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FEATURE

Ivory keys invite passers-by to play



Budget cuts impede transfer prospects

Thursday, September 9, 2010

KELSEY HILARIO

Staff Writer

Budget cuts and impacted majors are making it tough for students trying to transfer to SJSU, according to the university website.

Admission to SJSU from another college is based on several factors — GPA, choice of major, units taken and the location of the college the student is transferring from, according to the SJSU website, and the majority of majors require an average of a 2.6 cumulative GPA based on all transferable courses taken at the time of application.

Ricardo Jimenez, a senior justice studies major, said he was able to transfer to SJSU from the College of San Mateo after only two years. He credits this to only taking courses that were transferable to SJSU.

"It was actually kind of easy," he said. "I always went to my counselors meeting and stuff and my advisers meeting so they actually pointed me in the right direction."

Because of budget constraints, SJSU is currently accepting only upper-division students for Fall 2011, according to the website.

Thesis students must have 60 transferable semester units or 90 quarter units, 30 semester units of general education or 45 quarter units, good standing with their last college and completion of four basic skills courses by Spring 2011, according to the website. Senior photo major Stephanie Adams said she transferred from Diablo Valley College, and had to submit her request for a transfer three times, since SJSU lost her first two requests.

Play it again, San José!

Volume 135, Issue 6





High: 71° Lo<u>w: 53°</u> "Make copies of everything," she said. "Don't



JUAN FLORES, A SENIOR HEALTH SCIENCE MAJOR, PLAYS A PIANO ON SEPT. 8 IN FRONT OF THE DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. LIBRARY. THE PIANO IS ONE OF 20 THAT DECORATE DOWNTOWN AS PART OF THE SAN JOSE 2010 BIENNIAL PROJECT.

See **PAGE 8** for the full story

Students supplied with assorted snacks in store 'Just Below' MacQuarrie Hall



JUNIOR HOSPITALITY MAJOR LAUREN WELCH POINTS OUT A BEVERAGE TO HER FRIEND AT "JUST BELOW" ON SEPT. 8.

KENNY MARTIN

Staff Writer

A new store opened on campus this past June to fill the gap created when restaurants closed as a result of construction on the Student Union, said the senior director of retail services for Spartan Shops.

While there is no longer a Burger King, Market Pizza or Market Cafe, students can now visit Just Below, found on the first floor of MacQuarrie Hall, Jeff Pauley said.

There they will find a Peet's Coffee, a Jamba Juice, a sandwich shop and a breakfast station, which primarily offers bagels.

In addition, there are shelves of food items for sale, representing a selection similar to what is found in the Village Market in Campus Village Building B, such as juices and bags of chips and an assortment of other snacks.

Just Below is open Monday through Thursday from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m., and Fridays from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m, but are closed on the weekends, according to its hours of operation.

Nolyda Tep, a senior computer engineering major, said she hasn't been a frequent customer of Just Below, but has a favorable opinion of it.

"It's great," Tep said. "I wish it were closer to the Engineering building. I'd be broke, though."

Senior engineering major Arnold Bajet said he also wishes the shops were in a more central location.

"I don't go [to Just Below] often because my classes aren't near Mac-Quarrie Hall," he said. "It looks impressive, though. It's more authentic."

Pauley said the reason MacQuarrie Hall was chosen as the site of the new eatery was because of simplicity.

"There was space on the first floor," he said. "Spartan Shops needed to relocate. It was an easier project than building from scratch on open land."

Melissa Newman, who works as a student lead for both the deli and Peet's Coffee at Just Below, stated in an e-mail that more than 1,000 people visit Just Below on a daily basis.

"Kettle chips or 'Food Should be

Good' chips sell a lot," she stated. "People buy chips for a snack or alongside their sandwiches, so those brands and products go the fastest."

Yehlen Corpuz, a junior business management major, said she spent a lot more time at the old Spartan Shops location in the Student Union, although that was partly because she worked there during her freshman year.

"I liked the other one because it had more food choices," she said.

Pauley said most of the people who worked at Spartan Shops' previous location are now employed at the food court inside the Student Union.

Kushal Vora, a graduate student in science computer engineering, said he has walked past Just Below a couple of times while exploring the campus.

"It looked very busy, and that is what gained my attention," he said. "I definitely plan to go there."

The name "Just Below" doesn't have any special meaning, said Pauley, other than that the store is located on the first floor of MacQuarrie Hall.



Professor's love of nature fuels her passion for studying the starry unknown

AIMEE MCLENDON

Staff Writer

When Natalie Batalha heads out for a jog, the sky twilight blue, she drinks in the aroma of apple blossoms as she runs toward the river.

And as she looks up at the expanse of stars and the crescent moon she is in awe.

That is where the physics and astronomy professor from SJSU said she began her journey to the stars, which led her all the way to NASA.

As the deputy science team leader for NASA's Kepler Mission, Batalha said her love and intense reverence for nature is the wellspring from which she draws inspiration for her work.

"I think scientists are similar to artists in creativity," she said. "They draw from the same source."

Her love for nature coupled with her passion for space exploration served as a catalyst for her work on the Kepler Mission — which she said is a search for the frequency of Earth-sized planets in and near the habitable zone, she said.

The habitable zone is the "sweet spot" where a planet is not too close or far away from the sun, Batalha said.

The core mission of Kepler, which was launched in March 2009, is to discover how common Earth-sized exoplanets are, she said.

Exoplanets are planets outside the solar system, Batalha said.

The search for Earth-sized planets is intriguing, said Luke Lajoy, a graduate student in math.

"I'm not an expert, but my guess is we will find other Earth-sized planets," said Lajoy, who is currently taking a course in astrophysics. "I would have to say the universe is so big it seems inevitable that there is life out there — yet intelligent life may be hard to find."

Although the science involved in the Kepler Mission is complex and extensive, Batalha explained that it's a matter of taking methodical steps.

"It all begins with the question, 'Are we alone?'" Batalha said. "Is there life out there?"

She said that is where research, such as looking for Earth-sized planets that may have life, begins.

After that. Batalha said, it's a matter

istics they are looking for, such as water in liquid form, which is required for life on Earth.

While the mother of four works 14hour days analyzing data from the satellite telescope orbiting the sun, she said she is torn about not having enough time to teach at SJSU this semester.

Although her blood, sweat and tears are now throttled into the Kepler Mission full time, Batalha said her heart remains at SJSU.

"It's not uncommon to walk in her office and see five or six students around her desk working a problem," said Michael Kaufman, an astronomy and physics professor at SJSU.

> To know you are here on this earth to do something that impacts people who are still discovering themselves that's really something. NATALIE BATALHA SJSU Physics & Astronomy Professor

"It's an hour-and-a-half that I don't have to think about anything except for what my body is doing," she said. "There's no room for anything else besides thinking about the precision of my body and its movements."

That outlet provides a small respite from the demands of the NASA mission, which recently released new discoveries on the Kepler website, based on the first 43 days of the mission.

According to Batalha and the Kepler-NASA website, the discoveries include 706 stars with candidate exoplanets and six confirmed planetary systems, one of which has two transiting planets orbiting the same star.

"This is very intense," said Steve Bryson, a scientist and colleague on the Kepler Mission. "We are all deeply in this project and spend as much time as possible on it, but she is very much at the forefront and she is very careful about her research."

Bryson said Batalha works just as hard to prove there aren't exoplanets as she does to prove there are.

He said it's important to the scientific mission that she does both, and he commends her integrity.

The possibility of life on other planets is something SJSU Professor Kaufman said everyone wonders about.

"Just given the vast number of stars in the sky, I'd be surprised if we are unique," he said. "My hunch is that Earth-sized planets the right distance from the sun are probably common."

Kaufman said that answering the fundamental questions of the Kepler Mission is the first step scientists must take before moving on to answer the bigger question, if life exists on other planets.

The work Batalha said is crucial now, is analyzing the data to verify whether the hundreds of planet candidates Kepler discovered truly are exoplanets.

She said there would certainly be some candidates that will be ruled out since there are signals in nature that mimic planet transits.

The Kepler Mission is scheduled to last three-and-a-half years and Batalha, a perfectionist by nature, said she is in it for the long haul.

Beside her love for nature, exploraand passion that Batalha said she ap- tion and teaching, Batalha said the discoveries made so far energize her commitment to the mission.



NATALIE BATALHA, AN SJSU PHYSICS AND ASTRONOMY PROFESSOR IS CURRENTLY WORKING ON NASA'S KEPLER MISSION.

An Evening With **Dolores** iuerta

of laying out a plan.

"We study life on Earth," she said. "Where does it exist? Where doesn't it exist? Where do we expect to find planets like Earth?"

From there, Batalha said scientists form a model to define what characterproaches her own life.

Kaufman, who has been working in

the same office as Batalha since 2003,

said Batalha is passionate about her

sion and teaching, she really does care deeply about her students," he said.

"She's so enthusiastic about the mis-

It is with the same spirit of discovery

students.

"I think you have to keep discovering yourself, I was 40 when I began to take up ballet," she said. "And it has been life-changing for me."

Hidden away from the rigors of the mission, Batalha said ballet provides some downtime for her mind.

"Discovering stuff no human being has ever seen before — that's exhilarating," she said. "To know you are here on this earth to do something that impacts people who are still discovering themselves — that's really something."

King Library revamps website

AMARIS DOMINGUEZ

Staff Writer

The University website within King Library launched a new gateway for students and faculty members to access academic resources, according to an SJSU news release.

After having an unchanged website for five years, the library decided it was a time for an update and has been working on the redesign since last year, according to representatives from the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Library.

"The website is a little busy for me, but I'm sure the library felt like they needed a change and I think it's a change for the good," sophomore sociology major Anna Flores said.

The main goal in redesigning the library's website was to try to understand what information was most important to users and to figure out how to make that information easily accessible, according to John Wenzler, project manager for the website's redesign.

"The library has approximately 300 online databases where you can search for journal and newspaper articles," said Wenzler, associate dean for digital futures, information technology and technical services. "We subscribe to over 70,000 journals and we have over one million books and I think that students face information overload when they come into the library to use our website."

He explained that with the new website, the library is doing its best to present all of its material in a way that makes sense to students.

"We are always happy to get feedback about what works for students and what doesn't work so that we can make the website better," Wenzler said. "We do not see the current website as a completed project but as an evolving resource that will continue to develop to meet students' changing needs."

Kim Bui, a senior nursing major, said she likes the new

website because she can easily navigate to what she is looking for more quickly.

'It's so much more interactive than it was before," she said. "I think a lot of research must have gone into this."

Wenzler said a lot of research went into the redesign, as the library put together the Joint Website Redesign Taskforce that included employees from SJSU and from the San Jose Public Library system.

"The taskforce worked with a usability consultant to determine how to make the website user friendly," he said. "We did testing with 47 different library users including faculty, graduate students, undergraduate students, disabled users, teens, children and adults."

Wenzler also explained that the library's website is still undergoing transformation with plans to merge the SJSU library website with the San Jose Public Library website, which will describe the resources and services available to all San Jose residents at all 19 branches, and the Joint Library Portal, which will provide information about the partnership between SJSU and the San Jose Public library system at King Library.

"I don't really care for the new website because I feel like there is so much going on that I don't know where to start," junior engineering major Mike Tran said. "I like to be able to find things quick and easy and not have to search around for days looking for something."

Wenzler said the library is happy to get feedback about the website from anyone at SJSU and that there is a form on the website where people can submit comments.

'Generally, the feedback has been very good, but there have been some suggestions for improvements that we are considering," he said. "During the semester, a usability class in the School of Library and Information Science will be analyzing the site, and I believe that I will get some good feedback from them."

"By the Time We Got to Phoenix: SB 1070 and the New Chicano Civil Rights Movement"

A conversation with legendary civil rights activist Dolores Huerta, MALDEF president Thomas A. Saenz, and three members of the activist band Ozomatli; moderated by **Richard Gonzalez of NPR.**

September 23, 7:00 PM Morris Dailey Auditorium

\$15 General - \$10 Students

available at Event Center Box Office or at ticketmaster.com

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A benefit for the Center for Steinbeck Studies and the Mexican Heritage Corporation

Sponsored by the Student Union, Inc. and Mexican Heritage Corporation; In cooperation with Associated Students and the Calisar Chavez Community Action Center



Associated Students inducts new members

KELSEY LYNNE LESTER-PERRY Staff Writer

Eight new members were appointed to the Associated Student government and a representative from the United States Census Bureau presented an award during a board meeting yesterday afternoon in the Student Union.

Transfer student and marketing major Karsten Konopath was the first to be appointed, as the director of business affairs by a unanimous vote.

A.S. President Tomasz Kolodziejak said that Konopath is a very organized and outspoken person who would be a good match in the government's team efforts.

Kolodziejak said Konopath was also the vice president of finance for the honors society at Marin Community College, managing a budget of \$200,000.

As director of business affairs Konopath said that he will be serving on financial committees.

Konopath said he wants to help all the students around the budget crisis to figure out how they can allocate the funds in A.S. more efficiently, in order to promote better student life on campus.

"Being a transfer student I didn't really get to be that involved in campus, and now through A.S. I can get more involved, get to know more people, and definitely help promote our school," he said. "I hope we have a great year as Associated Students and I hope we can start getting more enrollment."

Madison Jones, Riley Knight, and Amanda Dougherty were all appointed as students-atlarge on the Lobby Corp committee.

Knight, a senior political science major, said his major and lobbying for people's rights were two things that attracted him to the position.

"Student rights are near and dear to me," he said. "I recognize that a lot of people are intimidated by talking to public policy makers, but regardless of your major you should be a part of the senate."

He said that students who don't want to be directly involved in student government

should at least come and sit through board meetings.

Knight said any amount of involvement in the government is better than none.

"I would like them to know that there are a lot of opportunities that go unclaimed," he said. "The A.S. is a way to bolster your resume, and get practical skills by being part of a leadership endeavor. That's something you don't necessarily learn in just a classroom."

Knight said that he happened to know a few people on the Student Senate who thought he would be a good candidate for the position.

"In the long run it was my decision," he said. "But I'm glad I did it."

Junior biology major Dougherty said she didn't know a lot of people on campus until she joined a sorority, from there she said decided to join student government.

She said she didn't know what her student rights were and she wanted to be able to advocate better for her friends and students on campus.

"It was more formal and out of my element," she said about her appointment onto the senate. "It's a different change of pace, but I liked the change."

Jagdeep Deol, John Sepassi, Schehrbano Khan, and Leroy Madarang were appointed to student-at-large positions in the A.S. finance committee.

These members will be working closely with the A.S. Controller Ramon Vizcarra, Madarang said.

"I'm pretty excited that I'm coming back for a second year," said Madarang, who served on the finance committee last year. "I'm hoping to bring experience I had last year to improve the financial climate."

Doris Tse, a partnership specialist for the U.S. Census Bureau gave a presentation to the members of the senate.

"You have involved all of the students and used all of your resources," she said. "You will continue to see the results of this census."

Tse also presented the University Representative Cathy Busalacchi with a plaque, and the rest of the senate members with collapsible census bureau lunchboxes.

High school test designed to give students an edge

JAIMIE COLLINS Staff Writer

A record number of eleventh-grade high school students in California are participating in the Early Assessment Program test, according to the California State University system website.

This voluntary test measures students' proficiency in English and math to assess their preparation for collegelevel courses, Erik Fallis, media relations specialist for the CSU system, stated in an e-mail.

"It's great that students are preparing themselves," said junior nursing major Elizabeth Caselli. "Knowing what to expect will make the transition to college smoother."

The website reported a total of 378,870 students completed the assessment test in English and 178,667 completed the math portion this year.

The website also stated that 84 percent of test takers demonstrated proficiency in English and 57 percent in math, indicating a five percent increase, the highest in a single year since the test was implemented in 2006.

Junior kinesiology major Kayla Richardson took the assessment test for math and English before she started her first year of college.

"It was a great way for me to find out where I stood academically in two of the most important subjects," she said. Fallis stated that the assessment test is one way that the CSU system is helping to

prepare students in the pursuit of equal access to higher education.

"The CSU has strongly advocated for more state resources in order to provide greater access to higher education," he stated.

However, with the current budget crisis facing the CSU system and stricter admittance requirements, Fallis stated that an increase in proficiency does not necessarily mean an increase in enrollment.

Thomas Snyder, a senior graphic design major, said he believes SJSU can't afford an increase in student enrollment since the university is already impacted.

"Just because more students are proficient doesn't mean that the university will admit them," he said.

A particular major or campus is impacted when the amount of applications filed exceeds the number of enrollment spaces available, according to the CSU website.

The focus of the assessment test is proficiency, not admittance, and while the increase may result in additional freshman applications, it will most likely not affect enrollment severely, Fallis stated.

"Students prepared for college are able to take college-level courses that count towards their degree starting in their first semester," he stated. "This is an advantage of speeding their progress towards earning a degree and having the skills necessary to be successful in their lege readiness."

classes."

By taking the test during their junior year, Fallis stated that students can receive their grades early and use their senior year to improve their skills in these subjects.

"If you know what classes you need extra time in, you can plan out your schedule," Snyder said.

With additional high school graduates being prepared for college level courses, Fallis stated that enrollment in remedial sections for English and math will be reduced while enrollment in college-level courses will increase.

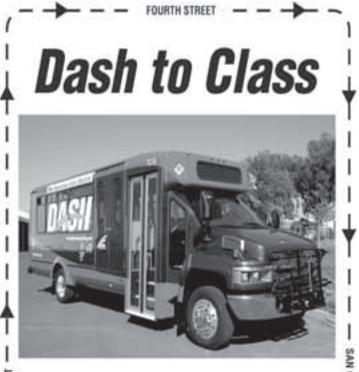
"I think it is great that they are testing juniors," Caselli said. "It gives them more time to figure out what they need to do before their freshman year."

Fallis stated that being proficient will also enable students to graduate sooner, reducing the student enrollment rate and increasing the amount of graduates looking for employment.

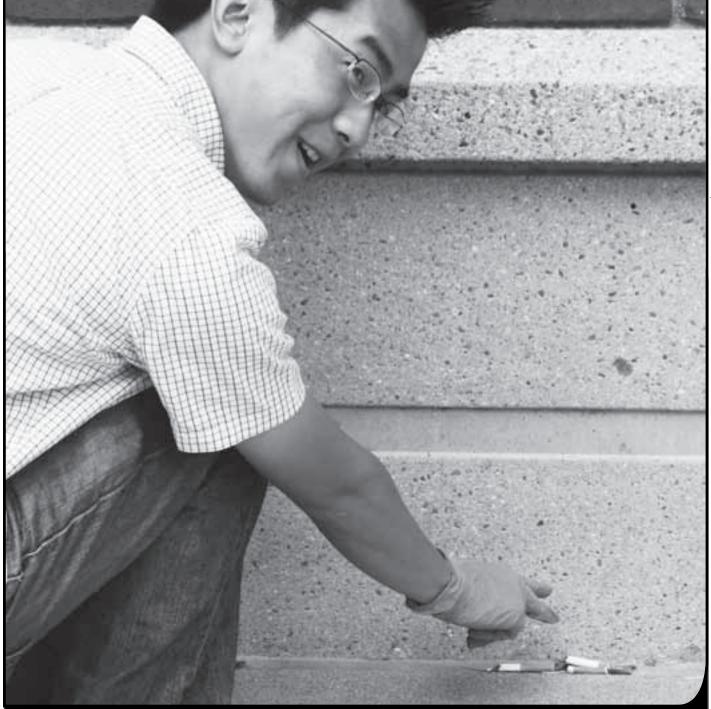
"Public higher education is a primary driver of quality jobs and a vibrant state economy," he stated.

While the test is voluntary, Fallis stated that the CSU system urges high school students to participate.

"The CSU certainly encourages high school students to take the exam," he stated. "Ideally, it will mean that more students will make choices in their senior year that will increase their col-







JOE TRAN, A SENIOR SOCIOLOGY MAJOR, PICKS UP CIGARETTE BUTTS ON CAMPUS WITH THE SAN JOSE STATE ENVIRONMENTAL CLUB ON SEPT. 8. CLUB PRESIDENT ERICA SCHROEDER SAID THEY PICKED UP ABOUT 2,000 BUTTS, NEARLY 2.5 POUNDS IN A ONE AND A HALF HOUR TIME PERIOD.

PHOTO: BR С

Park for Less, Shuttle for Free.

The Downtown Area Shuttle (DASH) stops on Fourth Street, at San Fernando and at Paseo de San Antonio, connectina San Jose State University to:

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Students favor late morning classes

CALLI PEREZ

Staff Writer

Classes held at 10:30 a.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays have always been prime time for the most popular attended classes among both students and teachers, said the associate vice president for undergraduate studies.

NEWS

Besides this 10:30 a.m. time slot, there is no actual way of telling which specific courses have the highest attendance among students, Dennis Jahene said.

However, Jaehne said SISU can always expect that courses that are required for all students, such as English 1A, will always reach full capacity.

"I like 10:30 classes because I commute to school and it is not too early, but I still get school out of the way pretty fast, allowing me to have a full day," said Kevin Tihoi, a sophomore business marketing major.

The 10:30 a.m. class time slot is a popular selection for students commuting to campus, said Kaleigh Mallette, a junior child and adolescent development major.

Hill," she said. "There is not a whole lot of traffic before a 10:30 class and it is not too early in the day for me."

For other students, the 10:30 a.m. class time is not by choice said Annalese Manno, a senior hospitality, recreation and tourism management major.

"I chose this time because it was the only time I could take this class," said Manno.

Students are not the only people who benefit from 10:30 classes, English Professor Cynthia Baer said of her current fall semester schedule.

"The reason why I like 10:30 courses is because this is a very sedentary job and you can get out of touch with your own body and so working out is really important," Baer said. "I happen to be a morning workout person so if I don't have a class until 10:30 I can actually get to campus, do a workout, have an office hour and then go to class.

"So it's kind of perfect for me because I get my blood moving, then put my head to work, then I deliver the lecture. Therefore, 10:30 for me

"I drive from Morgan is optimum."

Steven Hernandez, associate director of analytic studies, said students can always refer to SJSU's website, under the Office of Institutional Research tab, for the current term enrollment report.

The enrollment report allows public access to class listings alongside the number of seats and enrolled students which will remain preliminary until the end of the add period, he said.

According to the website, the enrollment management committees across campus could use the information to exert more control over the size and characteristics of the student body and to manage both attracting and retaining students that SJSU is committed to serve

The SJSU Office of Institutional Research website also provides access to statistical information regarding enrollment at SJSU and the other 23 California State University system campuses along with the description of new students, geo-demographics, class load and degrees awarded, Hernandez said.

THIS DAY



ON SEPTEMBER 9, 1976 THE SPARTAN DAILY REPORTED THAT ...

Captain Kevin Duggan prepared for an escape from a riveted, padlocked milk can filled with 100 gallons of water during the world's smallest circus, which visited SJSU on Sept. 8.

- The Society of Women Engineers was expected to become an official campus club in the fall semester by reaching the required 15 members after two years of waiting
- A fire destroyed three student-owned cars in a carport the night of Sept. 7, next to the Chi Pi Sigma fraternity house.

TRANSFERS

From Page 1

just turn it in and expect it to be there, make a copy of it. If you go in and talk to someone, record who you talked to and what you talked about."

Transfers are classified into two groups, according to the website — local applicants and non-local applicants.

Local applicants, who are people who earned the majority of their transferable units from Santa Clara County and Santa Cruz County, are guaranteed admission as long as they meet the minimum require-

years to transfer from Southern California.

Presutto said it took a year to figure out what he wanted to do and once he decided it only took two years to actually get up here.

No matter where one transfers from, whether it be local or non-local, SJSU requires students to maintain their eligibility, attend the mandatory orientation meeting and take the Writing Skills Test, according to the website.

There are special admissions programs on campus geared to help people make the transition successfully, the Hardship Petitions, Educational Opportunity Program, pre-admission advising and Students with Disabilities, according to the website. Jimenez and Presutto said they both agree that the most important part of the transfer process is to meet with counselors and advisers as often as possible.



ments and apply by 11:59 p.m. on Nov. 30. Non-local applicants — people who earned the majority of their transferable units outside of Santa Clara County and Santa Cruz County — are offered admission based on the capacity of their individual majors and how full the overall campus is.

Anthony Presutto, a junior animation and illustration major said it took him three





Mosaic hosts semester's first poetry reading

JEN NOWELL Staff Writer

The school year started off with a collaboration of words as the Mosaic Cross Cultural Center hosted its first open mic night of the semester on Sept. 2.

Mosaic is a resource center that offers student run programs under the direction of Hyon Chu Yi-Baker and Assistant Director Sadika Sulaiman Hara, a senior psychology major Denisse Mendez said.

The event was held in the Student Union between Weaver's and Subway and will be held there on the first Thursday of each month.

Lukogho Kasomo, a senior political science major and in her second year with Mosaic, said it's a cool little spot for local artists

to showcase their talents.

"A lot of people have talent, but are too afraid to come out," she said. "But many have had the opportunity to build their repertoire through this."

Mendez, who spearheaded the event, said she can't write poetry, so instead she read a piece of writing by another artist that personally spoke to her.

When asked about the turnout for the evening, Mendez, a diversity advocate intern at Mosaic said, "Honestly, it's low, but I think people are just confused by the change in location."

She said in previous years the open mic was always held at Market Café, which is now gone because of construction.

One of the performers of the evening was

Lindsay Leong, a senior social science major, who read a poem she wrote.

"This is the first time anyone has heard this poem, so I hope you all enjoy," she said.

Leong said it was her first time performing at the open mic at SJSU, but this was not her first time performing in front of a crowd.

As for returning to perform again, Leong said she definitely would.

"Now that I have Mosaic's schedule of events, I would like to attend more of them," she said. "There are a lot of cool people here, who are definitely supportive."

Freshman nursing major Pakeeza Ali, who came for a class assignment, said the event was cool because everyone was really supportive.

"Even people just walking by were clap-

ping and dancing," she said.

This event has been held for a couple of years, Mendez said, and a wide range of performers have taken part.

"We have had poets, pianists, guitarists and one semester, the performers from 'The Vagina Monologues' came to perform," she said.

To get the word out about the open mic night, Mendez said she talked to music professors on campus about offering extra credit to students of theirs who come out to participate.

"Each student intern picks something near and dear to their heart that they feel a personal connection to," she said in regards to Mosaic.

'The American' is good, but not in the way you'd expect



DONOVAN FARNHAM Online & Tech Editor

If there is a spectrum for movies with director Michael "More Explosions" Bay on one side with giant talking cars and over-the-top gunfights, then "The American," starring George Clooney, would be at the opposite pole.

The trailer for "The American" portrays it as an atypical action movie filled with clichéd car chases and witty, super-spy one liners shot at a poorly accented villain.

But that's not the case at all.

Audiences are instead treated to a character-drama where little happens in terms of action, something which the film makes up for with a well-developed plot and character development and fantastic camera work.

Clooney's character, Jack or Ed-

ward — it varies depending on who his character is speaking with — is a gunsmith for hire who builds weapons for international assassins and has been contracted to build one more rifle for a pending murder.

Through the course of the film, Clooney's character grows from a cold, slightly paranoid recluse who won't hesitate to kill someone if he suspects him or her of doing him harm.

The film ends with Clooney becoming a redeemed and slightly warmer human being through conversations with an elderly Roman Catholic priest, played by Paolo Bonacelli, and the companionship and eventual romance with a prostitute played by Irina Bjorklund.

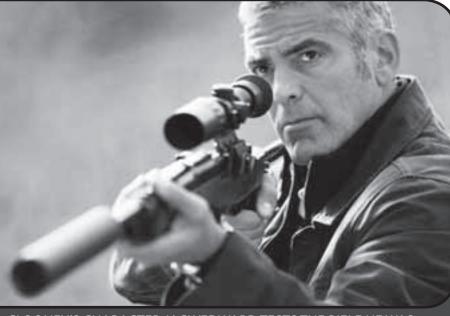
What makes this film great is that it gives the audience just enough to get the story and nothing more. Everything in this film, the dialogue, the action and the music, is kept to a bare minimum which allowed me to focus on what I think was the best part of

the movie: the cinematography.

From the first to final shot, the movie is filled with scenes with amazing light work, leading lines in and out of the frame and fantastic composition,

which gives the sensation of watching a series of portraits that just happen to be linked together to make a coherent movie.

As great as "The American" is, it's



CLOONEY'S CHARACTER JACK/EDWARD TESTS THE RIFLE HE WAS HIRED TO BUILD FOR AN ASSASSINATION.

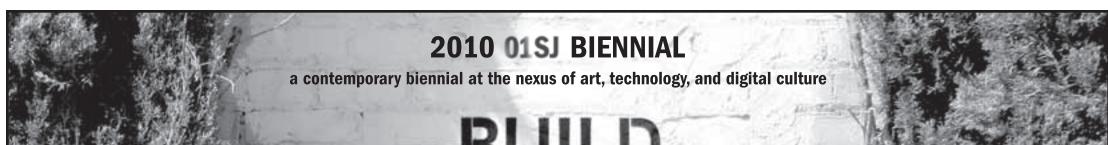
not without its flaws. The biggest flaw is the lack of action could leave a little to be desired if you bought a ticket expecting a typical summer action movie.

It's understandable when someone watches the trailer for the film which, I would argue, has all of the action from the 105 minutes of the film packed into less than 90 seconds. It's accompanied by a more energetic soundtrack than the rest of the film — not to mention the roughly seven people that are killed through the course of the film, about half of whom are killed in the trailer.

I'm guessing the trailer was cut in this way because if they portrayed "The American" accurately, no one would go to see this film — I know I wouldn't have.

If you're looking for a film done in the vein of minimalist storytelling, then you may love "The American."

But if you are caught by the trailer's proverbial sleight-of-hand and the film's marketing ploys, then you'll probably get halfway through, walk out and ask the movie theater's manager for a refund.





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New talent boosts 49ers chances

COMMENTARY

ALEX SPICER Staff Writer

For the first time since its last playoff appearance in 2002, the San Francisco 49ers are considered favorites to win the National Football Conference's West division.

But to get there, the Niners will need to play up to their full potential while also taking advantage of a weak division.

Head coach Mike Singletary said in a preseason press conference that his biggest concern going into the regular season was whether his team would play up to their talent level.

"I believe the answer is yes," Singletary said in response to whether the team could play to the level they are capable of. "Af-

ter the first game, after the first few games, I will know whether it's an emphatic yes."

Perhaps the biggest question mark for the Niners this season is at quarterback, which features Alex Smith, the 2005 No. 1 overall draft pick.

Smith has had a troubled career, and for the most part, has never lived up to the expectations of his fans and coaches.

It wasn't until last season that Smith recorded his first 300plus yard passing game, which came with the team's loss at Qwest Field against the Seattle Seahawks, the same team he will face this Sunday.

Yet if last season is any indication of Alex Smith's abilities since regaining the starting quarterback position, he may be just the man to guide San Francisco back to the playoffs.

Fortunately for Smith, this will be his first season in which he will be in the same offensive system as the previous year.

Smith finished last season with an 81.5 passer rating and 18 touchdown passes, both the highest of his career.

For the Niners to be successful during the 2010-11 campaign, both Smith and the rest of the offense are going to have to be consistent.

Even so, the Niners should be in better shape offensively than they have been in several years.

Two-time Pro Bowl running back Frank Gore will lead the back field on offense once again, and the surprise retirement of Gore's backup Glen Coffee was nullified with the addition of Brian Westbrook to fill that void.

"I thought if he could help my team get better and help us go to another level, I'm fine with it," Gore said in an interview with the Associated Press. "He's been a great back in this league for a long time. I already started asking him questions, but I feel he can help me get better.'

Star tight end Vernon Davis has blossomed under head coach Singletary, and is expected to continue to improve.

A young but talented receiving corps featuring Michael Crabtree and Josh Morgan, combined with Davis, will provide Smith with many targets.

With the addition of firstround draft picks Anthony Davis and Mike Iupati to the offensive line, Smith should find himself with more time to look downfield than he has in past seasons.

Despite the improved offense, it is the Niners' defense that is expected to carry the team into the playoffs.

All-Pro linebacker Patrick Willis, who led the NFL in tackles last season, will head a defense that allowed the fourthleast amount of points per game last season.

On special teams, the Niners are still looking for a punt returner, and had several players audition for the role, but had no clear standout for the job.

On the other end of the special teams spectrum, Pro Bowl punter Andy Lee and former San Jose State kicker Joe Nedney will be returning to maintain a solid kicking duo.

It would be considered a disappointment to fans and the team if this 49er team were to not reach the playoffs this season, and in such a weak division, it should have little problem completing that task.

The National Football Conference West includes the St. Louis Rams and Seattle Seahawks, who won a combined six games last season, plus a depleted Arizona Cardinals team that has question marks and holes at key positions.

However, Singletary is not paying much attention to the "playoffs or bust" title that has been attached to this team since the end of last season.

"You know what, the only thing I'm thinking about right now is Seattle," he said. "Anything beyond that, we don't even need to talk about."

The 49ers open their 2010-11 season on the road against the Seattle Seahawks on Sunday, Sept. 12 at Qwest Field.

Campbell brings hope to Raiders in 2010

COMMENTARY

MATTHEW SANTOLLA Copy Editor

With the 2010 NFL season about to begin, defensive upgrades and the off-season addition of quarterback Jason Campbell have given the Raider Nation reasonable hope for a winning season.

Campbell is a player who has commanded respect from his teammates and is not afraid to speak his mind about the Raiders.

"We're a confident team and we won't lose that confidence," Campbell said to CBSsports. com. "We feel like we can turn the corner."

The decision to release former No. 1 overall draft pick quarterback JaMarcus Russell gives the Raiders a chance to be competitive.

Russell admitted in an interview with ESPN he did not work as hard as he could have and that

his teammates were aware of that fact.

"He didn't progress as we wanted him to or needed him to," Nnamdi Asomugha said while appearing on ESPN's Jim Rome is Burning. "The mental part of the game, I don't think, caught on for him as quickly as we needed it to."

Head coach Tom Cable is entering his second full season with the Raiders.

"I think we are a much smarter team than we were a year ago," Cable said in a press conference during summer training camp. "And we should be able to display that."

One of the most significant weaknesses of the Raiders' last season was the team's run-defense.

Last season, the Raider defense allowed 155.5 yards rushing — only five teams allowed more.

To address the problem, the Raiders completely replaced its starting linebackers.

Last year's team leader in tackles, Kirk Morrison, was traded to the Jacksonville Jaguars.

Morrison's replacement is Rolando McClain, 2009's 8th overall draft pick.

McClain, a 6'3", 255-pound linebacker, was an All-American and team captain for the national champions University of Alabama.

In the off-season the Raiders traded for linebackers Quentin Groves and Kamerion Wimbley.

Wimbley, Groves and McClain are expected to be the starters and make an immediate impact.

To improve the defensive line, the Raiders signed Pro Bowl tackle John Henderson, promoted second-year player Trevor Scott to defensive end and drafted Lamarr Houston out of the University of Texas.

Asomugha headlines the defensive secondary, which includes Chris Johnson and Tyvon Branch.

The key to success for the Oakland defense will be its ability to stop opposing running backs.

Offensively, Oakland has only room for improvement.

The Raider offense averaged 266.1 yards a

game last season, the second worst in the NFL.

Along with the addition of Campbell, new offensive coordinator Hue Jackson gives the Raiders offense a fighting chance to improve.

Second-year receivers Louis Murphy and Darrius Heyward-Bey, along with the often-injured Chaz Schilens, have shown in the preseason they have been working hard to improve.

If the Raiders' wide receivers can prove they are a threat, it will allow the running backs to be more successful.

Running backs Michael Bush and Darren Mc-Fadden will share time in the backfield in 2010.

A major key to the success of 2010 Raiders will be the performance of the offensive line.

The play of left-tackle Mario Henderson, rookie center Jared Veldheer and left guard Robert Gallery will spearhead a unit that has underperformed in recent years.

The change at quarterback and upgrades on the defense will give the Raiders a serious chance to have their first winning season since 2002.

PHOTOS: SF49ERS.COM, RAIDERS.COM



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esterdays

NFL players should man up

There's an iconic black and white photo taken in 1964 of Hall of Fame NFL quarterback Y.A. Tittle kneeling, hands in his lap, head bowed, blood dripping down his face. His uniform is stained with mud and grass. His helmet lies behind him.

He'd just been laid out by one of the Pittsburgh Steelers, his errant pass intercepted and returned for a touchdown.

Tittle suffered a concussion and cracked sternum on the play, but he finished the season.

Football is and always has been a violent game. It is a battle. Guys who enter the game know that.

All this talk of NFL players saying that an extended schedule would be hard on them has me asking: Where have all the Y.A. Tittle's gone?

The prospective new schedule, a brainchild of the owners, would lengthen the season to 18 games from the current 16. The idea would have to be accepted by the players' union, according to an Aug. 26 Associated Press article. If all were in agreement, the change would take effect in 2012.

So far, players are resistant to the idea. 'You want more games?' they say. 'We want more money.' Of course.

Can we count on the owners resisting having to pay more? Of course.

But cash doesn't sound like some of the players' main qualm.

issue — being out of place.



<u>ISAIAH GUZMAN</u> Staff Writer

They sound more worried about the possibility that the schedule will take too much of a toll on their bodies, which are already taxed by a 16-game schedule.

That argument is about as off as a Jay Cutler pass. (He threw 26 interceptions with the Chicago Bears last season, the most in the NFL.)

The overall schedule — preseason and regular season included — would not lengthen a bit. It would remain at 20 games. The preseason would just be shortened from four games to two.

Even if the two additional regular-season games were harder on players, football has toned down over the years. Developments in equipment technology and new rules on tackling have made the NFL a safer place no more two-bar facemasks like the one Tittle had knocked off the day that famous photo was taken, and no more harpooning receivers running across the middle with helmets to the sternum.

And come now, football is still mild compared to, say, rugby. An average rugby season is also longer than 16 games.

England's top rugby league, the Aviva Premiership, plays a 22game regular-season schedule. Tell me that game isn't at least as rough as the NFL. Players in the premiership don't even wear shin guards as they smash each other into the turf. They wear foam headgear that looks similar to the leather helmets football players wore 90 years ago.

Bleacher Report columnist Nathaniel Uy says the switch would also be bad for player progression and roster evaluation.

Uy says the preseason games where fringe players try to make an impression and veterans iron out the wrinkles would be lost. Maybe, but the cream would rise to the top, regardless, and the veterans could fine tune during the first couple games of the regular season.

True, season records from 16game seasons would be eclipsed by 18-game season records. But records from the two different eras could just be put in separate categories.

The NFL has already switched its schedule from 12 games in the 1940s and '50s, to 14 games in the 1960s and 1970s, to the current 16 games.

Content with awkwardness

Major League Baseball also switched its schedule from 154 to 162 games in the early 1960s, and life pertaining to records went on.

As for the change interfering with the start of college football? Simple.

Start the NFL season later and end it later. What would happen then? Football might interfere with spring training?

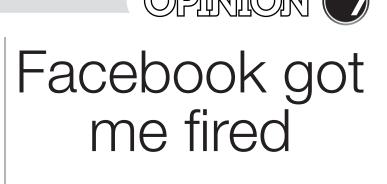
The change will be good for the people who really matter the fans, the ones who put the millions in the players' and owners' pockets.

More games mean more Sundays on the couch, more Monday nights at a sports pub with friends and more chances to get to a game. And for those of us who have the misfortune of loving bad teams, adding two games would mean that one or two key losses wouldn't be so detrimental to our playoff chances.

Who knows, maybe with more games, even mean owners will drop the price of tickets (though I doubt it).

None of the arguments against the change, least of all the talk of players being worn down, should hold the 18-game schedule back.

Yes, the game is dangerous and yes, it's hard on the body, but it's not the war it once was. Don't think so? When was the last time you saw a busted-up image like Tittle's?



For four years, I worked in the cosmetics department of a popular department store. I've helped some really interesting customers during my time there and always had funny or interesting stories to share over coffee with friends.

After I told my brother a crazy story about this lady who always came to the counter and used the testers to apply her makeup every Saturday night, he suggested that I visit this website called Peopleof Walmart.com.

After spending hours scrolling through camera phones photos of people wearing crazy outfits or doing revolting things in the store, I thought it would be funny to document the things I saw at work, using the camera on my phone.

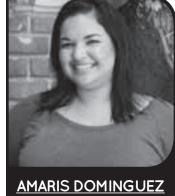
I started taking pictures of things like two kids in a one-kid stroller, a confession of love written in lipstick across a new display case, and multiple people wearing outfits that really should have stayed in their closets.

Housed within my little phone were days worth of shared stories with friends. One friend urged that I begin a photo album documenting a day in the life of a beauty adviser, on Facebook.

Since Facebook is the ultimate social networking portal for sharing things, such as funny pictures, I began the 'On The Job' album and received tons of comments from friends.

I even shared some laughs with a few co-workers who commented about pictures I had posted, saying my pictures made them laugh and made their day.

album would come with a huge lesson. I was attending a work training session back in July and mid-training, I was called into the human resources office and asked if I knew the store's policy on social networking.



Staff Writer

Wrong.

I was then informed that this was only brought to their attention because someone who had access to my private Facebook account had given management access to my "On The Job" album.

I was already feeling upset that a "friend" of mine had outed me, when they explained that the procedure of such a violation called for suspension.

I argued that the suspension was unfair because I hadn't received any notice of any updated policies, but it didn't matter.

Pending further investigation, and unaware of what that even meant, I spent the next two days going through different waves of emotion while my job lay in limbo.

I had read magazine articles about people's employment being jeopardized by Facebooking and always thought it would never happen to me.

Wrong, again.

Ultimately, the whole ordeal ended with my resignation — all because of social networking.

I'm not going to lie, I did hate my job and complained about it often, but by no Little did I know that the means was I ready to just up and quit with no backup plan. I can see how I was in violation of the social networking policy and how it put the store in a bad light, but I am still angry how everything played out and how human resources wouldn't even tell me who the gossiper was "for fear of retaliation." Although it was fun while it lasted, the brighter side of this story is: I now work for a company where I still get to interact with people on a daily basis and I no longer dread going to work.



d in high school. It doesn't hurt as bad because people aren't as callous as preteens, yet I still feel like the odd girl out.

In high school, I had two friends that I walked to school with every day betray me and tell other people they didn't like me and made fun of me to everyone.

It even got to the point to where one night I received a hateful IM from an anonymous person, whose identity was later discovered.

I sometimes envy the people who know how converse with anyone and to advance it from just small talk, those Some days I feel the way I smooth talkers who can easily build trust and respect among others, two things I don't seem to get from many people.

the same respect and courtesy as others.

People may question my intelligence because of my weird and awkward personality, but that doesn't mean I lack any intelligence or maturity. I act immature at times, but who doesn't?

Yet people still question whether I'm trustworthy, smart, attractive or pretty enough.

At the end of the day, this is all I have to say to those

people: Bite me.

OPINION 🌔

out.

back.

Freshman year of high school, some of my friends made the same decision, but thankfully I had three loyal buddies to back me up and support me.

ing fun of me behind my

But that is all in the past now and I have moved on.

When I think back on all that, it does hurt that people were so mean to me when I did absolutely nothing except be nice to them, but all that is done and it helped to make me the person I am today.

I have become more sarcastic and outgoing in my posthigh school years, so that may throw people off. In all honesty, I don't always know how to act around people.

My life has been filled with painful things done to me by people I thought were close friends, so maybe I have become paranoid when it comes to relationship building.

Truthfully, it is hard for me to know what to say in a conversation at times. That feeling of loss leads me to make a joke or remain a quiet bystander.

I am told that my sense of humor throws people off, I can't change that about myself though. It's fun to joke around and not always be so uptight every day, but it doesn't mean I don't deserve

We are all different, if you want to be in a small clique with your "buddies," then go for it. I have a select few friends who I am lucky to have and that are more fun

than any of the judgmental people out there that made me feel like crap for so many years.

Oddly enough, some of the people that screwed me over in the past have actually become good acquaintances of mine.

I hurt like any other person, but I heal like no other.

The policy stated that employees could not take pictures inside of the store, let alone share them on any social networking website.

I said no and figured I would have to sign off on the new policy and be on my merry way back to training.

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Ivory keys invite passers-by to play

MICHIKO FULLER Staff Writer

The strains of a melody floating across the pavement sounds like a rock song from the radio, but you can't identify the source until you are finally close enough to see it.

There it is, just a secondhand, upright piano trussed to a cinder block and the closest tree. The player is anonymous and a cup of coffee sits on the piano bench next to his backpack. When he finishes his song, bystanders clap and someone else takes a turn at the keys.

Pianos appeared outside the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Library and the Student Union as part of the San Jose 2010 Biennial project, according to the web address on each piano.

Walking out of the library, junior chemistry major Daniel Coxon said he saw the white

piano, with each part labeled in black paint, and sat down to play a Pink Floyd song. "The funny thing is, I haven't had access to

a piano in like six months," he said.

One passer-by lingered around the piano questioning where it came from and to whom it belonged. The biggest source of confusion was why the pianos were in San Jose and on campus.

"So you just found a piano and started playing?" said Calvin Worsnup, a junior computer science major.

Outside Philz Coffee on Paseo de San Antonio, stu-

the web address on the pianos and discuss the zil, according to the website. mystery behind the pianos' arrival.

The piano website is also a forum to appreciate the instruments by uploading photos, sharing experiences and creating events for any of the

piano locations. Senior English major Nathan Garavaglia sat down to play a dark brown piano that imitated a tree trunk outside Philz.

"I haven't had any training," he said. "It's not much fun when you don't know how to play piano." There are 20 uniquely decorated pianos scattered around San Jose's parks and plazas for the enjoyment of the public as part of a traveling art exhibition by British artist Luke Jerram, according to the piano's website. Jerram wrote on his website that the idea for these pianos came from a visit to his local laundromat, where the same people met every week without speaking to each other. "I suddenly realized that within a city, there must be hundreds of these invisible communities, regularly spending time with one another in silence," he wrote. "I hoped that by placing a piano into the space acts as a catalyst for conversation."



PROJECT. THE PIANO ABOVE IS LOCATED AT PASEO DE SAN ANTONIO.

From the laundromat to crisis, "Play Me, I'm Yours" was born out of a failed attempt to play instruments from hot air balloons. Wind conditions got the better of Jerram's "Sky Or-

Music is an expression

and graffiti is expression

too. It's part of it and

can't be taken away.

TRIXIE ASCUNCION

Junior nursing major

chestra" and he was forced to rework his project, according to the piano website.

Officially premiering in Birmingham, United Kingdom, in 2007, it is estimated that 140,000 people played the pianos within three weeks. Over the next three years, the piano project went across the

dents took advantage of Wi-Fi to investigate globe to Barcelona, Sydney, London and Bra-

However, they have not been treated very well in San Jose, according to Wendy Norris, owner of Norris Communications.

Some pianos have been vandalized and labeled as "not art." When the pianos were brought to New York City they were left unmarked, according to Norris.

However, artist Jerram said the pianos are now the people's to do with as they please.

Junior nursing major Trixie Ascuncion voiced her agreement.

"Music is an expression and graffiti is expression too," she said. "It's part of it and can't be taken away."

Norris encourages the people of San Jose to take advantage of the pianos while they are here because they will be donated to local schools and community groups after the biennial ends.

David Kim, a senior digital art major and media intern at Zer01, is working to capture all the events of the biennial on video to share via the Internet.

Working behind the scenes, Kim said he had the privilege of seeing the pianos before they hit the streets.

"I got a first hand look at how the pianos were decorated," he said.

The piano outside the Student Union is brightly colored and airbrushed, while another at the Circle of Palms outside the Museum of Art in downtown San Jose is white with a black skeleton of a tree on its back and falling leaves cascading across its front. The goblin head on the piano at the Paseo de San Antonio has teeth made of piano keys.

The piano at the San Jose McEnery Convention Center has a wooden rainbow screwed to the top of its leafy green colored base.

"They stand out and contrast to the environment," said Erick Lui, a freshman computer engineering major.

Erik Siverson, a piano technician for the music department, said the pianos add to the ambiance.

"It may not be what you like to hear, but it's different than a boombox," he said. "It's live."

The official biennial lasts four days, beginning Sept. 16 with a variety of events from plays and performances to exhibitions and public art, such as Jerram's pianos.

While the large majority of events take place in San Jose, the biennial celebrations branch out as far as San Francisco and Berkeley, according to the website.

The pianos will be held over until Sept. 22, leaving more time to explore San Jose in pursuit of all 20 and to enjoy the impromptu street performances they enable.

Walking downtown and listening to music doesn't have to mean plugging in your iPod to tune out the traffic, when someone is providing a mini concert for those lucky enough to pass by at the right time.

Biennials only come around every two years, so now is the time to stop and listen to the piano, painted like roses.



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