

Growing up together, as a family

by Chelsea Bieker
Rampage Reporter

SYMBAA and Idile Programs offer aid to African-American students at FCC

Today students of all age and race face challenges when it comes to completing their college education. With bumps in the road such as maintaining work, family life, and school deadlines, it is easy to get side-tracked. With such varying backgrounds Fresno City College students possess, everyone here is on their own unique path to success. The sad part is, many don't make it.

With extracurricular crises that occur in life, school can be overwhelming, and challenging to have the time to complete the things necessary to excel. Many students slip through the cracks, going unnoticed. What is encouraging though is that there are groups right here on campus willing to not only help, but go the extra mile to ensure student success. Two such groups are SYMBAA and Idile.

At first glance, these groups are very similar. Both are aimed at helping the African American population succeed in school. Both groups use community involvement and the instilment of leadership skills to build self-confidence in the students. At a second glance though, they are in fact different.

SYMBAA-- Strengthen-

ing Young Men By Academic Achievement -- is geared specifically to the African American male population, according to the program's coordinator, Cedric Hardamon. SYMBAA is designed to address the lack of academic success in African American men attending Fresno

City College. Nationwide, African American males have the lowest success rate among college goers, Hardamon said. The SYMBAA group is working hard to change the statistic and prove that they are not only good people, but great students.

By definition, the SYM-

BAA program is a plan to assist African American male students in achieving success through a coordinated program of courses and support, but according to those involved, it is much more.

It's a learning community where involved teachers and students are aware of each other's

strengths and weaknesses. They have a sense of responsibility to one another that mimics not just an academic group, but a family, said Donald McQuiller, a student in the program.

"What we are trying to do through the program is to infuse both social and academic responsibility amongst the students," Hardamon said. And the students definitely know it. Donald McQuiller, 26, agrees. He said that after moving frequently throughout his childhood, it was difficult for him to find the motivation to stay in school.

The SYMBAA program has helped him tremendously. "Growing up, I didn't have a solid foundation to lean on, but I do with SYMBAA," McQuiller said, or Mr. McQuiller as he would be addressed in the program. Darlene Roach, the program's counselor explained that in the classroom, the students insert a formal "Mr." in front of everyone's last name to show respect. This way, the students feel more accountable for their conduct in the classroom. It lets everyone within earshot know they mean business.

McQuiller says he is clearly thinking beyond the realms of graduating. "I want to be a teacher. I have knowledge

See Programs, page 5t



Idile students engage in class activities

Too fast, too curious?

Fresno launches its assault against street racing, but some feel Police officers are profiling drivers based on their race.

See 'Dragnet' story pg. 3



This car found on campus is packed is NOS



Another car on campus with illegal tire modifications



Cars with raised or extra fins may easily be labled as illegal

photos by Robin Vallentyne

Whatstitution Day ?

FCC's celebration of Constitution Day finds many uninformed students

by Carly Hubbell
Rampage Reporter

The Associated Student Government of Fresno City College hosted the 2nd annual Constitution Day on September 18th. The event went on from 10:00 to 11:00 near the fountain. Music, activities, and contests were displayed to educate students about the Constitution and the founding government of the United States.

The Associated Student government received grant money that was used especially for that day. It is required nationwide for schools to acknowledge Constitution day so putting on this event was required.

Jennifer Mendrin, a student
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News

Idle/Symbaa Programs

A detailed look at two of the programs at FCC providing services for minority student. **Page 1**

Crack down on Racers

Fresno's new task force on illegal street racing. **Page 3**

Fresno Reacts to Pope

The world reacted to the Pope's questionable choice of words by picking sides and condemning all dissenters. Has Fresno done the same? **Page 4**

Cigarette usage at FCC

Cigarettes may be the most dangerous killers on earth, but not only are they available in every corner store, they can also be used in many outdoor public environments. Should FCC change its policy? **Page 4**

A day to be celebrated?

The Associated Student Government hosted its 2nd annual Constitution Day on Sept. 18 to celebrate the 219th anniversary of the day the Constitution was signed. ASG found that many students do not know much about this sacred document. **Page 3**

Sports

Football

The Fresno City College football program began its 9th season under head coach Tony Caviglia, and have already faced a tough schedule. **Page 10**

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The Legend of Chuck

A completely irrelevant column about why Chuck Norris is considered to be the most powerful man on the planet. **Page 12**

Back in the day

Some children today do not even recognize where their favorite television shows got their start. Here's why. **Page 12**

Male bashing time

If you hate men, you'll love reading pieces that bash them even more. Here are some options on what to do when you encounter chauvinistic men. **Page 13**

To Join or not?

A heated debate on the whether the benefits of joining the military outweigh a bullet. **Page 11**

News

September 27, 2006

Rampage

Fresno City College

RAMPAGE

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Letters to the editor and submissions to the calendar will be accepted via e-mail or in person 12 noon - 1 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday, at The Rampage, Room SC-211, above the bookstore. Please keep all letters to a maximum of 500 words along with contact information.

Classifieds

Coca-Cola Ban Plea

FCC Students presenting a speech to board of trustees on Oct. 4th @ 4:30 pm @ McLane high school contact: Rosanna Spicer 322-4857 platos_mistress@yahoo.com

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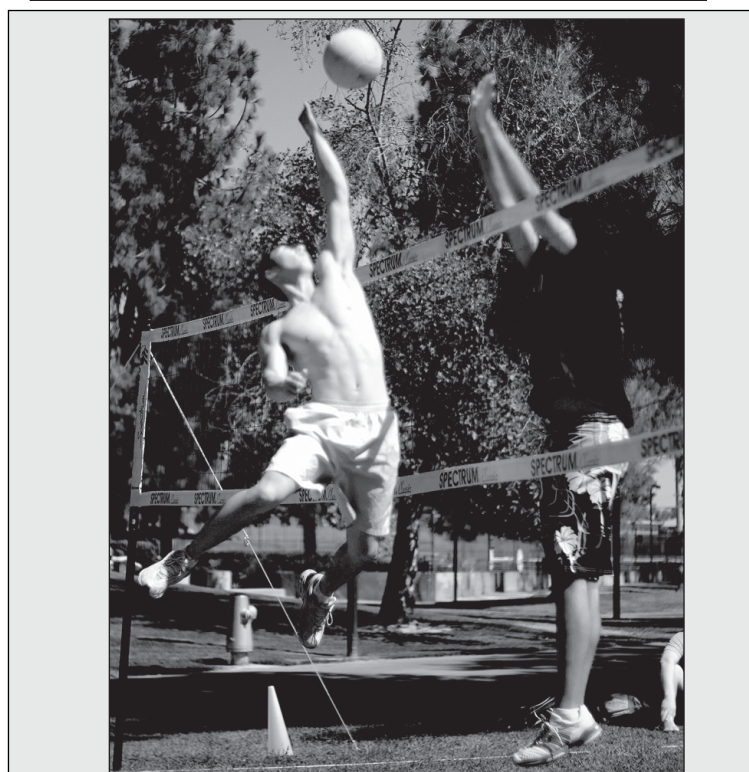


photo by Michael Behlen

Participants of FCC's 2 on 2 Intramural Volleyball

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'Dragnet' could be on your tail

by Leah Edwards

Rampage Reporter

Do you feel the need for speed? Are you one of the many who thrives on the thrill of adrenaline?

Perhaps, you are one of many racing enthusiasts, who work tirelessly on your vehicle, making endless modifications and adjustments to achieve that perfect balance of looks, speed and performance.

Or are you one who suddenly discovered the desire to join the ranks of speed racers after watching 'The Fast and the Furious'?

If so, Fresno police's anti-street racing task force (DRAGNET) might soon be on your tail. Drivers of illegally modified vehicles risk receiving a citation or getting their vehicles impounded if they fail to make ordered corrections, according to Sergeant Gary Beer, head of Dragnet. Real racing is dangerous, not like it's portrayed in the movies.

The popularity of the underground world of street racing has skyrocketed over the past decade, causing the State of California to recently devote more money and energy into keeping this dangerous lifestyle from entering the mainstream public.

Racing is one of the most ancient forms of competition on the planet, starting as far back as the first man and horse. The desire to 'best' one's opponent fuels this need for speed. According to www.Historyofracing street racing was first outlawed in 1674 because people were being run over by sprint (horse) races in the streets.

"There has always been a problem with street racing. Street racing has never really been monitored," said Beer "It is hard to prove if someone involved in an accident was street racing or just hit a pole due to excessive speed, because a lot of times the other racer doesn't stick around."

Sergeant Beer said he receives information regarding two or three accidents or deaths a week connected with street racing worldwide. According to Sergeant Beer, "It is hard to judge the actual

number of accidents related to street racing because of a lack of witness testimony. The Primary Collision Factor is usually stated as something else like drunk driving, speeding, or driving too fast for conditions."

In Fresno, the racing days of old, where 200 people stood by watching the street race are now gone. "It's four or five cars stopping at In and Outs, and they run out and race real quick and then get back to town," said Musser. "We use a helicopter, and fly over outlining areas looking for a large group of taillights, two or three races go off at McKinley and Hayes, and Shields and Bishop."

In 2002, a 14 and 18 year old brothers were killed at Cornelia and Lincoln, this was

will meet you and get the Chief of Police, maybe even help to police it."

One FCC student, who requested his name not be released, stated he has received a ticket for illegal modifications on his car, and said he is concerned this has become a racial issue.

"The law isn't fair, someone might just like the looks [race car]," said FCC student David Hernandez, "Improving your car is just something to do."

"We have to use probable cause to make a stop," said Officer Jason M. Musser. "I've pulled over hundreds of these guys since the program started and there's been every spectrum of the population we have here in Fresno. We profile the car, not the

fiber hood, wider tires, larger brake caliber that shows through, and a big coffee can muffler. These are but a few on an extensive list of what is looked for by officers.

Musser added, "You can have a vehicle that's been heavily modified and your sole intention is racing it on the track and you've never raced it a day in your life on the street, however if you drive it back and forth to school you're still in violation of the smog laws."

If you receive a ticket for illegal modifications, it cannot be signed off by an officer, you must go to an agent of the state, an automotive smog representative.

There is a smog referee station from the State of California, run by Rick Nishioka, located at the FCC Career and Technology Center at 2930 E. Annadale Ave in Fresno. "You make an appointment, pay a fee and your vehicle is inspected for everything," said Beer.

"The only way you'll get your car towed is if you're involved in a street race, exhibition of speed, doing a brodie or burnout, or once we write you a ticket for a violation, we put you out of service," said Musser. "You cannot drive this vehicle other than from the place ticketed, to home or to a place of repair."

The smog referee station can tell you what parts are considered illegal. "They can legally modify their engine; it is the fact that they are illegally modifying their parts. What makes them an illegal part is that they are not approved by the California Air Resources Board, (not smog legal)," said Beer, "Anything under the hood that's adjustable is illegal."

The task force is out to enforce laws already in effect; they are just beginning to strictly enforce them. "We are car enthusiasts too," said Musser. "Just keep it on the track."

For more information regarding the 'DRAGNET' program, contact Sergeant Beer, head of the task force at 621-5050.

Typical 27156(b) Violation Items

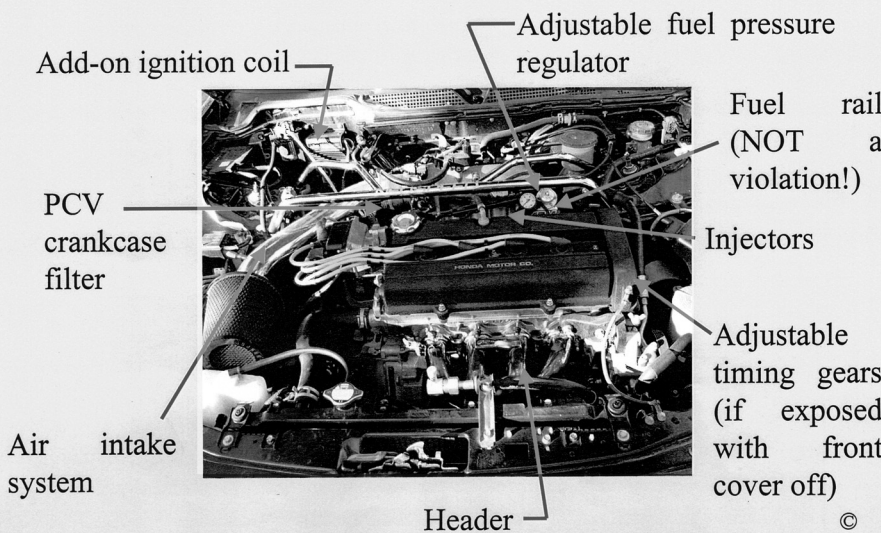


Photo courtesy of 'DRAGNET' person."

Sergeant Beer added, "We look for signs that the vehicle has been modified for racing. We don't care what race you are, but on the Internet they say that we are targeting, picking on Asians because they are the only ones driving a Honda, and that's not true. With the re-invention of the Mustang, Dodge Charger, and the Camaro's coming back, there are plenty of kids modifying these types of cars too."

"New cars nowadays look very modified. I want to make my car look good and sound good," said FCC student Tou Lee Vang. "Muscle cars don't even get stopped when they are fully modified, and they stop us for our tiny imports!"

Probable signs that a vehicle has been illegally modified are such things as tinted windows, bald tires, an added wing, carbon

one of the tragedies that led to the award in May of 2005 of the two-year grant 'DRAGNET' designed to impact illegal racing. The first of its kind began in San Diego in 1999, where they were facing 16 fatalities a year believed connected with street racing.

This statewide grant involves educational programs and ten host agencies, with all the Central Valley departments working together with Fresno. Andre Mucelroy, the racer involved in the death of the two teen boys on Cornelia and Lincoln in 2002, is now a guest speaker for the program as part of his probation.

The goal is educate people on the woes of racing and to get illegally modified cars off the street.

"Guys from Fresno racers.net said, 'We need a track' and I totally agree," said Beer. "You find a place and put it together and I

Mexico's real independence day celebrated

by Efen Marquez

Rampage Reporter

Every year Americans may celebrate Cinco de Mayo as Mexican Independence day, but the real date actually falls on September 16. Cinco de Mayo is actually the date of the Mexican victory over the French at the Battle of Puebla in 1862. September 16, the real Mexican Independence day, is the day that Mexico declared war against Spanish rule in 1810, some 50 years before Cinco de Mayo occurred.

To help celebrate this occasion, Fresno City College held activities and music from radio station 107.9 "La Kalle" in the free speech area and food booths on the Bookstore lawn. Some of the activities included the Fresno High Folklorico Dancers, the FCC Grupo Folklorico Dance group and a salsa making contest as well as a club rush.

"This is very important because I'm from Mexico, and this reminds me of where we come from. Basically, this is to remind us that we have to follow our cultures and that's what it's all about to me" said Daniel Gonzalez, a first year Fresno City College student.

In addition to the music and performers, a salsa making contest was held with entries from some of the clubs present including Latin American Students.org (LASO), Student Paralegal Service, Culturas Unidas, The Diversity Club, Alpha Omega Medical Assistants and the Native American Student Association. The winner of the Salsa contest was Ali Espinoza, Executive Vice President of the Associated Student Government, who was unavailable for comment.

"I think that we want to represent diversity here on campus and all cultural events that we can and, of course, Mexican Independence day is very important and that's why we do recognize and bring in performers and culture and entertainers to make it real" said

Maile Glover, College Center Assistant for College Activities. The event also brought in coverage from local television news stations.



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COLLEGE
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OCTOBER 4, 2006

STUDENT ACTIVITIES CENTER

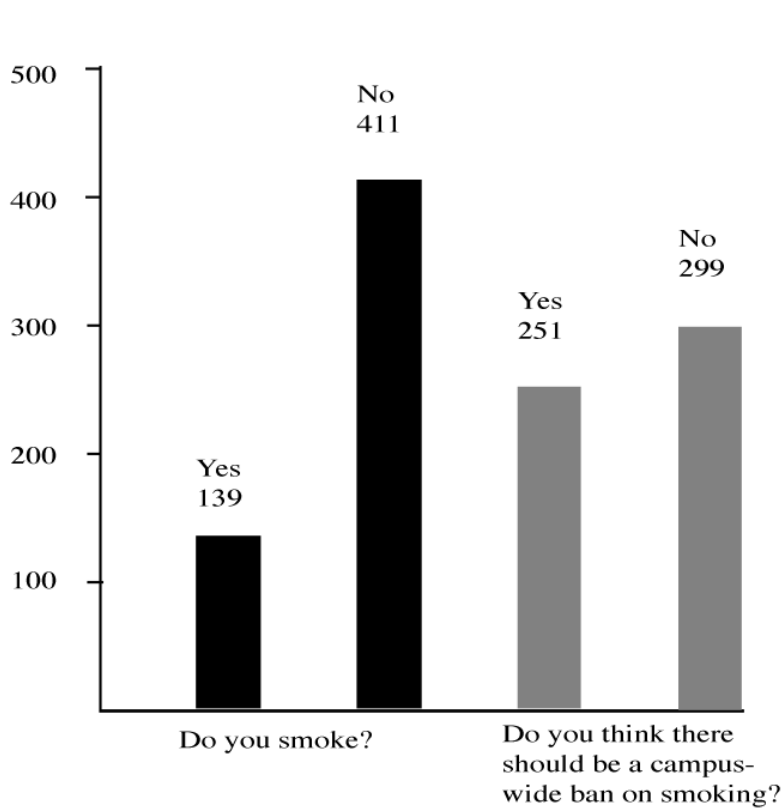
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Central California Blood Center

Dangerous Hobby on Campus

Should FCC be smoke-free?



by Buen Moua
Rampage Reporter

While trying to enjoy a menthol cigarette between classes one day with friends, a student expresses the thought of America being one of the fattest (and possibly the unhealthiest) nations in the world made him realize how insalubrious and stupid he felt for inhaling that “death stick.”

“I don’t feel like I would want to quit smoking just yet, cause if I did, I would just find something else--like food--in

place of the cigarette,” he says.

After hearing a friend make such a radical statement, the friends joked, “Yeah, and we will all walk to the nearest ash-tray and toss our cigarette butts in it. Ha!”

For some college students like this group of friends, smoking has become a normal part of their college experience, becoming tolerable even for nonsmokers.

In a recent poll at FCC, less than half of students surveyed feel there should be a campus-wide ban on cigarette smoking. The

survey also showed that out of 25 percent who say they smoke, eight percent of those smokers agreed there should be a campus-wide ban on smoking. Sixty-one percent of students who say there should not be a campus-wide ban are non-smokers.

The unofficial survey was done between Sept. 18-20, with 550 participants total.

As far as smoking on campus, Fresno City College’s only regulation is to stay 15 to 20 feet away from any building on campus.

Cigarette smoking does not only affect smokers. It affects nonsmokers and the environment as well.

April Harris and Lindsay Merrow, both Liberal studies major and nonsmokers, say that there should be designated areas for smokers. Harris added that there should not be a campus-wide ban because smokers have the right to smoke cigarettes.

An anonymous FCC student, who smokes, said a cigarette ban would make him smoke less and that would motivate him to quit.

Vannet Vath, criminology major and a nonsmoker said, “There should be a ban because I don’t like secondhand-smoke. Plus the campus looks dirty because butts are everywhere.”

A research by the University of Minnesota on college

campuses worldwide, suggested “20 percent of students actually began smoking in college, while 50 percent intensified their smoking during college.” Also found in there research was that “campus smoking rates doubled in the last decade and are currently twice the rate of the overall adult population.”

Cigarette smoke, according to the 2004 Surgeon General Report, contains approximately 4000 chemicals. The report also said that, “smoking harms nearly every organ of the body, causing many diseases and reducing the health of smokers in general.”

“Cigarette smoking is the leading preventable cause of death in the U.S.,” stated The National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (CDC), and The World Health Organization. “And it causes about 440,000 deaths each year; more than AIDS death, illegal drug use, alcohol, motor vehicle injuries, suicide and murder combined.”

Secondhand smoke is the third leading preventable cause of death, according to American Cancer Society, in www.cancer.org.

The FCC maintenance crew especially has much to say about a campus-wide ban on cigarette smoking. “FCC should have a stricter rule on cigarette smoking because they [the students] don’t honor the 15 feet rule, and I take pride in my job,” said John

Luna, Custodian 1.

At the Business Building, students smoke not even 15 feet away, which is only 15 paces from the building,” Luna said.

Luna added, “There is definitely a littering problem with cigarette butts. We find them in restrooms, elevators...sometimes students would smoke going into the restrooms.”

The website www.cigarettelitter.org, a not-for-profit organization dedicated to aiming at significantly reducing the amount of cigarette butt litter stated that an “estimated several trillion cigarette butts are littered worldwide each year...cigarette filters are made of cellulose acetate tow, not cotton, and can take decades to degrade.”

“Fire concerns also play a role,” according to the Federal Emergency Management Agency, reported in a 2002 article in the *Akron Beacon Journal* in Akron, Ohio. “Arson and careless smoking closely follow cooking as the leading cause of fire injuries on college campuses.”

In a fight to reduce the number of smokers, California has proposed a cigarette tax of well over two dollars per pack of cigarettes. In January, California became the first state to declare secondhand smoke a toxic air pollutant, while the city of Calabasas prohibited smoking on all public areas in March 2006, said Calabasas city officials in *The Acorn* newspaper.

The Pope is only human, he makes mistakes too.

Leaders of Fresno’s Catholic and Muslim communities affirm ties

by lfe-Chudeni Oputa
Rampage Reporter

On September 12, Pope Benedict the XVI outraged the international Muslim community with a quote in his speech at the University of Regensburg.

Pope Benedict quoted Byzantine emperor Manuel II Paleologus, “He said, I quote, ‘Show me just what Mohammed brought that was new, and there you will find things only evil and inhuman, such as his command to spread by the sword the faith he preached.’” Benedict’s speech was met with a surge of anger and demands by Muslim leaders for an apology.

Anger over Benedict’s words has lead to threats on his life. Mehmet Ali Agca cautioned the Pope against making a planned trip to Turkey, “As someone who knows these matters well, I say your life is in danger. Don’t come to Turkey,” said Agca, the same man who

attempted to kill Pope John Paul II in 1981.

On Sunday, September 17, Benedict expressed his regret at the offense taken by the Muslim community, saying he was “deeply sorry”. He further apologized at his weekly general audience in St. Peter’s Square on Wednesday, September 20. “In no way did I wish to make my own the words of the medieval emperor. I wished to explain that not religion and violence, but religion and reason, go together,” he said. He also expressed admiration for Muslims, “I hope that my profound respect for world religions and for Muslims, who ‘worship the one God’ and with whom we ‘promote peace, liberty, social justice and moral values for the benefit of all humanity’ is clear.” Benedict said he hoped that this incident could generate “positive, even self-critical dialogue both among religions and between modern reason and Christian faith.”

Pope Benedict’s comments have been felt all over the world, including here in Fresno. “I personally felt that his comments were irresponsible,” said Malika Sharef, a Fresno City College student and member of the Muslim community “I don’t think that he did it to really put down the religion or do harm to the religion, I just thought he made a very, very big error.”

“The Muslim community was surprised, and this message from the Pope caught us off-guard,” said Kamal Abu-Shamsieh, Director of the Islamic Cultural Center of Fresno, “Not just Muslims, but Catholics as well.” Abu-Shamsieh agrees that the quote was offensive and gave an inaccurate portrayal of Islam, but does not agree with Muslim leaders who have continued to stir conflict. “We welcome their opinion, we encourage them to issue their opinion, but that is not the binding opinion of the Muslim community,” he said.

Bishop John T. Steinbock

echoed this sentiment in his official message regarding the Pope’s remarks, “Needless to say, the quotation has been taken out of context and is being used by some Muslim leaders to inflame their followers against the Holy Father, against Christianity, and against the West.” Steinbock emphasized that the quote has diverted attention from the intended message of the Pope. “It is interesting that the Holy Father...is calling for the great Religions of the World, inspired by Faith and Reason, to enter into a dialogue of cultures,” said Steinbock, “The main emphasis of his lecture is not Islam. He is mainly criticizing the way Western civilization is taking faith out of political, technological, cultural, and social life. ...”

Even with all the conflict surrounding the Pope’s comments, the Islamic-Catholic relationship is not lost. “We can still be unified,” said Sharef, “It just depends on how people of different faiths ... plan on going

about dealing with the situation.” Steinbock agreed, “The current controversy will not shake the Islamic-Catholic relationship that has been so strong in so many places throughout the world, including here in our own valley,” he said.

While many around the world are still rattled by Benedict’s words, Fresno is taking the situation in stride. “There was never a long-term conflict,” he said, “The message itself and the circumstances around the message brought Muslims and Catholics together.”

“I personally felt that his comments were irresponsible...a very, very big error.”

-FCC student regarding the Pope’s infamous quote.

Programs: both Idile and SYMBAA help students succeed cont from pg. 1

to share, and no one should be left in the dark.” McQuiller says he would like to teach History or African American History. As his smile grows wider, he added, “It may be hard now, but it’s gonna be a greater later.”

McQuiller certainly isn’t the only one raving about the program. Antonio Parker has been involved in the program since spring of 2006 semester and recognizes the amazing opportunities the SYMBAA program has provided. Not always the best student growing up, Parker said he has made up for lost time.

With good grades, and big plans for transferring to a university in Florida, he said that coming to class and doing his personal best are not just choices anymore, they are his lifestyle. He has learned to maintain his academic life as well as maintain a spot of the Fresno City College football team. When asked his favorite part of the program, he doesn’t hesitate. “Everyone is like a family, it’s like a support group.” For SYMBAA community is key.

Idile, (pronounced e dee lay) is also geared toward

the success of the African American student, except the Idile program is open to Males and Females. This program accepts students on the English 125 or 126 levels, and is designed to increase the transfer rate, develop leadership skills, and involve students in the community, according to the program’s pamphlet.

The main counselor of the program, Shuntay Taylor, said she thrives on the successes of the students. “The most rewarding thing about being involved in a program like this is knowing that you helped equip someone with the necessary skills to succeed.

The joy on their faces

when they accomplish something is the best part,” Taylor



Ken Belmont, Jr. and members of the Idile family

said. With about a 60 percent transfer rate, those involved with Idile must be doing something right, according to Taylor.

New to Fresno City is seventeen-year old Kenneth Belmont. Apprehensive to start college, he has found a sense of community through the Idile program. “If you miss an assignment, you can call someone; it’s like a family.” Belmont raved about the two hour study session included in the program, when they do peer tutoring and get extra help. “I think I wouldn’t have met as many new people if I wasn’t involved in the program,” Belmont said. He said he hopes one day his hard work will land him a job as a photo-journalist.

Another amazing part of Idile is the diversity of the participants’ backgrounds. To say that forty-year-old Pearl Grice-Faggins is a survivor would be an un-

derstatement. A past marred by years of domestic violence, and single-motherhood paved the way for nothing but struggle when it came to academics. A mother of seven, she never took a stab at college. That is until now. She says she is back and more determined than ever.

The Idile program has opened the door for Grice-Faggins to thrive, and that’s exactly what she is doing. She doesn’t give Idile all the credit though. “My family is so supportive of me and what I’m doing. It was intimidating at first knowing I would be sitting in a classroom full of people who could be my kids, but I want everyone out there to know that it’s never too late.

“The instructors care. They care that we succeed; they care that we understand; they really do take time to get to know each student,” she said.

The Idile and SYMBAA students have it together. With plans for the future, and optimistic attitudes, success for them is inevitable. They seem to be working hard, and doing all they can to give back to their fellow members as well as their communities. With the leadership skills they are acquiring, the future is bright.



COLLEGE ACTIVITIES OFFICE UPCOMING EVENTS

**Fresno Sesquicentennial
 Parade
 Sept. 30, Grizzlie Stadium
 Starts at 10am**

**Club Rush
 Oct. 4, Main Fountain
 10am - 2pm**

**Blood Drive
 Oct. 4, Student Lounge
 9am - 3pm**

**Susan G. Komen Breast
 Cancer Awareness
 KSEE 24 & Stefani Booroojian
 Oct. 6, Library - West Wing
 10am**

**3 on 3 Soccer
 Oct. 6, West Lawn
 10am - 2pm**

**Homecoming
 Oct. 21, Ratcliffe Stadium
 F.C.C. vs. C.O.S.
 4:30pm Tailgate
 Kick - off 7pm**

**“Stop the Hate, Stop the Violence”
 Building a Culture of Peace
 Oct. 1, Fresno State - Concert Hall
 2pm - 4pm
 Garlanding and Meditation
 4:15pm Fresno State - Peace Garden**

**Applications for Homecoming Royalty and Float
 Competition are now available in the
 Student Lounge**

For more information, call: 265-5711

Const: Founding fathers long forgotten

Cont. from pg 1

dent at Fresno City was in charge of the event and made sure everything went in order. All in all, the day went on flawlessly with active participation from students. Mainstream music was played to capture the attention from students and to make the experience an enjoyable one.

“It was fun,” says James Martinez, a fourth semester FCC student who participated in the production, “We had contests and gave out prizes, like gift certificates to Starbucks, Jamba Juice and Borders.”

Questions requiring participants to explain specific Constitutional amendments or name all 13 colonies were just a few of the inquiries asked. The contest required the students to be put into two groups of three, with the winning group having answered the most questions correctly.

James laughs as he recalls the answers that a couple students had answered during the contest. “One guy thought the founding father of our country was Abraham Lincoln,” he says, “And the person who got it right asked if the founding father was the person on the one dollar bill.”

Many students around campus really don’t know a lot of the facts that the United States was built upon. In fact, many didn’t even know what the Preamble was. The goal of the event was to shine light on the national holiday and perhaps get students more involved in knowing about the country they live in.

“I was at first just drawn to the music by the fountain,” says Katie Bayliss, a 3rd semester Fresno City Student, “But then I started watching and I guess I could say that it was pretty cool. I learned a lot of stuff about the Constitution that I didn’t really know about before.”

Matt Steele from the Fresno Bee and Peter Ellison of the New York Times had also helped out in the Constitution Day event by taking pictures, and interviewing students. Both had offered to pay for certain items, but the Associated Student Government had instead decided to use grant money of their own. The two newspapers provide the school with free copies of their respective issues every weekday.

The Associated Student Government puts on almost all Fresno City events held on campus, most of which can be seen by the fountain. They will be holding a Voter Registration Ray, where they encourage students to register; that will be followed by Ramburger Roundup Day, where they supply free lunches to those who have a Fresno City ID.

Welcoming a familiar face



Janine Christl, Speech Instructor

photo by Ryan Weber

by Maylin Tu

Rampage Reporter

Many Fresno City College students go on to great things—whether in the arts, the sciences, or just in life. The rest end up back at City.

Just kidding.

Wait! Put those rocks down, I have the perfect counter-example: Janine Christl, theatre and speech instructor at FCC.

Not very long ago, she too was a student here. In fact, she personifies the successful, productive, and well-adjusted former attendee.

Not only does she teach three classes at City, she also runs her own theatre company and serves as Director of Development at the new Cal Arts Academy (formerly Cynthia Merrill’s).

Her company, Epic Theatre, just received its second grant from the Fresno Arts Council. Their next production will be Jose Rivera’s play *Marisol*, which touches on issues of homelessness, war, and the temporality of material things.

Christl started Epic in response to what she saw as a void in the Fresno theater community.

“I felt like [we were] lacking theatre that really inspires change.”

Her inspiration has always been to create thought provoking art, “Theatre that . . . as you walk away, you go, ‘Ah, I want to go to coffee and talk to someone about this.’”

In a bid to fuse art with action, Christl plans to send part of the profits from the show to Global Green, an organization dedicated to rebuilding New Orleans with the latest in energy saving technology. She hopes others will be inspired to give back to the community:

“Instead of just feeling frustrated with what’s happening—find ways to change it.”

Christl grew up in Fresno and got her start at Bullard Project Talent, an audition-in program for students in elementary school through eighth grade. She attended Clovis West High School, and then studied theatre at City before trans-

ferring to UC Santa Cruz. She later graduated from Cal State Fullerton with her MFA.

Walk down the halls of the theatre building and look at the pictures of past productions—you’ll find her there (hint: she was here in 1993).

Debi Shapazian, head of the theater department and herself a former FCC student, remembers Christl from her days as a student:

“She was always very, very sweet, very nice, prepared—she was very bright.”

After graduating with her MFA in 2001, Christl taught at Cypress College in Orange County and opened an acting studio with a friend. On visits home to Fresno, she noticed that the arts were starting to blossom. That did it. She moved back to Fresno.

Two years and one theater company later, Christl still finds time to teach at City College.

“I love teaching—teaching’s my favorite thing . . . The classroom’s just such a joyful place for me because I feel like I learn something every day, and hopefully I offer something every day.”

This semester she is teaching three sections of Speech 12, a class focused on teaching students how to speak in front of people.

“It doesn’t ask you to change who you are, but it helps you to develop who you are and find your own voice.”

Christl’s goal is to see each student succeed on a personal level:

“I try to create an environment where people feel free to express themselves as creatively as they possibly can, and without judgment.”

The hardest part, she says, is the end of the semester.

“Sometimes I wish there was more time than what I have.”

Christl’s own experience at City has helped her teach.

“She has a real good understanding of what a community college student is about,” says Shapazian, “she knows what each class—their personality, what they

need.”

First semester theater student Charles Estes describes his class with Christl as “very, very, very wonderful” and says she is, in his opinion, a great teacher:

“She knows a lot about the industry of acting and about vocal work . . . she’s able to help all of us as far as speaking in front of people.”

The course covers correct enunciation, correct posture, and correct grammar, and is, according to Estes, not like school at all.

“[It’s] more like a yoga class . . . everyone’s so calm, laid back, not full of stress . . . you don’t think of anything else in the world.”

Estes says she brings a casual, informal environment to the class:

“She’s just Janine when she comes to class . . . she brings her personality . . . she dresses like us, she act like us.”

Clearly, everyone at FCC is glad she decided to return to Fresno.

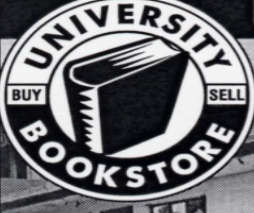
“She’s delightful to have around, she’s always positive, very cheery, which I appreciate,” says Shapazian.

“I think her students really appreciate her work, and they do good work for her.”

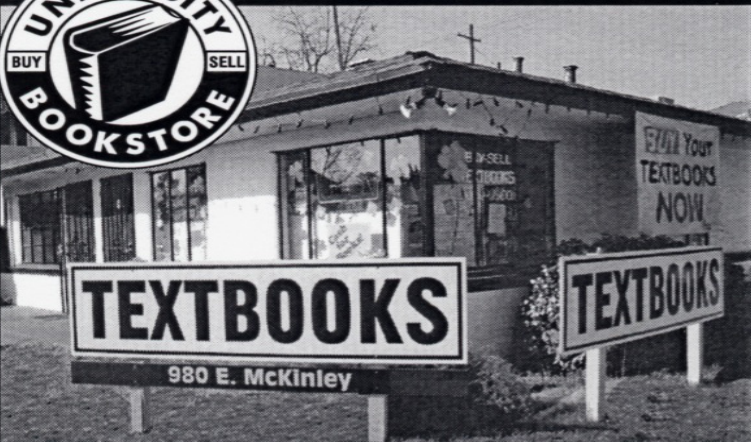
Q & A

1. Favorite flavor of ice cream? Baskin Robbins Mint Chip
2. Favorite color? Purple
3. Biggest pet peeve? Soap Opera Acting
4. Favorite actor? Mark Ruffalo
5. Favorite actress? Laura Linney
6. Favorite movie? “Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind” and also....given my favorite actors, I love “You Can Count On Me”.
7. Favorite candy? Well—I guess M & M’s with the Movie Popcorn (extra butter) all mixed together
8. Dream car? My car. I love it. It’s a VW Jetta.....drive happy.
9. Favorite musician/band? Right now, The Fray....but that will change by next week.
10. Favorite book? The Power of Intention by Dr. Wayne Dyer

Bonus question: one piece of art (song, play, movie, whatever) that’s changed your life? There was an art exhibit of Georgia O’Keeffe’s work on display when I was in DC a few years back called “Working In Black and White” and as you went through the exhibit you realized that everything consistently became shades of grey. After seeing that exhibit, I titled my thesis graduate book after it and realized that everything that I had learned and continue to learn blurs together to form something in between the clarity of one thing or it’s opposite. Life seems to be that way.



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An inspiration to us all

FCC college student helped himself and continues to help others

By Joseph Rios
Rampage Reporter

John Camacho came in through the door on the opposite side of the building. He was wearing an over-sized green t-shirt with the word, "Champion"

fingers latched onto his palms and his wrists laid limp.

"What's up you guys?"
"Oh, Stan, this is my friend Joseph."

"Hey Stan, it's nice to meet you."

"Hi," he said, taking a bite

One day while Camacho was eating lunch back in 2000, Stan and his friend Robert, also a special needs student, came up to Camacho and asked him if he could feed them. Well, he did, and he's been doing it ever since. Monday through Thursday at 10 a.m. and 12 p.m. on Fridays is time for him and Stan.

The two of them shared with me that Robert passed away this past July. They weren't sad though. Stan went on to tell me how he and Robert spent their time checking out girls near the fountain.

"He taught me everything I know."

The three of us couldn't stop laughing while he told his story. I looked over at Camacho, who leaned back laughing, and I couldn't believe what a remarkable young man he was.

At first glance, Camacho doesn't seem like he's anything to marvel at. He's quiet, reserved, taller than most but not a giant; he's got an athletic build but he's no Arnold.

Camacho's just an ordinary guy - an ordinary guy, with an extraordinary story to tell.

Six years ago 220-pound-Camacho weighed 412 pounds. But to him, it wasn't that big of a deal.

It wasn't until he was walking around campus one day and found himself out of breath that he decided to make a change.

"Hey Stan, do you remember me when I hadn't lost the weight?"

"Huh?"

"Remember how I looked before I lost all that weight?"

"Oh," he said as his head sank low and he laughed. He remembered.

Camacho endured the name-calling growing up, the jokes, and being made fun of as if they were something inevitable, something he couldn't change. But for the first time he felt compelled to change the look of his situation and change his life in the process.

He cut all the junk food from his diet—everything from ice cream, fast food, pizza, to soda and candy was cut from his daily lineup. No food entered his mouth after 7 p.m..

The next thing Camacho did was start working out. At his weight he couldn't just lace up his running shoes and run the Boston marathon, so he started slowly.

He hit the streets with a staggered pace. A little running, a little walking. Each day he gained strength. In time, he was running more and walking less, running farther and running faster.

After a while, his clothes ceased to fit. This time, it wasn't because he was too big and they were too small.

"Everything was falling off my body," said Camacho. "I got more confident in myself. I realized that I could do this."

After shedding over one hundred pounds, Camacho enrolled in head women's soccer coach Oliver Germond's swimming PE class.

The pool seems like the last place someone trying to lose weight would want to be considering the need to unclothe, but he was out there.

"He really wasn't that great of a swimmer, to be honest," said Germond. "But he was always working so hard. He'd swim a few strokes and then stop. Then he'd keep going."

Germond noticed his work ethic and began talking to him. When Germond learned about what Camacho was doing, he invited him out to his team's summer conditioning.

On the first day, Camacho said, he was a little nervous showing up to an all girls soccer practice. "I was thinking, 'What the heck am I doing here?'" he said. "I'm sure they were thinking the same thing."

He's gotten over his ner-

vousness and has been going out to practice every summer for the past three years.

Each summer when conditioning starts, the girls wonder who he is. Germond explained that he always waits a few days before telling the group of about 50 girls who he is and what he has done. As shy as Camacho is, Germond always asks him if it's alright to share his story.

The girls are amazed to see the before pictures and then look at the man that's running alongside and, most of the time, ahead of them.

"He's half, no a quarter of the man he was," said assistant coach Drew Mattos settling down in Germond's office during our interview.

"In weight," Germond added.

Besides being one of the girls' biggest fans, he's grown into a pillar of strength for the girls when summer workouts get tough.

"He's a role model. He gives the team someone to look up to as far as work ethic," said Germond. "He's almost part of the coaching staff."

"He's a motivator," said Mattos. "John's out there doing the things the girls think they can't do."

Even though Camacho surmounted all the obstacles and has lost the weight of an NFL defensive back, he still holds firm to his diet and his exercise routine.

I asked him what was the most difficult thing to give up, "Pizza," he said with a smile on his face. "I loved pizza."

Continued on Page 8

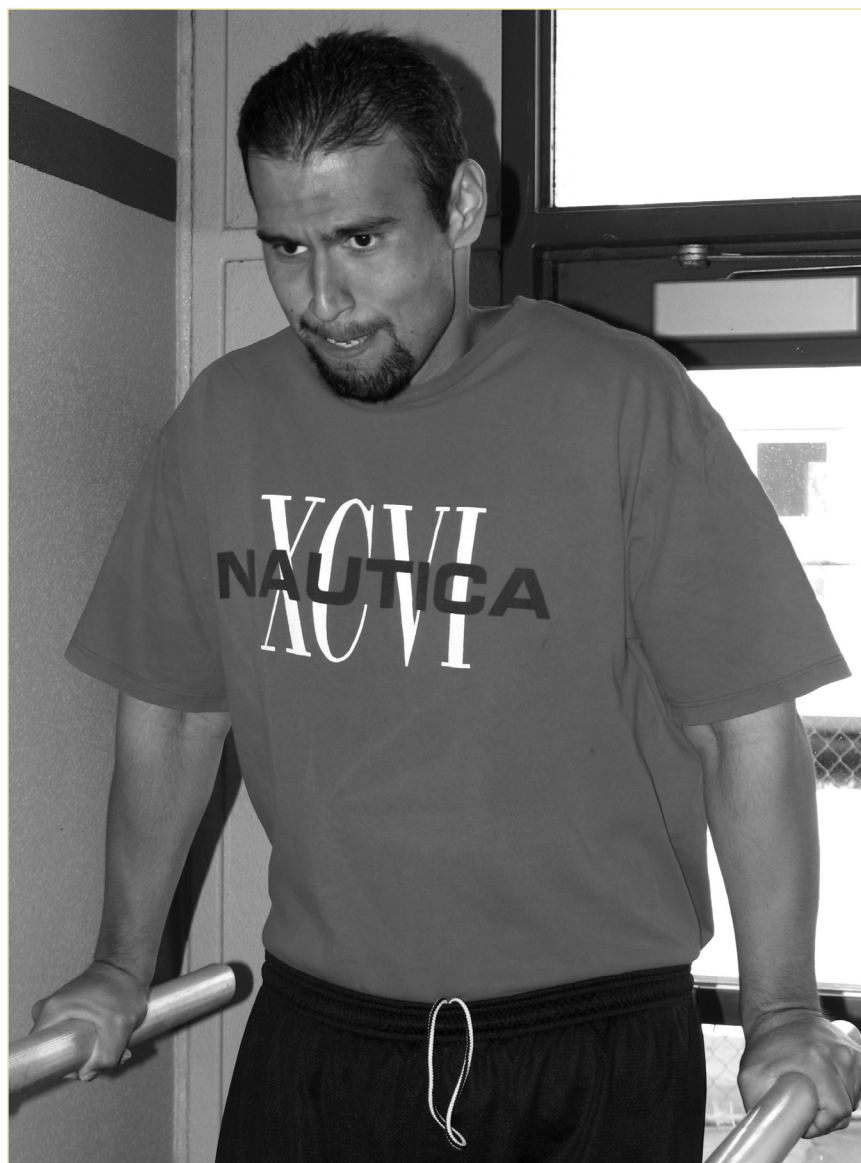


Photo by Joseph Rios

John Camacho continues to push himself in his workouts. Whether he's running at Woodward Park with the Women's Soccer Team or doing dips outside the gym, he gives it his all.

embroidered across his heart and the buckle in front of his pants synched the excess denim into bound up wrinkles near his waist and the legs flared out wide.

"We waiting on Stan?"

"Yeah, I told him I was coming, so he should be here."

"I'm going to go grab something to eat."

While I browsed through the bags of chips and bottles of Powerade, I could only imagine what was about to take place. I paid for my greasy hamburger and fries and clenched the two black caps on my blue Powerades and walked over to the table.

In those five seconds it took me to get to the table, I gave Stan a once over.

He sat hunched over in his motorized wheelchair laughing at something Camacho told him. His eyes shut tightly, pulling the ends of his smile past his ears. His

out of the air with his greeting.

While I wolfed down my grilled beef and fried potato hunks, Camacho fed Stan. He did it with the exercised precision of a veteran nurse. Stan sat there and communicated to Camacho what he wanted with head nod variations and flutters of the lips.

First it was the sandwich. Camacho carefully, but quickly, unwrapped the sandwich and put it in front of Stan's mouth. Camacho had already uncapped his juice and poured him a cup with a straw. Stan leaned over to straw and took a swig.

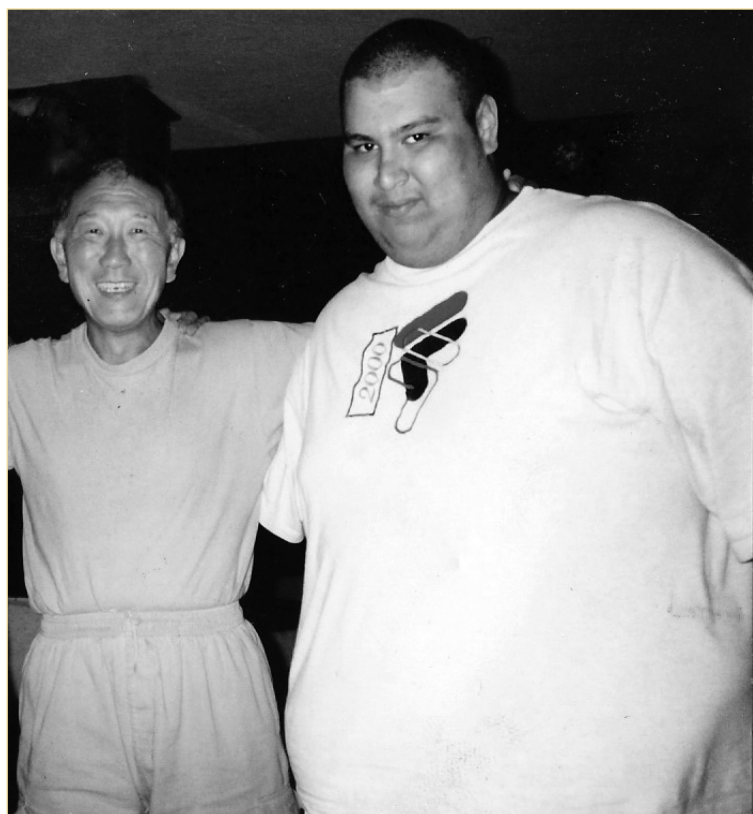
"How long have you been doing this?"

"I started back in 2000."

"So about the same time you started losing weight?"

"Yeah, pretty much."

Once the sandwich was done and the juice was sucked down, he unscrewed the cap to a thermos filled with warm coffee.



Before his quest began, John Camacho weighed over 400 pounds.

Camacho: *knows what The Rock is cookin’*

continued from pg 7

When it came time to reward himself for the hard work and fasting, he’d reach for a grab bag of nacho cheese Doritos – crunchy triangles of cheese covered heaven.

How did he workout? Like The Rock himself no less. He modeled his workout after Dwayne Johnson’s as it appeared in Men’s Health Magazine.

All of it was a part of the 180-degree turn in his life. Camacho turned his back on everything that contributed to him being overweight, and turned toward healthy living.

“Most people who have lost weight have had surgery, or cheated by taking pills,” said Germond. “He did it with hard work.”

“Johnny did it the right way,” said Mattos.

“He changed his lifestyle. It’s inspiring to know that you can change your life in a positive way,” said Germond.

I asked Camacho if he ever regretted being overweight. “Sometimes I think about going back in time to change things,” he said. “But I wouldn’t change being overweight. If it all wouldn’t have happened I wouldn’t have met Oliver and I wouldn’t have met the soccer team.”

I finished my hamburger and I was almost out of French fries.

Stan was going on about his escapades with his old buddy Robert while Camacho and I buckled over laughing. He might be tough to understand at first, but the man has got stories.

But as I sat there listening



Photo by Joseph Rios

Camacho takes his daily run around the FCC soccer field. During the summer, Camacho trains with the women’s soccer team.

to Stan, I looked over at Camacho and I couldn’t help but think: here I was with the guy that Germond, Mattos, and the girls from the soccer team said was the coolest, nicest guy around.

“There aren’t many like him,” Germond said.

Here was the guy who quietly lost over half his body-weight in six years, a guy who feeds a good friend everyday during the week, and a guy who wants to be

a preschool teacher. While I sat across from Camacho and Stan, I thought about everything I had heard about John Camacho and in that moment, I believed every word of it.

Before we parted I asked Stan, “Hey Stan, what do you like the most about John?”

He thought for a second about what I was asking him then he gave me a big smile and shied to one side and said, “He’s funny.”

They Keep on Rolling



Photo by Quinn Robinson

The Fresno City College women’s soccer team is seen here in action against West Valley on Sept. 15. The Rams defeated the Vikings in a rematch of last year’s second round playoff game 5-0. The Rams record is currently 7-2-0



Athlete Spotlight

By Mike Williams
Rampage Reporter

Travon Jones

a.k.a. Superman, is on a mission this year. His mission: to lead his team to a Northern California championship. Jones is one of the most elusive running backs in California this year, already receiving a scholarship offer from the University of Nevada. You’ll have a better chance of sneaking on a gun on a plane than taking “Superman” one-on-one.

Q: How old were you when you began playing football and why did you choose this sport over other sports?

A: I was 12 and I chose football because some of the athletes I looked up to were football players.

Q: Do you get frustrated in a game if things are not going your way?

A: Yes, I have to learn how to keep my composure.

Q: Biggest fear in life?

A: God.

Q: Where do you see yourself in 5 years?

A: Living life to the fullest.

Q: Why do you call yourself “Superman”?

A: When I was a kid, I ran around the house with a Superman costume for two weeks straight. After that my family started calling me Superman.

Q: Favorite athlete of all time?

A: Myself.

Q: What keeps you going?

A: My parents, they’re always motivating me.

Q: Do you get nervous before games?

A: I used to when I was younger, but now it’s just like a riding a bike.

Q: What was your favorite cartoon growing up?

A: I had a lot of favorite cartoons, but if I had to pick one it would be the Flintstones.

Q: Who would you marry Christina Milian or Oprah Winfrey?

A: Oprah, just because of the money.

Q: Who’s your number 1 fan?

A: My little sister Marshay.

Q: What’s your goal for this season?

A: To have a healthy year and be a threat to every defense.

Delivering the kill

Volleyball team in midst of another tough conference battle

By Mike Williams

Rampage Reporter

There is no doubt about the talent that is on the Fresno City Women's Volleyball team.

With 11 freshmen on this year's team, experience seems to be one of the only problems that can't be fixed over night.

Coach Bethany Buller said she believes her team will get better week in and week out and make a run to the league title.

The Rams are 4-2 after losing to College Of The Sequoias.

This was a rival match that could have gone in any teams favor that night. The Giants just happened to make the least amount of mistakes.

"I feel our biggest opponent is ourselves," said Buller.

From Buller's prospective all of the problems that occurred Wednesday night, can be fixed.

The Rams are ranked 14th in the California Community College Women's Volleyball Coaches Association poll.

The Rams, however do not pay attention to their ranking, the girls focus on each game, one game at a time and let their ranking handle itself.

Sophomores Jacqueline Hill, Jackie Anaya, and Lauren

Storey the only returning players for this year's squad, have adjusted to the fact that they are now the leaders on a very young team.

With so many freshmen on the team, a couple of these girls have been asked to play out of position or step up their play.

The freshmen on this team respond well to a challenge.

Lyndsey Myrick has made a

huge impact on this team with her ability to play three positions. Whenever the team needs help, Myrick can go in and get the job done.

Donsha Jackson has stepped up her game tremendously. She's progressing as the season goes on. Whenever the team is in need of a kill shot, you can always count on Jackson to deliver.

"I don't think people realize how much work we put in," said Storey on how the team has adjusted to the lack of experience.

There are a couple of things different on this year's team, compared to last year's team.

The team this year is a lot closer than they had been in the past. They get along like they are all sisters.

One of the keys in having a great team is the relationship with players and coaches on and off the court

"Last year's team had a lot of talent," said Hill. "But this year's team is more of a unit. On and off the court we are like a family."

This year's team is also filled with players who come to work hard everyday because they know that the hard work will pay off. Storey is one of the hardest workers on the team and, it shows on game days.

This is Buller's first year as head coach, but she's been here for the past couple of years and it's nothing new to her.

"I love my girls," said Buller. "I wouldn't trade them for anybody."

Buller can talk to her players about anything off the court. On the court, one of Buller's strength is that she is a great motivator. She believes in her players, and her players believe in her as well.

She is focusing on her team getting better everyday and minimizing the mistakes.

With a young team, the Rams have a lot of work to do if they want to win the league.

You better believe that Buller will push this team, because she wants to see her team be successful.

She also has Sept. 27 marked down on her calendar. That date is the Rams' first match against Taft

"I'm looking forward to playing them," said Buller. "It's always a fun match."

"This year's team is more of a unit. On and off the court, we are like a family."
-Jacqueline Hill



Power in numbers: FCC returns with three sophomores on this year's team, but is still a highly feared opponent in the CVC



Photos by Robyn Valentyne

Ashley Fantazia (14) and unidentified teammate attempt to block a kill against Modesto Junior College on Sept. 13

Opinion

Grizzlies sell stadium name for \$16 million. FCC has five sports venues. You do the math.

Columnist takes a look at what FCC can gain from selling its stadium's naming rights

By David Witte

Rampage Reporter

The Grizzlies' new deal with Chuckchansi for the renaming of Grizzlies Stadium brings up some interesting possibilities for FCC.

The Grizzlies deal is for 15 years and \$16 million. My only question is: who the hell is this Ratcliffe guy, and why is his name on FCC's football stadium? Is he paying for this?

Try this on for size: "Tonight, FCC football plays Reedley College at Tachi Stadium."

We have a football field, a softball field, a baseball field, a basketball/volleyball/badmin-

ton/wrestling gym, tennis courts, a pool, and... um... a game room by the cafeteria.

Why not sell the naming rights? Imagine the football team playing at 7-11 Stadium, or the softball team playing at Chuck's Vinyl Siding Field.

The basketball team could play in the City Lights Arena, and all your tennis classes could be held at the Lamar Entertainment Courts.

Imagine what you could do with a few million dollars from each sports venue.

The college wouldn't have to beg to renovate the Old Administration Building.

We won't even call it that any more, we'll sell the

naming rights. The Wal-Mart Administration Building has a nice ring to it.

Why stop there? I'm sure there's someone that would pay \$16 million to name this place Maxi Pad City College.

We could have a class on how to go horseback riding and do cartwheels without leakage.

Imagine when 1550 Sports Radio covered the baseball games: "Maxi Pad City's defense soaked up a lot of hits, but they won it with a liner up the middle."

This is a trend in sports that is unstoppable. I don't even know where the San Francisco Giants play anymore.

AT&T Park? SBC Sta-

dium? The house that Bonds built, presented by Coke and Payless Shoes. Now that Rupert Murdoch owns Myspace, will we see a stadium named after it? Tom Field, maybe?

All sarcasm aside, I'm tired of organizations selling their stadium's name to the highest bidder.

I don't care how much the Chuckchansi "resort" paid, I'm still calling it Grizzlies Stadium.

People in Denver still refer to Invesco Field as Mile High. I still hear Giants fans referring to the new Candlestick Park.

When Chuckchansi's

contract is up in 15 years, and the place becomes Hot Topic Field, I'll still call it Grizzlies Stadium.

Not that I have anything against Indian casinos. I'm all for them.

Screw those palefaces out of their hard-earned money. We screwed you out of your hard-earned land.

But leave the stadiums alone. We don't go for that here at Maxi Pad City.

If you want a minor-league baseball stadium, build yourselves one. Put a team in there. It would probably be better than the Grizzlies.

Built Ram tough

Fresno City College football is back for the 2006 season.

By Eric Valdez

Rampage Reporter

Under ninth-year head coach Tony Caviglia, the Fresno City College football team has begun its season, prepared to overcome any challenges and produce a quality record.

Last year, the team performed well, finishing with a record of 7-4 in the Valley Conference.

This season, the team has a lot of strong players coming from different positions. Although the team consists of many talented players, there are some that really stand out in coach Caviglia's eyes. Quarterback McKinson Souverain, wide receivers Keston Cheathem,

Michael Williams and Zeb White, running backs Cody Hobbs and Travon Jones, and tight end Trevor Messersmith make up most of the Rams.' Offense.

On defense, linebacker John Clark, cornerback Casmin Thomas, defensive back Jason Strobe, and defensive lineman Josh Smith provide the defense with talented play that could take them far in 2006.

One of the biggest challenges that the Rams faced is the game against City College of San Francisco. FCC had a record of 1-7-1 against CCSF before the Sept. 16 game at Ratcliffe stadium and after last season's 40-0 loss, FCC was primed for payback.

The Rams came out like they were on a mission, beginning

with an early 21-0 first half lead. During the first quarter, sophomore Casmin Thomas blocked a punt and returned it seventy yards for a touchdown, to extend FCC's lead to 14-0.

Later on in the game, during the second half, he returned another blocked punt for a touchdown

FCC's Cody Hobbs was able to run the ball well against a very strong CCSF defense. However, this was not enough for the Rams as they lost the game.

They made too many mistakes including dropped passes by receivers and defense coverage breakdowns.

One of FCC's biggest problem was applying pressure on the CCSF quarterback, Zach Lee.

Lee muffed a handful of snaps, but FCC's defense couldn't get the ball quickly enough, allowing Lee to throw the ball away or make big conversions.

After that, the defense broke down and Lee had enough time and space to launch the ball deep for a completion.

The game ended with a close score of 34-31 in favor of San Francisco.

"Going into the CCSF

game, I wanted to see how this team would respond to the challenge of facing a good team like SF," said Caviglia.

"We are still trying to sort out and evaluate our personnel, and going into the game we still had a lot of unanswered questions."

However, Cavigila still

has strong hopes in the season's future.

"After the game, although we did not win, we felt very happy with our team. We competed well and gave it our best. The character and attitude of this year's team is very good," stated Caviglia.

A Running Start

Cross country team is loaded with talent

By Brian Noonan

Rampage Reporter

The Rams kicked off the season with a bang Saturday, Sept. 23, as they took the Northern-California team title and fourth overall at the Fresno Invitational at Woodward Park. Fresno City also finished third in the American River College Invitational on Saturday, Sept. 9 in Sacramento. Freshman Bobby Rodriguez was ninth overall and the second man across for Fresno City College.

"I was very nervous about running in college level, and I was saying to myself 'What place am I going to take?' After I got done, I realized that it was a very easy race," said Rodriguez. "Now I have a good idea where I fall in with the rest of the runners and my first race was a very cool one to remember when I move on to doing other things."

Sophomore Tony Pulido and freshman Isaac Vizcarra made up a strong top three for the men and finished fifth and 28th overall, respectively. The Rams also saw freshmen Julio Moreno and John Brodie cross the line for 40th and 45th overall. With a solid team score of 125 points so early in the season, the outlook for the championship season seems bright.

Thanks to a strong group of newcomers and returnees, FCC cross-country also looks to be a contender for the Nor-Cal Cross-Country title and a high placing in the state championships come November. Pulido was a 2006 Northern-California Championships participant in the 1500 meters, and boasts a personal best 4:06.17 from

the spring track season.

Moreno comes to FCC from perennial powerhouse Madera. The Coyotes were ranked nationally during his junior year. While at Madera, Moreno finished fourth overall at the 2005 CIF Central Section Championships at 16:04 for the 3.1-mile course at Woodward Park.

"The team has come a long way since last year. Everyone is training hard, and in the process is encouraging everyone else to follow," said Pulido. "Also, the team seems to be more united, making us even stronger since we don't want to let each other down, pushing our only limitations."

Besides the former Madera teammates, red shirt Cesar Rodriguez has been training with the team and will help FCC come track season. Rodriguez placed 7th in the 10k at the 2006 Junior College Track and Field Championships with a time of 33 minutes. David Reynders will provide additional depth with his 1:55 800 and 4:24 1600 track PRs.

Fans looking to cheer on the runners are encouraged to watch them at their next home meet; the Central Valley Conference Championships on Oct. 25 at Woodward Park.

"We are looking at a good chance of placing in the top two at Northern California Regionals, and in the top five at state," added Pulido. Everyone in the team seems to be getting stronger and faster with each practice."

Remaining Schedule

Sept. 30	@ Sacramento City	7:00 PM
Oct. 7	BYE	
Oct. 14	West Hills	7:00 PM
Oct. 21	COS (Homecoming)	7:00 PM
Oct. 28	@ Sierra	2:00 PM
Nov. 4	@ San Joaquin	1:00 PM
Nov. 11	@ Reedley	7:00 PM

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To be, or not to be

All that you can be

Military offers the GI Bill, which provides money for college.

by Ana Zavala
Rampage reporter

Much has been said to propel civilians against joining the military. This can be inferred when looking at the number of enlisted within the past few years. Let's just say numbers have not doubled.

A countless number of people have the impression that the only field in the military is that of a soldier, and that is just not true. Although you can be a soldier, the military offers just about every job occupation held in the civilian world, with some of the best training in the world.

There is a wide variety of military occupations, ranging from dental assistant to military intelligence. Some of the very keen military men and women claim the most skilled expertise in a variety of jobs.

Let's face it; you've probably heard a great amount of prejudicial claims against the military. One of the most frequent; civilian jobs are better because pay for a civilian job is higher than that of the equivalent military job...and well...that's just not accurate.

At its lowest men and women forming part of the lower entry-level pay scale, make about \$1,200 a month (pay for an E-1 with less than four months of service). Nevertheless many who started as an E-1 excel and come out of the service having advanced a couple ranks *(the previous does not apply to all military branches of entry level military personnel). On the other side of the scale is the basic pay for achieved military personnel and that is at about \$16,000 a month (while serving as JCS/Vice JCA, CNO, CMC, Army/Air force CS, commander of a unified or specified combatant command). The pay scale will increase if there is an increase in civilian

wages, and in addition the military gets half a percent increase more than that of civilians.

While working a civilian job, never really leaving your town, doing anything exciting or experiencing much is good enough for some, others don't mind a little traction to achieve all of those.

In addition to pay and travel, the military offers a vast amount of benefits members and their intermediate families can receive while in and after retiring from the military. Of course they must meet all requirements to receive any benefit; naturally, the requirements for every benefit vary widely and benefits vary from state to state.

That being said, there is an abundant amount of benefits earned while in the military. For example: Those in active duty have medical, vision and dental benefits. These benefits have 100% coverage. This together with the fact that you can retire after only 20 years of service, well... that's if you want to, are a great addition to the many reasons for joining the military.

Another of the more recognized benefits the military provides is the GI bill. The GI has been available to military personnel since 1944. Active duty service members and veterans can receive more than \$37,000 in tax-free money that helps fund tuition fees, books and even living expenses.

With a variety of benefits ranging for personnel, whether active-duty, in the Reserve, the Guard or retired, the list of benefits would take too long to read about but some of the following can be almost simplified.

Benefits for California: Fishing and hunting license (pay less for license), Farm and home loans (Direct loans from the state of California), State and park recreation pass (\$3.50 for a life time pass to any California park), Motor vehicle registration fee waiver (registration fee waiver and free license

see PRO, p. 13

This is the same government that once thought slavery was OK.

by DC Leavy
Rampage reporter

First off, let me state that I realize this is an era marred by war and terrorist attacks, and that during such times, going against the government may not be the smartest choice. I also realize that I may be unfairly labeled as a traitor, or even an advocate of terrorism.

But, despite the opinions of the narrow-minded, I am here to remind us all that there is a minimum of two sides to every story. While not always popular, someone has to speak up for the other side. These days stating one's opinion against the military can only be done only by "a few good men" (or women), however I took up the metaphorical gauntlet and have risen to the challenge.

I'm here to say that the military isn't all glitz and glamour as the images promoted by Hollywood cinema and commercials make it appear. If you go into the military you won't turn into the next "Rambo." I guarantee you it's not as magical as the "Be all you can be" commercials you see plastered across the TV screen. It just seems that everyone assumes that as soon as you go into the military, you get your own tank, M16, as well as your own squadron and jet fighter. In actuality, a quarter of the recruits that sign up never make it to the battlefield. Because most are dropped for not being military material, or they can't handle the required training course.

If you're not one of the thousands that gets assigned to the kitchen or janitorial duty, then there is a chance that you could get trained in one of the courses that the army and navy are well known for: to be a sniper, tank driver, communication special-

ist or even fighter pilot. There is also a vast list of regular jobs needed such as dental assistant or military barber, but the chances of you getting a position that you want are slim. Nowadays, it seems you'd probably have a better chance of getting a job guarding a local airport.

Military service also results in a higher percentage of casualties and fatalities. Unlike working for the IRS, you have a higher chance of never seeing your family again. We all watch the news-another soldier dies in Iraq from a suicide bomber. I've heard of occupational risks but who's willing to go up against a suicide bomber? I can't remember the last time I had to deal with a suicide bomber working at Wal-mart.

I can understand the pride that one gets from accomplishing something and making a difference. I also understand what it means to serve one's government, but there's a couple of things that you need to keep in mind. This is the same government that at one point thought slavery was okay and justifiable. It is the same government that imprisoned thousands of Asian Americans, as well as non-native Asians during WWII. It's the same government that bombed Hiroshima and killed around 200,000 Japanese, and gave radiation poisoning to the 100,000 survivors of the same government, then refused media access to the sites, so no one would question their method of weapons tactics.

It's the same government that's waging war in Iraq because of the actions of a small terrorist group that supposedly resides there. It's the same government that's finally confessed to having secret prisons where they torture people to get information, showing that our dark side is just as bad as anyone else's. But lastly it's

see CON, p. 13

Campus Voices

by Ana Zavala and Robin Vallentyne

What can you get out of joining the military?



Andrew Garcia
Marriage, family, child counselor

"Nothing much, except job opportunities, skills for the future, and a new haircut."



Dwayne McClain
Medical

"The military teaches you how to be disciplined, respectful, responsible, and it helps you pay for college."



Maria Gonzalez
Nursing

"You get the G.I. Bill and experience."



Aaron Autler
U.S. Marines

"The schooling and opportunity to pick a field having little qualifications. You become very proficient in a job."



Daniel Ayala
English

"Nothing at all. I think it's a bad choice. I think people want to live."

The Legend of the Norris

Chuck Norris can slam a revolving door, and you still have trouble slamming a six-pack. The Norris rules the internet with a blood soaked beard and an endless supply of roundhouse kicks to the face. You're next.*

by Matthew T. Mendez
Rampage reporter

Who do you believe in?
Allah? Buddha? Pac? It doesn't make a difference; whoever he is, Chuck Norris either killed him or roundhouse kicked him so hard it left a footprint across the face of his soul. Chuck Norris does not take kindly to imposters.

There is no easy explanation for how Chuck Norris obtained such an insane cult following, but trust me on this one, Chuck Norris has legions of hardcore fans invading the internet as we speak. I proudly am one of them--not because I take this thing seriously--but because I finally found something that is meaningless enough to plaster a smile across my face whenever I think about it.

As the online legend states: In the beginning, there was nothing...until Chuck Norris roundhouse kicked that nothing in the face and said, "Get a job." That is the story of the universe*.

And so you, Rampage reader, have become the next human to be enlightened by the most persuasive theory on the origin of the universe yet. A story like that

has gotta be true.

No it doesn't, but it sure would've been a kick-ass way to get our originaive party started.

As for the Chuck Norris phenomenon, I believe it got its start with the 1986 film "The Delta Force," starring you-know-who. A film based upon the 1985 hijacking of TWA Flight 847, it was incredibly inaccurate and features just one musical theme that runs throughout the entire movie. Chuck, as always, was unstoppable in both his pursuit of justice and his inept sense of reality.

A few years later came the most ridiculous show in television history. I speak of course, of "Walker, Texas Ranger." This is where Chuck Norris planted the seeds for his eventual reputation as an omnipotent badass. As Cordell Walker, he could easily handle any difficult situation, he had no flaws whatsoever, and he constantly defeated the most feared criminals in their respective fields--all in less than an hour. Always.

Oddly enough, the man who is probably most responsible for the hype surrounding Chuck Norris is Conan O'Brien. The day NBC purchased the rights to all of the USA Network's TV shows will forever be remembered as the day

Chuck Norris became better than you, and me too I guess--not by all that much though.

I have no clue how many religions are practiced on this planet, but ALL of them were created by humankind somewhere, in a time long before security cameras and Hot Pockets.

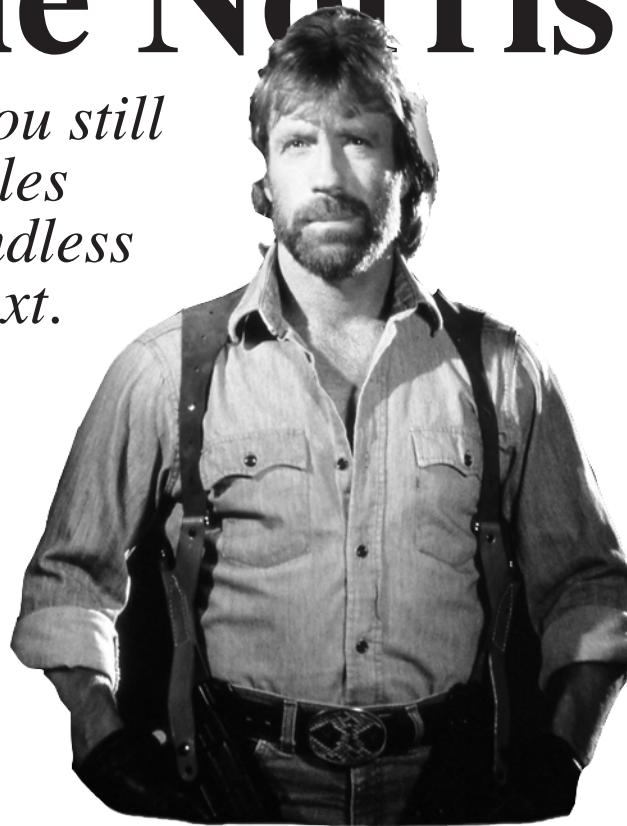
You don't have to believe any of this crap. You don't even have to like Chuck. There is no penalty for blasphemy in The Church of the Norris; however, you will be ordered to be put to death by the method of execution preferred by 42 states: lethal injection of chemical CNRhK (Chuck Norris Roundhouse Kick*).

Believe in whatever you feel is most righteous for you. For me, all religions were created equally at the same place AND time by the benevolent provider of relentless malevolence: Chuck Norris.

Created by roundhouse kick...somehow.

To see clips illustrating the greatness of Chuck Norris, or if you simply would like to discuss all things Chuck, go to my mspace page at www.mspace.com/lowercasejenkins

*-from ChuckNorrisfacts.com



Random Chuck Norris facts

from chucknorrisfacts.com

- *Chuck Norris doesn't daydream. He's too busy giving other people nightmares.*
- *They say curiosity killed the cat. This is false. Chuck Norris killed the cat. Every single one of them.*
- *According to Einstein's theory of relativity, Chuck Norris can actually roundhouse kick you yesterday.*
- *Chuck Norris invented black. In fact, he invented the entire spectrum of visible light. Except pink. Tom Cruise invented pink.*
- *Chuck Norris uses 8'x10' sheets of plywood as toilet paper.*
- *There are no races, only countries of people Chuck Norris has beaten to different shades of black and blue.*

Everything was better in my day

by DC Leavy
Rampage reporter

When I was a child I used to hear stories from my grandpa every time I went to his house to visit. Stories about how back in his day they had to walk six miles in the snow every morning to get to school, which always seemed kind of odd since he grew up in Bakersfield. Other times he used to talk about how TV was better back when he was a kid.

I never thought I'd end up like him, chasing kids off the lawn with a broom and a bad disposition. But my time seems to be coming nearer.

You see, I was on the bus the other day and I couldn't help but over hear two middle school kids conversation (journalistic trait). They were talking about how if Michael Jackson wasn't a rich white guy he wouldn't have gotten off. What?!?! It took me a while to grasp what just happened. These kids actually thought Michael Jackson was born white, and that was the reason he was acquitted of child molestation and endangerment. Being a good samaritan and a human being who believes that everyone should be enlightened and educated, I took the time to tell them that he wasn't white and actually was born black and had skin therapy to get his complexion lightened. Oddly enough they ignored me and stared

at me like I was the crazy old guy you see at the bus-stop talking about Jesus.

I decided to let it go and just enjoy my bus ride, when their conversation turned to boy bands and how "98 degrees" was better than "Nsync". When everyone knows the greatest boy band of all time was the "Jackson 5." Like "Nsync", "Backstreet Boys", or "98degrees" could ever hold a flame to the "Jackson 5" crew.

After a while I realized that it's not these kids fault that they don't know what came before them, they're just a product of their environment. They, like many of the years that came before tend to focus on the present rather than the past. Using this logic I started to think even more about this at first it was an interesting thought, then it became a fascination and soon an obsession.

Thinking about all the movies, music, and especially cartoons we took for granted and now seem to be lost to the archives of our memory and a vault somewhere. I wish I would've taken the time to record the shows and kept them with me, instead of frantically searching the Internet trying to recover my youth.

It's sad to believe that

legends like "Thundercats," "Voltron," and the "Smurfs" will only pop up as special flash back reruns. To think that "Pokemon" and "Yugi-Oh" have replaced our "G.I Joe" and "Dinosaurs" (Not the Momma!). Even though my generation wasn't the first to create some of these signature pieces of



Great shows like "Dinosaurs" (above) have been replaced by the likes of "Bobobo-bo bo-bobo" (below).
tvacres.com
forum.judgehype.com



Saturday morning entertainment, we were the first to start perfecting the recipe.

The standards of today's writers have been dramatically decreased when it comes to what makes an interesting story and a decent plot line. I was watching "Toonami," one of my favorite time slots on Cartoon Network, and a show called "Bobobo-bo bo-bobo" (that's really the name) came on.

It's a new show where one of the main characters is a 6-1/2 foot tall, caucasian guy with a blonde afro, who uses his overgrown nostril hairs to fight crime. At first I was positive that I was mistaken, but after a few more minutes of watching it, I was sure that the cartoon animation world had given up, and this show was the result.

I don't want this to come out like I'm sick of the accomplishments of the world of animation in 2000. In fact there's quite a few shows I wish we had when we were kids but I'm glad I can enjoy them as an adult. But I long for the days of "Fraggle Rock" and the "Snorks," when a superhero not only was super, but he was a hero, and the fantasy of every kid in class was to be them.

The idea that our children are going to live with "Felicity" instead of "Family Matters" and "Charmed" instead of "Martin" is a little unnerving.

I know TV is TV, but the classics should never die, especially since the world needs the wisdom of "Hermans Head" & "Animaniacs" now more than ever.

Hey, bro, you a jerk, too?

by Ana Zavala
Rampage reporter

Growing up, I was a constant boy defender on the “all boys are jerks” subject. “They’re not all jerks” I’d say, “you just need to keep looking.”

A few years and a couple of bad relationships later, I too have found myself repeating the infamous quote.

It seems that “cool” society has driven all the nice boys out and brought forth what we’re stuck with now. So what’s a girl to do? You have a couple of options.

1. Date as many boys as possible, hoping to find the “right one”(maybe not)
2. Wait it out, maybe the guy you like will out-grow his jerk self (12 months- forever)
3. Make all guys you date sign an “I’m not a jerk...for reals” form and have it notarized (consequences unknown)
4. Date the least attractive guy and teach him the un-jerk like ropes (don’t be shallow!)
5. Become their friend, then date them.

Regardless of the silly options, the important question here

is, are boys jerks forever or do they grow out of it?

I posed this same question to a good friend of mine who is 30 years old. His all-too-honest response was nauseating.

“I don’t know,” he said, “I’m still one.”

Girls, how much more truthful of an answer do we need?

But can we really label the male gender as a whole, when not all are at fault?

I’m not sure, but it seems that for every girl there are at least two jerks. Now, unless all jerks have been recycled numerous times (an unlikely possibility), we can deduce that, even if all boys aren’t jerks, most of them are.

Helpful hints to all jerks trying to change their ways...don’t be a jerk!

If in doubt; if it isn’t how you would want your mother, sister, or potential daughter to be treated, DON’T do it!!

My own definition of a JERK: **Guy who dates you to do you, dates you until he does you, and/or dates you and acts like he doesn’t care about you**

Pro: Be proud to serve

continued from P. 11

plates), and California veterans cemetery (all expenses burial paid at no costs to veterans) are only a small amount of the many things the military has to offer.

**Disabled veterans license plates, Veterans in California civil service examination, Farm and home loans, Employment and unemployment insurance assistance, Business license, tax and fee waiver, College tuition fee waivers for veterans’ dependents, property tax

exemption, disabled veteran business enterprise opportunities and a variety of others.

Still one of the most important things you can get from the military that you might not be able to get anywhere else, is the knowledge that you’ve achieved something that many never have and will never achieve. Serving your country is definitely something to be proud of. Plus you get to wear a really cute outfit!

Facts were derived from www.military.com

Con: Is the war over?

continued from P. 11

the same government that said the war was over two years ago, yet we’re still in Iraq putting many American lives at risk. It’s sad irony that we’re attempting when you attempt to bring about peace

and democracy with an M16 and a pistol in hand.

So, before you believe all the propaganda and media hype, take time to evaluate your life and make your own decision about what’s right for you. In the end, the only person that matters is you.

BANNED BOOKS Week

September 23—30, 2006

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn The Autobiography of Malcolm X
Candide The Death of Ivan Ilyich The Diary of a Young Girl Dracula
Frankenstein Gulliver's Travels Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone
The House of the Spirits I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings Jaws
The Jungle Lady Chatterdev's Lover Madame Bovary The Martian
National Bestseller ISABEL ALLENDE THE HOUSE OF THE SPIRITS
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Views

We at the FCC Rampage would like to thank Earth Talk/The Environmental Magazine for their contribution. If you have any questions regarding Earth Talk articles, please contact them directly.

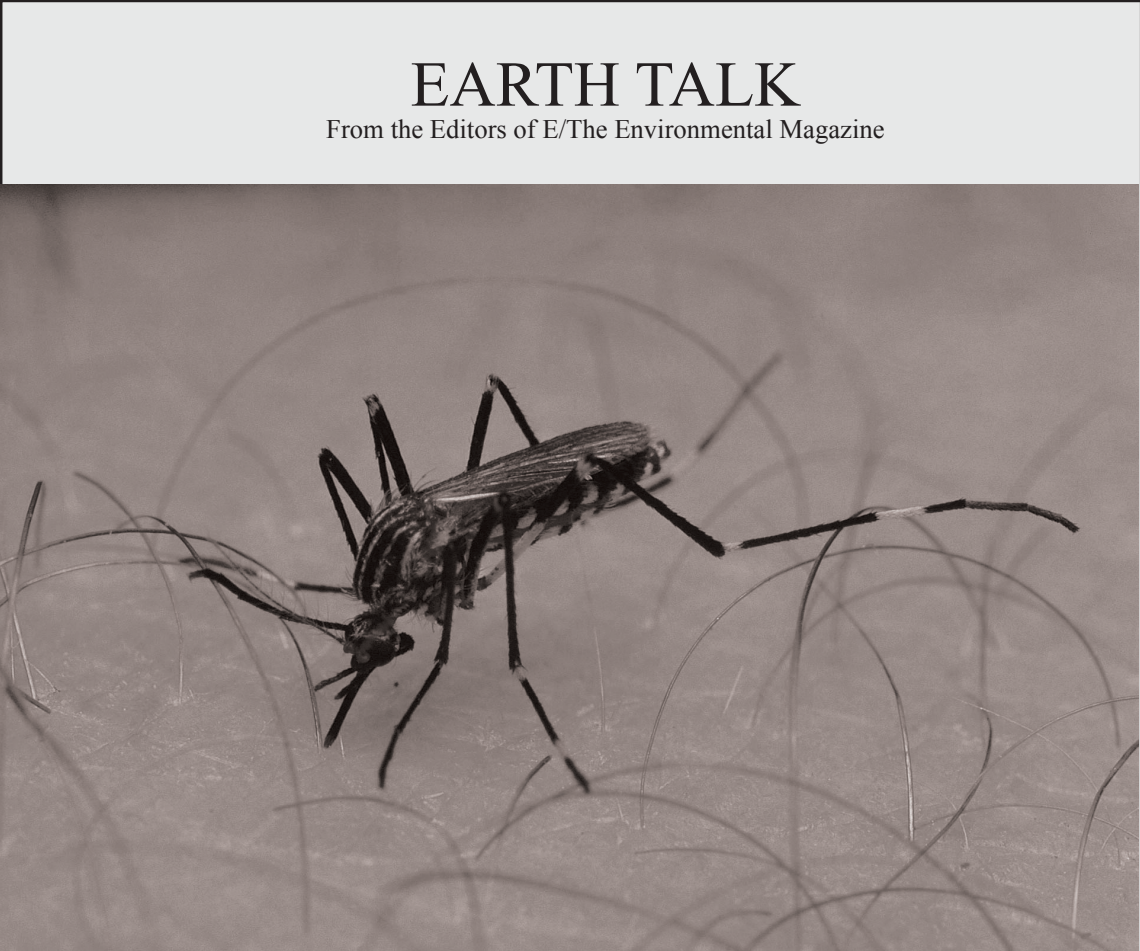


Photo Courtesy of Getty Images

Dear EarthTalk: I know that global warming causes extreme weather and melts glaciers and causes sea level rises. But how does it increase the spread of disease?
-- Curran Clark, Seattle, WA

Climate change accelerates the spread of disease primarily because warmer global temperatures enlarge the geographic range in which disease-carrying animals, insects and microorganisms--as well as the germs and viruses they carry--can survive. Analysts believe that, as a result of global temperature rises, diseases that were previously limited only to tropical areas may show up increasingly in other, previously cooler areas.

For example, mosquitoes carrying dengue fever used to dwell at elevations no higher than 3,300 feet, but because of warmer temperatures they have recently been detected at 7,200 feet in Colombia’s Andes Mountains. And biologists have found malaria-carrying mosquitoes at higher-than-usual elevations in Indonesia in just the last few years. These changes happen not because of the kinds of extreme heat we’ve experienced in recent months, but occur even with minuscule increases in average temperature.

But extreme heat can also be a factor, and the nexus of global warming and disease really hit home

for North Americans in the summer of 1999, when 62 cases of West Nile virus were reported in and around New York City. Dr. Dickson Despommier, a Columbia University public health professor, reports that West Nile Virus is spread by one species of mosquito that prefers to prey on birds, but which will resort to biting humans when its normal avian targets have fled urban areas during heat waves.

“By reproductive imperative, the mosquitoes are forced to feed on humans, and that’s what triggered the 1999 epidemic,” Despommier says. “Higher temperatures also trigger increased mosquito biting frequency. The first big rains after the drought created new breeding sites.” He adds that a similar pattern has been recognized in other recent West Nile outbreaks in Israel, South Africa and Romania.

Bird flu is another example of a disease that is likely to spread more quickly as the Earth warms up, but for a different reason: A United Nations study found that global warming--in concert with excessive development--is contributing to an increased loss of wetlands around the world. This trend is already forcing disease-carrying migrating birds, who ordinarily seek out wetlands as stopping points, to instead land on animal farms where they mingle with domestic poultry, risk-

ing the spread of the disease via animal-to-human and human-to-human contact.

A Congressionally-mandated assessment of climate change and health conducted in 2001 predicted that global warming will cause or increased incidences of malaria, dengue fever, yellow fever, encephalitis and respiratory diseases throughout the world in coming decades. The assessment also concluded that insect- and rodent-borne diseases would become more prevalent throughout the U.S. and Europe.

The news isn’t good for less developed parts of the world either. Researchers have found that more than two-thirds of waterborne disease outbreaks (such as cholera) follow major precipitation events, which are already increasing due to global warming.

CONTACTS: Natural Resources Defense Council Consequences of Global Warming, www.nrdc.org/globalWarming/fcons.asp.

GOT AN ENVIRONMENTAL QUESTION? Send it to: **EarthTalk**, c/o **E/The Environmental Magazine**, P.O. Box 5098, Westport, CT 06881; submit it at: www.emagazine.com/earthtalk/thisweek/, or e-mail: earthtalk@emagazine.com. Read past columns at: www.emagazine.com/earth-talk/archives.php.

Graphic novel 'Persepolis' a depiction of Islamic Iran

by Johanna Tanori
Rampage reporter

Graphic novels are truly the snobs of comic books. Some are actually pretty serious, some are sarcastically dry, and others serve as the only outlet of communication for creepy 20 some-things who cant relate to people without a storyboard. I used to hate comics. Actually I should say I used to love them. Reading the Sunday morning funnies is just a part of every nerdy kid's weekend routine. I

would revel in the full color world for at least twenty minutes. That's a long time for a kid. Until I hit ten, when I developed what you could call a more sophisticated literary taste. So I put down the Family Circus without a second thought. So long Billy, PJ and Barfy!

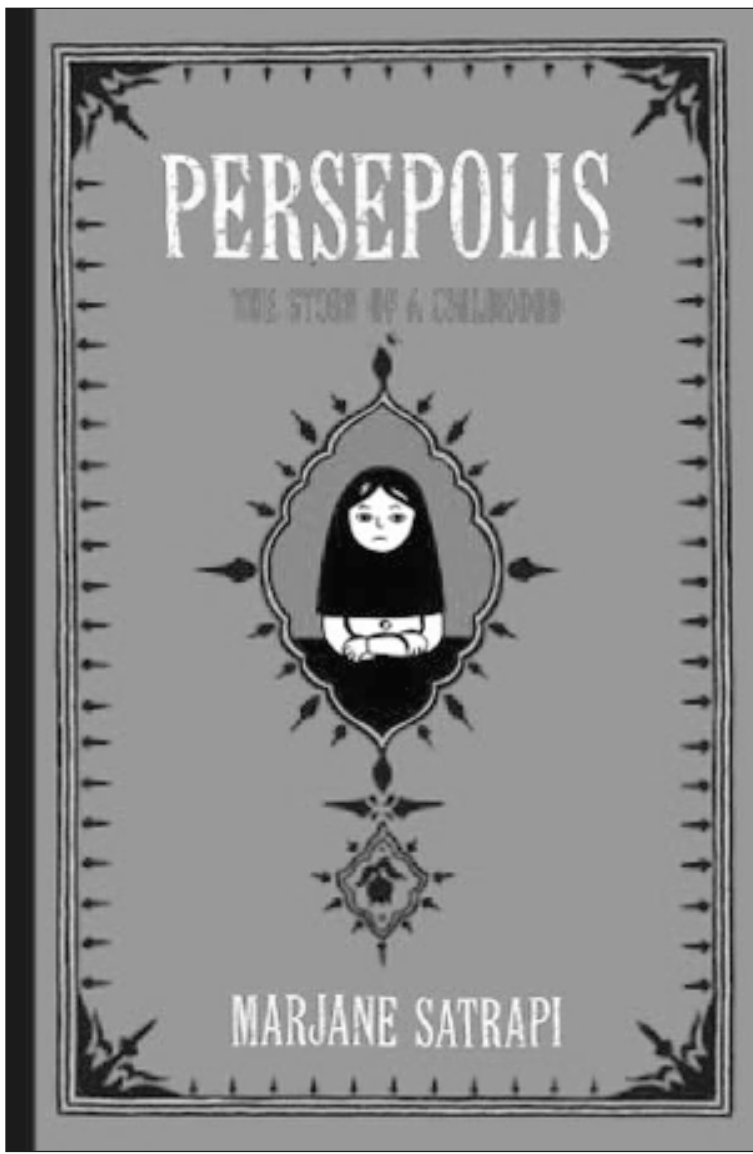
It wasn't until recently that I reverted back to my old ways, and this time I have Marjan Satrapi throwing me head first into the "born again comic feign" category. "Persepolis: The story of a childhood" is Satrapi's first graphic novel. An autobiography of her

childhood where she grew up in Iran during the time of the Shah: an extreme fundamentalist group that ran the country for many years. In this story Satrapi does an amazing job of depicting the everyday experiences of an eight-year-old girl confused by the oppressive government.

Coming from a family where her parents were both liberal professors, Marjan was consistently pressed to question the rules of the restrictive community around her. As Satrapi grew up her days in primary school were littered with awkwardly funny encounters between her fellow classmates and the conservative school nuns. Satrapi clarifies the social aspect of Persian culture by giving the reader a child's innocent perspective on the world, while also offering up endearing moments between her and her mother where she attempts to explain the delicacies of religion, the mysteries of the veil, and the divine desire to become a war martyr.

Marjan not only depicts her personal blunders but she also gives us stories from soldiers affected by the war in Iran. Starting from the beginning of the country's history and then dipping into current times, Satrapi craftily relates humanity to her everyday experiences and uses Persepolis to act as a satirical guidebook, giving the reader some much needed comic relief considering the country's current state.

I found this graphic novel to be a dashing quick read. Yet in reality it was just like a funny history class where all the slides reminded me of School House Rock. Persepolis was equally sarcastic and sentimental: a task never easily accomplished. I recommend that you read this book and see how it's done. Heck, you might even learn something.



randomhouse.com

Mastodon a roaring, angry metal force

by Efren Marquez
Rampage reporter

This band could not have a more fitting name. Mastodon sounds exactly as their name implies: a roaring, pummeling, angry beast that can ravage mosh pits and who also stomped across Pre-Historic Earth.

The similarities are there if you choose to look: the Woolly American Mastodon roamed the land for millions of years. The band Mastodon has been touring and playing in America for 6 years which makes them nearly ancient in the music world.

The American Mastodon was an enormous beast that used its immense strength to break huge branches off ancient trees in order to eat hard-to-reach leaves. The band Mastodon is an enormously heavy beast that uses its immense musical strength to break down doors in order to reach hard to find success and fans in the notoriously fickle metal world.

In trying to find success the band hasn't failed. This year alone saw the Atlanta-based metal band playing a high profile metal tour that featured thrash legends Slayer and new metal kings Lamb of God. With the release of the new album "Blood Mountain" available out on Relapse Records, there is a good chance that things will get better

for the band. In the last few years, Mastodon has drawn comparisons to legendary bands like Metallica, Black Sabbath and Rush and the new release does earn some of those comparisons.

Wasting no time, the band opens "Blood Mountain" at full speed with a wild opening drum solo by insanely talented drummer Brann Dailor on the opening track "The Wolf is Loose." It's a solid and heavy song that is also highlighted by the playing of guitarists Brent Hinds and Brandon Keliher. The first track isn't the only one that shows just how innovative these guitarists are. "Circle of Cysquatch" picks up and improves on what Metallica left behind in the 1990s while "Bladecatcher" spins off into a hallucination of swirling guitar sounds and textures earning the Rush comparisons. Another notable track is the driving "Hand of Stone" which will probably cause massive headaches for fans who love to headbang.

Another thing about Mastodon is that they rock. Simply put, the band rocks like those now lumped into the classic rock genre. They are careful to maintain a Rock and Roll streak in their music while improving on metal band techniques. It's a steady balance of styles that works to satisfy metal fans without alienating new fans just getting into them.



www.mastodonrocks.com

Timberlake takes place as next "King of Pop"

by Brian Noonan
Rampage reporter

Crooning listeners with a sultry fusion of groove-era funk and contemporary dance melodies, Justin Timberlake's FutureSex/LoveSounds is a masterstroke of musical ingenuity. With two hot singles already getting major radio play, FS/LS should further cement Timberlake's fast-rising reputation as the next "King of Pop."

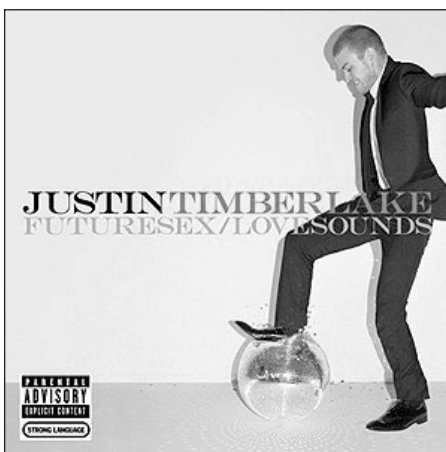
"Sexy Back" was the first

track released and has since taken dance floors across the nation by storm. The song is an excellent representation of Justin's transformation from teen pop sensation to intrepid pioneer.

There is simply nothing else out there quite like it. The track combines breakneck dance beats with the now famous catch phrase "I'm bringin sexy back," to create a much needed detour from an influx of the materialistic rants consuming hip hop inspired songs.

"My Love", a sublime concoction of chic studio production and passionate lyrics,

will be the second single. The song is essentially a contemporary love ballad, and blends well with



the overall image of the album.

Other tracks of note include "Chop Me Up" and "Damn Girl". Oscar-winning rap group Three Six Mafia is featured on the Timbaland produced "Chop Me Up". The lyrics are flirtatious in nature, with Justin and Three Six trying their best to win the heart, and body, of a girl who has them "screwed up."

Following suit in FS/LS's sexually charged line-up, Damn Girl is a throwback of sorts to traditional jazz-funk roots.

Listening to the track brings to mind Christina Agu-

ilera's new album, Back to Basics, which is largely jazz inspired. The song takes a different feel from the rest of the album, but appropriately so, adding a more eclectic tone.

The innovative musical structure and creative talent that went into this production make this CD an excellent purchase. It has a very eclectic feel to it, making it marketable to almost all types of music listeners.

If you haven't already bought it, stop what you're doing now and hit up the local music shack to get your hands on an instant classic.

Good cast, intentions in ‘All the King’s Men’

by Maylin Tu
Rampage reporter

If good intentions were cockroaches, “All the King’s Men” would need an exterminator, and quick!

Based on Robert Penn Warren’s Pulitzer Prize winning novel, the film chronicles the rise and fall of Willie Stark, an ambitious, man-of-the-people Louisiana politician played by Sean Penn.

Boasting an impressive cast—try Sean Penn, Jude Law, Anthony Hopkins, Kate Winslet, and Mark Ruffalo—“All the King’s Men” fails to deliver the dramatic goods.

Story elements that might

have worked in the book just aren’t believable on the big screen. If anything, the film simply confirms the adage that power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely.

Writer/director Steven Zaillian, Fresno born (but not bred), is best known for writing the screenplay for “Schindler’s List”. He also wrote such well-known films as “Gangs of New York”, “The Interpreter”, and “Clear and Present Danger”.

As a director, he made “Searching for Bobby Fischer”, which made the game of chess scintillating, and “A Civil Action”, which made John Travolta look very, very good, and corrupt corporations look very, very bad.

Clearly, when it comes to story, this guy knows his stuff. So what went wrong?

Perhaps the director got too close to the material.

All criticism aside, kudos to the director for attempting a star-studded movie that relies on story above all else and kudos for venturing into melodramatic territory with a straight face.

So, Steve (can I call you Steve?), you have brought good things to Fresno (and the rest of the world).

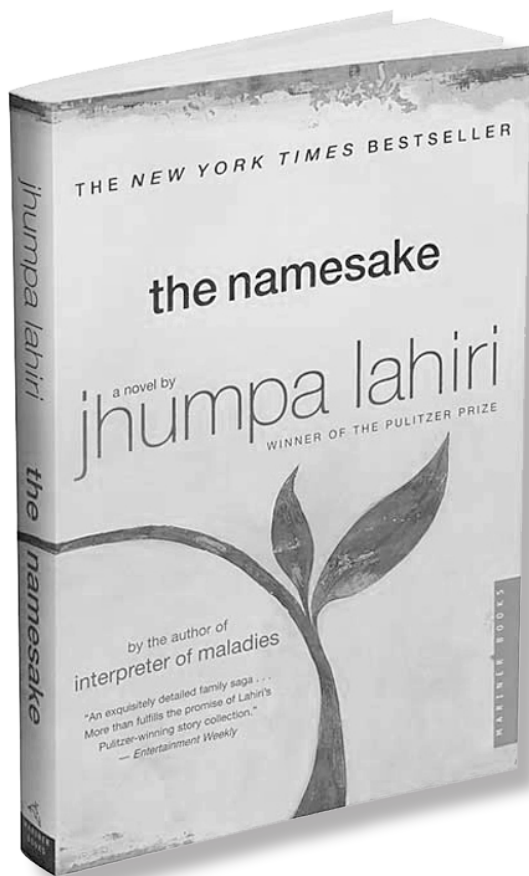
Your film reminds us, in stark contrast, of all the wonderful things you’ve done in the past. You may have screwed up this time, but we forgive you.

Just don’t do it again.



Sean Penn plays Louisiana politician Willie Stark in Sony Pictures’ “All the King’s Men.” movies.yahoo.com

‘Namesake’ a classic coming-of-age novel



by Chelsea Bieker
Rampage reporter

Jhumpa Lahiri, already having a Pulitzer Prize under her belt for her story collection, Interpreter of Maladies, takes on a brazen look into the lives of a traditional Indian family in her debut novel, The Namesake. This finely tuned novel takes us up close and personal into the customs and ways of life through two generations of the Ganguli family.

The first half of the novel focuses on the lives of Ashima and Ashoke Ganguli, who were part of an arranged marriage in Calcutta . When they decide to move to the United States , they settle in Cambridge , Massachusetts . When their first son is born, they face a predicament. His name. In the Indian culture a child is born with a “good” name, to be used for school and business, and a pet name, to be used by family and friends. The Ganguli’s are waiting for a letter from India from the grandparents that will hold the child’s true name. When that letter does not arrive, the newborn is given the name Gogol, after his father’s favorite author.

As Gogol grows older he resents the name that was bestowed to him. He feels a true lack of identity, and above all shame. In America few kids walked around with such an interesting name. Gogol desperately wants to fit in with everyone else. In a fit of desperation he legally changes his name to Nikhil, or for a more

American sound, Nick.

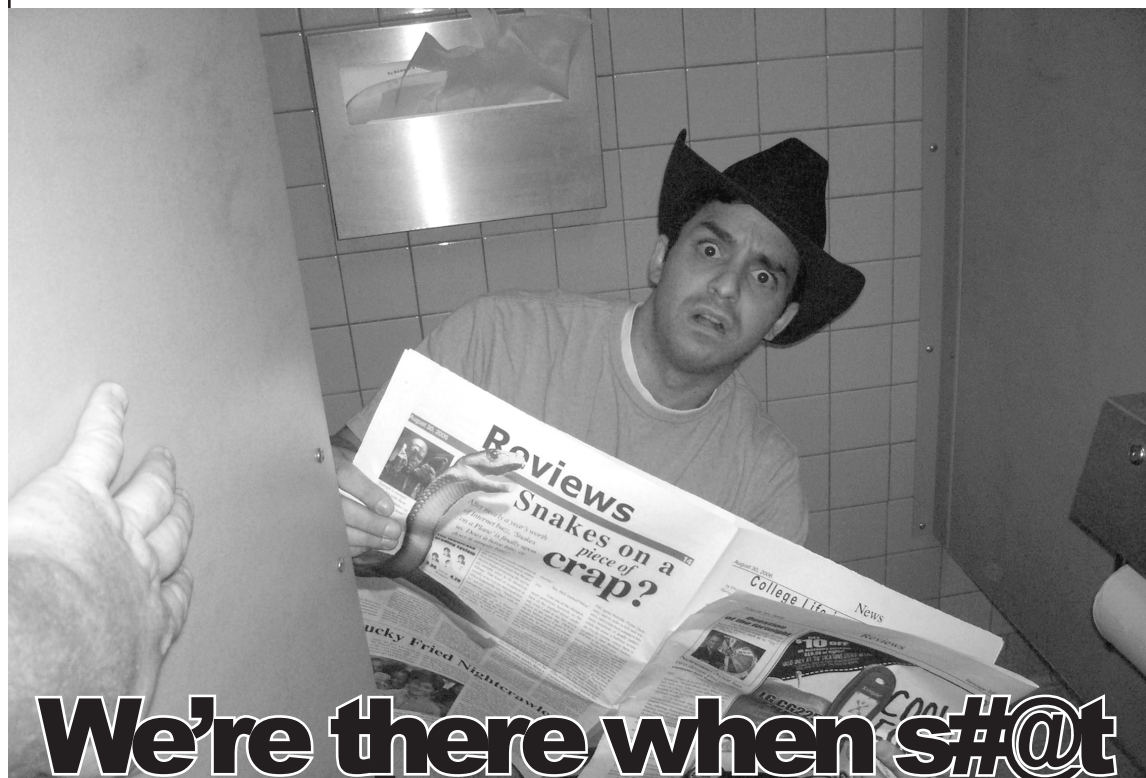
With his new name, and new -found confidence, we embark on his adult life. We follow Nikhil through series of awkward teen moments, his first high school party, and his life mission to break away from the Bengali customs.

I didn’t expect to relate to this novel, but I found that through Lahiri’s writing, she can make you feel anything she wants. She really is that good. Each sentence is constructed in a way that accurately paints a picture in the mind of the reader. There were times when reading this novel I found it impossible to put down. Gogol, or Nick, takes us down a winding path of love affairs, and struggle. By the end of the book I felt as though I knew him on a personal level.

I read a lot of books, and it isn’t that often that one comes along with such strength. I truly couldn’t believe this was Lahiri’s first novel, for she writes with wisdom far beyond her years. After reading this book, I decided to read her short story, Interpreter of Maladies. Once again she captivates the reader with the beauty of human nature. Her writings do not revolve around a vast amount of action, but they make you so involved in the characters lives, you are left yearning for more.

If you choose to read one novel this year, make it this one. It is a classic coming of age portrait, and is sure to tear at the heartstrings a little. It is extremely cliché to say that it made me laugh, and it made me cry, but that’s exactly what it did.

The Rampage



We’re there when s#@t happens

Rampage correction

Carly Hubbel wrote the “‘Crank’ will crank you up” review in our last issue, not Chelsea Bieker. Whoops.



'Last Kiss' not quite 'Garden State'

by Carly Hubbell
Rampage reporter

What's forgivable in love and what's not? When can you be selfless and when can you be a horrible jerk?

Questions like these arise in "The Last Kiss," the latest film starring Zach Braff, about a confused man and those in his life who are struggling around him.

The movie illustrates relationships at their hardest, and how everyone, young or old, goes through a crisis at some point, but its getting through it that defines your life.

Braff plays Michael, a 29-

(almost 30)-year old man who recently found out his girlfriend of three years is pregnant.

While he at most times keeps his composure around her, he is terrified of what lies ahead of him and isn't sure if Jenna (played by Jacinda Barrett) is all he wants for the rest of his life.

At a wedding, Michael meets a cute, young college girl named Kim (Rachel Bilson). She approaches him and decides that he is who she wants, and invites him to meet her one day on her college campus.

What happens next is both intoxicating but heartbreaking. His actions are driven by his confusion and panic about his life. His

character isn't someone you would naturally like because of his cheating and deception, but at the same time you feel pity for the guy and wonder to yourself, can you really blame him?

Michael has no doubt he loves Jenna, but he also has no doubt he desires the time spent with Kim. A huge wake-up call comes in the form of a screaming girlfriend and a sad, needy college student.

Jacinda Barrett, who was actually originally a Real World cast member in the mid-nineties, steals all the scenes she's in. She can turn on her emotions at the flick of a switch, going from calm and understanding one second

to hysterical and irate the next. Bilson took a step in her first film since the OC and plays Kim perfectly, using the vulnerable but carefree attitude only the young can attain.

The movie also follows the lives of Michael's three best friends who have entire problems of their own as well. One is a commitment-phobe who loves sex but not what follows, one is thinking about leaving his wife and son, and one is desperately trying to get over his ex-girlfriend while at the same time tending to his ailing father.

This movie can put you in a depressed state and probably isn't one you would want to see if you're

thinking of leaving the theater in any kind of feel-good mood.

While "The Last Kiss" is no "Garden State", it still has the same components of characters you love to analyze and a soundtrack that is compelling in every scene. The movie is an emotional train-wreck of events but it's one of those things that you love watching, mostly just because you're happy that you're not him.

This may not be a movie you would want to see with your significant other, since I'm sure it won't make you happy about any kind of relationship, but see it if you really want to see acting at its finest and a storyline that sticks with you well after the credits.

'Gridiron Gang' a typical feel-good sports movie

by David Witte
Rampage reporter



sonypictures.com

Willie Weathers (Jade Yorker) delivers the important speech at halftime of the biggest game of the season.

When I saw the previews for "Gridiron Gang", it looked like another one of those sappy sports movies where a group of rejects comes together to beat the odds.

And it was, but I'm a sucker for that kind of movie.

In the vein of "Friday Night Lights", "the Mighty Ducks", and any number of sports movies, Gridiron Gang follows a group of rejects in the form of juvenile delinquents at an L.A. County detention center.

Sean Porter (The Rock) is a counselor at Kilpatrick Detention Center, who laments that 80% of the kids who are released from the center will either die or return to jail.

Porter presents an idea to his superiors: create a football team. It will give the kids something to do besides the gang life. With the help of his trusty assistant Malcolm Moore (Xzibit), Porter goes about putting his team together.

Enter Willie Weathers (Jade Yorker), who is sent to the detention center after shooting his step-father in a family dispute. Porter tags him as his unwilling running back.

Weathers immediately runs into trouble with a rival gang member, Kelvin Owens (David V. Thomas), who plays for the defense.

The rivalry is put on hold when, after only a few weeks of practice, the team faces off against one of the best teams in the state.

On the first offensive drive, the team learns that its quarterback, Leon Hayes (Mo), has never thrown a pass in a game, contrary to his earlier bragging.

After a 38-0 loss, the team goes about trying to become an actual team.

Yorker does a great job playing the kid who's conflicted about trying to get out of the gangster lifestyle. At times he wants out, but when things go wrong, he goes right back to his old ways.

A young Brandon Smith, however, steals the show as Bug Wendal, the extremely cocky water boy. At one point, Wendal writes home, saying the team won seven games in a row because he scored about 60 touchdowns.

So if you like your movies with seemingly impossible obstacles bested, and swelling music during tear-jerking inspirational speeches, then this is the movie for you. If not, then, uh... too bad.