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INDEPENDENT

NORTHEASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY



Wednesday, September 4, 2013

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Vol. 33 Issue 2



IT'S A (speed) TRAP!

By Emily Haddad - Opinions Editor

Albany Park Speed Cameras slow down commute

Northeastern Illinois University students and other motorists who use Pulaski Rd, Foster Ave, Kedzie Ave, or Bryn Mawr Ave. to get to NEIU may soon receive an official warning in the mail from the Chicago Department Of Transportation (CDOT) for speeding.

As the next phase in the Children's Safety Zone Program, city of Chicago installed and tested the speed-monitoring cameras in the first 12 of 50 proposed "safety zone" locations during August of this year. While the cameras went live Aug. 26, 2013, motorists caught driving above the posted speed limits (between 20 - 30 mph) during the next month will only receive a warning in the mail instead

of a ticket. In addition to the interim 30-day period of warnings to acclimate drivers, CDOT will also grant drivers one free warning upon the first instance they are eligible to receive a violation and fine.

CDOT describes the signage to accompany the cameras as "extensive," but NEIU students should pay particular attention to their commute on streets bordering Gompers Park. Cameras are currently posted at 4124 W. Foster Ave. and 5119 N. Pulaski Rd. Cameras will also soon be installed near the intersection of Kedzie Ave. and Bryn Mawr Ave., just past the bridge that crosses over the North Branch of the Chicago River.

The fines for speeding start at \$35 for driving 6-10 miles above the posted speed limit, and jump to \$100 for anyone driving 11 miles or more above the posted speed limit in the safety zones, all located around

parks and schools. Several of these planned safety zones incorporate the majority of the major east-west and north-south traffic routes commuters to NEIU use on a daily basis. For students with limited financial situations, an unexpected \$100 fine could seriously impact their finances.

Students have been overheard in the hallways and in the NEIU parking structure warning one another about the cameras. "I've been telling people I know about the (Foster Ave) location and to be careful over there past the Jewel," said Kristopher Mika, Sociology student and Diversity and Social Justice Chair of the Northeastern Programming Board (NPB).

According to the CDOT website, the enforcement hours will be limited from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. in safety zones around schools on school days (Monday through Friday); 7 a.m. to 4 p.m.: 20 mph speed limit when children are

present; 30 mph speed limit when no children are present; and from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. there is a 30 mph speed limit. The enforcement hours around parks will be limited to only those hours parks are open (typically 6 a.m. to 11 p.m., 7 days a week) with a 30 mph speed limit.

In a statement released last year about Governor Pat Quinn signing the automatic speed enforcement camera legislation into law, Chicago mayor Rahm Emanuel said, "All this requires is that drivers obey the law near schools and parks to ensure the safety of our kids. Since day one as Mayor, my top priority has been to ensure that Chicago's children can focus on their studies, not worry about their safety."

While the cameras are meant to enforce the speed limit and protect

children from being injured or killed, the revenue generation potential for Chicago from the Children's Safety Program is significant. A representative of the Independent stood by the Foster Ave. Gompers Park camera and counted 57 flashes of the camera during a 60-minute period. Depending on the motorists' speed, that hour represented up to \$5700 per hour in fines to the city of Chicago. Considering Gompers Park is open 17 hours a day, this translates into a possible \$96,900 a day, or \$678,300 a week for Chicago.

However, CDOT stated that any revenue from this program will be used to "enhance the safety of children, including afterschool, anti-violence and jobs programs; crossing guards and police officers around schools; and infrastructure improvements, such as signs, crosswalk markings and other traffic safety improvements."

NEWS

NEIU Cafeteria Remodeled p. 3

OPS

Murders in Chicago p. 6

SPORTS

Kane Swings for Glory p. 10

A&L

New Sex App Available p. 13

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Northeastern Illinois University's Student Government Association (SGA) resumed session for the 2013 fall semester on Aug. 27, 2013. Five new senators were appointed and confirmed during the previ-

ous meeting, including Sam Aguirre, Amanda Slefo, Francesca Eshoo, Jovani Vazquez, Brenda Bedolla, and an incoming freshman, Laura Aguirre. LaShunda Stephens was also confirmed to the Council of Clubs (CoC). At the prior SGA meeting on July 23, 2013, Jessica Guillen was appointed and confirmed as a senator, and Nergal Malham was appointed to the CoC.

One of the goals of current SGA President, Ashor Jajou, is to intro-

Upcoming SGA Referendum

By Emily Haddad - Opinions Editor

duce a referendum intended to create a low-income student resource center. One aspect of this referendum is a student assistance space, where items such as professional clothing for job interviews, toiletries and sundries could be available to NEIU students who need them. "We want to offer things like clothing, toiletries, and diapers to low-income students, single mother, anyone who needs extra help," said Jajou. While the food bank is currently on hold because of federal regulations and monetary requirements, Jajou hopes to secure business sponsorship in terms of food assistance once the student assis-

tance space is up and running.

Another goal of upcoming SGA referendums is to arrange a student shuttle between NEIU's main campus and the El Centro satellite campus. Arranging free transportation between the two campuses could ease the commute of an average of 1,000 NEIU students per year that take classes at El Centro, and facilitate more students in considering El Centro as a viable option for classes each semester.

The next SGA meeting is Sept. 3, 2013. All SGA meetings are open to the public.

NEIU Police Blotter

Crime never takes a summer vacation. On July 28, 2013 the (CCICS) suffered criminal damage in the form of a broken window. Two days later the theft of a purse occurred in the first floor bathroom of the student union at the main Northeastern Illinois Univer-

sity (NEIU) campus. Both incidents have been administratively closed.

In the month of August, two more thefts under three hundred dollars occurred. On the first of the month, a purse was stolen from the third floor classroom of the (BBH). On the second of August a back-

pack was stolen from the bathroom of the student union building. Both incidents have been administratively closed.

On the third of August in parking lot F an arrest was made pertaining to a suspicious person who stopped on campus. The arrest was

able to be made due to an active warrant by the cook county sheriff's office. On the El Centro Campus criminal damage was found in the forms of graffiti, which covered a large space of state property in spray paint on the twenty first of August.

Chicago based Developers get Social with New App, Kyntal

By Luis Badillo - News Editor

If you look at any number of hugely popular apps on your phones, chances are you are looking at a piece of software created in the west coast. Startups and corporations operating out of California or Washington are well known for being on the forefront of the tech world.

Chicago however, has a few heavy hitters of its own. Companies like Groupon, Grubhub or Threadless are leading the Windy City into a boom of tech startups. Among those shiny new startups is a company called Zymbr Labs. Representatives of Zymbr recently came by Northeastern Illinois University (NEIU) to show off their recently launched app, Kyntal.

"It's a combination of many different things," said Zymbr co-founder Dietmar Lang. *The Independent* had the opportunity to receive quick demonstrations of the app on its features directly from Lang.

Kyntal promises to be a smarter way to find local businesses and on goings that matter to the user. It does this by not only using an algorithm to generate suggestions, but uses social media features to create them as well.

"We really want to focus on the social aspect" Lang told *The Independent*. When setting up a profile, a user begins by selecting interests that matter to him or her. The app allows for a wide array of interests, ranging from "craft beers" or "The Chicago Cubs". "The More specific you are," says Lang "the better."

Kyntal then takes these suggestions, and then produces a list of nearby businesses and locations that may matter to the user. It also creates a small list of users with the same or similar interests.

Kyndal encourages interaction between those users, allowing each other's interests or favorite loca-



Zymbr Labs co-founder Dietmar Lang showing his app to students

tions. This fostering of integration in theory then allows for users to find more like-minded people, allowing Kyntal to better its decision making on businesses or locations that matter to the initial user.

"We also are trying to respect people's privacy," with that in mind, Kyntal has implemented a profile system to let users create a "public profile" and a "private profile". Users' private profiles will only be visible to another once the two are friends via the app.

"It's a lot like Pandora but for

cool local stuff," said Lang in reference to the music recommendation service. The more Kyntal knows about what you like, the better it is at discovering new locations for you.

Kyntal also promises Groupon-like features by displaying prominently featured deals on the app. Unfortunately during *The Independent's* demo with Kyntal, the feature was not enacted at the time.

Though only on the App Store since June 21, 2013, Kyntal is generating some positive buzz. Kyndal

has averaged out a 5 star rating, though there are not many reviews (121 ratings as of this writing.) It also was featured on a tech segment ABC 7's *Windy City Live*. Zymbr Labs is definitely getting some attention with Kyntal and, if successful, might be the next big tech startup to hit Chicago.

University Food Services Reopens After Leaving Students Hungry

By Melissa Brand - Senior Staff Writer

Northeastern Illinois University (NEIU)'s food services shut down at the end of the spring 2013 semester without much notice. This left hundreds of students looking for other options for meals during the summer semester.

Earlier this year, a Food Service Advisory Committee was created to assess the needs of the University. This committee was comprised of students, faculty and staff. Once the needs were outlined, the committee started a search. According to Matt Specht, Assistant Vice President of Student Affairs, "The University began the process of looking for a new food service provider with the hope that the new provider could start over the summer and avoid suspension of service. The process of selecting a new food service provider took longer than anticipated, so a decision was made to suspend food service over the summer months."

Louie Georgopoulos, SGA Vice President and a member of the Food Service Advisory Committee said, "My role as well as the Committee's role was to survey the student body, faculty and staff to get an understanding of their overall view of the services being provided. Our goal was to uncover and address any issues, complaints or grievances the students, faculty and staff had towards the food service on campus. We also wanted to isolate, preserve and enhance the things they enjoyed most about the cafeteria." According to Georgopoulos, the committee will be an ongoing component of the University that will be utilized if and when other issues arise in the future.

Once the new provider was



identified, they worked to ensure food services would be open on the first Monday of the fall semester. The Golden Eagles Nest reopened at 10am on Aug. 26. "A'viands is committed to offering a wide variety of options in the cafeteria. They are also focusing on the quality of the food being served," said Specht. "As a smaller company than previous providers, they are able and willing to make necessary changes and improvements to their operation as time goes by."

Names like Subway and Robinson's are gone, replaced with a sub stand and "world flavors" stations. There will be daily specials every day of the week. There will also be a pizza station, salad station and Panini sandwich station. One new offering is a daily soup that rotates every day. The full menu will not repeat for a minimum of 3 weeks and is available online at <http://campus-dining.com/my-campus/neiu>. The menu section of the website shows available Fit Choices 4 Life, Seafood

Watch, Vegetarian and Gluten Free when available. Other sections on the website show catering information, hours and contact information. A'viands will have exclusive catering rights on the entire main campus. To set up a catering order, call A'viands at 773-442-5335 or send an email to: neiu catering@aviands.com.

One major improvement made was an upgrade to the point of sale program which will allow students to use debit and credit cards with

no minimum dollar amount and no need to sign for transactions under \$20. Specht said, "These improvements will speed up the process when purchasing your meal." The hours of the cafeteria will be Monday - Thursday: 10am - 7pm and Friday: 10am - 2pm. Students are encouraged to give feedback and suggestions on the new food choices and service on the website: <http://campus-dining.com/my-campus/neiu/feedback>.

Do you need a Lyft?

By Tommy Dato - Contributing Writer



Lyft passengers and drivers sign up with their phones and create an account.

Drivers are encouraged to make the ride engaging and interesting. Passengers are encouraged to tip the driver via their phones, after the ride. Passengers are ranked depending on their interaction and how they tip the driver. If you tip too little, your rank may drop and you may find yourself not being able to get a lift. The tagline at Lyft is "Your friend with a car."

In a recent interview with a Lyft driver, who wished to remain anonymous, stated, "The ride experience is supposed to be fun and casual for the driver and the passengers. The social aspect of the service is actually a major distinguishing factor. I let riders be dashboard DJs, if they wish. Passengers are invited to sit in the front seat so that a ride truly feels like it's with a friend rather than a chauffeur."

To be a lift driver, you must be at least 23 years of age, have your own car (year 2000 or newer) in working condition, have had a driver's license for more than 3 years, own an Android phone or iPhone and must pass an interview and background checks. Lyft also has a zero tolerance drug and alcohol policy. Drivers are given their pink mus-



tache after they are selected to be a part of the team and have passed a background and DMV check. All a passenger has to do is download the app, link it to a debit or credit card, and start requesting rides.

The city and surrounding areas are the only areas that a passenger can be picked up from. There is also a 60 mile limit on the length of the rides. If users need a ride that is very far away, they may end up outside the pickup area after the drop off and not have a ride back.

The app was designed to promote a friendly, carpool-like culture. A user needing to get from point A to point B and needing a ride; a Lyft driver happens to be heading that direction and is in the

same point A area. Now both can travel together with the help of the app and help each other out.

As youngsters, people are taught not to talk to strangers. Being able to trust a complete stranger to give you a ride can be difficult to do. Knowing that the Lyft drivers need to submit their information, picture, and go through background checks may help with the idea of using this service. The success of Lyft is on the rise. For passengers, it can be more fun and cheaper than taking a cab. There are still some bugs to work out within the app, but both the crowd-sourced service industry and Lyft appear to be here to stay.

When you hear the term "ride-sharing," do you think of a pink mustache? You might, now, thanks to Lyft. Instead of calling for a cab, taking several buses and trains, or hitchhiking, commuters can now get a ride through their phone using the Lyft app.

Lyft cars are required to sport a large plush pink mustache on the

grill, so passengers can easily identify them. The Lyft app is available on both Android and iPhones. The app is based out of San Francisco and was founded by Logan Green and John Zimmer. Lyft is currently available in 7 cities: San Francisco, Los Angeles, San Diego, Seattle, Chicago, Boston, and Washington D.C. with plans to expand. Both

All's Fare in Chicago Ride-Sharing

By Emily Haddad – Opinions Editor

A tap of the finger is fast replacing the frantic arm flailing used to hail a cab. E-Hail applications have transformed smart phone screens into interactive cab GPS tracking and hailing devices.

While many apps in the E-Hail family connect directly to the local municipality's licensed taxi services, a small subset has been growing that rely on a different pool of drivers, offering a service known as ride-sharing. Originally from the west coast, the rideshare concept is designed to let every day people give other every day people a ride if they happen to be going the same way. The traditional gesture of chipping in for gas is replaced by the option to donate electronically, with the application-maker getting a cut for having connected the driver and rider up in the first place.

The most visual of these ride-share services in Chicago is Lyft, with cars sporting the trademark Lyft pink plush mustache on the front end. Two other major ride-share services currently operate in the Chicago area, SideCar and UberX, a subset of the more well-known world-wide Uber luxury black car / limo service. Uber is also affiliated with the regulated taxi industry as part of a greater E-Hail app movement. In light of all the new SideCar, UberX, and Lyft drivers, Chicago's already troubled taxi industry faces new competition.

The United Taxidriers Community Council (UTCC) Secretary Peter Ali Enger summarized the taxi driving community's concerns over the ride sharing program as a matter of regulation and safety for both the driver and the passenger.

"[Ride-share drivers] don't have any regulation, there's no oversight insurance, and their background checks are not authorized by the city," said Enger. He explained that ride-share drivers aren't given drug testing and the background checks companies like Lyft perform are not as thorough as those given to city-regulated taxi drivers.

"People could slip through. Chicago seems to be willing to wait until something really terrible happens, a rape, a robbery, a murder, before they figure out a way to regulate this," said Enger.

He went on to explain that taxi drivers are concerned for their livelihood because of competition from people who don't pay weekly lease fees on their taxi medallion. "Drivers for these [rideshare] companies do not actually charge anything,

getting around city and state authorities by operating through the suggested donation system," Enger said.

The potential safety concerns for drivers and passengers of ride-share programs aren't being offset by any significant savings or financial gain. The rates suggested are similar to the rates you would pay in a taxi service, but nothing is guaranteed.

"Theoretically, you can get a ride to the airport and pay just \$1 and the driver can't do anything about it," said Enger. Perhaps even more concerning to Chicago should be the potential revenue loss. According to the City of Chicago websites, taxi drivers must pay the city a \$78 flat-fee ground transportation tax per active taxi medallion. Ride-share drivers don't pay the city any-

thing when they work.

"Because no money technically changes hand, and no regulations are in place to handle someone that doesn't operate under a taxi medallion, or taxi license, people aren't paying into the system. The city regulatory boards are two to three steps being industry technology," said Enger.

For a city continually running in a deficit, it makes very little sense for Chicago to leave loophole big enough for ride-sharing companies to drive through.

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The Outdoor Adventure Program.

By Luis Badillo - News Editor

Students wanting to get in touch with nature need look no further than their own, or their school's backyard. The southern half of the Northeastern Illinois University (NEIU) campus, beside the school's P.E. Complex contains grasslands and a preserve of Swamp White Oak Prairie Savanna. Students rarely venture into these more natural areas on the NEIU campus and are likely not familiar with what NEIU and the Outdoor Adventure Program has to offer.

"We see around 15, maybe 20 percent of the student body come by here," said Davisson Benson, Senior Staff Member in the Physical Education. He was keenly aware of the fact that a majority of students don't ever venture south of the Ronald J. Williams Library. Complex, and is one of the key people behind the school's Outdoor Adventure Program.

Some students may have taken a team building course through the program, but very few know

about the other activities they do. "Rock climbing is one of our constants," said Benson. Though the gym where the rock climbing walls is currently under construction, it is expected that the wall will bring in as many students as they did last semester. Aside from that, the gym also houses a high ropes course which will be open for students every other week. "We're probably one of the few places in Chicago with [a ropes course]," said Benson.

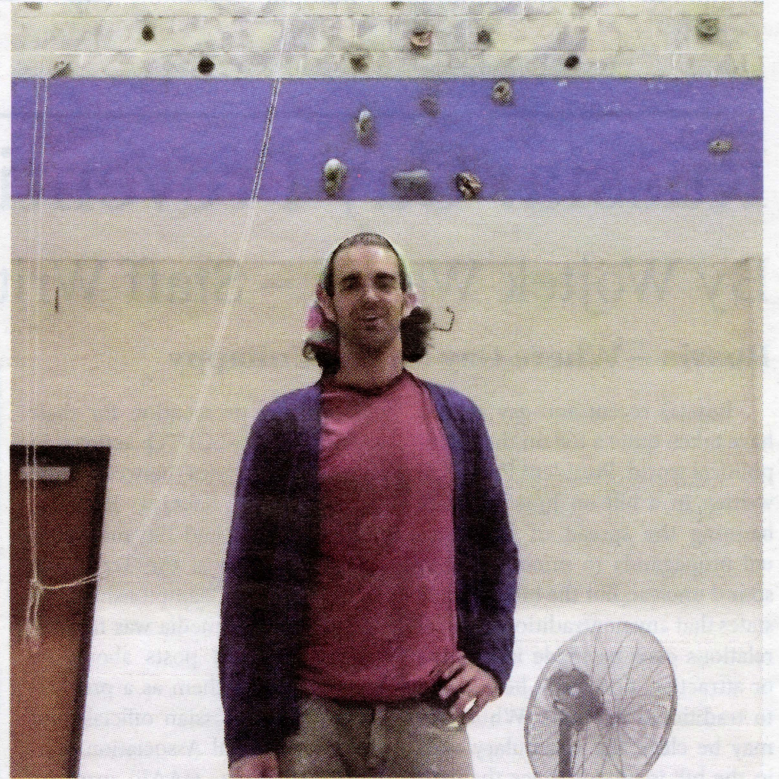
Though the Outdoors Adventure Program does give participants a chance to be active on campus, it also takes students on adventures off campus. Being an active participant means an opportunity to join other students in a whole spectrum of outdoor activities, including hiking trips, kayaking, and even several day-long camping trips.

"Over the last three years, over spring break we've gone to Kentucky," Benson said. "It's a total of five days. Two of those are traveling. We'll do a rock climbing day,

a hiking day, and some other fun event," he continued. "We even did zip-lining one year [which] was super awesome."

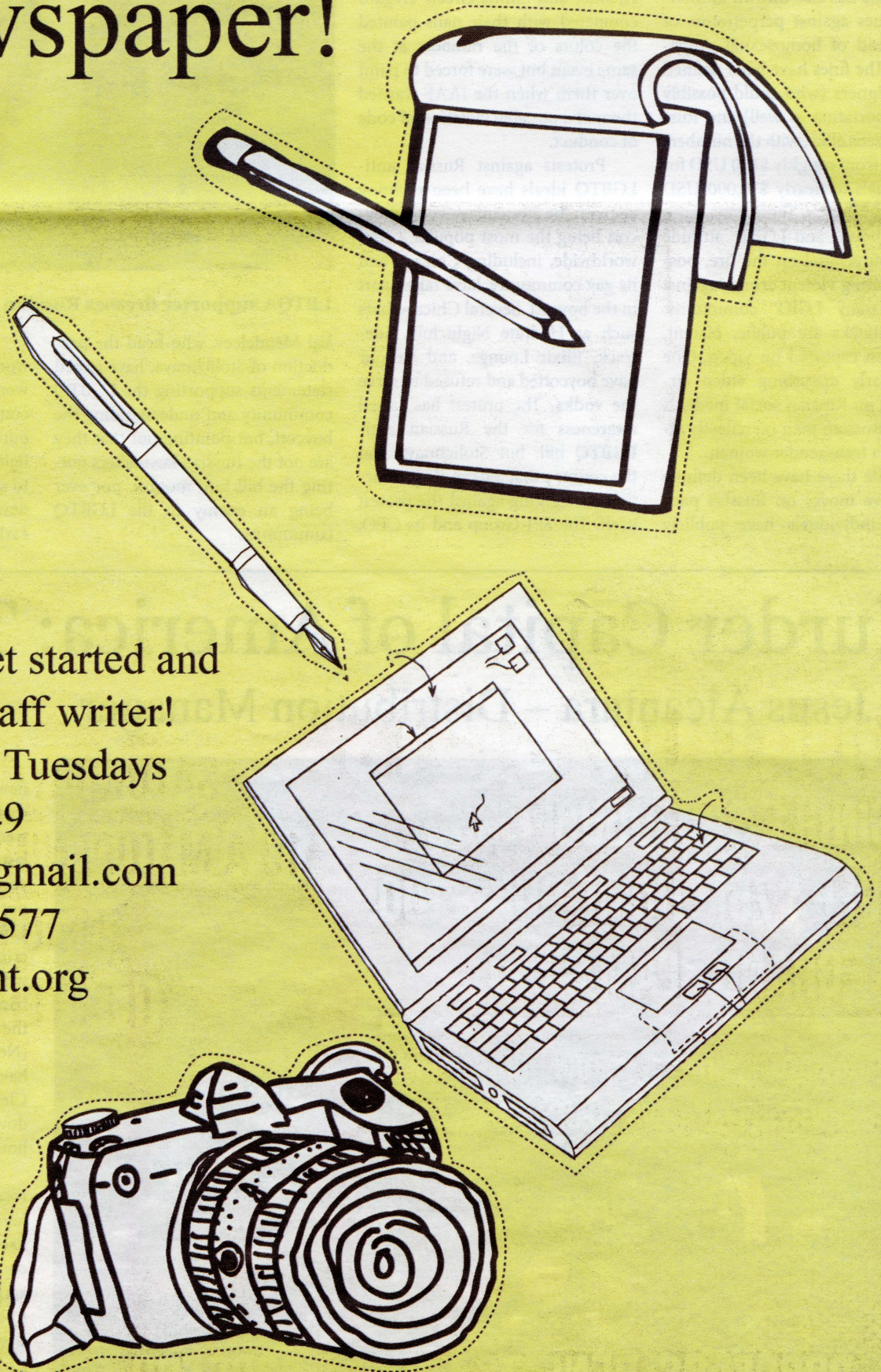
This semester's upcoming events include a hiking trip and kayaking in September, as well as a camping trip to Wisconsin and a corn maze trip. Students ready to channel their inner outdoorsman or outdoors-woman, might be interested in doing cold weather camping in November.

The Outdoors Adventure Club will be present in the fall into week here at NEIU with a table for any interested students wishing to master the great outdoors. Once construction has finished in the gym, (likely in October) students can head over to P.E. complex to ask about a rock climbing session, expected to be held three nights a week. And for all other events, postings or updates, students can head over to the program's Facebook page at <https://facebook.com/pages/NEIU-Outdoor-Adventure-Program>.



Davisson Benson standing in front of the school's rock climbing wall.

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Russia: Gay Prevention Specialist

By Wojtek Warias – Staff Writer

Russia – Where Gay Means Unhappy

Russia's recent anti-gay actions have taken quite a toll on the sociopolitical world. President Putin had written in a bill on June 30, 2013 banning the spread of homosexual propaganda to minors. It may sound unclear, but the bill basically states that any nontraditional sexual relations can't be made interesting or attractive, nor can it be equated to traditional relations. While that may be clear, the vocabulary used in the bill is muddy since the definitions of propaganda and nontraditional/traditional relations can be ambiguous. This is not unlike a stunt that Russia pulled by banning all homosexual propaganda back in 2004 and 2006 with similarly hazy definitions and regulations.

Russia has also thrown in monetary fines against perpetrators of the spread of homosexual propaganda. The fines have been defined for foreigners (who could possibly face deportation as well) and Russian citizens alike, with the numbers ranging from roughly \$120 USD for individuals to nearly \$30,000 USD for organizations. These bans, fines and general anti-LGBT attitude have poured fuel on the fire, possibly inciting violent crimes against the Russian LGBT community. These attacks are public, blatant, and often captured on video. One particularly disturbing video circulating on Russian social media is of four Russian men mercilessly attacking a transgender woman.

While there have been definite aggressive moves on Russia's part, several individuals have publicly

escaped any persecution for their seemingly pro-LGBTQ actions in Russia. The kisses between Russian sprinters Kseniya Ryzhova, Yulia Guschina, and Tatyana Firova sparked outrage at the Track and Field World Championships in Moscow. Social media was flooded with tweets and posts about the kisses, framing them as a pro-LGBTQ protest. Russian officials and the International Association of Athletics Federation (IAAF) were up in arms until a public denial came of the kisses holding any political weight. Nick Symmonds, an American, had dedicated his silver medal to the LGBTQ community as well, which meant breaking the propaganda law. Swedish athletes Moa Hjelmer and Emma Green-Tregaro competed with their nails painted the colors of the rainbow at the same event but were forced to paint over them when the IAAF warned them of a possible violation of code of conduct.

Protests against Russia's anti-LGBTQ ideals have been popping up, with the Stolichnaya vodka boycott being the most popular. Cities worldwide, including Chicago and its gay community, have taken part in the boycott. Several Chicago bars such as Hydrate Nightclub, Sidetrack, Elixir Lounge, and Parlour have boycotted and refused to serve the vodka. The protest has raised awareness for the Russian anti-LGBTQ bill, but Stolichnaya and the country that aids in its production are fighting against the protest itself. The SPI Group and its CEO,

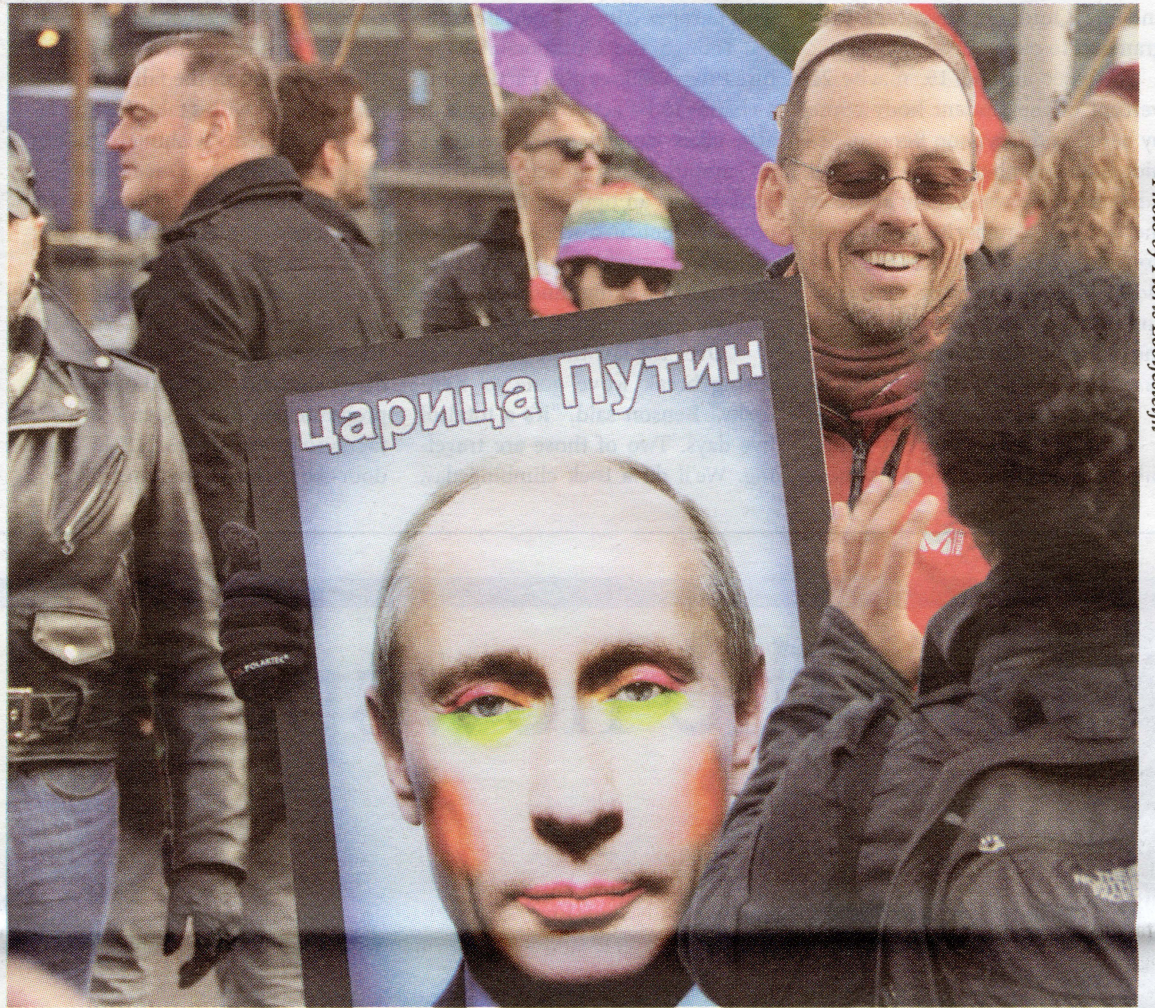


Photo by Floris Looijesteijn

LBTQA supporter dresses Russian President Vladimir Putin up in shock queen makeup

Val Mendeleev, who head the production of Stolichnaya, have issued statements supporting the LGBTQ community and understanding the boycott, but pointing out that they are not the Russian lawmakers putting the bill into motion, nor ever being an enemy to the LGBTQ community.

The anti-Russia war rages worldwide, but the battle is hardly won. While the Stolichnaya boycott, athlete protests, and celebrity outings against the bill shine a spotlight on the fiasco, it does nothing to stop it. When one of Russia's top news anchors, Dmitri Kisilev, stated earlier this month on television that

homosexuals should be banned from donating blood or sperm and have their hearts buried or burned, it was a definite sign that Russia is, and seems prepared to stay, years behind its European brethren that have already legalized same-sex marriage in the last decade.

Murder Capital of America: The Truth

By Jesus Alcantara – Distribution Manager



Photo by Vivvat S.

It is often the subject on the news: Chicago seeing rise in homicides. According to the FBI, there were 500 homicides in Chicago last year, exceeding the previous year's number. Many people would not find that surprising; after all, Chicago is known to have a lot of crime. The city streets are flooded with illegal guns. Gangs are terrorizing everyone around them. Even the neighborhoods around NEIU (Northeastern Illinois University) have had their share of homicides. Clearly, this city is quickly going down the drain, or, at least, that's how the media sees it.

While it is true that homicides rose from last year's number, it is hardly the worst year that Chicago has had. 970 homicides were recorded back in 1974. Chicago has actually seen a small decline in homicides since the early 90's. So why does the media continue to paint Chicago as "The murder capital of the world?"

A big reason Chicago gets a bad

rap has to do with how the statistics are presented. Yes, Chicago had the highest number of murders last year. Chicago also has a population of 2.7 million citizens. While 500 is a large number for murders, it is a small number compared to its total population.

A more accurate number would be the homicide rate, because it paints a better picture of how crime affects a city in relation to its population. Where does Chicago rank? In 2011, Chicago ranked 26th in homicide rates among cities with populations exceeding 100,000 residents—a far cry from the alarming tone that comes from using the homicide count.

In the end, it comes down to sensationalism. A story is going to get a lot more attention when it uses headlines like "Chicago: Murder Capital of America." Chicago is still struggling with the issues of gangs, guns, and political corruption, but it is certainly not "The Murder Capital of America."

Incorporating Games in Education

By Jonathan Gronli – Senior Staff Writer

Like an unrelenting tide, a wave of gamification—yes, that's an actual word—has washed across multiple industries, including education. Student interest levels in school continues to wane while their involvement in electronic media spirals ever upward, prompting educators to ask, 'what are some ways that games, actual games rather than just their mechanics, can be incorporated into classrooms?'

Admittedly, it might not be feasible for all departments or levels of education. Some skill sets may not lend themselves to game play. But for every point of drudgery, there are a wealth of areas where games and gameplay can be added as effective tools for instruction. Here are some of best examples.

One great way to interest students in writing is to incorporate collaborative storytelling games like Dungeons & Dragons or Fiasco, in creative writing classes. After all, each game is purely a narrative exercise. It deals with character creation and requires extensive consideration of a character's motivations, personal background, flaws, and family history. It also covers adaptation and collaboration with both players and the fiction itself to create an effective and cohesive story.

Particularly industrious GMs can also get firsthand experience working with world creation while learning to adapt to multiple (Player) Character decisions, an advanced writing skill set often tackled in college. Another strong application of these types of games that can be used in various theater classes. Bring history to life, learn dates, times, and events by stepping into the shoes of the person experiencing the historical event. Incorporate foreign language and problem-solving, and then put on a play about it to display that learn-



Photo by Jorge Leal

ing. Parent-teacher night was never so fun.

Another possibility is bringing Role-Playing Games (RPGs) into philosophy or political science classes regarding ethics, as they ask a couple of important questions. An example of an important question is simply, 'what happens when the only socially moral imperative that you should care about is the one that most profits yourself?' Other games ask questions covering issues of freedom, equal rights, cultural production and sovereignty. There are also games that offer interesting possibilities regarding the study of the natures of identity, knowledge and reality. Just studying the existence of the artifacts and systems

that allow gameplay in relation to, for example, Descartes's Meditations on First Philosophy would probably lead to interesting questions and discussions. I think therefore I am.

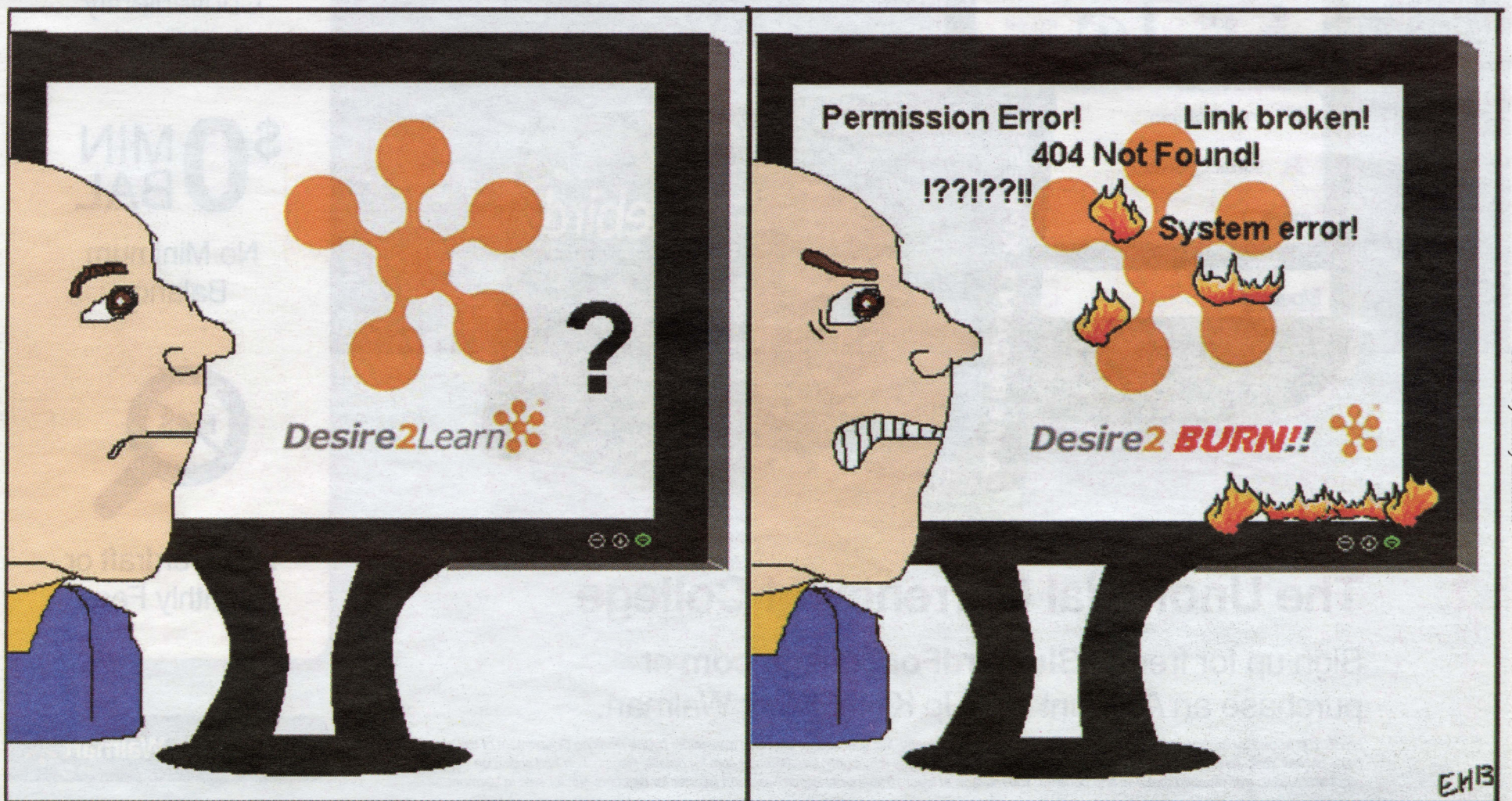
The most interesting application of game play is tangential learning. Constructed properly, any game, or even movie, can lead to interest, which can enable the willingness to learn about a topic, belief system or time period. It's enabling learning through the direct engagement of the audience. For example, the Assassin's Creed games, being works of well-researched historical fiction for the big picture context, can be used in history classes to examine the Crusades, the Renais-

sance in Italy and Constantinople and the colonies in the Americas from Mexico to the 13 original states circa the American Revolution. At least they'd be useful in looking at the big picture context of the art, architecture, conflicts and corruption during those times. The Civilization and the Total War series also occasionally give at least Masters thesis levels of information regarding different tech, social and civic developments in the in-game supplements. Games themselves are useful in teaching about mythology and fantasy as many draw heavily on myth, fantasy and folklore. Games also mix in psychology, at least in relation to Joseph Campbell and Carl Jung on archetypes in sto-

ries and fantasies. Tap into that and there's a class with a lot of potential for some refreshing interdisciplinary discussions.

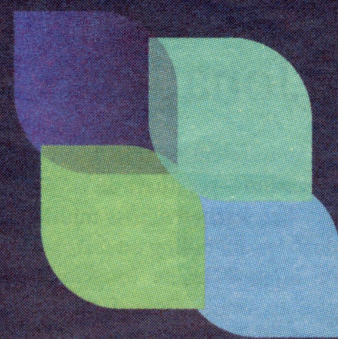
Then again, these are just some examples that barely scratch the surface of the topic. There are still many more examples that can be explored, though, there is one big thing that would need to be accomplished first for such a project to be successful. On top of learning enough to find and bring in applicable content to a set topic, educators would need to embrace the genre as a tool that masquerades as a toy.

Digital Daze



Comic by Emily Haddad

EH13



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Looking Toward a Brighter Future

By Alan Pearson – Staff Writer

The Chicago Cubs, to say the least, have not been a great team this year. No one really expected them to be much good anyway, but they are still under performing. Currently twenty games under .500 (55-75 as of 8/26), and in last place in the NL Central, it looks like the Cubs will not make the playoffs for a fifth consecutive season. It is not all bad, though. The Cubs had a high draft pick and made a couple midseason moves that could help turn the team around soon.

On June 6, the Cubs took Kris Bryant from San Diego State University. Bryant had an absolutely amazing year as he led the nation in home runs (31), slugging percentage (.820), walks (66), and runs (80). Bryant was clearly the best

hitter available in the draft. Even though the Cubs have an extreme need for young pitching depth in their minor league systems, hitters like Bryant do not come around too often. That is why the Cubs were smart to take Bryant.

The Cubs were never any good at any point this year, but they did have some interesting pieces on the team that they could trade to get prospects in return. The biggest of them were pitcher Matt Garza and outfielder Alfonso Soriano. Garza was acquired in a trade with Tampa Bay a few years ago to be the ace of the future. While the Cubs did not develop as quickly as hoped, they turned Garza into a big chip to trade even before the season began. Soriano, on the other hand, turned

37 and just came off a 32 home run and 108 RBI season. With only a little left on his huge contract he also became a key trade piece for the Cubs.

While all eyes were watching Garza and Soriano, the Cubs first traded Scott Feldman to the Baltimore Orioles. Feldman was not expected to pitch as well as he did. Baltimore was in desperate need of pitching, so they acquired Feldman for relief pitcher Pedro Strop and former top prospect Jake Arrieta. The big piece here was Arrieta. The Cubs pitching coaches helped a lot of pitchers, such as Jeff Samardzija, fix their command, which has hindered Arrieta from becoming a star.

Next to go was the biggest of



Photo by Frisbie

Alfonso Soriano

all, Matt Garza. The Texas Rangers sent Mike Olt, fill in starting pitcher Justin Grimm and the center piece of the deal, pitcher C.J. Edwards. Olt was once Texas's number one prospect and had potential to hit 35+ home runs a season, but he struggled in the majors and was sent down. Edwards is a big time strikeout pitcher that has impressed people with his live fastball and sub- 1.50 ERA. He is currently the number one pitching prospect in the Cubs organization.

The final trade happened right before the deadline. Riddled with injuries, the Yankees brought Soriano back to New York. In return, the Cubs received pitcher Corey Black. Black has a career 3.08 ERA

in the minors, averages almost one strikeout per inning, and throws over 95 mph. Scouts say that he needs to develop his off-speed pitches in order to move up in the organization, but all signs point to his rise.

Moving the key veterans on the team hurts the standings right now, but we all know that we have to get younger if we want to win. All of us Cubs fans have been waiting a while, so another few years won't kill us. With all the big prospects getting better, and the Cubs adding more of them, we are going to be a team to reckon with for a long time if plans pan out.

Wild Silliness

By Peter Targos – Staff Writer

Last year when Major League Baseball's commissioner, Bud Selig, added a second Wild Card team in the American and National Leagues, there were numerous thoughts about the addition: exciting, necessary, good for fans, and an emphasis on division winners. That last point, though, has raised baseball purists' eyebrows, and made them chuckle and wonder how this helps the division winners, let alone baseball in general.

According to the new rules of the Wild Card system, there will be two teams that play each other in a one-game playoff. Whoever wins this game goes on to play the division winner. Selig says that this gives the division winner more rest. This is compounded by the division winner getting home field advantage. Selig does not see how this would not help the division winner.

Despite Commissioner Selig's optimism, there are ways this is a disadvantage to the division winner. The first thing is momentum.

The Wild Card winner is probably euphoric after winning the play-in game, whereas the division winner is resting at home and waiting anxiously to play. Anyone that has watched playoff baseball recently has noticed that the less-rested team has done better. Rest is great, during the dog days of August, that is. While players and coaches will not admit this is true, the results speak loudly. A prime example was in 2006, when the Detroit Tigers had a week break leading up to the World Series, whereas the St. Louis Cardinals went through a seven-game series with the New York Mets. The Cardinals ended up winning the World Series even though they were not even close in talent with the Tigers.

The biggest reason why the MLB added a second Wild Card team was to give more teams a chance to be in the playoff race, which, in return, will hopefully get baseball better television ratings and attendance. If the Commissioner wants better ratings and

attendance, here is the biggest way he could achieve this result: focus on getting detractors and caustic players like Alex Rodriguez, Ryan Braun, and any other cheaters out of baseball. While Selig has done a better job of installing a stricter drug program, it is still pathetic and embarrassing how many cheaters continue to ruin this game.

How does adding a second Wild Card team and installing a one-game playoff help baseball overall? Yes, it makes the playoff race more exciting, but it also gives a team that wins just over half of their games a chance to play a team that won the division. True baseball fans want what is best for the game. Maybe this new format is what's best for baseball, or, maybe, what's best for baseball is getting a new generation of players like Mike Trout, Yasiel Puig, and Bryce Harper. Then again, maybe weeding out the remnants of the steroid era should be the foremost issue that the MLB needs to resolve.

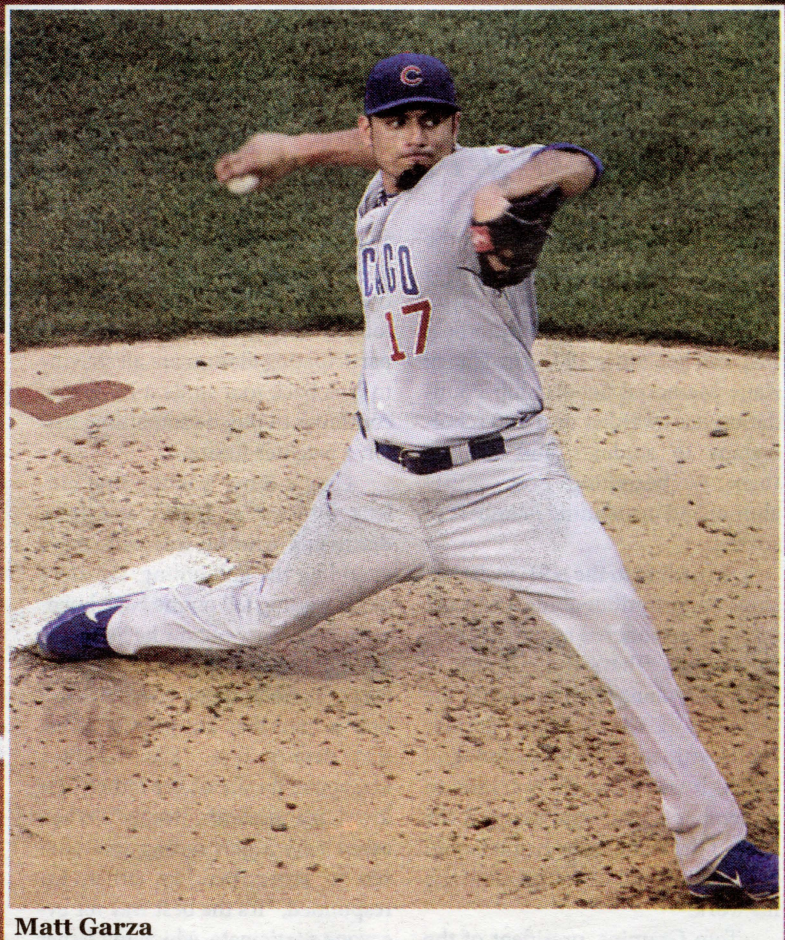


Photo by Gilbrown

Matt Garza

NHL Conference and Division Realignment

By Matthew Greenberg – Sports Editor

The 2012-2013 NHL season has concluded, our Chicago Blackhawks are the Stanley Cup champions, and the NHL offseason is in full swing. The most extensively discussed topic of this offseason is the realignment of the Eastern and Western conferences, and the divisions and teams contained therein, for the 2013-2014 season.

There are multiple distinct differences that have come with the realignment. Previously, the NHL functioned as a two conference, six division league, with five teams per division and 15 teams per conference, totaling 30 teams. Referencing the 2012-2013 league map, one of the main issues with this format was how spread out divisions were. The color-coded divisions show that teams had extensive travel nec-

essary for interdivision play, which any player will attest to taking its toll come game time. A tired team is not a winning team.

The realigned NHL will still have two conferences and 30 total teams. Beyond that, the changes set in. There will be four divisions, the Pacific and Central divisions in the Western Conference, and the Metropolitan and Atlantic divisions in the Eastern Conference. Referencing the 2013-2014 league map, the conferences have been more evenly split to represent the actual eastern and western geological halves of the league, with the actual separation line existing between the orange Central Division and the blue Atlantic Division.

Many teams have been reassigned to different divisions, and

some even to different conferences. The red Pacific Division includes Anaheim, Calgary, Edmonton, Los Angeles, Phoenix, San Jose, and Vancouver. The Central Division includes Chicago, Colorado, Dallas, Minnesota, Nashville, St. Louis, and Winnipeg. The green Metropolitan Division includes Carolina, Columbus, New Jersey, New York Islanders, New York Rangers, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and Washington. The Atlantic Division includes Boston, Buffalo, Detroit, Florida, Montreal, Ottawa, Tampa Bay, and Toronto.

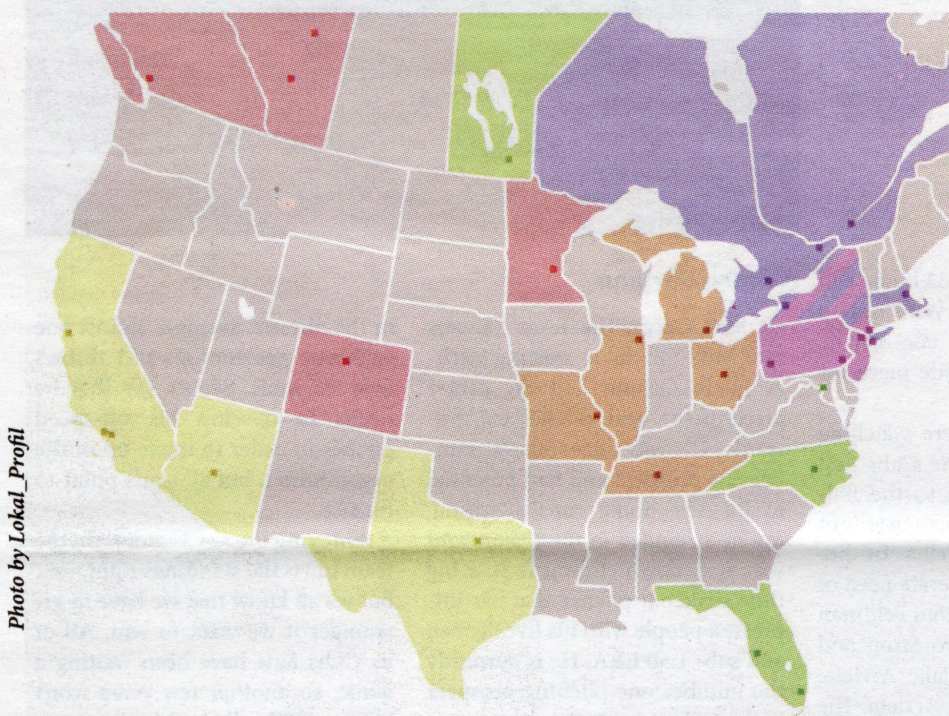
There are two major changes that came with these new divisions. Math aficionados will notice that now, instead of 15 teams in each conference, the Eastern Conference has 16 teams, while the West-

ern conference only has 14 teams. Many fans have made the argument that this gives an unfair advantage to teams in the West, because there is less competition to make the playoffs.

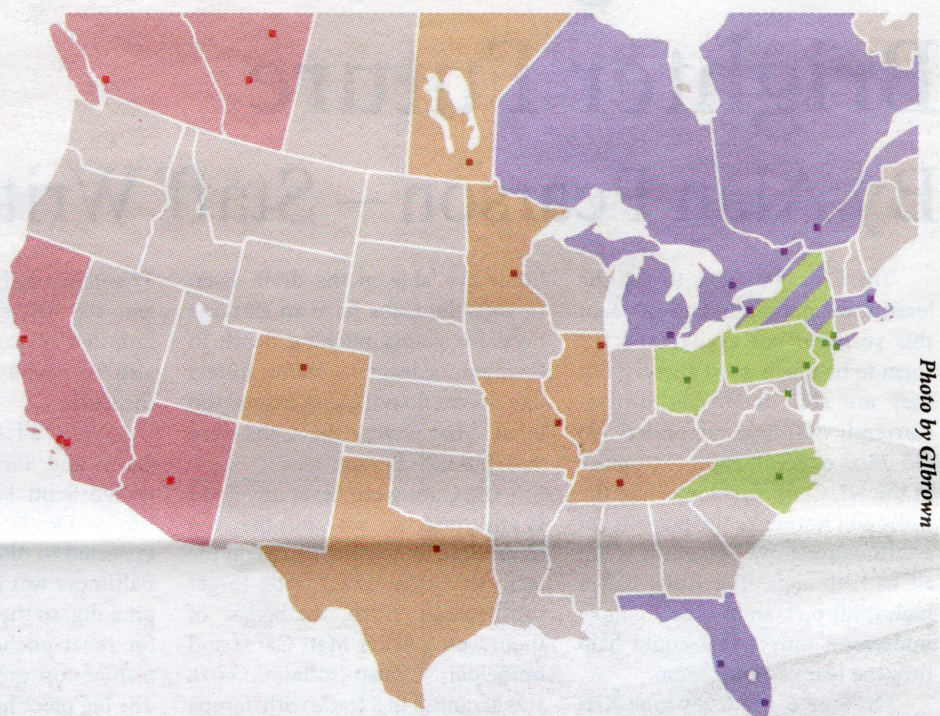
Major hockey fans will notice the other big change, which is that Detroit and Columbus are now in the Eastern Conference. There has been a lot of kickback against this switch, particularly in the case of Detroit. Chicago and Detroit is one of the oldest and most iconic rivalries in the history of the NHL, featuring two Original Six teams, and now they aren't even in the same conference. These changes do allow teams that rarely meet during the regular season to come head to head much more often, which will be exciting factor to get fans amped

up before game day. This will, in turn, drive up the revenues taken in by the league, which will turn the formerly struggling organization, especially considering the effects of the lockout from this past year, into a prosperous business.

Overall, the realignment should be beneficial for the NHL and its fans. Only time will tell as the season progresses and the experiment comes to fruition. The upcoming 2013-2014 season will give insight as to the flaws and successes of the realignment, and further changes can be expected to be made accordingly. Hockey fans need only sit back, relax, and prepare for another amazing year of NHL hockey.



2012-2013 NHL Conferences and Divisions



2013-2014 NHL Conferences and Divisions by Gibrown

41st Chuck Kane Golf Outing

By Gregory Adler – Staff Writer

With the economy being in the condition that it's in, and the costs of higher learning consistently on the rise, students need all the help they can get. Since 1973, the Chuck Kane Memorial Scholarship Foundation has awarded over 100 scholarships to students and assisted them in becoming both NEIU alumni and upstanding members of society.

According to the NEIU scholarships opportunities guide, the Kane scholarships offered roughly \$2,500 to students. That's the purpose of the event, along with honoring the memory of Chuck Kane, former NEIU Athletic Director and golf coach. It was a day for everyone to remember a man who touched the lives of the students he helped mold and inspire, and of course continue his work.

Tom Gramins, president of the foundation, said, "The students of Northeastern [Illinois] truly embody the American dream," and that one of the great things about the university is "the high level of

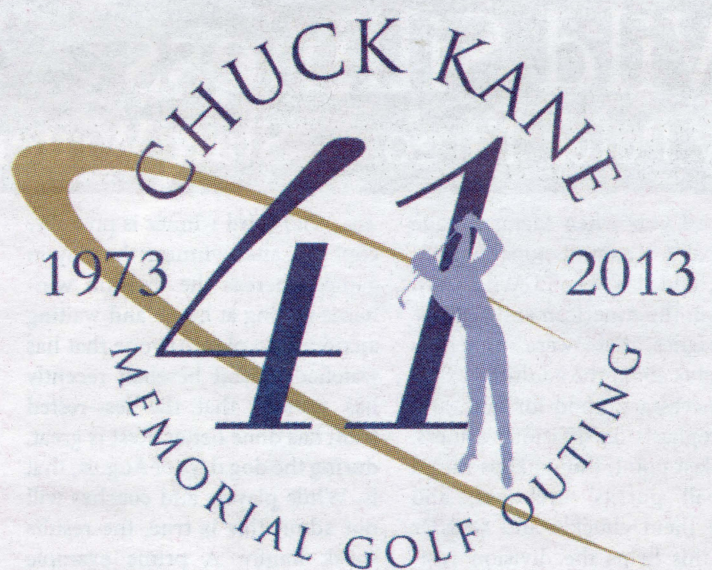
student involvement on campus." It is evident that this collaborative effort of the Kane family, the foundation, its investors, and the participating alumni are all striving to give back to a student body that continues to pursue something better: a brighter future.

Chuck Kane was the first athletic director of NEIU, and from discussing who he was with those attending the golf outing, the story of his passing fell on the back burner, but the story of how he lived was highlighted in so many positive ways. The old adage goes, "It's not how a man dies but how he lived, that defines him." His daughter, Liz, spoke fondly of her father, "He loved his students deeply." When asked why a golf outing was chosen to remember her father, Liz responded, "It's the best way for everyone participate, which my father would have loved."

Danny Crawford, famed NBA referee, was one of the first recipients of the Kane scholarship and has since been involved with the

Kane outing for decades. The self-proclaimed worst golfer in the world, Crawford spoke of Kane, "He was a super nice man." Looking back on his days at NEIU, the NBA official said, "NEIU exposed me to a lot of diversity," and when asked what advice he would give to current students, he stated, "Work hard for perfection and get better every day." When Crawford arrived at the sign-in table, he did not come empty handed. He was toting a framed and autographed Michael Jordan jersey for the silent auction to be held later that evening at the events dinner. "The Kane family is wonderful," Crawford proclaimed.

Another NEIU alum who came out to support the event was Al Hergesheimer, a former pitcher for the Chicago Cubs, Kansas City Royals, and the San Francisco Giants. "NEIU is where I matured as a player and received my degree in physical education," he said. Besides contributing to the event, Hergesheimer had some advice for the students who currently call



Chuck Kane logo

campus home, "Focus on hard work, believe in yourself, and go after what you want."

Bears Superbowl champion Dan Hampton also attended the events dinner portion as a guest speaker. "Every once in a while you get a chance to do something special, and that's what you've done here. You've made a lasting commitment to the future of Northeastern [Illinois] students," said Hampton. Chuck Kane loved his students, and in the spirit of that there is no

better way to remember the former athletic director than by supporting students in the quest for a higher level of knowledge. In that way, Chuck Kane will always be a part of the campus and the student body.

Arts & Life

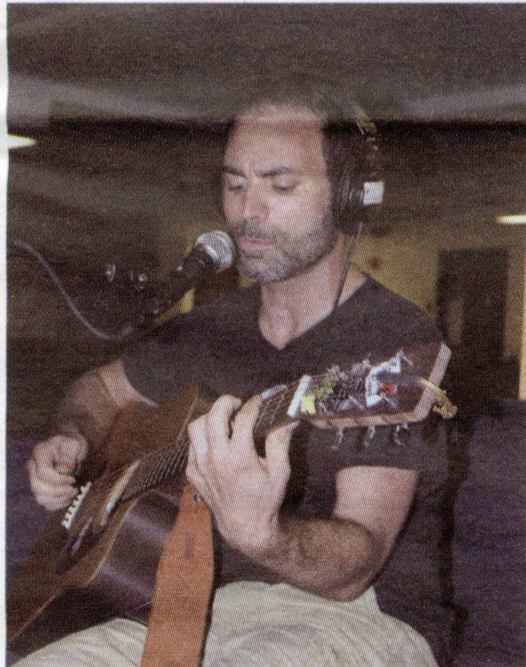
Arts & Entertainment



Sean Egan, JJ, Jonny Green, Brian Maloney

Folks seeking shelter at Northeastern Illinois University (NEIU) from the severe thunder storms on Friday August 30, 2013 found a nice musical refuge with live music in the basement of the Student Union. NEIU's own radio station WZRD

Chicago 88.3 FM hosts *Thursday Night Live*, a well-known opportunity for local musicians to play individual live sets on the radio. In an event akin the *Thursday Night Live*, WZRD Chicago showcased the sounds of Jonny Green, Brian Maloney, Sean Egan and JJ.



Jonny Green offers toe tapping tunes

The four gentlemen currently reside in Kansas City, Missouri.

Although the four travel together and sometimes perform together, they are each solo artists in their own respect and partake in side projects as well. JJ, who showcased his impressive talent for drums even before the sets began, is also in a band called Save the J's. While strumming a Paul Simon song during sound check, Jonny Green explained how the

four musicians are separate artists but travel together, which is kind of a throw back to when artists like Johnny Cash would travel with other solo musicians of the day.

The longstanding community of traveling performers who came before them was represented as the four gentlemen tuned up during their sound check. Each artist had a plan of what original songs they'd perform for their sets, yet still had a strong respect for what each man brought to the table.

Jonny Green's set was first and started the night off with upbeat and airy tunes courtesy of his voice and acoustic guitar. His set was full of toe tapping feel good numbers which seemed to mirror his constant friendly, upbeat personality. In some moments, his fun and bubbly sound was reminiscent of Paul Simon with a touch of John Mellencamp thrown in. Green later said that Simon along with Radiohead were two of his biggest musical influences. For more info on Jonny Green, check him out of Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/jonny->

WZRD Offers Listeners Refuge from the Storm

By Desiree Dylong - Arts and Life Editor

greenmusic.

Brian Maloney, who said he's a musician who isn't afraid to speak the truth, treated listeners to a set on piano. His crisp and soulful vocals rang out love songs that were determined and powerful. Not only did Maloney share his heartfelt love songs, but also sang of politics and how the world could use more critical thinkers and individuals who are open to understanding one another. Maloney is an artist on indie record label Black and White Records. You can find out more info at http://blackandwhiterrecords.net/html/brian_maloney.html

Sean Egan, who donned a brown sport coat and remained calm and collected throughout the show, presented a set that was a hybrid of folk and blues. Egan's vocals were especially a treat for those who seek out vocalists who are distinct. His raspy and worn-in vocals were similar to that of Tom Waits, and like Waits, his voice packed a punch with each lyric. Although his vocals may remind listeners of Waits, Egan still maintained originality throughout his set with occasional jokes

and laid back persona.

JJ, Sean Egan, Brian Maloney and Jonny Green embody the soul of determined musicians. They work hard, have fun and by the way they performed, it's clear that they love what they do.

If you're in a band and would like to be featured on WZRD Chicago, send an email to thursdaynightlive@wzrdchicago.org.

Also, be sure to tune in to hear live bands on *Thursday Night Live* every Thursday Night at 10pm on WZRD Chicago 88.3 FM.



Brian Maloney treats listeners with his piano playing and powerful voice

Photos by Desiree Dylong

A Step Back Is a Leap Forward

By Emily Haddad - Opinions Editor

The upcoming senior art exhibition, "A Step Back," began almost two decades ago with the primary tool of creative exploration, clay. A 34-year-old native of St. Charles, Illinois, Northeastern Illinois University (NEIU) Sculptor Kristopher Van Slee first discovered his deep appreciation of sculpting in a high school art class. "It was a basic

ceramics-pottery class. I really just liked how the clay felt," said Van Slee. "I liked turning a piece of mud or earth into something beautiful - the way clay responded to my fingers, the way it felt," he continued.

Van Slee described being inspired by forms in nature, as well as Asian art. The search for inspiration would take Van Slee around the country and world. After high school he took a break from making art to join the military. Van Slee served for five years in places such as California, Washington, Florida and Japan. "My family is Indonesian, so my time in Asia was particularly important to me."

Upon his return from the military, his family supported and encouraged him in his art career, often requesting his pottery and sculptures as gifts. "They all ask me, where's my pot? My art often turns into easy Christmas gifts." Van Slee also credited the teachers at NEIU

for being engaging, investing time and effort into him, and giving him the freedom to express himself.

As his skills progressed, Van Slee didn't just stick to clay, dipping into other mediums such as wood and metal. Other materials, he said, take charge of the sculpture to a certain extent. "You have to let the material attributes shine through organically." When working in clay, the outcome could be planned and directed a little more, he explained. "But unless you have a specific goal, ultimately the clay is the boss."

In his pottery and sculpture pieces, Van Slee often incorporates vivid biological forms and sinuous shapes, often melding one into the other in unexpected ways. "Untitled 1," the sculpture accompanying Van Slee in the picture above best demonstrates these aspects. The piece stands just 16 inches tall, but incorporates rich arboreal shapes and crags, cradling faces that seem



Krystopher Van Slee holding his piece *Origins*

at the same time both human and animal. The piece is multilateral and complex, offering a completely new and different visual experience from different angles.

"['A Step Back'] is both inspired by nature and our movement away from nature as a species," he said. "I like to return myself back to it, hold a piece of beauty that normally we can't hold," Van Slee said, specifically referencing his Lizard Pot, a large pottery bowl with three life-like lizards hanging onto the lip and sides.

The reptiles look alert and ready to run away from viewers, much like they would in real life.

Van Slee currently teaches pottery classes at Penguin Foot Pottery at 2514 W. Armitage Ave in Chicago, and at an adult center in Oak Park. After graduation, he plans to open his own gallery display with a studio in the back. Van Slee's ultimate goal is to teach sculpture. His senior show, "A Step Back," will run from Sept. 10 to Sept. 21 at NEIU in student gallery, room 217.

Photos by Emily Haddad

Cuddle Up With Crafting Culture

By Desiree Dylong - Arts and Life Editor

In *Crafting Culture, Appalachian Quilters and the Meanings of Quilting*, an exhibition by NEIU Sociology alumna Augusta Scescke collaborated with graphic designer Josue Herrera-Feeny to present beautiful photos that portrayed the hard work and tradition of quilt making. The collaboration showcased the work of different quilt makers in Kentucky, women who have passed down the legacy of the craft.

Scescke's exploration into the art of quilting started as research for her senior project. It eventually evolved into an exploration of

a traditional American art form and skillset that for many families, spans multiple generations. Scescke learned that there was more than meets the eye behind quilting, as with any situation.

Swathed in Scescke's work, the Student Union Second Floor Gallery was both warm and colorful. The images of the elaborate patchworks with their vibrant colors looked so soft and inviting that it evoked wishful thinking that the quilts in the photos were tangible. The photos also brought on memories of cold winter nights being tucked away underneath heritage

covers, and a mug of hot cocoa satisfying your taste buds, a feeling that one can only describe as home.

Scescke's beautiful photos are on display from August 27 -Sept 13, 2013, in the Student Union Second Floor Gallery. It is open and free to the public.



Quilt maker Polly creating beautiful art



Each quilt was a testament to hard work and craft



Scescke's exhibition showcased photos of elaborate quilt work

Photos by Augusta Scescke & edited by Josue Herrera-Feeny

Homemade Movies - Hollywood Blows Chicago Up

By Melissa Brand - Senior Staff Writer



Chicago Fire filming on Wacker Drive. Actor Taylor Kinney stars as Kelly Severide and actress Lauren German stars as Leslie Elizabeth Shay

Hollywood action is anything but new to Chicago. The Windy City has been used as a filming location for hundreds of television shows, box-office movies, independent films and even commercials for several decades, but lately some big name productions and stars are making it more popular.

Sometimes Chicago is used as the actual location of the film or television show. When watching a Chicago movie, landmarks are recognizable and local people get excited when they see familiar places. Other times, it can be disguised pretty well and is more diffi-

cult to know that it is Chicago. One example of this, is the new Michael Bay movie, *Transformers 4*, starring Mark Wahlberg, which is currently being filmed all over Chicago. Current film locations include downtown and on the North side, in the Uptown neighborhood. They have transformed downtown blocks to look just like Tokyo and Uptown resembles a town in Texas.

Chicago Fire, a weekly series on NBC is entering its second season in September and is also currently being filmed on location in Chicago. This show is based on the Chicago Fire Department and shows

the lives of the firefighters on and off the job. A spin-off show, *Chicago PD* is also in production around downtown.

Earlier in the summer, brother and sister directing team Andy and Lana Wachowski, best known for the *Matrix* franchise were in Chicago filming *Jupiter Ascending* starring Channing Tatum and Mila Kunis. The Wachowski's are originally from Chicago, but *Jupiter Ascending* is their first feature film made here.

Other notable productions that took place this summer are *Divergent* a film by Lionsgate, which are based on novels by local author Ve-

ronica Roth; and *Betrayal*, a new series on ABC. In the fall, production will begin on *Mind Games*, *Crisis* and *Sirens*.

Rich Moskal is the Director of the Chicago Film Office, a division of the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events. According to their website, the Film Office handles production needs including permits, city services and logistical support. "Clearly it's an exceptional time. Chicago truly has matured as a production center," said Moskal. "It is used to serve as a destination for major film production, as a place of origin and it is maturing and growing for local producing features and documentaries, made by Chicago and even the funding is Chicago based."

Moskal said it is also growing in terms of jobs for local students interested in the field. "The number of students in the industry is expanding. Local people can be employed and Chicago is a large hub, not just a transient destination." One of the most notable things about filming in Chicago is that a lot of the sets are on location, outside and very accessible to residents. Not only can they see the live action which can be explosive and exciting, but they can usually catch a glimpse of stars, or they can even try to become extras. In fact, most productions post extra job notices a few weeks before production starts.

According to Moskal, Illinois is just one of 40 states that offer a tax incentive for producing a film there. "Illinois offers a 30 percent tax credit on top of what is already included in production value such as cooperation with the City, reliable vendors and a sound stage,"

said Moskal.

There are several studios in Chicago but Cinespace Chicago Film Studios is the largest followed by Chicago Studio City. "We have been involved in over 20 productions since we opened in May of 2011," said Alexander Pissios, President of Cinespace. "*Boss*, *Playboy Club*, *Chicago Fire*, *Transformers 3 & 4*, *Chicago PD*, to name a few. We also have two FOX shows called *Crisis* and *Mind Games* coming and a show called *Sirens*." Cinespace has already built 15 stages and have another 10 to go. "We are a full service film studio, we offer stages, offices, lighting, camera, catering, etc.," said Pissios.

Ashley Campbell, a CMT major at NEIU works as a freelance associate producer. Campbell said, "You go to LA and there are an insane number of production companies, studios and talent agencies open, whereas Chicago's are fewer in comparison, and that's why the ones that are here producing great work are so admirable. They've brought the work here; they've brought it to the Midwest."

For a complete list of movies and shows filmed in Chicago, you can visit the Chicago Film Office's website:

http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/dca/supp_info/chicago_film_office1.html

If you are interested in finding filming locations, these two sites are kept updated daily for several cities including Chicago:

onlocationvacation.com and beforethetrailer.com.

Get Ready for NEIU Talent Show Auditions

By Desiree Dylong - Arts and Life Editor

Karl Voigt, Publicity and Promotions Specialist who works with the Music Department and also the Office of Cultural Events here at NEIU said that this year will be special since there are plans to have more student involvement. When it came to giving students advice about auditions, Voigt said it is important for everyone to just leave their fears behind.

Auditions will be held in the NEIU main campus Auditorium on Monday, Sept. 16 from 1-3 pm and Thursday, Sept. 19 from 1-4 pm. Staff, Faculty and Students are invited to strut their stuff and try out for the show. The talent show is sponsored by Beck's bookstore and

produced by the Office of Cultural Events at NEIU.

For more information on the talent show and auditions visit: http://www.neiu.edu/NEIU%20Events/Jewel%20Box%20Series/Lectures%20and%20Special%20Events/events/NEIU_2013_Talent_Show.html

Looking for information on the upcoming Music and Cultural Events on campus? Check out the new app Arts@NEIU which features photos, videos of soon to visit musicians and authors and a calendar of this semester's events. Arts@NEIU is available free on Android and IOS.

Also, checkout the Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Arts-at-NEIU/161868170514119?ref=hl>



Check out the new app Arts@NEIU

Courtesy of Instant Encore



Photo by Joe Davis

Last Year's Winner Bianca Lisa Araujo

Are you ready to get onstage, showcase your talent and win a cash prize? Now is your chance to audition for NEIU's 2013 Talent Show. Last year's event was one to remember, with the talented NEIU Pre Ed./Special Ed. Major Bianca Lisa Araujo winning first place with

a riveting and passionate performance of the classic Mexican song of unrequited love, La Malagueña. Michelle "Mimi" Cross won second place, and Jeraun Pearson won third with his own unique blend of hip-hop dance and mime performance to fast-paced music.

Lincoln Square Cafe Not Your Usual Grind

By Linda Monacelli - Staff Writer

What really sets The Grind Cafe far apart from other area cafes and coffee-houses like Starbucks and Le Cafe, is its commitment to building community. Columbia College MFA student and Grind employee Abby Hagler explained that a lot of students come to the cozy cafe because "it's a really great place to make connections, hang out, and have meetings, especially for artists." Every day, The Grind staff made a point of connecting with their customers on a personal, hu-

man level, which kept them coming back.

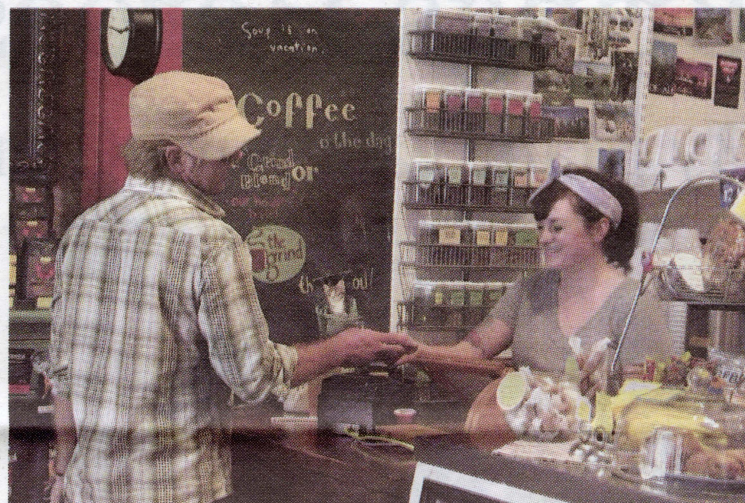
A young woman, who preferred to speak anonymously, frequently visited The Grind on her breaks from working at The Fork, a restaurant across the street. She said she chose The Grind over other local cafes because she really liked the people who work there, she liked supporting local, small businesses, and the coffee was just better. She usually ordered three shots of espresso over ice.

Of course, people also come for the phenomenal coffee and espresso. The Grind serves an exclusive Intelligentsia blend, Grind Blend and their espresso is from Chicago's own Counter Culture Coffee. The Grind also serves Counter Culture and Colectivo (formerly Alterra) coffees.

Boban Simic, another regular, said "it's hard to find a good place for espresso. Espresso at Starbucks is terrible. My favorite spot is Intelligentsia, but it's far for me. This is a perfect place for me to kill some time before I go to the gym. It's relaxed and cozy." Simic usually ordered espresso and biscotti.

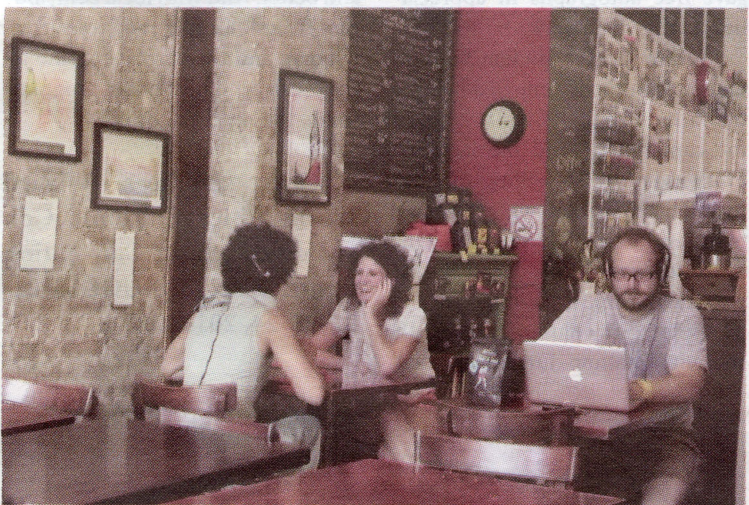
For tea-lovers, The Grind has a variety of Rishi brand teas and herbal blends. The staff will gladly create a combination to suit a patron's taste or particular need, such as nursing a cold or stomachache. A few of Hagler's favorite tea blends were vanilla mint pu-erh, Jamaica lime rooibos, and the hot rod green tea. Still, coffee, hot or iced, is by far the most popular drink, according to Abby. People also frequently ordered cappuccinos and smoothies.

With an array of art venues, centers, and schools in the area, the



Photos by Linda Monacelli

Another happy customer at the Grind



Customers spending an afternoon in the well loved cafe

quaint cafe does experience a lot of traffic from musicians, visual artists, writers, poets, and actors. Patrons of The Old Town School of Folk Music and The Lincoln Square Arts Center appreciate the mellow and friendly atmosphere where they can take a break from their work, focus on their work, take time to get inspired, or meet up with friends (or make new ones). The Grind prides itself on promoting and selling local art, which hangs framed on the walls, some already sold, some still with price tags. Underneath each

art piece is a poem from a pair of local poets. Songs from local musicians and groups play at a perfect volume, allowing for audible conversations or active concentration.

The Grind Cafe is located in Lincoln Square, at 4613 N. Lincoln Ave, in Chicago. Free parking is available on surrounding side-streets. They also offer free Wi-Fi, and, though indoor seating is limited, visitors will find a more cozy space on the back patio.

The Doctor Is In

By Wojtek Warias - Staff Writer

Years ago, when a young'un needed answers on sexual situations, they would probably read a book or ask their parents, but now, with the world wide web at society's fingertips, no one has to resort to that. That is where *My Sex Doctor* comes in; giving answers to a plethora of questions anyone might have in the back of their mind. With the technological takeover of smartphones and tablets, the online world is never far away, giving access to countless applications including *My Sex Doctor*.

First off, a name change might be in store in order to be taken more seriously, but alas, *My Sex Doctor* is no joke, despite the comical moniker. Essentially, *My Sex Doctor* is an encyclopedia of questions and answers on an incredible amount of sexual topics, with the

paid version of the application offering more than the Lite version. The items on the list range from basic topics about sexual education, such as male and female reproductive organs, to the heavy-duty topics that might be touchy for many young adults, such as pregnancy and abortion.

While what *My Sex Doctor* does for young adults or anyone with questions about sexual situations is definitely commendable, unfortunately it takes out the human element of such an intimate subject. It does nothing to teach the user about any of the emotional aspects of the subjects at hand, but more so focuses on just the scientific side. Different sexual topics in *My Sex Doctor* can teach someone numerous safety measures, and the more you know the better. *My Sex*

Doctor also does a wonderful job at reassuring the user that everyone is different and their situation may be completely different from another individual but that is completely fine.

All in all, what may seem like a comedic application wrapped in a funny name is actually a fantastic insight to the human body and its sexual development. With younger generations gaining more and more access to the web through technology, and learning about sexual interaction and development sooner than ever, *My Sex Doctor* is a perfect information source for nearly everything a user could have inquiries or doubts about.



Courtesy of MYSO LTD

The app is available in a paid version and a free Lite Version

Blue Jasmine

By Matthew Greenberg - Sports Editor

Courtesy of Sony Pictures Classics



Cate Blanchett and Alec Baldwin in *Blue Jasmine*

The great Woody Allen has created another masterpiece of the

cinema. The writer/director's newest film, *Blue Jasmine*, successfully shocks, frustrates, appalls and thoroughly entertains its audience with a wonderfully dark and comedic script, and a superbly strong cast fronted by the magnificent Cate Blanchett. Rene Rodriguez of the *Miami Herald* said, "Just when it seemed like Allen was going to settle for cranking out a comic bauble every year for the rest of his career, he comes up with a vital and vibrant knockout of a movie."

Blue Jasmine follows Jasmine (Blanchett), a recently divorced upper-class housewife from New York, who is going through a life crisis following her separation from her husband, Hal (Alec Baldwin), and she decides to move to San Francis-

co and live with her estranged sister, Ginger (Sally Hawkins). We follow Jasmine as she attempts to turn her life around and make something of herself beyond expensive clothes and fancy dinner parties, all while trying to maintain some semblance of sanity (which is generally aided by popping Xanax as needed).

We also follow Ginger as she navigates raising her two sons while juggling a variety of romantic entanglements, including her ex-husband, Augie (Andrew Dice Clay), her on-again off-again boyfriend, Chili (Bobby Cannavale), and a fling with Al (Louis C.K.), a seemingly nice guy she met at a party.

While we are engaged with the torturous hilarity of the present, the film also explores Jasmine's life with



4.5
Stars

Hal, leading up to their separation and her eventual mental disintegration. We are shown how Jasmine and Hal live the New York high life, her lounging on the veranda by the pool with her newest piece of extravagant jewelry while he engages in nefarious business endeavors and suavely brings new meaning to the word "infidelity."

Woody Allen may be the genius behind the curtain, Cate Blanchett's portrayal of a dysfunctional basket case will assuredly earn her a Best Actress Oscar nomination, if not the outright victory. Her job as the lead is tantalizing, maniacally disturbing, and, by the time she breaks down explaining to her young nephews about ingesting a healthy share of Prozac and Xanax, purely

hilarious. Hawkins and Baldwin also lend their seasoned talents to make *Blue Jasmine* fantastic, but the real surprise was from Andrew Dice Clay's dramatic performance, which is a stretch from his usual roles.

Steve Paul of the *Kansas City Star* said, "Allen's 45th feature movie as writer/director is quietly mesmerizing. It's a standout production in his hit-and-miss career, though it echoes with familiar Allen tropes." *Blue Jasmine* is a far cry from Allen's days of *Bananas* and *Annie Hall*, but his new way of torturing his audience with an awkward combination of humor and distress makes for an incredible cinematic experience.

Wizard World Chicago Comic Con Brings Heroes and Fans Together

By Mani Valathur - Contributing Writer



Catwoman and Batman pose together at Comic Con

The Wizard World Chicago Comic Con (WWCCC) at the Rosemont Convention Center is Wizard World's biggest and longest Comic-Con in the US. The event spans four days from Thursday to Sunday every summer in Chicago in mid-August. The 2013 attendance number is expected to break previous year's records of 70,000+. On hand this year were some local Chicago-connected celebrities like Chicago Theater Alum-Michael Shannon who was General Zod from Superman movie *Man of Steel*, former Chicago Bull Dennis Rodman and WWE Wrestler superstar local home-town favorite CM

Punk. There was something for all fans ranging from Wrestling to SyFy to Classic Super Hero Comics to Fairy Tale/Fantasy.

As a fan for more than a decade and a fan/volunteer for the third year straight year, I was amazed at how much better it gets from year to year. Talking to the fans in line, I discovered that 80-90 percent of the fans were casual fans who were accompanying the one friend or family member who were super-fans.

Fan/volunteer, Kris Mary V on that Saturday said, "Today I saw Ralph Macchio and wow, he is so gorgeous. This was a good birthday wish for me. My whole life for my

birthday I've wished that I could see him in person and my wish came true. I'm in heaven." There were many fans and even volunteers who came from St. Louis, Milwaukee, and even as far away as Philadelphia and New York. Some people and even news programs like WGN tend to say that the Con is simply a Pop Culture festival not really highlighting comics. But Fan/Volunteer from Ohio Joshua Jacol begs to differ, "Who ever said that 'Comic Con' is no longer about comics, never went to a Comic Con that had an exclusive (VIP only) comic cover for *The Walking Dead*."

Even though the Con did not get Hall A for the first time in twenty years, they far exceeded previous years square footage by getting two floors with Artist Ally, an autograph area, Photo Ops downstairs, Panel/Meet & Greet Programming, gaming and a bevy of vendors upstairs. This year's Artist Ally had the largest number of artists ever with more than 460 artists. Some of the featured artists were Neal Adams, J. Scott Campbell, Greg Capullo, Chris Claremont, Greg Horn, Ethan Van Sciver and Phil Ortiz of *Simpsons* fame. The Panel Room itself was bigger than in previous Con years, seating 1600+ people. The CosPlayer Costume Contest and the *Smallville* and *Firefly* panels were so jammed-packed, that even the small amount of standing room in the back fill quickly and many late disappointed fans had to be turned away.

The biggest hits with the loudest cheers this year was not surprisingly Stan Lee of *Marvel*. At Photo Ops, the biggest hit that I saw and heard from fans was "Arrow's" John Barrowman, who made sure fans got their money's worth by doing unique poses that included carrying both kids and adults alike up on his shoulder.

The surprise hit was Green Power Ranger, Jason David Frank, who got his fans so pumped up that their frenzy could be heard at all

ends of the hall. And special note, Jason David Frank even stayed after and personally thanked volunteers at the show-close meeting and took personal pictures with all volunteers who wanted one. Other guest like Wil Wheaton and Lou Ferrigno, Greg Horn and Phil Ortiz also gave free autographs in appreciation to the volunteers.

Fellow NEIU student/fan/volunteer, Dan Curley enjoyed helping the fans and said, "I really enjoyed the camaraderie and the fact that everybody was so willing to pitch in and help. The staff was really cool to us and extremely giving." One of those Wizard World staff for the past two years, a lifelong fan and multiple-year volunteer is NEIU student Jonathon Jurczak. Jurczak

also greatly appreciated the wonderful fans who came to the Chicago Comic Con and said, "...as a local, and as someone who has loved this convention since I can remember, seeing such a strong local community supporting this Con means that it can only get stronger, bigger and better. And with local contribution from folks like you (volunteers & fans), and the cosplayers, and all the locals who host panel programming, the sky is the limit".

Next summer's **Wizard World Chicago Comic Con at the Rosemont Convention Center is set for AUGUST 21-22-23-24, 2014.**



Predator at Comic Con

Photos by Mani Valathur



Courtesy of whitemysteryband.com

White Mystery

Riot Fest at a Glance

By Jon-Paul Kreatsoulas - Staff Writer

This year's upcoming Riot Fest in Chicago has been nothing but surprises since the announcement of setting the weekend long punk and hard rock festival in Humboldt Park all three days, September 13-15, as opposed to starting off the weekend at the decaying, yet homely, Congress Theatre. No disrespect to the Congress, as they prepare Riot Fest enthusiasts year round with their astounding arsenal of "Riot Fest Presents" shows, including the likes of Danzig Legacy, Bad Religion, and Marilyn Manson, as well as support to local acts.

Not only can patrons take advantage of the opportunity to see several of their favorite acts in a single day, let alone a single weekend, there's a carnival on site, Ferris wheel, fire eaters and all.

Here is a short day by day list of who to check out if you're torn between time constraints. As magical as music festivals are, you just can't see everyone. It kills us too.

Friday, September 13th

Masked Intruder - A band with a shtick because just playing music straight faced, or even reveal-

ing your face for that matter, isn't enough to get a crowd going these days. This mysterious pop punk foursome isn't hard to pick out of a mass, considering each member wears a colored ski mask, and their exaggerated northeastern accent is hysterical to listen to while they banter between songs. If the Riot Fest crowd is lucky, Officer Bradford (a close friend of the band and an agent of law enforcement) will join in and "party" it up in the pit.

Atmosphere - There's not a whole lot of hip hop coming out of Minneapolis these days, but the main duo of Slug (vocals) and Ant (DJ) make you forget about the drought. Often accompanied by guitar, bass, and keyboards for live shows, Atmosphere will certainly change speeds for Riot Fest goers.

Danzig 25th Anniversary with Special Guest: Doyle - Originally slated for August 16th at the Congress Theatre, then later announced to perform at Riot Fest the week of the original show, Glenn Danzig, the man, the myth, the monster, will showcase highlights from his ongoing career with his band Danzig. But the real treat here is the

hulking guitarist that trudges across the stage to join Danzig to perform a medley of Misfits songs.

Saturday, September 14th

The Dear Hunter - Mellow enough to get your attention as your Saturday afternoon haze settles in as you waver between thoughts of standing your ground or heading for the lines to get another beer or three. This Rhode Island band will probably make you shed your only tear all weekend. They are whimsical at times, but jagged and crunchy enough to make crowds stomp and chant in unison with campfire-like songs. If nature and timing, and the Riot Fest-powers-that-be, work their scheduling magic, this could be an awesome band to rock out to as the sun sets for the evening.

Public Enemy - The politically charged rap group seems to have never really fizzled out compared to some of their contemporaries from the late 80s and onward. Chuck D., Flava Flav, and DJ Lord will have no trouble hyping an already purely electric crowd of long time listeners and enthusiastic believers of what it means to be true hip hop artists and

veterans.

Rancid - Had it not been for these mohawked and tattooed delinquents and a few choice others, Punk, as a musical genre, may still be an underground pulse. But thriving nonetheless. Mixing sounds of gnarled power chords with the cooling of Reggae and Ska key board skips has always been this band's distinguishing element. For the sake of surprise and hoping, a festival is a wonderful place for musicians to collaborate on a whim. Despite their arduous, yet ongoing history together in The Transplants, it wouldn't be terribly difficult to envision Travis Barker of Blink 182 (who closes the night) joining Tim Armstrong on stage for a small reunion.

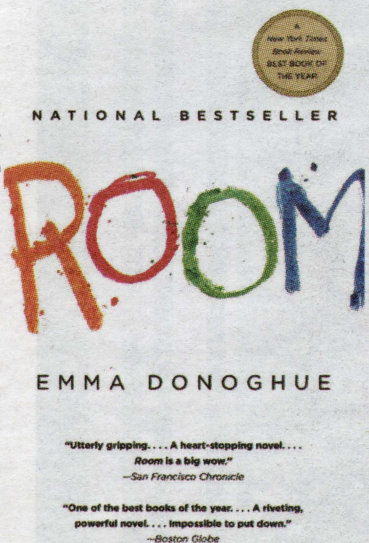
Sunday, September 15th

White Mystery - Chicago native brother and sister duo who might have potentially been born in a garage littered with stones and dead, cracking leaves. That's how they got their scuzzy, minimalistic sound. The redheaded head-bangers just recently opened for Gogol Bordello in mid-August with the Riot Fest

family backing them completely in terms of support. Humboldt Park will feel like a home within their home for these two.

AFI - With a new album coming in October, it's hard to imagine what this San Francisco Bay quartet will sound like. They've embodied hardcore punk, horror, glam, as well as electronic elements into their music, which, when taken a few steps back from to admire the strange patchwork, is quite impressive. With a body of work spanning across ten full length albums, you can expect a glorious greatest hits set, as well as the personal fan favorites, to be played from their mid-career *Black Sails in the Sunset* and *The Art of Drowning*.

The Pixies - With news in June regarding bassist Kim Deal leaving the band, this second wave announcement set might lose a few followers. Or maybe it won't. If you're too drunk at the time of the Pixies performance, you might find yourself in a ditch or at the top of the Ferris wheel stumbling over the lyrics to "Where is My Mind."



Room, an Electrifying Read

By Madiha Hussaini - Contributing Writer



room (a small shed in a backyard surrounded by high hedges) is his entire world; at least, it serves as everything he thinks is the world. Donoghue carries readers through a horrific event by allowing readers to view from the eyes of a 5-year-old in a captivating manner.

His mother, Old Nick, a small TV, his wardrobe, the bed and a toilet, consists of the few things enclosed within the room that Jack perceives as a part of his normal, everyday life. Everything outside the room, however, is incomprehensible and nonexistent. Jack believes that the purpose for everything in the room is made and available for only him and his mother. Innocent and unaware of his role as a pris-

oner in the room, Jack remains fascinated with mundane objects most children overlook. Although Jack is able to look up at passing birds and planes, as well as falling rain and snow through a skylight—his only connection to the outside world—he remains skeptical of life outside the room.

Room is an enthralling read that allows us to look at the world through Jack's perspective and thought process. Jack has a very fragile understanding of the world due to the limited amount of information available, which comes solely from his mother, who he believes cannot lie. His everyday direct influence and dependency on his mother, lack of social inter-

actions, and lack of meaning of life give Jack a unique perspective of how he grasps concepts.

Readers find the everyday lifestyle that Jack and his mother undergo, while being held captive in the room, an unsettling and shocking occurrence. *Room* holds a similar account to the Fritzl case that deals with Elisabeth Fritzl, who was held captive, sexually abused, and raped by her father for 24 years, during which time she gave birth to seven children and endured on miscarriage. Also, similar to Jack, is the case study of Genie, a 13-year-old feral child, who was abused and neglected as a child, which lead to her life-long physical impairment with a mental age of a 13-month-

old baby. In essence, *Room* serves as a beacon of light to the hundreds of cases of child abuse (whether it is psychological or physical) and to the account of women and children being held in captivity.

Donoghue explores the stress and joy of raising a child within a confined space and the strength the human mind employs in a physical and mentally challenging circumstance. In particular, this story resonates to all mothers who face the challenge of raising and nourishing children with the constant fear of shielding them from the dangers of the outside world.

Courtesy of Little, Brown and Company (2010)

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