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Prospectus News

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Music for people who like music

An interview with Fang Island

Sean HERMANN
Publications Manager

This week the Prospectus was able to sit down with Fang Island, an up and coming Brooklyn band who most accurately describes their sound as "everyone high-fiving everyone."

The band most notably consists of guitarist Nicholas Andrew Sadle (Daughters) alongside guitarist Jason Bartell, bassist Phil Curcuru, guitarist Chris Georges and drummer Marc St. Sauveur.

"Fang Island began as an art school project while the band members were attending the prodigious Rhode Island School of Design (also the foundation for Yeah Yeah Yeahs, Les Savvy Fav, Lightning Bolt, Six Finger Satellite and the Talking Heads.) According to guitarist Jason Bartell, the goal was to "make music for people who like music." That is, music without irony that harnesses its uplifting qualities. Just like a classic rock song or classical symphony can stir us emotionally, Fang Island exists to unlock that spirit."

Fang Island's self titled debut album will be released February 23, 2010 via Sargent House.

NS = Nick Sadler
CG = Chris Georges
JB = Jason Bartell

Prospectus: What are the major influences for the new album?

NS - MARIAH CAREY, BEYONCE, BONE THUGS N HARMONY, R. KELLY, THE WHO, AND BOOTSY COLLINS.

JB - Friends, Family, and Fireworks

Prospectus: Does Nicolas enjoy playing for Daughters or Fang Island more?

NS - NICHOLAS.

Prospectus: How do crowds usually react to your music?

CG - they get in the pit and try to love someone

NS.- SERIOUSLY, WE GET AIR GUITARS, POGOING, HIGH FIVES, FIST PUMPING, AND AT LEAST ONE PERSON CRIES. NO JOKE.

Prospectus: What sets you guys apart from everyone else?

CG - We're in it for the free

THROUGH CATCHY HARD ROCKING MUSIC. ROCK-SMITHS.

Prospectus: What would you like fans to walk away with after listening to the new album?

CG - If you try really hard you can beat any video game

TO HIM AND HE WAS INTO IT.

Prospectus: Sargent House is an outstanding label. How did you guys get a spot on the roster?

JB - Nick had been working with them through Daughters, and he started slowly sneaking

CCI, BAD BRILLIANT, AND CHERY LILLI. HOSTED BY ANDREW WK.

JB - Japan 2011. I'm calling it.

Prospectus: What all was involved in the process of shooting the video for "Daisy?"

JB - the idea was cooked up

have any one person appear to be the "lead."

Prospectus: Best venue you have played at?

CG - A kindergarten classroom in 2007

NS-MATHEWSONSTLOFT PARTY IN PROVIDENCE RI OR WILLIAMSBURG MUSIC HALL. TIED. WAIT, MAYBE THAT WEIRD ALIEN SPACE HANGER THING IN NEW JERSEY.

Prospectus: What is the craziest thing that has happened at one of your shows?

CG - A group of kindergartners formed a kind hug circle pit

JB - Playing "I Get Wet" with Andrew W.K. on vocals. Dream come true.

Prospectus: Who is the funniest member?

JB - Marc (drums)
CG - Jonathan Taylor Thomas (J.T.T.)

NS - ME.

Prospectus: Who is the shyest?

JB - Marc (drums)
NS - PHIL.

Prospectus: Who is the rock star?

JB - Marc (drums)
NS - ME/JIMLAYSON MARTMELL/DIVA-CHRIS

CG - David Bowie

Prospectus: What is one thing you would like to readers to know after reading this interview?

NS - NEVER BE BORED.

Prospectus: Anything else you would like to add?

CG - We like to have fun with you! LET'S HANG!

NS - JASON KISSES NICK.

Fang Island will host their record release party on February 13th at the Santos Party House in New York playing alongside Anamanaguchi, Aleister X, Cherie Lily, Bad Brilliance and "DJ" Andrew W.K.

Listen to Fang Island at <http://myspace.com/fangisland>



Fang Island describes its sound as "everyone high-fiving everyone." Courtesy of Sargent House Records.

soda

NS - MUSICALLY, WE TEND TO MAKE SOME RISKY MOVES AND USE RIFFS AND IDEAS THAT IN ANY OTHER BAND MIGHT SINK THEM RIGHT INTO A BALL PIT WHERE THEY STAY MAROONED WITH 25 8 YEAR OLDS. WE TRY TO BARE THESE IDEAS HONESTLY AND PROUDLY AND BRING THEM TO A PLACE WHERE WE CAN MAKE THEM ROCK HARD. WE AS PEOPLE, HOWEVER, ARE JUST SIMPLE MEN WITH SIMPLE NEEDS LOOKING TO EXPRESS OURSELVES

you want, even Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles for the NES

or

an urge to high five your best friend

NS - A SMILE.

Prospectus: How did you guys become so close with Andrew W.K.?

NS - PMA! WE LOVE ANDREW WK AND WITH A POSITIVE MINDSET AND OUTLOOK WE WERE ABLE TO ATTRACT THE THINGS WE WANTED MOST, WHICH FOR EVERYONE WAS TO WORK WITH ONE OF OUR BIGGEST MUSICALHEROS. WE SIMPLY REACHED OUT

Fang onto their radar. After much convincing, they decided that we were handsome enough to sign to their label.

Prospectus: Any tour plans coming up?

NS - WE ARE PLAYING A SARGEAT HOUSE SHOWCASE AT SXSW WITH SEVERAL OTHER REALLY GOOD BANDS AND ACTS AND SO WE WILL BE TOURING IN MARCH DOWN TO AUSTIN, MAYBE FURTHER, AND BACK. WE HAVE OUR CD RELEASE SHOW AT SANTOS PARTY HOUSE IN MANHATTEN ON FEB 13TH WITH ANAMANAGU-

by our friend Carlos Charlie Perez, we rented a studio at Juliard and had his choreographer friend work out some moves. The whole thing was very fly-by-night, trying and re-trying ideas for every take. Carlos is great at adapting, so he made the whole thing work

Prospectus: How did you guys get the idea for chanting vocals?

JB - originally it was out of necessity; we couldn't afford microphones early on so the only way to hear the vocals was to have everyone sing really loudly together. We wanted to have singing, but didn't want to

Minority students growing in number at some college campuses

Jenna ROSS
Star Tribune (Minneapolis)

ST. PETER, Minn. The growing diversity of college campuses can be measured in numbers, figures and graphs. Abdul Suleyman hasn't seen the pie charts, but he has seen the cafeteria.

"When I was a freshman, there were only three or four black guys," said the 22-year-old senior at Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, Minn. "People would have us confused. It went from that to now, there's maybe 15 of us."

At Augsburg College in Minneapolis Tereza Ponce de Leon is part of the most diverse freshman class in history.

The color palette on college campuses is changing.

Thanks in part to a big jump this fall, the number of students of color going to college is way up. From suburban community college campuses to small-town schools like Gustavus, the growth goes beyond statistics. These students are changing how professors teach and campuses feel.

"It's a fascinating moment,"

said Paul Pribbenow, president of Augsburg College and chair of the Minnesota Private College Council. "We're in constant conversation about what this means and what a gift this is."

Classes change, but how?

College was "always a big dream" of Ponce de Leon's. A program for low-income students called Admission Possible helped her focus her ambitions. Pregnancy narrowed her college search, but it only heightened her commitment to going. "I had to think not only about myself, but what would be better for the future of my son."

This fall, students of color make up 43 percent of the first year, daytime undergraduate class at Augsburg. In total, a full quarter of the college's undergraduates are students of color up from 8.6 percent in 2001.

Augsburg has lots of company. Enrollment of undergraduates of color is up nearly 90 percent in the last decade at the 17 member schools of the Minnesota Private College Council. Meanwhile, white



Senior student Cheng Lee, 21, first saw Gustavus Adolphus College as a high school senior in Upward Bound, a program designed to increase the number of low-income and first-generation students in college. He thought the hilltop campus was beautiful and liked the idea of getting away from the distractions of St. Paul, where his Hmong family lives. He began giving campus tours his freshman year and has watched the campus change through the eyes of the visiting high school students.

Jenna ROSS/Minneapolis Star Tribune

enrollment grew less than 4 percent.

In the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system, the enrollment of low income, minority and first generation college students groups considered "underrepresented" is up 22 percent this fall over last year.

"We had not seen anything like it before," said Linda Baer, senior vice chancellor for academic and student affairs.

Experts say the economy is one reason, but Terria Middlebrook, a 22-year-old student at Minneapolis Community and Technical College, sees something bigger going on:

"We are getting smarter knowing there is potential for us out there," she said. "Our President Obama is one example to us African Americans showing that we do have potential to succeed, but it's up to us to move forward."

"Pretty much college answers it all," she said.

We're here. Now what?

The big jumps in minority enrollment are the buzz of admissions offices around the country. With the college age

population decreasing and becoming much more diverse, colleges will need to recruit a more diverse student body to keep classrooms full.

But Augsburg Professor David Lapakko had heard the buzz one too many times. In early October, he wrote a post on the college's internal forum: "I must confess that I'm tired of hearing that the world and our classrooms are more diverse than in years past. To that I say, 'Well, duh.'"

Diversity is one of Augsburg's great strengths and "a critical part of a liberal arts education," Lapakko said. But with it come challenges that need to be discussed.

Teachers can make some changes easily, he said, like avoiding slang that confuses students whose first language is not English

Not so easy is the "big question colleges have been forced to take a hard look at," he said. That is: How much are professors willing and able to change how they teach or what they teach to reach he class that now sits before them?

Prospectus

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Chuck Shepherd's News of the Weird

LEAD STORY

In Somalia, which is without a central government to speak of and where very little freedom and an Islamic resistance and individual warlords' fiefdoms, a robust "stock market" has emerged in the city of Harardheere for "investors" in the seagoing pirate "industry," to raise money and supplies for kidnappers in exchange for a share of the bounty once a ransom is paid. According to a December Reuters dispatch, 72 "companies" are listed on the exchange, enabling "venture capital" to fund greater piracy traffic and more sophisticated looting. There even seems to be a financial "bubble" at work, in that since the "exchange" opened, pirates' ransoms have doubled to about \$4 million per ship.

Cultural Diversity

Afghanistan's national game, buzkashi, is attempting a marketing transformation inspired by pro football's and basketball's growths in the United States over the last several decades, according to a November USA Today dispatch. The main hindrance is that buzkashi is often little more than violent anarchy. A team of 12 men on horseback tries to carry a goat carcass the length of a field, around a goal and back, through an opposing team "defense" that includes almost any tactic short of murder. Spectators are often trampled by riders disregarding boundaries, and horses have dropped dead on the field from abuse or fatigue. The head of the Buzkashi Federation said he aims to present the game for consideration to the International Olympic Committee.

Latest Religious Messages

Carried Away: Since March 2008, the Cathedral of Christ the King in Phoenix has been ringing its bells every half-hour, 24 hours a day, enraging neighbors, and a showdown with city officials was looming at press time, according to ABC News.

Martina Rabess, 52, was sanctioned by Britain's Sevenoaks Magistrates Court in October after neighbors complained about her loud, continuous recitations of the Lord's Prayer in early morning hours around her apartment house.

Atlanta municipal bus driver Leroy Matthews was suspended in November for a recent incident in which he suddenly stopped the bus and refused to open the doors until the alighting passenger joined hands with him in prayer.

The Scranton (Pa.) Diocese, Needing Confession: Father Edward Lyman of the diocese was removed as a parish

administrator in November after he inadvertently (using his personal computer during early of Mass) clicked on photos of four bare-chested young men in provocative poses.

Also in November, the diocese disavowed Father Virgil Tetherow's behavior for offering Mass at a breakaway church in York, Pa., and too-aggressively protesting at a Planned Parenthood clinic (incidents on top of Tetherow's 2005 conviction on a charge that was originally child porn possession but downgraded in a plea agreement).

And yet another diocese priest, Father Robert Timchak, waived a preliminary hearing in November on charges of having child porn on his computer.

Aggressive Christianity: Rev. Marc Grizzard, pastor of the Amazing Grace Baptist Church in Canton, N.C., staged an October book-burning of "Satan's" literature, including works by Mother Teresa and Rev. Billy Graham and any Bible besides the original King James version.

In October, Mikey Weinstein, a former military lawyer who served in the Reagan White House, filed a lawsuit against Gordon Klingenschmitt, head of a Dallas chaplains' association, to stop Klingenschmitt from publicly reciting Bible verses implying a smiting of Weinstein, along with Weinstein's family and descendants for 10 generations. Said Klingenschmitt: "I never prayed for anyone's death. All I did was quote the Scriptures."

Karma

Shannon Broome, 15, of Jacksonville, Fla., with her leg in a cast and still laid up from a June rollover accident in an SUV, was hit again in December when another out-of-control SUV came through her bedroom wall and re-broke the leg (among other injuries inflicted).

Recently, at the Abergele Hospital in North Wales, Geraint Woolford, 52, was moved into a room to await a partial knee replacement and discovered that his roommate was Geraint Woolford, 77, who was awaiting a hip replacement. According to a December report in the Daily Mail, they are not related, but both are retired police officers.

The Simplest Musical Instrument

Rajeev Kumar of Calcutta, India, is well known locally for playing the harmonica, specifically, using only his right nostril. For added show, Kumar plays two harmonicas simultaneously, with nostril and

mouth. A BBC News reporter watching him (for a December dispatch) said Kumar's strain was obvious. "(T)he veins running through his nose and neck bulge, his eyes pop out, and his face looks red and stretched."

And at Britain's West Midlands Safari Park, the African elephant "Five" spends portions of almost every day puffing away at a harmonica she found in her enclosure. Said a park spokesperson, "Five was making tunes within a few weeks." (The talented Five also paints on canvas.)

Questionable Judgments

Michael Sampson, who was in court in Salina, Kan., in November merely on charges of littering and driving with a suspended license, was arrested after a judge spotted him at the defense table, making threatening gestures to witnesses. Sampson was seen holding his thumb and fingers in the shape of a gun, "firing" at a witness, and making a slashing motion across his neck.

In November, Father Joe Vetter, head of Duke University's Catholic Center, criticized a research team seeking student volunteers on female attitudes toward sex toys and paraphernalia. Father Vetter said the project would affect students "in this development phase (of their lives), and I don't think it's a good developmental practice to just tell somebody to just sit around and masturbate."

People With Issues

Sara Foss, 39, the mother of 13 in Derby, England, who is scheduled to deliver No. 14 in March, told the Daily Mail in November of her vow to continue getting pregnant until she fulfills her desire to have twins. Her longtime, live-in boyfriend works as a boat-builder, but their main income is government benefits worth the equivalent of about \$80,000 annually. (Foss, apparently also a fan of literature and movies, has kids named Artemus, Morpheus, Voorhees, Baudelaire, Blackbird, Echo, Malachai and Frodo.)

Least Competent Criminals

Not Ready for Prime Time:

See **Weird** on page 5

Ask MNN: Can I recycle my old pet toys?

Morieka JOHNSON
 Mother Nature Network

Q: My pets got more Christmas gifts than I did this year. I doubt there are recycling programs for old tennis balls. Any tips on how to recycle some of the old stuff?

A: Any plastic toys that have outlived their usefulness should go to the recycle bin. The Daily Green offers handy tips for decoding symbols on those plastic toys (www.thedailygreen.com/green-homes/latest/recycling-symbols-plastics-460321). It also pays to seek out companies committed to creating recyclable pet toys or products made from recycled material.

Once you've finished sorting those old toys, it's time to focus on the bigger picture. For every pup and kitten that got a little extra love under the tree, there is an animal still in need of blankets, chew toys and a forever home. Here are a few tips to help you, your pets and your community pay it forward:

GATHER UP THE GOOD STUFF

Most animal shelters welcome old blankets, towels and toys, as well as gently used food and water bowls. Make it a neighborhood project and ask all your pet-loving friends for a contribution. This also makes a great spring-cleaning project. To find a worthy animal shelter near you, visit www.animalshelter.org.

SUPPORT A RESCUE GROUP

Help a shelter pet make the transition to a forever home by donating collars, leashes and gently used beds to a nonprofit rescue organization. Those slightly hideous Halloween costumes and holiday sweaters help pups stand out from the crowd during adoption fairs. In my neck of the woods, Rescue Me! Animal Project (www.rescuemeanimalproject.com) and Atlanta Animal Rescue Friends (www.aarfatlanta.org) are popular organizations dedicated to helping homeless pets. Do a Google search for "pet rescue" and your city to find worthy organizations near you.

SHARE THE LOVE

Shelters need volunteers to help care for the animals. In addition to petting, walking and playing with the adoptable pets, volunteer opportunities

can include performing clerical duties, processing new animals and simply spreading the word about the need for good homes. You may even learn a few valuable training skills that can be applied to your own fur kids.

BUY A BAG, GIVE A BAG

Consider purchasing an extra bag of your pet's food and donating it to a local rescue group or pet food bank. Ann King of Atlanta started Save Our Pets (www.saveourpetsfoodbank.org) food bank in 2007 to help metro Atlanta residents keep their animals in the wake of tough economic times. Since then, she has distributed thousands of pounds of dog, cat and even horse food to animal shelters, rescue groups and out-of-work Georgians. Her Web site also lists pet food banks around the country (www.saveourpetsfoodbank.org/national-locations.php). If you don't find a location in your area, perhaps it's time to start one yourself. The site provides tips on getting started.

OPEN YOUR HOME TO A PET

Consider fostering an adoptable pet. It's a short-term commitment that pays long-term dividends. Some rescue groups supply pet food and necessary medical supplies; all you have to provide is love. I recently offered foster care to an extremely shy mixed breed dog named Hooch. After a few months around my extroverted pup, Hooch romped his way into a happy new home. I'll admit that there were a few accidents along the way, and I did spend a couple of Saturdays with him at adoption fairs, but seeing Hooch bond with his new family made the extra poop scooping worthwhile. I'll miss Hooch, but I am looking forward to opening my home to another pet in the future.

RECYCLE A PET

If you have the time and the resources, consider adopting a pet from a shelter or rescue group. Whether you are partial to purebreds or run-of-the-mill Heinz 57 mutts and couture kitties, there is probably a perfect new addition waiting for you on Petfinder.org.

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For baby boomers, staying active can be a painful fountain of youth

Lini S. KADABA
The Philadelphia Inquirer

PHILADELPHIA - Bob Willette clocks 110 miles each week on his road-racing bike, mostly while he commutes the 26-mile round trip to work.

He also whacks tennis balls with his doubles group. And he pushes himself in a regular hoops game, where "something's always twisted or stubbed. Or bleeding," he said.

The trim North Coventry, Pa., scientist is 53 years old. As with many baby boomers, his physical regimen comes at a price - upper-back pain, tendonitis and various aches. At least once a year, he said, his body "breaks down," forcing a doctor visit for a round of anti-inflammatories.

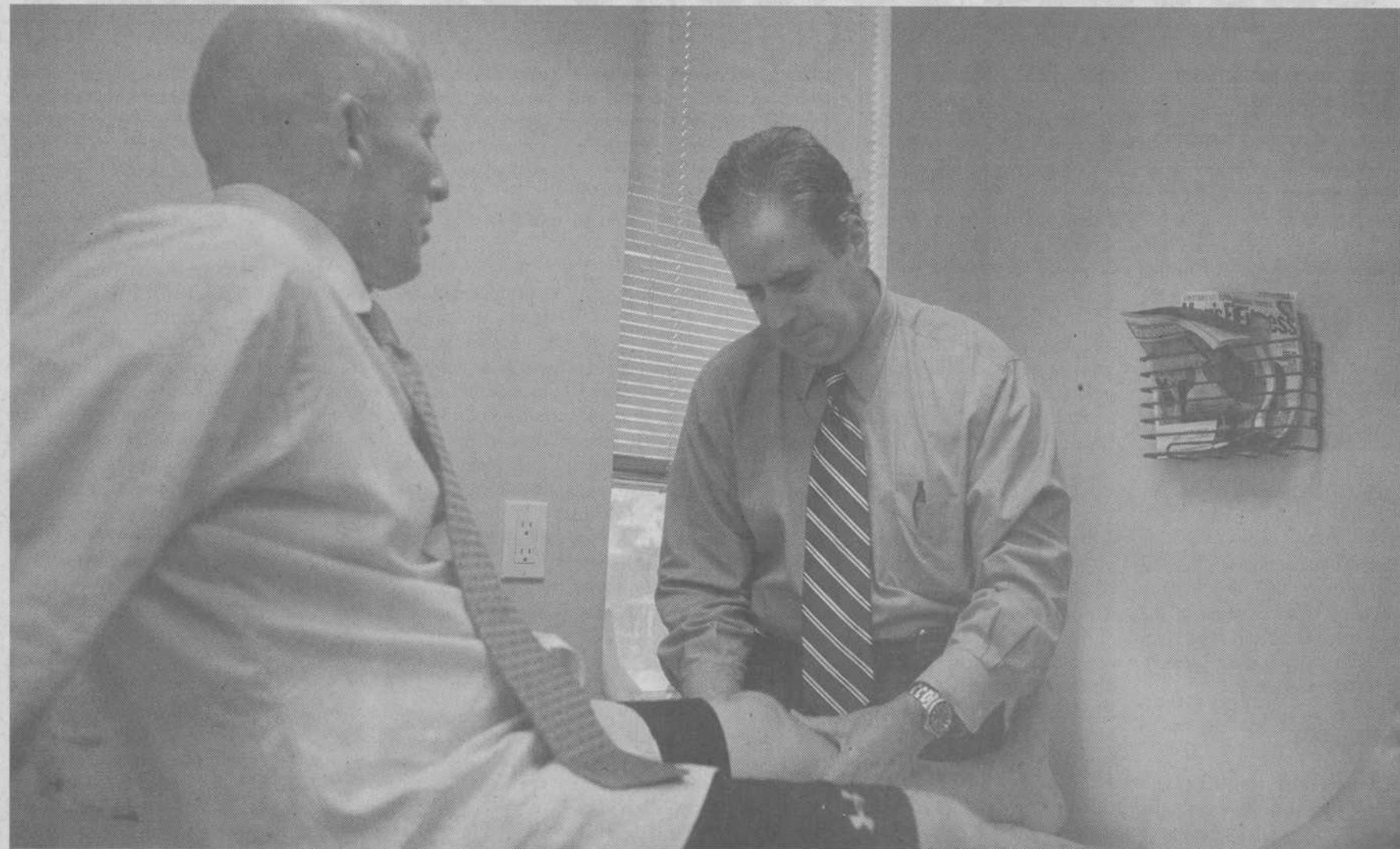
Diagnosis? Boomeritis. Coined by a local orthopedic surgeon, the informal term describes the swelling number of boomers - the oldest are 63 this year - plagued by twinges and pangs and even serious injuries that have not been seen at these levels before.

This is the generation, 78 million strong, intent on staying forever young. Not everyone does Botox. Many in the over-45 crowd stay fit through rigorous exercise that can wear the kids out even as the costs to those seasoned body's mount.

Sore shoulders, inflamed tendons, arthritic knees.

"People like myself are trying to hold back the clock," said Nicholas DiNubile, 57. The Havertown, Pa., orthopedic surgeon is credited with first using boomeritis (now trademarked by him) to describe the growing number of middle-age patients with exercise-related ailments. "Baby boomers are the first generation in droves trying to stay active in an aging frame."

An adjunct professor of orthopedics at the Univer-



Orthopedic surgeon Nicholas DiNubile, right, examines Edward Miersch, 52, a runner who has some wear and tear to his right knee, September 17, 2009, in Havertown, Pennsylvania. DiNubile teaches a course on the "mature athlete."

Ed HILLE/Philadelphia Inquirer

sity of Pennsylvania and avid tennis player who has issues with his own knee, DiNubile co-wrote "FrameWork: Your 7-Step Program for Healthy Muscles, Bones, and Joints" in 2005, which argues that the body's musculoskeletal frame was designed for only 40 years of pounding activity. Yet over the last century, life expectancy has risen more than 50 percent. The U.S. rate is at a record high of nearly 78 years, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Evolution hasn't, well, evolved fast enough.

"I believe we've outlived our

warranty," said DiNubile, who teaches a course on "Boomeritis - Care of the Mature Athlete."

Statistics on exercise injuries specifically among boomers are slim. But a look at data on emergency room visits paints a picture of a generation sore and bruised.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission analyzed for The Philadelphia Inquirer its National Electronic Injury Surveillance System data. It estimated that in 2008, ERs treated 282,476 injuries among baby boomers (those ages 44 to 62) who suffered all sorts of sports- and exercise-related

misfortune - a 47 percent increase from a decade earlier.

Among the national cases: A 46-year-old man fell off his bike at an indoor track and fractured a shoulder. A 61-year-old woman suffered multiple sprains from leg lifts. A 55-year-old suffered skull and pelvis fractures after falling from his bicycle while preparing for a 150-mile, round-trip bike ride to raise money for causes related to multiple sclerosis.

Another consumer commission study found that among 45-to-64-year-olds, unintentional overexertion was the second-leading cause of non-

fatal injuries treated in ERs in 2007.

"Some of it is inevitable," said Michael Goodyear, chairman of emergency medicine at Riddle Memorial Hospital in Middletown Township. "As we age, our body gets wear and tear."

Goodyear said about four or five baby boomers - a mix of weekend warriors and exercise fanatics - show up at the ER every day with pulled muscles, bum knees, sprains, strains or more. He advises that "if in your prom picture you're wearing ruffles and a big old bow tie and an Afro, then keep in mind that you

can't do the same things as you did at that time."

That message isn't heeded. Frederick Azar, spokesman for the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons, used to treat mostly people in their teens, 20s and 30s in his practice at the University of Tennessee's Campbell Clinic. "Now, you'll see patients in the adolescent ages all the way up to the 70s." Often he sees "a young person's injury in an older person's body."

Take bicycling. The CDC reported in 2002, the last year it compiled such data, that more

See **Boomer** on page 9

Credit card regulations are coming, in a while

By JEFF GELLES
The Philadelphia Inquirer

PHILADELPHIA - If a teacher learns that a student has been rewriting Wikipedia entries instead of doing the assigned research, how long should the teacher give the student to quit her deception and start earning grades the old-fashioned way?

How about a parent who sees a child cheating at a game? Should he be given a few months to learn to play by the rules, or told to start playing fair right away?

Over the last year, Washington has faced those kinds of questions with the nation's credit-card industry - and given an answer that would make the most lenient teacher or parent cringe.

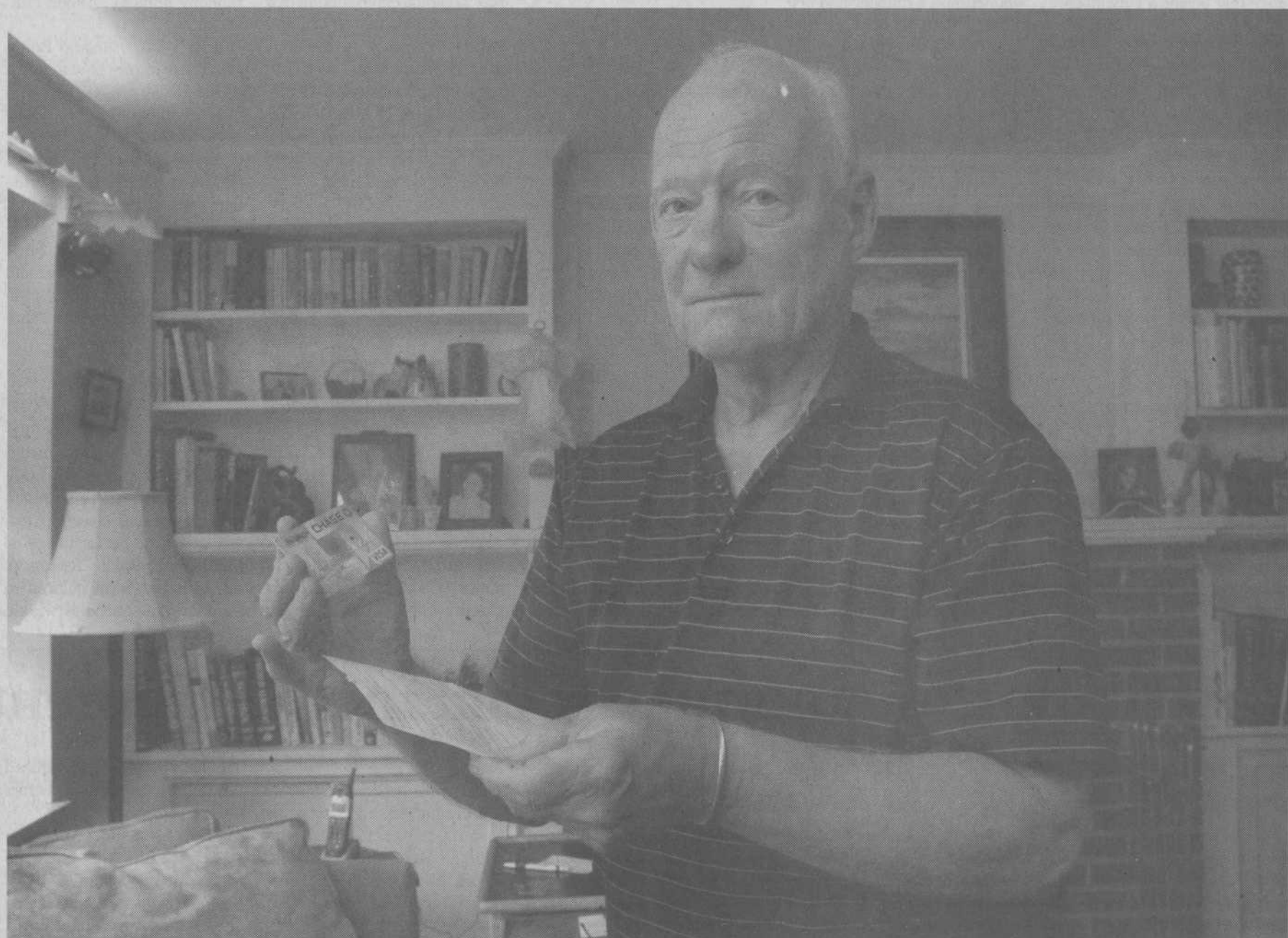
Yes, card issuers such as Citibank and Chase will have to quit a set of practices that regulators and lawmakers have finally outlawed as unfair or deceptive.

But not right away. In a concession to the arguments of the card industry that it needed lots of time to adjust, most of the new rules were delayed until February. Some won't take effect until August.

The result? According to a new study by the Pew Charitable Trusts, the nation's dozen largest card issuers - led by banks that taxpayers have spent billions to bail out - have doubled down on the practices that got them in trouble in the first place.

Pew, a Philadelphia foundation that lately has taken a leading role in some of the nation's great policy debates, has been studying the credit card industry for 2 years.

Last week, researchers from



Orthopedic surgeon Nicholas DiNubile, right, examines Edward Miersch, 52, a runner who has some wear and tear to his right knee, September 17, 2009, in Havertown, Pennsylvania. DiNubile teaches a course on the "mature athlete."

Ed HILLE/Philadelphia Inquirer

Pew's Safe Credit Cards Project said every bank credit card they had looked at, nearly 400, bore at least one of the terms that will soon be outlawed as unfair or deceptive.

"Any time, any reason" inter-

est rate increases that apply to existing balances as well as new purchases? All but one of the cards make that possible - up from 93 percent in a similar survey in December.

"Hair-trigger" imposition of

penalty interest rates? Nine out of 10 cards allowed rates to rise, often to 30 percent or more, based on one or two late payments in a 12-month period, even if payment is just a few hours late.

"Over-limit" fees, typically \$39, for transactions that the issuer could just as easily deny? Eight of 10 banks still would impose them.

Nick Bourke, a lawyer and former consultant to Visa Inc.

who now runs Pew's project, says consumers pay a high price for these practices. Just two of them - penalty interest and anytime, any-reason rate increases - cost cardholders

See **Credit** on page 9

Capsule reviews of feature films

Carrie RICKEY AND Steven REA
The Philadelphia Inquirer

ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: THE SQUEAKUEL:

2 stars. If you can read this, you're probably too old for this live-action sequel featuring the famously cute singing furballs. With Zachary Levi and David Cross. 1 hr. 28 PG (some crude humor) - David Hiltbrand

AMELIA:

3 stars. The role of pioneer aviatrix Amelia Earhart (1897-1937), who broke records, hearts and boundaries, fits Hillary Swank like a jumpsuit. Richard Gere co-stars in the evocative film from Mira Nair. 1 hr. 51 PG (discreet sensuality) - Carrie Rickey

ASTRO BOY:

2 stars. Slick, stylish CG-animated take on the vintage Japanese TV 'toon, but as robotic as its boy hero. With the voices of Nicolas Cage, Charlize Theron, Kristen Bell, and with Freddie Highmore as the kid with rockets in his feet. 1 hr. 34 PG (cartoon violence, kids and 'bots in jeopardy) - Steven Rea

AVATAR:

3 stars. James Cameron's mega-expensive, technological marvel is also a whole lot of fun: A gamer generation's "Dances With Wolves," with a human soldier (and his avatar) falling in love with a blue-skinned alien from the planet Pandora 2 hr. 42 PG-13 (violence, aggressive action, alien beasts, adult themes) - Steven Rea

BAD LIEUTENANT: PORT OF CALL NEW ORLEANS:

3 stars. Werner Herzog's film about a corrupt, drug-addled cop is a one-of-a-kind experience that boasts a ridiculously entertaining performance from Nicolas Cage. 2 hrs. 02 R (drugs, violence, sexual violence, sexuality, profanity) - Carrie Rickey

THE BLIND SIDE:

2 stars. Sandra Bullock stars as a Southern woman who takes a destitute teen into her home. Based on a true story, it's part sports saga, all tearjerker. 2 hrs. 08. PG-13 (violence; drug and sex references) - David Hiltbrand

BROKEN EMBRACES:

3 stars. Pedro Almodovar melodrama (or do you say meta-drama?) about a movie director (Luis Homar) in love with his star (Penelope Cruz), who is the mistress of the industrialist financing his film. 2 hrs. 07 R (nudity, sex, melan-

choly) - Carrie Rickey

BROTHERS:

3 stars. Jake Gyllenhaal, Tobey Maguire and Natalie Portman deliver the best work of their careers in this keenly observed and heartbreaking remake of the 2004 Danish film about a soldier gone to war, and the wife and black-sheep brother he leaves behind. 1 hr. 55 R (violence, scenes of torture, sex, profanity, adult themes) - Steven Rea.

COLD SOULS:

3 stars. Paul Giamatti stars as Paul Giamatti in this surrealist existential comedy about an unhappy actor who gets his soul extracted to unburden himself, only to bring new burdens - and intrigue, and the Russian mob - into his life. 1 hr. 41 PG-13 (nudity, profanity, adult themes) - Steven Rea

COUPLES RETREAT:

2 stars. A tropical vacation turns out to be a relationship workshop for four couples. Vince Vaughn, Malin Akerman, Kristen Bell and Faizon Love are part of a large cast in a skimpy comedy that is more adult than its rating indicates. 1 hr. 47. PG-13 (profanity, sexual content, rude humor). - David Hiltbrand

DARE:

2 stars. This steamy, teen-angst drama stars Emmy Rossum and Zack Gilford as high-school seniors experimenting with their sexuality and nascent sexual power. 1 hr. 30 R (teen sexuality, teen drinking) - Carrie Rickey

DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THE MORGANS?:

1 stars. Hugh Grant and Sarah Jessica Parker as unhappily married Manhattanites who witness a murder and are remanded to witness protection. So mirthless that you'll want to enroll in a witless-protection program. 1 hr. 43 PG-13 (sexual references, threats of violence) - Carrie Rickey

AN EDUCATION:

3 stars. A disarming and unexpectedly poignant story set in 1961 of a dreamy, Oxford-bound 16-year-old (enchanted Carey Mulligan) who takes up with a sophisticated older man (Peter Sarsgaard) pungently realized by filmmaker Lone Scherfig from the memoir by Lynn Barber. 1 hr. 35 PG-13 (discreet sexual content, smoking) - Carrie Rickey

EVERYBODY'S FINE:

3 stars. Billed as a fuzzy family comedy, this prickly weeper stars Robert De Niro in his best

role in a decade, as a widower trying to reconnect with his far-flung children. His is a minimalist performance with maximum emotional impact. 1 hr. 40 PG-13 (mature themes, profanity, sexual candor) - Carrie Rickey

FANTASTIC MR. FOX:

3 stars. The fur flies in Wes Anderson's stop-motion animation gem about an erudite predator and his burrowing brood. With the voices of George Clooney, Meryl Streep, Jason Schwartzman and Bill Murray, this adaptation of a Roald Dahl book is the best-animated film of the year, and maybe the best film, period. 1 hr. 27 PG (cartoon violence, "cussin," adult themes) - Steven Rea

INVICTUS:

3 stars. Rousing sports inspirational starring Morgan Freeman as newly elected South African president Nelson Mandela, who seizes upon the gladiatorial game of rugby to unify angry blacks and scared whites in his nation after the fall of apartheid. With Matt Damon. 2 hrs. 14 PG-13 (profanity) - Carrie Rickey

IT'S COMPLICATED:

3 stars. Meryl Streep as the hypotenuse in a romantic triangle with her ex-husband (Alec Baldwin) and an architect (Steve Martin) in Nancy Meyers' sprightly fairy tale for adults. R (pot-smoking, Baldwin's naked pot belly) - Carrie Rickey

THE MAID:

3 stars. Offbeat (and deadpan) comedy about a longtime domestic serving a Chilean clan. Is she a member of the family or a fixture inanimate as the kitchen sink? 1 hr. 35 No MPAA rating (nudity, sexual candor) - Carrie Rickey

ME AND ORSON WELLES:

3 stars. Richard Linklater's spirited reimagining of what went on with charismatic madman Orson Welles as he and his Mercury Players mounted their historic production of Julius Ceasar in 1930s New York - before Citizen Kane was even a gleam in his eye. Christian McKay, as the young, blustery Welles, is riveting. With Zac Efron and Claire Danes. 1 hr. 54 PG-13 (sex, adult themes) - Steven Rea.

NINE:

2 stars. Ron Marshall's film inspired by the 1983 Broadway musical in turn based on the 1962 Federico Fellini movie about a director in crisis. Daniel Day-Lewis is spidery fun as the central filmmaker, but Marshall's staging of the num-

bers has the effect of an overwrought girlie show. PG-13 (erotically suggestive dancing and musical lyrics) - Carrie Rickey

OLD DOGS:

2 stars. Predictable plot workaholics John Travolta and Robin Williams are tapped to be caregivers for seven year-old twins - unpredictable turns in this brisk, family-friendly comedy as broad as the waistlines of its stars. 1 hr. 28 PG (bathroom humor, below-the-belt jokes) - Carrie Rickey

PLANET 51:

2 stars. Machine-tooled computer animated feature that should satisfy indiscriminating pipsqueaks and nearly no one else. It's a low-IQ "E.T." in reverse, set on a faraway planet that looks like the "Happy Days" set, where a wayward American astronaut freaks out the antenna-headed locals. 1 hr. 28 PG (mild scares, cartoon violence) - Steven Rea

PRECIOUS: BASED ON THE NOVEL "PUSH" BY SAPPHIRE:

3 stars. Harrowing, and with heroic performances from Gabourey Sidibe and Mo'Nique as a 16-year-old and her abusive mother, Lee Daniels' film takes the audience from a girl's dehumanization to a life of purpose. 1 hr. 50 R (profanity, sexual abuse, physical abuse) - Carrie Rickey

THE PRINCESS AND THE FROG:

3 stars. This jazzy, pizazzy and enchanting Disney animated musical of the old-school, hand-drawn style features a scrappy new-school heroine - one who is both self-made and prince-completed. Anika Noni Rose is the voice of Tiana, a hard-working waitress hoping to save enough tips to buy her own restaurant, and Bruno Campos is a Mediterranean prince who steps into some deep voodoo when he disembarks in 1919 New Orleans. 1 hr. 37 G (some scary ghosts, may be too intense for viewers under 7) - Carrie Rickey

RED CLIFF:

3 stars. John Woo's awesome historical epic describes a storied third century Chinese conflict in bold, breathtaking ways. A magnificent war movie about the powers or man, the forces of nature, and the art of cinema spectacle. 1 hr. 55 R (violence, adult themes) - Steven Rea

REVANCHE:

3 stars. A 2009 foreign language Oscar nominee, this slow-burning Austrian thriller

- about a prostitute, her ex-con boyfriend and a robbery gone awry - offers a character-rich study in desperation, grief, vengeance, loyalty and love. A fine, sad, suspenseful film. 2 hrs. 01 No MPAA rating (violence, sex, nudity, drugs, adult themes) - Steven Rea

THE ROAD: 3 stars. Taut and haunting adaptation of Cormac McCarthy's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, with Viggo Mortensen and newcomer Kodi Smit-McPhee as a father and son trudging across a post-apocalyptic America, struggling desperately to survive. 1 hr. 53 R (violence, gore, profanity, menace, dread, adult themes) - Steven Rea

SHERLOCK HOLMES:

2 stars. Conan Doyle's famous consulting detective has Attention Deficit Disorder in Guy Ritchie's clamoring, breathless, turn-of-the-last-century action movie. Robert Downey Jr., ripped and ready with the glib riposte, is Holmes, and Jude Law his bland Dr. Watson. The Holmes-as-action-hero conceit could have been fun, if anyone had thought to write a screenplay that made sense. 2 hrs. 08 PG-13 (action, violence, adult themes) - Steven Rea

A SINGLE MAN:

2 stars. Colin Firth gives a strong, seriously melancholy performance as a grieving gay English professor in 1962 L.A., but fashion-designer-turned-director Tom Ford's debut is too beautiful for its own good. 1 hr. 39 R (sex, profanity, adult themes) - Steven Rea

THE SLAMMIN' SALMON:

1 star. A raucous and utterly pointless romp set in a seafood restaurant and brought to you by the Broken Lizard comedy troupe. Check please. 1 hr. 33 R (profanity, sexual references, raunchy humor). - David Hiltbrand

2012: 2 stars. Roland Emmerich sure knows how to make a doomsday movie with a happy ending. This preposterously diverting film starring Chiwetel Ejiofor, John Cusack, and Danny Glover is a wild ride that says, it's OK if eight billion die as long as eight movie stars - and the dog - live. 2 hrs. 28 PG-13 (intense disaster and destruction, profanity, children and dogs in peril) - Carrie Rickey

UP IN THE AIR:

4 stars. As the frequent-flying "career transition counselor" (read: the suave bully you hire when you're scared to fire employees) George Clooney gives the performance of his career. Jason Reitman's movie is perfectly tailored to the star's melancholy twinkle

and purring motor mouth. With the sublime Vera Farmiga and quirky Anna Kendrick. 1 hr. 48 R (language, sexual content) - Carrie Rickey

THE TWILIGHT SAGA: NEW MOON:

3 stars. Swoony love triangle plus swoopy camerawork equals this abstinence-makes-the-heart-grow-fonder adaptation of Stephenie Meyer's young-adult romance novel. With angst-princess Kirsten Stewart, passion prince Robert Pattinson and stud muffin Taylor Lautner. 2 hrs. 10 PG-13 (girl in peril, threats of terror, vampire and werewolf violence) - Carrie Rickey

UNDER THE SEA:

3 stars. A giant-screen 40-minute extravaganza shot in the Coral Triangle of Papua New Guinea and in the waters of Southern Australia and the Great Barrier Reef, this Imax project teems with creatures that are bizarre, beautiful, and otherworldly. Narrated by a mercifully restrained Jim Carrey. 35 mins. G (fish-on-fish violence) - Steven Rea

VISUAL ACOUSTICS:

3 stars. Dustin Hoffman narrates this charming portrait of Julius Shulman, the architectural photographer who shot buildings like they were movie stars, finding their best angle and immortalizing them. 1 hr. 24 No MPAA rating (documentary about architectural photographer) - Carrie Rickey

WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE:

3 stars. Spike Jonze dares to adapt Maurice Sendak's sublime and scary children's book classic, and conjures up a satisfyingly moody, melancholy, madcap live-action romp. No masterpiece, but it's a brave undertaking, and an oft-times transcendent one. 1 hr. 40 PG (scary imagery, intense emotions, mayhem) - Steven Rea

THE YOUNG VICTORIA:

3 stars. Emily Blunt shines in the title role as Britain's mighty 19th century monarch, in this deliciously dressed-up proto-feminist bio-pic. It's a portrait of a young lady taking to power - tentatively at first, but soon with fierce conviction, with relish. And with Rupert Friend as the soulful Prince Albert, at her side. 1 hr. 40 PG (adult themes) - Steven Rea

RATINGS:

4 stars: Excellent; 3 stars: Good; 2 stars: Fair; 1 star: Poor

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The Philadelphia Inquirer.

Top 10 most memorable social media moments of 2009

Seth LISS
Sun Sentinel

Social media caught fire with mainstream audiences this year. Despite the economic recession, sites like Twitter and Facebook saw tremendous growth. There were lots of mistakes and successes along the way.

My top 10 most memorable social media moments for the past year are:

- The Hudson plane crash update was the tweet heard across the country. Sarasota, Fla., resident Janis Krums snapped and tweeted a photo of the miracle landing of a plane into the Hudson River "There's

a plane in the Hudson. I'm on the ferry going to pick up the people. Crazy."

- The Iran election protests organized on Twitter showed people the power of citizen reporting. Citizens of Iran used the medium to organize and report on Iran's presidential election protests, and U.S. residents used social media sites to successfully lobby for increased news coverage of the protests. The U.S. State Department even stepped in to ask Twitter to delay a planned upgrade to allow Iranians to continue reporting what was happening.

- The dumbest Tweet of the year, a communications flub,

ironically came from an executive of a slick New York City public relations firm. A vice president of Ketchum dumped on Memphis, the hometown of a major client, Federal Express, before meeting with the company, BNET reported. He tweeted, "True confession but I'm in one of those towns where I scratch my head and say 'I would die if I had to live here!'" He and his company later apologized.

- The most damaging Facebook post came from a girl who complained about her boss, whom she had befriended. He fired her in a reply to her comment, according to the message exchange posted at nex-

tweb.com. Come on, people. Think twice before posting.

- An amateur singer got more than 100 million views on YouTube landing her a top-selling album. YouTube helped thrust Susan Boyle, an unemployed church volunteer, into the limelight with a video of her singing on "Britain's Got Talent." Jill and Kevin Heinz found YouTube fame as well when their walk down the aisle in a St. Paul Minn. church turned into a dance led by their enthusiastic wedding party.

- The movie "Paranormal Activity" became the first film to get a national release after people demanded the movie through Twitter and Facebook.

The horror movie, produced for \$15,000, grossed more than \$62 million as of October.

- Google includes real-time search results that pick up social media posts. As more people turn to social media sites for breaking news, Google announced on YouTube this month that it will include them in their search results.

- Zynga, maker of social media games "Mafia Wars" and "FarmVille," was valued at \$1 billion, according to Bloomberg.

- After a highly publicized race with CNN actor Ashton Kutcher became the first Tweeter to collect 1 million followers. Kutcher crossed the

1 million mark April 17, narrowly beating CNN's breaking-news feed, which had 998,239 followers at the time. He later told Larry King, "We now live in an age in media that a single voice can have as much power and relevance on the Web, that is, as an entire media network."

What's number 10, you ask? A Facebook friend request from my cyber-phobic mother was the most memorable social media moment to me.

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Sun Sentinel.

Cooks can do their part to help save the Earth

■ Start out with three changes in appliance use, food selection

Lisa ABRAHAM
Akron Beacon Journal

You've changed all of your light bulbs to those energy-saving twisty kind, you faithfully recycle your newspapers, glass and plastics, and you've even installed a low-flow toilet.

You may be feeling as green as Kermit the Frog, but there's one big area that you may have overlooked for conversion: the kitchen.

Now is a good time to review some steps cooks can take to develop kitchen habits that are more environmentally friendly.

Going green in the kitchen doesn't mean turning into a vegetarian, said Jackie Newgent, a dietitian, cooking instructor and cookbook author of the newly released "Big Green Cookbook" (Wiley, 2009). Newgent, a Fairlawn, Ohio, native, said she was motivated to write the book after learning more about climate change and the negative way carbon emissions are changing the environment.

Newgent's advice is to pick just three things to try to change. "Three things that you know are realistic. It's like dieting: if you try to do it all at once, you get overwhelmed," she said.

Don't get discouraged if you find your old habits are hard to break. "Every little change adds up to a big difference in the long run, even if it is just one change," Newgent said.

Here are some suggestions for greening your cooking and kitchen:

-Limit the time the stove/oven is used.

Never light the oven or turn on a burner when a small appliance will do the job. Microwave ovens, toaster ovens, electric griddles, panini makers and, yes, even a slow cooker all consume less energy than a traditional gas or electric stove.

Consistently using these small appliances can make a huge difference in your energy consumption, Newgent said. Even though slow cookers are typically on for hours at a time, they will burn less energy than a traditional oven to prepare the same dish, such as a roast.

Look for ways to lessen the amount of time the oven and burners are on. When cooking pasta, Newgent recommends using skinny varieties, like angel hair, that will cook more quickly. She also uses a method she dubs "lid cooking" to turn the stove off sooner.

Newgent brings a pot of water to a boil, adds her pasta and brings it up to a boil again. But then she turns the heat off, puts a lid on the pot, and lets the pasta finish cooking from the heated water.

When baking something, turn the oven off five minutes before the item is done and



Cooks can do their part to help save the Earth. Now is a good time to review some steps cooks can take to develop kitchen habits that are more environmentally friendly.

Photo Illustration by Karen SCHIELY/Akron Beacon Journal

allow the residual heat in the oven to finish the job, she said.

Consider making one meal each week that doesn't require using the stove at all, such as a salad.

-Eat more fruits and vegetables, less meat.

Newgent suggests eating one meatless meal per week. It requires more energy to produce meat than vegetables and fruits. Cutting meat out of just one meal per week can lead to significant energy savings over a year, she said.

If you aren't prepared to go meatless more often, you can still increase your veggie intake. Newgent said a simple rule to follow is to make sure that every item you prepare contains at least one fruit or vegetable.

Macaroni and cheese, she said, is one dish that is easy to add a vegetable to without

altering the dish dramatically. Put lettuce and tomato on a sandwich. Add fruit to your cereal. "It's easier done than it seems," she said.

-Run an energy-efficient kitchen.

While new major kitchen appliances may not be in the budget for many homeowners, most would see an immediate savings on electric bills with the conversion.

Appliance repairman Bryan Rambler, who operates Mr. Appliance of Northern Summit County in Akron, Ohio, said newer kitchen appliances use about half the energy of ones made before the mid-1990s.

He said proper care of appliances also will keep them running on less energy.

Refrigerators should be away from sunlight and heat sources, like ovens. The warmer the environment, the

harder the appliance will have to work and the more energy it will use.

Refrigerators also need breathing room - at least two or three inches of open space between the coils and the wall behind them to allow for better air circulation. Keeping refrigerator coils clean of dirt, dust and pet hair also will improve performance.

The harder an appliance has to work, the faster it will wear out, Rambler said.

Constantly opening and closing the refrigerator causes it to lose cold air. The same goes for the oven - keep the door closed as much as possible while in use to keep the hot air inside.

Rambler said gas stoves typically are less expensive to run than electric ones.

Always have the dishwasher fully loaded before running, and consider scraping your

dishes instead of rinsing them before loading, to save on water, Rambler noted.

Newgent also noted that when cooking outdoors, choose a gas grill over charcoal because gas emits less carbon into the atmosphere.

-Eat seasonally and buy locally.

When cooking, select fruits and vegetables that are in season and look for local sources for foods.

Jeannine Snyder, food chairwoman for today's Scarlet, Gray and Green Fair at Ohio State University's Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center in Wooster, said buying local means getting better produce.

"It doesn't travel for 1,500 miles and it's fresher," she said.

Studies have shown that foods on average travel 1,500 miles to get to our plates. And

while the jury is still out on whether buying locally versus trucking foods across country actually saves fossil fuel, there is no argument that fresher foods are more nutritious.

Snyder, who operates Cafe Carmen at the research center, said she tries to purchase from local sources for the restaurant and often serves vegetables grown right at the research center. "The greenhouse program is raising lettuce and tomatoes for us," she said.

While purchasing from local sources and farmers markets may cost a bit more than mass-produced foods, Snyder said, she likes knowing her money is going into local hands.

"I feel that supporting local business and keeping things close at hand is better than paying someone from California or Argentina," she said.

The Cuyahoga Valley Countryside Conservancy in Peninsula, the local organization that lobbies for local farmers and farmland, advocates eating locally to help local farmers stay in business, and as a way for consumers to become more aware of what they eat and where their food comes from.

-Be waste-conscious.

The terms "reduce, recycle and reuse" apply to food as well as traditional recyclables, Newgent said.

Recycling household waste - paper, glass, plastic and metal - is a good place to start in the kitchen. But Newgent said food scraps can also be recycled through composting. If you don't garden to use your own compost, consider saving compostable scraps and donating them to a community garden.

For items that can't be recycled, such as certain plastics, Newgent suggested looking for a way to reuse them. Not all plastic yogurt containers can be recycled, but Newgent said they make great holders for small items like crayons, craft supplies or small pieces from children's toys and games. A soup can easily become a pencil holder.

Take steps to stop waste before it gets in the kitchen. Newgent said buying bulk foods eliminates a lot of wasteful packaging. Use dishes instead of paper plates, a rag instead of paper towels and cloth napkins instead of paper ones - all of which can be washed and reused many times over.

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Akron Beacon Journal
(Akron, Ohio)

WEIRD

continued from page 2

Andre Stoltzfus, 17, was arrested in Saugerties, N.Y., in October after he allegedly counterfeited a \$1 bill that a family member later used toward the purchase of a pack of cigarettes.

Bandanna-clad Jason Zacchi, 27, was arrested in Dearborn Heights, Mich., in November after, according to police, pointing a shotgun at a Wendy's employee at the drive-in window and demanding money. Moments later, the shift manager angrily approached the window and yelled at Zacchi, "What the hell are you doing?" (The manager had recognized Zacchi through his bandanna. Zacchi is her son.)

STUDENTS

continued from page 1

"It's kind of like the elephant in the living room," he said. "People don't want to talk about the bad parts of it, the difficult parts."

Getting students in the door is only one part of a college's job. Graduating them is another. Colleges and universities aren't as good at graduating students of color, as they are white students.

Black, American Indian and Hispanic students are more likely to attend part time and less likely to graduate than white or Asian students, according to the Minnesota Office of Higher Education.

The office's 2009 report shows that at two-year schools such as community colleges

where much of the growth is occurring fewer than half of the students of color either completed a credential or transferred to another institution within three years.

"It's about not only bringing more people through the doors, but making sure that they are achieving and succeeding at the same rate," said MnSCU's Baer.

MnSCU is one of 24 public college and university systems that just pledged to shrink the gap in college going and degree completion between their traditional population and low income students and students of color by 2015.

White kids care, too

Cheng Lee first saw Gustavus as a high school senior in Upward Bound, a program designed to increase the number of low income and first generation

students in college. He thought the hilltop campus was beautiful and liked the idea of getting away from the distractions of St. Paul, where his Hmong family lives.

He began giving campus tours his freshman year and has watched the campus change through the eyes of the visiting high school students. A decade ago, fewer than 5 percent of students at Gustavus Adolphus College were a color other than white. This year, about 12 percent are.

"They always ask about the diversity the numbers, the facts and figures," Lee said. "But the main selling point is actually seeing students of color. If they see them walking by and saying hi to me, they really respond to that."

White kids are asking about diversity, too.

"These kids at Eden Prairie, they're used to a diverse population in their school," said Mark Anderson, dean of admission and vice president for admission and financial aid.

Gustavus recruits white students whose applications show that they value diversity.

"We consider them equally important in order to be allies in what we want our campus to ultimately become," said Virgil Jones, director of multicultural programs. "It does me no good to recruit you to come to school here if the majority of the white students don't want you here."

The college offers all first-year, underrepresented students peer and faculty mentors. Advisers meet with each student every semester. Tutors set up shop in the college's diversity center, as well as the

individual colleges.

But there's still room to improve, Jones said.

The college still deals with the occasional racist incident. The diversity of faculty and staff still lags. St. Peter could use a barbershop that knows black hair.

About 20 years ago, Anderson was mentoring a student who asked him: "You know why I sit in the front row?" He guessed wrong. "No, Mark," she told me. "It's because I don't want to see that I'm the only one in the classroom who looks like me."

"Now, that doesn't happen anymore," he said. "And that's pretty exciting."

(c) 2010

Star Tribune (Minneapolis)

OPINIONS

New texting and driving law not the answer

Prospectus

In a world where a cell phone has become as quintessential to communication as the smell of fresh-baked cookies is to grandma's house, society must adapt to the changes that come from such technology. The more advances there are in the capability of what was once a telephone, the more the societal norms must change.

In the past, when going out with friends, if you needed to know how to get to the nearest movie theater, you dialed 411 and asked for the address. Nowadays, the only effort required is to open an application on your iPhone. Today, we receive as many text messages from our boyfriend as we do our grandmother, and it is often the only way to get in touch.

In an era where everyone is always on the go, people do

not have time to pull over to the side of the road to answer a phone call. Not to mention that it would generally be more difficult to pull off the road while holding a phone up to your ear than it would be to simply respond to a text message with "no."

However, starting this year in the state of Illinois, it has become illegal to send text messages while driving. I believe that the legislature of this law was a waste of taxpayer's money. Not only is the law not going to save any lives, but also it is un-enforceable. Police do not have x-ray vision, nor can they use their super-sonic ears to hear the rhythmic typing of keys through layers of metal, glass and plastic. There is no way for a policeman to pull you over under suspicion of texting and driving, because even if you are witnessed using a cell phone, there is no way to prove what

you were doing. You may have been looking for a phone number, listening to a voice mail, or even getting directions using the GPS app. Not to mention that many of the under twenty-five crowd do not even need to take their eyes off of the road to complete a text message. With enough practice, it is possible to learn how to text without looking, and say enough to get the point across.

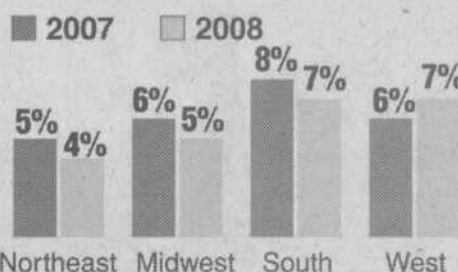
Essentially, a law making it illegal to drive and send text messages is unnecessary and unenforceable, making it a large waste of taxpayer money. Money that could be better spent on school funding or feeding the hungry. By spending precious time to work fervently to pass a bill, which will, in no way, shape, or form, help Illinois to become a better state, I have lost any respect I had for our congressmen and women. The only thing this law has accomplished is to have

Distracted drivers

Driver distraction, such as using hand-held devices, was involved in 16 percent of all U.S. fatal vehicle crashes in 2008.

Hand-held cell phone use

Percent of drivers, by U.S. region

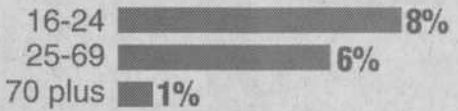


Distracted driving bans

Legend: Hand-held and texting only (light grey), Texting only (dark grey)



Distracted drivers, by age group



NOTE: Colorado ban effective Dec. 1; Illinois and Oregon, Jan. 1, 2010

Source: Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Graphic: Judy Treible © 2009 MCT

turned a generally law abiding citizen into someone who breaks the law five times in the

span of a twenty minute drive to school. The real danger does not lie in sending a text mes-

sage and driving, but in the politicians who believe it does.

A spreadsheet for happiness? Thanks, but I'll take the wine

Susan REIMER
The Baltimore Sun

What does it take to make you happy?

Apparently, most of us don't know, because there is a ton of scientific research and just plain navel-gazing out there that's supposed to help us figure it out.

Is it the music on your iPod, or an application for your iPhone? Is it a walk in nature, or is it nurture?

Is it talk therapy or music therapy? Is it time for yourself or selflessness? Is it physical exercise - or the exercise of free will?

Can you map it out on a spreadsheet and make a plan with happiness as the goal, or does it "just happen"?

Is happiness, as one researcher suggested, contagious like AIDS? The wider

your network of partners, the more likely you are to catch it?

One definition of happiness might be seeing the tail end of 2009 go out the door, taking with it all the economic wreckage of the last year. Certainly the new decade could not be worse, so it must be better, right?

I thought I knew what made me happy - a yoga class to ease my muscles and my mind, wine with a girlfriend, a movie with my husband, a day off with a list of modest errands to get me out the door, garden chores that produce an honest sweat.

Apparently, happiness is much more complicated than that. We just didn't realize how difficult it is to be happy.

Puppies and kittens make people happy. So, apparently, does working with farm animals. Because we don't do it much, caring and feeding such

large creatures makes us feel more confident and improves our self-esteem.

People in Hawaii are very happy. But if we all move there to be happy, we will all end up unhappy. Congestion and poor air quality make us unhappy, as evidenced by the level of unhappiness in New York and California, two places where lots of people moved because they thought they would be happy living there.

(We are pretty unhappy in Maryland, too. The state is ranked 40th out of 50 states in the happiness scale, according to British researchers. No word on the happiness level in London, however.)

Gretchen Rubin is very happy, probably because her book, titled "The Happiness Project," has just been published. The former lawyer and clerk for Supreme Court

Justice Sandra Day O'Connor makes the case that happiness can be achieved by sitting down with a spreadsheet and a calendar and making a month-by-month plan for achieving happiness that includes goals and sub goals.

I know people who would be happy doing that, but I know a lot more people who would be happy having wine with a girlfriend, if you know what I mean.

The folks at Apple must be happy because they've developed a "Live Happy" application for the iPhone that prompts users to express gratitude, recall a happy moment or an act of kindness and look at happy photos, presumably on their iPhones.

In this case, happiness sells for \$9.99 and it comes with a smiley face.

In the same way that having

a mildly depressed roommate can ruin your child's freshman year in college, happiness is infectious, according to British and Harvard researchers. And they found the happiest people are those who are at the center of a large social network.

"We know people who are most susceptible to HIV are people who have lots of partners," one of the researchers told the Los Angeles Times. "This is the same thing."

Which is, of course, one way to look at happiness.

They also found that if you have a happy friend living within a half-mile, you are 42 percent more likely to be happy. But if your happy friend lives two miles away, you are only 22 percent happier.

(You know the joke; Now you have to move.)

These same researchers make the case that since peo-

ple who report themselves to be happy live longer, healthier lives, happiness is a public health issue and there is a role for government in making sure people are happy.

All of which means that yoga classes are going to get really crowded with people the government has ordered to attend. And if California is any example, they will immediately become unhappy yoga students.

Or we will all be getting wine bottles in the mail instead of rebate checks.

That would make my girlfriends and me happy, though I can't speak for you.

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The Baltimore Sun.

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Kindness taught in school's online class

Linda SHAW
The Seattle Times

SEATTLE - If you recently found a shiny gold dollar coin in downtown Bellevue, Wash., thank the kindness class. Ditto if you stumbled upon a piece of glass art in Seattle's Pioneer Square, or a lottery ticket taped to a bus shelter with a note saying, "This may be your lucky day."

Since mid-September, the 250 people in Puget Sound Community School's online course learned about kindness by practicing it.

Along the way, they took emotional risks, repaired relationships, improved their outlook on the world, and realized kindness is contagious.

Signing up for the class "just felt like the right thing to do in order to step outside of myself and see the world as a helpful, kind place, as opposed to a frightening place," said Barbara Kyllingstad, who enrolled as a way to combat the isolation she's felt since she got laid off from Washington Mutual this year.

"I feel a lot more peaceful and positive about the world."

The phrase "random acts of kindness" first showed up at least a decade ago, a play on the expression "random acts of violence." Since then, books, movies and even national organizations have sprung up to keep the trend going.

Puget Sound Community School's kindness class - now in its 15th year - is a homegrown example that this year drew a record number of students. A few were teenagers who attend the small, private school near the Chinatown International District, which serves grades six through 12, but many were friends and friends of friends who live as far away as Poland.

Class instructor Andy Smallman, co-founder of the school, calls it a "positive virus."

Smallman offered his first kindness class to the teens at his school, where creating a nurturing environment is central to the educational philosophy. It was so successful he offered the second class online,



Andy Smallman, co-founder of Puget Sound Community School in Seattle, looks out from his office behind a school logo, December 4, 2009. He teaches the school's online class in kindness.

Ellen M. BANNER/Seattle Times

inviting anyone, anywhere, of any age, to sign up.

"It was the idea of throwing a little pebble into a pond and seeing how far the ripples would go," he said.

The first assignment: Do something kind for yourself. Like airplane passengers instructed to put on their own oxygen masks first in an emergency, we all need to tend to ourselves before we can care for others, Smallman says.

The second assignment: Do something kind for someone you love.

Then for a neighbor. Then for a stranger.

Smallman also stretches the definition of kindness. Assignment No. 10, for example, was to do something useful.

Class members wrote anonymous compliments to co-work-

ers, left homegrown pears out for passers-by, cleaned street storm drains, picked up trash and slipped a \$20 bill inside the next empty cup a barista would pick up.

A woman who lives in Astoria, Ore., bought a \$15 Fred Meyer gift card and left it on the windshield for a young mother who had just entered a nearby unemployment/welfare office.

Another kindness student, after running a half-marathon, gave her participation medal to the 76-year-old man who finished last, because race organizers by then had run out of medals.

Shortly after the killing of the four Lakewood, Wash., police officers, Chris Falskow, a 48-year-old real-estate agent and a board member at Small-

man's school, went to a Starbucks near his office where officers from Seattle's Harbor Patrol often go, and paid in advance for their next order.

Falskow says he was inspired by an Edmonds, Wash., man who also bought coffee for police officers - evidence, he says, that one kind act often begets another.

"If more people realize what they do with their acts of kindness ... we will live in a better place," he said.

Victoria Clearwater, who has a child at the school, said she was struck by how much these small acts of kindness enrich her own life.

"When a kinder option is chosen, it truly radiates out and comes back to you."

Smallman asked class members to share reports of their

deeds on the class homepage, and to reflect on their feelings about what they've done. But since it was an informal class, they weren't compelled to do so. There were no grades or credit, although students at the school could apply the activities to some requirements there.

Some participants chose not to write about what they have done because they felt that would be self-serving. In past classes, Smallman says, some have made a strong case every kind act is ultimately selfish. And there's probably some truth to that, he said, but he personally doesn't care.

To him, it's about forging ties among people. "If I'm doing something nice for you, of course I'm doing something nice for me because we're con-

nected," he said.

Some people also question whether small kindnesses add up too much. Smallman says he tells students they just don't know, that what might seem insignificant on the surface may actually have a large impact.

He recounted a friend's story about a boy who, after a storm, was throwing starfish back into the sea. An old man asked whether helping just a few of them mattered.

The boy threw another into the water and said, "Makes a difference to that one."

To see all the assignments and reports from the Kindness Class, see: <http://onlinekindnessclass.wordpress.com/>

(c) 2009,
The Seattle Times.

Firefighter's tattoo inspires apparel line

Jean PATTESON
The Orlando Sentinel

ORLANDO, Fla. - James Love, a third-generation firefighter from Orlando, Fla., always wanted a tattoo.

He finally sat down and sketched a design incorporating a cross, an eagle, wings of flame and a skull in a black helmet.

"When my brother-in-law saw it, right away he said, 'You should put it on T-shirts,'" Love recalled. "He's a Web designer. He told me: 'Draw something up; get it made; I'll put it on a Web site, and we'll see if it can sell.'"

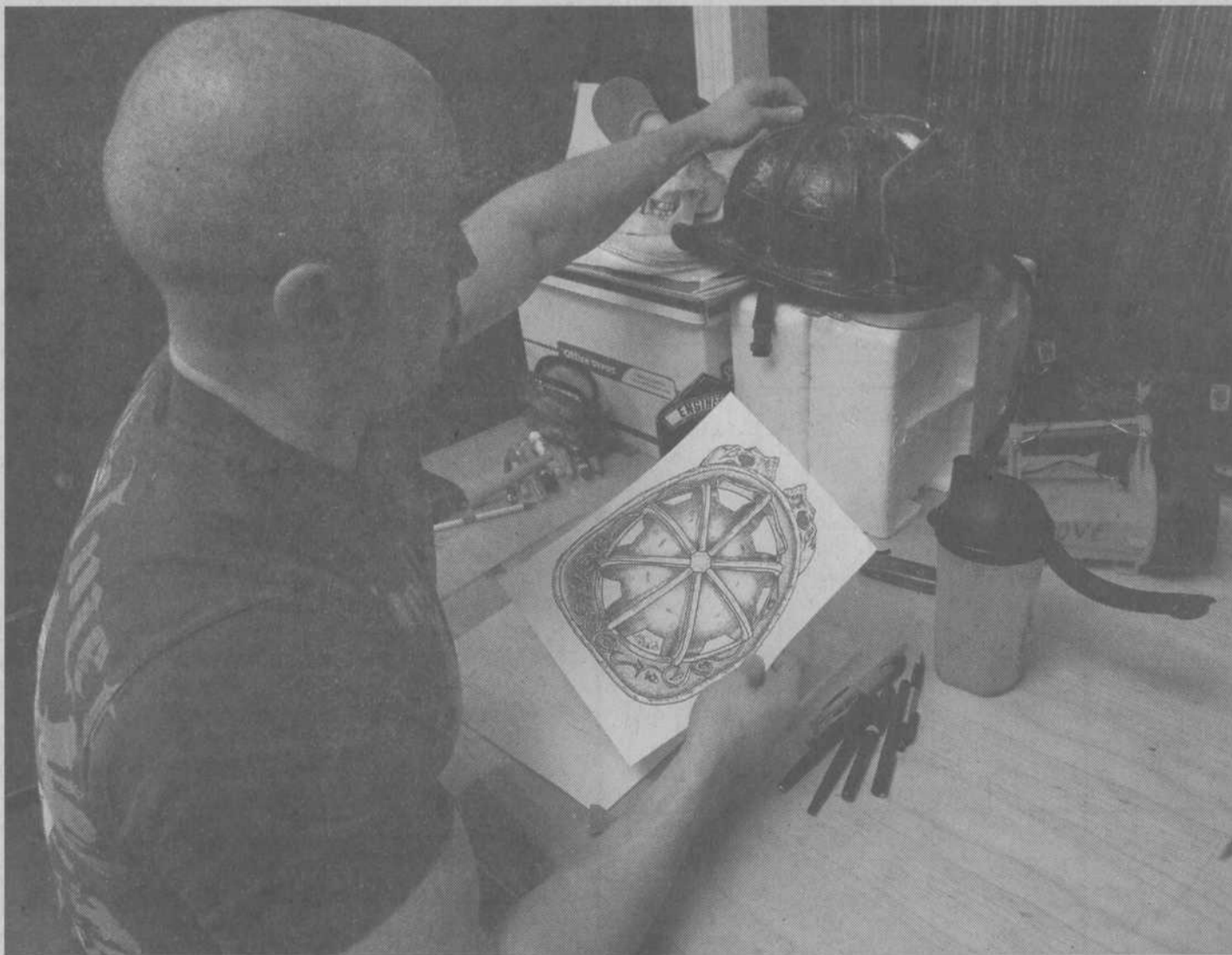
Love got to work - and in June, his Black Helmet line of firefighter-themed apparel for men, women and children was launched online.

Sketching comes naturally to Love, who majored in art at Miami-Dade Community College and planned to be a graphic artist - until the family firefighter gene kicked in.

Things at Black Helmet were slow going at first, Love said: "If we had two sales in a day, I was stoked."

Now they average 120 sales a day - and have more than 21,000 Facebook fans in countries around the world.

"I'm humbled people like my work," said Love, 30, who is based at Station No. 3 in Orlando's College Park neighborhood. "I see people at the gym wearing my shirts. It's weird.



Firefighter/T-shirt designer James Love works on a new design in his home studio in Orlando, Florida, December 18, 2009. Love has launched Black Helmet, a line of graphic T-shirts and clothing.

Ricardo RAMIREZ BUXEDA/Orlando Sentinel

It feels surreal."

His T-shirt line has expanded to include a range of shirts, shorts and accessories. All the designs have firefighting ref-

erences such as axes, hoses or flames. Some include sayings: Fight Fire, Adapt & Overcome, Remember the Fallen. A best seller is a long-sleeved

thermal printed with a Maltese cross and a prayer from Love's department chaplain.

"It's cool stuff," said Rick Walker, Love's station chief. "I

like the way a fire element is tied into the design: The stem of a rose is actually a fire hose. It's pretty unique," Walker said.

Several months ago, Love was commissioned to make shirts for the Camp Liberty Fire Department in Iraq. The designs should be on the Web site by mid-January.

"I'm 'stoked about that," he said. "We are fighting fires here. But they are fighting fires while someone is lobbing mortars at them."

Black Helmet Apparel is now making a modest profit. All the same, Love is not about to give up his day job. Firefighting is in his blood. His father and grandfather were firefighters in the Metro-Dade Fire Department; his uncle and cousin are with the Orlando department.

His wife, Victoria, who recently gave birth to their second son, manages the Black Helmet inventory, works with the screen printer and embroiderer, and takes product pictures for the Web site - using local firefighters as models. Pedro Sostre, his brother-in-law, maintains the Web site and is in charge of marketing.

And in an interesting turnaround, the clothing line that was inspired by a tattoo now is inspiring tattoos.

Love's Gothic-style Black Helmet logo has become quite a popular tattoo design, especially among firefighters.

(c) 2009
The Orlando Sentinel (Fla.).

Stylized teaching with Gram-O-Rama

Pam KELLEY
McClatchy Newspapers

CHAPEL HILL, N.C. - University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill's Marianne Gingham, a creative writing professor, begins her stylistics course each August with a grammar test. Most students fail it.

By now, Gingham expects this. In fact, she awards a prize for the funniest failure.

This year, the prize went to Jillian Vogel, a sophomore from New York City. "Words such as 'Holey Moley' and 'Cowabunga!' are examples of what?" one test question asked.

The correct answer: Interjections. Vogel's answer? Surfer language.

Like many of Gingham's stu-

dents, Vogel arrived at UNC without knowing formal grammar. "Not a lick," she says.

This is no surprise. High school grammar instruction fell out of favor in the 1960s and has never recovered.

Gingham is not dismayed. By the end of the course, her students will gain a new appreciation for grammar. They'll also give a public performance featuring - get this - the best of a semester's worth of grammar and language exercises.

When it's over, they'll post the show on YouTube. They'll marvel at how a playful grammar and language class made them better writers.

And years from now, after they've forgotten the content of entire college courses,

they'll remember the night they elevated grammar to performance art.

OLD VS. NEW

Stylistics is the quirkiest course in UNC's Creative Writing Department. It may be the quirkiest creative writing course in America.

Officially, stylistics is the study of language elements such as sound, form and vocabulary. That's what UNC's course is, too, but filtered through the original mind of its creator, Chapel Hill writer

Daphne Athas.

Athas, 86, a retired creative writing professor, grew up in an era when you learned grammar by parsing sentences - breaking them up and identifying each word by its part of speech. She didn't mind learning that way, but when she began teaching stylistics in 1976, she suspected contemporary students would balk.

"These days," she says, "you've got to beguile and delight."

So she concocted her own

exercises: Write a story using a single verb combined with different prepositions. Create a poem with only conjunctions. Choose a piece of instrumental music, and then write a story that fits the beat.

About halfway through the first semester, she decided to end the class with a public performance. Students loved it.

Stylistics went on hiatus in the mid-'80s, when Athas retired from full-time teaching. But in 2001, Gingham, a fervent fan, revived the course.

SUPERMARKET SHAKE-SPEARE

Now, she teaches it each fall using Athas' textbook, "Gram-O-Rama: Breaking the Rules." Cover illustrations include examples of wordplay. "I'll show you my diphthong," one says, "if you show me yours." Along with the book, students must have kazooos, for exploring how sentence rhythm conveys meaning.

One of Gingham's first assignments this year was Athas' no-

See **GRAM-O** on page 10

CREDIT

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at least \$10 billion a year and affect nearly a quarter of all accounts, he says.

It's important to remember that Pew was looking at terms being offered online to new customers - borrowers the lenders are trying to lure.

Though it's impossible to see the whole picture, evidence abounds that card issuers are imposing worse terms, including higher rates and new annual fees, on swaths of existing customers.

Citibank, for example, recently raised rates on some cardholders to 29.99 percent - not penalty rates, but basic rates for purchases. Annual fees were a relative rarity in the new-card offers Pew examined, but some issuers are notifying existing customers to expect them.

If you get such a notice, don't assume you're stuck. No matter what the lenders may say, Bourke says, they aren't necessarily repricing accounts based on risk. They may just be using a "test-and-learn" system for finding out what the market will bear.

"The big companies are going to pull out 10,000 or 100,000 accounts at a time and start trying new things with them," he says.

The good news is that resis-

tance may not be futile. It paid off recently for George C. Brown Jr. of Moorestown, a retired teacher and library director.

Brown was upset at a new \$79 annual fee on his Chase Prestige Card. But when he called and complained to a supervisor, Chase backed down. "What they're really hoping is that we don't pay attention," Brown says.

In a broader sense, that's been the problem with the entire credit card marketplace. Card issuers built a business model that seemed to work happily for the four in 10 cardholders sufficiently disciplined and well off to be "convenience users."

If you paid off your card

every month and never missed a hoop, you got more than the basic bargain: a convenient cash alternative and access to short-term credit. You were likely showered with kickbacks in cash, frequent-flyer points, or the like.

But that card came with an ugly flip side. Those who missed hoops - including some who were usually convenience users - got penalized with extra fees and rates that many considered usurious.

At its worst, the system resembled a bait-and-switch scam: With the acquiescence of regulators who trusted the market to police itself, card issuers crafted terms that allowed them to lend thousands of dollars to a borrower

at a reasonable interest rate and then triple or quadruple the rate for flimsy reasons, or no reason at all.

Sadly, that's what passed for "financial innovation" in the credit card industry, and Washington is wisely putting a stop to it. The question is: Why are we waiting until 2010?

Pew is pushing for an immediate halt to the worst practices. Congress should heed its call.

(c) 2009

The Philadelphia Inquirer.

BOOMER

continued from page 3

than a fifth of the men 45 and older with sports- and recreation-related injuries treated in the ER had a biking mishap - nearly the same as the portion of boys 5 to 9 (23 percent) and much more than the 16 percent for 10-to-14-year-olds.

Boomers get aggressive treatment, even surgery, to get back on the bicycle saddle - or exercise floor. And doctors are more often agreeable, Azar said.

Cathe Friedrich, 45, co-owner of Four Seasons Health Club in Glassboro, N.J., and an instructor, had inflamed tissue in a knee from daily hammering in the aerobics studio. DiNubile operated in 2006.

"After 40, the injuries start creeping up faster," she said.

Overuse is one of the main causes. At the same time, the benefits of exercise come from pushing limits. "It's a fine line," Friedrich allowed. "As we get older, that fine line gets finer."

No one is suggesting that boomers trade in their gym shorts for the La-Z-Boy. Rather, they need to change their approach to physical activity.

Friedrich advises the mature members of her classes - more than a third of her recent Advance Step/Upper Body Blast session was well past needing kiddie-care - to stretch, spend more time warming up and cooling down, and take a day off to allow for recovery. She has adjusted her own regimen along those lines.


Musician Margie MacWilliams, 57, a Four Seasons member, tries to be sensible when she lifts weights or takes a high-intensity, heart-pounding class. "You have to read the signs," she said. "You have to let your body tell you when it needs to slow down for a while."

Still, the Wenonah, N.J., woman has thrown out her back, hurt a heel and suffered tendonitis in an elbow over the years. Never mind. Exercise helps her "sleep better," she said. "You look better. ... I don't move like an old person. ... I'm going to do this as long as I can."

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The Philadelphia Inquirer.

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GRAM-O

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noun exercise: Create synonyms for nouns without using nouns. Cow became "black and white udderly milked." "Baby" morphed into "tiny cranky drooling."

Soon, Gingher's 14 students were rewriting songs and famous passages, turning perfectly lovely active sentences into deadly passive constructions. In this way, they learn to spot passive voice. "They learn grammar," Gingher says, "on the sly."

By mid-October, they had eased into parodies, nonsense language and malapropisms. Each class, they took turns reading their assignments.

One afternoon, Sam Morgan, a senior from Shelby, armed himself with a liquor cabinet full of malapropisms, slurred his speech and portrayed a drunken pilot: "Good martini everyone. I'm your Captain Morgan and with me are my copilots Jack Daniels and Jim Beam."

Then Erin Stoneking, a senior from Greensboro, N.C., offered a sonnet that could have been penned by Shakespeare, had the Bard ever shopped at Food Lion. It began:

O spite! O hell! I see the checkout line

Before me vilely lengthen, swell, and twine:

If they were civil and knew courtesy,

Another line would op' in urgency.

As each student finished, Gingher critiqued. One piece



Marianne Gingher, right, shares a moment with Daphne Athas, left, after a performance of *Battlestar Grammatica*, a show performed by students in Gingher's stylistics course at UNC-Chapel Hill, North Carolina, December 8, 2009.

Ethan HYMAN/Raleigh News & Observer

sagged under the weight of excessive malapropisms. Another nonsense-language piece didn't convey enough meaning. "Nonsense should make sense, in a weird way," she explained.

ALWAYS EXCITING

Students sign up for stylistics for many reasons, though usually not because they're hot to learn grammar.

Some want to study under Gingher, a writer and award-winning teacher. Some hope to

loosen up their writing style. A few take the class to avoid taking poetry.

Ben Greene, who graduated last spring, registered after seeing a stylistics show. It became his favorite college class.

"I always came in really excited," he says. "I remember trembling. I never could wait to show my exercise to the class."

Speaking by phone from Hollywood, where he's a

researcher for ABC's "Jimmy Kimmel Live!," Greene recalled a poem he'd written for class. It uses only infinitives:

To eat,
To drink,
To shrink:
To Alice,
To travel,
To Owl,
To Poo:
To Chris.
To fly,
To fight,

To crow:
To Pan.
To die,
To sleep,
To dream:
To Ham.

"There's a secret code among a lot of college and high school kids," Greene says. "We're going to come to class and nobody's going to try too hard, and we're going to sort of coast."

Stylistics, he says, was the rare class where students tried

as hard as they could. "You wanted to see if you could get the biggest laugh out of the class," he says. Classmates might say they liked a piece out of politeness, "but if people laugh, you know it worked."

WHAT WORKS

So if grammar can be such rollicking fun, why isn't it taught more?

In large part, says retired Penn State Professor Martha Kolln, because experts concluded that old-style grammar instruction was ineffective.

"It was a matter of classifying, parsing, learning groups of words," says Kolln, author of "Rhetorical Grammar." Teachers didn't relate exercises to writing, so the grammar instruction didn't help students become better writers.

Today, students learn much more about writing - crafting a thesis statement, organizing a paragraph, polishing through rewriting. But they often can't identify a predicate or misplaced modifier. Kolln argues that anti-grammar forces went too far. "Students don't know how to talk about their language," she says. "They don't have a common vocabulary."

ON STAGE

ON A RAINY evening this month, 150 people - students, faculty, and family members - packed a room in UNC's Wilson Library, eager to be entertained by grammar exercises.

Students titled this year's show "Battlestar Grammatica." Athas sat in the front row.

For more than an hour, the class performed chants, parodies, and word play. They recited the Balloon Boy saga to the tune of "The Addams Family." They delivered a noun-free commercial for the Snuggie, the blanket with sleeves: "Ultra-soft and super baggy; move around and fits great!"

In one skit, a father discussed sex with his son - entirely in passive voice:

"It is not forgotten what was done by us in the back seat when it was told to our parents that the movies had been gone to."

"Aw, sick!" the son replied. "This is not needed to be heard."

"Protection must always be worn," the father counseled.

The son didn't want to discuss it. Tempers flared.

Then he stomped off: "It is wished that birth was never achieved by me!"

In many pieces, music, and especially rhythm, were integral. In "Hiya Gorgeous," women chanted lame male pickup lines:

Damn girl. Ain't you fine?

I don't have a girlfriend. You can be mine.

I'll keep you at home so I know where you are.

Get out of my dreams; get into my car.

Then they chanted a reply:

Thank you, but I'd rather walk.

No. No. No. No.

I've got mace. I've got mace.

Reading the piece doesn't do it justice. You've got to hear it.

The same could be said of the entire stylistics course.

"Battlestar Grammatica" ended to enthusiastic applause. Classmates gave Gingher a bouquet. They hugged each other.

Jillian Vogel, the student who won the funniest failure award at the start of class, says knowing grammar rules has given her the confidence to play with them, break them and develop her own writing style.

Has her writing improved? She thinks so.

Certainly, her grammar knowledge has. A few days after the show, Vogel, along with the rest of the class, took Gingher's grammar test again. This time, she passed.

(c) 2009

The Charlotte Observer (Charlotte, N.C.).

Taking care of BUSINESS

On Jan. 8, 1935, Elvis Presley - the king of rock 'n' roll - was born. Despite dying over 30 years ago his business kingdom still thrives. The growth of Elvis Presley Enterprises:

ONE for the money ...

1977 • Elvis' estate, valued at **\$4.5 million to \$5 million**, left to daughter Lisa Marie as a trust to be managed by Elvis' father, Vernon Presley, and a Memphis bank

1979 • Vernon Presley dies, Priscilla begins comanaging **\$3 million** estate, but maintenance of about \$500,000 a year on 23-room Graceland mansion and other expenses are depleting it; Priscilla decides to turn mansion into a tourist attraction, starts Elvis Presley Enterprises (EPE)

1982 • Graceland opens with a \$5 admission

1983 • Tennessee law passed, pushed by EPE, requiring businesses selling memorabilia to pay licensing fee, royalties based on expected sales

1993 • Graceland bringing about **\$10 million** annually when Lisa Marie marries Michael Jackson

1997 • Estate estimated at more than **\$250 million**; revenues about **\$75 million**

2004 • Elvis becomes the best-selling solo artist in U.S. history; July 5 marks the 50th anniversary of the beginning of his career

2005 • Lisa Marie partners with Robert F.X. Sillerman, giving him 85 percent interest in EPE; Elvis tops Forbes magazine's annual list of top earning dead celebrities at **\$45 million**

2007 • 30th anniversary of Elvis' death; more than 600,000 visit Graceland annually

