called 'advertising,' but advertising is most certainly an integral part of any marketing and communications effort, and there is a budget in this regard," said Knorowski.

Knorowski warns that the print advertisement cannot secure students to NEIU, but rather it can leave an impression. The *Chicago Sun-Times*, *Hoy*, *Chicago Defender*, *Red Eye* and *Diverse Issues in Higher Education* collectively reach more than 1.3 million readers.

"If only 1 percent--an industry standard--of the readers see the advertisements, that would be about 13,000 people, which is more than NEIU's current total enrollment. Some readers might act right now and enroll for this semester or the coming school year. For others, the advertisement might make an impression, but they won't act--that is to say, enroll, for two or three years down the road for whatever reasons," Knorowski said.

## Online registration: The ideal and the reality

by **Lenny Ocasio**  
*Business Assistant*

Weeks before online registration was available to all students and faculty, groups of curious students and staff were invited to a mock registration to try out the new system. It was conducted in the Building B computer lab. The students and staff watched a brief tutorial on how to use the new system and then were given free rein to fully explore what it had to offer. Any problems or concerns were addressed and noted by the organizers of the mock registration.

While the mock registration showed a lot of programs that will prove to be very useful to students, the real registration and self-service page on *NEIUport* was not as impressive.

The mock session showed programs like an area that showed your current major and minor with the names and contact information of your advisers. There were also programs that would allow students to look at their transcripts, grades and class schedules. There was even a section for work study students to check on their progress. But, for now, many of these sections are just blank spaces on students' *NEIUport* pages. Because this is a new system, things like grades and class schedules won't be on the website until the semester has ended and the summer semester begins. The biggest priority to a student would be to register for classes and to check on their financial aid. These sections are up and running on the *NEIUport* website.

Currently, the real online sections are being developed and introduced to *NEIUport* one bit at a time. During the next few months many changes will be made to the system, just to make a student's life a little less stressful. Many of the services seen during the mock registration will not be available to students until the fall semester.

# NEIU admissions welcomes Hilton

by **Thelma Coleman**  
*Opinions Editor*

On Feb. 25, Dr. Eric Hilton began the position of admissions director to NEIU. Hilton has 18 years of college admissions experience and joined the NEIU community because he believes it is the next step in his professional career. "I really like the university community, it is a great fit for me," said Hilton.

Hilton is energetic about the work his office is doing for the university. "Northeastern's time has come for great opportunity. It is a university on the move," said Hilton. The Office of Admissions is working diligently to put specialized programs and initiatives into place to spruce up the recruitment drive for NEIU.

On March 6, NEIU held an Open House. Hilton also mentioned the extensive

marketing plan the university has in place to reach out to prospective students. "We have to be cognizant of what our competitors are doing. Part of the equation to attract students is sending powerful messages to certain mediums," said Dr. Hilton.

Hilton began his educational career at The Ohio State University with a bachelor's degree in communication. Hilton went on to attain a master's degree in physical education. Lastly, the new admissions director has a doctorate in higher administration education.

Hilton believes passionately in strong leadership and revealed that NEIU has cohesive team chemistry, which is important for the progression of the university community. Hilton said, "The most important thing I and the university can do is pave a way for students that will provide a solid educational experience, which will impact their lives."

## TOWN HALL, FROM PAGE 1

then stood to further address the question, and said that the university needs the Army, Navy and Marines in order to maintain financial aid, and must let them on campus to recruit at any time.

SGA Senator Mark Banks asked Hahs about the recent reduction in resources, like computers, that are available to students on campus. He said that while we need more computers in the computer labs, the number of computers has been reduced.

Hahs said that this recent reduction is a reaction to student complaints about the limited access of computers.

Apparently, there have been complaints about the fact that a number of students use the computers in the computer labs for recreation more than schoolwork. To counter this, the university reduced the numbers of computers available to all the students.

Another student, Eric Lopez, asked one of the last questions in the meeting, which regarded the amount of general education classes open for current registration. Hahs said that she is working on decreasing sections for classes in some other, less important areas in order to increase the amount



Photo by Regina Ramos

of sections open in the most pertinent areas.





# Greek Week 2008

*Northeastern Illinois University*

# GREEK-A-THON

*March 24 - March 28, 2008*

## Schedule of Events

**Monday, March 24th**

### "When a Death Occurs"

Join us for an educational experience while we view and discuss a film about hazing, and celebrate our campus as being an anti-hazing environment. Refreshments will be served.

**Alumni Hall**

**12:00 - 2:00 P.M.**

**Tuesday, March 25th**

### Greek Olympics

Come see the Greeks challenge each other in Olympic events such as the Chariot Race, Discus Throw and much more.

**Physical Education Complex 4184**

**1:40 - 2:40 P.M.**

**Wednesday, March 26th**

### Service Project

Help the Greeks collect items to donate school supplies for kindergarten children at the Albany Park Community Center. Crayons, paper, pencil cases, sharpeners, etc.

**Village Square**

**10:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M.**

**Thursday, March 27th**

### Greek Jeopardy

Come see the Greek chapters compete in a game show of wits and historical Greek facts. Refreshments will be served.

**SU 003**

**1:40 - 2:40 P.M.**

**Friday, March 28th**

### Pan-D'monium

**NEIU Greek Stroll Show**

Join us for an entertaining performance by the various NEIU Greek chapters. \$5 for NEIU students and \$7 for non-NEIU Students.

**Auditorium**

**7:00 - 9:00 P.M.**

**Sponsored by United Greek Council  
and Student Government Association**



For more information, contact United Greek Council (773) 442-4283.



### Anti-War movement still alive on campus

by Mike Arch  
News Editor

Outside the Student Union on March 13, many witnessed the Campus Anti-War Network NEIU chapter looking for support for a larger anti-war rally that took place on March 19, at Federal Plaza in Chicago's Loop.

The war in Iraq is in its fifth year and is still on the minds of Campus Anti-War Network

members. Organization member Matt Larson said: "The Anti-War Movement is not calling a national demonstration, and we feel that in the absence of a national demonstration it's important to get people involved in local protests. The only way we are going to stop the war is to build a movement at the grass-roots, independent of the political parties that both support the war."

The Campus Anti-War

Movement has taken this as an official stance to the war. "We were against the invasion to begin with, the U.S. Troops and U.S. Contractors need to completely withdraw from Iraq," said Larson. The Campus Anti-War Movement is also against military recruitment on campus.



Campus Anti-War Movement members hold a banner.

Photo by Mike Arch

### Budget \$2.2 million less than 2003

#### UPI Watch

by Duncan Macnab  
Production Editor

In 2004, the teachers' union at NEIU went on strike for 19 days. This was after contract negotiations failed. Earlier that year, the budget was decreased 8.2 percent from fiscal year (FY) 2003 to FY 2004. The governor's proposed FY 2009 budget is about \$2.2 million less than the FY 2003 budget.

Governor Blagojevich's NEIU budget for FY 2009 is \$370,000 less than FY 2008, a 0.009 percent decrease. This has made the University Professionals of Illinois' (UPI) Local 4100 unsatisfied with the budget. The total requested appropriations for NEIU's FY 2009 is \$40,400,700. In FY 2003, NEIU received \$42,585,400 from the state and \$39,077,700 for FY 2004. With current inflation trends, the actual value of the FY 2009 appropriations is diminished even further.

"[Blagojevich's] suggestion that Illinois' public universities should not be included in 'education' spending is deplorable," stated a press release sent out by the UPI.

"No one seriously believes that education stops at the 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Yet, our Governor continues to stop the flow of funding at that 12<sup>th</sup>-grade level, forcing our public universities to scrape by with funding

that doesn't even match 2003 levels," said UPI president Sue Kaufman.

"It was about a basic increase of salaries," said Therese Schuepfer, UPI's NEIU chapter president, commenting on the 2004 strike.

This time is not different, but Schuepfer explained that both sides brought outsiders to the negotiations prior to the 2004 strike, and that "was a mistake." She commented, "When it came to the battle of the outsiders, the real participants in the negotiations were left to the wayside." She went on to say that they would keep it someone from NEIU or UPI, if it came to that.

"One of the concerns is that there are a growing number of instructors that are not given the same kind of resources," Schuepfer said, talking about the amount of instructors to a room and the concerns about this year's contract. She commented on one instructor who was sharing the room with three others. She also stated that money was an important issue.

At this time she said they are at the fact-finding stage in working out a new contract. This means discussing issues and relaying them to an administrative team.

The union's contract ends at the end of August. In early April, union members will lobby for more money.

### SECRET OUT, FROM PAGE 1

offices will prepare in the university, to evacuations, and to specific emergency responses that may occur."

"We have a document and most of the chapters are absolutely perfect, except it always needs updating," President Sharon Hahs said. "There should be a cycle of what is the latest thinking on this, and how should we improve upon things."

For years, university officials have been reluctant to discuss the draft plan. It is a document at a public institution that is not made public for good reason, as Chief Lyons explained. "I understand that we have never given the plan to anybody, and that's intentional. Say an incident occurred in the class room building, say it was an active shooter or whatever; we are not going to divulge how we are going to proceed in handling that situation for obvious reasons. We don't want to jeopardize anybody," Lyons said.

Most of the documents on campus must be made public by law because NEIU is a public institution and is partially funded by tax dollars. For example, the university budget is placed in the library for anyone to see, but according to Lyons, The EMP is sensitive information that can endanger people if it is made public in full. That is why the university has the right not to publish or distribute it to anyone who wants to see it.

Hahs explained that there is one chapter that has not been carefully written. "So it doesn't look pretty yet. It is a very adequate plan. It is by definition always

a work in progress," she said. "We have the information we need and we will always be updating it."

The *Independent* was allowed to browse through the plan. There are 52 pages of information regarding 'what if' scenarios, structures of who handles what in an emergency, temporary locations and instructions on how communications will be delivered, among other things. In addition to that, there is a section on evacuation procedures, and the chapter that is still in draft form. That chapter is titled "Training and Testing."

In the event of an emergency, the immediate form of communication will be "from a human response."

"It is going to be from our police officers going out and notifying people, along with the parking office and facilities management. That's what is going to happen right now," said Chief Lyon. Other forms of communication are currently being considered.

Public Safety officers practice active shooter training that takes place on campus. They schedule these whenever the campus and funds are available.

Soon public safety will be providing informational sessions about what the university is doing to keep students safe on campus. These sessions have not yet been scheduled, but it will be an opportunity for the entire university community to hear first hand what is being done to keep people safe.



## The NEIU Golden Eagle 5K Run/Walk

### Sunday April 13, 2008

### 9am

#### Event Information

**Date of event:** Sunday April 13, at 9 a.m. Every participant gets a t-shirt

**Distance:** 5 kilometers or 3.1 miles. *Electronic time chip event.*

**Location of event:** NEIU Main Campus\*\*Start at the Athletic Field\*\*

**Prizes:** Medals for Male and Female top 3 finishers under 40 & over 40.

Entry Fees	Before 4/1/08	On-site
Current NEIU Student	\$10	\$15
NEIU Staff/Faculty/Alumni/Affiliates	\$12	\$15
NEIU Campus Recreation Members	\$12	\$15
General Public	\$15	\$20

**Additional Information:** m-montes1@neiu.edu or 773-442-4131

*Sponsored by Campus Recreation & NEIU Running Club*

#### NEIU Golden Eagle 5K Entry Form

Last Name _____		First Name _____	
Phone _____		Email _____	
M	F	Age on Race Day _____	Date of Birth ____/____/____
Shirt Size	Small	Medium	Large XL 2XL
NEIU Student	Staff/Faculty	Alumni/Affiliate	Community
Entry Fee _____	<b>Do Not mail cash.</b>		

Cut and mail registration with check to NEIU 5500 N. St. Louis Ave. Chicago, IL. 60625. Attention Campus Recreation 5K. Checks payable to NEIU Campus Recreation 5K. Packet pick up at the PE Complex 4/11 & 4/13 11-3pm or race day.

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# Commentary

## EDITORIAL

### I Survived NEIU

An NEIU student can be summed up in one word: determination. There are no other colleges with students that have the resilience of NEIU students. They are an inspiration to anyone looking to accomplish anything in higher education.

Many NEIU students are considered adult learners. This seems like an oxymoron, because aren't all college students adults? But in terms of students, 'adult learners' means a student who has rent or a mortgage to pay. They have to dress their kid for school or daycare. To top it all off, they still have to study for the midterm, write those two midterm papers and get that next thing done for their campus organization.

This is all in the wake of figuring out how one will get into classes that are filled up, or not being offered, while thinking to the future of how they're going to afford next year's increase in tuition and how they are going to get into the summer classes they may need.

There is also a barrage of increases in rent and other bills. It's no wonder that the students have a hard time with tuition increases. The administration has said they were going to look into other options for fundraising; however, only echoes of tuition increases are sounding. Soon, many students won't be able to attend NEIU, and the university will put itself out of business.

It's safe to say that a large amount of students come to NEIU for two reasons: location and affordability, the emphasis being on the latter. There are plenty of other schools in the Chicago area to receive a college degree from. NEIU is one of the least expensive choices. Even when the student figures out a way to make it all happen, the administration just says they did all they could do and raises tuition again, without adding more class sections.

NEIU students are an inspiration; we are one of the few universities that can boast that students beat all odds and never give up, even though it may take 10 years to graduate. We are students that make things happen for ourselves, even though everything about our education is stacked up against us from one semester to the next. We do all this while juggling work and family duties.

In the end, all one has to show for it is a piece of paper. This is not just any ordinary piece of paper, but the only thing in life no one can take away: a degree. One can lose their house, car, even family, but no one, as long as they live, can take away that piece of paper. It is a piece of paper that represents the knowledge gained during the higher education experience, but it is also a testament, a reminder of the personal determination in all that had been done.

Sure, you could have gone somewhere else that has more course selection, and that is a little more expensive. You also could have graduated more quickly. But then you couldn't be the graduate that gets to wear the T-shirt that says, "I survived NEIU."

## Homophobia: fact or fiction?

by Regina Ramos  
 Staff Writer

Every so often, the country debates sexual orientation discrimination, same-sex marriages and the like. In 1971, psychologist George Weinberg coined the term 'homophobia.' He used the Greek words 'homo' for 'same,' and 'phobia,' meaning 'fear.' Therefore, humans who suffer homophobia are 'afraid of the same.' Though most individuals will agree 'homo' means 'man' in Latin, the term does not justify a basis of society's unwillingness to change conservative views in regards to homosexuality.

In reality, how many heterosexual individuals actually use the excuse, "Well, I'm homophobic so I'm not going to that bar," or, "I don't want people to think I'm gay?" Without a doubt, mature audiences may second guess such a statement for pure humor and move on. On more serious terms, does homophobia actually exist in society?

The existence of escalated homophobia was sparked in the early 1980s and concerned the rise of the AIDS epidemic in the U.S. Frequently-used terms such as 'the gay plague' and 'gay cancer' infiltrated the minds of the country via the media. In the early stages of the disease, the public was not aware how it was transmitted. However, mainstream society did know that the condition predominantly existed within homosexual groups. As thousands of citizens died mysteriously from this unknown virus, demonstrations, work discrimination and rallies against AIDS victims of all sexual orientations strengthened fear among individuals. President Reagan ignored the disease and did not encourage research.

Most importantly, he failed to soothe a panicked nation or support AIDS education in schools. Was this because of something else other than the fear of AIDS? Why was President Reagan so insistent on silence? As a Republican, could his religious views have prohibited a speech to stop the prejudice?

Conservative principles inhibit the acceptance of homosexuality. Such values freeze humans into sexual orientation discrimination within the workplace, school and social encounters. The rejection of lesbians and gays follows a strict moral conduct put in place by a religious figure or an interpretation of scripture.

The Dalai Lama had an instance in which he publicly rejected a same-sex

human. Homophobia does not exist in the government; however, the failure to uphold human rights unfortunately presents itself in regards to minority groups. Gays and lesbians are a rising minority group in the United States. They are humans with a distinct characteristic, just like ethnic and religious minority groups. Certain heterosexuals refuse to accept the differences within the community through discrimination.

Homophobia is a preference in which heterosexual humans label their prejudice as ignorance or a handicap. Homophobic people are uneducated beings in regards to the subject. The fear behind hatred exists only to the extent in which the lifestyles of lesbians and gays are only known to the public through stereotypes.

Homophobia exists within gay and lesbian groups due to the fact that mainstream society continues to classify these lives as sinful and immoral. 'Coming out,' or the declaration of being gay or lesbian, is a common fear

within the minority group. Additionally, homosexuals may fear to distinguish themselves as such, due to the fact that they may be denied certain health care treatment, jobs and the like.

In all, homophobia exists in some heterosexual groups. Homophobia is merely ignorance, an under-education of a homosexual lifestyle and an unwillingness to accept differences in a community. Discrimination to the minority is not caused by homophobia; rather it is caused by hate. Homophobia exists for the homosexual community that experiences psychological and physical harm from hate crimes, rejection and discrimination.

*'Coming out,' or the declaration of being gay or lesbian, is a common fear within the minority group.*

couple for a blessing. Keep in mind, an aspect of religious code is used to filter the elite from the weak, as well as to provide a blueprint of the 'right way' to live. The spiritual systems have discriminatory aspects set in stone by tradition. Therefore, society cannot condemn any religion for the indecency to recognize gays and lesbians. Due to rules, homophobia does not exist in terms of religion or moral values. Furthermore, the country must respect their conservative views.

Constitutionally speaking, our government is not affiliated with a national religion. The system is in place to protect the civil liberties of each living

## On the Other Hand

by Nick Gaudio, Associate Editor

### First Amendment going too far

After witnessing a protest in the university commons before spring break focused on drumming up support for the Anti-war Coalition my first thought was that some people have gone too far.

While I am a vocal advocate of First Amendment rights, I also believe that there is a fine line to what can be said. The protesters trying to rally support for another march to protest the fifth year of the Iraq War does not violate any law, with the possible exception of the law of probability. The probability is that the government—who's now concerned with ending the war as completely as possible, so as to keep us from returning overseas only months after leaving—will not listen to yet another year of protests on a subject it isn't interested in.

While the notion of the government not being interested in hearing the petitioning of its people is not new and far from acceptable, the fact still remains that protesters like the ones at NEIU are beating a dead horse. U.S. foreign policy hasn't really changed regarding Iraq in five years, and it isn't likely to change, unless a Democrat is elected president in November.

So why all the fuss? Colleges are good for a lot of things, but promoting an atmosphere of idealism is a college's best trait. College students, myself included, are led to believe that we can directly fix the problems of the world, that we can do this from the safety of our homes and that the world will listen to the voices of the youth denouncing the many injustices inherent in the world.

While this would sound like a marshalling call for more protests on things like Iraq, the reality is that this isn't a rally cry. Demonstrations have seemed to lose their appeal. The real protest that young people are barely cognizant of is the most effective one: letters to Congress. If enough people with the same feelings on a matter were to send a prodigious amount of letters to their congressmen, then there would be more action for our causes.

But, standing in the university commons, yelling out to mostly non-receptive listeners to show up to a rally in protest of an unpopular war really won't solve anything. It'll just make people tired of that kind of debate walk on by, or on the other hand, write a column about it.

## CLASSIFIEDS

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# The challenge of a generation

by Chrys Hart  
Copy Editor

As of late, I've developed an overwhelming frustration with humanity as a whole. I've even developed an aversion to any type of media: the loss of what could have been one of our generation's greatest talents (Heath Ledger) riddled by scandal in the media before his corpse was cold, and one of our generation's lost causes (Britney Spears) made worse by constant media attention have finally taken their toll on me. Upon opening my Internet Explorer the other day, I was smacked with yet another headline about a public shooting spree and contented myself with just giving up any hope that was left.

Then I received a YouTube link that shook me to the core. It was the new song/video created by Will.i.am of the Black Eyed Peas featuring Barack Obama's "Yes We Can" speech from his New Hampshire campaign stop. Now, I know it's election season and Obama is a lingering presence as a presidential hopeful, but this is not an election plug or an endorsement for any candidate.

Although Obama's speech was directed at a nation, at America, it made me think about our generation, which should not be "as divided as our politics suggest," to use Obama's words. Many of us are making it paycheck to paycheck—if we're lucky. Some of us are occasionally struck with the worry of whether it's fair to bring children into this very chaotic world, while others must worry daily about the safety and education of children already here. Most of us have been affected by the current wars personally. Many of us are subjected to some form of prejudice despite the diversity of our

*"If you can contribute to the community, do it knowing that you may be influencing the next historical figure, rights activist or leader of the free world."*

campus and our nation.

These are the topics which inhibit me daily and constantly jade the way I look at my future. Most times I can find the silver lining, but lately that's been a trying cause; it's easier to tuck in my head, do what I need to do and let everyone else fend for themselves. However, after reminding listeners of some of the greatest moments in our nation's history—beginning with the writing of the Constitution and ending with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.—Obama states that we should "always remember that no matter what obstacles stand in our way, nothing can stand in the way of the power of millions of voices calling for change."

In light of the atmosphere in which these words were spoken, many took it as a plug for voting. Yes, you should vote if you qualify as a voter, and I strongly believe that if you don't vote, you have no right to complain. But more than advocating the importance of voting, these words invoke the importance of a generation that should be able to put differences aside, agree that things are screwed up without pointing fingers, and do what we can to make a change. If all you can do is punch a ballot, then

punch it as an informed citizen every time. If you can contribute to the community, do it knowing that you may be influencing the next historical figure, rights activist or leader of the free world.

As lame as it may seem, the idea to "pass it on" still exists, and it's up to us to make it happen. Think about others in the same perspective you think about yourself. Allow some leniency in the mistakes and shortcomings of others because you're not perfect either. Try treating others as if they're dealing with the same hardships you deal with. If we can put the petty differences aside, and say "Yes we can to justice and equality...to opportunity and prosperity...heal this nation...repair this world."

This speech sent me back into motion as a human part of the bigger picture. If, in two days, Will.i.am can bring together some of Hollywood's top performers to make a statement, then we can come together as a generation and take a stand for our future. Now is the time to do it. Go to [Yeswecansong.com](http://Yeswecansong.com) where you can watch the star-studded video and read Will.i.am's inspirational process in producing this non-endorsing, but powerful, video.

**The Opinionated Co-Ed** by Thelma Coleman, Opinions Editor

## Let's talk about sex

At age three, I remember sitting on the side of my mother's bed, gazing at her, starry-eyed as she explained the logistics of sexual intercourse. Yes, I was three years old, I had recently begun Head Start, and I loved eating grape jelly sandwiches. Though I barely understood a word my mother said, I now appreciate her courage. The talk of the 'birds and the bees' is one of the hardest challenges for parents. Some parents feel they are providing a license for their children to have sex; others are simply uncomfortable with the conversation. Although I am not a parent, as a daughter of a parent who gave 'the talk' early, I believe it is extremely important to introduce sex to children.

Either from media or friends, children are confronted with a plethora of mixed messages concerning sex. Home is the first place children must learn about sex. One may pose the question, "What about kids who do not have a 'home' to receive the sex talk?" In response, school should be the sole gateway for sex education.

Occasionally, parents avoid sexual conversation with children because of personal views. In a society such as today, it is pivotal for parents to be the first line of defense for children. Girls are especially vulnerable to

sexual ignorance. Teenage pregnancies would not be as prominent in our society if sex was not taboo.

Sex is a beautiful and natural gift to humanity. From reality TV shows to raunchy song lyrics, sex is demonstrated as a past-time. The sanctity of sex is not honored. Children have the right to know sexual intimacy does not solely exist in heterosexual relationships. Sexual activity occurs between two people who love each regardless of gender or sexual orientation. Communication is imperative for parents and children. Parents must have an 'open-door' policy for their kids. Children who feel comfortable will open up and are more likely to go to their parents for information.

I bet you are wondering who made me an authority on sexual education. I have no children and I'm a 20-year-old undergrad. To be observant of issues in society, I do not need any special credentials. As an African-American woman who has lived on Chicago's Southside my entire life, I have witnessed the destruction ignorance of sexual education breeds. It is time to shield our children from receiving the wrong messages about pressing issues in society. It is time to unite for the children.

### VOICE OF THE CAMPUS



SOPHIA LOPEZ

## Town Hall Meeting 102

The first Town Hall meeting President Sharon Hahs held was with NEIU faculty. In early March, she held one with NEIU students as well. The Student Government Association hosted this event, which was an informal dialogue where every question and concern was welcome.

Student Trustee Sunil Mahadeshwar introduced President Hahs, who reiterated NEIU's Statement of Values, specifically, about the importance of integrity, diversity, and community. She plans on having such Town Hall meetings at least once every term of the school year.

Mahadeshwar brought up the tuition increase and asked how it will affect financial aid. Hahs pointed to the "Truth in Tuition" act which guarantees the same tuition rate for four years. Those most affected by the increase will be those who came here before 2004 and who have not graduated yet. Smaller increases will apply to continuing and graduate students.

NEIU employee and student Al Cordero talked about the bind that full-time working students find themselves in when they do not qualify for federal and state financial aid, and what is being done to help such students. New Vice President of Advancement Carla Knorowski said that it's important to keep private scholarships and funding in mind as possible sources of funding. Also, she said it's important for students to voice their needs so that funds can be allocated to where they are most needed.

President Hahs then spoke about levels of funding from the Illinois Board of Higher Education. A flat budget for the fiscal year would technically be a decrease, given the rise in facility operations. She then announced that the Pappas Consulting Company was chosen as part of the school's strategic planning. Vice President for Student Affairs Melvin Terrell also fielded questions and concerns from students.

A student then mentioned the possibility of a faculty strike because union contracts will be up soon. Hahs explained that most are "not interested in having a strike for its own sake." She added that most want to reasonably work together and that there is more than just one set of union workers. It's a matter of getting prepared for both parties negotiating, which is a very formal process, she said.

Another student brought up the need for greater internet access in the computer labs. Vice President of Finance Mark Wilcockson explained that there were certain sections of the computer lab designated specifically for students to be able to do homework. This was done in response to student complaints about not being able to use a computer because a lot of people were on sites like Facebook and Myspace.

I had the chance to ask President Hahs about our school's retention and graduation rate, specifically for Latino students. The overall graduation rate is 18 and a half percent for freshman that remained full-time and graduated in four years. Since almost half of the student body is transfer students, I asked if there was a more accurate way to measure these rates. Hahs said that students can be tracked if they go to a school in Illinois, adding that rates for other demographics are also pieces of the puzzle.

Student Eric López brought up having a Latino Cultural and Resource Center in the proposed Education Building. Earlier, President Hahs had met with members from Chimexla, UPRS, and Que Ondee Sola surrounding the issue. She said, "It's not a yes or no answer, it's long and complicated." She explained that it's a matter of incorporating it into budget, planning, and what groups are going to work on what.

President Hahs also spoke about Lobby Day, which will take place the second year in a row in Springfield on April 9. The event is coordinated by Suleyma Pérez from the president's office. Students interested in participating in Lobby Day are encouraged to do so.

Finally, on a personal note, having been here during the reign of former university president Salme Steinberg, this new willingness for communication on the part of President Hahs strikes me as sincere. It's rare to have access to those in leadership positions. Hopefully, such Town Hall meetings foster open communication between the president's office and the student body.



# Brawl packs a serious

# punch

by David Mosher  
Production Manager

First we smashed, then we melee'd and now we get to brawl. *Super Smash Bros. Brawl* for the Wii is Nintendo's latest incarnation of the popular series. *Super Smash Bros. Melee* was the Gamecube's best selling game, so *Brawl* had a lot of hype to live up to. Thankfully, it doesn't just live up to it – it punches it in the face, Pikachu style.

The premise of the game is simple. Take a bunch of Nintendo characters (and Sega and Konami for good measure) and let them fight against each other. Give them each special moves related to the character, then tweak speeds, power and abilities until they're balanced. Then, have at it. It's a formula that worked well before, and it works flawlessly in *Brawl*.

First and foremost, the roster has been increased to 35 playable characters. Everyone from Mario to Pikachu is included. Some are unlockable, such as Solid Snake and Sonic. Each character has their own special gameplay style, with some completely new ones thrown into the mix. The Pokemon Trainer, for instance, throws out different pokemon to battle with, while being able to recall and send out a new pokemon at will. Each pokemon has different capabilities.

It's not just the roster that

has been expanded; the audio score has been as well. Nintendo has always been strong with their audio tracks, but this time around they've reinvented the wheel. Original composers from the *StarFox* were brought



in, and the result is fantastic. Many old tunes have also been thrown into the mix for good ol' Nintendo nostalgia.

Other notable additions to the game are the upgraded graphics and online capability. The

amount of polygons used for each character has been significantly increased, and the frame rate never dips below a steady 60 frames per second.

These features are just the mechanics, the underlying machinery of a masterpiece that comes together flawlessly, a true gestalt of multiplayer mayhem. The single-player experience in *Brawl* has been bumped up considerably from *Melee* for a lengthy 8-hour experience, but it is in multiplayer that *Brawl* truly shines.

Multiplayer is the reason *Brawl*, and the whole *Super Smash Bros.* series in general, exists. The amount of fun extracted from beating Mario over the head with Link's boomerang is not just satisfactory, it is an uplifting

experience of epic proportions, followed up by a short stab with Link's sword and a smash that sends Mario careening off the screen in an inevitable flash of defeat. Even more joyously, experiences such as these can now be experienced online with friends over the Internet.

The online portion of the game, while a noteworthy addition, is the only aspect that could have been implemented better. Matches are limited to a short two minutes with those who don't have your friend code, and headsets are not supported. This is not surprising coming from Nintendo, as their past online forays have been similarly shackled, in an attempt to prevent the young from intermingling with the old. While this may offer some degree of protection for the under age, it is simply frustrating to those who value human communication.

*Brawl* is a masterpiece of an addition to the Nintendo Wii's library of games. The Xbox 360 may have its *Halo 3*, and the Playstation 3 may have some games worth playing... eventually... but it's *Super Smash Bros. Brawl* for the Wii that will be getting all the attention this month.



Images courtesy of nintendo.com and smashbros.plains.gamespy.com

## Diversional Discourse

### *Et in Arcadia ego*

by Cheryl Lyman  
Entertainment Editor  
C-Lyman1@neiu.edu



Sitting in the cafeteria, looking out the windows toward the Peace Garden, you may see someone pacing back and forth talking to herself. Don't be alarmed. It's just me. In fact, you may see me walking down the hallway talking to myself as well.

I hadn't thought about how it must look to other people who see these conversations I have with myself, until one day, not only did I notice several people looking at me strangely, but a fellow newspaper person walked out into the Peace Garden and said to me, "You do realize you look absolutely insane, don't you?"

I then thought about getting an earpiece so it looks like I'm on the phone but that seems like a silly investment on my part though, since I don't have a cell phone.

My son and my roommate are both accustomed to me pacing back and forth

talking to myself, and the rest of the *Independent* staff are starting to get used to it (of course, most of them fit into the crazy category anyway).

But, if you don't know me, or the fact that I am also an actress, you may not realize that I am memorizing lines and running through blocking. The Peace Garden is set up in the same configuration as Stage Center, a thrust theatre, so it lends itself naturally for extra rehearsal time for me.

Currently, I am working on becoming Lady Croom in Tom Stoppard's *Arcadia*. Lady Croom is an English countess in the early 1800s. While some people have used royal to describe me, I doubt they were including me in the gentry at the time. In real life I usually have my nose stuck in a book or am slumped by a computer, so keeping my posture straight and my nose in the air can be a challenge. Luckily

my pronunciation and diction are fairly decent; otherwise, Stoppard's lines would be even more difficult to learn and say. He has a wonderful way of putting words together that can twist the tongue. I have several lines that give me problems, but they are coming together.

Thankfully, the line that includes "Frenchified mathematick" is not one of mine. The honor of saying that goes to Melanie Bujan, a teacher in the Department of Communications, Media and Theatre, who plays Hannah, a researcher in the 1900s. During one rehearsal that line just wouldn't come out right. Try it; it isn't as easy as it looks. Sorry Melanie, but you have to admit, it was a great laugh!

Laughing is something that happens frequently at rehearsals. Everyone involved in the cast and crew of *Arcadia* is absolutely lovely. It is much harder to work with people who

think that their you-know-what smells better than everyone else's. We don't have that problem with this show; we can all make fun of ourselves. This makes it okay to laugh at other people's mistakes.

There are plenty of mistakes that get made when you are trying to become a character. I've tripped on the stairs, talked to the wrong people, missed cues and messed up lines. We've all done something silly. That is what makes it so much fun.

Another thing that I find fantastic is that it isn't just students of NEIU who are in the plays here. Stage Center has an open casting call and anyone can audition. Because of this, I get to work with people who have acted in more than school productions.

Besides Ms. Bujan, there are several other actors in *Arcadia* that are not students. Erin Rigik and Kyle Martin are the leads in the 1800s part of the play, and they are amazing to watch. I

have learned so much by being able to interact with them. While no interaction occurs between the characters in the 1800s and the ones in the 1900s, it has been delightful to watch the actors from the 1900s. Rand Ringgenberg and David Ropinski are two of the actors in this time period, and seeing them find their characters is inspiring.

It is easier to find your character when you are working with your fellow actors, but as all of us have lives beyond Stage Center, we must pursue the role on our own as well.

This brings me right back to pacing back and forth in the Peace Garden. As Lady Croom becomes more developed in me, I may start to look more insane than usual, but hey, now that you know what I'm doing, I can say with pride, *Et in Arcadia ego!*

*Arcadia opens at Stage Center Theatre on April 10.*



# 10,000 B.C. requires mammoth screen

by Mark Clover  
Senior Staff Writer

If 10,000 B.C. is a movie you have your heart set on seeing, then there is no doubt you will want to see it on the big screen. In fact, if fantastical movies are your standard fare, or spectacular CGI effects are a must-see, then this movie should be on your calendar. As far as the storytelling and plot of this flick are concerned, the script cheats in a few areas. But, it is forgivable if only because it takes a rather simple tale, and twists it a bit, so as to move it beyond being utterly predictable. The acting is not bad, and at times touching, which is saying a lot, since the setting and script are not geared toward big dramatic moments for the most part. Direction is good, and the cinematography can be a bit dark, but the vistas chosen for filming this movie are breathtaking, while the ground-level shots are properly claustrophobic.

If there is a main problem with this film, beyond the thin plot, it might be the sound. At times, it is difficult to understand what is being said, and several people noted this difficulty when it happened repeatedly during the film. Keep your ears open whenever the camera moves in close to a scene that is obviously meant to be poignant or intimate. Toward the end of those scenes, there is often a line or word that gets muffled or eaten by the actor speaking. I can't help but think that a little more time in the studio re-recording some of the dialogue or re-mixing the sound could have benefited this movie.

The film does an interesting bit

of civilization-glomming to piece together its fantasy world, cherry-picking a number of real world cultures. Bits of Near East, African, Native American and other customs and costuming tropes are utilized to dress the various tribal and ethnic groups

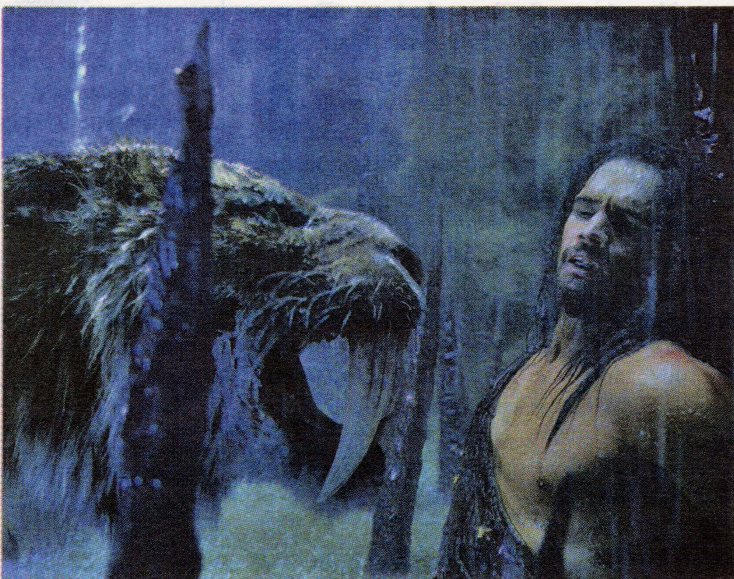


Image courtesy of Warner Bros.

populating this imaginary landscape. I think the filmmakers do a credible enough job making the world in which the film takes place feel familiar, without overtly trying to portray things as an alternate history. The Egyptian-style pyramids in the City of the Gods might tread most closely to the line, but it allows for some excellent set pieces to ramp up the action, so to speak, at the end of the film.

Effects-wise, there are more than enough mammoths, and close call

mammoth stompings to warrant their near-overuse. While looking forward to the saber-tooth tiger shots, in particular, it was surprising the creature played so small a role in the film, even though it is pivotal to the plot. The film surprises further by including another prehistoric creature, a number of this type, that almost make up for the lean use of the big cat.

The battle sequences might have been a little better choreographed, but at least they avoided the cliché of having either wire-fu, or some other quasi-martial arts maneuvers being the province of what are meant to be barely trained overlord warriors fighting against uprising slaves, townsfolk and hunters. There are some tough warriors on both sides of the major conflicts, but it would have been a mistake to make this film emulate levels of technology and fight-training beyond the pseudo-Stone and Bronze Ages. It just would not have fit well, and it is wise they avoided this pitfall.

The leads acting in this film are all attractive enough, without being

made to seem glamorous or overly buff. They all represent peoples living in harsh conditions, and except for a few elders in the tribes or the elite shamans/priests, the shape the people are in is fitting to the story. Casting all around is very good and aside for Omar Sharif narrating, the cast is not made up of really big names or star power, though most of the core cast have indeed spent a good deal of their lives in front of the camera, including the younger stars. There are no oddball cameos or people cast for that combination of physical size coupled with semi-star status like some of the older B-movies used to do (no models or athletes crossing over into acting).

The pacing of the film suffers in a couple of places where the story is meant to pull the audience in, and make them hope the characters will not give up. This would work better if the movie was more character driven, but the depth is just not there to support those moments of direction. But, again, those scenes are fairly brief and do not detract too much from the overall story, except for the aforementioned sound problems.

The bottom line is that this movie comes close to being on par with the typical summer blockbuster as a spectacle but comes up a bit short in the script and star power. Likely, the filmmakers planned for a late winter release to avoid the competition of Oscar films toward the end of the year and the big films just around the corner. Take it in on the big screen as a matinee and it can be viewed in all its big screen glory without damaging your budget in too regrettable a fashion.

## WWIII: brought to you by Tom Clancy

by Jonathan Gronli  
Editor-in-Chief

Tom Clancy, best-selling novelist and mastermind of various video games, has hit gold with yet another game/novel combo. *EndWar* hopes to be the future of real-time strategy (RTS) games. The book is a chilling play-by-play based off of an entirely possible scenario.

The game is going to be like one of the current Madden football games in terms of presentation. The difference is, rather than being set in a stadium and having two teams beating the hell out of each other for the score, it is the military. Rather than giving just a sky-high view of the battlefield, camera angles will be placed within units. This

gives a more televised, realistic look to the face of war-videogaming. Much like in reality, what seems to be destructible will be.

The gameplay is rumored to have taken a revolutionary turn. Rather than being a game full of point-and-click death, orders will apparently be given by the player's voice. This means you will be entirely justified swearing loudly at your TV when your troops act like total idiots. As for paying for reinforcements like other RTS games, you won't have to do resource harvesting. Rumor has it that you will gain money through capturing/destroying strategic points in a city.

The story is, World War III has broken out and is raging in its full fury by the year 2020. The three playable factions are: the Russians, who are trying to rebuild and surpass the strength of the Soviet Union, the European Union, which has completely united Europe and is trying to ensure continental economic superiority, and the United States, which is trying to keep their status as a world superpower.

Both the book and the game tie in certain aspects of other Tom Clancy games and stories. They both make

some references to events from *Rainbow Six: Las Vegas*, *Splinter Cell* and *Ghost Recon*. Some characters, like Scott Mitchell from *Ghost Recon: Advanced Warfighter* and *Ghost Recon: Advanced Warfighter 2*, make occasional cameos in the game.

The book is a bit more interesting than the game, though. Iran and Saudi Arabia have nuked each other off the map. Meanwhile, Russia has been doing a better job of utilizing their oil reserves, but they want to rebuild the power they once had, so they are trying to start a war between



America and the European Union, known in the book as the European Federation. If they are successful, Europe, and eventually the world, will fall to Russian control.

The story starts off with a group of American soldiers going into Moscow to capture a Russian officer with important strategic information. The information is such that might be able to quell the Russian onslaught from the west in Europe, and push back the

Russian troops that aerial transports are dropping into Canada. Sacrifices will be made for the greater good. American, Russian and European soldiers will die in battle against each other. A terrorist organization is succeeding in creating a high level of global instability, which happens to be straining the alliance between the United States and the European Federation. Cities will fall into enemy hands and possibly be regained.

The book is definitely worthwhile to read. The game, when it is released, should be a good new spin on the war-videogaming genre. *EndWar*, the book, gets five kinetic strikes on Paris out of five.



Image courtesy of xbox.com



# Little temptation

by Mark Clover  
Senior Staff Writer

Beyond the passable acting, there is little to recommend in *Bachelor Party 2: The Last Temptation*, which takes its name from the 1984 Tom Hanks vehicle. The uneven, low-brow script (with a fair amount of improvisation, according to first-time director/writer James Ryan) is predictable and not as humorous as it would like to be. Not that this is much of a surprise.

The original was far from top-notch, yet the producers steal the name from the 1984 film, even though it is in no way a

manner; that is, not beyond the fact that they both revolve around bachelor parties.

One wonders at the wisdom of co-opting the name in any event, as the original was not of a caliber worth repeating, nor was it a film so well-received that one would think there was value with which to associate it. According to the 10-minute long feature included on the "unrated" advance DVD copy (the movie will be coming direct-to-DVD March 11), Ron Moler, one of the producers of the first film, has been hanging on to this little gem of

a property for just the right pitch, before giving his consent to green light a so-called sequel. Moler explains to potential viewers, "I've heard dozens and dozens of pitches over the years. Many of the ideas just wanted to be very

derivative of the original, and that's where the problem was."

Director Ryan says, "Basically, they were looking for someone who had a take not only

on directing it, but on doing a rewrite. I had pitched some ideas and one of the ideas was the SAA cocktail party. [Two characters] stumble into this party not realizing it is a sex addicts' convention, and they assume it is a sales meeting, and it gets into a double entendre thing. So they asked me, 'Do you think you could write that?' So, over the course of the next couple of days I wrote pretty much close to what the scene is now, and they liked it, and we had another meeting and I was hired."

The line between soft-core pornography and bad B-movies is getting very thin these days. Although most of the lead actors manage to keep most of their clothes on, there is so much nudity among the supporting cast and extras that this film would have had to be chopped up pretty good in order to be released in theaters. Some of the actors in the movie, like Josh Cooke (perhaps known from such failed television series as *Big Day* and *Four Kings* in 2006, as well as *Committed* in 2005), Sara Foster (known from movies like *Psych: 9* in 2007, as well as *The Big Bounce* and the lead in *D.E.B.S.* in 2004) and Emmanuelle Vaugier (who plays Det. Jessica Angell on *CSI: NY*, and is often remembered for recurring roles like Mia on *Two and a Half Men* and Dr. Helen Bryce on *Smallville*) are talented, but sadly, may suffer damage to their careers if they continue to wallow in this sort of filth. One can only hope they wise up and choose future work that will allow them, someday, to look back with pride.

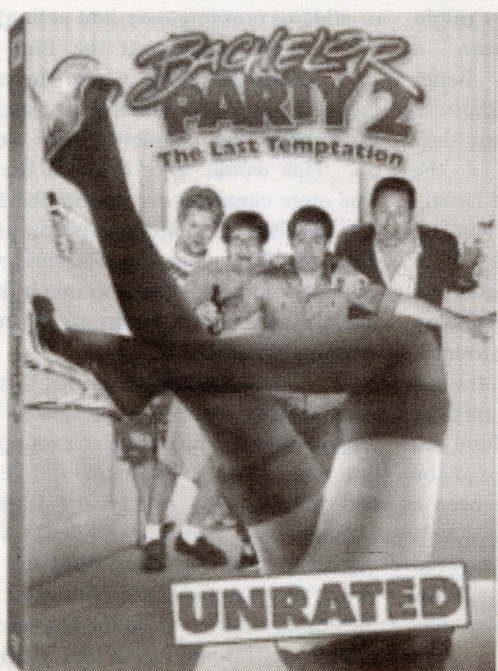


Image courtesy of amazon.com

sequel. There are no actors in the second movie from the original, the characters are not meant to be associated with those from the earlier film, nor is the plot tied to the first movie in any substantial

# The Vagina Monologues open minds and legs

by Kelly Lucia  
Senior Copy Editor

Vaginas are always worth listening to, but the *Vagina Monologues* takes that statement to a new level. The Feminist Majority Leadership Alliance put on the performance Feb. 20 at Stage Center. The show that I attended was packed to the brim. The turn out was so great that some people had to stand throughout the performance because there were no seats left.

The monologues are based off interviews of different women about their vaginas. They are the result of immensely entertaining responses that women had to some of the questions they were asked. There was no bias in whose voice was heard the loudest; many different vaginas were included to enhance the inclusion of many different perspectives that women have about their own anatomy. Thus, there were happy vaginas, angry vaginas, vaginas "closed due to flooding" and abused vaginas which told stories of sexual slavery and forced prostitution.

Emotions were high

as the audience listened to the multiple women on stage tell the stories. I, along with some others that I spotted in the crowd, definitely got choked up during parts of this play. There were other parts where I laughed myself silly. All in all, this performance is one of the most positive portrayals of the female body that I have ever witnessed. With all these vastly different perspectives from different vaginas, women are encouraged to love and accept their bodies despite that difference, and also to love themselves. The vagina is used as a symbol to unite all women in a common struggle for happiness and liberty, and that is something we as women can all agree on.

Although the *Vagina Monologues* might seem to be geared toward women, men can enjoy this show just as much as anyone else. The level of openness that is supported, along with the message of love for one's self, is positive and beneficial to any member of the human species. The actresses were right on their mark, and put on a great and worthwhile show for every member of the audience.

## BEYOND THE VEIL OF MADNESS

### MORBID DREAMS AND DYING DREAMSCAPES

by Jonathan Gronli  
Editor-in-Chief

As promised in the last issue, I will be going further into detail on H.P. Lovecraft and his weird fiction. The focus this time will be the Dream Cycle portion of his works of morbidity.

*The Dream Cycle of H.P. Lovecraft: Dreams of Terror and Death* is a wonderful compilation of 25 stories, all with a similar link. Rather than dwelling solely in the Cthulhu Mythos, a madness-inspiring string of stories, the Dream Cycle is more a fantastical dwelling into the nature of dreams.

While the Dream Cycle does not follow the Cthulhu Mythos, it does bring up many of the same topics, concepts and gods. The Necronomicon and numerous other books of occult nature drift through the river of dreams and nightmares that are concocted by the author. Through the ever-consistent departures into the occult, the Elder Gods, the Old Ones, the Deep Ones and the Other Gods make cameos throughout the stories of the dream cycle. Death may come to some; however, death is not necessarily the end. According to the famed couplet written by the author of

the Necronomicon the "Mad Arab" Abdul Alhazred: "That is not dead which can eternal lie, and with strange aeons even death may die."

What decrepit faces of times unknown might make themselves open to human reception in dreams? For H.P. Lovecraft, in this cycle of stories, there is some hope of waking up. However, his bleak pessimistic view of the world makes it nearly impossible to awake from these dreams relatively sane. Then, there are the stories in which the magic and power of dreams are lost, and through this, hope is

completely nullified.

These stories, from "Azathoth" to "The Dreams in the Witch-House," are simply about trying to understand the dream world.

Whether or not they are prophetic, or just random dreams of happenstance, is unimportant. What is important within these stories is the possibility of something beyond our normal senses and their ability to interact with us. Will they protect and serve us? Will they drive us into complete and utter insanity? Will

they...kill us? We don't know because we don't know what we will see at any time in any dream.

Quite honestly, the start of the dream cycle, much like a lot of H.P. Lovecraft's early stories, was awkward and poor in technique. However, with the anthology of his dream cycle, you get to see him grow into one of the most misunderstood writers in the horror and fantasy genres. You get a more complete view of his evolution into one of the greatest horror authors that the 20<sup>th</sup> Century had to offer. Rather than just focusing on the early, frilly, more fantasy-based stories like "Through the Gates of the Silver Key" and ignoring some of the more hard-edged, better written horror stories like "Pickman's Model" or "The Dreams in the Witch-House," it actually embraces both ends of the Lovecraftian spectrum.

If you're into horror and are either a fan, or looking for something new to sink your teeth into, *The Dream Cycle of H.P. Lovecraft: Dreams of Terror and Death* is one of the best things you can buy. Time to bring out the arbitrary grading scale, and it gets 9 Necronomicons out of 10. It would've been 10 but a ghoul felt human skin and ate the 10<sup>th</sup> Necronomicon.

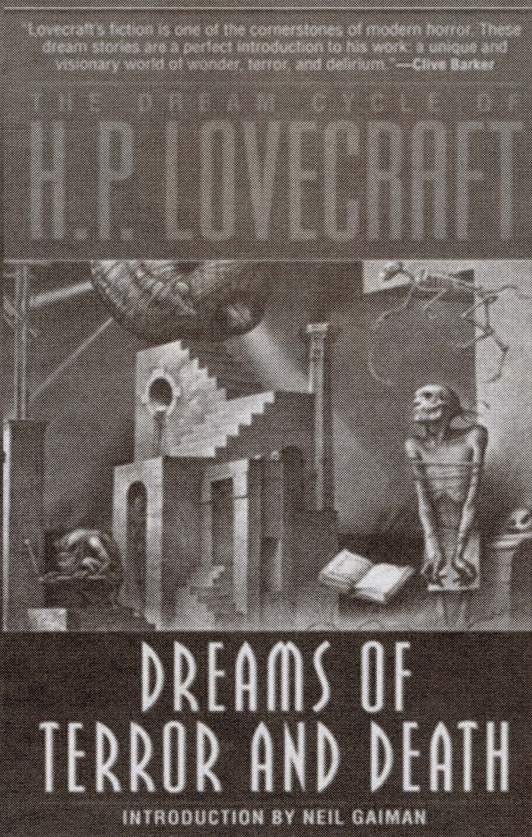


Image courtesy of amazon.com



# Let the blind lead those who can see but cannot feel

by Regina M. Torres  
Senior Staff Writer

Atlas Sound is the brand new, entirely solo debut of Deerhunter frontman/musical rebel Bradford Cox. In *Let the Blind Lead Those Who Can See but Cannot Feel*, listeners get an auditory meditation of ambient, memory-evoking soundscapes. For essentially a homespun, Atlanta bedroom album, this is one of the most subtly intriguing, honest and ambient musical efforts of late. In Cox's own words:

"This album is for my best friend Lockett. It has a lot to do with childhood. I wanted to make an album that was uplifting but honest, which is why it seems sad a lot of the time. I want to make music that could be 'healing' or therapeutic to people who relate to it."

Indeed, his music evokes a sense of a haunted yet hopeful past, with dense guitar and odd instrument samplings, whispered vocals and sensual ponderings. This album is a successful mish-mash of experimental recording techniques and garage-rock influences, which results in a surprisingly unique pop-like outcome by a true queer art punk.

The entire album is worthy of repeated listening for the mere subtleties that are woven throughout. The album on Krank Records is hard to describe in concrete terms. Nonetheless, it is a thoroughly unique and pleasant interpretation on the healing of past

memories.

"Recent Bedroom" is a slurry magic carpet ride of overdubbed guitar, tapes of treated drums and percussion, a music box, vibraphone and assorted electronics.

"Quarantined" offers mbira, metallophone and Ghana bells looped together with steady guitar, bass and collaged acoustic drums. Throw in an electronic bass program and glockenspiel, and the result is a seamless mix of complex, softly forceful and upbeat music to dance to in a daydream.

A Zen mist surrounds and lifts the meditative sounds of "On Guard." Gong bowls, electric piano, organ and various other percussion instruments combine with psychedelic pitch vocals. The song seems appropriate for playing during lift-off into outer space, or when getting a Swedish massage. Ahhhh.

For a bit of a lounge-type atmosphere, "Cold as Ice" delivers. The vocals describe entering the back room of a gay bar. "Walk into back room. Back room. Walk into back room. Back room. Cold as ice, cold as ice. Waiting there. Cold as ice," Cox sings.

"Scraping Past" is nothing short of

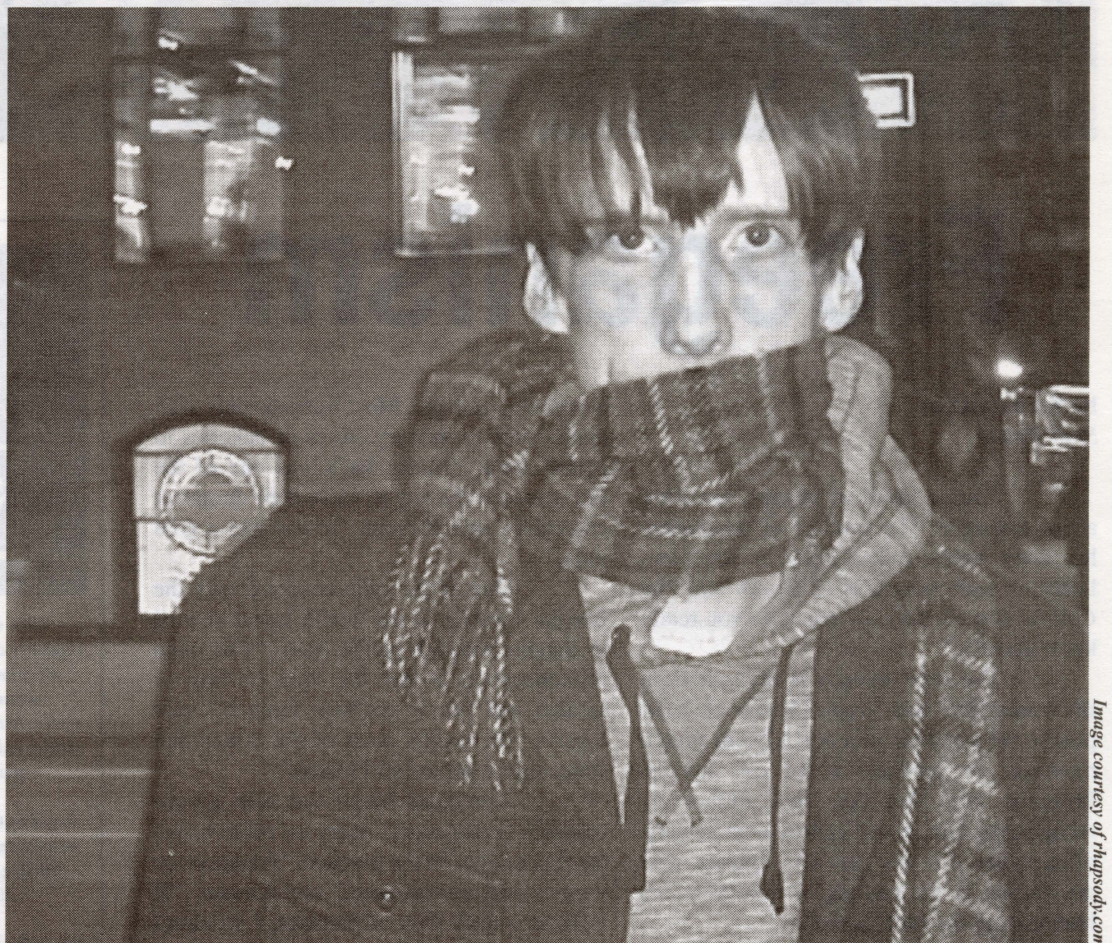


Image courtesy of rhopsody.com

lovely. The bass lines match beautifully with the groaning lyrics that echo repeatedly. The tension that accumulates is dissipated by the rhythm and harmony that soothes.

A mystical and exotic mood is evoked in the mostly instrumental track "After Class." Tremolo guitar and barely there vocals are layered along with bit-crushed percussion, bells, bass and various other electronic gadgetry to provoke a sense of slow majesty.

Listeners who can appreciate popish, surf-driven 80s-esque tunes, which

resemble the likes of old Pixies, will undoubtedly take to the song "Ativan." Slow, weepy, surf-twang guitar sets the pace with slightly off-center and layered vocals. This song is probably the most rock-oriented in nature, but don't be fooled. Atlas Sound/Cox is keen on throwing out curve balls. While the tempo is upbeat and calm, the vocals tell a different story. This is the story of a disgruntled, lovesick boy whose boyfriend is off with a newfound girlfriend.

Atlas Sound's new album of mixed sound is a definite keeper.

## Upcoming events on Campus

Through March 28: "Art Exhibit - "Flown the Coop" by Claire Ashley  
Monday - Thursday 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 pm, Friday 11:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.  
Fine Arts Center Gallery

March 25: Student Recital  
1:45 p.m. - Recital Hall

March 25: Yiming Zhang, piano - Graduate Recital  
(student of Mikhail Yanovitsky)  
7:30 p.m. - Recital Hall

March 27: Jazz Lab Band - Mayo Tiana, director  
7:30 p.m. - Auditorium

March 31: Stephanie Stahl, trombone - Senior Recital  
(student of Art Linsner)  
7:30 p.m. - Recital Hall

April 2: Caribe, NEIU Latin Jazz Ensemble  
(directed by Mayo Tiana)  
7:30 p.m. - Auditorium

April 3: Student Recital  
1:45 p.m. - Recital Hall

April 3: NEIU Guitar Ensemble  
(directed by Brian Torisian)  
7:30 p.m. - Auditorium

April 4: NEIU Brass Ensemble  
(directed by Travis Heath)  
8:00 p.m. - Recital Hall

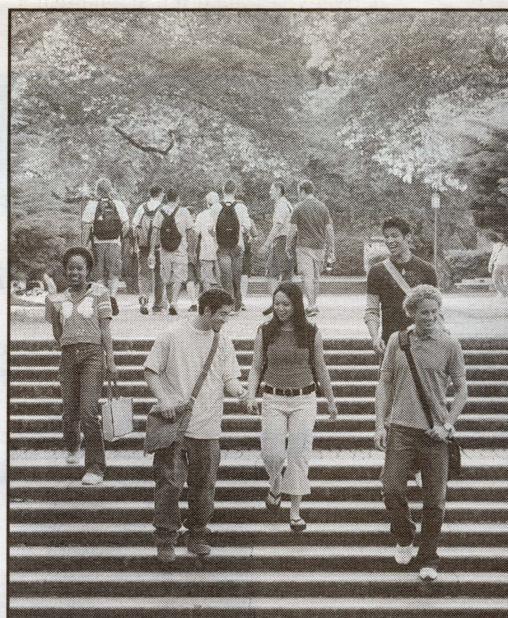
April 8: NEIU Percussion Ensemble  
(directed by Clay Condon)  
7:30 p.m. Auditorium

April 10: Student Recital  
1:45 p.m. - Recital Hall

April 10: NEIU Varsity Big Band  
(directed by Mayo Tiana)  
7:30 p.m. - Auditorium

April 10 - 26: Arcadia by Tom Stoppard  
directed by Anna Antaramian  
Thursday - Saturday 7:30 p.m. - Stage Center

To have your event covered, contact Cheryl Lyman at C-Lyman1@neiu.edu



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# Freeganism

by Sarah Antrim  
Staff Writer

You've heard of vegans, but what about freegans? The concept of *freeganism* has been widely talked about in the news lately on such programs as *Oprah* and *The Colbert Report*, but how much do you really know about it?

The term freegan is devised from the words 'free' and 'vegan.' Veganism is the practice of avoiding all products from animal resources or products tested on animals. Freegans take this one step further by recognizing that in our consumerist society, often times it's not just the animals who are abused in the making of products—it's humans and the earth as well.

Every day, hundreds of thousands of pounds of perfectly good food is tossed away from grocery store shelves in order to make room for new products. Freegans make the conscious choice to not contribute to the waste created by consumerism. "The reason for freeganism is to avoid over-consumption," said NEIU junior Kirsten Kilponen. Kirsten has been living a freegan lifestyle for several years now.

Instead of overpaying for groceries when so much food has gone to waste, you'll often find freegans rummaging through trash to find their food. For this reason, freegans are sometimes known as 'dumpster-divers,' which can shed a negative light on their lifestyle. A myth that is associated with the lifestyle is that freegans dig through

everyone's garbage. Most freegans only visit places such as grocery stores or bakeries to collect food. "Trader Joe's was one of the last places in the city to leave their dumpster unlocked," said Kirsten. "It was like a gold mine."

One of the main concerns with the freegan lifestyle is the health issues related to digging through public trash. "The main misconception is that the food is dirty or spoiled and you'll get sick from it," said Kirsten. "In reality, most of the things that stores throw out are still sealed."

Numerous blogs and web groups organize "trash tours" every so often to get more people in on the practice. "Freegans are very community-oriented," said Kirsten. "If I found a giant box of bananas, I wouldn't want to keep it all for myself—I would want to share it. No one goes dumpster-diving alone."

Freeganism isn't just limited to food intake, however. Freegans try their hardest to employ alternative strategies for living in the conventional economy by consuming a very minimal amount of resources. For example, Kirsten buys all of her clothes at thrift stores. She also boasts a furniture collection that is almost entirely from the trash.

"Crate and Barrel was next to the Trader Joe's we went to," she says. "They throw out all of their displays and anything that might have minor damage to it. We got new rugs, lamps, all for free." When asked if she ever buys anything new, she responded laughingly, "underwear."

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by David Mosher  
Production Manager

The online world is a wonderful place. It's a place where teenagers go to try out different identities in social networks. It's a place where adults go to find information to make life easier. It's such a wonderful place that its seductive lure can take over real-life responsibilities.

This seductive lure usually happens slowly and innocently. Facebook becomes slightly more important than studying for an exam, or checking out MySpace pages occurs before homework is completed, not after. It's a subtle change that usually no one notices. But it's a dangerous change.

It's a dangerous change because the internet takes away worries, much like alcohol or any other escapism technique. It lets us disappear into another world. To the user, it's nearly unnoticeable except for the fact that they are

## The Internet and escapism

*When the online world becomes the new real world*

momentarily happier in this fictional world. To everyone else, it's clear something is wrong.

The signs of escapism are many. The person will spend more and more time online, preferring the computer over real-life activities.

They may neglect to take care of themselves in favor of a game or chat room.

Like a n y addiction or disorder, it only becomes a real problem when it interferes with normal day-to-day activities.

How does this happen? To someone who has never been addicted to something like this, it may seem silly that t h e y can't just

stop playing and go outside or hang out with friends. But it's something more than that. When people are online, they are generally interacting. Most games are played with other people. There are more cases of people being addicted to MMORPGS, or massive multiplayer online role playing games, than there are single player games because of this social aspect.

This social aspect is a defining characteristic of human beings, that we are, in fact, social. The internet gives us a perfect chance to be social while leaving out many of the negatives of being social. For example, most awkwardness and physical insecurities are gone. For whatever reason, it's much easier to talk with people when you're a level 70 Night Elf Rogue than it is to talk face-to-face.

It's also fun. Naturally, games have challenges and rewards built into them. A person can spend a night online and leave feeling like they've accomplished something or earned a reward, even if in reality all they did was peck away at a 'qwerty' keyboard and stare at some liquid crystals.

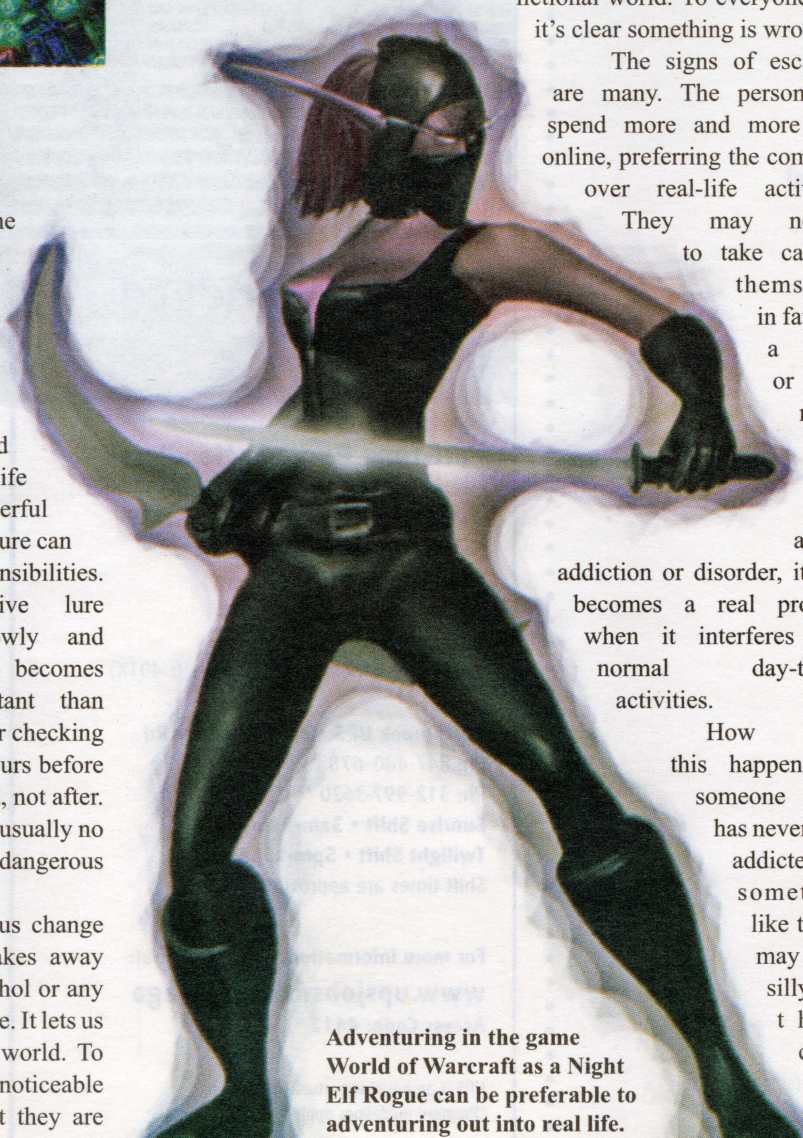
Is it 'wrong' for these people to get more enjoyment from the computer than from

real life? Thinking back to the awkward social situations we've all inevitably found ourselves in while being out on the town, it's certainly not hard to sympathize with them. With the rates of time spent online sky-rocketing and time spent doing everything else falling, the trend is clear that online is certainly becoming more and more seductive by the minute.

Where will it all end up? Will first dates be done with high resolution webcams and voice over IPs? Or will that part even be foregone, replaced by a dragon raid?

Certainly the government, for whatever reason, seems to think you should spend more time outside than inside. Countries like China and Korea can send people to mental hospitals for online addiction to games like *Starcraft* and *World of Warcraft*. They also have measures in place to limit the amount of time people spend playing these games.

Whether or not the United States will ever resort to such drastic measures is yet to be seen, but the problem is there. The only real question is whether spending too much time online is actually a problem, or just the new entertainment standard.



Adventuring in the game *World of Warcraft* as a Night Elf Rogue can be preferable to adventuring out into real life.



# Claire Ashley: Flown the coop

by Regina M. Torres  
Senior Staff Writer

Local Chicago artist Claire Ashley has an ongoing art exhibit at NEIU's Fine Arts Center Gallery, through March 28.

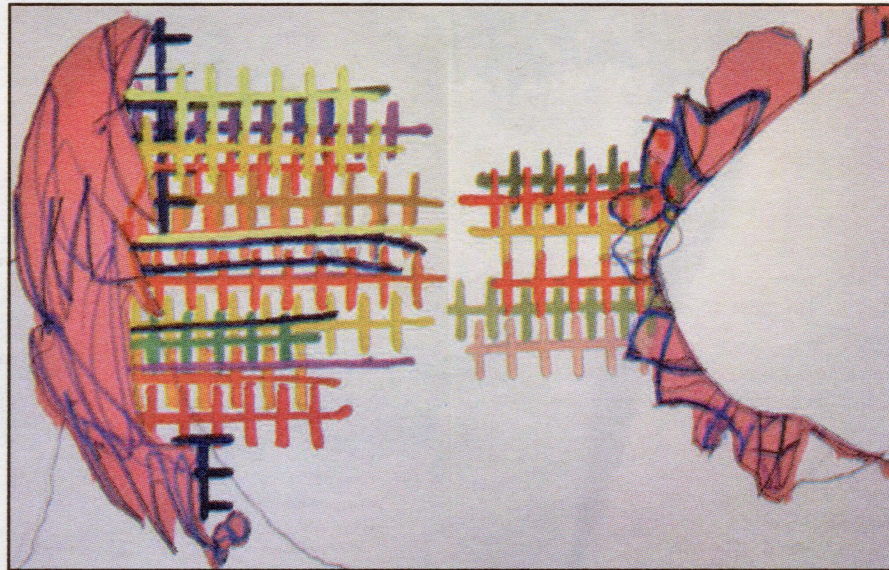
Currently, Ashley teaches first year art students at School of the Art Institute of Chicago, while balancing both her family and artistic life. And while she makes Chicago her home, her Scottish upbringing makes an impact within her artwork.

Ever the energetic and exploratory artist at work, Ashley started to make large scale paintings (8 x 8 ft.) of what she thought were abstract grids back in her homeland of Scotland. After her move to the States, and some reflection, she came to the comical conclusion that "they were actually giant tartan paintings."

Her interest in the grid and its patterns, metaphors and especially structures, may be a reflection of her often chaotic lifestyle. Within the process of creating her mixed-media works of drawing, painting, sculpture, photography and installations, Ashley is seeking "not solace, but space in which to think." Stimulation, surprise and playfulness are discovered and relished in Ashley's artistic processes. "I use the framework of content to direct the choice

of medium; however, I also like to allow the work to develop through process intuitively in the studio."

Besides her Scottish childhood, some of Ashley's artistic influences/inspirations are:



An art piece from Claire Ashley's gallery.

Rauschenberg's paintings, all works by Eva Hesse, Rebecca Horn's early performative actions with sculptural props, Richard Tuttle, her art students, and family.

Ashley applies found objects, architectural structures, various materials and

playfulness to her fun and interwoven artworks on the human condition. Her work seeks a metaphorical representation of humanity's cultural attachments and endeavors.

In her current art exhibit at NEIU

family's cereal boxes form a collage of interwoven recycled strips, forming a giant human face that looks out at the audience. Another entire wall hosts little plastic army men and other small toy figures sprinkled throughout in compromising situations; mostly tucked in/around toothpick barricades, and at times encased in wax. Interlaced strips of photos and paper form squares with openings/voids found within their centers. An eye-catching, cheerful, pink blow-up curtain is hung from the ceiling, with the bottom-pleated cuts complementing the jagged toothpick bottoms of the toy soldier wall series. Lastly, be sure to check out the tracing paper cut-outs that are grouped together behind the desk area of the gallery.

Ashley's work is an innovative and fun way of poking holes in society. At the same time, the deeper messages and metaphors need a closer inspection than just a first glance. That is where the big picture presents itself.

Claire Ashley's current exhibit can be viewed until March 28 at the Fine Arts Center Gallery.

Gallery Hours: Monday - Friday, 11-6  
773-442-4944

[www.neiu.edu/~art/gal.html](http://www.neiu.edu/~art/gal.html)

## Ely Liebow remembrance

by Mark Clover  
Senior Staff Writer

A year ago, March 30, 2007, Ely Liebow passed away. Northeastern Illinois University (NEIU) faculty, staff and students joined the family in mourning his passing, as he touched many lives and enriched them all. Ely Liebow's wife of 57 years, three daughters and two granddaughters will miss him most of all, but as his friend and colleague, Donald J. Terras, said at the time, "It was a sad day for all who knew this unique man that was loved, honored and enjoyed by so many people from all walks of life."

However, it has been a year, and it is important to note that the legacy of Ely Liebow lives on in a number of ways. Although a lifetime Sherlock Holmes aficionado, after Liebow's retirement from the English department of NEIU, he became even more immersed. According to Terras:

"It was during this time that his appreciation of detective fiction fully developed, with a particular interest in the Sherlock Holmes stories of Arthur

Conan Doyle. But this interest wasn't strictly academic. He would become a member of Hugo's Companions in 1968 and the Hounds of the Baskerville (sic) in 1971. With the Companions, Ely went on to become Sir Hugo from 1976 to 1978 and was The Most Notable Companion in 1988 and the Horace Harker Award winner in 1983 and 1995, in recognition of his many notable written contributions about the Holmes canon."

"Outside of Chicago," Terras continues, "Ely was a regular at the Sherlock Holmes birthday festivities held annually during January in New York, where one of his favorite pastimes was getting together with like-minded souls for drinks at Pete's Tavern, a pub that was frequented by O. Henry. In 1979, he received his shilling and investiture as Inspector Gregory from the Baker Street Irregulars and in 1991 was presented with the Irregular's Two-Shilling Award. From 1976 to 1995, Ely acted as an editorial adviser for the prestigious Sherlockian journal *Baker Street Miscellanea*, published in Chicago. All these accomplishments aside, Ely was

best known for his research on Dr. Joe Bell, the Scottish physician who served as Arthur Conan Doyle's inspiration for Sherlock Holmes. This research led to a book, *Dr. Joe Bell: Model for Sherlock Holmes*, published in 1982 by Bowling Green University's Popular Press and which has been re-released by the University of Wisconsin Press in 2007."

Liebow was a member of two Chicago Sherlockian scion societies (a scion is a branch group of the national organization called The Baker Street Irregulars). The Chicago groups are Hugo's Companions (contact-Bill Sawisch at [wmsawisch@sbcglobal.net](mailto:wmsawisch@sbcglobal.net)) and The Hounds of the Baskerville ([houndsofthebaskerville.org](http://houndsofthebaskerville.org)). In 2001, Liebow also started a Sherlockian group called the NEIU Sherlockians. This group meets at the Highwood Library every two months on the second Tuesday. More information about the NEIU Sherlockians is available from Sonia Arvanitis ([T-Arvanitis@neiu.edu](mailto:T-Arvanitis@neiu.edu)).

"The [NEIU] Sherlockian Club is a tight knit group at this time of about 20 people," says Arvanitis. "After professor Liebow died, they were worried that the group would be disbanded, but I agreed to continue it in memory of professor Liebow. We now have rotating speakers, preferably with an NEIU connection, at each meeting. The group has read a host of Holmes stories and watched videos and movies made years ago. They discuss the stories in great detail and no detail escapes them. They also read professor Liebow's Holmes book."

Arvanitis, as Director of Development at NEIU, has also been involved in the instituting of an Ely Liebow Scholarship Award. It is still in the works at this time as the endowment money is being raised. Once that has been accomplished, the chair of the English department will work out the selection criteria with input from the Liebow family. Further announcements will be made regarding this scholarship at an appropriate time.



Photo by Mark Clover

Ely Liebow, smiling while telling a joke.

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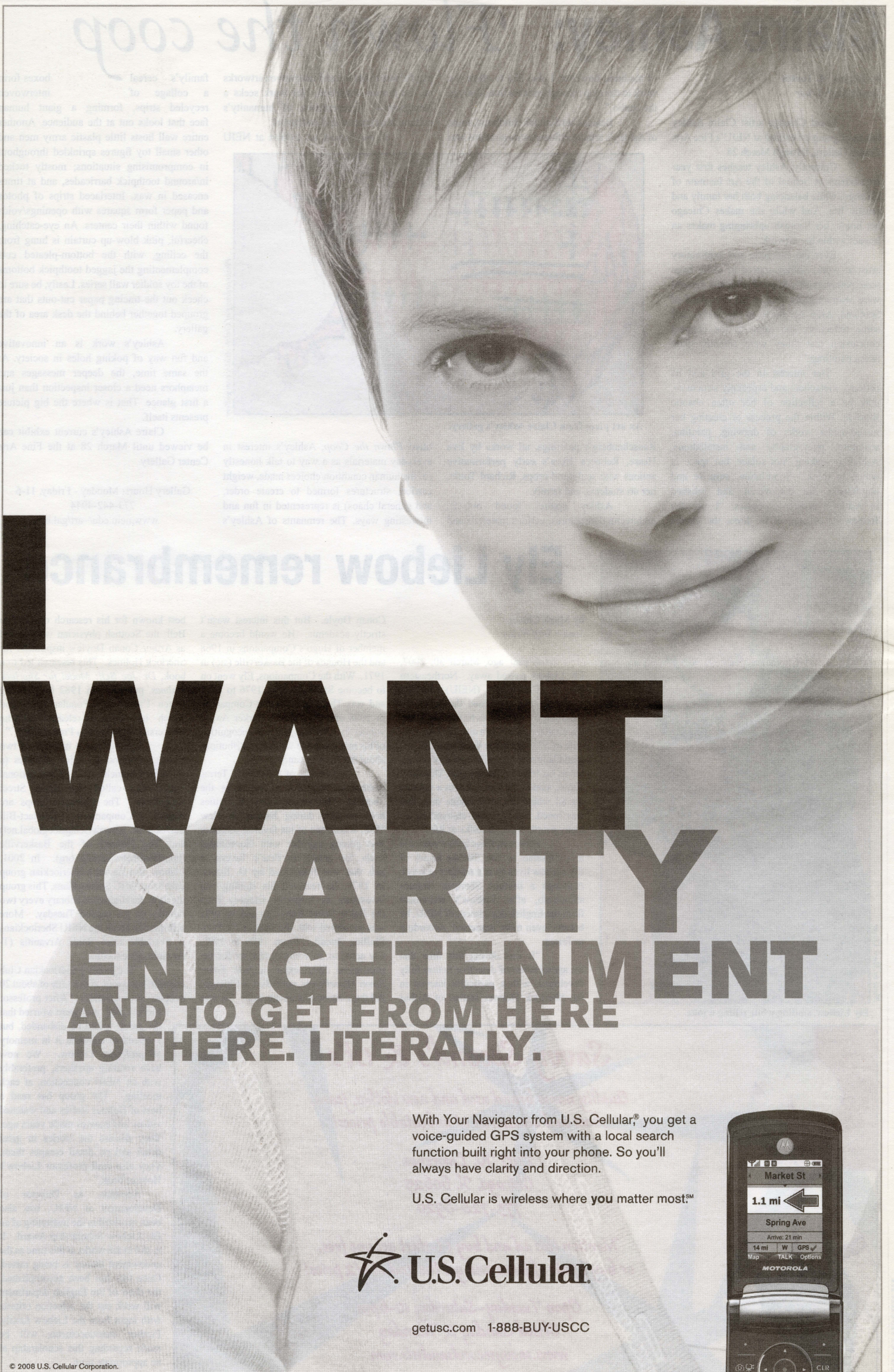
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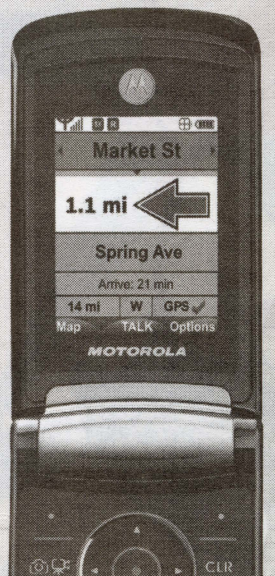
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# Mega cheap travel

by Sarah Antrim  
Staff Writer

With bus fares starting as low as \$1, Megabus is one way to travel on a budget. Megabus.com describes its company as "a non-stop inter-city express bus company that offers fares to travelers as low as \$1, via the internet." The Megabus makes daily trips to and from Chicago to 12 Midwest cities including St. Louis, Minneapolis, Detroit and Milwaukee. Should you happen to find yourself on the West coast, Megabus also recently

launched a Los Angeles hub, offering services to seven different cities, including Las Vegas and San Diego.

In September, Megabus invested \$10 million in bringing the first fleet of closed-top double-decker buses to America. Each of the 17 buses seats 79 passengers and is equipped with a full-service bathroom and a wheelchair ramp.

With gas prices constantly on the rise, Megabus can be an alternative to driving or flying. Coach USA conducted

a survey of 1600 of its customers and found that 45 percent of them previously used their car to travel. Of all passengers polled, 94 percent reported that the service offers a great value for their money spent and that they would use Mega Bus again.

So how does it work? First, you need to purchase your ticket from either Megabus.com or by calling (877) GO-2-MEGA. From Chicago, the Megabus makes trips to pick up travelers from Union Station at least five times every day. Buses depart as early

as 9:30 a.m. and as late as 10:30 p.m. The bus makes stops at designated cities, and maps of each drop-off location are provided on the website.

The earlier you book your tickets, the cheaper they are. "Passengers who book travel far enough in advance will have the opportunity to receive low-cost tickets," says Brian Souter, CEO of Stagecoach Group. Book far enough in advance and you can score tickets as low as \$1 one way.



Photo courtesy of mckinstrewnside.co.uk

## Reality Check...

Keith Atterberry  
Staff Writer  
360@keithatterberry.com

# Homeless in Humboldt Park

They stare vacantly at us from the sidewalk in the cold with cups in their hands as we drive by in our nice warm vehicles. As we leave the grocery store or the bank with cash in our pockets, we try to ignore them, but it's difficult because something inside of us says that we should help. Sometimes, we have mercy and give them a little spare change; sometimes, we don't.

They are homeless people.

We see them on the streets every day—pan handling, sleeping on the streets, under bridges and in parks, holding signs that say "Will work for food," or "Vietnam veteran, homeless, can you help?" We act as if they don't even exist, because if they exist, what does that say about society as a whole?

As I approached Humboldt Park Social Services (HPSS), Inc., a homeless shelter, in search of answers, I couldn't help but wonder what it would be like to call this place home, albeit temporary. I wondered what path led these people to this place, at this time. And I wondered what it would take to eradicate the social injustice of homelessness.

Between 2.3 and 3.5 million people experience homelessness nationwide, and approximately 166,000 people experience homelessness in the Chicago Metropolitan area. This is according to officials at the National Coalition for the Homeless and researchers at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC).

There is a misconception that most homeless people are either drug abusers, convicted felons or mentally ill. While many homeless do fall into the former categories, the truth is there are many causes of homelessness, including a lack of affordable housing and living-wage jobs. Other causes include, but are not limited to, unemployment/underemployment, domestic violence and prisoners released back into society without adequate housing.

When I arrived at HPSS I was met by Martin Feliciano, re-entry/volunteer coordinator. He was gracious enough to give some fellow justice studies students and me a tour of the facilities. Feliciano said he has served in his current capacity for two years.

He says he works at the shelter because of a sense of obligation to the community and his family. "I know the need. I've been affected by incarceration. Three generations of my family, so I know that, if something doesn't change, my grandkids are going to be affected; my great grandkids are going to be a part of that system and

somewhere, something has to change."

The shelter, located at 2122 N. Mozart, in Chicago, has served the Logan Square and Humboldt Park district for 15 years.

HPSS's stated mission is, "To empower, serve and advocate for the homeless and disadvantaged in our neighborhood by providing housing and supportive services."

In support of that mission, HPSS offers the following programs: The Center for Changing Lives, Interim Housing, Warming Center, Social Security Payee Program and Food Pantry.

About 60 families a year are afforded four months of interim housing. Furnished apartments are provided to single women, single parents with children and two-parent families. HPSS also offers parents help getting their children into local schools, day care and after school programs. In addition, job search and permanent housing assistance is provided to clients in the program.

The Warming Center opens its doors nightly between the months of October and June, for up to 60 single male adults seeking overnight refuge from the cold. Dinner is served nightly by staff members and breakfast is served to those who stay overnight.

On this occasion, Flory and Corrine graciously served us dinner, which was stewed chicken served over rice, along with garden salad, bread and fruit. I must admit that I enjoyed the food and was quite full afterward.

Regrettably, people are turned away sometimes because of a lack of space, said Feliciano.

Clients that receive funds from the Social Security Administration who are found to be incapable of properly managing their finances, because of drug addiction, mental illness, or other reasons, benefit from the Social Security Payee Program. "Each month, our agency receives SSA disability checks that we disburse in the best interest of these clients. In this manner, we secure their basic needs and enable them to stay housed," said an HPSS official.

In addition to the meals served daily, the Food Pantry serves more than 300 families a year. Families are provided food packages that can last for up to a month. Clients can also obtain clothing and referrals



A woman at the shelter readies food for the homeless.

Photo by Keith Atterberry

to other agencies for unmet needs.

Here are some key facts (source: <http://hpsschanginglives.org/>):

- Chicago's homeless system serves about 6,100 people each day.
- A network of 120 shelters provides 6,200 beds.
- Families with children are the fastest growing segment.
- An increasing proportion of the homeless are people with disabilities (physical, mental, substance abuse and HIV/AIDS).
- A minority of the population who are chronically homeless use most of the resources.
- Homeless people can be grouped in three broad categories, each with different issues and service needs.

o **Chronically homeless** represent 10 percent of the single homeless population. They tend to have chronic mental illness, substance abuse problems, unstable employment histories and histories of

hospitalization and/or incarceration.

o **Episodically homeless** represent 9 percent of the single homeless population. They tend to be younger, have substance abuse problems and use shelters seasonally.

o **Transitional homeless** include families and single adults who become homeless due to housing crises and social problems. They use shelters during times of economic hardship and family crisis.

- The homeless system is organized to manage homelessness and not prevent it.
- The system is not integrated—clear discharge planning for ex-offenders, hospital and mental health patients is lacking.
- Homeless individuals and families are staying longer in shelters.

For more information about homelessness contact Humboldt Park Social Services, Inc., (773) 342-6210, [www.hpsschanginglives.org](http://www.hpsschanginglives.org), or visit <http://www.chicagohomeless.org>.



# SPORTS

## Golden Eagle 5K Run

by **Tiffany Alberty**  
Staff Writer

NEIU's Running Club is hosting the first ever Golden Eagle 5K Run on Sunday, April 13. Runners of all levels are encouraged to participate. With the spring semester coming to an end, Running Club wants to get the NEIU community together for one last event.

The 3.1-mile race will kick-off at 9:00 a.m. and will consist of two full laps around the NEIU campus. The run will start on the Campus Athletic Field, continue along the west end of the campus, east on Bryn Mawr Avenue, and back south on St. Louis Avenue to the Athletic Field. Each runner will receive a T-shirt and personal time chip to clock their speed and time.

The Golden Eagle 5K Run is open to students, faculty, staff members and the general public. Registration for the 5K has already started and will continue through the morning of the run. The participation fee is \$10 for NEIU students; \$12 for NEIU faculty, staff and affiliates; and \$15 for the public. The fee will be increased for

those registering the day of the race. All money collected will be used for the event including time chips, awards and T-shirts.

Runners will be awarded medallions for coming in first, second and third place in their race categories. Runners will be placed in a race category according to gender and age: male, female, age 40 and younger, and over 40 years of age. Participants will have the option to run or walk without being disqualified for time.

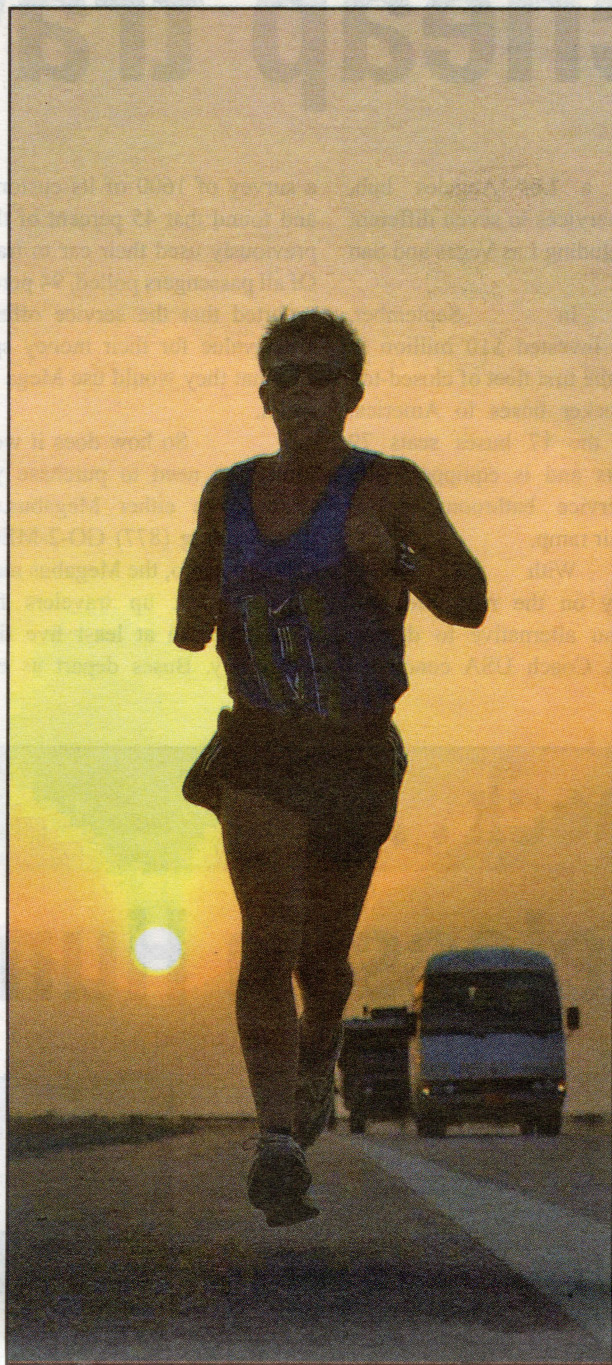
Organizers of the 5K race hope to promote a growing running community on campus. "This run will help the students and people get educated on running," says Martha Montes, Associate Director for Campus Recreation. "And if a person has never done a run, I highly suggest doing one of our workshops." The NEIU Running Club offers workshops to learn proper technique and preparation for races. They also offer scheduled group runs throughout the year to help improve running abilities.

The race will offer a chance for runners to compete or to simply get some exercise and enjoy some food. Beck's

Bookstore, Jimmy John's and Whole Foods are a few of the companies sponsoring the NEIU Golden Eagle 5K Run. Whole Foods will offer an after-run buffet with a variety of fruits, vegetables and juices. Volunteers from these companies will set up water stations, as well as help guide

runners around the course.

"35 people are registered already; 100 is what we are shooting for," says Montes. "We are hoping for a big turnout." For more information on the running workshops, or to register for the Golden Eagle 5K run, call Campus Recreation at extension 4131.



Running is a great way to stay healthy.

Photo courtesy of operations.mud.ink

## So, you're thinking of taking up running...

by **Benny Garcia**  
Special Contributor  
NEIU Personal Trainer  
Running Coach, NEIU Running  
Club

There are many benefits to starting a running program. Running is relatively inexpensive and can be done almost anywhere. It is a great way to enhance your cardiovascular health and it can be fun.

For the true beginner, someone that has never run for exercise or has not run consistently for over six months, it is best to start by walking. After walking consistently for a few weeks, slowly add to the exercise by walking for more time, later, walking faster, and then alternating walking and jogging. The walk/jog program should be a slow progression that leads to jogging, and finally, running. Everyone has different abilities, and a beginner's running program should be tailored to address those differences.

First and foremost, every runner must begin by finding the right running shoe. This task may be complicated, since there are several different foot types, body sizes and running styles. There are also millions of running shoes on the market and they are not all created equal. I recommend visiting a specialty running store like Runner's Edge, Fleet Feet or Universal Sole to get guidance in selecting the right running shoe. Like the running program, the shoe should fit the runner's needs.

The most common mistake that beginning runners make is doing too much too fast. The beginner has to gradually ease into running. Initially, the focus should not be on speed but rather on consistency. The beginning runner should focus on how to make running a part of their lifestyle. A good starting point is to set a goal of walking, jogging and/or running at least three times a week, on non-consecutive days. Sessions should last a minimum of 20 minutes followed by one day of recovery.

As with any exercise program, it is advisable to talk to your doctor before starting a running program. For running assistance or coaching, contact Campus Recreation at extension 4135 to find out about the NEIU Running Club or set up an appointment with a trainer.

## Mixed Martial Arts: Mixing it up at NEIU

by **T.C. Chung**  
Business Manager

Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) has been quickly gaining national exposure. While not yet a household name, MMA has had a recent explosion in popularity as a high-intensity, multi-discipline combat sport. Now NEIU has joined the craze. Mark Banks, an SGA senator and a student of Carlson Gracie Jiu-jitsu, founded the NEIU MMA Club in 2006. The primary focus of the MMA club is Jiu-jitsu, specifically Brazilian Jiu-jitsu. The main instructor for the club is Nick Garcia, and Geoffrey Gayares is the club organizer.

Jiu-jitsu started in Japan but was adopted in Brazil in the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Brazilians modified the Japanese art form so that it focused less on raw strength and more on technique and leverage. The Gracie family, from Brazil, revolutionized Jiu-jitsu and brought the art to the U.S., where it became known as Brazilian or Gracie Jiu-jitsu. Additional refinement of techniques included updates with modern fighting styles and a stronger focus on grappling. The reason for the grappling focus was that Jiu-jitsu could be performed at full force without additional equipment.

The NEIU MMA Club does not

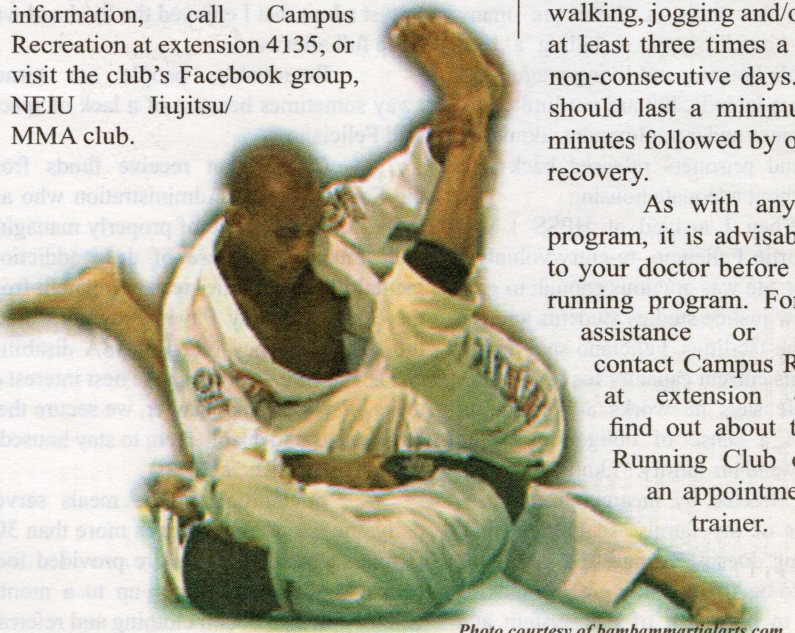
allow full contact because of insurance reasons, but instead focuses on the benefits of good technique. "It's practical, self-defense wise, and applies to real-life situations," said Gayares. The practicality of the ground-fighting art has been proven to work by many club members that have competed in tournaments. Some members have even earned first place rankings in the North American Grappling Association (NAGA) tournaments.

Since Jiu-jitsu is a combat sport, a new visitor to the MMA Club's training sessions might be surprised to find that the atmosphere is friendly and cordial. "We're respectful of each other, which helps because there's no fear of getting hurt. It's very safety-conscious," Gayares pointed out.

The laid back-atmosphere of the club may seem at odds since the nature of the activity is aggressive. However, members will explain that learning Jiu-jitsu is done best in a modest environment where members are easy going and willing to both teach and learn. The club provides a good base of knowledge on the art and, as Gayares explains, has an attractive price. "Most Brazilian Jiu-jitsu places charge at least \$100 a month. We're free," Gayares said.

The NEIU MMA Club meets

Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 1-4 p.m. and Saturday from 12-3 p.m. in the auxiliary gym of the PE building. No prior experience is necessary. People with a *Gi* can wear it to the meetings, but it is not necessary. The only required piece of equipment is an athletic supporter for males. Newcomers are always welcome. For more information, call Campus Recreation at extension 4135, or visit the club's Facebook group, NEIU Jiu-jitsu/MMA club.



Gracie Jiu-jitsu in action.

Photo courtesy of bambammartialarts.com