



VALENCIA VOICE

Volume 6, Issue 6

[HTTP://VALENCIAVOICE.COM](http://valenciavoice.com)

February 25, 2009

Celebrating Brazilian culture

Valencia campuses host 4-night film extravaganza

By Collin Dever
cdever@valenciavoice.com

For the second year in a row Valencia Community College plays host to a four night Brazilian film festival highlighting the rich diversity of Brazilian cinema. On hand will be distinguished filmmakers Elisa Tolomelli and Malu de Martino.

Ms. Tolomelli was an executive producer on the film City of God which was nominated for four Oscars including best writing, and best cinematography. Ms. Martino and Ms. Tolomelli worked together on the film Mulheres do Brasil (Women of Brazil) as director and producer respectively. Which covers the story of five women living in Brazil according to imdb.

Professor of Portuguese Richard Sansone organized the film festival as a way to provide people with a view of what modern day Brazil really looks like, and for his students the film festival is a living laboratory to practice their language and tie it into the Brazilian culture.

The opening night of the festival, which happened this past Thursday, Feb. 19, was a screening of Ó Paí, Ó (Look at This!) on the West campus in Building 5-111.

"Look at This!" follows the stories of the tenement dwellers of the city of Salvador as they celebrate Carnival.

With a diverse range of characters the film leaves the audience "curious to dive in but fearful of drowning," according to Mr. Sansone.

The second night of the festival took place on Monday, Feb. 23 at East campus' at the Performing Arts Center. Guests were invited to see the 2008 Berlin International Film Festival best film award winner Tropa de Elite (Elite Squad). Suggested by the students that attended last year's Brazilian Film Festival, Elite Squad illustrates the power struggle in Rio de Janeiro's Favelas (slums) between the special operations police and the drug lords.

The movie is based on the accounts of Rodrigo Pimentel who was an elite squad captain for nineteen years.

Moving over to the Osceola Campus the third film will be Lisbella E O Prisioneiro (Lisbella).

A classic love story with a Brazilian twist all focused around a movie theatre. Lisbella is a movie for all age groups. The film was shown Feb. 24 in Building two in the auditorium.

Finally the Brazilian film festival will conclude with Polaróides Urbanas (Urban Snapshots).

Following the lives of woman living in urban Brazil the film shows the joy and sorrow as the characters lives pitch between comedy and tragedy. Returning to the West campus



Alex Barret, Valencia Voice

Filmmakers Elisa Tolomelli and Malu de Martino.

Urban Snapshots will be screened Feb. 25 in building five room 111.

In addition to a rich cultural experience, the film festival also helps to partner the college with the community at large, a strategic goal of Valencia community college.

The festival has partnered with the Central Florida Brazilian American Chamber

of Commerce a lively and eclectic group of business owners who are as diverse as Brazil itself.

All Films are open to the public and anyone can attend. For each film there will be a reception starting at 6pm followed by the screening at 7pm. All films will be shown in Portuguese with English subtitles.

Junior college Brain Bowl championship at VCC



Todd Elliot, Valencia Voice

The Valencia team hones their minds and their fingers in preparation for this historic Valencia event.

By Kenny Wagner
kwagner@valenciavoice.com

This weekend Valencia Students will be competing in their own (Super) Brain Bowl, held on our own turf. Expectations are high and the students are feeling the pressure in hopes they will walk away with the gold.

Valencia Community College will be hosting the National Academic Quiz Tournaments' (NAQT) Community College Quiz Bowl Feb. 27-28 at the West Campus in buildings seven and nine. The tournament pits teams from 23 colleges against each other in a trivia competition, testing the knowledge of students representing their respective schools.

This year is a pivotal year in NAQT as well as Valencia history because 2009 happens to be the first year to feature an all community college category and VCC happens to be the first to get hosting privileges for the championship event.

In years past, community colleges were grouped in with four-year schools. The highest ranked community college team among the rankings of all schools in attendance was declared the winner in that bracket.

This year the NAQT decided to do things a bit differently, creating a category exclusive to community colleges. The winner will then go on to face larger Universities in the Intercollegiate Championship Tournament in Division II. So the stakes are high for the Valencia team. In January the NAQT held the Community

College Sectional Championship Tournament, the top teams from the sectional tournament advanced to the Community College Championship Tournament, the competition that will be held at Valencia.

This year 24 teams will be competing — including two from VCC and six states.

It is the hope of the Valencia team to bring home the championship and restore the glory of years past and this year, they have the home field advantage.

The categories the teams will be quizzed on come from the entire spectrum of collegiate curriculums, from math and science to humanities and art. The team leader, professor Chris Borglum is enthusiastic about the chances of his team in this competition, saying "We really have a good shot this year."

Valencia teams have been competing in the NAQT Quiz Bowl since 1983 and have won a total of five times.

Students are encouraged to attend the events and Brain Bowl adviser Chris Borglum has expressed his hope that people will show up and root for their team.

The NAQT Community College Quiz Bowl preliminary rounds will be held at 7 p.m. at Valencia on Friday Feb. 27. The competition will be continuing on from there all weekend punctuated by the finals, which are scheduled to be held at 2:30 p.m. on Saturday Feb. 28 in building 7 room 114.

More Brain Bowl on pages 2-4

Brain Bowl takes quick wits, fingers

By Jordan Keyes
University of Central Florida

Quick fingers and extensive knowledge of topics ranging from Astronomy to Zoology can make you a star in only one Valencia sport that I know of: Brain Bowl. For those more interested in anthropology than athletics, Brain Bowl provides a great outlet where nerds and

geeks of all kinds can compete to see who can retrieve their knowledge the fastest. Brain Bowl is very similar to TV quiz shows like Jeopardy, in that teams of 4 attempt to buzz in once a question is asked to answer for a possible ten points. If they answer incorrectly, they will be penalized 10 points. If they answer correctly, they will gain 10 points and be given a bonus question which can result in


a maximum of 30 bonus points. The questions can cover any number of topics and vary in difficulty depending on the tournament. A team of four is usually constructed to accommodate people with specialties that cover the main question categories: humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, and mathematics. The challenge comes in not only knowing

the answer to a question, but knowing it before the other team. If the other team buzzes in with the correct answer you lose the chance for bonus points. But, if the other team buzzes in and gets the answer wrong,

Continued on Page 4




NAME: Chris Muto
AGE: 21
MAJOR: Chemistry
BIO: Third semester with team, first in a starting role. Practices every day, is nervous thus far, but plans to be ready for the competition. Attending Valencia for cost reasons.



NAME: Patrice Newkirk
AGE: 21
MAJOR: General Studies
BIO: Newkirk has been with the team for one year. Attended and competed in the Delta-Burke Sectionals tournament last year. Newkirk uses homework to further her studies.




NAME: Joseph Clark
AGE: Unknown
MAJOR: Electrical Engineering
BIO: Joined the team in the Fall, and placed third in Valencia's last tournament. Feels the team is balanced, but still needs a little more preparation for the challenges ahead.



NAME: Thanapat Phoolsuk
AGE: Unknown
MAJOR: Engineering
BIO: Nicknamed "T" by the team, has been with Valencia's club for one year, but has not appeared in any events yet. Has a weakness pronouncing some words, but has an excellent memory he believes will help him out.




NAME: Andrew Levin
AGE: 21
MAJOR: Music
BIO: Music lover of the team, has been to two tournaments with the Valencia team, both on the Black (secondary) squads, where he has had the most success. Practices a lot to help absorb info.




NAME: Nikunj Mehata
AGE: N/A
MAJOR: Computer Science
BIO: Planning a transfer to UCF, or Carnegie Mellon; in Pittsburgh. Been with team for 4 months, heading into his first event. Excited to meet the challenges, attends Valencia for the professors.



NAME: David Jimenez
AGE: 21
MAJOR: Engineering
BIO: Planning a transfer to UCF, Jimenez has been with the team for 6 months, attending three events and placing in the top five in all of the events. On team to perform, but have fun as well.



NAME: Brain Kendrick
AGE: Unknown
MAJOR: Education
BIO: Newest member to the team, first competition was two weeks ago, earning second place in that event. Sees Valencia as a good launching point for his career.




NAME: Ryan Reyes
AGE: N/A
MAJOR: Engineering
BIO: An SL-Leader on campus for remedial math students, Reyes is in his third semester with the team, competing in two events. Math may not be his preferred subject, but he tries his hardest to figure it out.




NAME: Mercedes Gosnell
AGE: 20
MAJOR: Humanities
BIO: Gosnell is worried about Chipola, and is more concerned about the Inter-Collegiate Tournament coming up in Texas, and would like to garner enough points in this tournament to get the team there.



Todd Elliot, Valencia Voice



Name: Nolan Bensen
Age: 24
Major: History
Bio: Planning to attend Rollins College because it's cost efficient. Sees Chipola as the most serious threat to Valencia in the contest this year. Currently enrolled in the honors program on campus at Valencia. Bensen is the captain of the Red Team.



Red team captain A deeper look at Valencia's team leader

By Shaneece Dixon
sdixon@valenciavoices.com

With the Brain Bowl competition fast approaching, there are several star players that are representing Valencia in this collegiate experience. One of those students is Nolan Bensen, who is captain of one of Valencia's two teams that are competing this weekend. "Being the captain isn't a big deal. Anybody on the team can be captain. It's just a matter of paying attention to everyone else's strengths and weaknesses," said Bensen. This is Bensen's second semester on Valencia's Brain Bowl team. His first semester on the team was during the Fall semester. Though he finds it more time-consuming to be on the team now, he values the knowledge that he gains from practice. "It's insane how much knowledge I've gained from the past 5 months I've been on the team. I run into things in American and world history that I've never heard before", he said, "I actually

learn more in practice than what I do in class". The thing he looks forward to the most during the competition—other than winning—is competing against Chipola Community college, the team that defeated Valencia last semester in the Brain Bowl playoffs. "We got to 2nd place in the championship of the playoffs. There was one final match, they beat us with a difference of 5 points. We were almost completely evenly matched," Bensen said. The history major does have huge aspirations for his future. Among those goals are game design and law school, but the biggest of them is something that he has an inept passion and talent for. "I can see myself studying for education, maybe to be a professor. I would enjoy it a lot. It's an alternative to studying history, said Bensen, "It's enjoyable for me to teach someone else. Someone once told me that I would make a really good teacher and that was really flattering to hear." One quality about Bensen that he sees within himself through the competition is his desire to be crucial to detail—and to win. "I'm kind of obsessive about understanding things completely. I always wanted to be smart and wise. Like a good grandpa. I always looked up to people like Merlin and the great detectives in the film noir genres."

Practice makes perfect

By Brian Cronin
bchronin@valenciavoices.com

A dark room on the second floor of Building 2 on West campus doubles as the practice arena for the contestants of the Brain Bowl. It's a "Jeopardy" style setting, with two teams comprised of four students each, battling as a professor tosses questions at them. No team wins or loses in practice but you couldn't tell from the way they fiercely battle each other to be the best. Team Captain Nolan Bensen considers the questions for practice just as difficult as the questions at the event. "The questions, even though they are not the same in practice as they are in the event, there are a lot of similarities in the way they are set up." He also stated, "I am completely prepared for any question, and I feel the practice questions help the teams to organize. Practice continues every Monday and Wednesday until the Brain Bowl starts at the end of the week. The competitors also spend most of their free time getting ready. Nolan and the other competitors use their homework from other classes to help them prepare. Andrew Levin is a proponent of practicing; he states, "Practice helps us enormously. We, the competitors, can easily absorb the information if the questions are structured in the same manner from practice to the event." The competitors diligently study for the event in as many ways as possible. Some of the contestants spend Tuesday

and Thursday studying together in their own groups, spending hours quizzing each other. All of the students have a tremendous academic background and are determined to further their academic futures at the university level. Most of the students will go to University of Central Florida, but a couple contestants will deviate from that model and attend other universities, such as Rollins College, Florida State, and Miami University. Nolan Bensen is one of the competitors that will stray from the usual; he is leaning towards attending Rollins College. He declares, "Rollins is far superior than most of the other Florida colleges." "Nerves of steel" is the saying that comes to mind when asking the contestants how they feel. The team they are most worried about is Chipola, the team they lost to in the final round of their last event. The Valencia teams are fairly new to competing, but they are confident with all the practicing they have been through and all the practicing remaining that they will do their very best and come out on top in the Brain Bowl. Mercedes Gosnell, a returning contestant states, "We need to get enough points to move on to go to Texas at the next event." All team members agree that it will be difficult, but with hard training and diligent practicing they will be victorious. Joseph Clark says, "As long as we stay serious, stick to studying and continue to prepare, we will be great."

Teaching ways to play mind games

By Alex Barrett
abarrett@valenciavoices.com

You can see Chris Borglum mulling around in the hallways at Valencia's West Campus, but don't get upset if he doesn't pay any attention to you; he has a lot on his mind heading into the Brain Bowl Championship competition this weekend. Of course, what he has on his mind is trying to put tons upon tons of information on his team's mind, preparing them for any questions that may be thrown at them, and getting them ready for the intense situations and pressure they will face when they compete on Friday and Saturday on Valencia's West Campus, buildings seven and nine. The Brain Bowl puts up to four contestants in a heat against up to four more members from a different school; many schools field two separate teams, an "A" team and a "B" team, or as Valencia calls their teams, "Red," for the number one team, and "Black," for the secondary team. Borglum has been assembling and competing with these teams while teaching at Valencia Community College for over 16 years. You can also look at Borglum and see someone who appears calm and stoic, but you can see how serious he is about competition when you speak to him, and even more so in the practices he holds for the members of the teams; and is leaving lasting impressions of what they should be expecting on them as well. "The thing that has impressed me most about these guys, this team this year, is that they are really putting the extra effort in, practicing anywhere from five to eight extra hours a week on their own, outside of classroom practices," said Borglum. The teams convene twice a week, on Mondays and Wednesdays to hear Borglum read off possible sample questions they can expect to hear to tune their minds into processing information and finding the answer as soon as possible. Borglum's practice questions range from simple trivia to complex mathematics, vast amounts of history, philosophy, and various questions about different humanities topics and time frames, with a little pop-culture and sports sprinkled in for flavor.

Borglum needs to make sure the players expect that virtually anything can be thrown at them at any time, and they won't always have the time to listen to the whole question. Unlike other knowledge competitions, as soon as a player thinks he/she may know the answer, they may buzz in as soon as they would like, prompting Borglum to teach his teams not only knowledge memorization, but also speed and how to pick up on subtle hints. "If you get someone who is really concentrating, sometimes the question will almost completely tip off the answer, then it's down to whoever has the faster buzzer." With all of the practices aside, the Brain Bowl is an interesting and different event, one of which Valencia Community College has fared very well at, winning the championships five times since the tournaments inception in 1983, second in wins only to Broward Community College, who rattled off a five-year streak from 1989-1993, winning as well recently in 2006. With Valencia having great success in the past, Borglum looks for more of the same in this year's competition. "We have a really good shot to win this year," remarked Borglum. "There will, of course, be very stiff competition, but we are looking to take control and come home winners at the end of the tournament. It won't be easy, but we can do it. Looking back at all of those years coaching the Brain Bowlers, it was hard for Borglum to pin-point a favorite memory from his past experiences, but he was rather proud of one win in 2003. "The University of Michigan's team had not lost all year, they were undefeated. Then we beat them. Handed them their first loss of the year, which gave us the tournament victory. It's a great underdog story." Borglum will be looking to return to Brain Bowl glory this coming weekend, and urges others to get out there and support their team. "I would love to have people come, faculty, students, everyone available to come show their support. It happens early on Friday, so you can make plans afterward. It will really help these guys to have people rooting for them on their home turf."



Professor Chris Borglum

Todd Elliot, Valencia Voice

Can you Brain Bowl?

In case you were wondering what kind of questions are going to be asked, well, not even the competitors know exactly. Fortunately, here are some sample questions put together on Valencia's Brain Bowl homepage, at <http://net.valenciaccc.edu/brainbowl/sample-pack.shtm>. These questions are already in read-format, which means they are typed exactly how they would be read in competition.

See if you too can Brain Bowl! (Answers found below.)

1. He was wounded in the arm at the Battle of Lepanto, an injury of which he was very proud. He had a rivalry with his contemporary, Lope de Vega, whom he regarded as an inferior writer. For ten points, name this author who was in prison at Argamasilla in La Mancha when he created characters such as Dulcinea, Sancho Panza, and Don Quixote.

2. This nation's flag, like that of the U. S., features seven horizontal alternating red and white stripes. In the upper-left corner, however, where the U. S. flag has stars, this country's flag has a yellow crescent moon and smaller sun on a blue field. It shares borders with Thailand, Indonesia, and Brunei. For ten points, what is this Southeast Asian nation with capital at Kuala Lumpur?

3. Their name comes from the Greek word for "salt producer," and these elements react with metals to form ionic halide salts. They are all reactive, with the reactivity decreasing down the group. As typical non-metals, they have high electronegativities and ionization energies and form compounds by gaining an electron to complete a stable configuration. For ten points, what is this group of elements, also known as group 17, which includes fluorine, bromine, and iodine?

4. To qualify for it, one had to be male, a U.S. citizen (or at least have filed for citizenship), and either be the head of a family or over 21 years old. It granted 160 acres of public land free of charge to settlers who agreed to stay at least five years and to cultivate their parcel. What was this 1862 act, for ten points, which promoted the agricultural development of the west?

5. A graduate of Cal-State Fullerton, and a big baseball fan, he hung around with his alma-mater's players at the 1999 College World Series, thrilling fans. One of his first big roles was as the corpse in The Big Chill, but though he lay in the box, he was never shown. Things got better for him with roles in Silverado and No Way Out, but Madonna mocked him for calling one of her shows "neat" in her documentary Truth or Dare. For ten points, name this actor whose recent efforts like The Postman have been flops, but who can still bask in the glory of his Oscar-winning Dances with Wolves.

6. The single name which designates each of these rulers is the Arabic word for "tiger." One invaded India and won a decisive victory at Paniput in 1526. The other constantly fights against his rival, King Rataxas, who happens to be a rhino. One was the founder of the Moghul Empire; the other is King of the Elephants. For ten points, give the common name.

Answers: 1-Miguel de Cervantes, 2-Malaysia, 3-Halogens, 4-Homestead Act, 5-Kevin Costner, 6-Babar

What it takes to win it all

Continued from Page 2

time answering the question.

Tournaments are usually conducted in a round-robin style where each team plays every other team and then the top teams with the best record go to a playoff.

Valencia just so happens to have one of the best community college Brain Bowl teams, coming off of winning 3 consecutive national championships, they will be at the end of this semester for their 4th.

Professor Chris Borglum, longtime coach of Valencia's Brain Bowl team, runs his team much like coaches in any sport. He has regular practices that can result in up to 8 hours of practice per week. Assisted by Professor Lois McNamara and Boris Nguyen, Borglum normally runs rigorous practice sessions on Mondays and Wednesdays. These sessions usually involve mock rounds and extensive instruction on various subjects.

These practices have obviously paid off when you look at Valencia's successes. Team members also usually take on a subject to study on their own that will help them have a better knowledge of a topic.

All this hard work does have a pay-off. Brain Bowl is a great way to take those facts that you never thought you'd use or that list of dates you thought you memorized for no reason and use them for an enjoyable and rewarding activity. Sure there's the confidence that comes with knowing that you can recite the entire family lineage of the Hapsburgs, but there are also stipends provided to those involved. Those interested in participating should contact Professor Chris Borglum at cborglum@valenciaccc.edu.

Jordan Keyes is a former Valencia Voice editor-in-chief and Brain Bowl competitor attending UCF.



Rules for Competing

Following these 10 simple rules will help you to understand the flow of the competition. These rules are specially tuned for the tournament and it's contending teams. These rules, of course, can be altered at any time, but only by the appropriate personnel.

1. Players will have three seconds to answer after buzzing in, and readers (judges) will give players a true three seconds to buzz in when the question's finished.

2. Players may give two DIRECTLY RELATED pieces of information, such as "On the Road by Jack Kerouac" or "the dynamo invented by Michael Faraday." In other words, creator-creation will be accepted. Well written questions, however, will render its use unlikely.

3. Teams MAY substitute players at the half of a match.

4. A captain should be designated at the beginning of each match and s/he should deliver all bonus answers. The captain MAY designate a teammate to deliver an answer or series of answers on a bonus, but any attempt at delaying will be struck down by the reader/judge.

5. Readers will give captains a prompt when time is up on a bonus part: "answer, please." At this prompt, the captain must immediately provide an answer; any stalling will result in time being called. The prompt will be delivered by the reader after three seconds, resulting in about five total seconds per bonus part.

6. Ties will be settled by a sudden death toss-up. If teams are still tied after one question, another will be read, then another, until the tie is broken.

7. Ties for overall record in the tournament will be settled by head-to-head record-no exceptions. If head-to-head doesn't settle the tie (a three-way split), then total points scored will determine a winner. There is no provision for a championship round or playoff.

8. Teams should have at least three players, but may have up to six (two alternates). If we have any no-shows, or need an extra team to avoid having more than one bye per team, the tournament director reserves the right to draft a "spoiler" team, though this shouldn't be necessary.

9. The match is over when twenty toss-ups (barring extras) have been read. Time is not kept.

10. We will use a Swiss-pairing format in the tournament, meaning that after the first round, teams will be matched up randomly by a computer program which tries to pair teams with similar records. Over the course of 12-15 rounds, the best teams should play all the other best teams, allowing for a true champion to be determined.



Vice President Joe Biden and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi applaud prior to President Barack Obama's address to a joint session of Congress in the House Chamber.

A 'day of reckoning'

By Steven Thomma
McClatchy Newspapers

WASHINGTON — Calling this a "day of reckoning" for years of mistakes, President Barack Obama worked Tuesday night to assure a recession-weary nation that he's charting a new course out of the depths and ultimately to a prosperous future.

"While our economy may be weakened and our confidence shaken, though we are living through difficult and uncertain times, tonight I want every American to know this: We will rebuild, we will recover and the United States of America will emerge stronger than before," Obama said, according to a text of his speech that the White House released in advance.

Reaching for inspiring rhetoric like the language that lifted his presidential campaign, Obama said that the American people could find prosperity once again with the ready help and firm hand of the government on their side.

"I reject the view that says our problems will simply take care of themselves; that says government has no role in laying the foundation for our common prosperity," he told a joint session of Congress as tens of millions watched on television across the country and around the world.

"Now is the time to act boldly and wisely — to not only revive this economy, but to build a foundation for lasting prosperity."

Coming little more than a month into his presidency, Obama's first address to a joint session of Congress offered him a grand stage to spell out his vision for how the country can work its way out of a still-worsening economic crisis.

In a striking shift from the Bush era, Obama focused almost entirely on the economy, devoting only about six paragraphs near the end of the address to foreign policy and national security. He

said that he'd announce soon his plans to withdraw combat troops from Iraq, reportedly by August 2010.

In a broad indictment of the Bush era, he said that the nation was now paying the price for easy-but-wrong choices made from Wall Street to Pennsylvania Avenue — and sometimes on Main Street as well.

"We have lived through an era where too often short-term gains were prized over long-term prosperity, where we failed to look beyond the next payment, the next quarter or the next election," he said.

He criticized the decision in 2001 to use a budget surplus to cut taxes, calling it "an excuse to transfer wealth to the wealthy."

He said that "regulations were gutted for the sake of a quick profit at the expense of a healthy market."

He lambasted those at both ends of the housing boom: "People bought homes they knew they couldn't afford from banks and lenders who pushed those bad loans anyway."

"All the while, critical debates and difficult decisions were put off for some other time on some other day. Well, that day of reckoning has arrived," he said.

The address — akin to a State of the Union but not called that because it came so early in his presidency — came at an opportune time as Obama works to frame his agenda and build backing for what still could be a rocky road ahead.

Obama has broad political support, but he may be starting to pay a price for the continued anxiety about the economy.

A new Gallup Poll on Tuesday found that 59 percent of Americans approve of the way he's doing his job, down from 69 percent a month earlier. At the same time, the Conference Board said Tuesday that consumer confidence plummeted in February, reaching an all-time low.

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The Valencia Chess Club Team



The Valencia Chess club team is gearing up to win. Though the tournament is open to anyone, the club expects to face challengers from UCF and the University of Florida

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Valencia Open Chess Tournament

Chess club hosts 44-slot competition

Leah Reidenbach
lreidenbach@valenciavoice.com

Chess is sometimes stereotyped as "nerdy", but not at the Valencia west campus.

"I had no idea chess was going to become the in thing at Valencia.... I just love it," said Karen Blandeau the director of the west campus library. Almost daily one can see chess players in the library lobby practicing their chess skills.

Chess has become so popular at the West campus that more than 44 people will be playing in the Valencia Open Chess Tournament on Feb. 28 at 10:30am-5:00pm in the Health Services Building room 220.

So far, most of the competitors are from Valencia, but a few members of the University of Florida Chess Club will be there and possibly some members from UCF.

The tournament costs \$5 to enter and the winner of the tournament will receive 30% of the entry fees; that is about \$70 with the number of people signed up right now.

The second place winner will receive 20% of the entry fees and third place gets 10%.

The rest of the money will go towards the Chess Club budget to help cover the cost of the tournament which includes buying enough chess boards, pieces, and clocks for all the players.

The Valencia Open will be using the Swiss System for the competition; this means the competitors will only play competitors that are doing as well (or as poorly) as themselves, and each player gets 1 point for winning.

Once the top 4 players have been determined, the competition will use the single-elimination system to produce a winner.

When asked who was the best player in the chess club at Valencia, Andrew Neil the vice president of the Chess Club said that no one is the best, "It comes down to style of play, there are some people that match up bad against me and I might match up bad against other players."

If you are interested in watching the tournament it's free and there will be pizza and sodas provided.

The Valencia Open Chess Tournament is just for fun and anybody can sign up. If you think you have what it takes to win, or you just enjoy a fun game of chess you can contact Ann Farrell, the Chess Club student adviser and professor at Valencia, at afarrel4@atlas.valencia.edu for more information.



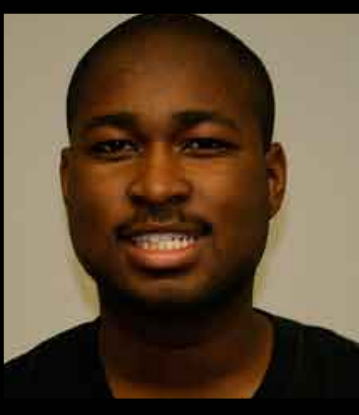
NAME: Leonardo Trimarchi
AGE: 19
MAJOR: Business Administration
HOBBIES: Chess, Tennis, Soccer, Movies
ACCOMPLISHMENTS: President of Chess Club, Honors Member, Phi Theta Kappa Member

"I enjoy playing chess because it uses concentration and I get to play many people and styles."



NAME: Daniel Marulanda
AGE: 20
MAJOR: Business Administration
HOBBIES: Playing Chess

"What I enjoy about chess is winning"



NAME: Jacques Amizial
AGE: 21
MAJOR: Business Administration
HOBBIES: Chess, card games, reading and hanging out with friends
ACCOMPLISHMENTS: Passing my classes and exams. Winning chess games.

"What I like about chess is that it's challenging and it forces you to think."



NAME: Juan Berrocal
AGE: 20
MAJOR: Biology/ Chemistry
HOBBIES: Working out, playing the guitar and tearing it up.
Accomplishments: 3.7 GPA and dog trainer

"I enjoy playing chess because it uses logical thinking and it clears your mind."



NAME: Gebezareth Berrocal
AGE: 19
MAJOR: History and Social Sciences
HOBBIES: Playing soccer and chess, researching subjects of interests, analyzing and synthesizing and lifting weights.

"What I enjoy about chess is the challenge of strategy and practicing skills."



NAME: Marqui Jenkins
AGE: 21
MAJOR: Engineering
HOBBIES: Playing chess, lifting weights, studying and hanging with the fellas.

"What I like about chess is the challenges I face with every opponent."



NAME: Sumair Dugan
AGE: 17
MAJOR: Business Administration
HOBBIES: Soccer, basketball, cycling, and volunteering.
ACCOMPLISHMENTS: Feeling the rewards of doing volunteer service in hospitals.

"In chess, I like how our mind reacts to the opponent's move."



NAME: Ricardo Negri
AGE: 20
MAJOR: Electrical Engineering
HOBBIES: Chess, lifting weights, and soccer.
ACCOMPLISHMENTS: Playing Chess, and almost done with school.

"What I enjoy about playing chess is that it is fun, has lots of strategies, and winning."



NAME: Thanapat Phoolsuk
AGE: 21
MAJOR: Engineering
HOBBIES: Playing Computer Games, Reading Books, Playing chess.
ACCOMPLISHMENTS: Founder of Chess Club at west campus.

"I enjoy playing chess because I get to practice concentration and logical reasoning and meet new people."



NAME: Britton Sprouse
AGE: 21
MAJOR: General Studies
HOBBIES: Chess, hiking, grilling, learning about the universe, life and nature.
ACCOMPLISHMENTS: Six years of formal competitive chess.

"I enjoy chess because it's the ultimate game of wits and a competition of the brain."



NAME: Andrew Neil
AGE: 20
MAJOR: General Education
Hobbies: Chess, Role-playing games, Basketball, Writing stories
ACCOMPLISHMENTS: Vice President of Chess Club and one of its founders.

"I enjoy playing chess because you get to play so many different styles and meet people."



NAME: Sahadeo Ramjatan
AGE: 19
MAJOR: Engineering
HOBBIES: Playing basketball and football.
ACCOMPLISHMENTS: Member of the honors program.

"I enjoy chess because it's about advanced thinking."

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Design - Kyle Beard
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Opinion - Shaneece Dixon
Features - Ebony Chance, Olivia Pullinger, Omshante Lee and Emiliana White

Newsroom: 407-582-5040
news@valenciavoice.com

Sales: 407-582-1572 / 407-582-1572 (fax)
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Our Voice

Religious biases dog faith-based initiatives

A brilliant man by the name of Thomas Jefferson once wrote to the Danbury Baptists, in which he referred to the First Amendment to the United States Constitution as creating a “wall of separation” between church and state.

However, when discussing the separation of church and state, it quickly becomes apparent that there’s a lot of misinformation, misunderstandings, and myths floating around which distort people’s perception of critical issues.

One of those myths applies to fact that the phrase “separation of church and state” does not actually appear anywhere in the Constitution.

There’s a problem, however, in that some people draw incorrect conclusions from this fact. The absence of this phrase doesn’t mean that it’s an invalid concept or that it can not be used as a legal or judicial principle.

In fact, there are plenty of practices and terms not found in the Constitution that are repeatedly used in court rooms around the country.

President Obama, continuing the tradition of his predecessor, has instituted, or rather strengthened the very same, faith-based initiative from the last few years.

President George W. Bush’s faith-based initiative allowed religious groups that accept tax funding to engage in discriminatory hiring and celebrated faith-based groups that proselytize.

Obama’s action leaves the Bush executive orders in place including one that specifically authorizes religion-based employment discrimination in publicly funded programs.

“I am very disappointed that President Obama’s faith-based program is being rolled out without barring evangelism and religious discrimination in taxpayer-funded programs,” said the Rev. Barry W. Lynn, executive direc-

tor of Americans United.

“It should be obvious that taxpayer-funded religious bias offends our civil rights laws, our Constitution and our shared sense of values.”

The common consensus has always been that as long as taxpayers, or private enterprises, (not the federal government) paid for faith-based programs then they would be tolerated.

The slippery slope was if the government intervened, leading opponents to verbally cry out against the proposed governmental institutions.

Questions of religious bias have dogged the faith-based initiative since former President Bush unveiled the program in 2001.

Bush insisted that religious groups should have the right to accept public funding and still hire and fire on religious grounds

and issued an executive order codifying this “right.”

Fellow citizens have joined

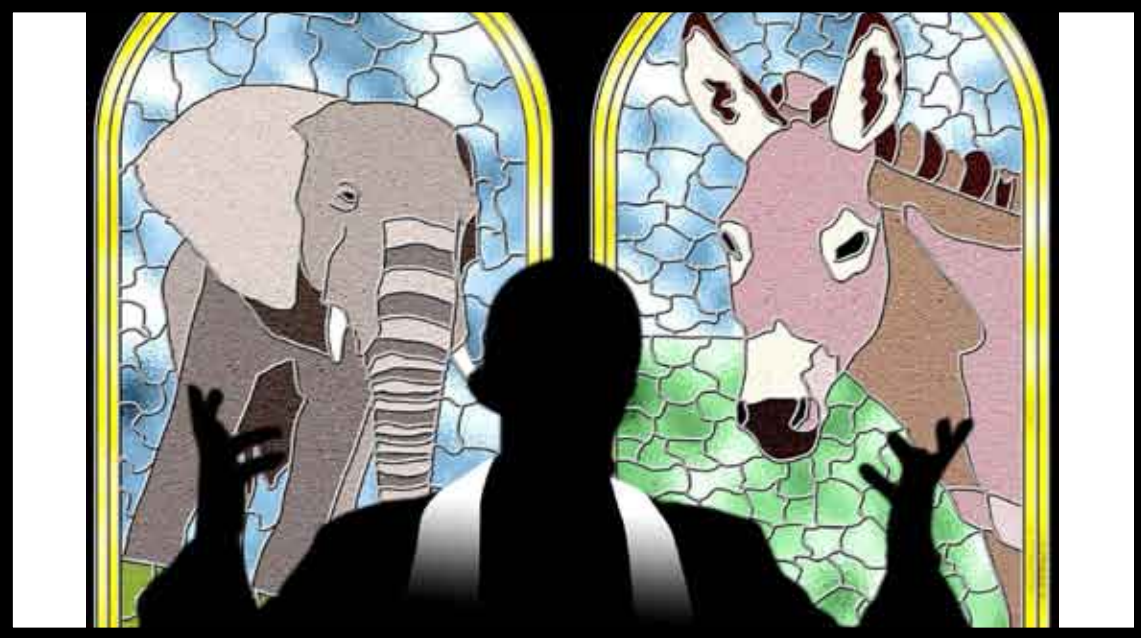
a coalition of religious and civil liberties groups opposing proselytism and religious discrimination in tax-funded programs. The groups have asked Obama to overturn the Bush executive orders.

In a speech he delivered in July, Obama said he wants civil rights and civil liberties safeguards.

Addressing an audience in Zanesville, Ohio, on July 1, Obama said, “If you get a federal grant, you can’t use that grant money to proselytize to the people you help and you can’t discriminate against them or against the people you hire on the basis of their religion.”

Lynn said he wishes that President Obama had discontinued the faith-based office.

“I would rather there be no ‘faith-based’ office,” Lynn said. “But if it exists, it must comply with long-established protections guaranteeing civil rights and civil liberties.”



Andy Rohrback, Colorado Springs Gazette / MCT Campus

Your Voice

Pulpit-based issues place burden on American public

By Kenny Wagner
kwagner@valenciavoice.com

Feb. 12 marked the 200th birthday of Charles Darwin. You can’t help but wonder whether he was thinking, while sailing on the HMS Beagle, if his theory, then in its infancy, would represent a paradigm shift among the attitudes toward religion and science in the world; or did he believe a couple centuries later people would still be finding encrypted messages from Christ in the form of his image on a burnt piece of toast or literally slaughtering each other over a rock in Jerusalem?

Funny thing is, people are slaughtering each other over a rock and people are inventing these silly encrypted messages in their head.

The problem with this is the fact that they defy common logic and rationality. Some would argue that religion itself defies common logic as well as modern science which is the cornerstone of our society, anything that defies it is poison to our social consciousness as well as our economy, education of our youth as well as a myriad of other issues affecting society.

Aside from that argument, religion can have a place in society. It does not offend our most basic ideals and the philosophies that are contained in religious texts are useful in all of our lives.

The real issue is contained in the so called evangelicals, those who seek to spread the word of the good book without any thought toward reason. This

spawns hatred for those who go against their ethics; homosexuals, atheists, people with differing opinions on the issue of abortion, those with different religions all become victims of mainstream religion machine.

These issues somehow creep into our government and public arena. Soon these issues penetrate every facet of our society, and just a few years ago we were all well aware of it.

Now, the issue has turned from religion to other issues, the most prevalent at the moment is surrounding the economy.

The government, beaten and scarred from previous political battles surrounding religious issues refuses to bring up the issue again, in fear of losing support or gaining the wrong sort of support.

Just like that concerns surrounding religion have vanishing from the public arena, however, the rift is still present and it isn’t the job of the government to air these concerns. We have to be open to talking about religion. We can’t be too uptight about our faith or be afraid of dissent.

Those who identify themselves as atheists or agnostics make up a full 16% of Americans, a minority larger than any other, where is their representation in our country?

Everyone’s voice deserves to be heard, that is an opinion held by people of all faiths and frankly that is the only way these ‘hot button’ issues surrounding religion are ever going to be resolved, by discussion and active listening by those of differing opinions.

These issues somehow creep into our government and public arena. Soon these issues penetrate every facet of our society.

Your Voice

AU unites for religious freedom

By Adam Fishman
afishman@valenciavoice.com

The first amendment of the U.S. Constitution vehemently states “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.” Conflicts have always been

The organization is located on Capitol Hill in Washington D.C., with a staff of more than 40 employees. Americans of many backgrounds have joined forces under the Americans United banner to defend the separation of church and state. Americans United is at the forefront of defending the concept, tackling real life issues such as “faith-based initiatives,” church

They believe that all Americans have the constitutional right to practice the religion of their choice.

present in American society regarding separation of church and state. What does this doctrine really mean? According to Americans United for Separation of Church and State, it is a concept in law whereby the structures of state or national government are kept separate from those of religious institutions.

Americans United is a non-profit educational organization founded in 1947 by a broad coalition of religious, educational, and civic leaders. The organization’s aim is to protect the idea of separation between church and state. They believe that all Americans have the constitutional right to practice the religion of their choice, or to refrain from practice as their conscience dictates. The government must remain neutral on religious practices. This has been a guiding principle of Americans United since the organization was founded.

politicking, government-sponsored religion, and religion in public schools.

Faith-based initiatives are a euphemism for taxpayer-supported religion. The initiative funnels taxpayer dollars to religious social service providers without adequate safeguards to prevent proselytism. In addition, these groups seek to discriminate in hiring based on religion even though their programs are publicly funded. Church politicking is when houses of worship attempt to intervene in partisan politics by endorsing or opposing candidates. Pulpit-based electioneering not only violates federal law, many believe it corrupts the true mission of our faith communities.

More information can be found about Americans United for Separation of Church and State at www.au.org.

Is the U.S. turning more religious or secular?

Religion, state may never unite

By Shaneece Dixon
sdixon@valenciavoice.com

This week’s poll deals with the topic of separation of church and state. Naturally, this topic, to our pleasure, is very controversial. Our country as we all know was founded on the search for freedom. Many people that emigrated to this country did so to flee religious persecution. Take for example the Pilgrims, whose images have sadly become picturesque figures to commercialize Thanksgiving.

Now we have our first president of African-American heritage to run in office with many other diversities. Like the fact that he is part Caucasian and part African-American. He is part Kenyan and part American. He has even been raised on both Muslim and Christian values. You could very well say that his background is very colorful to the eye.

Very recently, he’s been getting a lot of pressure under the assumption that like his predecessor, he is creating a pulpit based administration. As much as people say that want government and religion separate from one another, how probable can it be for this country to stay away from any reference of religion? We have the words “In God We Trust” written on our currency. The words “In divisible under God” in our Pledge of Allegiance and the plaque of the “Ten Commandments” standing outside the building where the Supreme Court justices meet.

In order for the government and everything that represents it to be completely devoid of faith based influences, there wouldn’t be any controversy that comes from the union of the two in the first place. How can we move forward if we can’t agree whether or not faith and government as two separate entities should ever be united?

The answers to this week’s poll varied on whether or not the country was becoming more religion based or more secular based. These eight individuals only reveal the opinion of a small microcosm of the country and perhaps the world as we know it today.



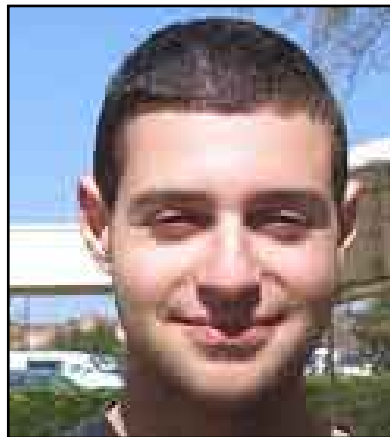
“More secular, just because with Obama winning the election, he was not so wrapped up in religion. We’re becoming more tolerant of other religions. Because people are more accepting to Obama there is more security.”

— Kelsey Stalvey



“I think we’re becoming more secular even though I’m a religious person. People are more interested in the economy right now than church.”

— Lee Jang



“I’d say a good 75% of Americans are more religious. People like to say they believe, it’s not much of a surprise; there is a lot of bad stuff going on.”

— Robert Coutu



“Everyone has their own opinion, the country is definitely not becoming more religious.”

— Viannie Vasquez



“I would say religious. Businesses are going bankrupt like Circuit City. With religion people are more open to ideas to prevent that than those people without religion.”

— Daniel Okeke



“I would say our society is going more secular. As generations go by people lose their traditional values.”

— Kyle Bates



“The US is becoming more religious because more and more the government is interfering with people’s morals and beliefs. Like who you choose to marry.”

— Lomenie Etienne



“I would say the U.S. is going more secular. The bills the President supports are more liberal; like stem-cell research and gay rights. That kind of goes against the Bible.”

— Danielle Schelmetz

Shaneece Dixon / Valencia Voice

VALENCIA VOICE

Opinion:

CORRECTIONS

Dedicated to Accuracy

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



Shaneece Dixon

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:

TOGA

FRIDAY, MARCH 20TH @ AKA LOUNGE

ICC club fair proves to be successful

By: **Kenny Wagner**
kwagner@valenciovoice.com

Students motivating each other to become better student leaders is the unofficial credo of the International Club Council fair which was held at Valencia West on Tuesday, Feb.17 on the SSB patio. It is a forum for Valencia clubs to showcase their organizations, share ideas, sell their mission to students and even sell a little merchandise.

The president of the Valencia West Campus SGA, Zia Ansari, was out promoting the groups, telling everyone to go support the organizations. "The dental club is selling toothbrushes for \$1." He said, "Normally they're like \$4 at Walgreens."

The club with perhaps the most response, however, was the new martial arts group V-Mac which stands for Valencia Martial Arts Club. "We teach many differ-

ent styles like: Tai Chi, Muy Thai, wrestling, Kendo, Minjitsu and Caoeria."V-Mac member, Jasper Stevens said. The latter is a Brazilian discipline rather than an Asian style.

The organization, which was fully funded and run by students, teaches members how to defend themselves from possible threats as well as providing a forum to discuss the cultures behind the fighting styles.

Other groups in attendance included Model U.N. which teaches students, among other things, how to present yourself in the political and public arena. The Hospitality club which prepares students for careers in the hotel industry and finally, Campus Crusaders for Christ which is a club dedicated to discussing Christian ethics and how they relate to students.

The crowd was large outside the SSB as students in between classes filtered out from their classrooms and into the court-

yard. Despite the number in attendance, surprisingly few were signing up.

"I would like to join a club but I'm already a member of the Black High Achievers." Student Kwame Walker said. Others reiterated that sentiment, as Amanda Dagiau said "The clubs looked real cool but I'm graduating this semester," as most seemed to be too busy to join up.

All in all the fair was successful, even if clubs were not recruiting as many people as they had hoped. They were able to be recognized by the rest of the student body, plus were able to make a little extra cash.

The ICC club fair is held each month but is subject to change. To join a club at Valencia visit the student development room in Building 4-103.



Kenny Wagner / Valencia Voice
Sign for Valencia West Campus' Education Club.

SGA meeting focuses on reaching Valencia students

By: **Kenny Wagner**
kwagner@valenciovoice.com

The Valencia West Campus Student Government Association met this Thursday in order to discuss issues important to students on campus.

Amidst discussions on various events and charities attached to the student government, the main items voiced at the meeting were: campus security, student involvement at the school and benefits for students in the form of discount cards redeemable at local restaurants.

The first order of business was the issue of campus security. Executive Secretary Kris Kimberly made an announcement that he will be personally walking around cam-

pus at three different times of the day to make sure the campus is as safe as possible.

"I will be looking at three main things during these campus walks; places for better lighting, more security, and places for new call boxes," He said. Look for surveys the SGA will be sending out around campus about the performance of Valencia security.

The SGA was also concerned with student apathy at Valencia. The way the Student Government plans on amending this issue is by having more students voice their concerns about campus issues and play an active part in government.

By a unanimous decision the SGA adopted a bill that opened a 'legislative town hall' the SGA plans to use as a forum for stu-

dents to voice their concerns on campus.

The plan is in the preliminary stages right now and no formal meeting place is set, but to summarize; the town hall will be a place open to students during the day to discuss issues and propose new ideas.

Students can also come here to propose new ideas for Valencia events and clubs. "We just want to hear from as many people as possible," President Zia Ansari said.

Along with the town hall idea, the SGA has added suggestion boxes for students to use at anytime, which can be found at all SGA events. A permanent box is located in building 4 room 104, the SGA offices.

Recognizing the need to issue some benefits to the student body, the SGA looked for ways to make campus life easier for stu-

dents.

The SGA found prices at the school cafeteria often too high and that operational hours are awkward, seeing that they close at 3pm. The way they planned to resolve this was by working with local restaurants around the school to provide discounts to students by showing their V-ID.

"We just wanted to give students something tangible from SGA," Secretary Kimberly said.

SGA meets every Thursday at 1pm in building six room 202. The meeting is open to students. The general administration offices are located in building four room 104. Look for a new SGA website and 'The Gavel', a newsletter which details all of the goings on in the SGA.

The Oscars' glamorous escape

By: **Booth Moore**
Los Angeles Times

HOLLYWOOD -- Hollywood is the stuff of fairy tales, and at the Academy Awards on Sunday, celebrities dressed the part.

Recession may be reality, but the gowns and jewels were pure escapist fantasy. Because, let's face it, if stars aren't glamorous, they aren't doing their job.

There was a magical princess aura to many looks in a palette of pales keeping with the spring season's trend for powdery colors.

The best was Sarah Jessica Parker's silver-embroidered sea-foam silk tulle Dior Haute Couture bustier gown, cinched at the waist, with an enormous ballerina skirt, followed by Penelope Cruz's 1950s vintage Pierre Balmain strapless ivory lace gown, hand-embroidered with gold bouillon threads.

Miley Cyrus' ivory silk chiffon Zuhair Murad confection, with scalloped tiers and foil-like embroidery, was too much dress for a 16-year-old.

Likewise, Marisa Tomei's dove-gray one-shoulder Versace gown with spiraling origami pleats was so ornate you barely noticed her.

Anne Hathaway looked like a mermaid in Giorgio Armani Prive's champagne-colored mermaid gown, covered in half-dollar size clear paillettes, but I wonder if it crunched when she sat.

Taraji Henson, in a rippling cream chiffon Roberto Cavalli column, offset by a red Mary Norton clutch, was the evening's best dressed. I loved it when she lifted her skirt to show Ryan Seacrest her shoes and you could see her Spanx lingerie. That's reality.

Henson's 19th-century diamond flower Fred Leighton necklace exemplified the jewelry trend. Amy Adams also wore an impressive Leighton piece, a 1950s colored gem-and-diamond collar. Viola Davis fastened a 1950s Leighton clip brooch to the front of her gilded Reem Acra goddess

gown. Freida Pinto showed off a diamond ring of Indian provenance. Her one-sleeved midnight-blue beaded-lace John Galiano gown was an interesting choice. I liked the way the shape echoed a sari, but somehow it aged her, especially with her hair up.

Red dresses, the surest way to va-va-voom glamour, were also popular -- Adams in red Carolina Herrera with a sculptural pleated bodice, and Heidi Klum in a slit-high red-silk taffeta RL by Roland Mouret gown.

Kate Winslet wore a one-shouldered blue-gray Yves Saint Laurent gown (the silhouette was all over the fall runways in New York last week). But what I really loved was her hair -- a sculptural flip styled by Renato Campora.

Hair styles looked more modern than ever, particularly Henson's sleek bob and Jessica Beal's easy do, the front pulled back and the rest tumbling around her shoulders.

Brooks Brothers dressed the evening's "biggest littlest" stars, the children from "Slumdog Millionaire," in tiny tuxedos.

Brad Pitt was in head-to-toe Tom Ford and, as usual, Giorgio Armani had quite a pack of fellas, including Sean Penn and Anil Kapoor.

Burberry dressed Hugh Jackman in three different tuxes, and Dev Patel. I only wish Patel's Brooks Brothers bow tie had been bigger.

It's been fun to watch Mickey Rourke do the red carpet rounds because he actually takes risks, unlike so many stars. Sunday night, he wore a Jean Paul Gaultier white wool tuxedo with a black vest and chained zipped-up watch pockets. Around his neck was a photo pendant of Loki, his recently deceased pooch. Gotta love it.

I'm all for self-expression, but Philip Seymour Hoffman's black knit cap made him look as if he were en route to a jewel heist. Lord knows, he was in the right place.

- LATWP News Service



Liz O. Baylen, Los Angeles Times / MCT Campus
Actresses Sarah Jessica Parker (above), Miley Cyrus (below) and Taraji P. Henson (bottom left) arrive for the 81st Annual Academy Awards held at the Kodak Theatre in Hollywood, Sunday, Feb. 22.

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Liz O. Baylen, Los Angeles Times / MCT Campus



Jay L. Clendenin, Los Angeles Times / MCT Campus

Oscars ceremony predictable at best



Danny Boyle won the Oscar for director for his work on "Slumdog Millionaire," at the 81st Annual Academy Awards held at the Kodak Theatre in Hollywood.

By Frank Tobin
ftobin@valenciamo.com

More musical than award show, The 81st Academy Awards were a mixture of obvious winners, and predictably long speeches.

A few highlights included a Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie front-row seat to the failed comedic stylings of Jack Black and Brad's ex Jennifer Aniston, and a solid showing for "Slumdog Millionaire" (8 awards, including Best Director and Best Picture).

All in all, a very pedestrian outing for the average viewer not emotionally invested in last years cream of the crop.

The winners, of course, beg to differ to such a simplistic analysis.

A touching moment in the award for supporting actor, when the family of Heath Ledger accepted the Oscar.

After the deserved standing ovation at the announcement of the posthumous accolade, and the subsequent respectful quiet that prevailed, Ledger's family showcased steely resolve, and thanked those who were responsible for his performance, while also honoring his memory.

"Heath, we both knew what you had created in the Joker was extraordinarily special, and had even talked about being here on this very day," Ledger's sister Kate said.

"We really wish you were, but we proudly accept this award on behalf of your beautiful daughter Matilda. Thank you," she added.

During Sean Penn's award acceptance speech, he calmed his usual fiery demeanor, yet still used the podium for a clear message.

"Thank you. Thank you. You commie, homo-loving sons-of-a-gun. I did not expect this," joked Penn after collecting the second best actor Oscar of his career.

Penn urged opponents of same-sex marriage- recently banned in California- to re-think their positions.

"I think that it is a good time for those who voted for the ban against gay marriage to sit and reflect and anticipate their great shame and the shame in their grandchildren's eyes if they continue that way of support," he said.

"We've got to have equal rights for everyone."

Kate Winslet, meanwhile, won her first Oscar after five previous defeats, for her portrayal of a former Nazi death camp guard who starts a love affair with a teenage boy in post-war Germany and is later put on trial for war crimes.

"I'd be lying if I haven't made a version of this speech before. I think I was probably eight years old and staring into the bathroom mirror and this would have been a shampoo bottle," she told the audience.

Pause for laughter.

"It's not a shampoo bottle now," Winslet added. "I feel very fortunate to have made it all the way from there to here and I'd like to thank some of the people along the way who had faith in me."

Spanish star Penelope Cruz won the best supporting actress prize for her part in the steamy Woody Allen comedy "Vicky Cristina Barcelona."

And rounding out the coverage was the entertaining, yet still over-done, hosting job by Hugh Jackman; who not only sung the opening number, but also had a pleasant sounding duet with Beyonce near the middle of the evening.

"Take it or leave it, this is what you got. Maybe once the economy begins to ramp up again, we might be afforded more flair. As it stands, not a bad night at all.

'Madea' fails to fully reach expectations

By Emiliana White
ewhite@valenciamo.com

Crowds poured in opening night for the latest play turned movie from Tyler Perry, "Madea Goes To Jail."

The comedy-drama follows the lives of Perry's alter ego, Mabel "Madea" Simmons, and the people who she comes in contact with through her latest criminal proceedings taking off from where Madea's last run in with the police in "Meet the Browns."

The film co-starring Keshia Knight-Pulliam ("The Cosby Show", Beauty Shop) and Derek Luke (Glory Road, Antwone Fisher) steers away from Perry's usual themes of keeping the faith.

Instead, it follows the one as Madea's character puts it "everybody got a life and what you do with it is up to you."

With a story line that evolves around the emotions of jealousy, betrayal and loyalty, the film fails to keep viewers in touch with the characters.

This can be attributed to its awkward transitions from the tales of Madea and Candace "Candy" Washington (Knight), a troubled young woman who sought a life of prostitution as a way to deal with a sexually abused past.

At any given moment viewers didn't know if they should sympathize with Candy or laugh at Madea's insanity.

The hysterical breakdown by Luke's character, Joshua Hardaway, didn't help Perry's cause.

Many scenes lacked the personal rationality that has come to be expected from a Tyler Perry production.

The film did have its good moments though such as with the appearances of Co-



Courtesy of Madeagostojail.com

lombian actress Sofia Vergara ("Meet the Browns") who amusingly stole the scenes as T.T., Madea's serial killer cellmate (not the same character that she portrayed in the film which set the tone for this one), making her limited screen time more memorable than that of the main characters.

Knight also managed to give weight to her character as she comes full circle in a emotional break through that helps her move on

from her pain.

Sadly, Knight and Vergara were not strong enough to carry the film through.

Not even the guest appearances of Al Sharpton, TV personalities Phil McGraw and Judge Mathis, radio personalities Tom Joyner, Michael Baisden, Steve Harvey, among many others could make this film worthy of being watched.

Though as the character Brown, played

by David Mann, says "King Kong ain't got nothing on" Madea, I would advise you to save your money and rent "Madea Goes to Jail" when it hits DVD stands in either a few weeks or a few months.

However long it will take for Lionsgate, the film's producer, to realize that they wasted money on promoting this venture.

You'll be doing yourself a favor by choosing another film over this one.

'Fired Up' a mockery of film industry

By Frank Tobin
ftobin@valenciamo.com

Nails on a chalkboard. A timeless tradition of someone taking their fingers, and scraping them down the blackboard surface, producing a horribly annoying screeching sound that no person can withstand.

There was only one moment in cinema history where this was used to success, the key scene in "Jaws" where the character used this method to quiet the town-hall meeting he was attending.

Any other time you hear this gratingly atrocious noise, you cringe and cover your precious ears.

However, and this is a HUGE "however," you will rather glue your auditory cavities directly to the surface of a chalkboard while a Velociraptor scrapes against it with its six

inch claws, than watch the movie (that term used in the loosest sense of the word) "Fired Up."

It's both difficult, and extremely easy, to explain exactly why this movie is the lowest of cinematic filth.

Quite honestly, "Kangaroo Jack," by comparison, looks like "Citizen Kane" (if you're not familiar with this classic, then "Fired Up" might be right up your alley).

Now comes the obligatory part of the review where we explore the content of the "film" (sic) in its entirety.

But since your time is better spent drinking Drain-O, you'll be spared the torture. Suffice to say, the setup is very simple.

The story involves two callow and witless high school football players, Shawn and Nick, who don't want to attend summer football training camp in the desert.

They also want to seduce the school cheerleaders, so they decide to attend cheerleading camp, ha ha.

Their high school is in Hinsdale, Illinois, whose taxpayers will be surprised to learn the school team trains in the desert just like the Cubs, but will be even more surprised to learn the entire film was shot in California.

And they will be puzzled about why many of the cheers involve chants of the letters "F! U!" - which stand for "Fired Up!" you see. Very clever... very clever indeed.

A brain-dead amoeba could secrete better writing than this garbage.

The characters relentlessly attack each other with the forced jollity of a non-English speaking telemarketer attempting to sell you flood insurance in the middle of the desert.

If you're a man (or a woman) with a

twisted cheerleader fetish, you'll be able to get your jollies off watching another equally bad, yet somehow more entertaining, "Bring it On."

And even then, that admission alone will force even the most ardent of human beings to die a little inside. Correction: you will die a TON inside.

Blah, blah, blah, this movie is so bad no words can adequately describe (aside from the verbal onslaught read in the rest of this piece) the validity of badness (as you can see, even IQ's drop after watching this visual tragedy... seriously, who even says "badness" in a quasi-professional review?).

Do your mental stability, physical health, and IQ a favor and avoid this ridiculous farce of a movie like the plague. Please. You will be eternally grateful.

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Family accepts Ledger's Oscar

By Reed Johnson
Los Angeles Times

HOLLYWOOD -- Accompanied by as-tandant ovation as well as a reverent silence, Heath Ledger's family accepted his Best Supporting Actor statuette.

The 28-year-old Australian actor, who was found unconscious in January 2008 in his New York apartment, was posthumously honored for his performance as the gleefully malicious Joker in the Batman saga "The Dark Knight." "Menacing, mercurial, droll and diabolical," co-presenter Kevin Kline summarized as he listed Ledger among the Best Supporting-Actor nominees.

The actor's father, Kim Ledger; mother Sally Bell, and sister Kate Ledger jointly accepted the award.

"This award tonight would have humbly-validated Heath's quiet determination to be truly accepted by you all here, his peers, with

in an industry he so loved," Kim Ledger said.

Kate Ledger said the family was accepting the award on behalf of "beautiful Matilda," her brother's 3-year-old daughter with actress Michelle Williams.

Even before "The Dark Knight" was released last summer, fellow actors, movie critics and others were predicting, and endorsing, an Oscar nomination for his chilling portrayal. Although "Dark Knight" received mixed reviews, many critics concurred that Ledger gave the movie a jolt of malevolent energy whenever he materialized on screen.

Oscar history suggests that Ledger's award was not merely sentimentally motivated. Only one other actor ever has been osthumously honored with an Academy Award, Peter Finch for "Network" in 1977.

But it's likely that at least some Academy voters were honoring not only Ledger's work as the Joker but the breadth of his accomplished, if tragically brief, career. "With this

premier performance as well as with a wide range of other roles to which he put his unique signature, Heath Ledger has left us an original and enduring legacy," Kline said.

Over the past decade, Ledger demonstrated that he could handle comedy as well as serious dramatic roles in movies as varied as "10 Things I Hate About You" (1999), "The Patriot" (2000), "Monster's Ball" (2000) and "A Knight's Tale" (2001).

His career high point arguably was the role of Ennis Del Mar, the emotionally terse anch hand he played in Ang Lee's "Broke-back Mountain" (2005), for which he earned a Best Actor Oscar nomination.

In "The Dark Knight," he had a tall assignment in interpreting the Joker, a character memorably incarnated by Jack Nicholson in Tim Burton's "Batman" in 1989. Nicholson's Joker is a witty, self-delighted clothes horse, brimming with comic sang-froid.

Ledger's Joker is rawer and uglier, both

physically and psychologically. Like Lon Chaney and other great monster men of the silver screen, Ledger conveyed a wrenching pathos lurking below the layers of makeup and venality.

In interviews, Ledger also acknowledged that filming "Dark Knight" and another movie, "I'm Not There," had contributed to his on-going bouts of insomnia.

Both in movie posters and in the minds of many viewers, the grotesquely smirking face of Ledger's Joker became the definitive image of the film. And, in one of those convergences of movies and real-world events, his nihilistic character spoke to the fears and uncertainties of a jittery time.

"See, I'm not a monster," Ledger's Joker-tells Christian Bale's Batman during a brutal interrogation scene. "I'm just ahead of the curve."

- LATWP News Service

von Furstenberg keeps up with trends

Clothing design remains an icon of fashion world

By Audra D.S. Burch
McClatchy Newspapers

MIAMI — Diane von Furstenberg has just arrived in South Florida, still thawing out from the merciless chill of Washington, D.C., still glowing from all that history in one place.

Von Furstenberg, who introduced the world to the jersey “wrap dress” more than three decades ago, is happy to chat about her charmed life, but not before a word or two about that remarkable Tuesday, President Barack Obama, and well, “the” snowsuit.

Here she is, the designer, the former princess, the cultural icon, perched on a bench in her dazzling new company store in Bal Harbour, Fla., beckoning all to look at her digital camera.

“That’s me, in the snowsuit! Can you believe it?”

Indeed, frame after frame has captured von Furstenberg’s unmistakable, almost kittenish smile, her knowing stare and shoulder-length curls tamed today by a Russian fur hat. She is leaning against a balcony in a black snowsuit.

“My very good friend is Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, so I had a very good seat right behind the stage. I could see most everything,” she says, not entirely oblivious to the young women in the store stealing glances. “It was soooo cold, but it felt warm because it was such a beautiful day.”

Though almost 1.8 million people came to the National Mall, von Furstenberg’s inauguration experience had a certain megawatt glamour quotient.

She found a chaperon in Vogue culturalist-at-large Andre Leon Talley, and the two made a handsome, photo-worthy pair. Her itinerary included cocktails at Maureen Dowd’s Georgetown digs and high tea at Hickory Hill, Ethel Kennedy’s Virginia estate where guests included Harry Belafonte and George Lucas.

She ran into musician Citizen Cope, who told her that most every time he sees a beautiful girl, she is wearing DVF. Ever of the moment, von Furstenberg blogged about it

all.

“When Obama became the nominee, I decided I needed to know more about him. I read his book, ‘Dreams from My Father,’” says the naturalized U.S. citizen. “After reading the book, I knew then that I trusted this man completely. He is exactly what America needs.”

Not 48 hours after the inauguration, von Furstenberg breezes into town for her 29th store opening and, in some ways, to celebrate her own history.

She’s done this a thousand times, gracefully, patiently talked about the chapters of her story — all while playing the perfect hostess in the dressing room.

She helps a young woman decide whether the floor-length white sequined gown is right, discusses the awesome nature of Pilates with a middle-aged mom whose amazing body comes from another era. She greets adoring fans and sips bottled water and even finds a moment to re-apply her lipstick, a DVF shade called Foreplay.

Then she effortlessly segues into the von Furstenberg rise:

Born in Belgium. Educated in Switzerland. Married a German prince. Launched her fashion house in New York.

“I never could have envisioned how my life would turn out,” says von Furstenberg, married since 2001 to media mogul Barry Diller. “But I always knew the kind of woman I wanted to be.”

Von Furstenberg came to own the 1970s. Her wrap dress was a raging success, crossing the stratusms of both the uptown set and Studio 54ers. At one point, her company was producing 15,000 dresses per week.

Von Furstenberg’s life seems to divide into two parts — her early success and her later success. She would likely see it as a continuum, one big adventure.

She built her company — from a style experiment born in the West Village to a global multi-million dollar luxury brand — upon the singular idea that women could be empowered and sexy.

Eventually, the fashion world and its followers moved on. Von Furstenberg’s popularity waned, and she labored quietly until the fall of 1997, when she staged a remarkable comeback using her famous moneymaker.

This time around, the wrap dress, still sumptuous and body hugging, was just a bit sleeker, a bit shorter. It became an instant



Jori Klein, Newsday / MCT Campus

Model displays fashion by von Furstenberg during Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week.



Rob Kim, Landov / MCT Campus

Von Furstenberg walks the runway after showing her designs at Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week.

hit with a new generation of fashionistas and with the old guard that had been wearing the vintage version.

At a time when elder fashion designers azre taking a bow, the 62-year-old and her family continue to grow the empire with the famous initials — the DVF logo is stamped on most everything from purses and luggage to rugs and sunglasses.

And she is at the center of pop culture: von Furstenberg has been a judge on Bravo’s “Project Runway,” and her headquarters in New York’s Meatpacking district is the backdrop for the MTV reality series “The City.”

Now, she is dabbling in interior design, “just a few rooms at my favorite hotel, the Claridge in London,” she says casually.

This is not her first foray into the hotel biz. Three years ago, she confabbed with W Hotel to produce an emergency fashion kit

with her black wrap dress and DVF cosmetics. And the waitresses at celeb-haunt Hollywood Roosevelt’s loungewear the designer’s signature wrap dress.

And she continues her personal mission to help women, working with a number of humanitarian and civic organizations. Her commitment to women’s issues has imbued much of her work.

One of her 2008 collections was inspired by Wonder Woman; part of its proceeds benefited Vital Voices, a women’s empowerment organization.

“My goal is to continue to make clothing that makes women feel beautiful,” she says, wearing her own, a patterned sheath, a bold black-and-cream wrap coat, nude fishnet hose and chunky gold jewelry. “I just want to stay relevant.”

- MCT Campus

‘Project Runway’ finalist in 1st show at Fashion Week

By Anne Bratskier
Newsday

NEW YORK — Jillian Lewis, the “Project Runway” Season Four finalist who hails from Selden, Long Island presented a hotly attended, totally tony fashion show — her very first, save for the show’s finale — at the Tela Design Studio on Little West 12th Street Thursday afternoon.

Smudge-eyed models posed on giant sil-

ver trunks in the center of the room as people oohed, ogled and sipped mimosas.

Jillian, who told us she was inspired by her own industrial environment in Long Island City, N.Y., went for the “urban warrior” theme using elements of graffiti, train tracks and clockworks.

These were implied, though some of the looks smacked more of the sexy, street urchin. A ripped up legging with chiffon insets

... we’re thinking, meow, catfight.

In fact, the collection overall had an aggressive sexuality to it, most of the fits were super body-conscious and the overall vibe, well, kind of mean streets.

Where Jillian shines, and we mean like glow in the dark, is with her trench coats and fantastic knitwear that is textural, sleek and seductive. A burgundy A-line “clockwork” hand-knitted dress featured a slit above the

bust, and a stand-off back that defied gravity.

Beyond cool. Missing in action: Jillian’s famous curls. We asked her about them, and she said that someone had done her hair differently for the day.

“I looked in the mirror and I didn’t know who I was,” she said. We did. She was Jillian Lewis, the designer.

- MCT Campus



Jori Klein, Newsday / MCT Campus

Models wears a designs from Jillian Lewis at a show during the Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week at Bryant Park in New York City, New York on Thursday, February 12, 2009.



Your thoughts on Rihanna/Brown case?

Careers in jeopardy

By Emiliana White
ewwhite@valenciacvoice.com

In no way should anyone ever support actions of domestic abuse.

Viewers were in awe when the news of Chris Brown’s arrest for allegedly hitting an unknown woman stormed the media. Rumors were quickly confirmed that the unknown woman was indeed his long time girlfriend, pop singer Rhianna.

Although spectators seemed to be horrified, they do not appear surprised. Some seemed to feel that fame has gone to Brown’s head and question if he is still the sweet, talented young man that debuted on the music scene or a cocky entertainer who needs a shot of reality.

The media has blown both of these individuals careers up so much, that they were forced to live a private devastating moment very publicly, creating an undeniable hindrance. In their quest for super stardom, they have already been compared to Beyonce and Prince, but this proves that they are still new kids on the block.

Hopefully this arrest is the first and last one for Brown, and although held to a different standard, Brown is not the only young person troubled with violence in a relationship. No matter how angry one may get, never should they place their hands on another individual. Take a walk, or hit a punching bag but never cross that line.

Think before action. Breathe and step back to regroup and think of a better way to handle the situation.

Although Brown’s public arrest has tainted his legacy and tarnished the man and entertainer that he will become, this type of exposure allows young fans to see the consequences of bad choices, and hopefully inspires them to take a better route.



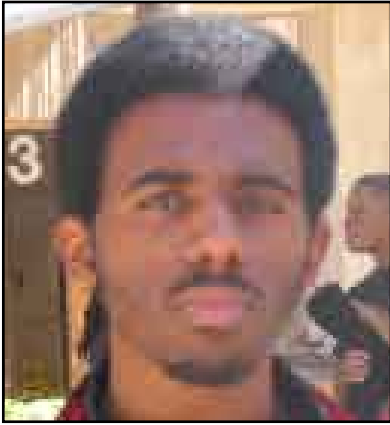
“We don’t really know what’s going on yet exactly. I think he beat up on her because when you hear other artists talking about the situation, they’re not backing up the fact that he didn’t do it. They’re just saying ,oh he’ll be fine.”

—Asif Hussain



“I think its a bit of an over reaction. There’s never a reason why you should hit a woman at all. That makes him look like a child that doesn’t have respect for anyone. Knowing that now I would be less likely to purchase something that has anything to do with him.”

—Nichole Walz



“Its not my business. If he’s guilty then he’s wrong but if not, then good for him. I have better things to do with my time.”

—Jasper Stephens



“Oh my gosh. I’m not really a fan of entertainment news, but he’s so wrong. You should never put your hands on a woman. Looking from the outside its not okay to judge because we don’t know what happened but regardless, its never okay to get up and hit a woman.”

—Marsha Clarke



“I think its sad and sickening. I don’t know the story but regardless, its not okay.”

—Brooke Landow



“I think its funny because I know Caribbean people and I think she’s just blowing it out of proportion.”

—Cordell Henry



“I think it really sucks because I really liked them as a couple. I think its sad and I think he really needs to get help for it, but I don’t think less of him.”

—Kayla Tribble



“If he gets convicted than I’m highly disappointed and he will lose my respect as an artist, because I think he’s talented but its not okay to beat up on a woman. That’s only if he’s convicted.”

—Chris Kelly

Photos by Shaniece Dickens

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Tiger's knee

Tiger Woods returns to professional golf after missing nearly a year to recuperate from ACL surgery. A look at how his injury occurred:

Power of the swing
Tiger's firmly planted left foot and powerful upper body rotation force his knee joint and lower leg bones to absorb the rotational motion created by the swing

Rotation

Left knee troubles
1994
Surgeons remove benign tumor

2002
Undergoes surgery in December to remove fluid around anterior cruciate ligament (ACL)

2008
Arthroscopic surgery performed in April to remove cartilage fragments

Doctors discover stress fractures to tibia two weeks before U.S. Open; surgery performed after Woods wins U.S. Open in June

What happens
① **Torn ligament**, common injury to an athlete's knee
② **Stress fracture**
Cumulative and repetitive forces over a period of time cause tibia to fracture; tibia accounts for 50 percent of stress fractures

Left foot

Force

Detail area

Rotational stress tears ACL

Left knee

Femur

Tibia

Femur

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Source: Journal of Orthopaedic Surgery, ESPN, Golf Digest, MCT Photo Service Graphic: Lee Hulteng

Woods returns for Match Play

Top-ranked golfer 'curious' after 8-month surgery rehab

By Chuck Culpepper
Los Angeles Times

In a notable development, the bones in Tiger Woods' left knee no longer roam around at their leisure, wreaking pain and fret.

"My bones aren't moving anymore," Woods said Feb. 20 in a teleconference from Orlando, Fla., one day after announcing he'd return to the PGA Tour Feb. 25 at the World Golf Championships' Accenture Match Play Championship in Tucson, Ariz.

"That's a very comforting feeling, hitting a golf ball and not having your bones slide all over the place."

Eight months after surgery June 24, Woods said he hits golf balls without pain for the first time in years, but that he still cannot ascertain "how the thing's going to behave in a competitive environment, and how the recovery is going to be day-to-day."

As Woods — still ranked No. 1 in the world — awaits his comeback match Feb. 25 against Australia's Brendan Jones, the world's 64th-ranked player, in the first round of the

Match Play, his foremost concern would be "whether or not my game's sharp."

Asked if he could go 36 holes next Saturday and Sunday, Woods said, "Well, I'd like to have that problem, bud."

Having tweaked his swing as well, he said, "I'm as curious as you, too. Getting out there and competing again, feeling the adrenaline, feeling the rush of competing, all of that."

Woods said that had his wife Elin not been pregnant with their second child and first son, Charlie Axel, born Feb. 8, he "probably" would have returned already, and that he waited for Elin's approval before returning at all. And while he mentioned time with his 20-month-old daughter, Sam, as the best by-product of his absence, he referred to some emotions seldom known to come from him.

"I wanted improvement right away," he said. "The first few months anyone that's ever dealt with an ACL, it's just brutal. You lose all your muscle. You lose your flexibility. You lose all your endurance."

"It's just a terrible feeling. But then building that up, it came back quickly."

— LATWP News Service

Kenseth now 2-0 to start NASCAR

Stays hot after Daytona victory

By Jim Peltz
Los Angeles Times

FONTANA, Calif. — Matt Kenseth is known as one of NASCAR's more reserved drivers, a Wisconsin native who often speaks in clipped sentences and seldom goes looking for the spotlight.

The Roush Fenway Racing driver also has a tendency to hide his cards until it matters and, much to Jeff Gordon's chagrin, he was holding the superior hand Feb. 22 here.

Kenseth held off Gordon to win his third Auto Club 500 NASCAR Sprint Cup race one week after winning the sport's crown jewel Daytona 500, giving Kenseth and his new crew chief, Drew Blickensderfer, a perfect start to the season.

The last Cup driver to win the first two races of the year? Jeff Gordon in 1997.

Kyle Busch was third in a Joe Gibbs Racing Toyota, and Kenseth teammate Greg Biffle was fourth.

"It feels pretty unbelievable to win the first two races" of the season, said Kenseth, 36, who won the Cup championship in 2003 but went winless in 2008, his first year-long drought in seven years.

The win also tightened the stranglehold that Roush Fenway seems to have over the two-mile Auto Club Speedway, as Roush drivers have now won the Auto Club 500 the last five years.

The 92,000-seat speedway, often chided for its lack of sellouts in recent years, also scored a victory of sorts in the eyes of its officials.

Despite fears that the economic recession, the Academy Awards telecast and other factors might limit attendance to 60,000 or less, NASCAR estimated that the race drew about 78,000 people, 8,000 more than it said attended the Fontana race last Labor Day weekend.

Auto Club Speedway, like many tracks nationwide, had cut prices on some seats in response to the economic pressure.

"The turnout was awesome, I'm so thrilled

with the crowd," said track president Gillian Zucker. "It clearly shows how passionate Southern California is about NASCAR. That even in this kind of an economy that the crowd is that big says an awful lot."

They also saw a close finish at the wide, fast track where the cars frequently are spread far apart, with Kenseth winning by only 1.5 seconds.

Gordon led 64 of the race's 250 laps in his Hendrick Motorsports Chevrolet and appeared poised to break his own winless streak dating to October 2007.

But Kenseth put his No. 17 Ford in front and kept it there over the final 35 laps, with Gordon in close pursuit but unable to retake the lead.

Kenseth, said team co-owner Jack Roush, "doesn't practice as well as a lot of people," a trait that often hides his car's potential and enables Kenseth "to save the car so he doesn't put extra wear and tear on it."

Gordon found that out the hard way. Despite driving "as hard as I've driven in a long time," Gordon said "I kind of knew with about 20 (laps) to go that we probably, unless he made a mistake, we weren't going to get him."

Kenseth wasn't so sure. "I thought (Gordon) was going to pass us, I honestly thought we were going to be too loose at the end" with the car's handling, Kenseth said.

"But I guess they tightened his (car) up a little bit and got too tight," Kenseth said. "It wasn't easy but we had just enough to hold him off."

For the first third of the race, it appeared Gordon teammate and reigning Cup champion Jimmie Johnson would hold off the field, just as he did in winning last year's Labor Day race in Fontana.

But despite leading 74 laps, Johnson faded to a ninth-place finish.

Busch, who won the two support races Feb. 21 in the Nationwide and Camping World Truck series, was hoping to become the first driver in history to sweep all three of NASCAR's events in a single weekend.

— LATWP News Service

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Magic soar by Heat, gored by Bulls

Orlando coasts 122-99 despite Wade's 50-point career-high game

By Brian Schmitz
Orlando Sentinel

ORLANDO —The Orlando Magic would say — and they have his latest stats to support their case — that guarding Dwyane Wade is the toughest job in the NBA.

Wade says the Magic have it all backward.

"It's the hardest game you're going to play in the NBA," Wade said of facing the Magic. "You got to stop Dwight [Howard] inside, close out on the 3-point shooter and then help back on Dwight again."

"It's the hardest 48 minutes you're going to play."

The Magic (41-14) needed all their weapons locked and loaded to whip the Miami Heat 122-99 and survive Wade's career-high 50-point game Feb. 22 at Amway Arena.

The game came down to Wade vs. fellow all-star Howard, and the respective boxscores carried an Oscars-type story line:

- The Magic won for best supporting cast, backing up Howard's 32 points and 17 rebounds.
- The four other starters on the floor with Howard all broke into double figures.
- Wade was the only starter for the Heat to score double figures.
- Howard had help, Wade was looking for roadside assistance.
- Wade, who made 17 of 30 shots, had 27 points at halftime, and the Heat trailed by 18.

"We balanced out an absolutely tremendous night by a great player," said Magic coach Stan Van Gundy.

Small forward Hedo Turkoglu scored 20 points and dished six assists, power forward Rashard Lewis had 18, shooting guard Courtney Lee 14 and point guard Rafer Alston — making his first start — added 12 points.

Anthony Johnson, who gave up the reins to Alston, scored 12 points, including a ferocious dunk that belied his 34 years. J.J. Redick added 10.

Orlando nailed 17 of 32 3-pointers (53.1 percent) and shot 54.7 percent overall, but more importantly dominated Miami on the boards 53-28, and held the Heat to 41.6 percent.

The Magic remained unbeaten



The Orlando Magic's new point guard, Rafer Alston, leaps past Miami Heat center Joel Anthony (50) at Amway Arena Feb. 22

since trading for Alston, who had nine assists.

Alston, acquired Feb. 19 from the Houston Rockets to replace injured starter Jameer Nelson, came off the bench to spark the Magic's win against the Charlotte Bobcats on Feb. 20. He had eight assists in that game, giving him 17 in two victories.

His energy and aggressiveness early was the difference. The Heat never recovered from the Magic's 39-24 first-quarter run as Alston

had a hand in 20 of the points. He had seven assists and hit two 3-pointers.

Alston's pass-first mind-set not only has revived Orlando's balky offense, but his play-making was contagious. The Magic finished with 22 assists on 41 baskets.

Alston, wearing No. 1, said he knew the Magic were an unselfish team even before he arrived. He didn't blink after getting his first start despite having arrived just before the Feb. 20 game in Charlotte.

Chicago cruises 120-102 as Rose, Thomas lead 7 in double figures

By K.C. Johnson
Chicago Tribune

CHICAGO — The Bulls' Tim Thomas is a fan of saying basketball is basketball, which might be another way of saying if you need him, he will be hanging at the three-point line.

But Thomas and the Bulls did make the game look ridiculously easy Feb. 24 at the United Center with an impressive 120-102 victory over the Orlando Magic.

That's what season-high 56.5 percent shooting can do, with Thomas scoring his 17 points and four three-pointers in 24 minutes.

The Bulls came within two points of tying their season high and established a high with 48 field goals.

"We have guys coming off the bench who know how to play," Thomas said. "That's very helpful."

Speedy starters don't hurt, either, as Derrick Rose's 22 points led the Bulls. Ben Gordon added 20 as seven players and all five starters hit double figures.

The victory over the Eastern Conference's second-best road team featured a balanced attack between starters and subs, the depth added from last week's trades already bearing fruit.

"We have some offensive options," newcomer John Salmons said. "We definitely can score, so it's going to be hard for teams to match up with us."

Brad Miller scored nine points with seven rebounds in 21 minutes.

"The new players spaced the court for us," coach Vinny Del Negro said. "Veterans know how to play, and that opens up penetration for Derrick."

But after playing the entire third quarter and scoring 14 points, Rose sat for all but the final 2:45 of the fourth as Kirk Hinrich headed a group that flowed.

"We had good control," Del Negro said. "I'm not going to break the rhythm of something just to get somebody extra minutes."

The Bulls shot a sizzling 58.7 percent in taking a 63-54 halftime lead, tying a season high for first-half points.

But Orlando, the league's most prolific three-point-shooting team, kept on firing, pulling with 83-82 on a 10-2 run.

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