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Slain Valencia student remembered

By Collin Dever
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A memorial service for a Valencia student killed in an apparent murder-suicide was held on the West Campus Feb. 9.

Loyta Gaye Sloley was found dead by Orlando police on Jan. 27 in the Courtyard by Marriott Orlando Downtown hotel on North Magnolia Ave.

Earlier in the day she was abducted by her boyfriend, James Clayton, who after hours of driving around the city, arrived at the Marriott, shot Sloley, then turned the gun on himself, according to police.

Police were notified of the incident by co-workers

at Lucerne Hospital after Sloley, 34, called to report she would not be at work because her boyfriend was holding her against her will, and that she was unaware of her location. The police tracked the cell phone she called from to the Courtyard, but when policed arrived both Sloley and Clayton already laid dead.

The memorial service was organized by the Black High Achievers, of which Sloley was a member, and about 40 people attended. Dr. Sylvester Robinson, the academic advisor, said a prayer, and former classmates said a few words.

Janet Bryan, the president of Black High Achievers, read a poem but was overcome by grief and a faculty member stepped in to finish.

Sloley graduated from Valencia with an Associate of Arts in general studies in December. She had been a student since spring 2001 and was enrolled in the current term as a non-degree seeking student, according to Valencia records.

Phone messages were left for Bryan and Sgt. Barbara Jones, of the Orlando Police Public Information Office, in an attempt to get comments, but neither responded prior to deadline.

Funeral services for Sloley were held Feb. 7 at the Trinity United Methodist Church in Orlando, and interment was to be held in her native Sheffield, Jamaica.

— Additional reporting by Leah Reidenbach



Loyta Gaye Sloley

Courtesy of the Sloley Family



Susan Werner performs at the East Campus Performing Arts Center with bandmate Trina Hamlin.

Collin Dever / Valencia Voice

Singer-songwriter wows East Campus

By Walter Frazier
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American singer/songwriter Susan Werner performed her blend of contemporary folk music live for Visions and Voices, Valencia's distinguished artists series Feb. 5 at East Campus' Performing Arts Center.

Werner attempted to keep the audience entertained and she did this successfully with not only her voice or the playing of her piano and guitars, but she also managed to squeeze jokes in between songs.

"I thought her performance was phenomenal," said Anne Marie Pierre, a viewer and student, "she was actually really funny too."

Werner started her career as a voice major at the University of Iowa and Temple University

Susan Werner performs set for Visions and Voices series

where she received both bachelor's and master's degrees. Soon after discovering her passion for folk music she started to write songs and play shows around the country, later settling down in Chicago.

Werner began singing classical music at the age of 5 but said, "I started out singing classical music and quickly realized I was not good enough, so I transitioned into folk music." Her latest album, "Classics," is a rendition of the style of pop music from the early sixties and seventies, but she has also released several other

albums in the past that have elements of jazz, gospel, and country.

Proving to be a versatile and engaging performer she played at a Peter, Paul, and Mary PBS special in 1998 as one of the best of the next generation of folk singers.

At the event Werner performed such hits as "Sunday Mornings," "I Can't be New" and "(Why is Your) Heaven So Small," which was later revealed at the question and answer segment to be inspired by a man in Chicago who was harassing people that were entering

a gay rights organization.

A great number of her songs deal with controversial issues including religion, government, and relationships.

However, not all of her songs are about liberal topics. She also writes many traditional pop songs that deal with subjects that are less unorthodox.

Trina Hamlin accompanied Werner during the set, playing the harmonica and light percussion. Once Werner finished playing, She and Hamlin offered the audience to visit the East Campus music room, where they were welcome to perform alongside them.

The next artist performing for Visions and Voices is Author Barry Lopez on March 5 at Valencia's Osceola Campus in Building 2-101 at 1:15 p.m.

— Additional reporting by Amanda Perrin

Senate tinkers with \$900 billion stimulus plan

By David Lightman and Margaret Talev
McClatchy Newspapers

WASHINGTON — A divided and discontented Senate on Monday began debating a nearly \$900 billion economic stimulus plan, while President Barack Obama launched a new grassroots campaign asking Americans to prod their lawmakers to act on it.

The Senate’s legislation could look dramatically different by week’s end, as lawmakers from both parties are eyeing changes in spending on infrastructure, housing aid and other features of the massive package.

The final Senate version must then be reconciled with the \$819 billion stimulus plan that the House of Representatives passed last week.

Concerns are growing among members of both parties about the price tag and the plan’s potential impact. The economy shrank 3.8 percent in the fourth quarter of 2008, its worst three-month showing in nearly 27 years, and economists see few prospects for quick improvement without massive government intervention.

Obama, looking to bring some Republican critics on board in time to have the final bill ready for his signature by mid-February, called Democratic congressional leaders to the White House on Monday for a strategy session.

In an e-mail sent by the Democratic National Committee, the president also urged voters to host or attend an “Economic Recovery House Meeting” this coming weekend, where a videotaped message from party chairman and Virginia Gov. Tim Kaine would be played to answer questions about the stimulus spending.

“I hope to sign the recovery plan into law in the next few weeks,” Obama said in the e-mail. “But I need your help to spread the word and build support.”

The grassroots tactic resembles Obama’s presidential campaign efforts to keep supporters across America involved and energized, and is a novel extension of computer-based campaign tactics into governance.

Ironically, Republicans, in urging more tax relief and housing assistance, said Monday that they’re truer to Obama’s spirit than Democrats in Congress are, while warning that most GOP lawmakers are likely to oppose the Democratic plan unless there are major changes. No GOP lawmakers voted for the House version last week.

“It appears the Democratic leadership has not gotten the memo _ or the message, if you will _ from the president,” said Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky. “We believe, Republicans, that a stimulus bill must fix the main problem first, and that’s housing. That’s how all of this began. We think you ought to go right at housing first.”

White House spokesman Robert Gibbs urged McConnell to “look at the whole bill,” calling the Senate measure “a good plan.”

The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office has estimated that 64 percent of the House stimulus plan would be pumped into the economy by Sept. 30, 2010. It hasn’t yet assessed the Senate plan.

Economists disagree on the value of the Democrats’ stimulus plans.

The plans “won’t reverse the current economic downturn,” said economist Mark Zandi, who advised Republican John McCain during last year’s presidential campaign and recently testified on Capitol Hill. “It will be severe, regardless. But (the stimulus) will provide a very vital boost to the flagging economy if it’s passed quickly, in the next few weeks.”

However, the Urban Institute-Brookings Institution Tax Policy Center found little to praise in the tax part of the Senate plan.

It didn’t give any tax provision a grade of A, which it awards for measures that would “begin quickly and go primarily to people who would most likely spend it or to businesses that would most likely use funds to retain workers or expand.”

It gave B-pluses to the rebates of \$500 to most taxpayers, and to an expansion of the child credit.

That sort of lukewarm expert evaluation, coupled with growing rumblings from wary constituents, could fuel a bipartisan consensus to do more about housing and infrastructure, which both are more well-suited for “stimulus” actions than some Democratic proposals are.

To quicken spending, Sens. Patty Murray, D-Wash., and Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., are expected to push to increase funds available for public works projects.

Republicans are taking the lead on housing, proposing a one-to-two-year government guarantee for a 4 percent interest rate on 30-year loans for creditworthy borrowers. Members haven’t yet worked out a definition of “creditworthy,” but GOP officials suggest it would include virtually anyone with a current loan or seeking a new one who’d qualify under normal lending rules.

Also being widely discussed among Republicans is a plan to give homebuyers a tax credit of up to \$15,000, or 10 percent of the cost of a home this year, whichever is lower.

Senate Banking Committee Chairman Christopher Dodd, D-Conn., said that he’s open to ideas. There’s some thought that many of the housing breaks could wind up in separate housing legislation likely to be considered later this month.

In the Senate debate, Appropriations Committee Chairman Daniel Inouye, D-Hawaii, referred to lapses by Herbert Hoover, the president at the start of the Great Depression, and stressed the urgency for the bill.

“We must act boldly, decisively and with all possible speed or we will face dire consequences,” Inouye said.

— MCT Campus

Obama ‘screwed up’

By Steven Thomma
McClatchy Newspapers

WASHINGTON — These first days aren’t going the way that President Barack Obama hoped when he promised to change the way Washington operates.

He remains popular, with broad support from the American people, but the taint of politics as usual is challenging the aura of something new.

Three of his top nominees have been caught with tax problems, two them departing abruptly Tuesday. Two more were former lobbyists named to high positions despite Obama’s ban on lobbyists in his administration. Yet another, New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson, had to withdraw weeks earlier because of an investigation into alleged “pay-to-play” politics at home.

“This tax issue was starting to reach critical mass,” pollster John Zogby said. “One is a mistake. Two is a problem. When you start getting a third, it possibly becomes a question of judgment. How do you ask Americans to sacrifice while Cabinet members don’t sacrifice until they get caught?”

First came reports that Timothy Geithner, a former official of the Federal Reserve, belatedly paid \$34,000 in back income taxes and \$8,000 in interest. He was eventually confirmed as treasury secretary.

Then came Tuesday morning’s departure of Nancy Killefer, who’d been nominated to a top budget post and who’d failed to pay unemployment compensation taxes for domestic help and had a lien placed on her Washington home as a result. She asked Obama to withdraw her nomination.

Finally on Tuesday, Tom Daschle withdrew his nomination to be secretary of health and human services. Daschle, a former member of the tax-writing Senate Finance Committee, last month paid more than \$140,000 in back taxes and interest, most of it owed for his chauffeured luxury car, which he enjoyed as a loan from a private-equity firm he advised. He also reported that he’d earned \$5 million in two years, largely from industry groups.

Suddenly, too many of Obama’s picks struck many people as business as usual

rather than “change you can believe in.”

When it was reported that Daschle had worked for a lobbying firm, for example, the Obama White House said that Daschle himself wasn’t a registered lobbyist and thus was exempt from Obama’s much-ballyhooed ban on lobbyists.

“I don’t know how you get paid \$2 million by a lobbying firm and not call yourself a lobbyist,” Sen. John Ensign, R-Nev., said Tuesday. “That just seems disingenuous to me and I don’t think passes the smell test.”

Obama exempted another high-profile pick from the lobbyist ban, naming William Lynn as the No. 2 man at the Pentagon. Lynn was a lobbyist for defense contractor Raytheon.

The president also named William Corr, a former anti-tobacco lobbyist, as the deputy secretary of health and human services. Corr said he wouldn’t deal with tobacco issues.

“Even the toughest rules require reasonable exceptions,” White House press secretary Robert Gibbs said recently at the White House.

When the reports of high-level appointees not paying their taxes piled up, Obama and his party invited ridicule as out-of-touch elitists at a time when Americans are suffering.

“Only the little people pay taxes,” said a Rex Babin cartoon, showing Daschle and Geithner climbing into a limousine, in The Sacramento Bee, a McClatchy newspaper.

“There’s a huge scientific breakthrough today. Researchers say they’re very close to finding someone from Obama’s Cabinet who’s actually paid their taxes,” Jay Leno said on NBC’s “Tonight Show.”

Obama conceded in a series of television interviews Tuesday that his appointments suggested a double standard in which the rich and powerful get away with not paying taxes.

“I campaigned on changing Washington and bottom-up politics. And I don’t want to send a message to the American people that there are two sets of standards,” Obama said on CNN, one of five networks to whom he gave interviews Tuesday.

“This was a mistake. I screwed up.”

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Hashing out new bailout plans

By Ronald D. Orol
MarketWatch

WASHINGTON — A new bank bailout plan to be unveiled Tuesday by the Treasury Department is set to create incentives for private sector investment into troubled banks.

However, regulatory observers worry that those incentives may not be strong enough to bring in the hedge funds, private equity companies and other investors Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner hopes to bring to the table.

As part of the revised plan, Treasury is considering creation of a “bad bank” or “aggregator bank” that would buy illiquid mortgage securities from struggling financial institutions. According to the new approach this plan would be partly funded by some of the remaining money from an existing \$700 billion Troubled Asset Relief Program fund, but the majority of the funds would come from the private sector.

In addition to the creation of a so-called bad bank, the Treasury is considering guarantees for mortgage securities, providing new capital injections into financial institutions, and helping out troubled homeowners on the verge of foreclosure while expanding a consumer lending program.

“The perceived goal is that this program will be less attractive to banks but available to more of them,” said Robert Klingler, attorney at Bryan Cave LLP in Atlanta.

One concern raised by some observers is that private investors may be less likely to want to buy mortgage assets as part of an aggregator bank, in part, because

an expected mortgage mitigation plan the Treasury is considering would make it more difficult for them to value the already illiquid mortgage assets.

The Treasury is expected to spend between \$50 billion to \$100 billion of the bank bailout program on a program to modify mortgages. On top of that, Congress may also pass a provision that would allow bankruptcy judges to modify mortgages and help individuals avoid foreclosure.

“You can’t price something unless you know what the terms are,” said Columbia Law School Professor John Coffee. “It’s hard to tell potential investors that you are buying a security whose value may change tomorrow.”

However, Coffee and other observers argue that should Treasury succeed at getting private investors to participate, it will add credibility to the program. Brian Olasov, managing director at McKenna Long & Aldridge LLP, argues that other non-government investors will trust that the participating hedge funds and other new owners will do the due diligence to figure out the true value of the illiquid assets.

“It does provide price discovery, it moves the management of the assets into professional hands and by removing toxic assets and placing them into the hands of others, you now have a clean bank people will want to invest with,” Olasov said.

The key, says Olasov, is for the government “subsidy” to offset any concerns associated with modified mortgages. The Treasury may provide guarantees for some mortgage securities. He also said the agency could also seek to limit losses to some participants. The Treasury could model its approach after a non-govern-

ment deal by buyout shop Lone Star Fund to buy \$31 billion in securities from Merrill Lynch for 22 cents on the dollar. As part of that structure, Lone Star had the right to walk away from the transaction if it later turned out the asset value was less than it had agreed to.

“We’ve been talking to our investors for a while,” said Olasov. “With those kinds of loss limited structures the federal government would get a lot of participants.”

He believes the Treasury will bring in three different types of private investors for three different categories of assets: residential mortgages, commercial mortgages and mortgage securities.

Many banks may also be apprehensive of participating in a new capital injection program that allows the government to eventually convert preferred shares into voting common shares. Bryan Cave’s Robert Klingler argues that the next round of capital purchases could lead more directly to nationalization of semi-healthy institutions. He predicts only banks that aren’t into great risk of going into receivership this year, however they have significant loan quality concerns.

“We’re in uncharted territory here,” Klingler said.

Klingler noted that many banks have lower stock market capitalizations than they did between October and December when the government made its initial capital injections.

“Because of the low stock market valuations of these banks, the government is expected to get more of the company than they would have once the shares are converted into common shares,” Klingler said.

Coffee also noted that, in some situa-

tions, the government may want to eventually sell its convertible preferred shares to certain private investors, such as activist hedge fund managers. Activist fund managers may want to own these securities because they convert into common shares with voting rights. Activists typically seek shares with voting rights as part of their strategy of pressing companies into making share-price improving changes.

“One of the major apparent differences between this program and the previous one is that the preferred shares could be converted into common shares with voting rights,” Coffee said. “Someone of the caliber of Carl Icahn may want to own these stakes because they want to eventually own a 10 percent voting bloc,” said Coffee.

Kevyn Orr, partner at Jones Day in Washington, said he’s uncertain whether the new program will help revitalized the banking system. Between 1991 and 1995, Orr was assistant general counsel of the Resolution Trust Corp., a U.S. government-owned asset management company charged with buying illiquid real estate assets including mortgage loans that were declared insolvent as a result of the savings and loan crisis of the 1980s.

Orr argues that the bad bank approach under consideration has similar characteristics to the RTC structure, however it focused on assets of troubled thrifts. He noted that the approach turned out to be profitable to both taxpayers and the private investors who bought the troubled assets at discounts and later sold for large profits.

“All these concepts have been tried before and some work and others don’t,” Orr said.

— MCT Campus



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Our Voice

We have to adjust to real recession

Faced by persistent opposition and delay, the Obama administration stepped up its urgent pleas over the weekend for quick congressional action on the economy, even as some economists warned that the latest steps and a major new initiative might produce only a stuttering recovery that requires further major intervention.

Lawrence Summers, director of President Barack Obama's National Economic Council, on Sunday urged the Senate, presented on CSPAN, to pass the administration's \$827 billion stimulus bill, and called on both chambers of Congress to reconcile their differences "as quickly as possible, to contain what is a very damaging and potentially deflationary spiral."

Meanwhile, Circuit City Stores Inc. will finally flicker out when its final 567 stores close this year, but the bankruptcy of the nation's second-largest electronics retailer will ripple across the U.S. economy for years. In its wake will be 18.71 million

that few have. In early America, food storage was necessary and practiced by all. Keep your food purchases simple, grow your own food supplies, and relieve your need for excess. The way of "Fat America" could now, finally, dissipate.

Are you wondering just how to make money in a recession? Whether you are self-employed, work for a small business or part of a large corporation, there are some basic principles that will help you survive a recession and even profit from one. While money is tighter during a recession, there is still money to be made if you know how. Even if you have a stable job, it's wise to look for a secondary source of income to provide for increased expenses and add to your financial security.

Be an entrepreneur. Start a small home business on the side to diversify your income sources. During an economic recession, look for a

profitable niche by offering essential goods or services, or adding

We live in modern times and desperate times call for desperate measures.

value to existing products. Get creative.

Another useful set of supplies to invest in, regardless of your political leanings, are firearms. Think of it in terms of the rational for carrying a condom: it's better to have it and not need it, than need it and not have it.

Throughout history, humans have been prone to violence when faced with the proverbial "survival of the fittest" mentality. And while it might have been nobler back in the days of yore to use bows and arrows, broadswords and shields, we live in modern times... and desperate times call for desperate measures. It's highly unfortunate that it could come to that, but in order to protect your family it's better to be safe than sorry. While a simplistic analysis this may be, a turn of events this could prove to become.

Obama has a unique opportunity to capitalize off of our country's inherent optimistic, faith-based ideals. But if his opponents have their way, we could be heading down either a socialist's existence, or an anarchist's paradise. Only time will tell.



Your Voice

Florida economy troubles worsen

By Kenny Wagner
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Try to fix Florida's ailing economy and soon you will soon be rocking back and forth, massaging your temples and sobbing softly to yourself. Perhaps that explains Gov. Crist's apparent apathy towards the issue, so far all he has accomplished is a failed plan to fix our mounting insurance crisis and a stalled plan to fix budgetary woes. But the real crisis does not rest with the Governor alone; the real problem is entirely grass-roots.

First off, we need to balance the Florida state budget, which may require installing a State income tax, something that used to be completely looked down upon. However, with the tourism industry at a languish we cannot survive on tourist tax dollars alone. Second, if we do establish a state income tax we can then appropriate more money to small businesses, especially the ones that attract tourists' business, otherwise all those t-shirt shops on International Drive would practically shut down forcing those small business owners to replace their shops with kiosks selling Barack Obama memorabilia in their vacant parking lots.

Next, we need to replace the lack of large companies in our metro areas once dominated by now defunct development companies. The City of Orlando, a few years ago, did a pretty good job of attracting new business to the area in the form of a few new hospitals. This needs to happen again,

according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, (a federal agency) Florida's education and health services grew by 4.2% in the month of Dec. 2008, compared to professional and business services which fell by 4%.

But we cannot put all of our eggs in one basket. Investing in health services alone just because it seems to be the silver lining among an otherwise black sky isn't the right answer. We need to attract more business to the Central Florida area. The Orange County Mayor Rich Crotty is trying to accomplish this by taking trips to Dubai to draw in would-be investors; however, we should look in our own neck of the woods for opportunities. It is time to abandon the building projects The City of Orlando and Orange County had planned, with little public support, and reinvest that money to attract companies based in the U.S. The Orlando Sentinel ran an editorial proposing that we invest money to attract high tech businesses, to create a long-lasting high tech sector in our own neck of the woods, the next silicone valley, it is time we put that plan in focus.

Above all, the citizens of Florida need to be pragmatists when it comes to our money now more than ever with an unemployment rate hovering around 8%; we need to keep a sharp eye on greedy developers, be mindful of how our local government works and be wary of how ineffective Tallahassee has been on this issue.

Your Voice

State budget cuts hurt disabled

By Shaneece Dixon
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Due to the crumbling state of the Florida economy, one area that is really suffering is health care. Health care benefits in particular are constantly decreasing year by year it seems. The main groups of people that really feel the burn of this are the elderly and the disabled. These individuals have been losing more and more of their benefits. Since the state budget is dwindling, the amount of money that Florida gives to insurance companies also dwindles. What's more, more Medicaid cuts are projected for 2009.

According to Medical News Today, the Florida Legislature wants to slash as much as \$1.2 billion in crucial health and human services programs. Obviously, these cuts affect these needy individuals and their standard of living. Without money coming from these Medicaid programs, there is little that they can do to survive.

A number of Florida's needy individuals end up being homeless or forced to live in group homes because they can no longer afford to maintain a normal lifestyle on their own, and their families can't afford to care for them. Over 92,000 adults with serious and persistent mental illnesses and 79,000 children with serious emotional disturbances in Florida are not receiving the publicly funded treatment services they need. According to Florida Senator Eleanor Sobel, we must search for alternative sources

of revenue, without making budget cuts for the disabled and the elderly.

"We must not only look to immediate economic relief but we must also look to future economic growth. We must find cost effective ways that allow individuals to get the critical services that they deserve," said Sobel.

The state constitution requires that when revenue declines, spending must decline in order to keep the budget in balance. But of all things to cut, why health care? From all people, why take money away from Florida's neediest people?

But of all things to cut, why health care? From all people, why take money away from Florida's neediest people?

One ironic part of the situation is that Health and Human Services make up 35 percent of the state budget. But according to legislators, the budget reduces provider rates by five percent, with exemptions for adult dental services, personal care assistance, and consumable

medical supplies. So services that make up a huge chunk of the budget gets dwindled to so little. If this is what is left from the cuts of health care in Florida, what about supported living benefits for the elderly and the handicapped? Cuts like this take away physical treatments and medication benefits from those who need it. So many questions needing to be answered, but legislators seem almost helpless to prevent the cuts, just as they seem to be helpless to find a solution and Floridians everywhere continue to feel the brunt the economic situation.

VALENCIA VOICE

Opinion:

Want your voice heard? Send us your opinions. Submissions are subject to editing for grammar, length and AP style. Send submissions to Shaneece Dixon:



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CORRECTIONS

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Whoops! Did we miss anything? Let us know! If you spot a correction or want to let us know what you think, please send an e-mail to:

What would you do if you lost your job?

By Adam Fishman
afishman@valenciavoice.com

If you're one of the lucky citizens of America who is still employed, you should be thanking whatever higher power you believe in. Seriously, thank them every waking hour of your day. As of January 2009, the United States unemployment rate was 7.2%. The highest level since 1992, and job loss totals are now at 3.57 million since the recession started in December 2007.

If your boss hasn't called you in their office yet to utter those dreadful words "sorry, we have to let you go," or "we just need to cut costs, and you cost too much," don't worry that day is probably coming if the state of our economy doesn't turn around. Try not to stress too much; there are options out there if you lose your job.

For those of you that still thrive off of mom and dad, live at home, have minimal bills, and are only working part-time, well, you can still thrive off of mom and dad right? If you're a full-time or part-time student who only works part-time, finding part-time work shouldn't be too difficult. For example, restaurants, bars, and clubs are always looking for people to work.

If you're living on your own, and you're working full-time, then a job loss to you can have more of an impact. A part-time job won't pay for the bills. It's even more difficult to find a full-time job that will work around a full-time or part-time school schedule.

Here is some good news, if you were laid-off or discharged from your employer for reasons outside of misconduct, you can join the millions of other Americans who file for unemployment compensation. In other words, if you're out of work at no fault of your own, you can receive temporary wage replacement benefits for up to six months while you try to find other work. You can go to the website, www.fluidnow.com to fill out an application.

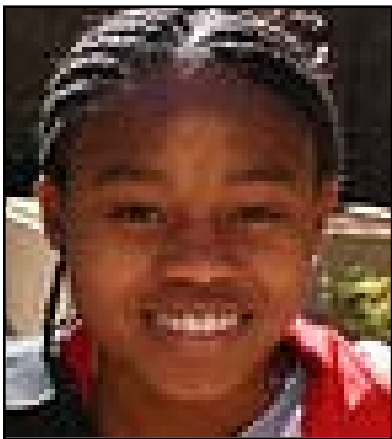
There are a few catches; the wage replacement will only be about 60%-70% of what you normally were paid in one week. For example, if you made \$350 per week your compensation will be about \$225-\$250. In addition, you have to maintain an accurate job search and every week you have to report any wages or income you might've earned elsewhere.

Unemployment compensation would certainly not be a permanent solution, but it can suffice in the meantime until you find other work. You could always try winning the lottery.



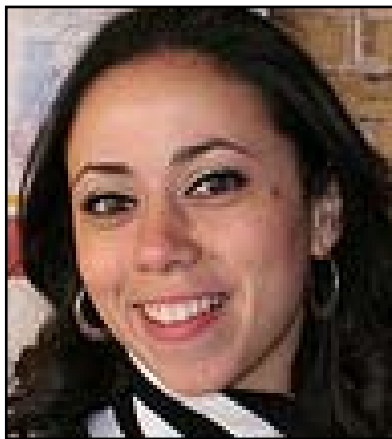
"I lost my job and I went back to school. I have two sons in college that still live with me."

— Jorge S. Mustafa



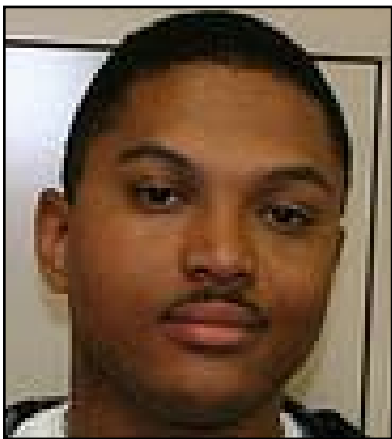
"I would hustle. The economy already affects me at the nursing home that I work for. They just cut back on my hours."

— Keandra Granger



"I'd look for another one. I will look all day until I find one. I need to survive."

— Meriem Bendadou



"If I lost one of my two jobs it would be really hard for me and my family. I jump in when my family needs me to help them out. Plus I have bills of my own."

— Deon Harper



"I would try to find another job. Right now, I work at Universal Studios."

— Tahir Malik



"I work with inner-city kids for the city of Orlando so I would just go apply for another job."

— Shanice Eady



"I work at the Hilton Hotel now. If I lost my job I would possibly research jobs that aren't affected by the economy. Maybe like an accountant or a medical assistant for a hospital."

— Quanisha Nugent



"I'd be shocked. I'd be worried about how I will pay my bills. I'd want to know why I got fired. But I would have a positive outlook."

— Hardeley Butler

TOGA

FRIDAY, MARCH 20TH @ AKA LOUNGE

A-Rod juiced up

By Clark Spencer and Barry Jackson
Miami Herald

Baseball superstar Alex Rodriguez fessed up Monday.

Rodriguez, a New York Yankees third baseman, admitted in a televised interview that he took performance-enhancing drugs in 2001-03 while with the Texas Rangers.

"I did take a banned substance," Rodriguez, 33, told ESPN. "For that, I am very sorry and deeply regretful."

The acknowledgement came two days after Sports Illustrated reported that Rodriguez tested positive in 2003 for anabolic steroids. Rodriguez said he started taking the drugs in 2001 because of the pressures he felt after becoming the sport's highest-paid player.

"I felt a tremendous pressure to play, and play really well," Rodriguez said in Monday's interview. "I felt like I was going up against the whole world. I just signed this enormous contract. I felt like I needed something, a push to get me to the next level."

Rodriguez was with the Rangers when he signed a 10-year, \$252 million contract before the 2001 season. He is a three-time winner of the Most Valuable Player award and has 553 career home runs — 209 behind the all-time home run mark held by Barry Bonds, another figure linked to steroids.

Rodriguez said he has not taken any banned substances since 2003, two years before Major League Baseball started cracking down on steroid use by penalizing those caught using them.

"I was young. I was stupid. I was naive," he said. "I wanted to prove to everyone that I was worth being one of the greatest players of all time."

Rodriguez, according to the Sports Illustrated report, was one of 104 players who tested positive for performance-enhancing drugs during survey testing in 2003. Those names were supposed to remain confidential but were confiscated by federal agents in a raid of a California drug-testing laboratory.

He said he was unaware he failed a drug test until a Sports Illustrated reporter told him. According to Sports Illustrated, sources said Rodriguez tested positive for Primobolan and testosterone. But he said in Monday's interview he wasn't sure what he took exactly.

"Back then, baseball was a different culture," he said. "It was very loose. I got caught up in this everybody's-doing-it era, so why not experiment with X, Y and Z? I'm just sorry. I'm sorry for that time. I'm sorry to fans. I'm sorry for my fans in Texas."

Rodriguez hit 156 home runs from 2001 to 2003 — the most prolific three-season stretch in his 15-year major-league career. Starting in 2004, when he joined the Yankees, he hit 119 home runs over three seasons.

Rodriguez, who attended Westminster



Paul J. Bereswill/Newsday/MCT

Alex Rodriguez of the New York Yankees admits, in an interview with Peter Gammons, to using performance-enhancing drugs between the 2001 and 2003 seasons.

Christian in Southwest Miami-Dade, joins Andy Pettitte and Jason Giambi among the few players to admit using steroids.

Rodriguez denied having ever used steroids, Human Growth Hormone, or any other performance-enhancing substance in a 2007 interview on CBS' 60 Minutes.

"At the time, I wasn't even being truthful with myself," Rodriguez said.

Primobolan, also known as methenolone, is an injected or orally administered drug that improves strength and maintains

lean muscle. It is not an approved prescription drug in the United States and is among the illegal substances listed in the Anabolic Steroid Control Act of 1990.

Attorneys and sports-doping experts said Monday it's unlikely Rodriguez will face legal ramifications because of several reasons:

The statute of limitations for use of anabolic steroids in 2003 has passed, ESPN legal analyst Roger Cossack said. A spokesman for the Department of Justice was unable to confirm that.

The 1990 law said those who are caught possessing or distributing anabolic steroids are subject to arrest and prosecution, with a first conviction carrying up to one year in prison and/or a minimum \$1000 fine. But that legislation makes no reference to people who test positive for steroids in an administered drug test.

"Most federal laws are tied to possession, not to use," said Paul Anderson, associate director of the National Sports Law Institute.

Even beyond those two factors, "there have not been prosecutions of athletes for simply using steroids in the United States," said Matt Mitten, director of the National Sports Law Institute. "They've gone after the source of the supply, not the subject."

Richard Pound, former president of the World Anti-Doping Agency, said unless perjury is involved, the government "has never gone after people for this because the sentences are so low it's not worth their time or investigative energy. Their efforts are spent on perjury."

Bonds is to go on trial March 2 on charges he committed perjury when he told a federal grand jury in 2003 he never knowingly used performance-enhancing drugs. Roger Clemens is being investigated by a federal grand jury about whether he committed perjury when he told Congress he never used steroids or human growth hormone.

Though Rodriguez told 60 Minutes in 2007 that he never used steroids, he never made the claim in a forum where he would be subject to perjury charges.

Meanwhile, the University of Miami said it will go ahead with plans to name its baseball stadium in Rodriguez's honor in an on-field ceremony at 6 p.m. Friday. The event is sold out, and a school representative said Rodriguez is expected to attend.

Rodriguez donated \$3.9 million to renovate the stadium, which will be renamed Alex Rodriguez Park.

"I'm sorry for my Texas years," Rodriguez said. "There's absolutely no excuse, and I really feel bad about it. If I was a fan of mine, a fan of the Rangers, I would be very ticked off."

Rodriguez said he has taken an estimated eight to 10 drug tests since 2003 as part of baseball's mandatory testing program.

At his news conference Monday night, President Barack Obama expressed regret over Rodriguez's revelation. "It tarnishes an entire era to some degree," Obama said.

And Texas Rangers owner Tom Hicks, who made Rodriguez baseball's highest-paid player, told The Associated Press on Monday he feels "personally betrayed" by the slugger's admission.

"This whole episode has caught me totally by surprise. I feel personally betrayed, I feel deceived by Alex," Hicks said.

— MCT Campus

One big name is not enough in this case

By Mike Wise
Washington Post

Alex Rodriguez shouldn't have to play the shame game alone. Expose them all, every last testosterone-infused baseball player wielding a bat or winding up for his delivery six years ago.

We have to know everyone who cheated the game, or as many as we can. We have to know who stole untold millions and fame from their clean peers, who sullied baseball and who didn't. For not to would be to cheat the real victim of the performance-enhancing drug era in the game: the career minor leaguer, the real-life Crash Davis.

We shouldn't let Rodriguez squirm alone

on camera, as he did Monday while admitting his use of steroids in a tidy, little tele-nova with ESPN's Peter Gammons. A-Rod is not merely as guilty as Barry Bonds or Roger Clemens; he's as guilty as every utility infielder now selling mobile homes in Bozeman or Orlando, players whose names we don't care about because they didn't have a dalliance with Madonna or a bona fide relationship with history and Henry Aaron's authentic records.

Performance-enhancing drugs are not merely wrong because they helped Bonds and Clemens taint the game's annals; they're criminal because of how they hurt the career minor leaguer, the guy who chose correctly between right and wrong. Unlike a

Jason Grimsley, he picked fair competition and the real risks of health over the spoils of fame and riches gained by an unfair advantage, and he still lost. He knew what human growth hormone could do to his warning-track power and a first-to-third speed that was never going to advance him beyond a Toledo Mud Hens' lineup card. He still decided against cheating himself and the game, and this is what he gets:

A truckload of baseball apologists who think enough is enough.

For that player, and for that matter the next generation of players who have the same dream, it's paramount that everyone on that list be exposed, that Rodriguez is not the only player who has to bear the "A-

Fraud" burden.

Too often in this world we choose professional ethics over genuine, real-life ethics.

Enough is enough.

Release the names, all 104 of them.

It's not about meting out more justice and shame, so we can type "A-Roid" and "A-R*d" and continue to treat Alex Rodriguez and Barry Bonds and Mark McGwire like pariahs.

No, it's so we can clear the names of those who deserve to have everyone know they didn't fall prey to cheating's addictive lure, to the syringes, the pills and the millions they promised to bring.

— LATWP News Service

Semi-pro wakeboarder attends Valencia

By Brian Cronin
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Around campus, you may catch a glimpse of Nick Foren, a 19-year-old, Semi-Pro-fessional Wakeboarder, but you probably wouldn't recognize him outside of his wet-suit.

Wakeboarding is a water sport where a boat pulls an athlete by ropes and handles as the athlete does maneuvers, or tricks, as the athletes prefer to say. Foren attends Valencia Community College, and has his plate full juggling wakeboarding and getting grades. A native of Detroit, Michigan, he moved to Central Florida to take advantage of the weather to train almost everyday and still have time to attend a great school like VCC. Valencia offers classes that are perfect for Foren's training schedule with day and evening classes and a range of quality majors that will eventually assist him in his future.

Along with his studies and grueling practice schedule, Foren also finds time to work because wakeboarding is an expensive sport. Sponsors provide Foren with the necessary funds to play the sport. "This sport is so expensive I could not make it without help," said Foren. The company that primarily sponsors Foren is Helium, a premier distributor of life jackets, vests, ropes, handles, and neoprene tops. They provide funds for Foren's wakeboard, boat, ropes and handles, gloves, cloths, and accessories. With wakeboards starting at \$100, boats at more then \$4,000 and countless other necessities, the sponsors don't deny it takes money to compete according to the online website Ski Pro. Some of the gear that Foren uses is a Hyperlite wakeboard. Hyperlite wakeboards are a manufacture of

wakeboards and the pioneers of the sport since its inception in 1991. They proudly craft their wakeboards to the standards set by their customers, athletes and themselves on the shores of Lake Sammamish in the United States.

Starting at age 11, Foren worked at his craft, earning a few awards at local events. He developed into a Semi-Professional in the Junior Men's Division when he received payments to participate in certain events. Last year he attended the first two stops of the Pro Wakeboard Tour. His dream includes moving on to becoming a professional wakeboarder one day; using hard work and dedication in both his sport and his studies to give Foren the tools to make this dream a reality. Staying in shape is the key to his success, says Foren so he trains daily. His workouts include: cardio three times a week, upper body twice a week and lower body workouts the other two days, "The whole body needs to be in tune for a person to succeed in this sport," clarified Foren.

Practicing at the local Lakes, Clear Lake and Lake Holden, put Foren above his competition. He rides twice a day and goes to Orlando Water-sports Complex three times a week. Eight years of experience, a good sport knowledge, and continued countless hours of training helps Foren perfect his tricks which, as he stated, do not come without risk. Able to do a 720 (spinning his body in the air a full two rotations), Foren acknowledges he must still work hard at his tricks. He said, "I do not want to put my life in jeopardy." VCC has helped Foren remain one step ahead of his competition mentally, and he admits that the ease of location and class times are very dear and necessary to Foren as he continues to compete at a high



NICK FOREN

Foren Practces up to 2 times a say to hone his wakeboarding skills.

UCF men topple SMU, 70-45

By Theresa Carli
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ORLANDO, Fla — UCF basketball team completed a winning home-stand Wednesday night wrangling the SMU Mustangs 70-45, and improving their record to 14-6.

The Knights came out of the locker room strong on both ends of the court, scoring the first 9 points of the game, and not allowing SMU to score until 3 and a half minutes into the first half. Starting Guard for UCF and leading scorer in Conference USA, Jermaine Taylor, was especially on point; shooting over 50% from the field and earning 16 points in the first half. Combine that with front man A.J. Rompza's 7 assists and guard Issac Sosa's 8 points, 6 of those from the behind the arc, and it results in a 40-23 UCF lead at the half.

Taylor said of his team's as well as his own impressive start, "I was feelin' it, and when I'm feelin' it, I'm gonna let it run. Rompza did a good job of finding me, and the big men did a good job of getting me open." The second half started slightly slower for the Knights, only scoring 12 points in the first 10 minutes. Luckily, UCF was dominant on the defensive side of the ball, forcing the Mustangs to make only 32% of their shots and not allowing anyone to dial-in from long range.

The Knights also dominated off the glass, out rebounding the Mustangs 46-32. The real story of the game is UCF's bench production, with premiere substitute forward A.J. Tyler leading the pack. Tyler came off the bench to earn a double-double, with 10 points and 11 rebounds; the rest of the bench tacked on another 21 points for the Knights. Tyler is proud to contribute, saying, "...get-

ting out there, doing what I can, making the most out of the opportunity. An opportunity to get off the bench and spark the team, get a little extra offense."

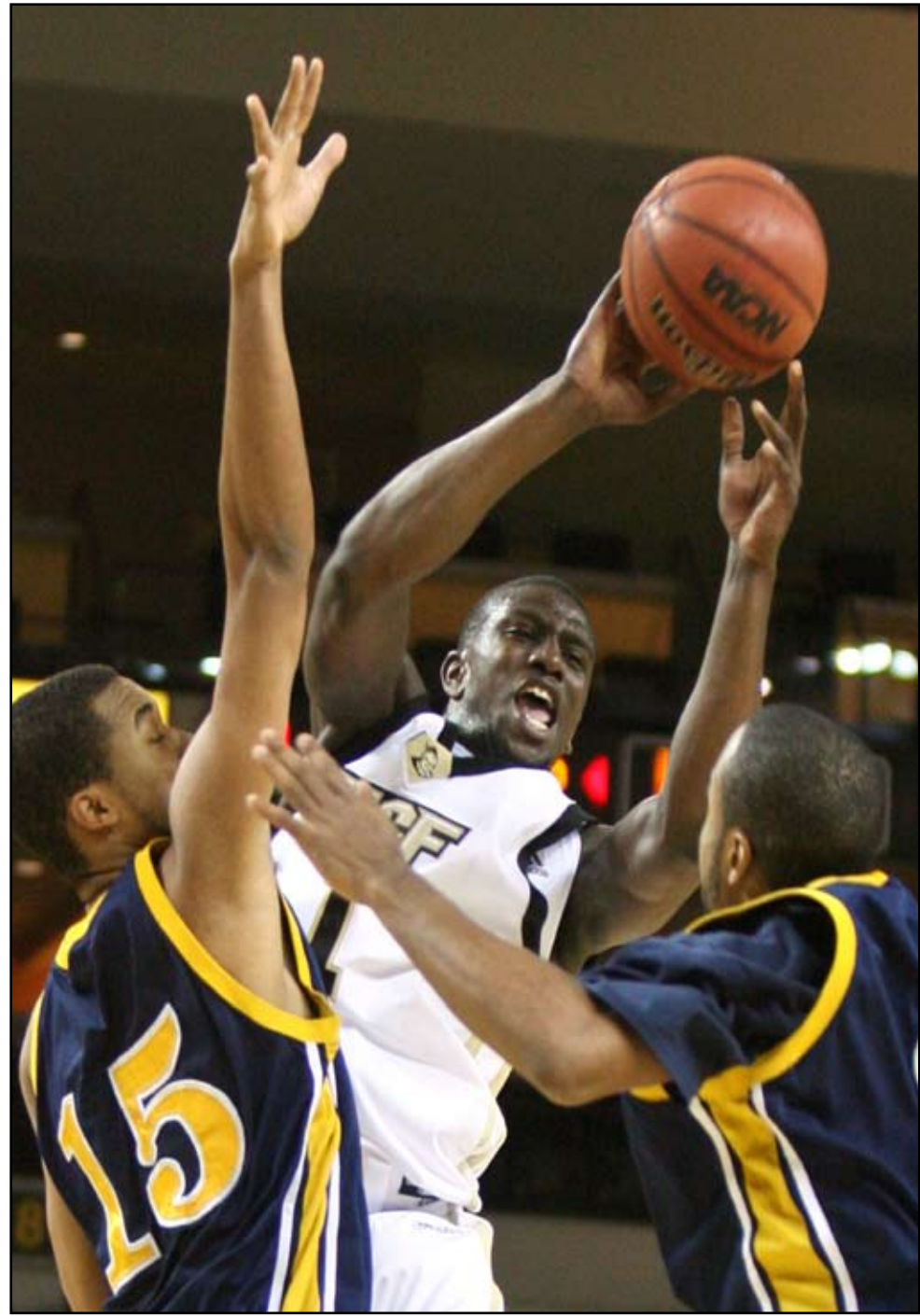
Getting off to an early start, offensively and defensively, and keeping that intensity throughout the game seems to be the perfect recipe for success for the Black and Gold. Head Coach, Kirk Speraw, would agree, saying of his team's outing, "Early in the game, we set a very good tone, didn't give anything away easy, fought hard on the glass...got the spread, and I'm very proud of our guys to not let up on that...Didn't let them feel like they could get back in the game."

The Knights are on a roll, and every player is riding the wave. Tyler summed it up: "We're feeling real good. Everybody's playing with confidence. Before we walk out on that court, we're pumped up. We're ready to play every game now."

Up next for the UCF after taking down SMU, the Knights traveled to New Orleans to beat Tulane in overtime 79-74 on Saturday, keeping their winning streak alive at 5. In their first overtime contest of the season, Taylor again led the team with 28 points, and Rompza added another 13.

UCF's reserves outscored Tulane's bench 24-13, Sosa leading the way with 12 points for the Knights. UCF's defense stepped up once again, forcing the Green Wave to shoot only 35% from the field. Before going on the road, Coach Speraw said, "It's nice for us to do what we're doing at home, but now we gotta go get that done on the road."

UCF has a conference match-up against the Houston Cougars at the UCF arena next. The Cougars are 12-7 overall and rank 5th in Conference USA.



Stephen M. Dowell / Orlando Sentinel / MCT

Jermaine Taylor passes the ball between 2 defenders.

NFC tops AFC in Pro Bowl

By Tim Bee
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It is not the Super Bowl. It is not hard hitting. It has different rules. There is no blitzing, you have to play a basic 4-3 defense, and a basic two wide receiver offense. There are not even any coach's challenges or reviewed plays. But the Pro Bowl is not about those things. It is about celebrating the past season of NFL football that we all got to witness. It is a fun exhibition game that most players love playing in. They get to spend a week in Hawaii and they get a chance to meet players they usually are trying to kill on any given Sunday.

Larry Fitzgerald's NFC team defeated the AFC 30-21, in a game that surprisingly had a little more excitement than most Pro Bowls. It was somewhat ironic when Fitzgerald, would have been this years Super Bowl MVP, was awarded the Pro Bowl MVP. Fitzgerald finished with 5 catches for 81 yards, and 2 touchdowns, including the game winning touchdown catch with 4:03 left in the forth quarter to go up 24-21.

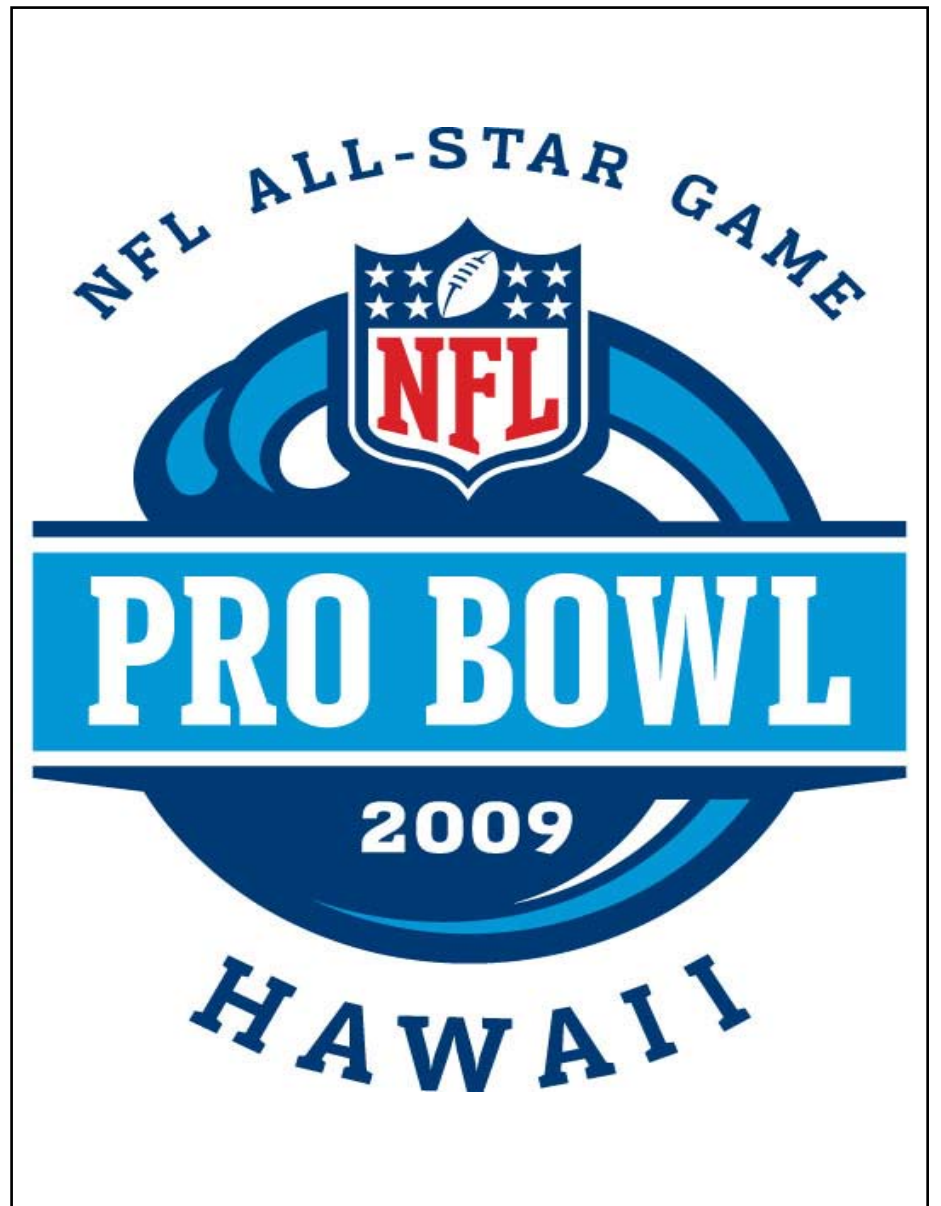
Le'Ron McClain, a running back for the ravens who would not have even played much this year if it were not for injuries, scored on a little trickery from the AFC with 6:59 left in the forth quarter. McClain ran the ball in from 5 yards out on the old fumbleruski play. The touchdown put the AFC up 21-17.

The 3rd quarter was dominated by defense, which is rare for a Pro Bowl. Not only was it dominated by defense but it was also dominated by NFC players from the same Minnesota Vikings team. There were three turnovers in the quarter, two of them being made by Vikings players. The lone touch-

down of the quarter came with 2:24 left when last years Pro Bowl MVP Adrian Peterson, of the Vikings, ran the ball in from 10 yards out. This came right after Jared Allen, a defensive end for the Vikings, sacked and forced AFC quarterback Kerry Collins to fumble the ball. Allen recovered the ball and gave his NFC team the ball on the ten yard line. The third Vikings player to make a play in the 3rd quarter was Antoine Winfield when he intercepted Kerry Collins with 4:36 left in the quarter.

Fitzgerald made the play of the game when he caught his first of two touchdowns on a hail marry 46 yard pass from Saints quarterback Drew Brees on the last play of the 1st half, which cut the AFC lead to 14-10. The play was almost as good as the play that Steelers outside linebacker, James Harrison made at the end of the 1st half of the Super Bowl. Both players gave their teams momentum going into the half. Harrison's was just a little more important.

The rest of the 1st half was all AFC. The AFC went up 14-3 after a Kerry Collins 9 yard touchdown pass to Texans tight end Owen Daniels with 0:28 left in the half. The only other touchdown of the 1st half came with 7:44 left in the 1st quarter when season MVP Peyton Manning of the Indianapolis Colts, found Chiefs tight end Tony Gonzales for a 19 yard score to put the AFC up 7-0. Gonzales with the touchdown catch broke the record for career receiving yards in the Pro Bowl with 533, tied Jimmy Smith and Marvin Harrison for most career Pro Bowl touchdowns with 5.



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Chris Brown arrested for battery before Grammys



Fitzroy Barrett / Landov / MCT



Lionel Hahn / Abaca Press / MCT

Rihanna attended the 50th Annual Grammy Awards held at the Staples Center in Los Angeles, California, February 10, 2008 where she and Jay-Z's "Umbrella" won Best Rap/Sung Collaboration.

**By Randy Lewis and Andrew Blankstein
Los Angeles Times**

LOS ANGELES -- Two of today's hottest young R&B stars, Chris Brown and Rihanna, spent the night before their scheduled Grammy Awards appearances with their arms around each other at a high-profile industry party, the prelude to what should have been successive national TV performances and an emotional high point for the couple.

Instead, neither performer made it to the Grammys as Brown turned himself in to Los Angeles police Sunday evening following an early morning argument and alleged physical assault that played out on a quiet street in Hancock Park. Los Angeles police booked the 19-year-old singer on suspicion of making criminal threats to his girlfriend. Brown later posted \$50,000 bail and was released shortly after the end of the show, but police said additional charges may be filed against him when the case is presented to the Los Angeles County district attorney's office.

The two stars' absence from the Grammy ceremony sparked a dramatic last-minute change in the production, for which veteran soul singer Al Green came to the rescue.

"I was in the shower and didn't have anything on and they said, 'Whatever you have, throw it in the bag and come on,' " Green said backstage about getting the call to perform. He said he was not given an explanation of the last-minute invite. "We had two hours and 40 minutes to rehearse, come back onstage and change and then go out and do it."

Brown and 20-year-old Rihanna, who was born Robyn Rihanna Fenty, had been together Saturday night in Beverly Hills at the pre-Grammy gala, hosted by the Grammy-sponsoring Recording Academy and veteran music executive Clive Davis.

After the gala, Brown and a woman drove through the upscale Los Angeles neighborhood around 12:30 a.m. Sunday in a rented Lamborghini and started arguing, police said. Brown stopped the car on North June Street, the two got out and the argument escalated, according to police.

The victim, who was later identified by sources familiar with the case as Rihanna,

suffered visible injuries and identified Brown as her attacker, according to the police report. Authorities did not describe her injuries or whether she was treated for them.

A witness called 911, but police said Brown was gone by the time officers arrived at the scene. Police routinely book domestic disputes in which one party exhibits any sign of physical injury as felonies, a police source said.

Shortly before the show began at 5 p.m. at Staples Center downtown, Grammy officials issued a statement that said, "We have just been informed Rihanna will not be attending tonight's 51st Grammy awards. Rihanna will not be performing. We are sorry to see she is unable to join us this evening."

Nearly two hours into the show, not long before Brown turned himself in, Grammy officials released a similar statement regarding Brown's cancellation.

Brown arrived at the Wilshire station about 7:15 p.m. accompanied by his attorney, Mark Geragos, and the attorney's investigator, Scott Ross. They drove into a parking lot behind the police station on Venice Boulevard just east of La Brea Avenue in a black vehicle. Brown and the man entered through a back door, where a posted sign stated for "authorized personnel only."

News of the episode sent a shudder through Staples Center, with reports rippling through the place at light speed via Twitter, iPhone and Blackberry.

"I'm hearing some mixed things about what happened," "American Idol" judge Paula Abdul said Sunday at Staples. "All I can say is I hope Rihanna heals quickly. She's a lovely girl."

Rihanna had three Grammy nominations going into Sunday's awards and Brown had two. He was to perform his hit "Forever," a smooth dance-floor workout about everlasting love, including the line: "It's you and me moving at the speed of light into eternity."

They were both nominated in the pop vocal collaboration category; Rihanna with rock group Maroon 5 for "If I Never See Your Face Again," Brown for his duet with "American Idol" winner Jordin Sparks on the track "No Air" from her debut album. Robert Plant and Alison Krauss took the award.

A publicist for the Barbados-born Rihanna, who sold more digital song downloads than any other in 2008, with nearly 10 million tracks, said Sunday night, "Rihanna is well. Thank you for concern and support." Her whereabouts after the incident were not known.

Her song "Disturbia," which she'd been scheduled to perform at the ceremony, was the sixth best-selling digital track of the year with sales of almost 2.8 million copies. Her performance slot was given to Green, who was joined by country singer-guitarist Keith Urban during the hastily arranged rendition of Green's 1971 hit "Let's Stay Together."

Brown's record label spokesman did not respond to the Los Angeles Times' request for comment. Brown finished 2008 as the fourth-best selling artist in the digital realm, posting 6.8 million tracks sold, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

In a 2007 interview with *Giant* magazine, Brown said his mother had been physically abused by his stepfather.

"He used to hit my mom," he was quoted in the article. "He made me terrified all the time, terrified like I had to pee on myself. I remember one night he made her nose bleed. I was crying and thinking, 'I'm just gonna go crazy on him one day ... ' I hate him to this day."

In the same interview, he said he had studied martial arts, which he used to defend himself once in a fight with several classmates. Brown said after his mother broke up the fight, he urged her not to go to the police. "Don't go to no cops pressing no charges," he reported begging her, "like we don't do that in the hood."

Brown's 2005 debut album, released when he was 16, earned the Tappahannock, Wash., native comparisons to a young Michael Jackson, both for his elastic vocal skills and his electrifying dance moves.

Rihanna burst out of Barbados the same year with a hit debut album, "Music of the Sun." Her 2007 single "Umbrella" was one of the biggest hits of that year. Her latest album, "Good Girl Gone Bad," made her an international star.

They attended last year's Grammy Awards ceremony together.

— MCT Campus

This year's Grammys cause major buzz

**By Claudia Eslava
ceslava@valenciavoice.com**

The Grammy Awards present a night to celebrate a past year of achievements and innovation in the music industry with its 51st Awards airing on Sunday, Feb. 8 on CBS.

This years, the show had some surprising twists with the Album of the Year going to Robert Plant and Alison Krauss, to the tender moments with Jennifer Hudson and Lil' Wayne. Surprise performances and sweet extras made the show a music lovers dream.

Opening the big show, Irish rooted veterans; U2 performed their brand new single "Get On Your Boots" from their upcoming album 'No Line on the Horizon' set to be released in March.

Preceding the opening act, Whitney Houston presented the first award of the night to an emotional Jennifer Hudson for 'Best R&B Album', honoring the newcomers with her first Grammy nomination and the first win for her debut self-titled album.

Hudson, who made only her second public appearance after experiencing a very public family tragedy last year, was overwhelmed yet managed to pull herself together to thank God and to "thank my family in heaven and those that are here today."

The night continued on with a spontaneously planned performance by Al Green who shared the stage with Justin Timberlake, Keith Urban and Boys II Men.

Honoring the Pioneers of music was

very much a theme throughout the evening with legends such as Sir. Paul McCartney inspired awe among new artists and the many winners such as Sugarland, winners of 'Best Country Performance By A Duo Or Group With Vocals' and the award for 'Best Country Song' for their hit single "Stay," whose lead singer, Jennifer Nettles, couldn't keep her excitement down from seeing the musical legend sitting in the audience.

Coldplay, who took home the three awards including 'Best Rock Album,' 'Song of the Year,' 'Best Pop Performance by a Duo or Group with Vocals,' also took notice of McCartney by jokingly apologizing for their band's matching outfits which resembled the costumes that were worn by The Beatles in their music video 'Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band,' by simply stating "sorry boss."

'Best New Artist' award going to North Londoner Adele, who was in tears as she thanked her mom who couldn't be there that night, and later combined her performance with that of Sugarland.

'Best Rap Album' went to none other than Lil' Wayne who was all the buzz as he took home four Grammys, performed a tribute to New Orleans along side R&B crooner Robin Thicke and also took to the stage with the all star "Rap Pack" Jay-z, T.I., Kanye West and a very pregnant M.I.A which got everyone out of their seats for the most exciting performance of the night.

Miley Cyrus took to the stage with Taylor

Swift as the Jonas Brothers did with Stevie Wonder as a reminder of the industries' future.

When her time came, Hudson gave a beautiful performance that was so packed with emotion that she couldn't keep her tears from flowing.

Throughout the night Robert Plant and Alison Krauss, who may be unknown when being compared to the popularity of rappers and Disney stars, slowly kept winning awards until finally their night was

made by winning the award for 'Best Album of the Year,' their fifth win of the night.

In such a tough category, its no wonder that the duo were surprised and delighted to take home the prestigious award.

At the very end of the day, the Grammy's earned its respect by not being a popularity contest but rather a celebration of music's most talented by awarding only the best.



Mark Cornelison / Lexington Herald-Leader / MCT

Alison Krauss and Robert Plant pictured playing at the Louisville Palace in Louisville, Kentucky, on April 19, 2008.

Buddy Guy out duels B.B. King, leaves fans wanting more

By Leah Reidenbach
lreidenbach@valenciavoice.com

ORLANDO, Fla. — Buddy Guy, 72, stole the show at the B.B. King and Buddy Guy concert Friday, Feb. 6 at the UCF Arena.

These two musicians are used to playing in a more intimate setting like the House of Blues, but they did have much trouble getting a good crowd in this venue.

Even for Guy's age he was still packed with energy and kept the crowd on their toes, literally. During one of his songs he walked into the audience playing his guitar as fans crowded around him. He even let some of them strum his guitar while he took control of the notes and chords.

Most of the crowd came to see the well-known blues player B.B. King, 83, but Guy gained a lot of the crowd's affection. During intermission people were buzzing about what a fantastic musician Guy is.

However, King's age started to show at the concert. He was wheeled onto the stage in a wheelchair from behind the wings of the stage. His band played for about 20 min-

utes before King walked to his seat on stage at about 10:15 p.m.

King who is well known for his storytelling, talked a lot between songs. He mostly told stories about his old age, love and "Dr. Viagra". He seemed to talk too much during this concert and his stories stretched out for too long, but he and his band made up for it by playing some of the best blues anyone has ever heard.

Although King spent more time talking than playing he still awed the audience with his talent during "The Thrill is Gone," "Key to The Highway," and off his new album, "See That My Grave is Kept Clean."

King and Guy's performances were nothing short of great but the only disappointment shared by the fans was that King and Guy never played together during the show.

Fortunately for the fans that did want to see this collaboration, B.B. King and Buddy Guy were seen the next day playing together with John Mayor and Keith Urban during the Grammys as a tribute to the late blues/rock legend Bo Diddley. Hopefully, they tuned in to see it.



Courtesy of B.B. King.com

B.B. King could not keep up with Buddy Guy at a recent UCF concert.

Tenchu 4: 2nd renaissance of stealth ninja action hits Wii

By Frank Tobin
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The Tenchu series of stealthy ninja action games has not been a strong production line recently. The first two games for the PlayStation One were stellar advances in the stealth action genre, but the latter games in the series for newer consoles proved too rudimentary and eventually became forgettable. Not to mention that the traditional controls offered by host formats such as Sony's PlayStation 2 and Microsoft's Xbox could only take Tenchu so far — now, on the Wii, it's reborn and better than ever.

"Tenchu 4" does shadow some areas of the series' history — you still get to play as A-list ninja couple Rikimaru and Ayame, and the feudal Japanese setting hasn't changed — but the Remote/Nunchuk controls and features are innovative and thoroughly involving. For example, the Remote pulses in time with your ninja's heartbeat; it starts off slowly when there's no immediate danger and gradually quickens as the situations become more tense and edgy. This is a constant feature of the game — a subtle but excellent use of force feedback that really enhances the atmosphere.

Elsewhere, the Remote movements, hint-

ed at by on-screen indicators, give your ninja access to a wealth of sneak attacks and enable the use of items: for instance, you can squirt syringes of water and flick ninja stars just by jolting the Remote in a forward direction. Meanwhile twists and shakes of the Nunchuk are used in conjunction with the Remote actions for more complex moves and, separately, for features such as quick view changes when you find yourself caught in tight spots.

The main game in "Tenchu 4" is a dramatic, charged adventure where the helpless are constantly being victimized, and it's your job to enforce some ninja justice by variously rescuing people, assassinating baddies and infiltrating their bases.

Pre-mission cut-scenes do a great job of establishing each new scenario, and they make use of the same engine as the in-game action, so there's an excellent sense of continuity here. Heck, even the voice acting really hits the mark — and it's not often we get to say that about Wii games. As well as all that, there are 50 so-called 'Side Missions' detached from the central storyline, which enable you to attempt challenges such as Assassinations, Safe Arrivals and Annihilations (in other words, destructive rampages).

These are all set within strict time lim-

its, and each challenge offers a new item as a reward for success. Your performance is also rated according to six different criteria, and it's a monumental task to achieve the Grand Master ranking and perfect scores across all 50 side-missions. This is the area of the game you'll keep on returning to once you've completed the main adventure on the highest difficulty setting (and that in itself takes some doing).

"Tenchu 4" lives on meticulously crafted set-pieces where you have to play your role to perfection, because one false move results in instant death. It's mostly about not being seen or heard, and about killing enemies with the minimum of fuss. Yet it's a tremendously satisfying game, mainly because it sets such intricate, difficult tasks without ever unfairly hindering you with dodgy controls or botched AI. In short, "Tenchu 4" is a smooth operator and every bit as tricky as the ninjas who front the game.

Perhaps best of all, though, the developer has managed to create a graphically rich and detailed version of 13th Century Japan that's positively dripping with atmosphere ("Tenchu 4" is best played in the dark).

It might have been a popular fantasy for young boys, specifically, to stalk the shadows

of their old neighborhoods in black sweat-shirts, striking out with plastic swords at invisible enemies... but now it's possible, albeit in digital form, to partake in the fantasy of being a ninja in feudal Japan. Thankfully now, at least, it's impossible to poke your own eye out with a toy sword... unless of course you swing the Wii Remote too close to your face.



Courtesy of UbiSoft.com

Voci Dance provides interactive fun for community

By Cassie Weinz
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Arts Fest 2009 kicked off its two week tribute to humanities and culture on Friday, Feb. 6 with a technology themed extravaganza.

The Say It Loud Warehouse, located on Mills Ave. in Downtown Orlando, played host to a perfectly done modern dance performance, iMovie/dance/blog/art, put on by the Voci Dance Company.

While waiting for the performance to begin, guests were entertained with a large screen game of Nintendo Wii as well as text messaging their most recent activity to the website Twitter, which was also projected across a large backdrop.

The performance began with what may have appeared to some as a light show.

The dancers reveled themselves to the audience with spotlights that were strapped across their foreheads.

This then resulted in a performance of acrobatic twists and turns which led the dancers to turn their spotlights on

one individual dancer at a time.

It was a dance of freedom and uninhibited emotion.

The dancers began to spin and reach out to extend their hands to an audience member which ignited the notion of limitless boundaries.

Audience members were captivated once witnessing the display of raw passion that was behind the first performance and it left them wanting to see more.

Fortunately for them, Voci Dance had more that they were willing to share.

Words that may spark the viewers mind while watching the performance would be along the lines of interesting, interpretive, powerful, and insightful.

But regardless of any of these inclinations, the dance exists and it remains in it's entirety for the soul ability to express ones self. Anything else someone takes away from it will only be their interpretation of this unique art form.

The reality of Friday's performance did have an underlying meaning.

It's no secret that technology has become a vital necessity to our way of life and Voci Dance sought out to capture that notion.

Every dance from start to finish included at least one element of technology if not more. One dance involved the power of text messaging and had the dancers glued to their cell phones for the entire duration of the routine.

Another dance poked fun of a 1920's flapper girl while modeling in front of her Macbook laptop.

All of which had the audience members chuckling with laughter as they themselves witnessed the truth in one dance and the irony in another.

Loraine Andrews, who was attending a Voci Dance performance for the first time was a little shell shocked in the beginning saying, "When I first walked in here I was very confused and it took me a while to figure out what was happening."

The more Andrews watched the performance, the clarity of her surround-

ings came into perspective.

"The underlying theme, I felt, was technology and how technology is such an important part of our lives. I thought it was interesting how they combined art, which is soft and touches your soul, and then they touch it with technology which is cold.

I think they were trying to show how the coldness of technology can come together with the warmth of art," said Andrews.

Well, the warmth of art was indeed connected with the coldness of technology that night.

Every dance contained a soft, heart-felt emotion and was tied in with a physical, electronic object that we as humans would find vitally important.

For those interested in learning more about the Voci Dance Company and seeing their next performance, visit their website, <http://www.vocidance.org>.

There you will find tons of the information about this unique and inspiring company.

Is Valentine's Day just a Hallmark holiday?

By Omshante Lee
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Here it is again... that time of year that we have all been waiting for. Delectable chocolates and adorable stuffed animals line the shelves of your favorite shopping centers, against a rainbow of pink and red shades specifically designed to prompt joy and the celebration of love.

Happy couples everywhere cannot wait to show their affection, and soul mate seekers are now given the perfect opportunity to pursue a new love interest in hopes of finding their true match.

With all the "love" in the air, one cannot help but to be moved by Valentine's Day... right? Wrong.

Despite Cupid's display of superb marketing techniques, many are not amused.

Of course, clueless boyfriends and husbands, who view the holiday as a direct threat to their bank accounts, have undoubtedly biased opinions. They are expected to purchase an array of gifts, ranging from flowers to diamonds, attempting to prove something that should have been established long ago.

However, it is not just men or bitter single ex-girlfriends who feel mocked by this seemingly sentimental holiday. Despite the sincerity of the initial intention, many people feel that Valentine's Day has lost its real meaning in an endless sea of clever schemes used by companies to get the most out of their customers.

Jewelry and floral companies ambush television and radio with countless advertisements not only putting financial pressure on couples, but demonstrating the materialism of society as well.

Promoted as a day that is designated to appreciate love, many now wonder if instead Valentine's Day exploits it. Millions are made every year off of couples who are media trained to associate true human emotion with material generosity.

Despite what we'd like to believe, has Valentine's Day become nothing more than a "Hallmark holiday"



"Yes, kind of. A lot of people lost the true meaning of it now its just to buy gifts."

— **Ahley Tuel**



"Yes because its not really for the guys, its for the girls. I picture myself giving to the lady that really appreciates things. Like a box of chocolates or a Victoria's Secret gift card."

— **Keith Bradley**



"Everybody knows about it. It has a value behind it and people use it to spend time with the one they love, or that special someone."

— **Justin Mazzotta**



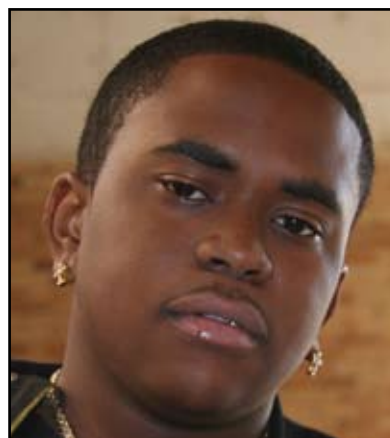
"No, I think its more for being in love."

— **Margarita Marin**



"No, because Valentine's Day is for friendship. A day to spend with the ones you love."

— **Marie Louis**



"I don't really celebrate it, but the people who do celebrate it are probably really in love."

— **Keemo Anderson**



"I like Valentine's Day. I think its a great way to show your love. Its nice to have love and not alot of people do, so if you have it you should celebrate it."

— **Cheryl Lovas**



"Yes, because you should love everyday not just Valentine's Day."

— **Jamal Scott**

Photos by Claudia Eslava/ Omshante Lee





Darren Michaels / MCT Campus

Ginnifer Goodwin stars as Gigi, Jennifer Aniston stars as Beth and Jennifer Connelly stars as Janine in New Line Cinema's romantic comedy "He's Just Not That Into You."

Viewers are into 'He's Just Not That Into You'

Olivia Pullinger
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Is a woman making the first move gutsy, or just desperate? Old school and misogynistic as it sounds, "He's Just Not That Into You," the latest hit from director Ken Kwapis (Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants), claims that men should do all the work involved in initiating, and keeping a relationship. Rather than presenting a new perspective, the writers of the self-help book on which the film is based, Greg Behrendt and Liz Tuccillo (Sex and the City), take an old one and remind viewers why it was so popular back in the good old days.

The creator's of this film argue that every guy is programmed to get what they want girl-wise, and that a man will go after

a woman if he wants her. There are exceptions to every rule, but why should a woman hang onto a glimmer of hope that she is meant to be with this one person who is giving her every reason to believe the opposite? It seems illogical, overly-dramatic, and frankly, just dumb.

Basic message: women should stay away from the guys who don't like them enough to pursue them.

Women may shy away from this film because it presents a stereotypical, somewhat old-fashioned view of modern women. Ginnifer Goodwin portrays GiGi, a bubbly, overly-outgoing woman who is desperate to find a man. However, the film should not be taken as an accusation that all women are desperate — just the ones who pursue men. As the character of Alex (Justin Long)

advises to GiGi: "Some traditions are just born of nature and last through time for a reason."

And let's face it, the movie, and the idea in general has some truth to it. It could not be any simpler; if you're being cheated on, or the other party is not calling you back, all explanations aside, they, for lack of a better phrase, "are not that into you." So why not wait for the person who is "into you" enough to pursue you themselves? And it's not to say that men don't come upon similar scenarios; the movie shows rejection from the male perspective as well when Conor, a "gay-friendly" real estate agent attempts to seduce Anna (Scarlet Johansson) throughout most of the movie. Anna, however, has her sights set on Ben, a man who is unhappily married to Janine (Jennifer Connelly),

an eccentric house-wife who doesn't show concern over her husband not being faithful to her, but expresses those feelings through her distrust in his claim that he is not smoking cigarettes. And Beth (played by Jennifer Aniston), is faced with the decision of whether or not to leave her boyfriend of seven years, Neil (Ben Affleck,) who claims not to believe in marriage.

The film, with its cast of A-List celebrities, along with newcomers like Justin Long and Ginnifer Goodwin, does a fantastic job of showing relationships from various perspectives, and provides insight on everyday relationship issues, yet is still quite amusing and entertaining. Overall, coming from someone who is not generally a fan of romantic comedies, it is enjoyable and probably one of the best in its genre.

'Mall Cop' doesn't measure up

By Alex Barrett
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Normally, I would say that any good movie starts with a golf ball. I say this, because "Happy Madison", Adam Sandler's production company, rarely makes slip-ups and all their movies open with an old dude hitting a golf ball.

This is not one of those movies. Paul Blart, played by Kevin James, is a man on a mission, to join the New Jersey State Police. There's only one problem, he has a tendency to just randomly fall asleep, not a good quality for a police officer. After failing his officer's test, he finds himself back in the mall, patrolling it to help little girls carry bags and pulling over old people in rascal scooters. Unfortunately, that is really it. Mall Cop was missing that Sandler allure, and even funny-man James couldn't rescue this debacle. Eventually, the mall gets taken over by a group of thugs stealing credit card numbers, and get this, they all ride skateboards and BMX bikes. This is, of course to keep up with James when he is on his Segway, which is just about the ENTIRE movie unless he is inside his house

eating dinner. After the ruffians bust into the mall, they take hostages including the local hair weave seller, who happens to be Blart's crush at the time.

Of course, he saves the day, unconventionally, but he does. And yet, I still feel cheated out of two hours of my life, forced to listen to what seemed like one really long, really bad fat joke. This movie dragged on for a very long time, and through the entire thing the most I could mutter was a sporadic chuckle now and again; and even then I forced some of them out.

I will begrudgingly follow my earlier critiques, rating this on a 10-point scale, but it isn't going to be pretty. A funny movie that isn't funny, has NO quotable lines, bad acting, and really just a waste of film.

This is one of those movies where you sit back and think, "Damn, with millions of dollars I could have made a better movie about a rock and my left foot."

I give it a lowly 2 out of 10. The only reason it didn't get a one is because... well... I felt bad. This isn't even a wait for rental movie. It isn't even worth your time to illegally download it. Just take my word on this one, and skip it.

'Coraline' magical hit with viewers

By Frank Tobin
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Continuing in the tradition of the director's early work on "The Nightmare before Christmas," this newest foray into stop-motion story-telling encapsulates all the technological advances in the field, while also pleasantly clinging to older methods.

The general consensus was that Henry Selick, the director, had tarnished Neil Gaiman's original story, the horror novel this movie is based on, turning it into "Disney fodder." The truth is: the film manages to be both charming and creepy.

For those not in the know, "Coraline" tells the tale of Coraline Jones, who moves to a new town and a house with several strange characters. As well, Coraline's parents neglect her, and so she takes to exploring her new home by herself. In her exploration, she finds a parallel world that is much more whimsical and fun than the real world.

The one difference is that in the 'Other World,' almost all the inhabitants have buttons for eyes. But still, the other par-

ents in this world pay attention to Coraline, and the rather blasé atmosphere of the real world is electrified with color and interesting flights of fancy. It seems just so perfect... or is it? Henry Selick manages to take Gaiman's story, and crafts a world that just seems to take great advantage of stop-motion in a world where the obvious choice would be to go for a totally computer-generated world.

Dakota Fanning, Teri Hatcher, and a number of other actors give voice to a number of wonderful characters.

And if anyone is questioning if the 3-D is worth it- the answer is a resounding "yes, it is." This isn't the fly-in-your-face 3-D that was seen 2-3 decades ago. It's subtler, but gives dimension to the miniature world of 'Coraline.'

"Coraline" does an excellent job not only transporting the viewer to a darker version of our own existence, but also immersing us with its perfect blend of artistic story-telling and technical prowess. Don't let the PG rating deter you from seeing this wonderful cinematic experience; movies like this don't come around that often... if at all.