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Official Student Media of Valencia Community College

Military men accused of murder

By Craig Whitlock
The Washington Post

JOINT BASE LEWIS-McCHORD, Wash. - The U.S. soldiers floated a plan as simple as it was savage: to randomly target and kill an Afghan civilian, and to get away with it.

For weeks, according to Army

charging documents, rogue members of a platoon from the 5th Stryker Combat Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division, hatched the idea. Then, one day last winter, a solitary Afghan man approached them in the village of La Mohammed Kalay. The "kill team" activated the plan.

One soldier created a ruse that

they were under attack, tossing a grenade on the ground. Then others opened fire.

According to charging documents, the unprovoked, fatal attack on Jan. 15 was the start of a months-long shooting spree against Afghan civilians that resulted in some of the grisliest alle-

gations against American soldiers since the U.S. invasion in 2001. Members of the platoon have been charged with dismembering and photographing corpses, as well as hoarding a skull and other human bones.

Continued on page 4



Army photos, c/o The Washington Post

Corp. Jeremy Morlock, left, of Wasilla allegedly took part in three murders of Afghan civilians perpetrated by five members of the Army's 5th Stryker Combat Brigade.



Don Purlinson / Valencia Community College

Patricia Smith performing her brand of poetry.

Poet recites at VCC

By Shannon Scheidell
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"Poetry has the power to move us from a place inside our heads, to a safer place," Patricia Smith said Thursday, Sept. 16 while performing in the Student Lounge of the Winter Park Campus. Smith is the author of Blood Dazzler, her fifth book and most recently published book of poetry. Last week, she stood in front of a group of more than 80 students, all eyes glued on her, as she read a few of her pieces. Some of them were straight from her book, others were recited from beneath closed eyelids.

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Economy comes around

Research committee declares normalcy

By Kevin G. Hall
McClatchy Newspapers

With little fanfare, the National Bureau of Economic Research declared Monday that the so-called Great Recession is over, determining that the U.S. economy hit bottom in June 2009 and began a long, sluggish rebound.

"In determining that a trough occurred in June 2009, the committee did not conclude that economic conditions since that month have been favorable or that the economy has returned to operating at normal capacity," the bureau said in a statement Monday. "Rather, the committee determined only that the recession ended and a recovery began in that month."

The bureau officially dates recessions, and concluded that this one was the longest on record, save for the Great Depression. The so-called Great Recession lasted 18 months, two months longer than the recessions of 1973-75 and 1981-82.

For many Americans, it still feels like recession. The unemployment rate has been stuck around 9.6 percent for months, almost 15 million Americans are without work and dozens more are working two jobs or are in jobs that pay less than their previous ones.

"I think this (statement) will forever cement economists as being out of touch. This is cold comfort for someone who is still unemployed, and it's more a matter of getting the accounting right for economic history," said economist Douglas Holtz-Eakin, a former director of the Congressional Budget Office and the president of the American Action Forum, a center-right policy research group.

The fact that the bureau needed almost 15 months since the recession's official end to declare that it was over speaks to the economic challenge the United States faces. The bureau's Business Cycle Dating Committee waited to make a final decision until key government data revisions had occurred to gauge what had been the gross domestic product — the broadest measure of the production of goods and services — and gross domestic income.

The committee noted that while growth and income were up from last year's lows they were well below the peaks of 2007.

Recessions often are described as two consecutive quarters of economic contraction, but they're more a period of falling economic activity across the economy and lasting more than a few months. The bureau's researchers evaluate data on income, employment and industrial production, as well as sales.

In what could provide some cover to the Obama administration, struggling with the perception that it hasn't done enough to boost employment, the committee members noted that the bottom in hiring usually comes many months after a bottom in contraction.

After the 2001-03 recession, employment bottomed 21 months later, and employment hit its low six months after the end of the latest recession, the bureau said.

The bureau, headquartered in Cambridge, Mass., also said that economic activity could remain below normal for some time after a recession.

— MCT Campus

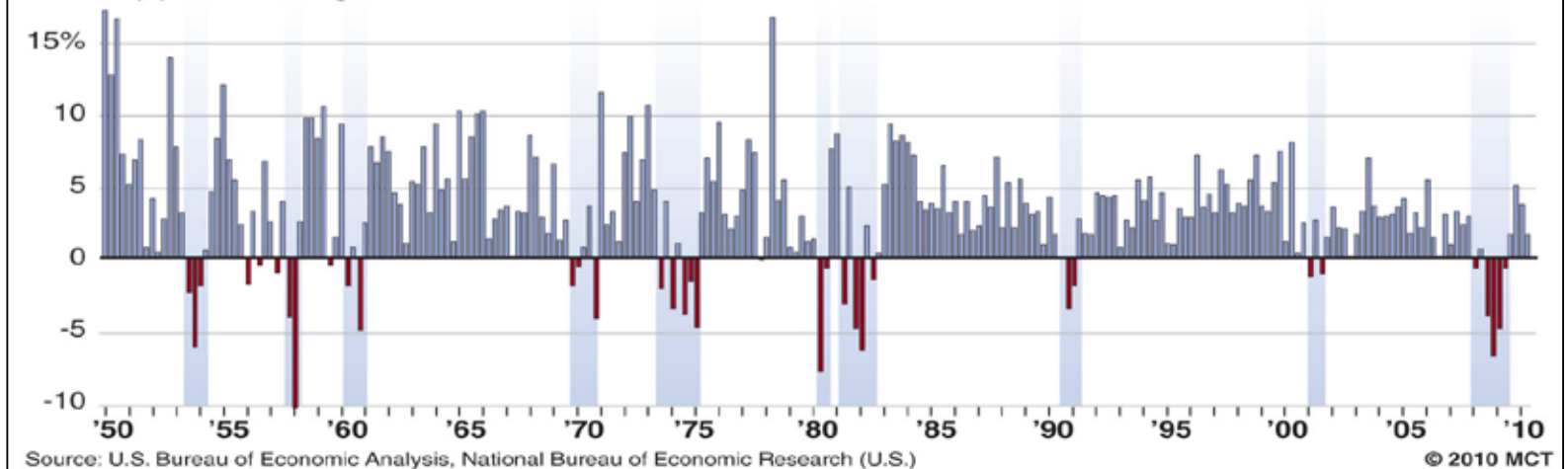
Long recession ends

The National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER), which formally declares a recession's start and finish, has said the recession, which began in Dec., 2007, officially ended in June 2009.

Tracking U.S. recessions

Quarterly percent change in GDP

Period of recession



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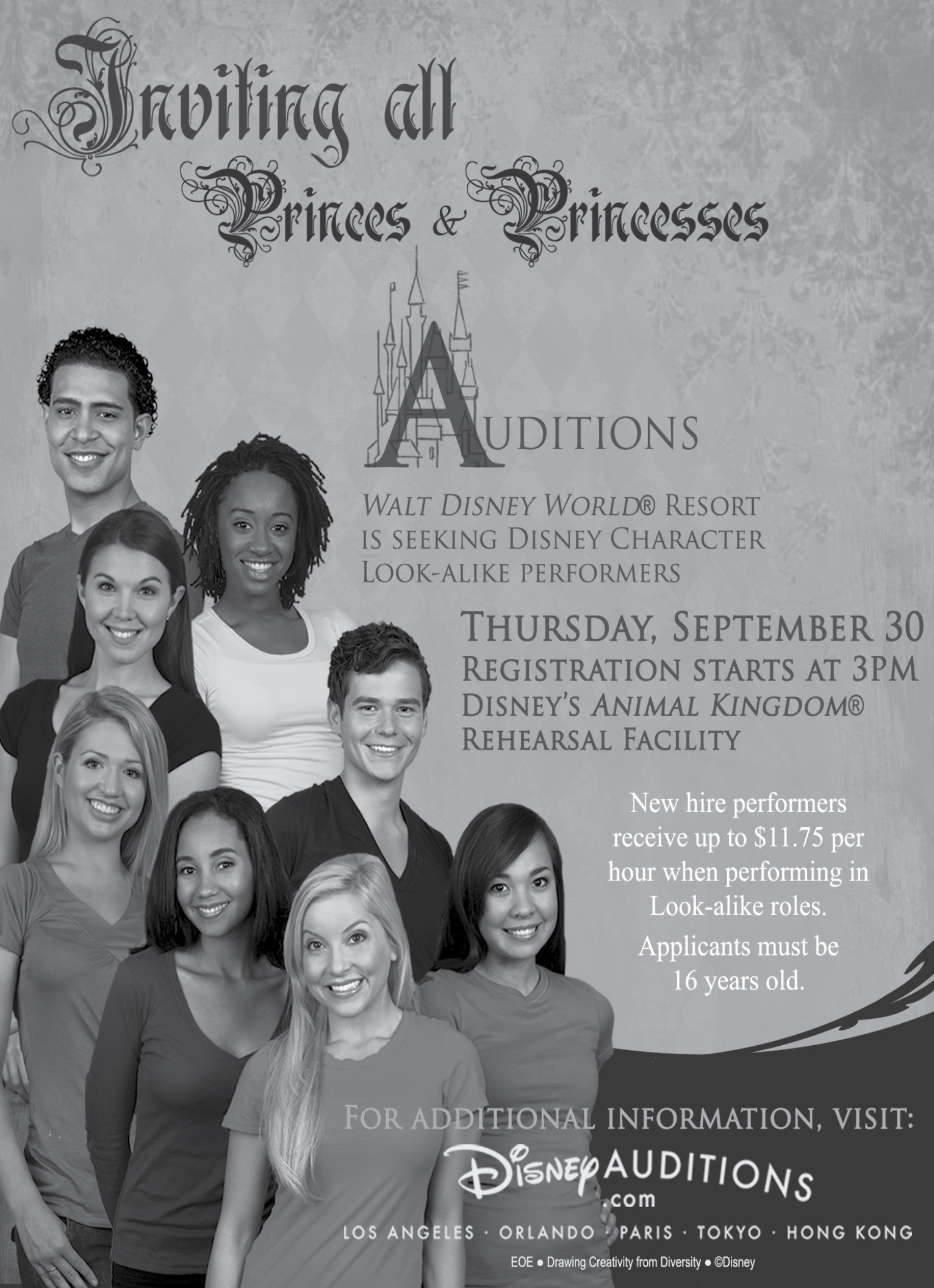
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VCC recruits voters

By Sabrina Alvarez
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Many students today do not realize the importance of registering to vote. Jeanette Cruz, a worker from the Orange County supervisor of elections, promoted a voters' registration effort at Valencia Community College's West Campus, directed toward students.

"We should allow ourselves to be heard," said Cruz. "Why not take the opportunity to vote, since it is our right?"

The booth was located in front of the Student Services Building, hosted by Cruz who encouraged students to register to vote for the state

elections in November.

If you didn't register to vote during the voter's driveon Thursday, don't worry, public libraries all around Orlando, have voter registration applications available to the public. All you have to do is print, sign and send the applications through the mail.

"It only takes two minutes to register, it is as easy as buying lunch at McDonalds," said Cruz.

Wislande Petit, a student, said she thinks she can make a difference by just registering. "It's important to know what candidates are going to represent you," Petit said when The Voice interviewed her.

Hurry up and register to vote. The deadline is October 4, and voters can also register online at: www.ocfelections.com.



Russell Griner, Valencia Voice

Wislande Petit registers to vote at one of the many stands that were set up around Valencia, enticing students to register.

U.S. soldiers can't cover up hunting civilians for sport in Afghanistan

Continued from page 1

The subsequent investigation has raised accusations about whether the military ignored warnings that the out-of-control soldiers were committing atrocities. The father of one soldier said he repeatedly tried to alert the Army after his son told him about the first killing, only to be rebuffed.

Two more slayings would follow. Military documents allege that five members of the unit staged a total of three murders in Kandahar province between January and May. Seven other soldiers have been charged with crimes related to the case, including hashish use, attempts to impede the investigation and a retaliatory gang assault on a private who blew the whistle.

The accused soldiers, through attorneys and family members, deny wrongdoing. But the case has already been marked by a cycle of accusations and counter-accusations among the defendants as they seek to pin the blame on each other, according to documents and interviews.

The Army has scheduled pre-trial hearings in the case this fall at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, home of the Stryker brigade. (The unit was renamed the 2nd Stryker Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division, when it returned from Afghanistan in July.) Military officials say privately that they worry the hearings will draw further attention to the case, with photos and other evidence prompting anger among the Afghan civilians whose support is critical to the fight against the Taliban.

According to statements given to investigators, members of the unit - 3rd Platoon, Bravo Company, 2nd Battalion, 1st Infantry Regiment - began talking about forming a "kill team" in December, shortly after receiving a new member, Staff Sgt.



Family photo, c/o Washington Post

U.S. soldier Adam Winfield, center, with parents Emma and Christopher Winfield.

Calvin Gibbs, 25, of Billings, Mont.

Gibbs, whom some defendants have described as the ringleader, confided to his new mates that it had been easy for him to get away with "stuff" when he served in Iraq in 2004, according to the statements. It was his second tour in Afghanistan, having served there from January 2006 until May 2007.

The first opportunity presented itself Jan. 15 in the Maiwand district of Kandahar province. Members of the 3rd Platoon were providing perimeter

security for a meeting between Army officers and tribal elders in the village of La Mohammed Kalay.

According to charging documents, an Afghan named Gul Mudin began walking toward the soldiers. As he approached, Cpl. Jeremy Morlock, 22, of Wasilla, Alaska, threw the grenade on the ground, records show, to create the illusion that the soldiers were under attack.

Pfc. Andrew Holmes, a 19-year-old from Boise, Idaho, saw the grenade and fired his weapon at Mudin, according to charging documents. The gre-

nade exploded, prompting other soldiers to open fire on the villager as well, killing him.

In statements to investigators, the soldiers involved have given conflicting details. In one statement that his attorney has subsequently tried to suppress, Morlock said that Gibbs had given him the grenade and that others were also aware of the ruse beforehand. But Holmes and his attorney said he was in the dark and opened fire only because Morlock ordered him to do so.

"He was unwittingly used as the cover story," said Daniel Conway, a civilian defense attorney for Holmes. "He was in the wrong place at the wrong time."

Morlock, Holmes and Gibbs have each been charged with murder in the shooting. Attorneys for Morlock and Gibbs did not return phone calls seeking comment.

On Feb. 14, Christopher Winfield, a former Marine from Cape Coral, Fla., logged onto his Facebook account to chat with his son, Adam, a 3rd Platoon soldier who was up late in Afghanistan. Spec. Adam Winfield confided that he'd had a run-in with Gibbs, his squad leader. He also typed a mysterious note saying that some people get away with murder.

When his father pressed him to explain, Adam replied, "did you not understand what i just told you." He then referred to the slaying of the Afghan villager the month before, adding that other platoon members had threatened him because he did not approve. In addition, he said, they were bragging about how they wanted to find another victim.

"I was just shocked," Christopher Winfield said in a phone interview. "He was scared for

Continued on next page

Three soldiers charged with murder

his life at that point.”

The father told his son that he would contact the Army to intervene and investigate. It was a Sunday, but he didn’t wait. He called the Army inspector general’s 24-hour hotline and left a voice mail. He called the office of Sen. Bill Nelson, D-Fla., and left another message. He called a sergeant at Lewis-McChord who told him to call the Army’s criminal investigations division. He left another message there.

Finally, he said, he called the Fort Lewis command center and spoke for 12 minutes to a sergeant on duty. He said the sergeant agreed that it sounded as if Adam was in potential danger but that, unless he was willing to report it to his superiors in Afghanistan, there was little the Army could do.

“He just kind of blew it off,” Christopher Winfield said. “I was sitting there with my jaw on the ground.”

Winfield said he doesn’t recall the name of the sergeant he spoke with. Billing records that he kept confirm that he called Army officials; he also kept copies of transcripts of Facebook chats with this son. He said he specifically told the sergeant of his son’s warning that more murders were in the works.

Army investigators have since taken a sworn statement from Christopher Winfield, as well as copies of his phone and Internet records.

Eight days after Winfield tried to warn the Army, according to charging documents, members of the 3rd Platoon murdered someone else.

On Feb. 22, Marach Agha, an Afghan civilian, was killed by rifle fire near Forward Operating Base Ramrod in Kandahar province, where the 3rd Platoon was stationed. The Army has released few details about the slaying but has charged Gibbs,

Morlock and Spec. Michael Wagnon of Las Vegas with murder.

An attorney for Wagnon, who was on his second tour in Afghanistan and also served in Iraq, did not return a call seeking comment.

More mayhem followed in March, when Gibbs, Wagnon and three other soldiers - Staff Sgt. Robert Stevens, Sgt. Darren Jones and Pfc. Ashton Moore - opened fire on three Afghan men, according to charging documents. The documents do not provide basic details, such as a precise date for the shooting, the identities of the victims or whether they were wounded.

Winfield’s attorney, Eric Montalvo, said his client was ordered to shoot but fired high and missed. He and Winfield’s parents say they can’t understand why the Army has charged their son, given that his father tried to warn officials about the platoon.

After word leaked that one soldier had spoken to military police, several platoon members retaliated, records show. They confronted the informant and beat him severely - punching, kicking and choking the soldier, then dragging him across the ground. As a last warning, the documents state, Gibbs menacingly waved finger bones he had collected from Afghan corpses.

However, the informant talked to the MPs again and told them what he had heard about the slayings, according to court documents.

Some members of his unit, he said in a statement, “when they are out at a village, wander off and kill someone and every time they say the same thing, about a guy throwing a grenade, but there is never proof.”

This time, the Army acted quickly and made arrests.

— WP Bloomberg

Volunteers raise ‘healthy’ money for charity

By Victor Ocasio
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Members of the community service group, Valencia Volunteers have begun their annual Healthy Grill Outs, which started Tuesday. The volunteers are accepting donations in exchange for grilled turkey dogs, chips and drinks.

All of the donations received from the grill outs, dated September 14, 16, 28 and 30 will be given to both the American Heart Association and the Pakistan Flood Relief Fund.

Justiss Wilder, organizer and grill master of the cookout, detailed the work that this West Campus based community organization does.

“Valencia Volunteers are independently run from campus to campus, but at our location here on West Campus, the group currently has over 500 members logged in our database,” said Wilder.

Being a member of the volunteer group offers students many opportunities to accumulate community service hours, while helping various charitable organizations around the world. This includes

the Susan G. Komen Foundation and the Seabird Sanctuary.

“We were able to raise a lot of money for the sanctuary, which goes to clean up efforts in the Gulf to help birds affected by the oil spill,” said Wilder. “Breast cancer awareness and fundraising is also one of our biggest projects that we do every year, and always raise a lot of funds for.”

During October, the group will be sponsoring a number of events, including Pinktober Day on Sept. 28 and the “Making Strides Walk,” this Wednesday.



Shannon Scheidell, Valencia Voice

Valencia Volunteers hand out snacks and sodas at the healthy grill-out in the west campus courtyard.

OUR VOICE

Video games are a part of your world

Do you have a cell phone? How about a Facebook page? How about, what you think of when you hear the name, Mario? Believe it or not, all of these things are synonymous with gaming.

Video games have quickly grown to a level of immersion in our society unlike any other entertainment medium. In fact, it is the largest entertainment industry in the world, both costing the most to produce, making the most profit, and employing more workers than the music and movie industries.

Everyone plays video games, whether it be 'Bejeweled' on your cell phone, 'Farmville' on Facebook, or playing Wii Sports on an actual video game console. Even your mother has probably played games.

Last week marked the release of one of the industry's most anticipated and highest praised games, 'Halo: Reach.'

The original 'Halo: Combat Evolved' changed the landscape of gaming forever. It was the first first-person shooter (FPS) on a console to ever reach mass appeal, forever expanding the popularity of console gaming.

Because of it, the FPS genre has flourished and grown, making games like 'Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 2' able to be the most popular entertainment launch ever, selling enough copies to earn well over \$1 billion within a few months of its launch.

The release of 'Halo: Reach,' which is the final Halo game by development studio Bungie, marks a full-circle of gaming culture and growth.



c/o MCT Campus

The fans will always be there to support their favorite hobby, eagerly awaiting announcement of the next big thing. What's more interesting are those people who delve only slightly into the world of gaming.

Do they return, or become gamers themselves?

This group of people who don't even realize they play games are known as casual gamers. The phenomenon of casual gamers has only recently come to the forefront of the industry's attention.

This is due to the runaway success of the Nintendo Wii and its family-friendly, easy games, as well as things like 'Farmville' and 'Mafia Wars.'

Another key influence to the immersion of games in everyday life is the iPhone and other Apple products. Perhaps un-

aware of how important gaming would be to their market, Apple has innovated on the distribution and form of what we think of as conventional games.

Titles like 'Peggle,' 'Scrabble,' 'Sudoku,' 'Tetris,' and 'Plants vs. Zombies' are all prime examples of these new types of games; cheap and easy to purchase with quick, bite-sized experiences.

Just because games are readily available in almost every piece of technology that we use on an everyday basis, doesn't mean that people are necessarily playing any though.

In many respects, gaming is still a very niche, underground medium.

Gaming is also often under criticism for being harmful, or a waste of time for children. Many games, however, enforce thought, creativity, and problem-solving.

What's misunderstood is that the majority of games created are aimed at an adult, or teen audience.

Many people simply don't understand games, don't like games, and will never play games. Those people are still direct influences on the industry.

Even without children, or friends to purchase games for, non-gamers are constantly being surveyed, marketed towards, and brought into the gaming industry.

Everyday, more and more people are playing games and becoming gamers themselves.

So with such a huge monetary investment and such a large number of consumers following them, why are video games so popular? What makes them so special? What makes them so appealing?

Webster defines a game as an activity engaged in for diversion or amusement. In other words, the entire point of games is to simply have fun and get your mind off things. Everyone can relate to that aspect and would surely have a vested interest in achieving such ends.

Some of the greatest aspects of games are those that relate to the human experience. A desire to socialize, meet new people, play with friends, compete to see who's best, test one's skills, and again, have fun

For those who play games, they know what's so special. For those who don't, it's only a matter of time until they do.

So, play any good games lately?

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POLL

By James Austin
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This weekend I threw the Super Bowl winning touchdown. This weekend I saved a princess from a dragon. This weekend I outran a hoard of zombies and stopped an evil mastermind from destroying the world and I did all of this without leaving the comfort and safety of my couch. This weekend, I played video games.

Video games are interactive escapes that let players experience things they could never do in reality. They provide us with new worlds to explore and challenges to overcome, and they allow us to be who we never thought we could be.

They also help in more practical ways too, able to increase creative thinking, reflexes, and problem solving skills.

According to a study conducted by the University of Rochester, gamers will consistently reach accurate decisions faster than non-gamers. The researchers theorize that this is because the repetition and structure of certain games actually works to 'train' the brain to make snappy decisions. In other words when a gamer and a non-gamer are both presented with a zombie shambling towards them, the gamer thinks 'shoot' faster than the non-gamer.

With the success of titles like 'Modern Warfare 2,' it's plain to see that video games are quickly overtaking the status of movies and television as a means of escape from the real world.

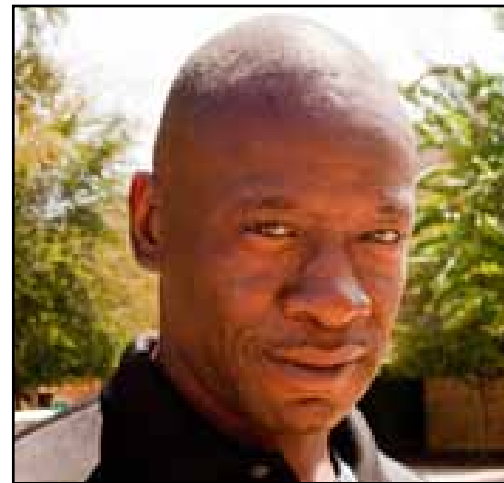
Video games are rapidly becoming more successful and more profitable. Which is a good thing, because how else would Mario save the princess?

What are your opinions of video games and the video game industry as a whole?



It gets more advanced every year. They have more features and get more popular. It keeps kids out of trouble.

— Anthony Whitlow



They are overrated. They cost too much and too much time is put into them.

— Joseph Flowers



I don't play, but my husband does. You can relax when you're stressed and get your mind off of things. Children can have fun playing them.

— Yeliantte Melendez



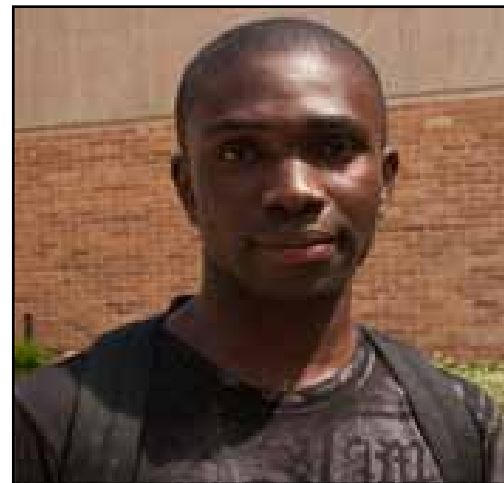
I don't have time to play. I think kids spend too much time on them.

— Kevin Walsh



I play them. I just don't have time to play that often. I have nothing against them, just not enough time to play.

— Reshma Tiwari



I don't play. It's a waste of time and money. After you play it a few times, the disk always gets scratched.

— Roosevelt Desravines



I have a nine year old, so, I don't like them. People should only play an hour a day. My son wants to play all day, which gets him in trouble.

— Carla Motta



It's knowledge, but its a waste of time. Kids shouldn't play all the time.

—Phuc Huynh

Dirty Heads re-issues 'Any Port in a Storm'

Reggae band heads to the top of charts

By Haley Howell
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The Dirty Heads' album, "Any Port in a Storm," produced by Steve Fox and Stan Frazier, was re-released this year and has extended beyond a single genre to unite and excite alternative rock, hip-hop and rap fans.

Their influences range from a Sublime feel, throughout, to the mellow melody of 311. The guitar riffs that could lead into any Jimi Hendrix cover and even mid-song Beastie Boys style raps populate this album.

The band, hailing from Orange County, Calif., consists of five members, including two vocalists, Jared Watson and Dustin Bushnell, Jon Olazabal (percussionist), Matt Ochoa (drummer), and David Foral.

Watson and Bushnell grew up as friends in sunny California, living the SoCal life of partying, surfing and laid-back beach days; this album is full

of anthem worthy songs for any fun-loving beach kid.

The Dirty Heads' biggest radio hit, "Lay Me Down," slowly, but surely, rose to the top of the charts and inspired many to buy the 23-track special edition album.



c/o www.myspace.com/DirtyHeads

It can be listened to from start to finish with no lapse in fun, happy infusions of hip-hop, acoustic rock and beach inspired reggae.

"Lay Me Down" is currently ranked No. 4 on Billboard's Rock songs, and peaked at No. 1 on both charts.

In the making of "Any Port

in a Storm (Special Edition)," the band partnered with Josh Freese (Nine Inch Nails, Korn), percussionist Alex Acuna, Slash, M. Shadows, reggae radio host Native Wayne, the legendary Tippa Irie of the dancehall genre, and most notably, Rome Ramirez of Sublime with Rome.

Ramirez collaborated with The Dirty Heads in writing and performing their biggest hit yet, "Lay Me Down," a backwards romance told through an upbeat ballad.

The only unifying feature of the tracks is that they seem to follow the timeline of an all-nighter, starting with nighttime party songs, moving to "Insomnia" in the near middle, followed by a fast paced wake up track, "Easy."

Then the album begins rounding out, with songs like, "I Got No Time," and, "Chelsea," that reflect the sort of slow, drawn out, foginess that follows in the day after a

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Katrina victims honored in poem

Patricia Smith's '34' moves students

By Veronica Figueroa
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Valencia Community College's eighth Vision and Voices event took place on the Winter Park Campus, with a packed house.

The program launched in 2002 as a way for students to enjoy the works of songwriters, poets and artists from around the world. This year's poetry reading was performed by award winning author and poet, Patricia Smith.

Smith has won numerous awards for her writing and has performed in such places as, The Poets Stage in Stockholm, Sweden and the Aran Islands International Poetry and Prose Festival.

Smith has toured in Germany, Austria and Holland and has also appeared as a guest poet for the series, "Def Poetry Jam," which aired on the Home Box Office (HBO).

Before reading each poem, Smith shared anecdotes of her life with the audience, which lead her to write them. "I judge my poems

by seeing how people respond to them," she said.

The audience grasped onto her every word.

At the end of each reading, there was silence while the students digested the words and for those few seconds, the only sound was the whirring of the soda machines.

Smith exuded charismatic energy, which helped the students connect with her.

She closed her eyes and it was as if she had sub merged herself into the pages she had written, taking the audience with her.

Smith is clearly a veteran poet, but surprisingly down to earth. She jumped right into her poem, "Building Nicole's Mama," which is dedicated to the sixth grade class of Lillie C. Evans School in Miami.

She explained that she has been starting every poetry reading with that poem for ten years now because it reminds her of the power that words have to move people from place to place.



Don Purlinson Valencia Community College

"I love watching bad movies," admitted Vision and Voices poet Patricia Smith.

"I love watching bad movies," she admitted, and went on to tell that her poem, "Medusa," was inspired by the movie, "Clash of the Titans."

"Medusa was turned into stone by Athena," she said, "because she was with the wrong man." This received a few giggles out of the females in the crowd.

In the poem, Medusa is conveying that she couldn't help defiling Athena's temple by sleeping with Poseidon: "It's not every day a gal gets to sample a god, you know that. Why are you being so rough on me?"

Her final poem, however, re-

ally captured everyone and expressed the emotional toll caused by Hurricane Katrina, which is entitled, "34," and it is found in her fifth book, "Blood Dazzler," released in 2008.

The poem is centered around the 34 senior citizens that were left behind during the hurricane and died in a senior home.

She captured the different persona of each character and brought them to life in front of everyone.

"I want people to pick this up in a few years and remember that Katrina happened," she said.

Poet gets personal

Continued from page 1

Freshman Jillian Harris, said "If I closed my eyes, I could've seen the faces of the people she was reading about. It's like she was channeling another person through her voice."

During Smith's performance of the poem, "34," her voice fluctuated while she re-enacted 34 personalities that she remembers from her time in Louisiana, after hurricane Katrina hit. She said she felt compelled to connect with these individuals, who were struggling so visibly, without food to fill their children's bellies and no beds to rest their heads in.

"She's really ballsy and cool," Harris said. "She shows no fear."

Student Dylan Morley asked Smith about how she goes about the writing process. She shared some insight into her life, as a teen, as well as what it takes to inspire her now.

Movies on television, such as Clash of the Titans, have provided beginning ideas for some of her poems. She wrote a poem about how Medusa came to be the way she is, as a direct result, of watching late-night TV.

"I record snippets of the conversations of people I encounter and I keep a small recorder under my pillow, just in case," Smith said.

In between poems, she'd ask how the audience was doing and would shift her weight from one foot to the next, in visible anticipation.

"I judge my poems by the way the audience reacts and by the looks on their faces," she said.

There was a question and answer part to the event, as well as time for book signing, last Thursday. She currently teaches literature and poetry at City University of New York.

‘Kingdom Hearts: Birth by Sleep’ delivers new material to audience

By Jon Terbeche
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It's been a while since the last major installment in the Kingdom Hearts franchise was released. Since the release of 'Kingdom Hearts 2,' a PS2 remake of the handheld, 'Chain of Memories,' and a DS title, '358/2 Days' are the only things to show.

It's already been five years since the new generation consoles have been out, and a new, full-scale 'Kingdom Hearts' game has been largely sought after.

Instead fans are presented with another side story title on the PSP, 'Kingdom Hearts: Birth by Sleep.' Even though 'Birth by Sleep' is a portable title, it is not a mere bite-sized adventure, but instead one of the most polished, entertaining, and varied games in the saga.

"Birth by Sleep" takes place ten years before the

events of the first 'Kingdom Hearts.' You play as one of three newly introduced characters, Terra, Aqua and Ventus, a trio closely resembling that of Riku, Kairi and Sora.

While the formula may not have changed, the execution and gameplay certainly have, for the better. Battles are quick and fierce, perhaps the best in the entire franchise.

This comes as no coincidence, as Square Enix did an excellent job overhauling the controls to the PSP. The shoulder buttons control the camera and lock-on feature, while the d-pad cycles through commands. This makes the flow of battle seamless. The soundtrack is also top-notch. All of the music and sounds fit the mood of the story perfectly. Also,

with new characters, new voice actors join the fray, and they did not disappoint. The voice work is the best in the series, with legends like Mark Hamill and Leonard Nimoy performing impeccably.

The biggest feature in the game is the inclusion of multi-player modes. For the first time in the series, fans can fight head-to-head with their friends. Not only that, but other fun mini-games are included, like the board game mode, making this installment a pretty large package of game-play modes.

For fans of the series, 'Kingdom Hearts: Birth by Sleep' tells an interesting back story, with new characters, new modes, and new fun to be had. The fact that all of this is done on the PSP is quite the achievement, but begs the question, "What could the developers do on one of the more powerful consoles?"



c/o Square-Enix

Weezer weezes out new album

By Paige Preston
ppreston@valenciavoice.com

Weezer's recent album is a glimmer of hope that things will turn out for the best, despite accepting the horrible reality that it will be an inevitable disaster.

Fortunately, Weezer's newest album, "Hurley," released on Sept. 14 by Epitaph Records, has proven that there's a good reason to keep the hope alive.

The band has yet to go back to its musical roots, planted in fan favorites such as "Pinkerton" and the "Blue Album," but "Hurley" represents a small promise that Weezer's future releases may reflect the band's original sound.

Upon first glance at the album's cover art, it might be easy for longtime fans to quickly want to reject the album as another nonsensical, hyperactive, overtly pop production from front man, Rivers Cuomo. The cover depicts a large portrait of actor Jorge Garcia, famous for his character Hurley on the popular TV show "Lost." Cuomo did offer some explanation on the decision. "We just wanted to use that picture of Jorge Garcia's face on the cover. It's such an amazing album cover, and we didn't want to have any other words on it, so we just figured everyone was going to call it Hurley, so that's what we call it," said Cuomo.

In every release since "Pinkerton," Cuomo has tried to hide away the raw emotion that leaked into lyrics and reverberated through speakers of listeners, during the band's virgin years. Every now and then, a gem of a song will crawl through the confusion, leading fans to nod their heads instead of scratching them.

"Hang On" follows up with a simple, but



c/o Spin.com

satisfying, sound. The harmonious chorus, "Hang on till I see you again/ I'm going to be more than a friend/ You know that this isn't the end so hang on," is one that could prompt many sing-a-longs from fans.

Due to the lineup of tracks, it seems as if Cuomo is playing a joke on listeners by following up "Where's My Sex," undoubtedly one of Weezer's worst songs in recent years, with two of the best.

"Hurley" will surpass the expectations of many who have come to expect the worst of Weezer, as a result of less than satisfactory releases such as "Make Believe" and "Raditude."

There are tracks present on the album that may raise new hope for Weezer's future, what has come to an unlikely return to the sound that made them the powerhouse they are today.

However, this does not entitle "Hurley" to overall stellar reviews. All in all, the effort is a fun step in the right direction for Weezer.

Bye, bye, baseball

Washington Nationals reliever returns to school

By Adam Kilgore
The Washington Post

The Washington Nationals’ season will end on the first Sunday on October, and Drew Storen’s college life will restart. As his teammates scatter for the offseason, Storen will hitch a ride straight from Citi Field to JFK Airport in time to board Virgin America Flight 29 at 7 p.m., one way to San Francisco.

Storen will drive from the San Francisco airport to his apartment on the campus of Stanford University - his roommate has already picked up his key for him. By Monday morning, less than 24 hours after the final out of the season - which he may very well record himself - Storen will settle into his seat for Physics 41.

Storen is returning to college to pursue an achievement uncommon among major league baseball players: a degree from a four-year university.

He left school after his sophomore season to enter last year’s draft and still has six quarters separating him from his diploma in product design. Storen will tackle one of them while cherishing the college experience not as a student-athlete, but just a student.

“I’ve grown up a lot in the past year,” Storen said Tuesday, sitting in the Turner Field dug-out in Atlanta. “I feel like I’m going back to high school or something - kind of go back to that different attitude. It’ll be fun. It’s going to



Richard A. Lipski, The Washington Post / MCT Campus
After the season, Washington Nationals reliever Drew Storen will resume his work toward a degree at Stanford University, balancing education with baseball.

be great. I really enjoy the Bay Area. I really enjoy being in school. A lot of my best friends from college are there. Why not go back and chip away at my education?

“Playing baseball is like playing with house money, almost. If it works out and I don’t have to work a day in my life, that’s great. If not, then I fall back on a Stanford education.”

Storen has felt sure, since he started receiving significant recruiting attention in high school and chose Stanford, that he would eventually graduate. Everyone in his family owns a diploma; his sister is at Johns Hopkins medical school. Storen’s life, his family jokes, has become centered on “The Plan.”

-MCT Campus

UCF ADMISSION DECISIONS MADE ON THE SPOT

Valencia East

FRI SEP

24

10am—2pm

Building 5, Room 511/112

Valencia East

TUE OCT

12

10am—2pm

Building 5, Room 511/112

Valencia Osceola

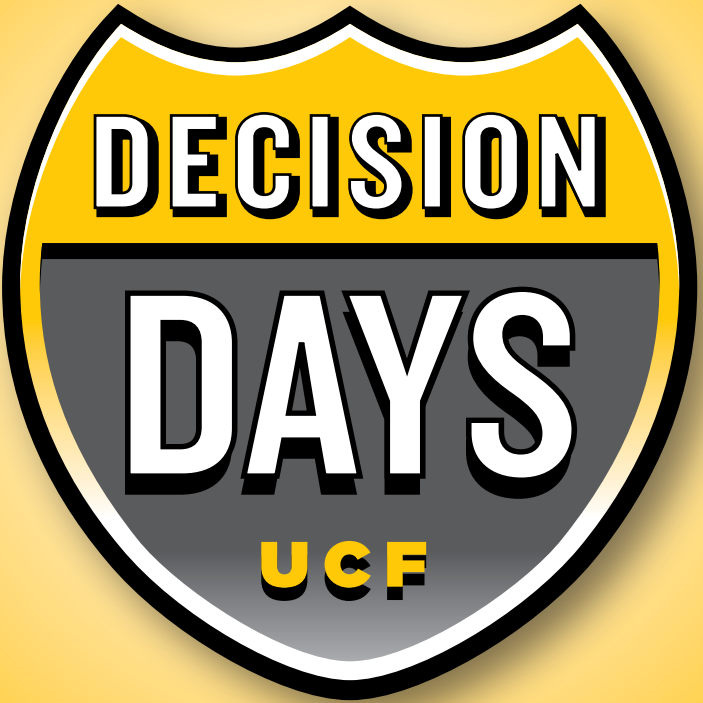
TUE OCT

19

10am—2pm

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29

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Building 11, Room 106

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FRI OCT

8

10am—2pm

Building 11, Room 106

Valencia West

WED OCT

20

10am—2pm

Building 11, Room 106



UCF

Stands For Opportunity

Ex-NFL tight end now sees bright future in UFL



Jim Prisching, Chicago Tribune
Jermaine Wiggins enjoyed a successful eight-year career in the NFL, and signed with the Florida Tuskers UFL team last season after taking two years off from football.

By Neil Tredray
Contributing writer

Jermaine Wiggins entered professional football when the New York Jets took a chance on him as an undrafted free agent 11 years ago and signed him to their practice squad.

It was the beginning of a long NFL career for Wiggins, during which he caught a Vinny Testaverde pass for a touchdown as part of the Jets' Monday Night Football comeback dubbed the "Miracle at the Meadowlands," won a Super Bowl ring with the Patriots in Super Bowl XXXVI, and played against the Patriots with the Panthers two years later in Super Bowl XXXVIII.

Wiggins left Carolina and spent three years with the Vikings before signing with the Jaguars in March of 2007. He suffered a concussion during a preseason game in August that same year and was released. In short, by almost any definition, Wiggins has had a successful and impressive NFL career.

That success leads one to ask an obvious question. Why would a player who achieved the highest honor of his sport sign with an unproven league, which Wiggins did after being drafted by the Florida Tuskers in the UFL's Premiere Season Draft in 2009?

"It's the opportunity to continue doing what it is that I do, and that's playing professional football," Wiggins said. "It's a way to keep my career going and have the opportunity to make a living. The NFL only has so many jobs and the UFL is giving guys the opportunity to continue their careers, whether on the field, as a coach or working in the front office."

After signing with the Tuskers, Wiggins had only an abbreviated time in training camp to get familiar with the offense. Luckily, he had some help from a former teammate.

"When I was in Minnesota I worked with [quarterback] Brooks [Bollinger]," Wiggins said. "I had a good relationship with him there. He's smart, he's a competitor, and he knows the game of football. He was able to come in and make the transition very smooth. He didn't miss a beat, he just got into it."

That chemistry and experience helped lead the Tuskers to an undefeated regular season and a chance for Wiggins to play in a third championship game. An overtime loss to the Las Vegas Locos was not what Wiggins and the team had envisioned, though.

"We played well last year but we obviously didn't attain our goal, which was winning a champion-

ship," Wiggins said. "To me, in order to be successful you have to win a championship."

Wiggins is enthusiastic about the opportunity the UFL has given him and other players.

"The one thing I really want to get out there is that the UFL is a great opportunity for guys to create a career," he said. "Look at the UFL and say 'Hey, I'm fortunate enough to be in the UFL. Let me try to build a career here.' If you're blessed enough to get that opportunity [to play in the NFL], that's great but the main focus is building that career with the UFL."

Tuskers Head Coach Jay Gruden understands what it means to the veterans in the UFL. "I think one, they love to play the game and two, they feel like they have a lot more football left in them despite people telling them they don't," Gruden said. "Jermaine proved he has a lot more football left in him."

For his part, Wiggins sees the opportunity long-term. "I'm trying to build a fan base where fans will look at like 'Hey we're going to get to know these guys who will play for our teams for four, five, six years,'" Wiggins said. "I'm a sports fan myself. I'm a die-hard Red Sox and Celtics fan and it's good to see some consistency with your players."



(Picks are winners, they do not take odds into account.)
Last Week:



Alex Barrett

12-3



Kenny Wagner

9-6



Russell Griner

10-5

TEN @ NYG			
CIN @ CAR			
PIT @ TB			
BUF @ NE			
CLE @ BAL			
SF @ KC			
DAL @ HOU			
DET @ MIN			
ATL @ NO			
WAS @ STL			
PHI @ JAC			
IND @ DEN			
OAK @ ARZ			
SD @ SEA			
MONDAY NIGHT GB @ CHI			

The real McCoy

By Alex Barrett
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LeSean McCoy hasn't taken long to show the world why the Eagles drafted him two years ago in his sophomore year. McCoy played sporadically last season, only starting four games for the injured incumbent, Brian Westbrook, he racked up 637 yards in split time, and caught 40 passes as well.

McCoy has surged in his opportunities as the fea-

ture back, after Westbrook was relased from Philadelphia, in an offense that has been led to this point by ex-convict Michael Vick.

McCoy tallied 120 yards and three touchdowns on 16 carries on Sunday; averaging 7.5 yards a carry while catching four passes as well.

Next up for McCoy, the ever-struggling Jacksonville Jaguars, who have proved so far to be the team everyone thought they would be; a scrimmage game on everyone's schedule.



Yong Kim / Philadelphia Daily News, MCT Campus