

Afghan Taliban’s new plan



Dion Nissenbaum / MCT

An Afghan child and merchant stand in front of a market in Marjah.

By Dion Nissenbaum
McClatchy Newspapers

MARJAH, Afghanistan - Two weeks after the U.S.-led forces swiftly seized control of this long-standing insurgent stronghold, Taliban forces are posing a new threat by menacing, beating and even beheading local residents who cooperate with the emerging Afghan government, according to Afghan and American officials.

Unable to confront the U.S. military directly with any serious challenge, Taliban fighters are shifting tactics as they try to undermine the American-backed Afghan government before it can win the trust of these southern Afghanistan residents, who have lived under insurgent rule for years.

While the incidents so far appear to be isolated, American military leaders warned Sunday they must contain the threat before it gains any momentum.

“We are in a very critical situation right now,” said Matt, a U.S. military adviser to the Afghan security forces in Marjah who asked his last name not be

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Official Student Media of Valencia Community College

Chinese traditions showcased at Valencia

By Shannon Scheidell
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Valencia Community College is bringing everyone together by connecting students from different cultures. The East Campus hosted the annual Chinese Festival on March 3, this year of the Tiger, for hours of enlightening activities and performances.

The members of the International Club were there to help set up the decorations, hand out fried dumplings, and translate the names of students into modern Chinese symbols.

Jorge Reyes, a student volunteer, received both his first name and last name in full Chinese characters, as translated by Edsion Dai, a member of the club. The words are written according to their pronunciation, said Dai, in segments proportional to the number of syllables in the name.

Lion dancing took place, which usually entails two people per lion, one the head, the other the tail end, who wear a traditional animal costume and move to the rhythm of a beating drum. Each motion and flick of the lions’ “body parts” symbolizes different behaviors and overall emotions that the lion may be having. For example, during the beginning of the dance, the two lions greet each other by seeming to sniff one another’s behind. Then each dances, kicks, and jumps around to depict the different events of one larger story.

The theatrics were provided by the Traditional Martial Arts Center. The performers were Fallon Mosley, as the head of the gold lion, with Sifu Charles Rivera, as the tail.



Shannon Scheidell / Valencia Voice

Lion dancing at the Chinese Festival on March 3.

Bryan Schmidt and Donald Shaw made up the silver and purple lion.

Students not standing around to watch the show were lining up to participate in the activities under cover of the campus’ library entrance. Volunteers and International

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Beckham’s game seeks finale



Daniel A. Anderson / Orange County Register

An injury leads soccer player to end career.

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Iditarod has a winner



Bob Hallinen/Anchorage Daily News/MCT

Iditarod musher Lance Mackey rubs the head of his dog Rev after rubbing ointment in one of the dog’s front legs at the Takotna, Alaska checkpoint.

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Chinese festival entertains Valencia students



Shannon Scheidell / Valencia Voice

International Club members Marie Andersol, Pamela Moreno and Meghan LeFranc.

Continued from page 1

Club members taught students the art of Origami, Chinese paper cutting, the meaning of their Chinese Zodiac signs, and how to properly use chopsticks.

If a student visited a least 2 of these events, they would earn a free dumpling as a warm treat in the face of the harsh wind tearing around the stands that day.

In the middle of the cultural fray, the club president,

Meghan LeFranc, was called on stage to accept her Student of the Year Award by advisor Lori Sunday.

LeFranc welcomed and thanked everyone for coming to the event and spoke briefly about how enthusiastic she is about being a member of such a vital group on campus.

Originally from France, she said, "Yes, I'm from France, but the Eiffel Tower is not France to me." She said the objective of the club is to bring different students together to give them

an insight as to the culture behind the icons that seem to represent each country.

"We try to be a democracy," she said. As the president of the International Club, she wants to hear the views and opinions of the members to try to meet their needs and give each one an opportunity to show the school what their heritage means to them.

Continuing the action, Rivera and Sifu Sam Winters demonstrated the moves involved in proper Tai Chi technique. Re-

garding this type of meditation, Winters said that it is almost like "moving yoga."

"It increases your balance, stamina and your coordination. Thousands of people in China do it every day. Everyday, like boom! They're in the park, doing Tai Chi.

"It's so good for your health," Winters said.

Each "sifu" brought out his own sword, by the end of the event, to show their skills in Tang Soo Do to the growing crowd.

Rivera has been practicing various Martial Arts for more than 30 years, where students Schmidt and Shaw have been practicing for as much as 14 years, between the both of them.

The International Club has been up and running for more than 20 years now, and still comes together on a weekly basis to bring information to anyone who is curious enough to attend the meetings.

The club is especially for

those who wish to travel and learn about life in different countries.

Member Marie Andresol said that being involved with the club can help students understand what it would be like to immerse themselves in another culture.

The information provided every Tuesday, when the club meets, can give them knowledge on where to go and how to behave in different cultural settings.

Spring Open House Wednesday, March 10 • 5:30 p.m.

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Movie-goers escaped to 'Wonderland'

'Alice in Wonderland' takes in \$210.3 million worldwide for its 3-D opening

By Ben Britz
LA Times

LOS ANGELES - Disney ended up picking just the right moment to jump down the 3-D rabbit hole.

As "Avatar" comes to the end of a historic three-month run, Walt Disney Studios' "Alice in Wonderland" took most of the 3-D screens and opened to an eye-popping \$210.3 million worldwide.

Much like director James Cameron's mega-hit, Tim Burton's adaptation of the classic tale, starring Johnny Depp, generated about 70 percent of its opening weekend business from theaters with 3-D screens. It easily beat the premiere of "Avatar" and set a record for the biggest winter opening, even accounting for ticket price inflation, selling a studio-estimated \$116.3 million worth of tickets in the U.S. and Canada.

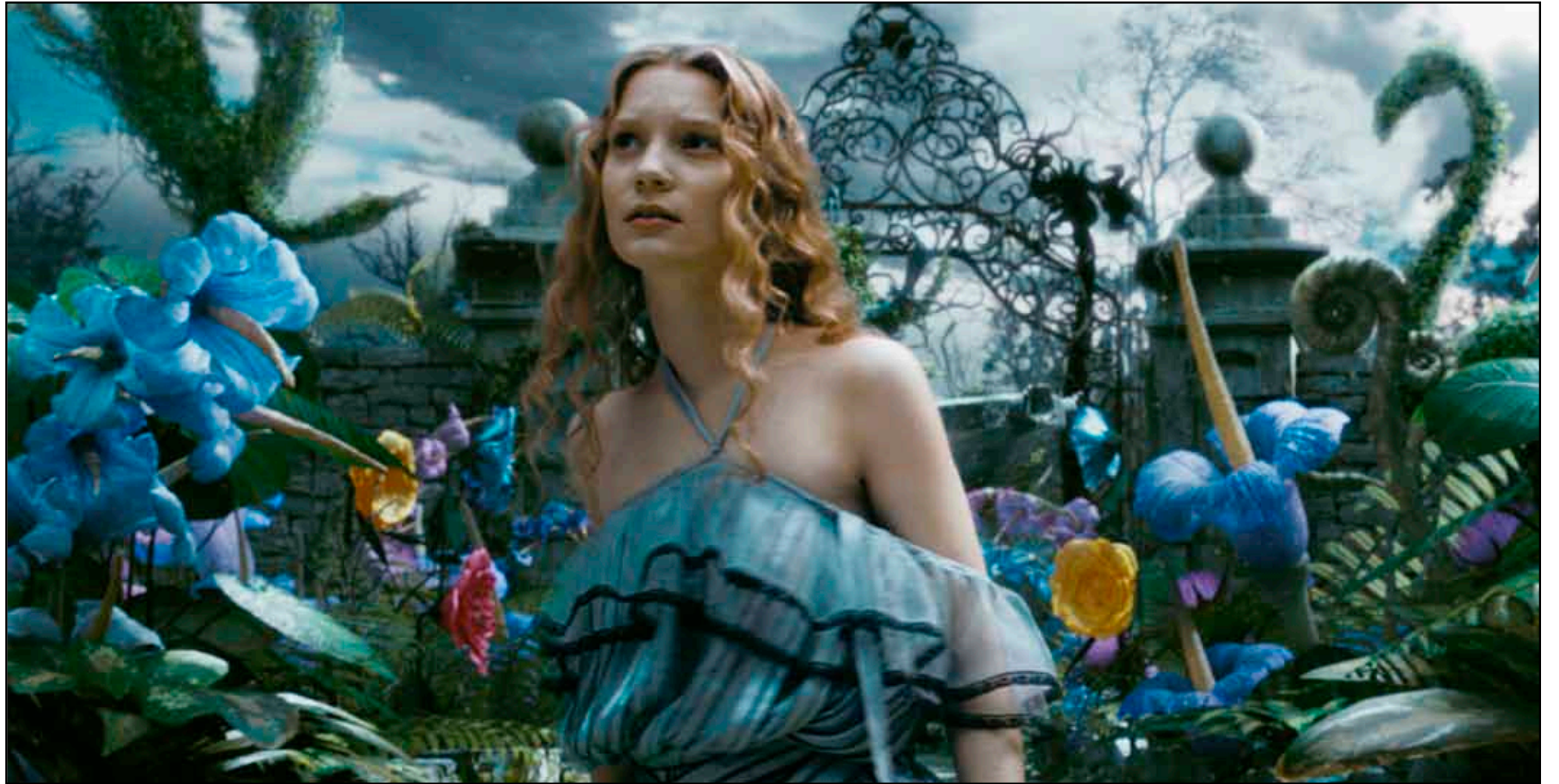
Overseas, it took in \$94 million in 40 territories, also setting a record winter opening.

"After 'Avatar,' people were saying that they're ready for the next 3-D world and the first weekend in March was all of a sudden the right place to be to meet that desire," said Disney Studios Chairman Rich Ross.

"Alice" played at about 220 more 3-D theaters than "Avatar," since exhibitors have added more capacity recently. As returns came in, it became clear that audiences generally preferred to see Disney's movie with the advanced technology, despite higher ticket prices.

"In theaters with multiple formats, we saw that the Imax 3-D sold out first, then regular 3-D, and then 2-D," said Disney distribution President Chuck Viane.

Though young women were most interested in "Alice," the picture's strong showing and sellouts at all times of day indicated that it had broad appeal. At midnight shows Thursday night, Viane said,



Courtesy Disney Enterprises, Inc. / MCT Campus

Mia Wasikowska stars in "Alice in Wonderland," Tim Burton's adaption of Lewis Carroll's famous childrens tale.

the movie made \$4 million, mainly from young adults. It generated \$41 million in the U.S. and Canada on Friday largely from families with daughters early in the evening and from couples on dates later in the night. On Saturday, "Alice" grossed \$44.3 million domestically, in large part due to families attending matinees.

3-D has accounted for an increasingly large percentage of ticket sales over the last three months for "Avatar" as it has marched past \$2.6 billion. That will be very difficult for "Alice," however, because most 3-D screens will switch to DreamWorks Animation's "How to Train Your Dragon" on March 26, a sign of the increasingly crowded marketplace for 3-D movies.

Word of mouth should be strong for "Alice," however, as audiences gave it an average grade of A-minus, according to market research firm CinemaScore, though reviews of the film were decidedly mixed. And with American students starting spring break next week, Disney will benefit from higher-than-average family attendance on weekdays.

The film's European opening was almost derailed when the studio, in an initiative championed by Walt Disney Co. Chief Executive Robert Iger, announced that "Alice" would be released on DVD just 12 weeks after it hit the big screen. Several theater chains, including two of the three biggest in Britain, threatened not to show the movie because of concerns the short window would hurt ticket sales. That led to a tense standoff that was resolved at the last minute.

Ultimately, "Alice" collected \$16.8 million in Britain, by far the highest opening for a movie in March in the country. It also performed very well in Italy, Russia, Mexico and Australia.

Disney estimated that the countries where "Alice" opened last week would account for 60 percent of its international gross. The film has yet to premiere in several key territories including France, China, Japan and Brazil.

-MCT Campus

Taliban mounts intimidation campaign

Continued from page 1

used to protect his identity. The Taliban are re-organizing. The capability they lost two weeks ago is coming back. The population knows that. And everyone is watching to see if we have the capability to address that new threat."

The evolving intimidation campaign is emerging as an early test for the U.S.-backed Afghan government that is struggling to establish credibility and convince skeptical residents that it will not allow the Taliban to return to power.

While U.S. military forces have steadily solidified their hold on much of this vast agricultural region filled with poppy fields used to finance the Taliban leadership, the new Afghan government is still trying to find its footing.

Haji Abdul Zahir, the newly appointed district governor of Marjah, has been working with a skeleton crew of Western advisers and one Afghan assistant. The U.S. military has been ferrying Zahir around in helicopters so he can assure locals he's in charge. Zahir's government compound has only rudimentary infrastructure.

On Sunday, Afghan and American military leaders prodded Zahir with requests to exert more control and persuade reluctant Marjah leaders pushed out by the Taliban that they needed to return.

"How many of us are from Marjah?" U.S. Marine Col. Randy Newman asked the two-dozen men taking part in the meeting. "None. The Taliban are from Marjah. They have earned some amount of trust of the people. The people trusted the Taliban justice. If we continue in this manner, we will not earn their trust."

Although they have been pushed out of power in Marjah, Taliban insurgents have slowly been trying to reassert some measure of control.

Marjah residents have told U.S. Marines that Taliban insurgents are coming around at night to

threaten and beat Afghans who cooperate with the Americans.

In at least one confirmed case, said U.S. military officials, the Taliban beheaded a local resident suspected of working with U.S. forces. The U.S. Marines are checking out at reports of at least two other beheadings in Marjah.

While the reports are difficult to verify, U.S. military officials said even one beheading creates enough fear to dissuade some Afghans from coming forward to help.

"They know what it means to have your head cut off, it's a very visceral thing and very easy to understand," Newman said. "Our trust, our security, their government are all unknowns to them and so we have to eventually make sure they understand that as well as the visceral reaction to a beheading."

How Zahir and the U.S. military respond to the latest Taliban challenge will have a big impact on how much confidence local leaders have in the new Afghan government.

American forces have to constantly reassure Marjah residents they aren't going to hand over control to a weak or corrupt Afghan government that can't prevent the Taliban from returning to power, not just this year, but in the years to come.

"They don't want to piss off the wrong Afghans," said Lt. Col. Cal Worth of St. Louis, the head of the 1st Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment, which played a central role in the military offensive that wrested Marjah from Taliban control. "They don't see the world in our 10-to-15 microwave minutes, rather they see it in 10-to-15 years."

Zahir spent most of the three-hour meeting listening to the concerns, posing questions and asking the U.S. Marines to pump more money into Marjah to get projects off the ground.



Dion Nissenbaum/MCT

Haji Abdul Zahir, the newly appointed district governor of Marjah, speaks to Afghan and American military leaders Sunday, March 14, 2010 at a meeting to discuss security in the southern Afghanistan region. U.S. Military leaders warned that the Taliban are using new tactics to try and intimidate local Afghans.

While the U.S. military has already spent hundreds of thousands of dollars to repair schools, clean canals, and compensate Afghan families who lost relatives killed during the recent fighting, Zahir asked the U.S. military to do more.

During Sunday's meeting, the U.S. Army adviser working with Afghan forces told Zahir that the security forces were being constrained because there was no judicial system in place to jail suspected Taliban insurgents turned in by local residents.

We need to sit down and have a very strong

discussion about how we're going to deal with Afghan justice for these men we know are hurting people," said Matt, who's advising Afghan police in one section of Marjah. They look at me and smile because they know they're going to be released within 24 to 48 hours.

"The people of southern Marjah are not going to be confident in our ability to bring security until we can permanently take those men off the battlefield," he said. "That's where we earn the population's trust."

-MCT Campus

OUR VOICE

In observance of today we write an opinion with a more inebriated view on things.

Tonight we go out to make bad decisions all in the name of the patron saint of... uh ... what was it?

We celebrate in the name the patron saint of green beer and and guys wearing skirts (cited from wikipedia).

Saint Patrick's Day became famous one year when George Washington hijacked a shipment of english rations, and left it to his Irish colonel Patrick Day to distribute the goods.

He distributed all the alcohol to his fellow Irish soldiers with an order to drink it all before Washington returned from his evening shirtless bear hunt and cherry tree genocide.

When Washington returned he found all the Irish men marching down the streets of the fort banging their drums and followed by the women from the local brothel dancing a jig with their feet going mad and the rest of them not really moving at all.

Colonel Day was found in the stables proclaiming himself to be a saint and wielding a staff attempting to drive the snakes off the land (also cited from wikipedia). St Patrick's Day was always destined to be one of the great drinking holidays right along with Cinco de Mayo, and Easter.

Perhaps no round is complete without a toast, so in order to avoid the cliché "cheers" or "YEAH lets get [messed] up"

Erin Go Bragh-less

A history and guide for America's favorite drinking holiday



William Gratz, Abaca Press / MCT Campus

The celebration of St. Patrick's day is generally marked by parades and false claims of being Irish.

we have some traditional Irish toasts for everyone:

"Today, we drink to get drunk. And when we get get drunk we sleep. And when we sleep we commit no sins. And when we don't sin we go to heaven. So today we drink to go to heaven."

"We drink to your coffin. May it be made of a 100 year old oak planted tomorrow."

"May you die in bed at 95, shot by a jealous spouse."

"Here's to a long life and a merry one.

A quick death and an easy one. A pretty girl and an honest one. A cold pint -- and another one!"

We have also gathered some more tips to help you get through a successful Saint Patrick's Day.

First and foremost pace yourself, if you get an early start you have the potential for 16 hours of drink time, so go slow and finish strong.

If attending class before two make sure you only have a maximum of two beers before class (that should give you enough

time to sober up for the drive home).

When you get to the bar wear closed shoes, the ground will already be sticky from the split beer.

If singing along with an unfamiliar song just wait for the third run through of the chorus, Irish songs tend to be long and repetitive. Make sure you have a designated driver prepared, also known as a cab, because nobody stays sober.

If you have to much of a good time don't be alarmed if your upheavals are green, it's just food coloring. Above all the most important thing to remember on holidays with lots of drinking, don't be that guy or girl. I'm sure you all know what were talking about.

We shall enjoy the sea of green today and watch as our nation's waterways are turned green. We will look jealously at the green island across the pond as they enjoy four whole days of debauchery.

We will look angrily at our early Thursday classes and consider the painful hangover.

We will eventually swear off alcohol for the rest of our lives with lines like "I will never drink again" or "that's the last time I get that drunk on a Wednesday."

But most importantly we will celebrate a holiday that holds national pride for a country with a great history and whose roots are in millions of American citizens whose ancestors immigrated here to build this country.

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POLL

Saint Patrick's Day Inquiries

By Collin Dever
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Coming from an Irish family the celebration of St. Patrick's Day has never been optional, it's mandatory.

My grandfather goes to church and the parade. My father and I go drinking and listen to music.

So in spirit of today's festivities we asked students and faculty a couple March 17 related questions along with my answers to all the questions we asked.

What are you doing for St. Patrick's Day?

Because Saint Patrick's Day falls on a Wednesday I am unfortunate enough not to do anything to crazy. I'll just have to settle for some green clothes, Irish music, some good food, and a guinness or two.

What was your most memorable SPD?

Last year I was in Pittsburgh with my family for St. Patrick's day. I went to the parade with my father and grandfather, watching all the college kids already drunk stumbling down to watch the parade at noon. We went out for live music and Irish beer and ended up walking about three miles back to my grandparents.

Have You ever drank green beer?

no.

Will you?

not If I can help it. Who want to drink beer with food coloring that has been sitting out for hours.

Happy Saint Patrick's Day



All I remember is just a bunch of drunks

—Ashanti Omowale

I'll be at church on St. Patrick's Day

—Hannah Plaisance



I have a friend whose birthday is on March 17 that made for a memorable day

—Raul Gonzalez Spanish Prof



No. I wouldn't buy it. It's a waste of money and I'm not interested.

—Juliana Montoya



Favorite St. Patrick's Day? I don't remember.

—Philip Van Schepen



I never had green beer. But I would. Why not? It's just food coloring.

—Derek Workman



I have great memories of St. Patrick's Day in Boston and of the parade.

—Esther Coombes English Prof.



I'm going to wear green so I don't get pinched.

—Dwayne Reynolds

‘El Porto’ delivers fun and quirky tunes to enjoy

By Christine Saraceno
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North Carolina native Joe Firstman is back with his fifth album “El Porto”. The ex-“Last Call with Carson Daly” bandleader has put together a short, quirky CD that a good number of people will find enjoyable. When I read the press release for “El Porto” I completely psyched myself out and thought “There’s no way I’m going to like this”. Even when I heard the first two songs “Marlene and Her Sisters” and “House” I

had the same mindset. It wasn’t until I heard the third track “The One That Makes You Happy” that I began to change my mind. It’s a cute, mellow ballad that is almost guaranteed to tug at your heartstrings. The next song “Mr. Winston” was good melodically but somewhat confusing lyrically. Why Firstman decided to write a song about a guy named “Mr. Winston” who’s “mean as hell to everyone” is beyond me, but why he also decided to include “Jennifer” (who had a distinct dis-



like for him and displayed that through the etching of Swastikas on his locker) and the story of his brother’s birth has me even more puzzled. Basically the song is kind of random. When I heard “The Candle Maker” I thought I was about to hear Kimya Dawson’s “Tire Swing” because the beginning of both songs sound alike other than the fact that “The Candle Maker” is better produced technically speaking. There’s a bluegrass breakdown towards the end of the song which aided

in keeping the song from sounding so repetitive. Unfortunately many of the songs are repetitive. It’s almost as though he sat at a desk thinking “I can’t think of anything that rhymes with that line. I suppose I’ll just sing the same line three times. Problem solved”. The album is short and simple which isn’t necessarily a bad thing but I tend to expect “short and simple” from an artist’s first album not their fifth. If you like laid back, country music that tells a story though, even if that story tends to get a bit confusing at times, then you should give “El Porto” a listen.

Terra Terra Terribly Weak

By Christine Saraceno
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After listening to “Mind like a Man, Soul like a Child” from Orlando based band Terra Terra Terra, my first thought was “Wow!” After a short pause, however, I followed up that thought with “that really sucked.” Not the most intellectual or articulate thought, but completely accurate nonetheless. It all started with a frivolous, static filled introduction with an inaudible interview of some type in the background.

If you’re going to put a verbal excerpt in an introduction make it something motivational or something that flows and makes sense with the rest of the album. Now if every other track was spectacular I very well could have forgiven the band for wasting the 65 seconds of my life that the intro took up. I’m fairly certain that the guys in TTT are on a quest for ul-

timate mediocrity because it only went downhill from there. Basically describing one song is like describing all of them. In fact, there were a few occasions where I checked to see if I had accidentally put a song on repeat or if it was just a particularly lengthy song. Lead singer Loren Taylor displays the same indiscriminate murmuring in the beginning and then whiny yelping by the end on every single song. The mixing was horrible but in this case it didn’t bother me much because it saved me from hearing Taylor’s voice. Perhaps giving John Dye, TTT’s synth player, a bigger role would’ve saved this album from being the catastrophe that it is. Goodness knows drummer Issac Eisenhower could have used some assistance in masking his intermediate drum work. There’s more to go on about but, in short, I disliked this album immensely and wouldn’t recommend it unless you suffer from insomnia in which case this will have you in the deepest slumber of your life, and it’s cheaper than Ambien.

music downloads

Week ending March 9, 2010

#1 Album



Almost Alice
Various Artists

Top tracks

() Last week’s ranking in top five

United States

<i>Break Your Heart</i> • Taio Cruz	1
<i>Imma Be</i> • Black Eyed Peas	(1) 2
<i>Hey, Soul Sister</i> • Train	(2) 3
<i>Need You Now</i> • Lady Antebellum	(3) 4
<i>Baby</i> • Justin Bieber	5

United Kingdom

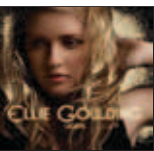
<i>Rude Boy</i> • Rihanna	(2) 1
<i>In My Head</i> • Jason Derulo	(1) 2
<i>You ... Dirtee Love</i> • Florence + the Machine	(3) 3
<i>Empire State ... Broken Down</i> • Alicia Keys	(5) 4
<i>Starry Eyed</i> • Ellie Goulding	(4) 5

Spain

<i>We Are the World ... for Haiti</i> • Artists for Haiti	(1) 1
<i>El Run Run</i> • Estopa	(3) 2
<i>Meet Me Halfway</i> • Black Eyed Peas	(4) 3
<i>Somos el Mundo 25 por Haiti</i> • Artists for Haiti	4
<i>Stereo Love</i> • Edward Maya, Vika Jigulina	(5) 5

Source: iTunes

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Lights
Ellie Goulding



Life in the Treehouse
Marlango

Blue Man Group are a hit

By Karen Raffaello
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Blue Man Group is a Grammy-nominated group famously known for theatrical shows that combine music, comedy, and stage performances. Blue Man has appeared on a number of popular television shows: The Tonight show, Ellen, and Regis & Kelly as well as Scrubs and Arrested Development.

"We are a very acting and drumming based act," said Kirk Massey, a current Blue man. "We look for actors with drumming background or drummers with acting background."

Phil Stanton, Chris Wink, and Matt Goldman, who comprise the blue men with no hair or ears and metallic blue skin, founded the trio.

When they first started performing they would step out of character and interact with fans after the shows. Now the group is always in character, never speaking and acting childlike by using technology, art, and music in a comical way.

"It's kind a like everything's being held together with duct tape," said Massey, "but it's really cutting edge technology being held together."

Massey has been a Blue Man for six years now. His training for the im-

prove show consists of drumming, acting, and catching marshmallows. The group uses LCD light shows, tribal rock music, and the reactions of the crowd to put together a fantastic show for all ages.

The group has a vibe with college students. Massey fell in love with the group at nineteen, and finds that college students can relate easy to the new age and undefined experience the audience gets from each show.

The idea behind the group was to have characters that everyone could relate to, which is why they related to no one race, ethnicity, or greed.

The show uses a lack of vocal communication to enhance the connection each audience member has with the show.

They use instruments and dramatics to perform. They use a wide variety of drums, strings, air poles, pipes and tubes. They are on a world tour traveling to New York, Boston, Chicago, Las Vegas, Germany, Japan, and Orlando.

The Orlando show runs year round at Universal's City Walk. Adult tickets start at \$64 and children under nine starts at \$25.

They have special offers available for college students at \$30 and group sales. Tickets are available by phone at 407-258-3626, online at www.blueman.com, or in person at the Blue Man Group box office.



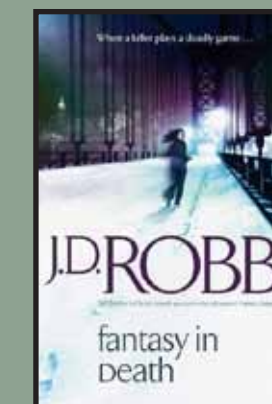
MCT Campus

Universal Studios' Blue Man Group performance is heavily based on percussion and acting.

Detective novel lacks realistic sleuthing

By Jimmy Tater
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In J. D. Robb's "Fantasy in Death" the death of a spokesperson takes place in the 2060s.



Bart Minnock, one of four partners in a video game production company, was found dead in his apartment with his head decapitated with almost no trace of a killer.

The company creates futuristic video games that are very life-like and in this situation the new game, "Fantastical," that Bart was testing was deadly.

Lieutenant Eve Dallas was assigned to the case and quickly suspects that the death is a homicide and the killer works with Minnock.

For a novel featuring a detective there is very little reference to the various stages of a crime scene investigation.

The main focus in this detective novel is shifted from the investigation to theoretical new technologies that would emerge in the decade of 2060.

The video games boast the use of vir-

tual reality rooms that incorporate visuals, sounds, and smells for a very unique experience.

The investigators "program" coffee and other food items from their refrigerators, they have a "slink" which does the same things as the modern cellphone, and home security is stressed to be superior than that of the present day.

There are personal droid robots that take care of the home when the owner is away, but questions arise when there is no record of anyone entering the apartment before Bart was murdered.

Occasionally, the narrator elects to make sarcastic comment about the characters in the novel.

Why not let the reader make their own decision about whether a character is likable or not? Why debase any characters at all?

It makes the reader ask why should they bother with this novel if these characters are so uninteresting according to the cynicism of the narrator.

For a detective novel that lacks any realistic methods of sleuthing because of all the hypothetical futuristic technologies, the characters were the strongest part of the story.

Yet, the narrator tries to convince the reader that a character like Minnock is a social disappointment because he is interested in programming video games although he leaves a good legacy that is rehashed as friends, family, and business competitors are interviewed after his murder.

The novel disappoints as a detective story, but may interest those who were impressed by the futuristic technologies that would change domestic life in George Orwell's "Nineteen Eighty-Four."

Beck's World Cup hopes torn

By Grahame L. Jones
Los Angeles Times

David Beckham's hopes of playing in a fourth World Cup vanished Sunday when the on-loan Los Angeles Galaxy midfielder tore his left Achilles' tendon while playing for AC Milan.

Beckham, who turns 35 on May 2, was devastated by the injury, which definitely will rule him out of the June 11-July 11 tournament in South Africa and likely will end his international career.

He was said to be in tears in the locker room after the match. Beckham had worked for three years to have a chance to be on England's World Cup squad, only to have the dream snatched away from him three months shy of the tournament.

Had he been selected, he could have become the first English player to appear in four World Cups.

"As far as the World Cup is concerned, he's definitely out," Jean Pierre Meersseman, Milan's team doctor, told the Times of London.

The injury will sideline the midfielder for five to eight months, and, depending on his recovery and his mood, could mean that his Major League Soccer career also will come to an end.

Beckham had purposely joined AC Milan on loan in each of the past two seasons to keep alive his World Cup hopes.

Beckham, who left the San Siro stadium on crutches, was scheduled to fly to Turku, Finland, on Monday for surgery.

The injury occurred in the closing moments of Sunday's match and caused Beckham to limp toward the sideline before he was carried off the field.

'David understood he had torn his Achilles' tendon. Unfortunately, the party is ruined.'

"It's broken. It's broken," he reportedly said of the Achilles' tendon. The anguish on his face was clear for all to see, and it was a pain shared by his coach and teammates.

"Beckham's injury makes us feel terrible," The Associated Press quoted AC Milan Coach Leonardo as saying.

"David understood immediately that he had torn his Achilles' tendon. When the tendon breaks, everything comes away and the muscle starts to rise. I feel great pity for him. This injury has been a heavy blow for him and for us. Unfortunately, the party is ruined."

Beckham was virtually assured of being named as one of the 23 players England Coach Fabio Capello will take to South Africa. Beckham was not expected to be a starter, but his experience and leadership qualities were being counted on to boost the team, and he could have played a key role off the bench.

As matters stand, it is possible that Beckham could still go to South Africa, not as a player but rather as an ambassador for England's 2018 World Cup bid.

Beckham has played 115 games for England, 10 shy of the record held by former goalkeeper Peter Shilton. He was not expecting to better that record, but he was expecting to play in the World Cup.

England opens its World Cup campaign against the U.S. on June 12.

Beckham also was injured before the 2002 World Cup in South Korea and Japan, breaking a bone in his right foot. He recovered in time to make the team and to play, but he was not fully fit.

This time, the injury is more serious and there is all but no hope of him making it back onto the field for his national team.

Whether he makes it back onto the field as a Galaxy player remains to be seen.

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Mackey takes Iditarod

By Kyle Hopkins and Mike Campbell
McClatchy Newspapers

NOME, Alaska — Pumping his fist as he approached the finish line, Lance Mackey won the Iditarod Sled Dog Race on Tuesday afternoon, becoming the first musher to take four straight.

Students on Valencia's West Campus have been inundated with Iditarod for the majority of this semester.

The Get Into Reading program featured "Winterdance" by Gary Paulsen.

The story follows Paulsen's as he trains for and then competes in the Iditarod.

Mackey, 39, and his team of 11 dogs passed under the burlled arch at 2:59 p.m. Alaska time, becoming the second musher in race history to finish in fewer than 9 days — by just 51 seconds.

"I had seven dogs who would go to the end of the earth for me, and nine more who would try," Mackey said at the finish line. "I've got a lot of young superstars and a bright future with them.

"I'll probably be back next year," he added. "I don't see why not. I'm a little beat up, though. I can only be so tough so long."

The feat earned him a check for \$50,400 and a new Dodge truck.

Hans Gatt of Whitehorse finished second at 4:04 p.m., and Jeff King of Denali Park was headed for a third-place finish.

Under a bluebird sky, Mackey's dogs trotted down Front Street while the big afternoon crowd surged forward, narrowing the slot of snow through which he could pass.

"I drew the right (bib) number, 49, representing the whole state of Alaska and the people who believed in me," he said. "It was an amazing wel-

come as usual. People were cheering as if it was my first one."

Two of Mackey's stalwart dogs, Rev, who's missing his left ear tip, and Maple sat with Mackey under the burlled arch, adorned with collars of yellow roses. Mackey draped his arms around them and planted a kiss on the fur.

"They may not be the fastest team in this race," Mackey said. "But they've got the biggest hearts."

The Mackey family now owns six titles — one by his father Dick in 1978, one by his half-brother Rick in 1983 and Lance's four.

Only four other mushers have that many. Rick Swenson of Two Rivers has five. Mackey, King, Martin Buser of Big Lake, Swingley and Butcher are the others.

Lance's career began slowly with a 36th place finish in 2001, his first race.

Cancer turned his life upside down three days after the end of that race.

Doctors determined that the piercing headaches he had been experiencing for were due to a squamous cell carcinoma growing rapidly in his neck. To save Mackey's life, doctors cut out muscle, lymph nodes, the internal jugular vein and several nerves.

Twelve weeks of post-surgery radiation follow, but the radiation ate away at his jawbone, costing him 10 teeth. He also has limited mobility in his right arm and radiation treatments left his body weakened against the cold.

Relentless running turned the tables for Mackey in this year's race. His dogs delivered a stunning run of about 140 miles from Nulato to Unalakleet without a significant rest to vault past Jeff King into a lead they'd never relinquish.

Imagine running five marathons back-to-back-



Bob Hallinen, Anchorage Daily News / MCT Campus

Lance Mackey makes his way towards the ice of Golovin Bay on his way to the White Mountain, Alaska Checkpoint.

to-back-to-back-to-back.

Mackey's dogs went a little farther — and then kept it up all the way to Nome.

"I'm totally willing to gamble any time any day," Mackey said back in Unalakleet. "I'm not afraid to lay it on the line."

It wasn't the first time King had fallen victim to a bold Mackey ploy.

Two years ago, King seemed poised to pass Mackey in the home stretch but Mackey slipped out of the Elim checkpoint as King slept to gain the upper hand.

"I wondered," King said this year in Shaktoolik, "maybe that 140-mile run was a little much. But they came back."

Since the race's rag-tag, thrown-together beginnings in 1973, some 817 mushers have guided dog teams to Nome. Eighteen have been crowned champion. Only one has worn that crown four

consecutive years.

The late, great Susan Butcher had her string of three straight stopped in 1989 by Nenana's Joe Runyan; Butcher won again in 1990.

More recently, Doug Swingley of Montana dominated the 1,000-mile marathon from 1999-2001, a streak ended when Martin Buser of Big Lake authored the fastest Iditarod ever. Swingley lollygagged into town in 40th place that year and proceeded to use the burlled arch as his wedding chapel, marrying longtime companion Melanie Shirilla as dogs stood by as canine bridesmaids and groomsmen.

"There's a hell of a lot of good dog teams in this race with exceptional drivers who are very focused and determined," Mackey said earlier. "Hans Gatt just whipped my butt in the Yukon Quest."

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Let the madness begin

How to win a year's supply of chicken wings

By Jeff Miller
The Orange County Register

All the players can win is a championship, a lousy title.

But you, you could win \$1 million or a new car or, at FOX-Sports.com, \$1 million plus a year's supply of chicken wings, the heart-attack helper coming compliments of Hooter's, where, if you ask nicely, they might be willing to just drop your ascending aorta into the deep fryer.

All it takes to claim your prize is correctly predicting the outcome of 63 consecutive college basketball games, which, mathematically speaking, is about as probable as Dick Vitale giving birth.

That, however, isn't the point. The point is that the NCAA tournament is upon us once again, meaning it's time for everyone to dream big, even if we have a Winthrop's chance in hell.

But we do have a chance, all of us do, a chance to dance, this event becoming as interactive as a boozed-up Ben Roethlisberger.

Doesn't everyone fill out a bracket or two or 10 now? Every office, every Web site, every vacant street corner offers a contest. And yet, not a single person is picking East Tennessee State to win a game.

Experts say nearly \$2 billion in lost productivity will accumulate at American businesses during the tournament.

A big part of the allure is that anyone can win, armed with no more information than each team's seeding.

As a public service today, we'd like to pass along some information to help as you're losing money to your friends and being confounded by how in the name of all that's holy someone who has played basketball since being able to walk still can't make a stinking free throw when it matters!

Contrary to what this tournament loves to sell, the Cinderellas – the real Cinderellas – have no chance. Teams seeded 15th and 16th are 4-196 in Round 1. Even Donald Sterling thinks that's bad basketball.

Unlike the average television executive, do not fall in love with Duke. The Blue Devils have won one national title in the past 17 years. North Carolina

has twice that many in the past five years. So does Florida.

Here's some knowledge to drop on your pals: Wyoming has the same number of NCAA basketball titles as Georgetown, Syracuse and Michigan. Each school has a total of one.

The Cowboys claimed their championship in 1943 behind Kenny Sailors, who not only was selected as the NCAA player of the year twice but he won the award once before and then again after a stint in World War II.

How great of an American is Sailors? He's also credited with popularizing and possibly even inventing the jump shot.

Inventing the jump shot? That's sort of like being able to claim you invented the steak.

A few other trends to consider: In the first round, No. 9 seeds fare better than No. 8s, as do No. 12s compared to No. 11s. And avoid the Pac-10 this year. Apparently most of the country's college talent has done so.

Beyond all that, you're pretty much on your own. We'd like to wish you luck but not too much luck.

We plan on going 63-0 and then devouring chicken wings to our heart's discontent.

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Filled in brackets for 2010 NCAA men's basketball tournament, listing all 65 teams and matchups for the tournament.