

10-23-2006

Columbia Chronicle (10/23/2006)

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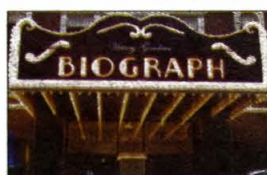


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Board approves property purchase

College begins
process to build
new Media Center

By Amanda Maurer
Campus News Editor

After years of planning for Columbia's proposed Media Production Center, the board of trustees gave the college permission to begin the property's purchase process at the Oct. 5 meeting.

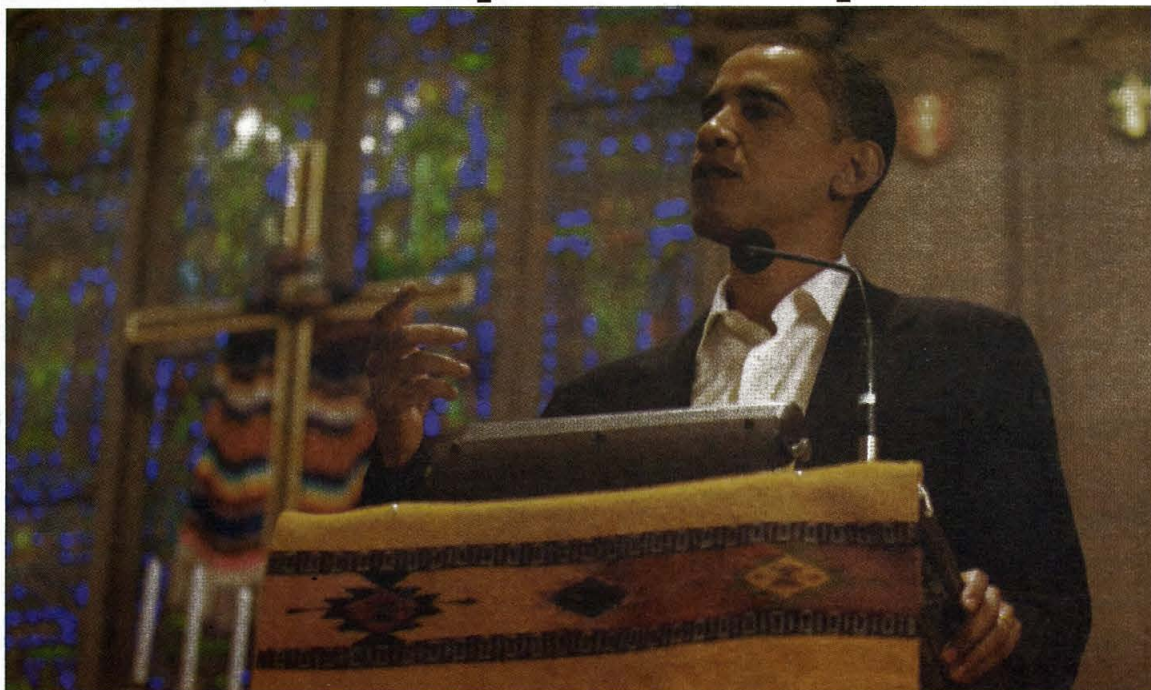
According to Columbia officials, the college must first find an architect before the project's cost can be better determined. In addition, the college cannot break ground at 1632 S. State St., until they publicly begin and reach the capital campaign goal of \$20 million, which Columbia president Warrick L. Carter said could take as long as four years, during a press conference on Oct. 2.

The \$20 million campaign will help fund the Media Production Center, scholarships and endowments. Officials have not decided if it'll also help purchase the property.

Since the city has promised to sell the land to Columbia, there won't be any competitive bids for the property, said Alicia Berg, vice president of Campus Environment.

Berg could not give a cost for the property as the college will soon negotiate the price with the city. She did say the city is willing to sell it at

Obama promotes hope



Mauricio Rubio/The Chronicle

U.S. Sen. Barack Obama speaks at the First United Methodist Church, 77 W. Washington Ave., on Oct. 17 before a signing promoting his latest book 'The Audacity of Hope,' which discusses faith, values and politics.

a "very reasonable price."

City officials in the Department of Planning and Development were not able to provide a price either.

Film and Video, Television and Interactive Media department members have had a number of meetings throughout the years to help design the new facilities in the 36,000-square-foot Media Production Center. Some of the proposed areas include two sound stages, a motion capture studio

and an animation lab.

The Media Production Center will also become the home to the college's new media truck. The vehicle allows broadcast journalists, television and radio students and others to report on location.

"[The Media Production Center is] really going to provide us with this incredibly efficient and effective and creative way of teaching our students," said Doreen Bartoni, dean of the School of Media Arts.

While some majors will be using the classrooms and studios more than others, the facilities will be available to the entire college.

Officials acknowledged the college's need for the Media Production Center, which will become the first building Columbia has ever constructed, for a number of reasons. The two-story building will fulfill spatial needs by providing students with enough space for professional

equipment and studios.

"It's really important that we set out a vision, and we're starting to implement that vision to handle all of the growth that we've had," Berg said.

Since Columbia has historically occupied and renovated the insides of buildings, the college landed the nickname "hermit crab of the South Loop" by Lynn Becker, a reporter for the Chicago Reader.

See Center, Page 6

Death rays, Chevys and disco balls: the world of Zap Props

By Michael Claire
Assistant A&E Editor

It's a small room, yet the amount of firepower contained in it would presumably be enough to permanently put a large insurance company out of business. The shelves are stocked full of loose rounds and clips of ammo. Shells roll over

each other like treads on a tank, while large automatic rifles carve their butts and muzzles against floorboards and walls.

A war chest lingers heavily at first glance, seemingly waiting for the right maniac or grumpy old timer to come and lovingly nurture its destructive capabilities. But despite the fact that this little com-

bat cave gives the impression of a mercenary's dream, this eclectic arsenal is surprisingly tame, and altogether—fake.

The armory at Zap Props and Antiques, 3611 S. Loomis Place, is only a tiny section in a vast warehouse full of oddities and antiques. From operating tables to taxidermic coyotes, decommis-

sioned rifles and war relics, Zap has everything needed to create movie magic.

As the largest prop house in the Midwest, Zap naturally caters to advertising agencies and big Hollywood production companies, but Columbia's film and theater students are also taking advantage of Zap's massive selection of props and antiques.

"Their warehouse is incredible," said John Jensen, a film and video major. "Even if you have nothing to get from them, I recommend going just to look around because it's a trip. It's organized like a fuckin' crazy person's house or garage."

Zap is extremely sympathetic toward student needs, and it offers a hefty 50 percent discount for students with an updated college ID.

"It's not a money making thing for us; it's really just us trying to help students so they can make really amazing movies," said Zap employee Shanna Wolthuis.

But generosity to students aside, a good portion of its revenue comes from routinely working with many of the city's production design companies.

"Recently we've worked on *The Weather Man*, *Barber Shop*,

See Props, Page 17

HIV/AIDS testers send students home

By Steve Yaccino
Assistant Campus Editor

Jacob Holland expected to get tested for HIV when he walked into the Residence Center, 731 S. Plymouth Court, on Oct. 11. For weeks, fliers for the free testing had been taped in hallways schoolwide promoting the event. Holland, a performing arts major and senior class president, entered the student lounge and was told to come back in an hour because the testers were not ready. When he arrived the second time, he was turned away. As it turned out, only 12 students were able to sign up for testing, and he was not one of them.

"At a school of almost 11,000 students, I think it's ridiculous that we would be promoting free STD and HIV testing and yet only accommodate a few number of students," Holland said. "If you're going to promote something like that, you're going to have to do it well."

There were 20 students waiting when the testers from

See Test, Page 4



Rachael Strecher/The Chronicle

The warehouse that stores Zap Props, 3611 S. Loomis Place, contains an overwhelming amount of antiques and knick-knacks, including police boxes, traffic lights and fans.



Instant karma's gonna get you

By Hayley Graham, Editor-in-Chief

My friend Katie and I recently feel like we're on a streak of inexplicably bad luck. Sure, nothing too terrible has happened—knock on wood—and we may just be overreacting, but it made us feel a little bit down in the past few weeks.

Sure, I haven't broken any bones, been in a car accident or lost a significant amount of money gambling on a riverboat casino, but I did lose a few things and had a week from hell.

And I didn't just lose a sock or an earring, I lost my lucky charm that I've had since I was in the eighth grade.

Katie and I have been thinking a lot about this and trying to figure out why these unfortunate things seem to keep blindsiding us, and we just can't seem to come up with a good conclusion. We're also both very Irish, so we've been left puzzled and wondering where our supposed Irish luck has gone.

But last week when I was hanging out at our usual Wednesday night spot, I heard a great story that opened my eyes to a possible answer for our streaks of bad luck. The story of somewhat unfortunate events started off when a girl, who I'm going to call Jane, living in Boston agreed to dog sit for her neighbors while they went on a two-week family vacation.

One day Jane went over to the house and unfortunately found the dog dead. Now don't get the wrong impression—this

wasn't due to anything Jane did while watching over the family's beloved pet. The poor pooch's ticket was up, and Jane was left with the corpse of a golden retriever.

Jane, of course, had no idea what to do, so she called up the local veterinarian, who told her to bring the dead dog into the office so they could hold it until the family returned. Since Jane didn't have access to a car or any extra cash for a taxi, she had to use public transportation to get the dog's body to the vet's office.

Since it's not exactly easy to inconspicuously haul around the body of a golden retriever on public transportation, Jane figured the most logical idea would be to stuff the corpse into a suitcase and roll it around as if nothing was wrong.

When she was finally on the train, after carefully wheeling around the precious cargo, a fairly attractive man standing next to Jane struck up a conversation with her and asked what she was doing with the luggage. Even though it seems like she would have frozen up when asked this question, it didn't even faze Jane since she had already concocted a great lie in case she was asked this.

Jane effortlessly told the man she was a salesperson for a technology company and that her luggage was filled with various types of electronics, like mp3 players, laptops and digital cameras—brilliant.

The lie worked beautifully and the friendly small talk kept

going until the man and Jane happened to get off at the same stop. They said the polite conversation ended, "Nice meeting you, hope to see you around," shook hands and parted ways. And Jane was left grinning, knowing she was almost to the veterinarian's office without having to reveal the disgusting truth about the contents of her luggage.

But as Jane began walking away, the friendly guy ran back up to her, punched her in the stomach and stole her luggage, dead dog and all, thinking he had just taken thousands of dollars in electronics.

If that's not karma coming back at the thief, then I don't know what is.

Since retelling this story a few other people say they have also heard it, so there is an unfortunate possibility that this ridiculous tale is just an urban legend. For now though, that's for you to decide. The best part about this story is the shocking moral we learn at the end. What goes around comes around, right?

Is karma the cause of my recent series of unfortunate events? Maybe. However, I can't seem to think of anything really awful I have done recently that would cause some bad karma to be coming back to me. But maybe these events are not necessarily unlucky or unfortunate, and were meant to be learning experiences to help me grow as a person.

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Arts and Entertainment
Commentary
City Beat

Announcements

Black Student Union meeting

Join the Black Student Union in its focus on cultural, social and academic programming for black students. The meeting will take place at 6 p.m. on Oct. 23 in the Wabash Campus Building, 623 S. Wabash Ave., room 311. All Columbia students are welcome.

For more information, call Kimberly Weatherly at (312) 344-7994.

An My LA: 'Small Wars'

The Museum of Contemporary Photography will explore the Vietnam War and the current wars in Iraq and Afghanistan in two photographic series called "Small Wars" by An My LA. La was born in Saigon, Vietnam, before coming to the U.S. as a refugee in 1975. Her exhibit will open at 5 p.m. Oct. 26 at the Alexandroff Campus Center, 600 S. Michigan Ave., from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily through Jan. 6.

For more information, contact Jeffrey Arnett at (312) 344-7779.

Go-Go graduate school

Join in with graduate programs from around the nation from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Oct. 27 at the 1104 Center, 1104 S. Wabash Ave., to get arts and media advice on portfolios and building a successful application package. Bring portfolios and work samples for one-on-one reviews and panel discussions.

For more information, contact Mercedes Cooper at (312) 344-8612.

Mix it up with Click

Come meet students at an afternoon mixer hosted by Click, a student organization to raise awareness of artists' relationships to each other. From noon to 2 p.m. on Oct. 26 at the Hokin Annex, Wabash Campus Building, 623 S. Wabash Ave., students will be showcasing artwork and participants will be encouraged to design a Click arrow logo. The best design will be featured on a Click T-shirt.

For more information, contact Kate Begani at (630) 254-4109.

In Your Opinion

Do you know what Critical Encounters is?



"No, what's that?"

—Samantha Grossman, junior, marketing



"I'm not familiar with the term at all."

—Mark Perkins, junior, film and video



"No idea. I've heard of it."

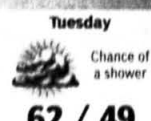
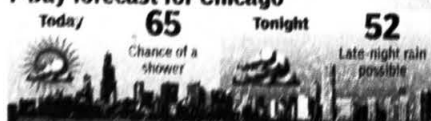
—Sara Laskowski, senior, photography



"I'm assuming it's like 'caught off guard,' like when you come out of the bathroom and someone sees you naked."

—Rex Santa Ana, senior, photography

7-Day forecast for Chicago



Forecasts and graphics provided by AccuWeather.com ©2006

THE COLUMBIA CHRONICLE

If you have an upcoming event or announcement, contact The Chronicle's news desk
chronicle@colum.edu
(312) 344-8964

Grant helps Columbia become greener



Mauricio Rubio/The Chronicle

Freshman graphic design major Christian Williams, right, and senior film and theater major Jason Walsh, left, empty recycling deposits into a blue bin.

College buys recycling bins, begins new program

By Amanda Maurer
Campus News Editor

This year Columbia "has become a little more green, blue and gray thanks to the college's new recycling program and a \$30,000 grant from the state of Illinois. The grant allowed for the purchase of more than 70 new receptacles and the creation of two new student worker positions.

Last year Recycling Services, Inc., a company that works along with the college's current waste-removal company, placed recycling boxes for paper around campus. This year the company offers recycling receptacles for glass, plastic, aluminum and paper.

Those who participate in the student-run additional recycling program help collect items every day and leave them in several dumpsters around campus for Recycling Services to pick up.

The grant came from a total of \$550,000 that the state of Illinois distributed to businesses and schools in August to further recycling efforts. According to those involved with Columbia's program, the money also purchased bins, containers and promotional items to be given out during convocation.

Columbia officials took this step to become more environmentally responsible for the garbage the college creates, said Alicia Berg, vice president of Campus Environment.

"I know our students, faculty and staff are all committed to environmental responsibility, so the school should be following through on that commitment," Berg said. "It's overdue, frankly, and I'm just glad we're doing it."

The program's new containers have received mixed reviews. Brenna Marshall, a sophomore marketing major, works in the office of New Millennium Studies and noticed some people using the new containers.

"I think we waste a lot of paper, but at the same time, I see a lot of recycling receptacles," she said. "Whether they're used is kind of up in the air."

John Wawrzaszek supervises students in the recycling program. He has worked on staff since he graduated from Columbia in 2003. Although the student-run recycling program has been around for more than 15 years, it was put into gear once Wawrzaszek could spend more time with the students.

One problem the recycling staff faces is that students, faculty and staff don't always throw their items in the correct containers.

"Each container is clearly

See Recycling, Page 6

National anchor shares 'nuggets of wisdom'

Joan Lunden visits Columbia for Up Close conversations

By Mary Kroeck
Assistant A&E Editor

Most Columbia students get the opportunity to see where their careers can go by looking at the professionals in their field and trying to follow their words of wisdom. The "Conversations in the Arts: Up Close with ..." series gives students and the general public the chance to hear professionals speak and ask them questions about their careers.

The third season of the Up Close program began on Oct. 19 with Joan Lunden, who hosted "Good Morning America" for 17 years, making her the longest running host on early morning television.

Lunden spoke at two sessions on campus—a student press conference held in the Ferguson Theater, 600 S. Michigan Ave., and the official Up Close program, which was open to the public for \$50 a person at the Dance Center, 1306 S. Michigan Ave.

Lunden's presence on campus benefited students because she shared her experiences and gave advice on achieving similar success, said Eric Winston, vice president of Institutional Affairs.

"We chose her for students, especially those in broadcast and journalism," he said. "We are a school of media and communication. Students should know how [Lunden] got to be as successful as she is."

Lunden said she is glad she had the opportunity to speak to students because it's a way for her to give back to others.

"I think [Up Close] is a very special program," Lunden said. "Not that many universities have programs like this. It's an opportunity to give back to young people, to impart a few nuggets of wisdom that have helped [me] succeed."

However, it's unclear how many students the program actually reaches. There were only about 15 people, including students and faculty, at the afternoon press conference. Rhea Coffern, a sophomore journalism major, didn't attend the event and was unaware that Lunden was on campus, but feels it's important to know a person in any student's given field.

"It's always good to meet professionals in their field because sometimes the direction you choose to go in can be difficult," Coffern said. "It's always good to go to people who have been there to get advice."

Lunden began her career in Sacramento, Calif., in the early 1970s and became host of "Good Morning America" in 1980, the same year she became a mother.

"Raising my children is the hardest, most complex, consuming thing," Lunden said. "I feel I've made my mark in life. I've disseminated information for decades to help make people's lives better [with advice about] how to run their homes, lives, bank accounts."

See Lunden, Page 11

Student loses weight, gains self-confidence

By Jessica Galliat
Staff Writer

On a cold and snowy October morning, students bundled up in heavy coats, scarves and gloves, prepared for the unexpected cold that lingered outside the front doors of the Hokin Annex. One student, buried in an oversized red coat, black gloves and stocking cap, said he did not recall the cold bothering him as much last winter.

"I used to love the cold," David Dabrowski, a senior film major, said. "I guess fat has really good insulation."

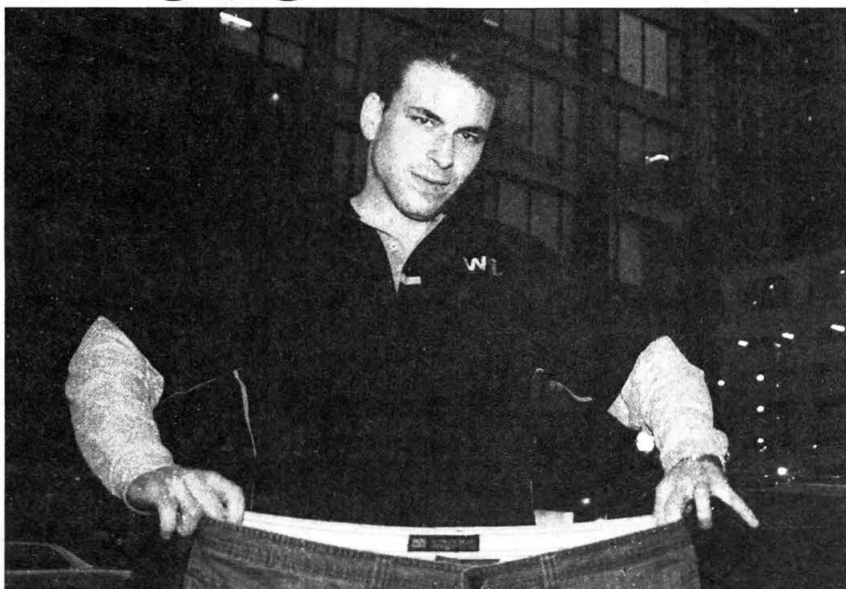
After a nasty fall during a night of heavy drinking in May 2005, 360-pound David Dabrowski was fed up with his unhealthy lifestyle and being overweight since he was in fifth grade. He promised himself he would lose about 30 pounds so he could weigh himself on his scale at home. A year and a half and almost 200 pounds later, David Dabrowski, now 24, maintains a steady weight of 180 pounds.

"I can still see the scars on my face from when I fell," David Dabrowski said. "I was drinking a lot, so I lost of a lot blood, and my face was all bandaged up the last week of the semester. It was a wake up call to change what I was doing."

According to the Chicago Department of Public Health, 49 percent of Chicagoans age 20 and older are obese.

"I have always been a big person," David Dabrowski said. "Well, always had been a big person."

"He was always pretty chunky as a kid, starting around elemen-



Keith Bishton/The Chronicle

David Dabrowski, a senior film major, recently lost 200 lbs by eating a vegetarian diet and exercising three times a week. He said the best thing about losing the weight was getting engaged.

tary school," his mother, Linda Dabrowski, said. "He couldn't always do what other kids did and started putting on more weight."

Without consulting a dietician or trainer, David Dabrowski decided to cut out fast food, pop, alcohol and meat in addition to exercising regularly to reach his goal weight.

Mark Brticevich, coordinator and director of fitness and sports at Columbia, said anyone who is 100 pounds or more overweight and trying to lose weight should usually seek consultation in the process.

"They should be under a doc-

tor's care, see a licensed dietician, a psychologist and maybe even group therapy," Brticevich said.

After struggling with "switching everything up" and changing his eating habits the first couple of months, the pounds started to drop. Midway through the fall semester of 2005, David Dabrowski surpassed his goal, weighing in at 329 pounds. David Dabrowski said he wanted to keep going and try getting below 300 pounds.

"It was still bittersweet," he said. "I still wasn't happy with the way I was."

By Thanksgiving of 2005, David Dabrowski was exercising six days a week, keeping up with his diet and losing as much as 20 pounds each month.

"It was really hard staying on it," David Dabrowski said. "When I couldn't take it anymore, I would just go to bed early instead of staying up all night snacking. That was my way of dealing with it."

After going on his first date the day after Thanksgiving with his longtime crush, Laura Klein, Dabrowski said he had more of a reason to keep going with his

See Weight Loss, Page 11

Test: Students denied HIV screening

Continued from Front Page

Howard Brown Health Center, the organization performing the screening, said they could only test 12 students. The other eight were refused testing and referred to a website where they could find alternative screenings in the city. No record was kept of how many additional students were turned away, and Columbia's administration admits they were unprepared to accommodate the increase of interested students.

Columbia's Student Health Services arranged the screening in conjunction with Critical Encounters, a yearlong Columbia program focused on HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention. It was the first STI and HIV testing of the 2006-2007 school year. It was also the first since Critical Encounters' efforts began, a connection administration points to as the reason for the influx.

"It's been very difficult historically for the institution to get students to get tested," said Kari Sommers, assistant dean of Student Life. "Nobody wants to do that—who does? It's awful."

This is the third year Columbia has run HIV tests through the Howard Brown Health Center's Broadway Youth Center, a Chicago-based organization focused on HIV/AIDS prevention among local youth. The youth center, which donates the time and equipment required for

testing, conducted multiple screenings on campus last year, and has tested at local colleges like Loyola University and the University of Chicago. Casey Schwartz, health educator for Howard Brown and one of the two testers present, said he's never seen more than a dozen students turn out.

"Twelve is a very normal number," Schwartz said. "It is a normal number for colleges in general."

The few tests that occurred consisted of an oral-swab HIV screening and a gonorrhea and chlamydia urine test. The results of the oral swab, though different than the standard five-day blood test, are accurate indicators for whether an individual needs to visit a clinic for further testing. The youth center offers pre- and post-counseling for each person tested, a process that Schwartz said takes about 20 minutes per person. With only two testers present and only two hours of scheduled testing, 12 students was all the center was ready to accommodate.

But Tyrone Matthews, Columbia's coordinator of Student Relations, found a list of almost 40 people at a test in fall of 2005, though there is no indication of how many students out of the 40 received testing. Matthews said he was unaware of the testing procedure and history before last week's event and did not find the list until after the Oct. 11 test. He said he went out on a limb with Howard Brown because he had worked with Columbia before.

"This was my first time, I didn't really know what to expect," Matthews, who was hired this fall, said. "Now we've seen everything

and know what could possibly go wrong."

Despite the confusion, the administration sees the current number of students seeking testing as a sign that Critical Encounters' efforts toward AIDS awareness is working.

"With Critical Encounters going on, it's more visible," Matthews said. "It's a good thing on one hand. On the other hand, it's bad that we weren't prepared for the number of students who came."

To be prepared, Columbia is partnering with Working for Togetherness, another local HIV/AIDS awareness organization, to secure a testing Hummer that

will be on campus Nov. 30 and Dec. 1 for World AIDS Day events. Inside the Hummer, students can get oral-swab HIV screenings with results in 20 minutes.

Lott Hill, assistant director for Civic Engagement and co chair of Critical Encounters, said Critical Encounters is working on a website with all the local testing sites for those interested in additional opportunities, but said the site won't be up for a few weeks.

In the meantime, Columbia is partnering with the AIDS Foundation of Chicago and 19 other agencies to provide more frequent testing on campus,

ensuring that no students will be turned away.

Schwartz said Howard Brown didn't turn students "away," but that each was referred to alternative testing sites around the city. But students like Holland felt uncomfortable going outside Columbia's campus.

"Getting tested is something you need to build yourself up for," Holland said. "The reason it's at school is because it's convenient and in a comfortable setting. To get turned away after mental preparation like that just kind of sucks."

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Big Mouth open mic night



Keith Bishton/The Chronicle

Big Mouth emcee "L" walks through the crowd and interacts with Dana Hamilton while he warms up the audience for Columbia's monthly open mic night.

The Music Center of Columbia College Chicago 1014 S. Michigan at 11th St.

Concert Hall Events

Monday October 23
Blues Ensemble Recital
12:30 PM

Tuesday October 24
Reggie Benjamin in Concert
12:30 PM

Reggie Benjamin Workshop
1:30 PM

Wednesday October 25
Student Jazz Trio Concert
12:30 PM

Thursday October 26
Jazz Gallery in the Lobby
12:30 PM

Friday October 27
Classical Performers International
Latino Symphonic Festival
7:00 PM
(For tickets call 312-431-1330)

All events are free. Unless otherwise noted
For more info: 312/344-6300

MAKE IT A HABIT. PITCH IN.

for more information contact recycling@colum.edu

COLUMBIA COLLEGE RECYCLING PROGRAM

we now recycle
paper, glass,
aluminum, plastic
look for recycling centers
throughout campus

Columbia
COLLEGE CHICAGO

dceo
CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT & CLIMATE

SPRING 2007

It's almost time to REGISTER!

Your registration time slot for the Spring semester can be obtained by going to the Register for Classes screen on OASIS (the Students tab, CX- Student Enrollment Portlet, Register for Classes). Set the Current Option Setting to Spring 2007. Time slots are based on the total of your cumulative earned and in-progress credit hours. An e-mail with your registration time slot, and other registration information will also be sent.

Registration time slots do not apply to graduate students. All continuing graduate students register beginning November 6.

Your OASIS e-mail login format is as follows:

Firstname.Lastname

Example: Joseph.Smith would be your full e-mail login

Your e-mail password is the same as your original default OASIS password (until YOU change it). Remember, changing your password in OASIS does NOT change your e-mail password, and vice versa. If you have problems logging into your e-mail account, please contact the Student OASIS Help Line at 312.344.7788.

Continuing degree-seeking undergraduate registration begins

Monday, November 6

Open Registration, (all students including degree-seeking & students at large) begins Saturday, January 13

The above time slots will remain open for registration until Saturday, January 27 at Midnight (CST).

Orientation for new freshman and transfer students will be in the week of January 8.

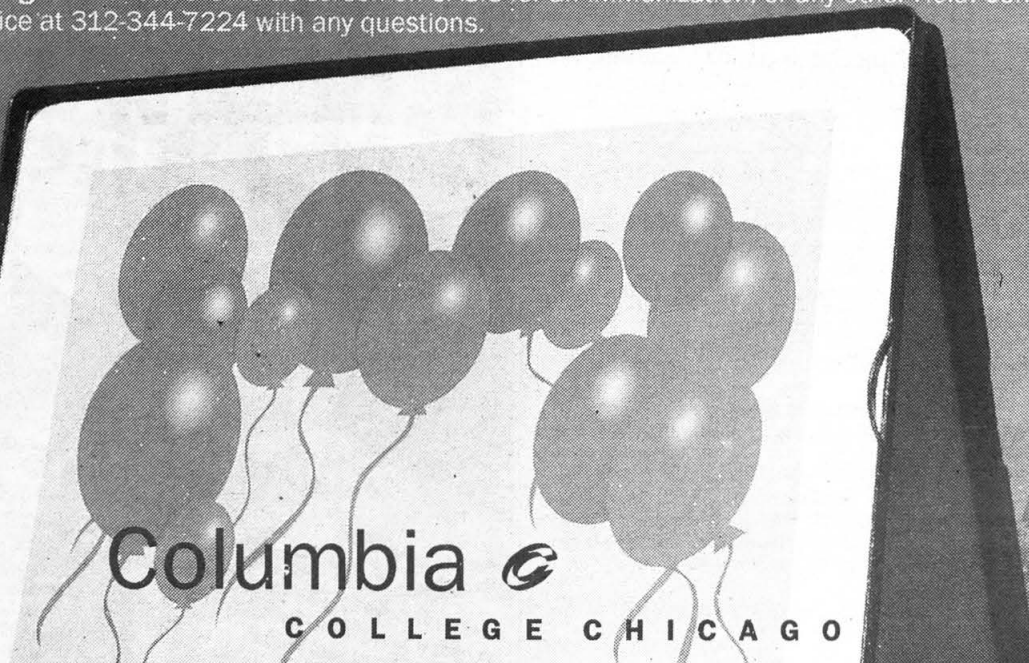
Students who are not current on their balance will be restricted from registering. Log into OASIS to check your balance on your Course and Fee Statement, or your registration hold status on Student Profile - Holds. If you have questions regarding your account balance, or need to review your options to resolve your account, please contact Student Financial Services toll-free Help Line at 1-866-705-0200.

- Check with your major department to determine if faculty advising is required. If so meet with a faculty advisor before your registration time or as soon as possible.
- You will be required to update your Emergency Contact information before you can register. You can also check and update your other addresses.

Students who do not have a complete immunization record on file with the Records Office will not be allowed to register. Check the Holds screen on OASIS for an immunization, or any other Hold. Contact the Records Office at 312-344-7224 with any questions.

create...
change

Photo by Bryan Serafini



Center: Property located in industrial area

Continued from Front Page

Berg believes Columbia's reputation can change with the college's future plans to construct other facilities.

"What that means is we're not recognizable, and I think a new building, the Media Production Center, is going to be important to helping establish our identity in the South Loop," Berg said. "It's important that the new building be innovative and fresh, just like Columbia is."

The city of Chicago currently owns the empty lot at 1632 S. State St. Since the property is located in an industrial area, officials from the city and college agreed that it would be an ideal location for the two-floor Media Production Center.

"It makes no sense to build a two-story building right in the heart of our campus, because property values are way more expensive," Berg said.

Originally college officials believed the Media Production Center would need to be constructed off cam-

pus at a satellite area.

By moving a number of classes and creating new facilities in the Media Production Center, space will be freed up in other buildings, allowing for more classrooms.

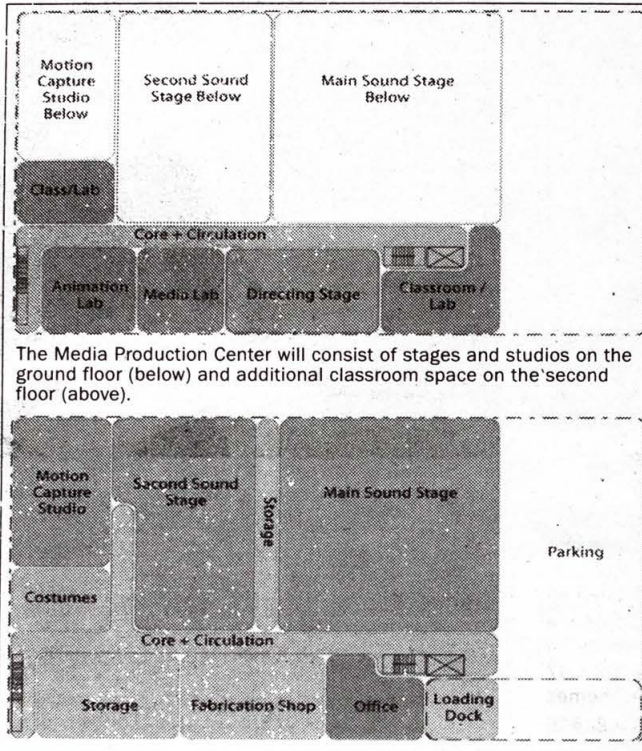
Although the Media Production Center will be located a few blocks south of campus, officials and students don't think the distance will be a problem.

Sharon Szalkowski, a senior television major, agrees. Although

she will have graduated by the time the Media Production Center is completed, she said she would be happy to walk a few extra blocks south, even though she likes the college's current television facilities.

"We can always use more space," she said. "It's obviously good that we'll get a whole other building."

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Courtesy Columbia's Master Plan

Recycling: Program receives mixed reviews

Continued from Front Page

their items in the correct recycling containers.

"Each container is clearly marked: Blue is for paper; green, plastics; gray, cans and glass," Wawrzaszek said. "We tried to make it as easy as possible for people to participate."

According to Wawrzaszek, paper cannot be recycled if it is contaminated with garbage, and when other items are mixed in with recyclables, they need to be sorted.

"It makes the job messier and sometimes defeats the purpose of recycling at all," Wawrzaszek said. "So we're all about telling the Columbia community to sort your recycling in the correct bins and to place trash in its own bin—no mixing."

Joanne Harding, who oversees recycling in the office of Facilities and Operations, said she's received positive feedback from students, faculty and staff.

"The program is going great," she said. "The containers are being filled, and we're reducing the amount of trash going into landfills."

Columbia can monitor its

recycling progress in each building through monthly statements released by Recycling Services, Inc. The reports list the total volume in pounds of items collected per month, the number of trees saved, water conserved and cubic yard of materials saved from landfills.

During the month of August, more than 8,000 pounds of unsorted office paper was recycled along with nearly 100 pounds of corrugated containers in the South Wabash Building, 623 S. Wabash Ave. All recycling efforts translated into 69 trees saved, 28,550 gallons of water conserved and more than 20 cubic yards of materials were kept from piling up in landfills.

"If we get support from the department heads, faculty and staff, it should be a no-brainer for our students and visitors to participate in the program."

—John Wawrzaszek, supervisor for the student recycling program

The true test of the program's success will come in the September and October reports, Harding said. The past two months' reports will also include

statistics on glass, plastic and metals, and now that classes are in session, a greater number of people use the receptacles.

"We need the up-and-ups to take notice of what we are trying to start here," Wawrzaszek said. "If we get support from the department heads, faculty and staff, it should be a no-brainer for our students and visitors to participate in the program."

amaurer@chroniclemail.com

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September 15, 2006 - April 1, 2007



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A Plant's Eye View of the World**
Saturday, November 11, 2 p.m.

Meet Michael Pollan, author of the best selling book *The Botany of Desire: A Plant's Eye View of the World*. This book is a complex examination of the relationship between humans and plants and our dependency on each other.

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This exhibition and its North American tour were developed by The Field Museum, Chicago, in partnership with The Vereinigung zur Förderung der Genomforschung, Vienna, Austria, and The Mendel Museum, Brno, Czech Republic.

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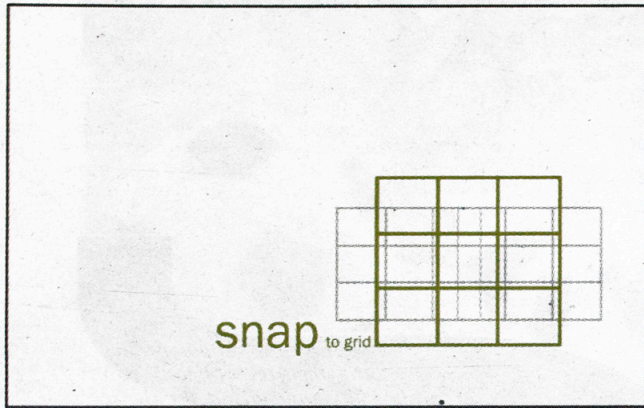
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**ALBERT P. WEISMAN MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP
EXHIBITION, OCTOBER 9 - NOVEMBER 17, 2006**
RECEPTION: OCTOBER 26, 2006, 5-7PM *This week!*
BEST OF SHOW PRESENTATIONS: 5:30PM

The Albert P. Weisman Memorial Scholarship Fund was established in 1974 to encourage both undergraduate and graduate Columbia College Chicago students to complete projects in all fields of communication. With projects spanning 10 disciplines from 47 artists, this year's exhibition cuts a creative swath across themes as divergent as the business of dying, professional wrestling, and synesthetic experiences.

C33 GALLERY, 33 E Congress Avenue,
HOURS: 9 AM - 7 PM MONDAY - THURSDAY AND 9 AM - 5 PM ON FRIDAY

SNAP TO GRID, OCTOBER 20 - NOVEMBER 10, 2006
RECEPTION: OCTOBER 24, 5-7PM *This week!*

CURATED BY TRACY TAYLOR, ALYSIA KAPLAN, AND MICHELLE WASSON

Snap to Grid is an exhibition conceived of and juried by three Chicago artists who currently teach digital media in Chicago's premiere college institutions- Columbia College and The School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Envisioned as an exhibition opportunity for students who currently use digital media as a tool in their creative process, the jurors selected artwork directly from their departments by students whose work exhibits exemplary craft and thought-provoking ideas.

GLASS CURTAIN GALLERY
1104 S WABASH AVENUE. HOURS: 10 AM - 5 PM TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY AND
FRIDAY AND 10 AM - 7 PM ON MONDAY AND THURSDAY

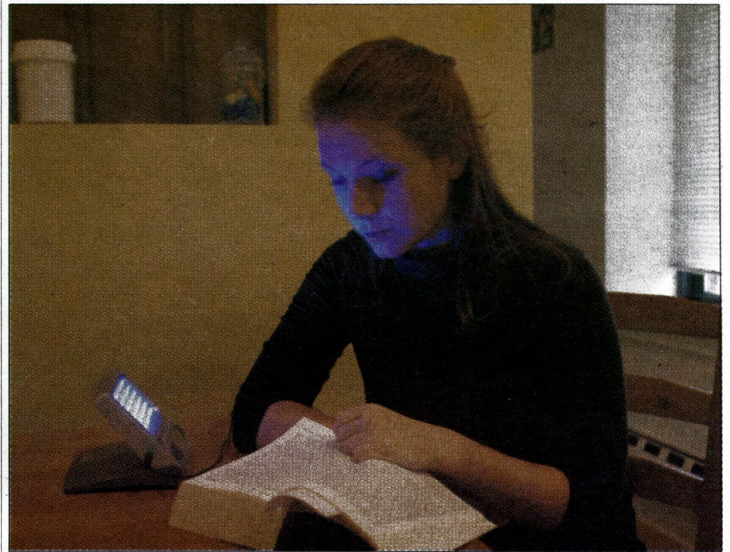
CELIA HERRERA RODRIQUEZ
A PRAYER TO THE MOTHER WATERS FOR PEACE
OCTOBER 12 - NOVEMBER 8, 2006

In conjunction with the Columbia College Chicago FOCO Festival, The Glass Curtain Gallery presents the installation and performance *A Prayer to the Mother Waters for Peace* by Celia Herrera Rodriguez.

A Prayer for the Mother Waters for Peace thoughtfully addresses issues of economics, war and ecology. This multi-media installation and performance will be determined by the collaborative efforts of Celia Herrera Rodriguez, students of Columbia College Chicago and guest performers. On October 12, the exhibition will debut with an elaborate, multimedia ceremonial blessing using water collected from areas of conflict across the globe.

cspaces.colum.edu

A real life case of the 'winter blues'



Michael Jarecki/The Chronicle

Julie Berndsen, a senior television major, reads Miguel de Cervantes' 'Don Quixote' while using her mood relief light. The blue light is used to help her seasonal affective disorder.

Seasonal affective disorder hits home

By Jenn Zimmerman
Assistant Campus News Editor

It's a cold, rainy, dark October day, the worst kind of day for the 22-year-old television major. The sunlight peeks in and out of the clouds, but for most of the day the streets around Columbia are crowded with students bundled up in winter coats and hiding under a sea of umbrellas.

Julie Berndsen suffers from Seasonal Affective Disorder, a disease that more than 10 million Americans suffer from, according to Heather Kobb, a spokesperson for the National Mental Health Association. To some like Berndsen, October means more than just the leaves changing—it means their illness returns.

According to the National Organization of Seasonal Affective Disorder, SAD is a form of winter depression that affects people between the months of late September until April. Since the daylight hours are shorter, depression occurs because of a biochemical imbalance in the brain that can be stabilized by exposure to more sunlight.

A couple years ago Berndsen said she started noticing a change in her mood. Feeling depressed, she labeled herself with a case of the "winter blues" and turned to her parents for help. Having some knowledge of SAD, Berndsen took the advice of her parents and turned to a therapist for help.

"I grew up as a lifeguard and was out in the sun all day," Berndsen said. "I noticed in the winter months I felt down."

Her therapist recommended using a lightbox, which consists of a light bulb that gives off UV rays similar to the sun. Berndsen said she hasn't noticed much of an improvement but doesn't want to risk what would happen if she didn't have it.

"Whether it does anything or not I don't know, but I figure I'll give it a shot," she said. "I think if I didn't have it could be worse, but it's not some dramatic [difference]."

Kobb said people who suffer from SAD won't start seeing symptoms until their college years. However, with the darker months approaching, she said treatment could be as easy as turning to someone's own

backyard.

"Just getting some sunlight in your system and exercising [can help]," Kobb said.

Kobb said that being exposed to UV rays kicks in the amount of melatonin in the brain that in turn can help fight off the feelings of depression. With sunny days not always guaranteed, she said that exercise will also help produce more endorphins which can improve someone's mood.

Marsha Morris, a licensed clinical social worker at Columbia's Counseling Services, said that she believes SAD is an increasingly critical disease.

"It is becoming more serious," Morris said. "It brings about depression and you need therapy or medication."

Morris said anti-depressants are an option for those diagnosed with SAD, but the major difference between SAD and other forms of depression is that anti-depressants are only taken during the winter months.

With the holiday months creeping up and finals following closely behind midterms, Morris said it is common for students to start feeling overwhelmed even if they don't suffer from SAD.

"Everyone is supposed to be happy and joyful [around the holiday season]," Morris said. "People are let down."

With some students not being able to go home for the holidays and those who have a lost someone close to them, the winter months often remind them of who is not there with them to help celebrate, thus triggering feelings of being alone.

Berndsen offered some suggestions for those whose suffer from SAD:

"Take time for yourself," Berndsen said. "Or anytime you see light hang out by it, relax."

Free counseling services are available for all Columbia students at the Residence Center, 731 S. Plymouth Court. However Morris said that the first option students should always turn to is their support system of family and friends.

jzimmerman@chroniclemail.com

SYMPTOMS OF SAD

- A desire to oversleep and difficulty staying awake, but in some cases disturbed sleep and early morning wakening
- Feeling fatigue and an inability to carry out normal routine
- A craving for carbohydrates and sweet foods, usually resulting in weight gain

- Feelings of misery, guilt and loss of self-esteem, sometimes hopelessness and despair, sometimes apathy and loss of feelings

- Irritability and desire to avoid social contact
- A tension and inability to tolerate stress
- A decreased interest in sex and physical contact
- Extremes of mood and short periods of hypomania in spring and autumn

Joshua Covarrubias/The Chronicle

CAMPUS INTRAMURAL UPDATE



U.S. Cellular® gets me... so I can always get the score.

Columbia Renegades VS Roosevelt Lakers!

Come watch the first ever Baseball game between the Roosevelt University Lakers and your Columbia College Renegades! This game will be played at Alexian field, a minor league baseball field!

Directions - Take the 10:30 a.m. Chicago to Elgin Metra train from Union Station to the Schaumburg stop. The train drops you off right at the field!

When - October 28th at 1:00 PM

Where - Alexian Field, in Schaumburg, IL



★ CURRENT SPORTS

Baseball - Cycling - Soccer - Wrestling
Cross Country - Capoeira - Men's Lacrosse
Men's Basketball

★ CURRENT SPORTS INTERESTS

Tennis - Fast-Pitch Softball - 16" Softball
Volleyball - Women's Basketball - Kickball
Flag Football - Raquetball - Women's Lacrosse
Ultimate Frisbee - Swimming - Dance - Diving
Cheerleading - Rugby - Paintball - Gymnastics
Water Polo

<http://ATHLETICS.COLUM.EDU>

★ FITNESS AND INTRAMURALS

Free fitnessclasses for Columbia students held at the fitness center located at Roosevelt University - Marvin Moss Center at 425 S. Wabash, 4th Floor.

*Abs- Thursdays 6-6:30pm

*Cardio Kickbox- Thursdays 6:30-7:00pm

*Aikido- Thursday 6-8pm & Saturday 3-5pm

*Vinyasa Yoga - This is a 4 class series. Classes will be held every Wednesday between October 4th and October 25th.

★ ANNOUNCEMENTS

Baseball

The baseball team will be facing off against Roosevelt University. This game will be played at the minor league stadium, Alexian field in Schaumburg, IL.

Soccer

Open practices are held every Tuesday & Thursday at 5:00PM in Grant (Columbus & Balbo).

Cross-Country

Cross Country meets at 30W building, on the corner of Wabash and Congress. Monday-Friday at 6:30 a.m. to run.

Gymnastics

If you are interested in Gymnastics, they have practices EVERY Friday from 3-5pm at the Roosevelt Gym, located at 425 S. Wabash, 4th floor.

Renegades COLUMBIA COLLEGE CHICAGO

Men's Basketball

Every Tuesday and Thursday Men's Basketball meets at Roosevelt Gym at 7:00 P.M.

Softball

If you want to play Softball this year then show up at the Conaway Center located on the first floor at 1104 S. Wabash on October 24th @ 6:00 P.M.

Men's Lacrosse

Men's Lacrosse meets every Friday in Grant Park (Balbo & Congress) at 3:00 p.m. If you are interested then simply show up!

Capoeira

Capoeira is a Brazilian Dance/Martial Art. They have practices on Tuesday and Friday from 5-7pm at Roosevelt's Gym.

Contact the Renegades - 1104 S. Wabash Lower Level Office A - 312-344-6917 - ATHLETICS@COLUM.EDU

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Columbia grad, former PI writes novel

Author receives PI training to improve writing, add details

By Kristin Kaller
Staff Writer

A successful novel requires an interesting storyline, strong voice and believable characters. In addition to tapping into creativity, a writer must do his research.

This is what Sean Chercover did. After he graduated with a Bachelor of Arts from Columbia in 1991, he enrolled at the American Security Training Institute and went on to become a private investigator in Chicago and New Orleans. He did this not because he wanted to solve crimes or catch bad guys, but to know more about how the profession works and get more inspiration for his writing. Chercover always had an interest in writing crime novels and wanted real-life experience.

This led him to write what is soon to be his first published novel.

Big City, Bad Blood is a story about a disillusioned journalist who becomes a private detective and ends up becoming entangled with the police, the FBI and the mob.

"It's not a mystery, you know who the bad guy is," Chercover said.

Those who knew Chercover in college would not have expected him to become a private investigator.

"When I heard that he was becoming a PI, I thought we lost him," said Fred Gardaphe, former Columbia English professor of Chercover, author and director of Italian-American studies at the State University of New York at Stony Brook.

"I couldn't imagine him as a PI, but now that I look back on it in retrospect, it makes sense," Gardaphe said. "He was always very observant, with great descriptions of people or with what somebody was doing."

Life as a private investigator was nothing permanent or glamorous for Chercover.

"You tend to piss people off,"

Chercover said. "I found it to be fairly depressing because everyone I came in contact with was at a low point in their lives. After a few years, I felt I got what I needed out of it and moved on."

Gardaphe was one of the first

"Fiction writing gives you the latitude to talk about what's going on in society."

—Sean Chercover, Columbia alumnus and author

to read Chercover's writing and became a mentor to him. Chercover said he didn't have the guts back then to share his writing with many people, but Gardaphe encouraged him and saw the potential in him as a writer.

At that time, Chercover was writing nonfiction and opinion pieces, plays and scripts. He was also one of the first students to take courses designed by Gardaphe and his English Department colleagues who

broke away from those in the Fiction Writing Department. Chercover didn't take a single fiction writing class during his time in school.

"I thought about taking some fiction writing classes, but there was a lot of rivalry between the English and Fiction Writing Departments at the time," Chercover said. "My English teachers kind of pushed me away from going into those classes."

Chercover still writes documentaries and children's shows at a Toronto television station. He splits his time between Toronto, where his family and the station are, and Chicago, where he gets most of his inspiration for his novels. He enjoys writing documentaries because he learns about many different subjects, but feels he gets more out of fiction.

"Fiction writing gives you the latitude to talk about what's going on in society," Chercover said.

He believes his novel is more than just a crime thriller, but a

modern social statement.

The novel is all fiction, and the main character in his novel is not his alter ego, he said.

"It's not fruitful to write characters who are just like you," he said. "I also like to explore who I might have been if I had different values."

Chercover signed a two-book deal with William Morrow and his second book is due out in January 2008. It took him three and a half years to write the story and four months after that to get an agent.

His agent wanted to see him give the main character a little more depth so that readers could connect with him more emotionally. He rewrote it in two months, and a few more months later he had a deal. The second novel will be a sequel to the first, with the same main character, and is still in the works.

Big City, Bad Blood, which is due out Jan. 9

chronicle@colum.edu

Passion for motorcycles becomes a job for grad

By Rashauna C. Hull
Staff Writer

The nation's premier motorcycle radio talk show, "Open Road Radio," has opened the door of opportunity for its founder, producer and host, Gina Woods, a Columbia alumna who has proven that following your dreams can lead to unimagined success.

"Open Road Radio" was founded in 1997 while Woods was working at another Chicago radio station, WVVX 103.1 FM.

After eight months of surveying people on the streets of Chicago on their thoughts of a radio motorcycle talk show, Woods was offered her own radio show by the operations instructor at WVVX.

Woods, who has been riding motorcycles for almost 20 years, retailed with Harley Davidson and has done several runway motorcycle trade shows.

While attending the University of Texas as a radio major she had her first child and decided to raise her in her hometown of Chicago.

Woods moved back to Chicago with little thought of going back to school until she heard about the radio program at Columbia. She was so impressed by what the program had to offer that she decided to attend Columbia as a communications major, which led her into a career in radio.

Woods was a full-time student and a single mother in her early 30s, making her the oldest in most of her classes. In addition, she worked two part-time jobs to help put her daughter through school.

"Gina always gave 150 percent," said Christine Moran, performing radio formats teacher and mentor to Woods. "She has the necessary desire, drive and work ethic that it requires."

Woods believes that she benefited from Columbia's hands-on

Tickling the ivories



Mauricio Rubio/The Chronicle

Chuchito Valdez, an Afro-Cuban musician, performs at the Music Center, 1014 S. Michigan Ave., on Oct. 18. Valdez participated in the a workshop that taught people about the roots of Afro-Cuban music. Valdez was born in Havana, Cuba, and performed piano with the Cuban band Irakere for two years.

radio program and working with actual professionals in the field. Her enthusiasm about radio, networking and building strong relationships with her teachers enabled her to find a job in Chicago.

In 1992, Woods began working for US 99.5, where she had her most beneficial radio experience. She also learned that with positive learning experiences come negative critiques.

"One program director told me that I was never going to make it because he did not like my voice," Woods said.

Criticism only encouraged Woods. She began working at WVVX as a board engineer in 1995, where "Open Road Radio" was born. Two years later she moved to WCBR and then WJJK.

WJJK was not satisfying enough for Woods. Her audience was small due to the station's low

wattage and she had to pay for her show to be on air.

"Open Road Radio" premiered on WCKG in 2000. Similar to WVVX, Woods had to pay for airtime—almost \$1,000 per hour.

Woods searched for greater opportunities for her talk show.

"I am amazed at how my career has turned out. Nobody ever thought a motorcycle radio show would go this far."

—Gina Woods, Columbia alumna and radio show host

She contacted several radio stations in the Chicagoland area. In the midst of her searching, she landed a job with WIIL Rock 95.1 FM in April.

After 10 years on the airwaves,

"Open Road Radio" has cruised onto Next Media's WIIL Rock 95.1 FM. The show hits Chicago airwaves every Sunday from 11 a.m. to noon.

"['Open Road Radio'] is one of a kind," said Patrick McDorman, Woods' longtime friend, who assists her. "She is the first to have a motorcycle show and a lot of other stations have tried to copy it since."

Topics such as the latest product reviews, insurance, tech tips, rally events, travel bits and race results can be heard on the program. In addition, interviews with motorcycle riding celebrities such as Evel Knievel's son, Robbie Knievel, Jay Leno, and interviews with motorcycle manufacturers are also featured.

At WIIL Rock, "Open Road Radio" has gained more listeners, sponsorship and has become a

larger part of the radio industry.

"I am amazed at how my career has turned out," Woods said. "Nobody ever thought a motorcycle radio show would go this far; we have been on for almost 10 years."

Woods now has two co-hosts, National Motorcycle Hall-of-Famer Jo Giovannoni and motorcyclist Robert Garbner, who enjoy doing radio with her and appreciate her work ethic.

If there is one piece of advice Woods would give to students who aspire to be in the radio field, it would be to stay focused and determined.

"Always follow your dreams," Woods said. "No one thought I would ever make it this far and I did."

chronicle@colum.edu

The Portfolio Center, Advising Center and Alumni Relations present:

GO-GO GRADUATE SCHOOL

::Visiting Programs Include::

Friday, Oct. 27th - 10am-3pm

Conaway Center, 1st Floor, 1104 S. Wabash

Getting in takes more than a transcript and an essay. Graduate programs from around the nation will gather to give you advice on submitting portfolio and application materials. Whether you're ready to apply or just thinking about grad school, representatives from our guest schools will guide you on building an impressive application package.

Oh, and don't forget to bring your portfolio-in-progress, reel or work samples.

Your mom would be so proud...

Check www.colum.edu/portfolio for updates about visiting schools & schedule.

10am-3pm----- One on One Admission Advising
10am-10:45am----- Applications "How To"
11am-11:45am----- Visual Arts Admissions Packages
Noon-12:45pm----- Film & Television Admissions Packages
1pm-1:45pm----- Submitting Digital Samples*

(*Note: This panel is subject to change)

::Schedule::

Adler School of Professional Psychology

American Film Institute

Art Institute of Boston/Lesley

Art Institute of Chicago

Boston University

California College of the Arts

Carnegie Mellon University

Chapman University

Columbia College Chicago

John Marshall Law School

Maine College of Art & Design

Memphis College of Art

Miami Ad School

Minneapolis College of Art

Mount Mary College

Parsons New School of Design

Rochester Institute of Technology

Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College

San Francisco Art Institute

Savannah College of Art & Design

Tyler School of Art

University of the Arts

Wayne State University

Show Off Portfolio Reviews...

One part mentorship, one part talent search, Show Off is a program that brings artists, professionals and students together for portfolio reviews and advising. Registration required. Students should call 312-344-7280 for more information.

October 24th / 7pm

WUNDERMAN

Wunderman Chicago is part of a global award-winning promotional agency whose clients include Microsoft (Xbox), Burger King, Vodafone and Coke. **Art Director Kristine Rohl '03** will visit to review creative advertising portfolios. Open to Juniors, Seniors and Spring '06 graduates.

October 26th / 1pm

PIE TOWN PRODUCTIONS

Producer **Kenneth Arkow** of Pie Town Productions will be here to meet TV and Film Juniors, Seniors, grad students and spring '05 grads with a working reel (or a DVD sampler of their work) in cinematography, videography and directing (...and producing too). Pie Town produces the popular cable programs *Design on a Dime*, *House Hunters*, *24 Hour Design* and *Rachel Ray's Tasty Travels* among others. Kenneth will give feedback to students on their samples and is actively looking for Direc-

November 2nd / 2pm

LISA BOYLE GALLERY

Lisa Boyle of the Lisa Boyle Gallery will visit Columbia to meet aspiring artists, view their work (and work in progress) and advise them on practices of preparing work for gallery representation. Lisa Boyle displays work in a variety of media (paint, pencil, photo and sculpture) and within a variety of styles - with an eye towards emerging talent.

November 7th / 10am

i4 DESIGN

i4 design is an award-winning branding and package design agency effectively reaching consumers by stimulating emotional experiences. Clients include Kellogg's, Quaker, Philip Morris, Keebler, Ocean Spray among others. Design Director **Amy Kosnick** will review design portfolios and is seeking talent for a spring package design intern. Open to product and graphic design juniors, seniors and Spring '06 grads.

Upcoming programs....

Learn concrete tips from professionals on ways to improve the development and presentation of your body of work.

Oct 30th @ 7pm - Too Flashy? Showcasing you interactive talent. Open to all current students and spring '06 graduates.

Nov 2nd @ 10am - The Ins and Outs of Art & Design Portfolios: Selection, Editing, Sequencing & Presentation. Open to all current students and spring '06 graduates.

Nov 7th @ 5pm - Webfolios: Choosing a gallery and menu style. Open to all current students and alumni.

Nov 8th @ 5pm - Webfolios: Integrating a blog into your online portfolio. Open to all current students and alumni.

Nov 9th @ 5pm - Webfolios: digitization and compression of video for the web. Open to all current students and alumni.

All events take place at the Portfolio Center, located at 523 S. Wabash, Room 307, unless otherwise listed. Visit www.colum.edu/portfolio and check out the "Portfolio Reviews and Events" section for details.

PORTFOLIO CENTER

Caribbean author discusses books, life

By Steve Yaccino
Assistant Campus Editor

At the climax of Columbia's eighth-annual Creative Nonfiction Week Oct. 19, Jamaica Kincaid stood tall at the podium inside the Film Row Cinema on the top floor of the 1104 Center, 1104 S. Wabash Ave. Her hair was pulled back beneath a white bandanna as she read excerpts from her books *Talk Stories* and *My Brother* in an elegant West Indies accent.

Born and raised in poverty on the Caribbean island of Antigua, Elaine Potter Richardson, who later adopted the penname Jamaica Kincaid, moved to the States at the age of 17 to nanny for a wealthy American family.

She began reading at an early age and always enjoyed writing. Kincaid began writing and was soon discovered by New Yorker columnist George Trow, who helped land her a job on the magazine's staff. Her many novels and nonfiction narratives describe her childhood, homeland and family with beauty and rawness. She now teaches a creative writing course at Harvard University.

The Chronicle: Why did you

change your name?

When I started to write, I didn't want my parents to know I had embarked on this really unheard of thing. No one in the history of the place I come from wrote. I was afraid they would laugh at me. I thought I would fail at it, but that didn't stop me from trying.

How did you choose Jamaica Kincaid?

It was done lightly, but it took a lot of time. I had many combinations of islands and Scottish-sounding names. It was quite fun.

Do you think creative nonfiction has a distinct purpose in society, besides entertainment?

I hope so. I mean, even entertainment can serve a higher purpose. Well, even my fiction is very much informed by real things. Often things in my fiction turn up in my nonfiction and vice versa. It's just a question of change of direction for me. If I'm writing a piece of fiction, I manipulate the facts to suit certain emotional ends I have. If I'm writing nonfiction, I very much insist that I hew to some realistic, actionable truth. I never associate either form with entertaining or

not. I'm one of those ridiculously constantly serious people.

Is there an overall theme to your work?

I'm not conscious of it when I'm doing it. I'm only conscious of it when someone points it out to me, and I wouldn't want to be conscious of it myself. There's some emotional quality I'm sure, but I'm not aware of it; if I was I'd immediately get rid of it. I don't like the familiar in my writing. Every time I write a set of things I want to believe I'm doing something new, writing like I've never written before.

Do you find it difficult to balance writing structure and emotions when approaching a personal piece?

It seems to me that in writing, there are all sorts of tensions, things that are opposed to each other, in conflict with each other, that a writer has to have. You have to know everything on the one hand, and you have to know nothing on the other hand, and in between you have to write. If you think of it, the anxiety, the unease, the discomfort, the unsettlingness in those two conflicting states, that's what I write

around. So is it emotional? Yes, but it's not crippling.

Tell me about the book you read from on Oct. 19.

I started out intent to read the book I wrote while traveling in Nepal collecting flower seeds. But here I am in Chicago. I wrote a book about my brother dying of AIDS and found out about some crucial information about his life in Chicago right around the time he died. So, looking out my hotel window, I was reminded of it. I thought I would read my book about my brother. It was a very extraordinary moment in my life, and I have these very complicated feelings about Chicago because of that.

Tell me about hiking in the Himalayas and your book *Among Flowers*. Where did that idea stem from?

It comes from my curiosity. I became a gardener just around the time I was a mother, and one thing led to another. I became interested in catalogues that the flowers come from. Then I became interested in the people who grew the plants that I could order through the catalogues, and then I got interested in where they got the seeds. So I traveled around the foothills of the Himalayas collecting seeds for my flower garden.

And the book is about your journey?

The book is about that journey, exactly. There's not much to say about it, I was quite in the state of terror at the time. For one thing, I was in a strange place, I had just gotten a divorce, I had left my son all alone at home. Nepal wasn't strange, it was unbelievable.

I've never seen a landscape like that. Usually a landscape runs horizontal; this ran vertical. You could practically see the sky—it was like a bowl. The nights were unusual, you'd hear silence and the sound of the landscape collapsing because it does collapse a lot in Nepal. It was extraordinary. I sometimes think that all young poets should have this experience. **Why was it so extraordinary?**

I was constantly in a state of nonstop for a week," Dabrowski said. "I love lemon-meringue pie, and a lady from my work gave me a lemon-meringue pie for my

awe and feeling terrified because I was walking on little trees that were no bigger than the palm of my hand, and on the other side was a huge drop. And then I ran into the Maoist guerrillas and there were a couple of times where we thought they would kill us. But to die that way isn't foolish.

I want to be very careful about the way I die, so for instance, I'll never take a tour of the Grand Canyon in a helicopter; I think that's a very silly way to die. Falling off a precipice while looking for the seed of a rare magnolia would be all right.

Which one of your books is your favorite and why?

The one I just finished writing. The one I'm writing is always my favorite, then when I'm done it's no longer my favorite.

What is your new book about?

Well I can't tell you. Because then I wouldn't be able to write it. But I don't really read my own work or think about it too much. I bear it in my mind so much that when I'm done with it, it's enough.

Do you think it's necessary or limiting for students to study writing in college?

I don't think it's either. Writing is such a peculiar thing, you can study it, you can not study it, it depends on what suits you. I would have made a terrible student, but if I would have had the opportunity, I would have taken it. It just all depends, and the climate you all are in where the outlets for writing are so limited because you don't have magazine and newspapers to just peel out into. The avenues for learning these things by doing them are not as possible. It's probably unlikely that you could walk into the New Yorker and become a staff writer.

If you could give young writers any advice, what would it be?

Read. Read everything, even if it's the instructions on the bottle of ketchup.

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Andrew Nelles/The Chronicle

Jamaica Kincaid spoke about her brother, who died of AIDS, at the Film Row Cinema in the 1104 Center, 1104 S. Wabash Ave., on Oct. 19, as a part of Creative Nonfiction Week

Lunden: Anchor gives internship advice

Continued from Page 3

their homes, lives, bank accounts."

Lunden also had a lot of advice to pass on to the young students in the audience, saying that every little job can have importance.

"I have a motto for life: Whenever you're asked to do something, just say yes and figure out how to do it," Lunden said.

Lunden also said it was important to make connections with others in the industry and valuable contributions when working at an internship.

"I would tell every intern who came to work for me that they can make the job as big or as small as they wanted it to be," Lunden said. "If you make yourself valuable [to a production] they can't afford to lose you. Any college student should understand you need to use every connection available to you because it helps you get on the playing field, learn how the game works, the secrets, the other players and they get to know you."

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Weight loss: Student addicted to serious diet

Continued from Page 3

weight loss.

Klein hadn't seen David Dabrowski since June of 2005, and Klein, now Dabrowski's fiancé, said she did not know he was on a diet when they had their first date.

"He looked so incredibly different," Klein said. "I didn't even recognize him."

When David Dabrowski would hit a goal weight, even after celebrating his 100-pound weight loss over New Year's Eve of 2005, he said he always wanted to keep going.

"Every time I hit a goal weight, I would think, 'I've got to lose more,'" David Dabrowski said. "Once I got around 210 [pounds], my mom started getting mad at me."

By May of 2006, he was down to 180 pounds, exactly half of what he weighed a year earlier. He later weighed as little as 166 pounds when he said he started agreeing with his parents that he needed to stop.

"Just looking in the mirror, I don't look anything like I started," David Dabrowski said. "But when I look in the mirror, I don't see skin and bones like everyone is always telling me."

Currently at 180 pounds, a weight he said he is happy with, David Dabrowski said he now can see how some people could develop anorexia or other eating disorders.

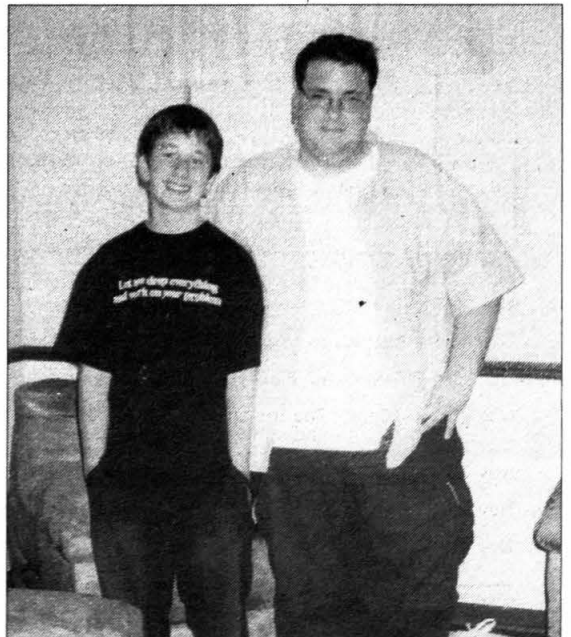
"Once you get into the rhythm, you don't want to stop," he said. "What you see isn't always what others see."

Among all of the benefits David Dabrowski said he has reaped from losing the weight, he said the best part is being able to shop in normal stores.

"I had always shopped at big and tall stores," David Dabrowski said. "I always thought, 'If I could just shop at Old Navy.' I needed a jacket sometime in May, and I picked up a large from Old Navy. When I tried it on, it was too big. I made such a big deal out of it."

Although David Dabrowski has yet to have cheated much on his diet, he said he still has some weaknesses for his favorite foods.

"I would kill someone to be able to eat strawberry ice cream



Courtesy David Dabrowski

At his highest weight David Dabrowski (right) weighed 360 pounds.

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PAGE 20





Outgoing Mail

from Brent Steven White

Dear emo kids,

A recent Saturday night of mine consisted of staying at home, drinking a bottle of wine and watching a cheeky chick flick. I had plenty of opportunities to go out with friends and hit some parties, but an undeniable urge to spend the night alone overwhelmed me. I was feeling extra (emo)tional, and I wasn't even drunk yet.

Then it happened. After three or four glasses of some fine pinot noir, a haze swept over me like a cold Chicago wind. My thoughts turned into jelly. My emotions took over. As the sappy movie climaxed, so did my feelings of aloneness. I felt like the main character in every Fall Out Boy or Story of the Year song. Befittingly, I felt ... emo.

My dear misguided emo friends, you know this feeling well: emotional to the point of penning pathetic poetry in your room lit by a few candles. Listening to the stereo play some stupid emocore band whose singer laments about his -losses, which you relate to because,

gosh darn it, life is so hard when you're young, tender and overwhelmed to the point of cutting yourself with razorblades to show off the scars like trophies to your friends who share in your pain because they feel like you.

What's it like staring into a mirror every time you see somebody who dresses the same way you do? Because I'll be honest, I can't help but feel like I'm seeing a copy of a

copy when I see individuals from a particular stereotype who cut and style their hair in the same way, dress themselves similarly, look like half-dead heroin addicts, wear ridiculous amounts of eyeliner, and, perhaps most importantly, listen to atrocious music that's about as profound and meaningful as an MTV reality show.

The thing that annoys me the most about "the emo scene" is that it's completely unoriginal. Music aside, the fashion and culture of it are rooted in the indie and punk scenes. Emo culture steals traits of these two styles and blends them with a person adopting and adhering to an overabundance and unnecessary amount of melodrama and sensitivity. You remind me of a walking, talking, Mexican soap opera.

Of course, we all fall into certain stereotyped groups. And most of us hate being pigeonholed, labeled and thrust into cultural categories—especially if

that category is misunderstood or misconstrued by outsiders. Incidentally, most people consider me to be an indie music geek, when in fact I like a lot of pop, metal and jazz music. A few have even accused me of being an emo, something which I vehemently deny.

Yet here I was: Alone, drunk and on the verge of weeping like a redheaded stepchild who'd just received a brutal beating from one of its parents, and all for no reason. I couldn't help but feel like an overly emotional sissy. A wimp. And it bothered me, so I put on some Dillinger Escape Plan. And I was cured. Music is powerful like that.

But it annoys me that emo takes that power, that substance in music, to an extreme. Bands like My Chemical Romance, The Used, Brand New, Finch and the aforementioned Fall Out Boy capitalize on simulated rebellion and pseudo-angst. It takes feelings all of us have and regurgitates them over music that is far too polished.

And I can't help but wonder who is truly to blame for this modern day epidemic in music—the bands, who are marketed in a way where their image supersedes their music, or the fans, who capitalize on the bogus angst. Emo music sounds like a chorus of crybabies.

But we all cry, and, often times, we let our emotions get the best of us. From time to time, we all wear our emotions on our sleeves. Some of us even stay at home on a Saturday night to drink wine and watch cheeky chick flicks. I guess we all go a little emo sometimes.

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JACKASS OF THE WEEK



MCT

Read My Lips

by Tiffany Breyne



Wrap it for me, baby

I lost my virginity at 19 years old to a guy who said he lost his at 15 years old. Some of my friends are still virgins, and some have been having sex since they first knew what it was. The other day I was trying to think of how I even learned about sex in the first place. I remember being on the bus as a little kid, hearing the word "blowjob" and having no idea what it meant.

See, I never had the sex talk with my parents. Not that most parents go into details about how to give a proper blowjob or go down on a girl till she squeals with pleasure, but I assume most parents do go over the basics with their kids. Maybe my parents were too busy or too embarrassed to discuss what happens when a guy puts his pee-pee into a girl's wee-wee.

I grew up with just my dad from seventh grade on, so I also imagine the pressure a dad must feel to look into his youngest daughter's eyes and talk about such a personal act. Instead, all that I learned came from friends, movies and most importantly, school—they all taught me the basics of everything I

needed to know. There was the fifth grade field trip to the Robert Crown center where, through videos and presentations, we learned all about how babies were made. If watching a woman give birth on a huge screen isn't enough to scare kids into having safe sex, then I don't know what is.

Some years later, there was eighth grade health class, where Mr. Hawkins made the whole class repeat after him: "Penis, penis, penis, vagina, vagina, vagina." That's a day I'll never forget; a bunch of dorky eighth graders giggling and nervously looking around the room as they slowly said the phrase, but avoiding eye contact, because no one wants to look their crush in the eye while mouthing the word "vagina."

As the elections roll around, though, and politicians state their point of view on certain issues, one that I take very seriously is sex education in our schools. Under the current administration, many educational programs teach the abstinence only method, telling kids that the most beneficial way to stay safe is to just not engage in any sexual activity. Wait until marriage, they say, and then you can have all the sex you want. While some may say that's the right answer, I say it's bullshit.

Because of those eerily memorable educational events I had while growing up, I know the importance of using protection every time I have sex. I admit, I have had some slip-ups where the heat of the moment took over and I didn't

make the wisest decisions, but I always take the proper precautions afterward.

Most guys I know don't like to use condoms; they say it takes away from the sensation. I understand, fellas, but think about the somewhat lessened pleasure compared to a lifetime of an STD, or maybe even worse, a baby that needs constant attention. I think the condom outweighs the apparent lack of sensation any day. My new guy knows there's no way we're getting it on unless he wears a condom, and we still have a great time.

In fact, I bought my first pack of condoms when I knew he was probably going to stay at my place and we'd most likely have sex. It was a daunting task since I didn't know which ones to choose—ribbed? Her sensation? Ultra thin? Maybe warming sensation KY jelly to add to the mix? The options were overwhelming, but I felt content with myself as I walked up to the cashier and happily paid for my key to the land of lots of (safe) sex.

Unfortunately, though, many kids nowadays might not know that they have the option to demand protection before having sex or might not know it's completely normal to buy a pack of condoms or birth control. For them, ignorance may be bliss until it lands them a dirty wart or a big belly bump nine months down the line.

Watching my guy reach over to my nightstand for a condom is probably one of the sexiest things ever and just makes me even more excited. I hope the next generation gets to experience the same thrill as they venture into the exciting world of safe sex.

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Here in Chicago it's often hard to tell who rules the road—pedestrians or cars. People jaywalk, cross the street with just seconds to spare before cabs or buses plow into them and cars stubbornly drive while pedestrians still have the walk signal. More often than not, though, cars and walkers manage to get by just fine with a random flick of the middle finger, some swear words and a nice swerve to avoid any dents or legal action.

That hasn't been the case lately. Not to get all serious on everyone, but this week The Chronicle would like to profile a specific kind of jackass. We're talking about the kind that we don't just laugh at, but would rather like to donkey punch, head-butt, scoff at, pinch painfully and spit on: hit-and-run drivers.

On Oct. 15, Theodore Troutman, a 46-year-old Joliet man, was found dead on the street the morning after dying from a hit-and-run incident. The driver has yet to be found. On Oct. 16, Kenneth Junior, a 5-year-old boy, was hit by a car on the South Side that blew a stop sign. He later died. Police continue to search for the driver.

A study done recently by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reported that the number of people killed in a hit-and-run incident has increased by 20 percent since 2000. There's nothing worse than a person who doesn't own up to their crime, and it's a sad story that it happens so often.

The study attributes the big increase in deaths to more distractions and just plain not focusing on the road. Here are some words of wisdom to drivers: Pull your heads out of your asses, and pay more attention. No one wants to end up a killer and a jackass for the rest of his life.

—T. Breyne

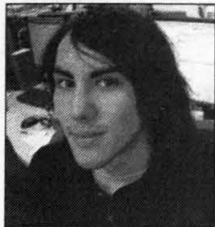
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Ratings Guide

So, is that movie worth watching? That CD worth buying? Count the hearts in each review and use this handy chart to find out.

👉👉👉👉👉	Complete Crap
👉👉👉👉	Download it
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👉👉👉👉	Very Good
👉👉👉👉	Word Up.



Joshua
Covarrubias



Katie
Neville



Jon
Jones

Top 5

Things that fold: It's not just origami and T-shirts anymore. Hopefully one day everything I own will fold into a smaller, more awkward object. My favorite folds so far include my bicycle, cereal bowl and laptop.

Dental floss: I recently started flossing after brushing, and have found it to be a worthwhile effort. It's just like that delicious cigarette after a big meal; it seals the deal. I have never been a smoker, but maybe that's true.

Hypediss.com: This online community has been added to my daily web-surfing pattern. Users post products both new and old for others to "hype" or "diss." It has a breadth of amazing products, and a lot of Nike dunks with ridiculous color-ways.

Blind Willow, Sleeping Woman: This new collection of short stories by Haruki Murakami is the perfect buffer between school and work. The stories are great, but what bumps it into the Top 5 is the cover designed by Chip Kidd.

iTunes 7: Despite the criticism, I can't help but love the new interface every time I open it. The new hierarchy, more white space and flattened feel of it is beautifully done. While I'm in love with Cover Flow, my incomplete collection of album artwork leaves me down in the dumps.

Keggers: My roommates and I threw a kegger on Friday the 13th for our roommate's 21st birthday. Some asshole smashed our albino pumpkin over his head. Someone stole one of our glass collectables. A girl pinched my boyfriend's ass while I was sleeping. KARMA.

Teavana: The fresh tea that is the root of my caffeine addiction and credit card debt.

Getting hit by a utility van: Doesn't that just sound badass? My only injury was a friction-induced burn on my elbow. Although one would assume getting hit by a utility van would be a traumatic experience, it was kind of awesome.

Jonathan Safran Foer: This guy is such a phenomenal author. He wrote *Everything is Illuminated* and *Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close*, which I am currently deeply enthralled in. These are two of the best books I have read in the past year. This duo is perfect to read when you are in a depressed stupor of monotony. They have an ideal balance of content to both help nurture the depression and make you laugh out loud at the ridiculous mores of life. Both cynically examine different qualities of our existence on an extremely micro level.

Elliptical machines: Addiction. The endorphin high I get from "running" is far better than any other form of self-medication that I have prescribed.

Standing in the middle of the sidewalk: When people are trying to get to class or work and other people randomly stop and talk making it impossible to get around them, it puts a smile on my face. Thank you very much.

Wicker Park, my new home away from The Chronicle: There are so many different things to do and bars to go to. Everything is within walking distance. The best part about it, though, is the guy who dances on the corner of North Avenue and Damen Avenue at 2 a.m. He carries an '80s-style boom box and has really sweet moves. I can only sum it up as impressive.

Books or reading in general: It gives me a chance to get away and think of all the things I could be doing with my life. It also gives me a chance to think about what I might do 40 years from now when I get done paying off all of my school loans and am able to do something I enjoy.

City street sweepers: I am happy to know that you, like the post office, will get the job done through rain, sleet or snow, just because more water needs to be put on the ground.

The documentary Pimps Up, Hoes Down: You taught me many things in the long two hours of my life that you wasted. The most important is how NOT to treat women. You also have perhaps the funniest award show of all time, the National Pimp Awards. The prize for winning is a giant chalice, which is gigantically funny.

Exposure



Mauricio Rubio/The Chronicle

Footsteps in the sand have a certain connotation to them. Seeing someone, like this little girl, follow in them can give a quiet feeling of nostalgia. Watching her jump from footstep to footstep can make one smile. She proudly announced that she was going to erase all the previous footprints so that only hers remained. This was taken before a wedding at St. Michaels, a resort along the Chesapeake Bay.

MONDAY / James Blunt and Starsailor play at the Aragon Ballroom, 1106 W. Lawrence Ave. The show starts at 8 p.m. and is \$32.50. Author Todd Dills reads from his book "Songs of the Rapture" at Quincy's, 1854 W. North Ave., at 7 p.m. The event is free. **TUESDAY** / Dating for Nerds at Guthrie's Tavern, 1300 W. Addison St. The event begins at 7 p.m. Admission is \$15 advance, \$20 at the door, and one drink included. The Recording Academy presents "Truth, Lies and Digital Audio: Getting the best out of your digital audio workstation." It takes place at John Buck Lecture Hall, 224 S. Michigan Ave., from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. Admission is free for Recording Academy members, \$30 for non-members. RSVP at 312-786-1121. **WEDNESDAY** / DJ Logic plays at Abbey Pub, 3420 W. Grace St. The show starts at 9 p.m. and is \$20. Participate in an evening of flamenco music and dance at Old Town School of Folk Music, 4544 N. Lincoln Ave. The program begins at 8:30 p.m. Admission is free. **THURSDAY** / The Hold Steady performs at The Metro, 3730 N. Clark St. The show starts at 8 p.m., 18+. Tickets are \$16, Gleesner House, 1800 S. Prairie Ave., celebrates 20 years of Edgar Allan Poe readings. The event starts at 9:30 p.m. Admission is \$9.50. **SATURDAY** / "King Henry V" is performed at Newberry Library, 60 W. Walton St. Chicago's Shakespeare Project continues the story of Prince Hal. The play starts at 10 a.m. The event is free. The Gene Siskel Film Center, 164 N. State St., presents *As Smart As They Are: The Author Project*. The film starts at 4-4:45 p.m. Tickets are \$5 for members, \$7 for students and \$9 for everyone else. **SUNDAY** / Sparta plays at The Metro, 3730 N. Clark St. The show starts at 6:30 p.m. Tickets are \$15.

October

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Old theater begins new era

Historic Chicago theater, The Biograph, reopens after \$11.3 million renovation

By Brent Steven White/Assistant A&E Editor

The house lights dim and a hush falls over the audience at the Biograph Theater as the first play to be performed at the legendary venue since it closed in 2004 is about to premiere to local, regional and national press.

Victory Gardens, a local theater company founded in 1974, purchased the 92-year-old theater for \$2 million, and spent \$9.3 million renovating and rebuilding the theater into a state-of-the-art 299-seat auditorium. The renovation was headed by architect Daniel P. Coffey.

The theater company purchased the Biograph from Larry Edwards, who rented the hall for short-term theater festivals.

Built in 1914 and designed by Samuel N. Crowen, the Biograph Theater, 2433 N. Lincoln Ave., was placed on the National

Registry of Historic Places in 1999. The theater is one of the oldest in the country.

The Biograph was made famous when, in 1934, FBI agents killed the notorious and elusive gangster John Dillinger as he left the venue after seeing "Manhattan Melodrama" with his girlfriend, Polly Hamilton.

Because of Dillinger's death and the age of the theater, it was named a city landmark by the city of Chicago's Commission of Historic Places.

The theater's new name on the marquee also made its debut—Victory Gardens Biograph.

"When the opportunity arose to be in a new space and restore an iconic piece of Chicago's history, we couldn't pass it up," said Allen Doederlein, director of development for the Victory Gardens

Theater. "Because we're at the Biograph, we're allowing our artists to paint on a bigger canvas, giving them better tools and the opportunity to expand."

Much of the \$11.3 million it took to refurbish the infamous theater was given to Victory Gardens by friends and donors, Doederlein said. Two such benefactors were Ann and Bob Wiseman, who were in attendance for the play and said they've given thousands of dollars to the theater company, including \$6,000 for two lifetime seats at the new Biograph.

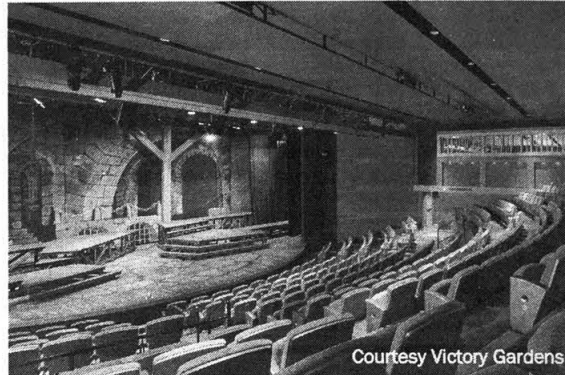
"Victory Gardens at the Biograph is important for Chicago theater and local playwrights," Ann Wiseman said. "The [renovated] theater will do well."

Victory Gardens at the Biograph kicked off its resurrection with Charles Smith's "Denmark," which received a standing ovation.

"Denmark" is a dramatization of an early 1800s freed slave named Denmark Vesey. Vesey, a controversial figure in black history, planned a rebellion in Charleston, S.C., to free the city's slave population. But the plan was disclosed to authorities, who arrested and hanged Vesey.

A former Columbia student stars in the play. Anthony Fleming III, who attended Columbia in 1997 but didn't graduate, plays Vesey and said he's been involved with theater for nine years.

"The audience was awesome



Courtesy Victory Gardens

Restoration in the new Biograph Theater took more than two years and cost Victory Gardens over \$11 million.

tonight," Flemming said at a reception following his performance. "[Theater] is more collaborative than film, and the audience reaction is more immediate. I love the process of a play being put together."

The newly reinvented theater was jam-packed for the Oct. 15 performance, which was preceded by a reception in the venue's lobby. The play will run until Nov. 12, and is followed by "The Snow Queen," which will be performed Dec. 1 to Jan. 7, 2007.

Dennis Zacek, artistic director for "Denmark," said spending \$11.3 million so that Victory Gardens could have a new home is a huge achievement for the theater company.

"It's a theater that is dedicated to the new work of playwrights," Zacek said. "To have accomplished [this restoration] is amazing."

In 2001, Zacek accepted a Tony Award for Regional Theatre on behalf of Victory Gardens, the highest award that can be given to regional theaters.

He also said purchasing the Biograph was both an important move for the Chicago theater company and for the city of Chicago.

"We have saved the Biograph," Zacek said. "This place could have turned into a gallery, a shop or a sports bar, but we're continuing the legacy."

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Rachel Strecher/The Chronicle

The new marquee sits in place of the Biograph's previous one, which Victory Gardens donated to the Chicago History Museum. The Biograph, 2433 N. Lincoln Ave., recently reopened.

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THE
COLUMBIA CHRONICLE
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Props: Stuffed to the gills for film- makers and collectors

Continued from Front Page

Batman Begins and the television series "Prison Break," said Zap owner Bill Rawski.

While Zap does try catering to most films, they do claim to specialize in certain aesthetics.

"Most motion pictures, especially ones with a grittier type of feel or ones set in an antique type of setting, come here," Wolhuis said. Located in a barren warehouse

district in Chicago's Bridgeport neighborhood, Zap is essentially a cross between Willy Wonka's chocolate factory and a Ripley's Believe It or Not museum—minus, of course, the tasty aphrodisiacs, cheese factor and Oompa Loompas.

Walking into the rental portion of the building, it's easy to get lost in the sheer size and randomness of the place. The initial first steps greet patrons with a sensory overload of medical supplies and various circus paraphernalia. Partial medical cadavers are stacked along old pharmaceutical counters, while various creepy clown busts are strewn over distorted "fun" mirrors and pinball machines.

To first-timers, the various rows of shelves and piles of "stuff" have no real organization-

al layout to them, and the whole place can come across as one gigantic maze.

"The organization relies mainly on me knowing where things are," Wolhuis said. "Usually, though, people have something specific that they're looking for, so we normally push them in the right direction."

David "Big" Krause, a production design teacher at Columbia, advises his students to use Zap for their productions.

"Even though they're not very organized, that's half the fun," Krause said. "It's kind of an adventure to go there."

Disorganization aside, Zap's employee mishaps do tend to border on the bizarre.

"We lost a six foot doughnut the other day," Wolhuis said. "My boss claims it was a bagel, but I still say it was a doughnut."

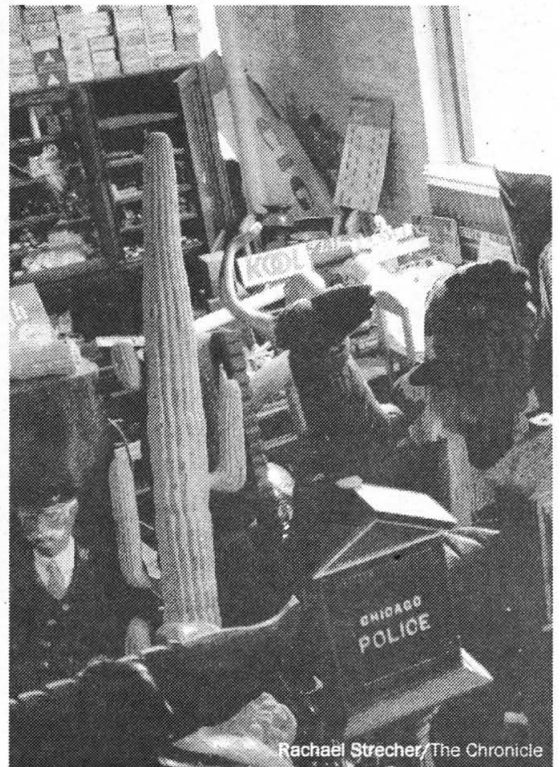
Although the discount seems enticing for prospective student clients, Krause cautions that students may not find exactly what they're looking for.

"I think they're great for some stuff," Krause said. "They're great for the more unusual things, but for a lot of the standards that you'd expect to find in a prop house, they lack."

Rawski, a long time antique dealer, first began supplying props to production companies more than 10 years ago when he supplied coin-operated merchandise to the film *A League of Their Own*.

Soon after working on a few more movies, like *Home Alone*, Rawski saw a need to provide Chicago with a large prop house and as a result Zap opened its first location off Belmont.

After a decade of business and a new store location, Zap not only allows customers a chance



Rachael Strecher/The Chronicle

Zap Props and Antiques, 3611 S. Loomis Pl., contains an overwhelming amount of antiques and knick-knacks.

to rent props and antiques from its vast warehouse, but it also sells many of its items on eBay, designs its own custom props and supplies wall decor for restaurants and bars.

"We've done all the Portillo's, most of the Fuddrucker's and a few Potbelly's," Wolhuis said.

But even during its slowest days, this warehouse still overflows with life and nostalgia. Every cranny and shelf is teem-

ing with creative possibilities for designers, artists and film auteurs and Zap never fails to interest its customers and employees.

"Yeah, it's a crazy place, but after a while the novelty wears off and it's just the product that you have, and you forget that every piece is amazing and priceless," Wolhuis said.

mclaire@chroniclemail.com



Rachael Strecher/The Chronicle

An unusual number of fans mingle with filmmaking gear and various other props.

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Podcasts meet crime fighting

Internet-based program airs weird tales of delinquency

By Kim Driscoll/Staff Writer

It's digital media meets the world of crime fighting with "Stop! Police," a new podcast that provides listeners with weird, wild and wicked tales from the streets of Chicago.

The Internet-based program, located at insideChicagotv.com, adds to the growing number of news downloads by those enthralled with non-traditional forms of broadcasting.

"Stop! Police" was launched in August, and the two-month-old show features rarely reported, true crime stories taken from the pages of Chicago police logs. Newscaster Darren Stephens presents the stories in a 1950s news style, mixing seriousness and humor.

"Stop! Police" producer Michael Holm said that people are generally interested in crime, and he tried to create a noir-style program reminiscent of old news shows.

"There was a different type of sensationalism back then, and newscasters created excitement when delivering the news," Holm said.

David Berner, a full-time faculty member in Columbia's Radio Department, explained podcasting as audio and video files distributed over the Internet, using syndicated feeds, which are downloaded to personal computers, iPods and MP3 players. Podcasts are available through online subscription or by going directly to the site and downloading, and most are free of charge.

"This is media on demand," Berner said. "And people like podcasts because you can listen [to them] whenever you want."

Berner also said podcasting is appealing because "these syndicated programs are regularly downloaded to you without your having to do anything."

Berner proposed two podcasting programs to be added to the Columbia radio curriculum, a J-term "how to podcast" program and one that includes podcast marketing.

"People want to listen and see what we want, when we want," as indicated by public interest in pay-per-view, iTunes and TiVo, Berner explained.

Those amused by weird news seek out Internet sites, such as YouTube and "Stop! Police," because local radio and news programs make stricter judgments on what is considered newsworthy. "Stop! Police" tries to find the humor in crime situations and highlight them. For example, the show reported a story in which a man spotted someone trying to break into his car and confronted the criminal. The offender then pulled out a knife, said "get back" and rode off on a blue mountain bike.

"This is stuff you can't get anywhere else [or in mainstream media]," said Dr. Robert Thompson, pop culture expert and

Trustee Professor at Syracuse University's S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications.

"The idea of seeing others who look like us, but who behave differently, is appealing," he said of the show.

"Stop! Police" material basically writes itself since it comes directly from the Chicago police blotter, Holm said, acknowledging that there isn't a lack of interesting crime taking place in the city.

"There is sometimes comedy in tragedy," said Darren Stephens, the show's newscaster.

Recently, Stephens poked fun at a crime victim, as he frequently does in his shows, who reported to Chicago police that his laptop had been stolen after he left it on the car seat with the windows down.

"You have to have some respect and sensibility [when reporting the news]," Stephens said. "But why would you leave a laptop on your seat and your windows down in the city of Chicago?"

InsideChicagotv.com is home to two podcasts: "Stop! Police" and "insideChicago," a lifestyles type show, featuring video of journalist Ellen Fox visiting Chicago neighborhoods in search of real, behind-the-scenes stories.

Fox's latest show featured the Columbia College Sartorial Flux fashion exhibition, which features custom made garments that are functional and innovative. The show also featured designer Valerie LaMontagne among others.

"We want to be informed, but also entertained," said Mallory Sohmer, production manager for insideChicagotv.com and a Columbia alumna. She said Stephens' invisibility adds to his appeal, "he is like the wizard."

The company hired Sohmer, who graduated in May of this year, after an internship and some freelancing at Pixel Brothers, Inc., a local production company.

A collaboration between Pixel Brothers, Inc., Webjones, a technical production company, and Inside Publications, a newspaper covering neighborhoods on Chicago's North Side, comprise insideChicagotv.com.

Thompson said access to programs like "Stop! Police" provides a level of local coverage, and it is appealing to hear about the mishaps of others.

"A part of it is you feel better about yourself," Thompson said. "You can feel superior to others without actually being involved—like watching reality shows. We used to have outlets like freak shows. People just need a diversion."

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Courtesy of Darren Stephens

Darren Stephens, a local newscaster, presents "Stop! Police," a podcast that tells the oddities of the Chicago crime scene.

ICE making music from art

Columbia's artist-in-residence ensemble has a musical response to French artist's exhibit

By Mark Byrne/A&E Editor

Last month, Claire Chase walked into an art gallery and dreamt of writing music for an exhibit based on dreams.

On Oct. 27, she'll be able to do just that. Chase is the executive director and flutist of the International Contemporary Ensemble, the artists-in-residence chamber musicians at Columbia College and New York University. The exhibit, at Flatfile Gallery, 217 N. Carpenter St., is the work of French artist Alexandra Loewe. It features numerous exhibits in a variety of mediums, which all relate to dreams. Chase wasted

no time, and set up a show at Flatfile on the closing night of the exhibition, during which ICE will improvise a performance as a response to Loewe's art.

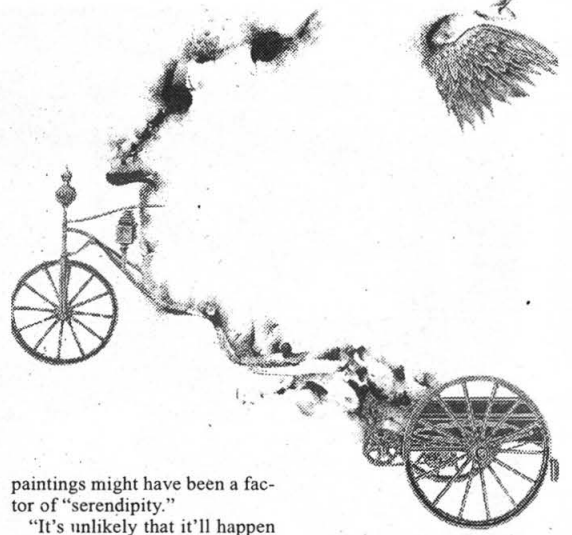
"When I looked at her series I immediately thought, 'we have to play this piece,'" Chase said. "We need to get a bunch of musicians standing in front of this painting and we need to play the painting."

The show will feature several performances, including a percussion piece, written specifically for ICE by Huang Ruo, a composer they work with often.

There will also be pieces penned by well-known modern composers Takemitsu and John Cage. Chase said that all of the compositions they picked fit with Loewe's exhibition because they are reminiscent of dreams. Chase describes the music as anything from "the very bizarre and abstract and dark [to the] childlike and innocent and sweet"—all of which she thinks will fit nicely with Loewe's work. The highlight of the show will be 20 improvised vignettes for 20 of Loewe's pieces.

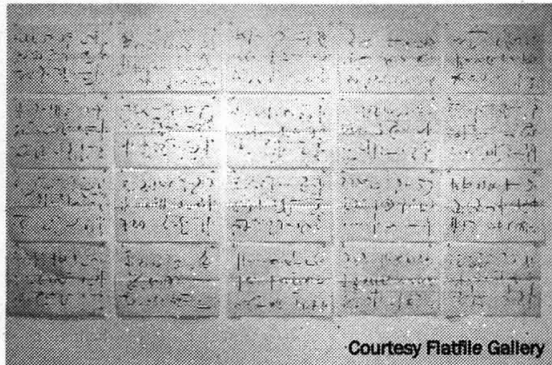
"We do a lot of interesting things, but we've never done this exact thing before," said Susan Aurinko, the owner and director of Flatfile Gallery. Aurinko said the gallery occasionally hosts events such as poetry readings, but an ensemble playing music to art is a new to both her and the gallery.

ICE plays a series in New York that merges visual art with music, so Chase is more familiar with the concept. This is the first time ICE has worked with Loewe, though it won't be the last—Chase said the two of them are already collaborating on another project. Aurinko said that she too would like to do this type of performance in the future, though she recognizes that Chases' reaction to Loewe's



Courtesy Flatfile Gallery

This piece, titled 'Dream Track 17', is part of a long series of drawings done with pencil and ink that depict abstract objects from the dreams of Alexandra Loewe.



Courtesy Flatfile Gallery

This series, 'Recorded Dreams,' was painted by Alexandra Loewe in ink, using her finger. Claire Chase said it reminded her of musical notation, and inspired the performance at Flatfile Gallery, 217 N. Carpenter St., on Oct. 27.

paintings might have been a factor of "serendipity."

"It's unlikely that it'll happen on a regular basis because you have to have the right musicians seeing the right show at the right moment," Aurinko said. "I hope that it will be the beginning of a relationship with ICE."

Chase explained that musicians often enjoy performing in galleries because they typically provide a good acoustic atmosphere.

"[Galleries are] very live and very intimate," Chase said. "It's perfect for chamber music."

Joe Cerqua, the supervising producer of Columbia's Music Department, said a musical reaction to art is nothing new, but it shows that ICE is trying new things. He said it is one of only a handful of groups in the city who he considers to be "pushing the boundaries" of music. When Columbia chose ICE as artists-in-residence in 2004, Cerqua said they were,

looking for an innovative ensemble who could regularly perform recitals.

"That was where the search started," Cerqua explained. "It ended with ICE because they're brilliant."

Even though he said the concept isn't new, Cerqua said he is excited for the performance on Oct. 27.

"This is one of the reasons why we keep them around," he said.

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LIVIN' IN A LAND OF VIRTUAL REALITY

Story by Jennifer K. Fischer

Graphics by Jennifer Eider

Brick walkways line a lush, green courtyard with fountains and playgrounds. Dozens of shops line an outdoor mall. Some sell beds, some sell clothing. Some even sell properties and prefab homes. People wander casually, stopping to greet one another and making small talk.

Welcome to Second Life, population 1,000,000—and growing. With virtual world populations increasing, so are virtual businesses. But real people are spending real money in intangible worlds such as Second Life, an online 3-D society, and as its commerce becomes more lucrative, real-life businesses are taking notice.

The avatars—pixilated alter-egos—who exist in Second Life aren't just teenage computer geeks hanging out online. In their first lives, these players are split nearly 50-50 as far as gender, and their median age is 32, according to Catherine Smith, media relations officer at Linden Labs, the company responsible for the Second Life phenomenon. These users sit at the keyboards of state-of-the-art computers with high-speed Internet access. And most importantly, they have money to burn.

On Oct. 19, users spent more than \$462,000 U.S. in a 24-hour period, according to statistics kept on Secondlife.com. Users pay for items and services just as they would in other online shopping forums, by registering their credit card number when signing up for a free Second Life account. Linden Dollars (L\$), the currency used on Second Life roughly translate as L\$250 to \$1 U.S. and are converted at LindeX, the Second Life currency exchange. Like real-world currency, its value fluctuates some.

Now budding entrepreneurs are setting up virtual shop, using the world to sell renderings of the fashion designs, digital real estate and even pornography. One such trailblazer is Sitearm Madonna, who wished to use her Second Life identity. Not only is Madonna a journalist for Second Life's largest newspaper, The Metaverse Messenger, she is listed as a consultant and expeditor for Second Life Virtual Worlds projects, assisting innovative residents with both long- and short-term projects such as Dublin—an accurately reconstructed, fully functioning online Dublin, Ireland.

"The purpose of Dublin in SL is to be a steady, safe, fun place for people from all over the world to get together and be entertained and get to know each other," said Madonna, who acquires an average of one new client per month. "What is different about it is that it focuses on social events and live music for entertainment, not gambling or sex. All the staff come from visitors who liked the place so well that they decided to work there. It also focuses on connecting both sides of the Atlantic. There are more innovations on the way." Madonna holds academic degrees in physics and systems engineer-

ing, and her first life careers included planner, project manager and organization developer for both for-profit and nonprofit organizations in information technology and youth service. She became a Second Life resident in October 2005 and started her first consulting gig in November of that year. She listed her services on the Linden Lab Developer Directory in May 2006, and now works exclusively in virtual reality.

Though she operates independently, she aids her fellow service providers, content developers and consultants in their business developments. Madonna said Second Life attracts residents from the U.S., UK, Canada, Australia, Germany, Scandinavia and elsewhere—in that order—therefore presenting the opportunity to meet people one wouldn't easily encounter in real life. She added that for some reason, people interact more "closely and vividly" than they do in other online forums such as e-mail or chat rooms, perhaps because it is more "present and believable" conversing with visible beings in a 3-D world. She said many of the people she works with in Second Life have both real-world and virtual jobs, using the online community as an expansion of what they do in the real world.

"They express more of their artistic, creative side and use skills they do not get to use fully in real life," she said. "It is good for Second Life because they add new and needed resources, and it is good for me because I have new experts to whom to refer my clients. When I discovered Second Life and began making money here, I decided this was just the thing to work with and develop, not only for myself, but for all of us interested in this amazing new world of online work."

A real-life store such as American Apparel may not rake in real, life profits selling to avatars, but it makes for great exposure to their online operators. However, the store didn't initially come to life—or cyber life—as such. Raz Schoinning, director of Web services for American Apparel, said it was a personal interest that turned into something completely experimental. Earlier this year, Schoinning met a "brilliant young man" by the name of Wes Keltner who runs a small advertising agency out of Lexington, Ken. After a little small talk, Keltner, a man with Linden Labs contact, asked Schoinning if he'd be interested in trying something highly experimental.

"The rest is history," Schoinning said. "It represents an interactive evolution."

Really, though, the rest remains to be seen. In its first month, nearly 3,000 virtual garments flew off the shelves of American Apparel's Second Life branch at L\$250 Linden Dollars.

The American Apparel store itself took little time to construct. Schoinning said the initial build was done within three weeks. They had no one to model themselves after, and in Second Life, anything goes. The store could have been in the air or on an island. They kept it as a virtual representation of a physical store from the walls to the layout to the T-shirts and hoodies inside. Real people staff the store as avatars, assisting customers and ringing up sales.





Most of the money spent now changes hands between businesses operated by avatars. The U.S. value of user-to-user transactions for June equaled \$5.3 million, according to Linden Labs data.

With such a great number of potential consumers, businesses such as Warner Records and Universal-Motown Republic Records find ways to promote themselves on Second Life. Even cliques of university students from schools such as Harvard, USC and Cal State reside in this cyber world, where they perform research and even hold classes.

Now both Linden Labs and American Apparel hear from advertising agencies and other businesses. Schoinning believes that many agencies are trying to pitch the concept to their clients, and those clients aren't getting it. He thinks agencies focus a lot of attention on how they can sell—but players in Second Life are there to socialize, entertain themselves and explore.

"They want you to play with them, not sell them," Schoinning pointed out. "Second Life inhabitants are fairly complex creatures."

It's common to explore Second Life and run into fairies, pink-haired women, giant robots and other oddities. Some inhabitants create a cyber version of themselves, while others use the world as an outlet for fantasy.

John Suler, Ph.D., who wrote an online book called *Psychology of Cyberspace*, explained that with the anonymity places like Second Life provide, people express needs they wouldn't necessarily express in face-to-face living. An additional step in pursuing that uninhibited expression of needs is spending money, Suler said.

"In many respects, the 'virtual' world becomes very 'real' because it satisfies those needs, so people are willing to invest 'real' money in it," Suler said.

A virtually uncharted territory, cyberspace provides endless possibilities economically and otherwise. So it begs the question of whether or not physical businesses will make their way into cyber worlds and whether or not cyber businesses will make their way into the real world.

"Over the years to come, we will become more sophisticated in how we manage our online and offline lifestyles," Suler said.

"Sometimes the two worlds will overlap and enhance each other."

Smith at Linden Labs maintains that the Second Life community isn't currently large enough to support a major company but that it does provide a way for those companies to interact with their audiences.

"There's an interesting ecosystem at work in Second Life," Smith said. "Residents own the content they create in Second Life, and those who want to participate can by creating and selling their work."

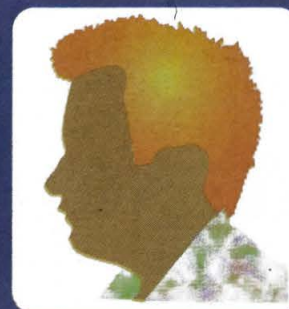
But for the time being, corporate America poses no threat. Second Lifers will continue to thrive in their alternative universe, alternative economy and all. And there is room for more.

"I believe it should be possible for people to do what they love for a living," Madonna said. "While considered idealistic and impractical in my generation growing up, I think this idea is one whose time has come. It is a growing, coming trend that more and more young people will be able to realize."

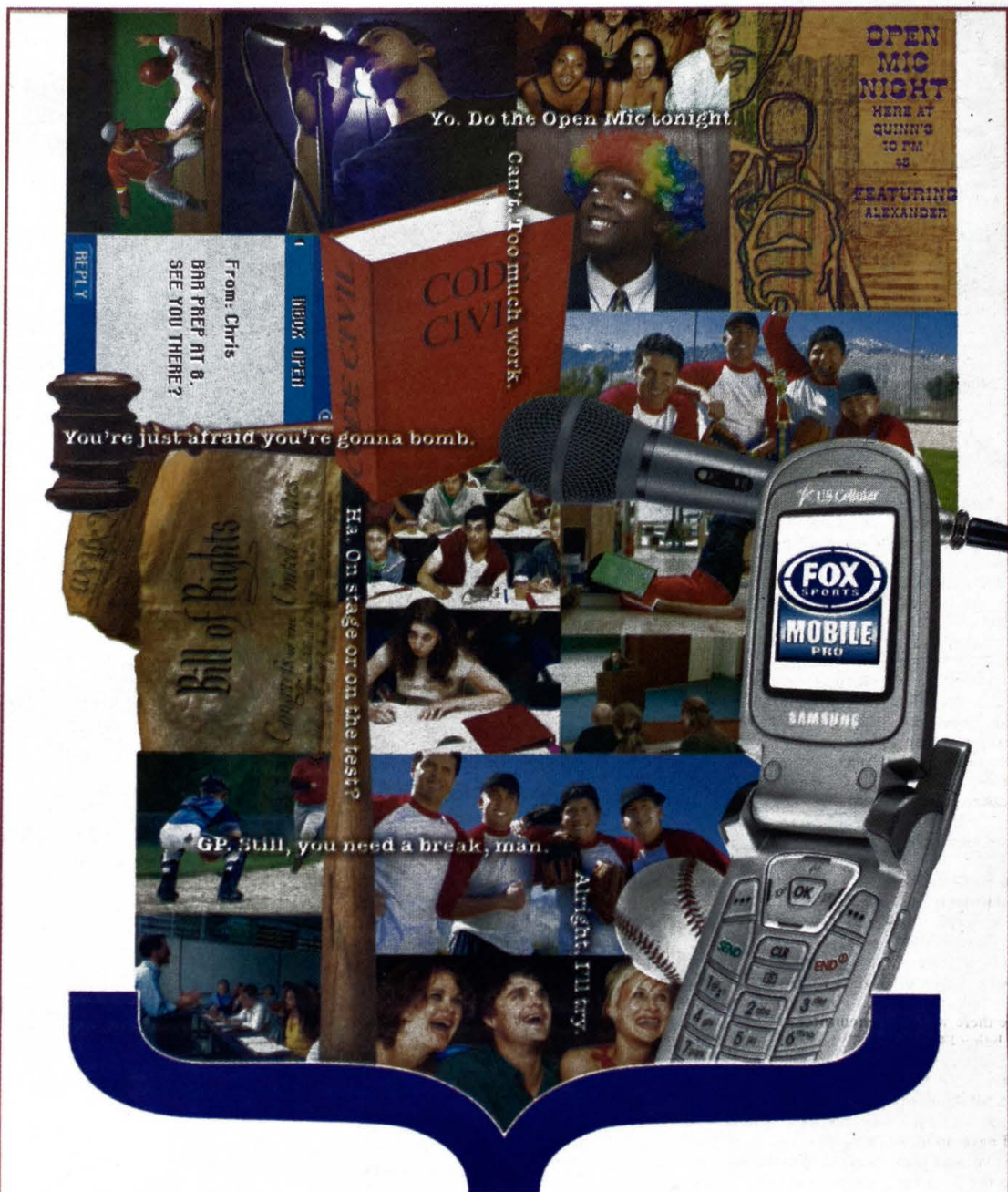
Madonna recommends that anyone wanting to start a business in Second Life look around at the kinds of businesses already there, and then consult experienced residents. She added that prospective virtual entrepreneurs should pay attention to the feel or spirit of the operations and the residents to find which are most compatible with their own.

Madonna thinks experiences in the virtual world of Second Life are "just as 'real world' as experiences in the 'real' real world."

"Some call it 'mixed up' reality or 'mixed reality,'" Madonna said. "I call it the 'new, improved reality,' myself."



"Some call it 'mixed up' reality or 'mixed reality,'" Madonna said. "I call it the 'new, improved reality,' myself."



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Songbird blends British rock with Steinbeck

Matt Costa takes time off the road to talk about his California roots and 'The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test'

By Jenifer K. Fischer/Managing Editor

On Oct. 17 the MySpace and (Red) Hotel Cafe Tour hit Park West. The show's Chicago lineup consisted of folk, acoustic and indie sets including the Weepies, Joshua Radin, Cary Brothers and Charlotte Martin, as well as headliner Matt Costa, whose divinely simple and exquisitely crafted music evokes lazy summer afternoons, meandering road trips and life's simplest beauties.

Costa hails from the California coast. After shattering his leg in a skateboarding accident fewer than five years ago, he rediscovered the guitar he started playing at the age of 12, and the rest, we shall say, is history. Jack Johnson's Brushfire Records re-released 24-year-old Costa's first full-length album, *Songs We Sing*, earlier this year.

As Costa made his way to Chicago from Milwaukee, he chatted with *The Chronicle* from the road about his musical inspirations.

The Chronicle: So you haven't had any real formal training, it's mostly been self-discovery?

Costa: It was interesting because when I first started writing songs, I was drawn to the simplicity of folk music because it was like there wasn't so much to digest, being like the drum parts and the electric guitar parts and the bass and all that when it's good it all kind of blends into one thing; but for me it was like, 'man, I have no idea how they're doing that' so I just broke it down into the acoustic and built it from there. I heard things on my favorite records and tried to emulate however they were creating that sound and sometimes I did it wrong, but then you come up with your own techniques and variations on it.

You are from California. Does that translate into your music?

I guess. You can't help but have whatever sound that's naturally where you're from. Everyone has their sound kind of where they're from, and they can't help it because that's just who they are, and their surroundings definitely shape their music. I guess I'd say it's almost more like having an accent.

Your music seems to reflect the sounds of a lot of U.K. groups. Who are your big musical influences?

When I started writing music I was listening to a lot of Donovan—his most popular song was "Mellow Yellow," kind of later in his career when he started getting more into the psychedelic—but early on he was kind of like the British Bob Dylan. The thing that appealed to me about that was just the guitar and his voice and how just that could carry a song.

So I learned a bunch of those early songs. And from there I got turned on to listening to the Beatles, the Kinks and the

Zombies. Contemporary artists from Britain like Travis and Belle and Sebastian are artists I like a lot.

What is it about those particular artists' sound that attracts you?

Whatever that feeling is, that intangible feeling you can't describe. To me it's like an escape. You hear those songs and bands, and they're coming from some place totally different than where you were raised, from a different background. I was just naturally drawn to that.

Have you ever had a chance to meet any of those musicians?

I have met Donovan. I met him when I was in Dublin, Ireland. I met him at a hotel. I got in there really early in the morning. During the show I'd stayed over at some kid's house and played music all night long. As I was getting into the elevator I just decided to talk to him and tell him how much his music meant to me, and he was really nice.

How is that as an artist, who is also a fan? Does it change the encounter?

To be on the other side of that for someone really made me appreciate it. I saw the way he acted—it definitely it made me appreciate how down to earth he was, and I just try to be the same way to people that my music affects because I know how much of an influence he had on me and my life.

How so?

The songs that you listen to, they're just as much a part of your life as whatever sort of relationships you have in your life, whoever it is. Whatever time you're going through, whether you're in school or have a bad accident or whatever, the songs are what take you back to those times in your life. They're there through all of it.

Like the name of your album, *Songs We Sing*?

Actually, the name of the title came from when I first started writing the record. I was just covering songs and writing songs here and there, and I'd bring them over to my friends' house. It was kind of a flop-house where everyone would just hang out. People would come from out of town and go and leave, and every night we'd sit around and drink and smoke and write, and I'd play songs or someone else would take the guitar and play a song and just have a good time.

Basically all the songs that I brought over there that I would sing there for the first time became all the songs for the record, so I thought what better title than to call it than *Songs We Sing*?

Where'd you find the inspira-



Courtesy Fresh and Clean Media

Former pro skateboarder Matt Costa traded in his board to sing for Jack Johnson's record label, Brushfire Records.

tion for the songs?

Basically it's just my obsessions at the time. All I do when I walk around is picture myself living inside the book, and I can't help but—that's all I think about so I end up writing about it.

I could say "Ballad of Miss Kate" is roughly based on the book *East of Eden*. [The character] Katherine Trask is Miss Kate in the song, so it's loosely based on that. "Sweet Thursday" is another John Steinbeck reference. It talks about going to Monterey and things near Salinas. Monterey County is where Steinbeck lived and wrote about a lot of characters in his book. I drive up the coast a lot and spend time there, and I wrote about that just referring to a bunch of stuff in his books. Like I said, the title track and the album are named after the house I used to go sing songs in.

It's not just music, then. Authors—Steinbeck—have a big influence on you. Are there any other artists who aren't necessarily musicians who influence your work?

Yeah. I would say a lot of the, like when I started getting into Dylan and Donovan, that's sort of the folk thing and the beatnik thing. One of my friends turned me on to Kerouac's stuff, and I got into that.

That wasn't really necessarily more inspiration for writing as it was—ah, it was inspiration for writing—but like inspiration in a sense that way that he lived and those people lived, it was kind of like a carefree sort of business that's they're kind of traveling vagabonds doing their thing. There's something really romantic about that. That's kind of what we do when we're touring. You just kind of have to let go of everything, and you definitely are detached from the cultural norm. You kind of just get in your own world of whatever and that's what [Kerouac] was all about and the whole beatnik generation thing.

What are you reading now?

Right now I'm reading Tom Wolfe's *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test* and so that's the same kind of the whole evolution of that scene into the same sort of mindset. That's inspiration in a sense just to break out of the norm or what you think is the norm because everything is there is no normal no matter what you're raised to believe.

So what do you do when you're back home?

Write some more songs. I like going on the California coast. There's a lot to see and just kind of escape on the coast there with the different kind of landscapes. The

coastline is so long that there's like 10 different states in one.

Careerwise, what's down the road for you?

Since I've been out for a year and a half traveling on the road, I've come across a lot of different artists and musicians, so I think there will be more collaboration. I've always sort of collaborated with other musicians. I think even more so on the next record and getting a lot of cool artists I've come across on the road to play.

Do you have any genres you would like to explore?

I've written like a samba song and like a Cajun kind of song like a crazy early-1900s sort of Zydeco. As I've been writing music and wanting to explore things, I've been kind of digging deeper and deeper into where the music comes from of the people I really like a lot. And saying "OK, what are the roots of what they're doing?"

It's one thing to be inspired by those artists, but it seems almost filtered, so I just want to get back to originally where it comes from and have a fresh take from that. That's what I like to try. It's kind of an interesting thing—sometimes you can't really help what comes out, it just kind of does.

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'Ruminations' before the tour

Aaron Karo talks about his e-mail, his comedy tour and why a career on Wall Street wasn't up his alley

By Mark Byrne/A&E Editor



Aaron Karo started an e-mail column while in college nine years ago. Because of its popularity, he is now a touring comedian, and will be in Chicago on Oct. 27.

Aaron Karo has a lot on his mind. And every couple of weeks, he tells more than 50,000 people about it.

For the past nine years, Karo has written a series of e-mails titled "Ruminations," a collection of things that Karo finds funny or interesting. As a self-professed frat boy at the University of Pennsylvania, the topics never strayed far from girls, booze and the party life, and because of how relatable it was, it became popular almost immediately.

The first 20 people to whom Karo sent the first e-mail began forwarding it to friends and friends of friends. By the time Karo graduated, he had 45,000 subscribers. What started as a drunken middle-of-the-night e-mail turned into a national phenomenon—and eventually a career.

Now, Karo is a standup comedian, and he'll be in Chicago at the House of Blues on Oct. 27. He tried out Wall Street, working as an equity researcher at an investment firm—didn't like it—compiled his bit into a couple books, *Ruminations on College Life* and then *Ruminations on Twentysomething Life*, and recorded a DVD of his comedy performance, which was released on Oct. 16.

The newest incarnation of his e-mail column, now targeted at

twentysomethings, details the trials and tribulations of life as a "recovering frat boy" who must cope with real life while dreaming of beer pong and toga parties.

Karo doesn't just write comedy for the typical frat boy—he embodies the lifestyle, and he is neither shy nor apologetic about it. "You're really getting fucked by the real Columbia," Karo said about the school's website when he spoke to *The Chronicle* just before leaving on a national tour.

The tour kicked off in Pennsylvania on Oct. 17, and will conclude at a sold-out show in New York on Nov. 18. Karo talked about life as a touring frat boy, and how he ended up as one.

The Chronicle: Do you travel on comedy tours with a posse?

Aaron Karo: It's just me, there's no entourage. I actually prefer it that way, because then there's more of me to love for the ladies. I don't want them to get distracted.

What do you like to do when you're on the road?

Since a lot of what I write about is drinking and partying, I feel like I have an obligation to live up to that. I have friends in Chicago, so I have something to do there. But people will e-mail me before I even come and tell me they're taking me out. I'm pretty approach-

able. People are already setting me up for the first leg of the tour.

Why didn't a Wall Street job work out for you?

I really don't like shaving, waking up early or tucking in my shirt.

How did you manage to get a book deal right out of college?

I had signed with a manager who had gotten my e-mail, and he had helped me get the book deal. I don't want to say it was easy, but it was easier than most people's first book deals. I had a following already, and [publishers are] really looking for something they can market. I still didn't know what I was going to do—I mean, I'd never done standup before—but that was the first inkling that I could make a career out of it. Before that I had no idea.

Did you always want to be a comedian?

I definitely did not know I wanted to be a comedian. I was always the funny guy. I feel like I've been a comedian my whole life, just never on stage. I was always into business and I went to Wharton [School of Business], so I was obviously interested in that from a young age. But I was always more entrepreneurial than I wanted to be in a suit and tie.

What were you thinking as the

e-mail list kept growing so rapidly? control it.

I didn't know I could make a career out of it. I kind of missed that boat for a while. But I did know that amassing this e-mail list was a good thing. In a sort of nebulous way I knew that a big mailing list was going to lead to something. I just didn't know what the hell that was going to be.

Do you have an obligation to write about typical frat boy things?

I try not to think about it that way. I've gotten the success I have from just writing what I was thinking. If something weird or out of character happens to me, then that's funny. If I do something strange or something not frat-boyesque, then that's funny. It's really about me. I can't really

But there must be people who are opposed to that lifestyle. What about mothers who are about to send their sons off to school?

Dude, moms love me. They try to set me up with their daughters.

You said you don't like Los Angeles as much as New York; why is that?

The bars close at 1:30 in L.A.

What do they do at night?

I don't know. They fucking go home and do yoga and eat celery sticks.

Visit Aaron Karo's website, www.aaronkaro.com, to sign up for his e-mail list.

mbyrne@chroniclemail.com

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Reviews

The Rapture

Pieces of the People ...



The album art sucks. Nevertheless, it's The Rapture, and if you like to dance it's worth picking up. A few songs live up to the band's billing, like "Devil," which bitches and moans about love and "Whooh! Alright Yeah ... Uh Huh" which calls out those who do not dance. —J. Ewert Jr.

Glass Candy

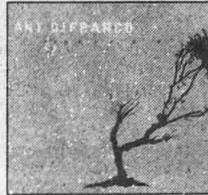
Music Dream (Demo)



I can't really tell if the lead singer is an alcoholic with a depressing speech impediment or just a huge weirdo. The heavy beat in the track "B Girls" is almost too satisfying, like that feeling you get when you've waited all day at work to rush home and make that steamy deposit at the porcelain bank. —C. Mahlmeister

Ani DiFranco

Reprieve



For a woman who's said and done everything socially conscious women in America dream of saying and doing, DiFranco still manages to say something different with *Reprieve*. This is another brilliant album by this talented singer/songwriter/poet who is sadly underrated. —B. White

The Five Fists of Science

Matt Fraction and Steven Sanders



The story of a financially drained Mark Twain's hare brained scheme to market Nicola Tesla's giant mechanical suits to world leaders. Along the way the characters cross paths with yeti-hunting cultist Thomas Edison. A quick, off-the-wall read with good art but clashing text bubble design. —S. Baltrukonis

Modern Drunkard Magazine

September/October issue



This anniversary issue celebrates the 10-year bender known as Modern Drunkard Magazine. It's a quintessential read for those who like to drink coffin varnish. It hammers the point home that you could probably be drinking right now at some dim lit bar, playing it Bogart instead of stressing out about that pregnancy test. —C. Jakubowski

Doctor Strange: The Oath

Marvel Comics



This new four issue miniseries follows the sorcerer supreme in his campiest moment ever. Strange's young live-in servant develops a life-threatening cancer, and there's plenty of "I don't know what I'll do without you moments" that come across as a bit homo-erotic. The weird sexual tension and artwork make this series worthwhile. —H. Clauss

Top Chef, Season Two

Bravo



Both this season and last, "Top Chef" has relied on the sheer ridiculousness of each contestant in order to garner any legitimacy. Unfortunately, that gimmick grows old. In fact, it's already old. Let's face it guys, and this goes for "Hell's Kitchen," too: You're never going to live up to "Iron Chef." —M. Byrne

Project Runway Season

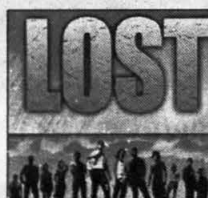
Bravo



The second half of this season finale wrapped up nicely, considering how the first part completely blue-balled viewers. Come on! But would the producers really kick off Jeffrey? Thankfully, the answer was not only "no" but they awarded him as the winner. Other highlights included Laura's Orville Redenbacher look-alike husband. Hot. —H. Clauss

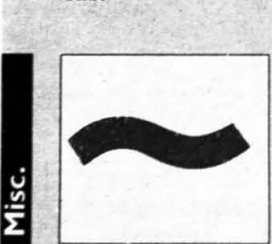
Lost

ABC



John Locke's back as a "hunter," and the only thing coming to mind is, "It's about #\$\$@ing time." Season two almost destroyed the character, but the show's writers appear to have caught on and are now building him up for some big moment, which will hopefully happen in this season and not the next. —H. Clauss

Tilde ~



The tilde, aka the squiggly thing over the letter n in Spanish, rocks my world. Want to spice up your conversation or term paper? Throw in a few words with this lovely symbol. And I can't emphasize enough the importance of including the tilde in many words. Afio, anyone? —K. Haburn

Umlaut



Why don't we have these awesome grammatical things in English? I'm going to start adding them to the end of u's just for the hell of it. Soon, this mark will no longer only be a Germanic vowel modifier; it will be used by all. —B. White

Rextasy



Rextasy, in reference to the Chicago Bears quarterback Rex Grossman, is more than just a player; he's a state of being. Rextasy, which was coined by an Internet user known only as mudbone1969, is the belief that Da Bears will win no matter how shitty the offense plays so long as Rex Grossman is on the field. —M. Rubio

Premium Blend

Taking a closer look at Chicago's local bands

When four guys from all over the country are brought together by classified ads and Craigslist.org, the sound achieved is just as varied as the musicians themselves. Taking a fusion of metal, rock and noise, doctor, this virus is silence [sic] is comprised of Brandon Aase from Northfield, Minn., on vocals; Aaron Elmore from Downers Grove, Ill., on bass; Ben Bowman from Cambridge, Mass., on guitar; and Tim Nix from Plaino, Ill., on drums. With songs on their self-titled demo CD that last beyond the radio-friendly three and a half minutes, the band strives to create songs that tell a story in movements through whatever means they can. The band sat down with The Chronicle to talk about their music and future aspirations.

The Chronicle: Where did the band get its name?

Nix: I was reading one of Kurt Vonnegut's books and he talks about the sound that bats make, that it sounds like a disease of silence. We just liked the way it sounds. You'd see a doctor if something was seriously wrong. There's a sense of urgency.

Aase: It's like there's something wrong with us and the only way to find a cure is to find a deeper truth.

How would you describe your music?

Elmore: It's like a post-rock metal with strong contrast and juxtaposition. It can go from a fanatic sound to a slow build. It kind of comes out how it comes out.

What venues have you played in Chicago?

Elmore: Subterranean, The Beat Kitchen, Underground Lounge.

Aase: We like playing dives. It feels like you're in a basement, like you're back in high school.

Who has influenced your music?

Bowman: There's no one that we're trying to intentionally sound like. Everyone takes different things from different bands. We're trying to create something honest. We're not really into pop culture. We like music that tells a story and has content.

What do you want your audiences to get out of attending your performances or listening to your demo CD?

Aase: To see a performance and have it resonate with you. I think all great performances do that. The album is definitely a headphones album. You put on your headphones and alter your state of consciousness.

Is there anything you would want your audience to know before they went to one of your shows or picked up an album if you got signed?

Elmore: You shouldn't need an intro statement. If there's someone that has to come up with one before someone understands the music, then my view is that they've failed.

Bowman: We're finishing up an EP now and would want someone to listen to it and hear a story. Art is so much more engaging if it takes some effort to understand it.

What do you think you'd be doing if you couldn't be professional musicians?

Elmore: I don't know. We all have day jobs and things to

doctor, this virus is silence



Courtesy of doctor, this virus is silence

do outside of this, but this is what we're most passionate about.

You can find out where doctor, this virus is silence is playing and what the band is up to by checking out their Myspace account at www.myspace.com/dvts or by logging on to their website, which is currently under construction at www.dvts.net. The band is playing a show on Oct. 25 at the Mutiny, 2428 N. Western Ave. The show starts at 9 p.m. and is 21 and over.

—M. Kroeck

'Man of the Year': worst of the year

Robin Williams turns a relevant premise into a bipartisan bore

By Matt Fagerholm/Film Critic

"There's no 'Pop! Zing!' There's no oomph!" Christopher Walken's character Jack Menken tells comedian-turned-presidential candidate Tom Dobbs in *Man of the Year*, while indirectly providing a succinct review of the entire movie.

Dobbs is played by Robin Williams, who has made his career out of playing a motor-mouth nonconformist with a twinkle in his eye. This character may work in prep schools—*Dead Poets Society*—and hospitals—*Patch Adams*—but not politics, where his lighthearted persona is thoroughly insubstantial. He may rip off Barack Obama's line declaring "there

are no red states or blue states, but a United States," yet by avoiding any vital issue, like the war on terror or global warming, Williams offers no solution to unite our differing views except with stale routines even David Letterman wouldn't touch.

You know a comedy is failing when Walken, in his soggy, detached mode, indulges in one of his trademark mini-monologues about shaving circus elephants, and doesn't inspire a single guffaw.

In the era of "The Daily Show," which many viewers watch more often than real news programs, how could this film's relevant premise be reduced to such contrived dreck? Director Barry Levinson obviously wants *Man* to combine two of his most successful films, *Good Morning Vietnam* and *Wag the Dog*. That may explain the film's borderline criminal bait-and-switch: It's actually a god-awful drama disguised as a mediocre comedy.

The wonderful Laura Linney has the undesirable role of "party pooper," as her inexplicably serious storyline grinds any amusement to a halt. She works for a computerized voting system, discovers a glitch that elects the wrong president and then falls victim to scheming executives who intend to cover up the mistake. What follows is one of those yawn-inducing thrillers involving loud clangs on the soundtrack, cell phone chargers and not an ounce of originality.

This is Linney's worst film since *The Life of David Gale*, and for similar reasons. By making Dobbs the nation's un-chosen candidate, and casting greedy executives—instead of lying politicians—as the villains, the film blows its chance at delivering the social commentary it promised. Like the

vastly superior *Bulworth*, any potential satire is derailed by unconvincing subplots. And the satire is so old hat that it's no wonder the once-topical "SNL" shows up in the final reel.

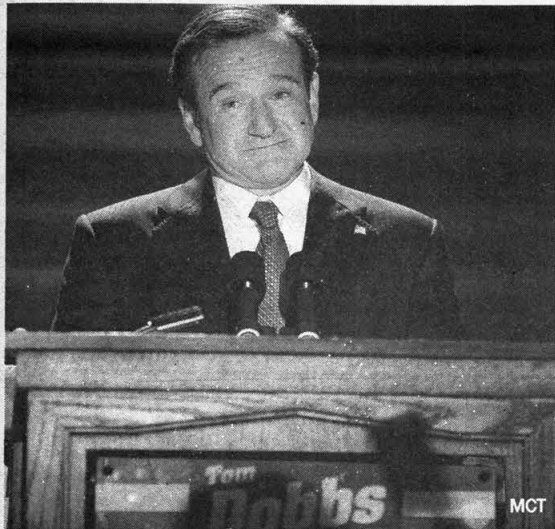
When Williams rants center-stage during a televised debate, it's less of a Jimmy Stewart filibuster than a Robin Williams stand-up act. Regardless, his act inspires equal amounts of laughter from both the public and Congress, even though the audience didn't laugh once. As Dobbs observes, a joke stinks with or without a laugh track, which the deadening silence at the screening no doubt proved.

Man's lack of self-confidence is exposed whenever its characters make wistful observations, pretentiously guiding viewers toward the "importance" of this inconsequential story. In a nutshell, the film's earth-shattering message is "don't lie." Are you listening, Capitol Hill? Some of the film's messages are plain wrong, like its claim that voters don't care about the issues.

Levinson and Williams should have taken the advice of Columbia critical studies teacher Dan Rybicky, who recently warned his film students that "if you try to please everybody, you please nobody." *Man of the Year* will certainly bridge the divide between the nation's warring parties by stirring up a series of unanimous groans.

chronicle@colum.edu

'Man of the Year'
Directed by Barry Levinson



Robin Williams stars in the new film 'Man of the Year.' Williams plays a political talk show host who decides to run for president.

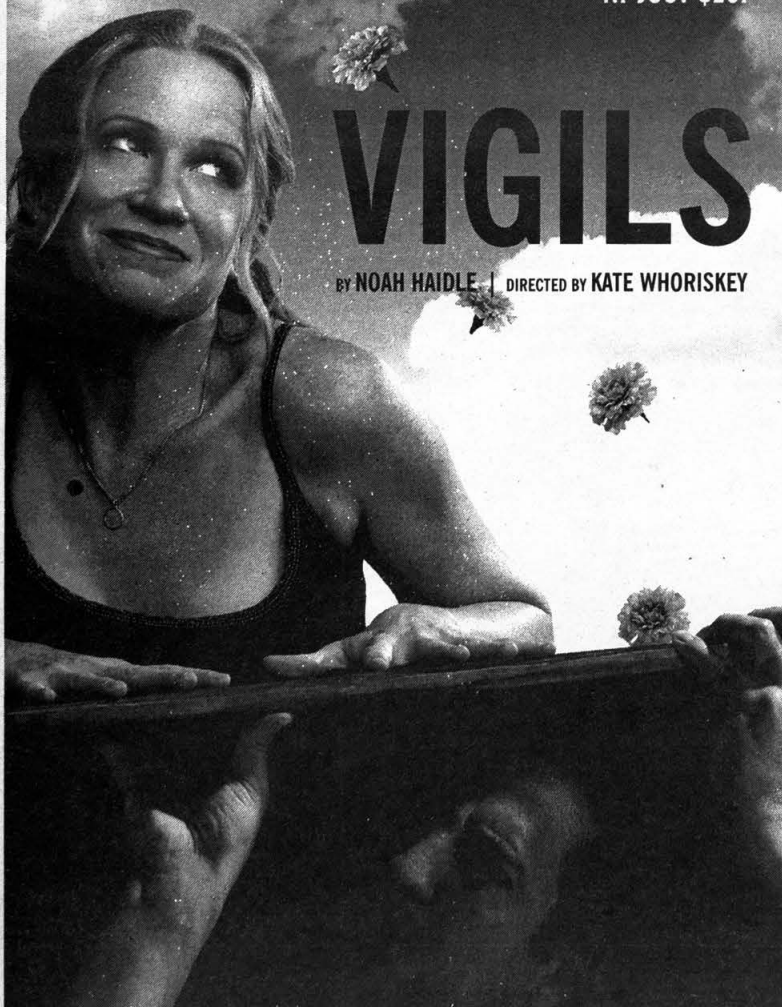
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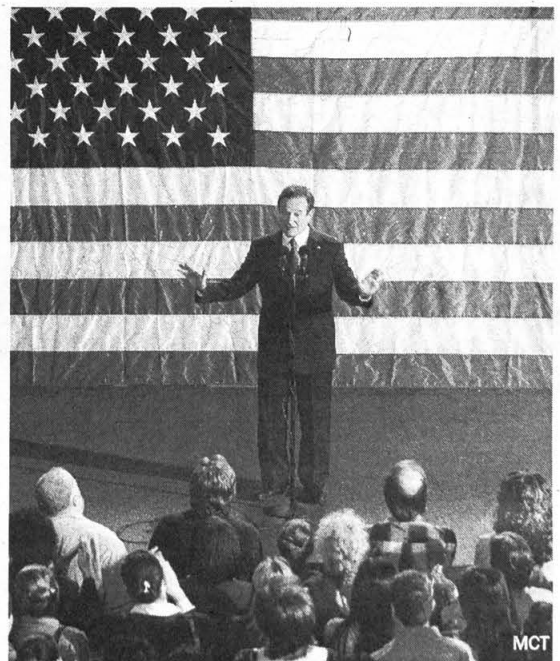
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'Man of the Year' is in theaters now.



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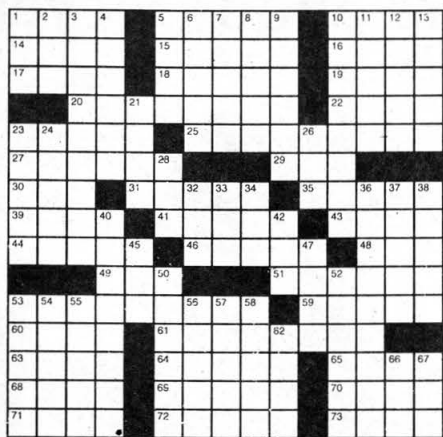
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Crossword

- ACROSS
- 1 Small fry
 - 5 "The Trial" author
 - 10 Lead actor
 - 14 Pouting face
 - 15 Arrivederci, Andre
 - 16 Niger's neighbor
 - 17 Braided string
 - 18 Robert and Alan
 - 19 Leave out
 - 20 Result of division
 - 22 Org. of Gulbis and Creamer
 - 23 Mired
 - 25 Denim pants
 - 27 Courters
 - 29 Bobbsey twin
 - 30 Cycle starter?
 - 31 Vaulted recesses
 - 35 "Imus in the Morning" channel
 - 39 Shuttle grp.
 - 41 Streisand film
 - 43 Dyeing vat
 - 44 Flash of light
 - 46 Perpendicular
 - 48 Gun lobby, letters
 - 49 Gangster's gun
 - 51 Bellybuttons
 - 53 Fairway hazards
 - 59 Ceremonies
 - 60 B.C. or Ont.
 - 61 Death notice
 - 63 Church court
 - 64 Floor shiner
 - 65 Spurt
 - 68 Part of OAS
 - 69 "Skittle Players" painter
 - 70 Black as pitch
 - 71 Chore
 - 72 Cries out
 - 73 Ann and Ang
- DOWN
- 1 HBO rival
 - 2 Tic-tac-toe win
 - 3 Blue mineral
 - 4 Act alluring
 - 5 Former Twins pitcher
 - 6 Impromptu
 - 7 Castro of Cuba
 - 8 Actor Reeves
 - 9 "Northanger Abbey" author
 - 10 Dnieper port
 - 11 Florida port
 - 12 True up
 - 13 Dove and Rudner
 - 21 Gumbo ingredient
 - 23 Took a swat
 - 24 Of sound
 - 26 Tight spot
 - 28 Mata Hari or 007
 - 32 Calendar-watch abbr.
 - 33 Pic blowup
 - 34 R-V contents
 - 36 XCI
 - 37 Uncle Miltie
 - 38 Boorish
 - 40 Termite eater
 - 42 K-O connection
 - 45 Witty remark
 - 47 Theda of silent movies
 - 50 Heavy-lidded
 - 52 "Aeneid" author
 - 53 Fat avoider of rhyme
 - 54 Smell
 - 55 Observes
 - 56 Die down
 - 57 Video image unit
 - 58 Skyscraper guts
 - 62 Samovars
 - 66 A. Godfrey's instrument
 - 67 Herndon and Cobb

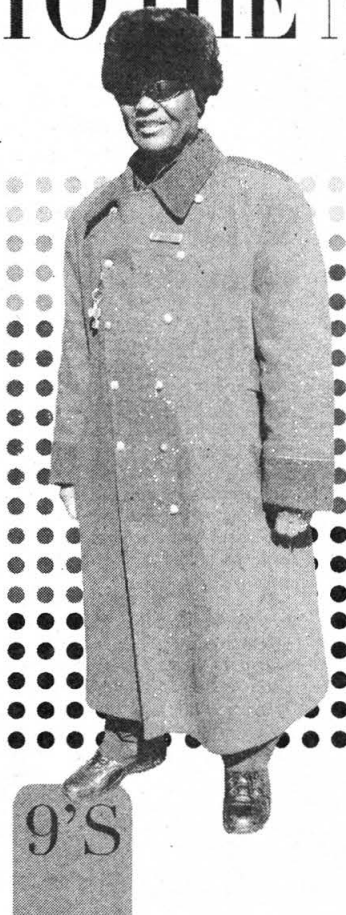


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Solutions



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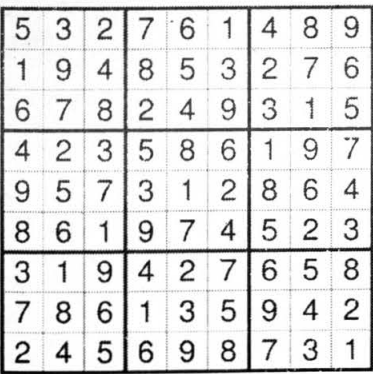
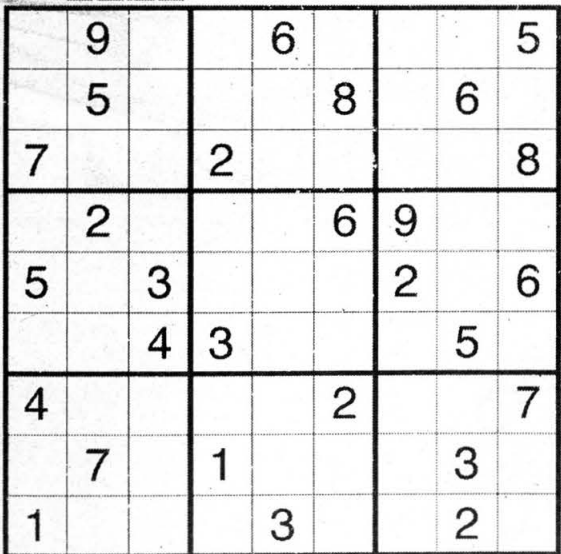


Wilson Gordon of Evanston has been a door person at the Hilton Hotel, 720 S. Michigan Ave., for 20 years. He describes his style as "not dressy, just casual," but it really shines when the cold weather hits. Gordon stands out from the crowd in his stylish red coat and fuzzy black hat, standard for door people at the Hilton. Both the hat and coat have a distinctly Russian flair; Gordon doesn't know why that is, but he likes it. And it keeps him nice and warm. "When it gets cold, man, you gotta wear 'em," Gordon said.

Rachael Strecher/The Chronicle

Sudoku By Michael Mephram

Level: 1 2 3 4



Complete the grid so each row, column and 3-by-3 box (in bold borders) contains every digit 1 to 9. For strategies on how to solve Sudoku, visit www.sudoku.org.uk.
Sudoku on Mobile. Enter 783658.com in your mobile Web browser. Get a free game! Some carrier charges may apply.

Horoscopes by Hunter Clauss

-  **Aquarius** (Jan. 21 — Feb. 19): Why must you be the screen door on this submarine called life?
-  **Aries** (March 21 — April 20): Fun times are ahead for you on this rocky sea of self-loathing depression. During an upcoming trip to Medieval Times, you will actually travel back in time to witness some shitty jousting fest.
-  **Sagittarius** (Nov. 23 — Dec. 21): The best thing about finding your true love is knowing that you'll shatter his life when you dump him.
-  **Leo** (July 24 — Aug. 23): Your dinner-plate nipples will continue to grow faster than the amount of money Columbia loses in the bureaucratic machine known as higher education. Tweak those black holes of sensation!
-  **Libra** (Sept. 24 — Oct. 23): Your main source of exercise this week will mostly be concentrated on running away from the cops after an altercation involving a whack-a-mole game and your butt.
-  **Cancer** (June 22 — July 23): Coming home one evening leads to a soul-searching confrontation with your roommate, who has spent the last six months constructing a beehive wig out of your pubic hairs. The roommate answers the easy question by saying she is selling it to a Rosie O'Donnell impersonator. The hard question—how they got the hairs—is something you'll have to sit down to hear.
-  **Pisces** (Feb. 20 — March 20): During a party you'll notice that many of the women there are shaped like Danny Devito as the Penguin from *Batman Returns*.
-  **Taurus** (April 21 — May 21): Purchasing a magical dildo from a mystical shaman will spell good times when you, ah, rub it three times to learn it harbors a genie.
-  **Scorpio** (Oct. 24 — Nov. 22): The end of your game is coming when your friends figure out that your shoes aren't to blame for that weird noise you make every time you walk. When confronted, just be honest and tell them you can't help it if you fart while you walk. Also point out the fact that you're leaving it somewhere else for people to smell. In the end, they'll understand.
-  **Virgo** (Aug. 24 — Sept. 23): A newfound life as a debutante will be filled with mystery, intrigue and gross amounts of hot dog eating.
-  **Capricorn** (Dec. 22 — Jan. 20): Your pants this week will have an acceptance rate on par with Columbia, which will then cause you to become a future case study in STDs for the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention. Can you say, "oral syphilis warts"?
-  **Gemini** (May 22 — June 21): Using a yellow Lance Armstrong bracelet as a cock ring doesn't really mean you're insensitive. It just means you have poor taste in cock rings.

West coasters care more about recycling



By Brent Steven White
Assistant A&E Editor

Cans, bottles and plastics line the streets on West Belmont where I live. Every day I step over various forms of garbage while on my way to the train.

To someone who was raised in the Pacific Northwest—one of the most gorgeous areas of the country—Chicago is filthy and foul.

It recently occurred to me that Chicagoans collectively possess a strong disinterest in the environment and have a general lack of concern for city cleanliness. This is disconcerting.

Don't get me wrong—I love Chicago. I love the people too. Generally speaking, however, the citizens of this city care less about the environment and keeping the city clean than the people of Portland, Ore., (where I'm from) do. This needs to change.

Take curbside recycling. For the past 10 years, Chicagoans have been asked to put their plastics, cans, bottles and paper bags into blue bags, and place them into their ordinary garbage. But the blue-bag program has failed to even make a dent in citywide recycling.

The Chicago Sun-Times reported in April that only 13 percent of Chicago residents participate in the blue-bag program, and that a dismal 8 percent of the items recovered have actually been recycled. But in the Portland metropolitan area, every household and business is provided with two recycling bins, and the

participation among citizens far exceeds that of Chicago.

According to Bruce Walker, manager of Solid Waste & Recycling for Portland, close to 90 percent of the city's citizens participate in city-wide recycling. And the cost of recycling to Portland households is only \$3.66 per-month, which is included in their monthly garbage bills.

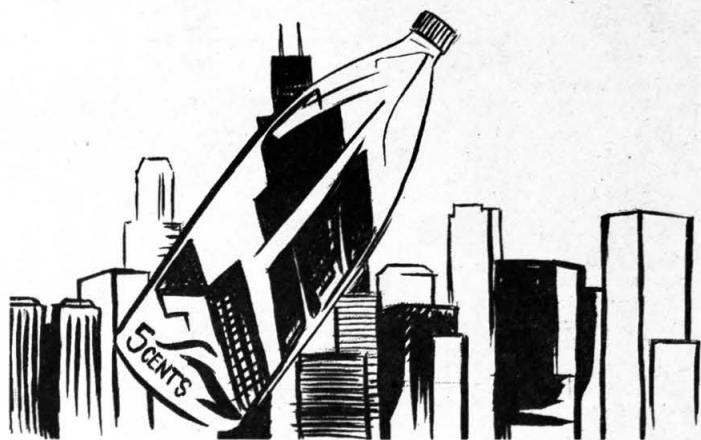
In Chicago, the blue-bag program costs the city an estimated \$70 million per year, or about \$5.8 million per month. And while mathematically Portlanders spend more for recycling, it's available to everyone, unlike Chicago's blue-bag system, which only reaches 700,000 households, or one third of the population.

Having lived—and recycled—in both areas, I attribute this polarity to the differing attitudes that exist among Chicagoans and Portlanders. But the differing attitudes go beyond personal attitudes and beliefs, and are instead rooted in the collective social consciousness. In plain terms, the city of Portland, as a whole, cares more.

And why shouldn't they? Not only does the city of Portland provide curbside recycling to everyone, it rewards people financially for recycling cans and bottles at stores. Oregon pays recyclers 5 cents for every bottle and can recycled. Why doesn't Illinois adopt a similar program?

The numbers say it all—people here just care less, thus a financial incentive to recycle in this state would likely generate low interest from citizens.

But I'm optimistic for the future. Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley has shown some attention to the issue of



Joshua Covarrubias/The Chronicle

resource management with pilot curbside recycling programs in a couple of Chicago neighborhoods. In Beverly, on the South Side, a yearlong experiment generated 80 percent participation from residents. In addition, the pilot curbside recycling program will reportedly be expanded to involve seven to-be-determined wards next year.

And Daley's administration has created drop-off centers in 15 neighborhoods where citizens can drop off their paper, cans and bottles. So, even though the blue-bag system has been a complete failure for the mayor, clearly the issue of conservation is being addressed on the local level.

But the opportunity for real change—a

curbside recycling program like the one we have in Portland—rests on the shoulders of the citizens of Chicago. They need to call for change. They need to take action. Few things are as important as the environment and the Earth. And just because Portlanders statistically care more about about recycling, it doesn't mean that more Chicagoans can't do their part and pitch in.

While writing local and state representatives, the mayor and signing petitions from conservation groups are good places to start, real change starts at the bottom. This is the reason why resource management is so successful where I'm from: Local and state governments care, but the residents care more.

Roamin' Numerals

10 Age of a Pennsylvania boy who refused to ride with his parents on Oct. 18, fearing for his safety after his parents were drinking and driving, according to UPI. The parents, Kenneth Sutton, 41, and Paula, 40, of Monaca, Pa., have been charged with DUI and child endangerment. A motorist called the police after he saw the boy leaving the scene.

15 The number of hours prior to a lethal injection that a Texas death row inmate committed suicide. Michael Dewayne Johnson, 29, slit his arm and throat with a blade making him first prisoner in Texas to kill himself so close to a scheduled execution according to the Associated Press. Johnson was set to die after gunning down Jeff Wetterman in 1995 at a gas station near Waco.

18 Age of a teenager who drank 24 cans of lager beer, 1 liter of Sambuca and one and a half liters of vodka, while still managing to wake up the next morning, according to the Sun Newspaper on Oct. 19. Steve Weber woke up in a cell and told police he drank so much after his girlfriend left him for another man.

Ariel ain't so cool anymore



By Tiffany Breyne
Managing Editor

As a little girl, I always watched *The Little Mermaid* and thought about how pretty and cool Ariel was. She had long, flowing red hair, which I've always had a fascination with, got to live under the sea, and had a gorgeous man—

who was also a prince!—and a loving group of family and friends. She had the life, and I was insanely jealous.

That's why I was so excited that the movie was making a comeback in the form of an awesome two-disc set a couple weeks ago. Yet last weekend, when I finally had time to sit down and watch the magical animation, I came to a different conclusion—Ariel was a naïve idiot. From my much older and wiser viewpoint of a soon to be 22-year-old, I realized Ariel was nothing but a 16-year-old hottie with a puppy love crush on a horny, flute-playing prince. I suddenly discovered that one of my favorite childhood movies didn't teach me anything worthwhile. I learned nothing about love, nothing about learning from my mistakes and nothing about the value of friendship.

How could I have been so mistaken all this time? My little mind used to dream of the day my cute prince would take me away and we'd live happily

ever after in his awesome mansion with butlers and fancy meals available 24/7. Now, though, after seeing the movie and seriously thinking about the actual moral of the story, this is all I could come up with:

Disobey your father and run away from home.

Ariel repeatedly rebelled against her father by keeping human artifacts like globes and silverware in a secret cave and going up to the surface of the ocean. She didn't show up to an underwater ceremony honoring her in front of the whole mermaid

kingdom. Ariel even decided to get rid of her fins and leave home without telling her father. She had this "I do what I want" attitude that I now find obnoxious and bratty. Realistically,

Ariel wouldn't have a chance at surviving such a life change.

This brings me to my next point.

Hang out with sketchy people and let them steal parts of your identity. Ariel wanted to be with the love of her life, and that was never going to happen with those sweet

little green fins of hers. The solution to her problem? Go to

the dark lair of the evil Ursula and sign your life away while some creepy eel characters lurk in the background. If this was a realistic version, Ariel would be little Lisa buying crack in the alley to look cool in front of her mysterious crush.



Joshua Covarrubias/The Chronicle

Lure men you don't know into loving you. Prince Eric was on a boat with that old guy, his cute furry dog, his flute and other sailors when Ariel laid eyes on him, fell in love and decided to change her life forever. Ariel didn't know anything about this guy, and she was willing to change herself and use her good looks to make him fall for her. Maybe this is why girls end up in the news after meeting some creep they fell in "love" with over the Internet.

I realize that not everything about the movie is negative. It teaches that friends and family will always be there, and that even when things get tough in life, they can get better. My biggest upset is Ariel—in the end, the girl doesn't solve any problems on her own and she still gets what she wants.

My 3-year-old sister loves any Disney movie with a princess, like Cinderella and Snow White, and at such an impressionable age, I don't want her admiration going toward a helpless cause like Ariel. I'm on a mission to point her and others in the right direction so that years down the road when she watches the movie again she doesn't feel the same dissatisfaction with Ariel that I do now. Lord knows we don't need more rebellious daughters running away to hang out with weirdos and strange men.

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Editorials

Jobs blow anywhere you go

Last week The Chronicle ran a story about University Center RAs' frustration with the increase in office hours. Some RAs felt they were spending more time doing office and reception work than interacting with students and striving for a better residence life at the University Center, even though those extra hours were required since this fall.

With the beginning of the fall semester, the University Center added five mandatory service hours a week to RA responsibilities.

Janice Johnson, the executive director of the University Center, told The Chronicle there was a miscommunication about the hours. RAs are expected to complete 1.5 day duty hours and five service hours, Johnson said. Day duty is time the RAs serve accommodating residents needs during day-time as opposed to night time, which is the norm. Some RAs thought that the 1.5 hours counted as part of the service hours, which is where the confusion arose.

"Everything we do here is providing the best community and environment for our students," Johnson told The Chronicle. "It's not easy to be an RA here at the University Center."

Of course we empathize with the RAs—they are college students just like us—and in addition, they have to deal with drunken freshmen and drama on a regualry.

However, it's common knowledge by now that disgruntled workers are everywhere. Of course, on paper, the job description of an RA is to facilitate interaction between students, and in addition, according to the story, "over-seeing meetings, programs and activities, community development, peer advising, duty coverage and a floor of students."

Unhappy workers can't work well with others—it is just bad karma. But we can't simply choose an "us vs. them" mentality—a compromise should be reached between management and the RAs.

"We increased the stipends and increased the meal plans and we looked as that all together as an overall compensation for all the employees," Johnson told The Chronicle.

While we think that U.S. Equities Realty, the Chicago-based real estate firm that monitors all residents and staff including the hiring of the 36 RAs working at the University Center, is playing it cheap by giving students more work, the RAs did sign up for this on their own accord. Further, two RAs have quit recently.

It's understandable that U.S. Equities feels justified for giving more office, assistant-like work because the students do get free room and board. But that is also counterproductive to what an RA's

job should be.

On one hand, RAs gain valuable experience interacting with a lot of students and using problem solving. While people skills are good to put on a resume, there comes a time when it's necessary to suck it up and deal with it.

Despite all the problems that RAs have to deal with on top of maintaining a 2.5 GPA, and getting paid less than minimum wage, RAs must realize that many students work. It's a matter of commitment to your job. Nothing that is free is easy—including free room and board.

"I couldn't work for someone who felt like they can just abuse me for profit," said Andy Costello, the sophomore music major who quit two weeks ago after more hours were loaded onto his plate.

There is nothing wrong with business. However, treating the position of an RA by dropping a load of office work on students seems stressful and it takes away from creating a positive learning environment. Perhaps the University Center should hire more student RAs in addition to the ones they already have.

Yes, it will cost more, but isn't it a business rule to keep the workers happy and the business will stay happy? We know more employees means more costs—but the University Center should facilitate some better dis-course.

A 'critical' predicament

This year marked the start of Critical Encounters, a college-wide initiative meant to educate the college community on global issues. This year Critical Encounters is concentrating on HIV/AIDS issues.

In an effort to raise awareness, free STD tests were performed last week. But with the seriousness of the disease along with the anxiety that come with taking those tests, it's a shame that many students showed up but weren't accommodated.

"Here's a test you don't have to study for," fliers promoting STD testing at the Residence Center, 731 S. Plymouth Court, said.

While Critical Encounters is a wonderful way to create awareness, particularly when it comes to AIDS, something is amiss when the college can't accommodate students during free STD and HIV testing—especially when it was advertised campuswide.

When the time came for the Oct. 11 testing, only 12

students were tested—the rest were turned away.

Granted, if this was a bake sale, perhaps it would be understandable that some accommodations couldn't be made—running out of cookies and milk happens to everyone. But this was an advertised free STD and HIV test, and when students came out, having already battled through the fears that are associated with getting tested for a life-threatening disease, they were turned away.

Talk about making people feel like crap.

Last fall, 40 students signed up for screens, and, even in a cynical world, perhaps accommodating at least 40 students rather than 12 seems logical. This should have been handled better. Granted raising awareness and providing valuable services for 12 students in a school of 11,500 is ridiculous. But turning kids away when they come seems like a poor effort in addressing the issue.

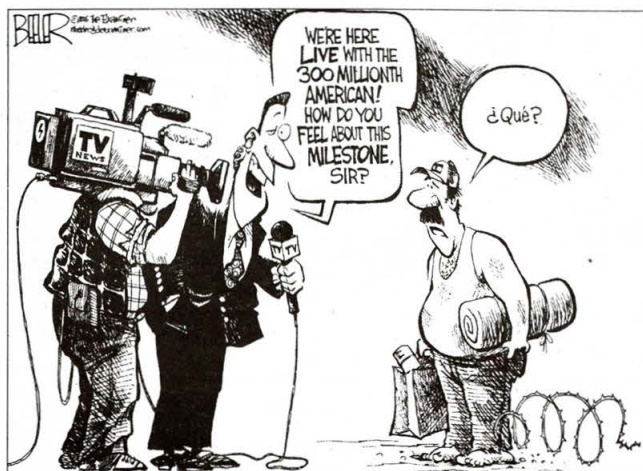
There were nearly 1,300

reported HIV cases in Illinois in 2005, according to the Illinois Department of Public Health, and HIV/AIDS is a huge problem that the college community must protect itself against, particularly since people under 25 make up 50 percent of all new HIV cases in the U.S.

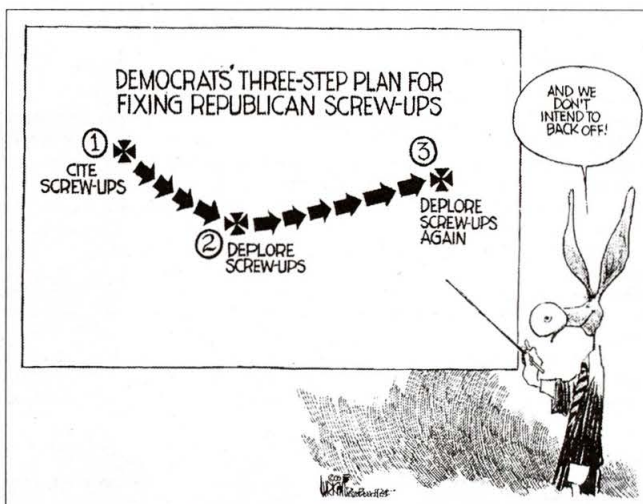
To remedy this mishap, Columbia will partner with Working for Togetherness to screen for AIDS/HIV in a Hummer on Nov. 30 and Dec. 1 and students can get test results within 20 minutes. However, it takes courage to take an AIDS test, especially in public. The performed tests were oral-swab HIV screens, along with gonorrhea and chlamydia urine tests. While positive results from swab tests are not definitive indicators of having an STD, they still mean you should go to the doctor.

While we don't think Columbia needs Bono's help to raise awareness yet, what kind of awareness is Columbia really achieving?

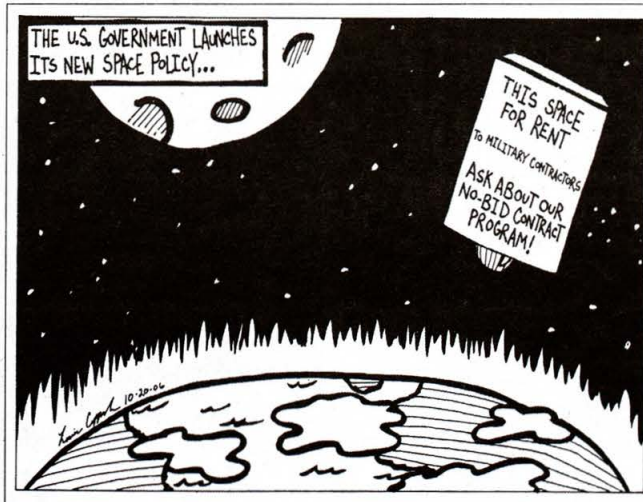
Back from the Drawing Boards



Nate Beeler/MCT



Dan Wright/MCT



Louis Coppola/MCT

Have an opinion about something you read on these pages? Did you catch a mistake, think we could have covered a story better or believe strongly about an issue that faces all of us here at Columbia?

Why not write a Letter to the Editor? At the bottom of Page 31 you'll find a set of guidelines on how to do this. Let us hear from you.

—The Columbia Chronicle Editorial Board

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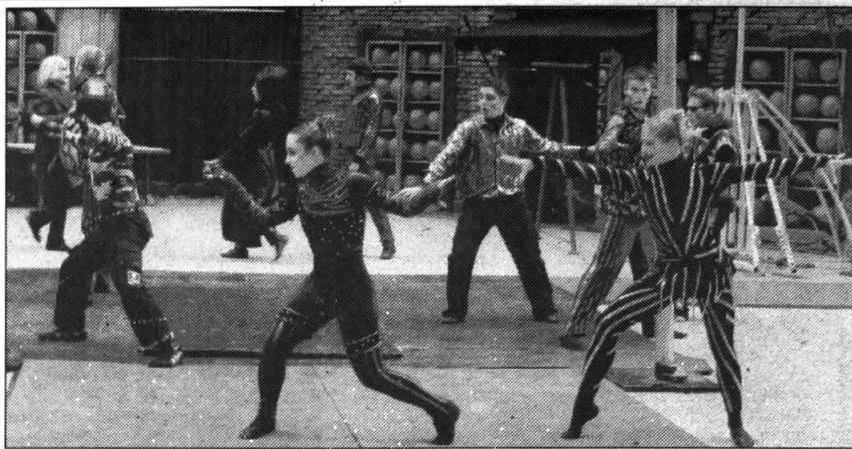
 Authorized Campus Store

**Annual October
Chicagoween fest
now at Daley Plaza**

By Rashauna C. Hull
Staff Writer

The 'circus' performances include dancing, high-flying aerial entertainment and fire and knife juggling. Six Mongolian girls between the ages of 7 and 11 were recently added as contortionists in the circus.

The International Academy of Design and Technology Fashion Council offers mask making as a new activity this year. Visitors can



Mauricio Rubio/The Chronicle

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Left: Ivana Ivanova of the Midnight Circus hypes up the crowd on Oct. 18. Right: Members of the Midnight Circus show off freaky moves.



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Campus crime stats can be misleading

Chicago totals vary in urban campus environments

By Allison Riggio
Assistant City Beat Editor

Ever since a tragic 1986 murder on a Pennsylvania campus, colleges and universities across the country are required to submit crime rates to the federal government each year. Some experts, however, say this information might be skewed under the provisions of the law.

Jeanne Clery was a 19-year-old college freshman who was raped and murdered in her dorm room at Lehigh University. Clery's parents found out the university had nearly 40 violent crimes reported on campus in the three years prior to their daughter's death and lobbied Congress to enact the 1990 law that now requires federally funded colleges and universities to provide three consecutive years of crime statistics to students.

The Jeanne Clery Act requires schools to report all crimes that occurred on or near campus, and the numbers generally appear on each school's website. Schools are also expected to make a "good faith" effort to gather reports from local police, according to S. Daniel Carter, senior vice president for Security On Campus, Inc., a nonprofit grassroots organization founded by Clery's parents.

Since schools are not technically obligated by law to include crime statistics from local police—only to request the numbers from officials—totals can often be skewed. Colleges and universities that do obtain such numbers can appear to have higher crime rates than those that do not, according to Dolores Stafford, chief of police at George Washington University.

Stafford is considered an expert on the Clery Act, according to Christopher Blake, associate director for the International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators.

"Most institutions are in compliance and are doing what they can to gather the required statistics," Stafford said in an e-mail. "The fact is that some local police departments don't, or won't, provide the requested statistics and they are not under any legal obligation to provide them. If the institution requests the statistics, they have done all they can."

Many Chicago colleges and universities did include police totals of crimes near their campuses for 2005. According to DePaul University's director of public safety, Bob Wachowski, it is important to remember that not all victims counted in the school's statistics are necessarily students, since the victim is unknown when crime numbers are received from police. These incidents are included because the crime occurred near the campus, regardless of the victims' affiliation to the school.

In 2005 a young man was shot

Wachowski said he isn't worried about its effect on the school's safety image.

"[That incident was] adjacent to our property," Wachowski said. "I report it all. It doesn't matter to me. The whole purpose is letting the students know that something happened. That way they have a sense of what's going on around them when they go out in the neighborhood."

DePaul's Lincoln Park campus also saw a spike in burglaries, which Wachowski said is likely a result of police reports

tistics, according to Northwestern's assistant chief of university police, Dan McAleer.

Northwestern has its own police department, McAleer said in an e-mail, so the institution might see higher crimes reported directly to its own police unit, rather than Evanston police.

Stressing this point, he added that if a person was the victim of a crime on the school's campus and tried reporting it to Evanston police, the victim would actually be referred back

residences of people who have no affiliation to the university."

Because of variables such as neighborhood crime rate increases, Clery Act statistics should not be used as the final word in a school's overall safety, according to Carter.

"We're working, along with the U.S. Departments of Education and Justice and other groups, to better educate schools about how the Clery Act works and their obligations under it," Carter said. "Steady progress on this front is being made and in the next couple of years we hope to have eliminated much of these types of discrepancies between schools."

Carter also noted that the Clery Act may not be the best way to compare colleges or universities on the same level, since so many variables do exist.

"The Clery Act statistics aren't necessarily best used for a horse race comparison," Carter said. "The Clery data should serve as a starting point in understanding that crime happens on a given campus, and what type, and generally where to help prevent future crime."

One key factor in ensuring the accuracy of Clery statistics is encouraging students to report any crimes to authorities. Bob Fitzpatrick, assistant vice president for campus safety and transportation at Roosevelt University, said he trains resident assistants each year in how to handle student crime reporting in residence halls.

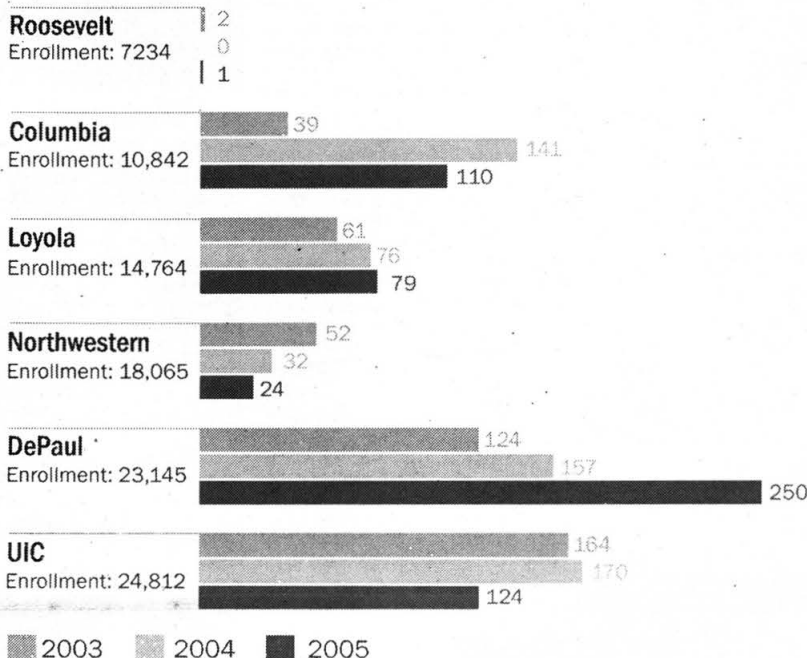
"Many times students aren't going to necessarily report [a crime] to a campus safety officer or the police, they're going to talk to their [resident assistant]," Fitzpatrick said. "We're going to protect the confidentiality of the individual involved, but unless we know about it, we can't help them."

Clery Act expert Stafford agrees that though students can't be forced to report crimes, it is imperative in ensuring the most truthful statistics possible are reported by schools.

"Each victim of a crime has the right to decide whether or not they are going to report the crime, not just at colleges, but anywhere in the country," Stafford said. "We all know that more crimes are committed each year than are reported, but all law enforcement can do is disclose the reported crimes."

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Reported crime stats overall for various schools in 2005.



Included are crimes against persons: murder, sex offenses, robbery, assault/battery; and crimes against property: burglary, arson, motor vehicle theft. Note enrollment is graduate and undergraduate for 2005, on all various campuses of each school.

Joshua Covarrubias/The Chronicle

and killed near the Taste of Chicago, and since the murder occurred in the vicinity of DePaul's campus, it was included as a crime in the school's annual statistics, Wachowski said. The victim was not a student, and the incident occurred during the summer, he added.

This is the only major Chicago college or university to cite a murder in 2005, however,

from residents of the neighborhood, not DePaul students.

Like DePaul's Lincoln Park campus, Northwestern University sometimes endures higher crime rates than other Chicago-area schools because of nearby neighborhoods. Many residential crimes reported to local police are close enough to the campus to warrant reporting them in the college's crime sta-

to Northwestern police to handle the matter. Other Chicago schools may not be subject to this type of jurisdiction, he said, and may not field as many crime reports.

"Because many of our students live, or traverse off campus, we try to provide a picture of crime off campus," McAleer said. "Thus, some crimes reported may have occurred in private

Green: Petition signatures force candidate off November ballot

Continued from Back Page

the Democrats pushed to have her name rejected from the ballot because of allegedly invalid signatures.

Her party attempted to validate the signatures, but given the massive amount of time it would take to have thousands of affidavits signed for verification, the Green Party ran out of time, and as of now, will not be on the Nov. 7 ballot.

"This is the way established parties keep third parties off the ballot," said Cummings.

According to Andrew Spiegel, Cummings' attorney, the Green Party candidate submitted 3,494 signatures to the Illinois State

Board of Elections on June 26.

Exceeding the petition requirements is a common tactic by third parties to combat nomination petition investigation.

"That's the rule for third parties," Spiegel said. "Always get double the amounts of signatures you need."

On July 3, Soto's party challenged 2,440 signatures on Cummings' nominating petition, claiming the signatures on the petition did not match the ones on the signers' voter registration cards, Spiegel said.

"There are a number of reasons to challenge another party's petitions," said Tom Leach, spokesman for the Chicago Election Board. "The other party may not have enough registered voters, they may have forged the signatures; it is about having enough legitimate signatures."

Cummings said she, along with the opposing attorney Michael Kasper and a Chicago Election Board hearing officer, reviewed hundreds of nomination petitions.

Kasper previously had unsuccessfully attempted to knock Green Party gubernatorial candidate Rich Whitney off the ballot for the Democratic Party.

The hearing officer rejected nearly 2,000 signatures and removed Cummings from the ballot.

Cummings then proceeded to file an appeal before Chicago Board of Elections Commission's Terence Flynn. During the appeal Cummings and her staff went door-to-door to get affidavits signed.

On Aug. 2, Cummings' case was thrown out. Flynn declared Cummings had only 1,518 valid signatures, 13 shy of the requirement.

Cummings still hopes to get her name on the ballot.

"We are currently trying to get the Illinois Supreme Court to hear the case," Spiegel said. "It is hard to tell whether it will be heard or not."

"Elections are competitive," said Jay Stewart, executive direc-



Keith Bishton/The Chronicle

Kathleen Cummings, the Illinois state representative 4th district Green Party candidate, is fighting to get her name on the ballot.

tor of the Better Government Association, a nonpartisan government watchdog group. "For a campaign, parties will take any step to win, and the best opponent is one that is not running."

The political bar is set higher for candidates running for the first time versus incumbents.

Incumbents who received 5 per-

cent of the votes in the last election only need 500 signatures to maintain their position on the ballot.

"With our signatures, we showed that over 3,000 people wanted another party in the election, some of whom said they didn't even want to vote for me," said Cummings. "That's democracy."

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Andersonville's vow: area not selling out

Proposal to ban chain retailers from certain locales

By Jonathan E. Briggs/MCT

For years, the Andersonville neighborhood on Chicago's Far North Side has been defined by its quirky, hip, one-of-a-kind shops and eateries: Women and Children First bookstore. Ann Sather restaurant. Wikstrom's Gourmet Foods. Alamo Shoes.

Now as the once-struggling neighborhood becomes a hot destination for residents and shoppers—and large corporations take notice—some local business leaders and politicians are considering a drastic attempt to lock in the area's charm: the city's first-ever ban on chain retailers.

According to a draft ordinance by the city Law Department, "formula businesses" such as Starbucks could be banned from designated business districts in certain historic neighborhoods.

The ordinance has not yet been introduced. But if it were to make its way through the City Council successfully, qualifying neighborhoods could decide whether to opt in to the ban.

Proponents got the idea from San Francisco and smaller cities where similar measures are in effect.

The proposal's backers point to a 2004 study that found that for every \$100 spent with an Andersonville business, \$68 remains in Chicago, compared

to \$43 with a chain store.

But some property owners—including some retailers—are balking at the idea, arguing that it would unnecessarily restrict property rights.

Andersonville is not chain-free. It has a Starbucks, a UPS store and an Einstein Brothers Bagels. But for the ban's supporters, it's a matter of proportion.

"One Einstein Brothers Bagels isn't going to harm the neighborhood, but if we started getting a density of them, then our whole character changes," said Ellen Shepard, executive director of the Andersonville Chamber of Commerce.

The concept of banning Borders, The Gap and their ilk is no doubt provocative in light of the "big-box" minimum wage ordinance vetoed last month by Mayor Richard Daley, who con-

"The novelty (of Andersonville) is about history, local people, the stories. If you eliminate the stories, you're Anywhere, America."

—Thom Greene, architect who designed the Clark Street streetscape

So far the Daley administration has no position on the so-called "formula retail" ordinance. Alderman Mary Ann Smith, one of the proponents of the ban, said much work remains to be done. If an ordinance ultimately is introduced in the City Council, she said, it

could be months from now.

But the idea is already stirring debate in tight-knit Andersonville.

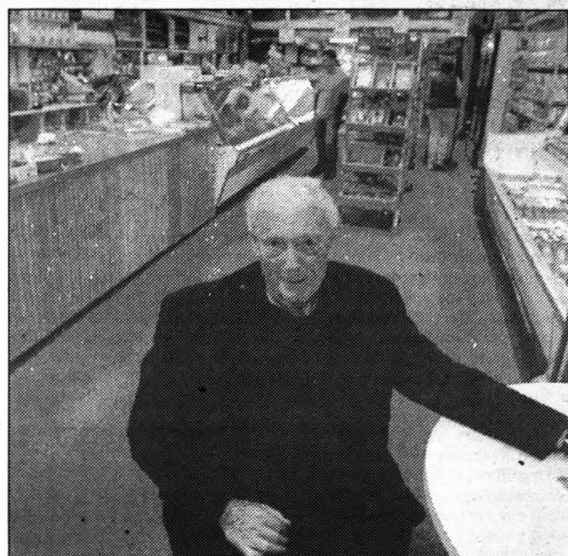
Some merchants support the concept, contending that it will help preserve the distinct retail flavor of Andersonville, but are against a citywide ban.

Ann Christophersen, owner of Women and Children First, 5233 N. Clark St., said she would prefer a measure like that in San Francisco, which allows varying regulations in each neighborhood. Some neighborhoods there have banned chain stores entirely.

But building owners faced with rising real estate taxes are opposed to the proposal, because they wouldn't be able to rent to chain-store merchants, who often can pay more. They argue that the best defense against chain stores is to create an environment for independent retailers to thrive.

What both sides agree to is this: Andersonville has a "sense of place" worth preserving.

The neighborhood's roots date to the mid-19th century, when immigrant Swedish farmers moved into what was then a distant suburb. Settlement was sparse until the Great Fire of 1871, when the log cabins preferred by city-dwelling Swedish immigrants were outlawed within Chicago's boundaries.



MCT

Ingvar Wikstrom's business, Wikstrom's Gourmet Foods, Inc., 5247 N. Clark St., adds local flavor to Andersonville.

The immigrants soon migrated north, settling into homes around Clark Street and opening delis, hardware stores, bakeries and other businesses.

The neighborhood, which is officially part of Edgewater and Uptown, slid into a decades-long decline after the Great Depression. Swedes began to move to the suburbs after World War II and Clark Street became littered with empty storefronts.

Though local business leaders rededicated Andersonville to its Swedish roots in the 1960s, disinvestment again plagued its commercial district in the 1980s.

Business owners again rallied and with the help of locally-owned banks, provided financing for start-ups and to market the community. The effort resurrected Clark Street, and

Andersonville's residential areas became fashionable again.

"The novelty (of Andersonville) is about history, local people, the stories," said Thom Greene, an architect who designed the Clark Street streetscape. "If you eliminate the stories, you're Anywhere America."

But Marianne Candido, who owns a three-flat on Clark Street with a Specialty Video store on the first floor, said the ban would violate property rights.

"The government tells me that I can't discriminate who I rent to on the upper floors as long as they meet the economics," Candido said. "But on the bottom part, they're going to tell me, 'Sorry, not these bigger chain stores. You have to rent to mom-and-pop and they may or may not be able to pay the rent.'"

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MCT

People strolling on Clark Street in Chicago's Andersonville area. City officials are thinking about imposing bans on retail chains in certain historic neighborhoods.

Budget: CTA riders voice concerns about new projects

Continued from Back Page

percent higher than in 2005. He also noted in the increased budget the appearance of higher costs in the CTA's injuries and damage fund as well as substantially increased wages due to a labor arbitration award over the summer. Labor accounts for 70 percent of the CTA's entire operating budget.

Additionally, the budget forecast for 2009 project a significant jump in public funding needed, something CTA officials said will be dealt with when the time comes.

Despite this year's fare increase to \$2, rail system ridership has continued to grow while bus ridership declined. Overall, CTA ridership slowly surpassed 2005's ridership by 1 percent, or 5 million rides, according to the budget recommendations.

At the beginning of the CTA's meeting, South Side resident Dorothy Harris spoke during the public comment portion. Harris said she is fed up with the CTA's irregular service and dirty, overcrowded buses in the South Loop.

"For the longest time, the transit riders in the area have not been getting the service we deserve," Harris said vehemently to the board members. "[There are] dirty buses that come infrequently and when they do their 'packed to capacity.'"

Kruesi said after the meeting that the CTA is working to install and upgrade a better tracking sys-

tem to help pinpoint buses and provide more accurate due times for buses and trains, but said riders would not see the benefits for at least a year.

South Loop resident and bus rider Kathryn McKechnie agreed with Harris that the buses in the South Loop are infrequent at best. McKechnie, who takes the bus to school at the Illinois Institute of Art, 350 N. Orleans St., said sometimes the buses don't even stop when they go by.

"The other day I got on the bus after waiting 25 minutes and there were three other in a row behind it," McKechnie said. "The buses seem to travel with a pack mentality."

McKechnie said the CTA problems have remained the same since she moved to the area in 1997. She said she doesn't understand what the CTA's problem is, but wouldn't be opposed to another fare hike as long as better service could be guaranteed.

Lincoln Park resident Laura Norris said she opposes another hike because the CTA needs to make better use of its money before it asks the public for more. Norris, a regular Red Line rider, said just about every day there's some track work or glitch in the system that delays service.

"They've got all these problems with service all the time, but they're still starting new projects," Norris said. "Maybe instead of opening the new Pink Line, the CTA should've used some of that money to fix something rather than making something else that will need to be fixed in the future."

The problems for Norris and other Red and Blue Line riders might get even worse starting Oct.



Michael Jarecki/The Chronicle

Chicago resident Dorothy Harris speaks to CTA board members during a CTA board meeting on Oct. 18. Harris was upset about the bus system being unclear and unavailable to the South Side of the city during rush hour times.

23. At midnight, the CTA closed both the Red and Blue Line Washington Street el stations for two years. The closure is part of a renovation that will connect the subways to a planned rapid transit station within a new shopping center development at the famously dormant Block 37, 108 N. State St.

Aside from the Block 37 development, the CTA has had numerous problems with the Brown Line renovations and may face repercussions from the Blue Line derailment this past July that hospitalized many riders. On Oct. 17 dozens of passengers involved in the accident filed a lawsuit against the transit authority.

CTA chairman Carole L. Brown said after the meeting that the new budget is not a threat, but if they do not receive the additional

funds, the CTA will have to look into shrinking the size of the system and increasing fares to afford remaining functional.

"What we'd like to do is [talk] about enhancing service rather than reducing the size of the system, and the only way other than additional public subsidy that we could balance our budget would be making those choices and we're hopeful and optimistic that we won't have to make those choices," Brown said.

The CTA will hold its only public forum on the new budget recommendations Nov. 8 at 6 p.m. in the CTA boardroom, 576 W. Lake St.

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Michael Jarecki/The Chronicle

CTA Chairman Carole L. Brown and CTA president Frank Kruesi answer questions from the media after the CTA board meeting on Oct. 18.

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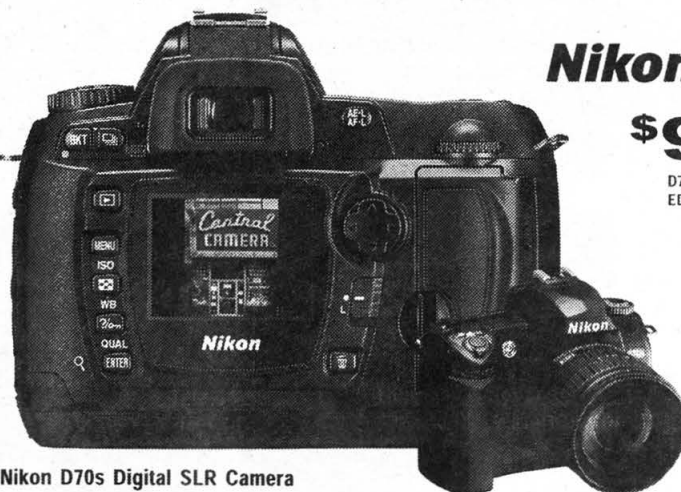
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Urban Excursions: Little Italy



By Jennifer K. Fischer
Managing Editor

When I said I would cover Little Italy for this issue, nearly everyone I talked to swooned over the "cute old Italian guys" who frequented the neighborhood. Unfortunately, I didn't encounter them. As a matter of fact, on that particular October Saturday afternoon, Little Italy didn't strike me as having any more character than Chicago's other noted ethnic enclaves.

The neighborhood that attracted Chicago's first Italians in the mid-1800s didn't feel as "historical" as I'd anticipated. It actually gave off a rather polished feel with its clean streets, minimal traffic and obligatory corner Starbucks. Perhaps it felt that way because most of the businesses I entered had been relocated from their original residences.

But it won my heart anyway. As always, the food did the trick. I know the cheap Italian eats at Pompei, 1531 W. Taylor St., are offered at a handful of Chicagoland locations, but it all started in Little Italy by Luigi Davino in 1909.

Three generations later, the cafeteria-style restaurant dishes up an array of homemade pastas, pizzas and salads. Inside were a dozen or so raven-haired middle-school-aged girls in knee-length party dresses accompanied by boys clad in sport coats, carrying wrist corsages in plastic containers.

A pair of cops chatted with the staff as they ordered dinner. Couples sat sipping glasses of wine and stealing bits of one another's lasagna and Caprese salads. Not only was the food "delizioso," the people-watching was spectacular.

Nearby Conte Di Savoia, 1438 W. Taylor St., is an Italian delicatessen and espresso bar that essentially translates into a gastronomic treasure trove. Pastas, Italian cookies, sauces and olive oil's line the shelves. Refrigerated cases overflow with cheeses, Italian meats, such as prosciutto, and fresh, homemade gnocchi, ravioli and pasta. Imported Italian wines, including plenty of the famous red Chianti, and espresso beans are also staples at this community landmark since 1948.

If you're not inclined to dine in the neighborhood, you can find an entire feast's-worth of ingredients here to take home and prepare a romantic dinner for your amore—hint: Remember this come Valentine's Day.

Food is not all that the West Taylor Street portion of Little Italy offers. The National Italian-American Sports Hall of Fame and Museum, 1431 W. Taylor St.,

includes 44,000 square feet of history from Mario Andretti's Indy 500 racecar to a coat worn by Green Bay Packers coach Vince Lombardi.

Across the street, Piazza DiMaggio pays homage to the great Italian-American baseball player. Though its trio of fountains is covered over this time of year, a statue of Joe himself stands grandly in the center of the circular bench- and tree-lined plaza.

Surely, it's a grand place to sit and enjoy some gelato on a hot summer's day. But until the next heat wave—months from now—hop on the Blue Line, get off at Racine and head west on Taylor to enjoy Chicago's slice of Italia.

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Andrew Nelles/The Chronicle

Patrons crowd a takeout line in Pompei, 1531 W. Taylor St. The Italian-themed restaurant features an impressive menu of affordably priced Italian cuisine.



Andrew Nelles/The Chronicle

Piazza DiMaggio, 1400 W. Taylor St., is a park dedicated to the memory of famed Yankees baseball player Joe 'The Yankee Clipper' DiMaggio.

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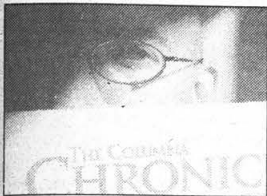
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Scoop in the Loop



By Eric Kasang
City Beat Editor

You can't blame the poor bastards for salivating. After all, it's close to the big game on Nov. 7, and political junkies are only human.

And what has politicians darting from one stump speech to the next and whispering conspiratorially in hallways? It's the large block of undecided voters. While a chunk of them staunchly stake claim to their parties' affiliations, this unpredictable base could potentially remove a candidate

from the political chessboard.

A recently published Chicago Tribune/WGN-Channel 9 poll indicated that the gap is narrowing between Cook County Board presidential candidates Todd Stroger and Tony Peraica. According to the survey of Cook County voters, 39 percent would probably vote for Stroger, 36 percent for Peraica.

The number that probably has both camps flustered is the 22 percent of undecided voters. With this large uncertainty, the respective campaigns are scrambling throughout Cook County to get their word out. And it's keeping the political junkies guessing.

Todd Stroger is carrying a double-edged sword known as his father's legacy. While people recognize the Stroger name, Todd has to deal with his father's failure to hire qualified supervisors at the Cook County Temporary Juvenile Detention Center and to

combat Cook County's bloated budget.

While Tony Peraica, the Republican candidate for Cook County president, has a record for fighting Cook County corruption, his surname is less familiar.

Still, the poll indicated that 31 percent believed Peraica could reform Cook County while Stroger received a 29 percent thumbs up. However, 20 percent thought that neither could actually reform the county.

And despite Stroger's attempts to label Peraica a "George Bush Republican," the undecided voters could actually swing for the moderate county commissioner.

As for the gubernatorial race, Gov. Rod Blagojevich is leading with 43 percent support from polled voters, according to a recent Chicago Tribune/WGN-Channel 9 report. The report also gave Republican candidate Judy Baar Topinka 29 percent and Green Party candidate Rich Whitney 9 percent. The unknown variable for this campaign is the

17 percent of undecided voters.

The poll also noted that more than half of the surveyed voters aren't digging either Blagojevich or Topinka. With the recent indictment of the governor's friend, Antoin "Tony" Rezko, who allegedly grabbed kickbacks and campaign contributions for state jobs and businesses and Topinka, who is part of the same political machine as the recently convicted former Gov. George Ryan, it's no surprise that people are weary of whom to vote for. Combine voter dissatisfaction with the undecided and Illinois could have a tight, three-way race coming up.

With this voter disenfranchisement, the political arena is open for a surprise win. The undecided voters may truly serve as the final arbiters for governor and county board president. This is edge-of-your-seat politics set for Nov. 7. And the beer is chilling in the fridge.

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In Public

It's your last chance to shop at the Loop's Farmers Market. Peruse the local produce at Federal Plaza, 230 S. Dearborn St., from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. Oct. 24.

DePaul University faculty discusses the challenges of assimilation using Jhumpa Lahiri's book *Interpreter of Maladies*. The discussion, titled "The Immigrant's Journey and the Tangle of Identity," will be held at DePaul's Student Center, 2320 N. Sheffield Ave., Room 120, at 6 p.m. Oct. 25. For more information, call (773) 325-7840.

Chicago's Polish American Heritage Month presents author Wesley Adamczyk. Adamczyk will read from his book *When God Looked the Other Way* about his family's struggle when the Soviets deported them to Siberia during World War II. The event will be held at the Harold Washington Library, 400 S. State St., at 5:30 p.m. Oct. 24. For more information, visit chicagopubliclibrary.org.

The Chicago Antique Market will be up for the last Sunday of the year from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Oct. 29. Visitors can buy, sell and swap various antiques and collectibles on Randolph Street between Ada Street and Ogden Avenue. For more information, visit www.chicagoantiquemarket.com.

Looking for a free concert on Sunday? Then check out the "Chicago Latino Composers Series: Peace and War," which showcases Chicago and American Latino composers. The event will take place at the Chicago Cultural Center, 78 E. Washington St., at 3 p.m. Oct. 29. For more information, call (312) 744-6630.

Treasurer: Candidates debate qualifications, trade jabs

Continued from Back Page

within Illinois. The list—often appears as a supplement in newspapers and lists the person's name and unclaimed assets.

At the Oct. 17 debate, the two candidates sparred over which is the more essential of the two qualifications for Illinois treasurer's office: financial versus legislative experience.

Democratic candidate Alexi Giannoulas, who served as vice president and senior loan officer at his family-owned, Chicago-based Broadway Bank, told the audience why his experience qualifies him for the treasurer's position.

"This is the state's banker, the state's chief investment officer," Giannoulas said. "We need someone with some financial experience. Under the state constitution, the Illinois state treasurer's job is to protect and invest taxpayers' money to get the best rate of return. I'm the only person [with the previous financial experience] who has done so."

However, Republican candidate Christine Radogno, a nine-



Mauricio Rubio/The Chronicle

Reporters converge on Democratic candidate Alexi Giannoulas, who debated with Republican candidate Christine Radogno at Maggiano's Banquets, 111 W. Grand Ave., on Oct. 17.

year Illinois state Senator who represents parts of Cook, Will and DuPage counties, explained that her legislative experience qualifies her for the position.

"The state treasurer's office is a constitutional office. It is in line of succession for governor. It is not just a banking function," Radogno said. "You need to know the legislative process that a treasurer frequently gets involved in. If you don't know that process, you will not be able to carry out that office on behalf of the taxpayers. I have that to offer."

Although both candidates explained why each was best suited for the job, the barbs flew

early and often in the debate. Radogno brought up questions surrounding Giannoulas' family-owned bank lending money to alleged mobsters. Giannoulas said banking is one of the most regulated industries and federal and local governments found that his bank did nothing wrong.

Giannoulas then countered that Radogno had accepted more than \$5,000 from former Gov. George Ryan in 1996 and she has not returned the money. A jury found Ryan guilty of mail fraud and racketeering this year. Radogno retorted that her 1996 campaign received the money long before the government filed corruption charges against Ryan.

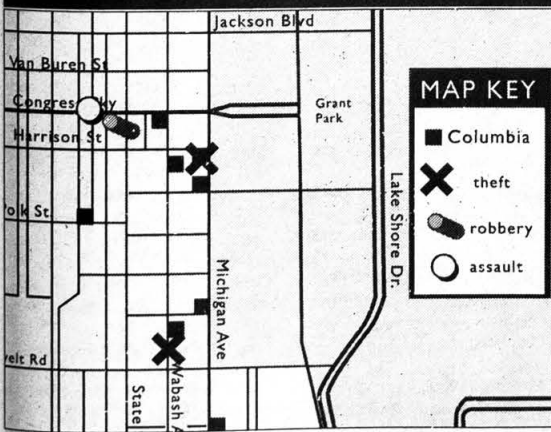
While answers from the candidates elicited both claps and groans, Paul Greene, the debate's moderator and City Club of Chicago's program director, told the audience the candidates' digs against each other is the norm at the club's debates.

"Those of you new to the City Club, this is often the normal tenor of our debates," said Greene.

For more information on each candidate, visit their official websites at radogno2006.com and alexiforillinois.com.

ekasang@chroniclemail.com

Off the Blotter



Jennifer Crider/The Chronicle

Attack by mother and daughter

A 16-year-old female student at Dunbar Vocational Career Academy, 3000 King Drive, reported on Oct. 13 that a teenage girl from the same school and her mother pulled the 16-year-old girl's hair and slapped her repeatedly on the face and body. The 16-year-old said she had an oral altercation with the other girl and after the battery the daughter and her mother fled on foot.

Talk about a bad week

The Bongo Room Restaurant, 1152 S. Wabash Ave., reported two burglaries in three days. The restaurant's owner reported on Oct. 15 that the glass front door had been smashed and an unknown amount of money and other items were missing. On Oct. 17 the owner reported that the boarded-up door had been broken, the cash register was open on the floor and a gray cash box containing \$125 was missing.

ID gnomes

An 18-year-old Columbia student reported Oct. 11 that her ID and Social Security cards, bus pass and print card were taken from her coat while in room 405 of the 600 S. Michigan Ave. building. She told police she had not left her coat unattended and that classmates had been sitting behind and across from her coat in the chairs next to her.

Robbery by double-beating

A theft was reported in the alley at 36 W. Congress Pkwy. The 27-year-old victim reported that after leaving work on Oct. 11, two unknown men aged 20 to 30 wearing all black approached him and beat him up with their fists. The offenders took \$238, a \$250 cell phone and \$50 shoes from the victim. The victim had no bruises or cuts on his body.

Compiled by Chronicle staff through information provided by the Chicago Police Department.

CTA's budget needs millions to balance

By James H. Ewert Jr.
City Beat Editor

Last year the Chicago Transit Authority's budget deficit was \$55 million and the CTA proposed several "doomsday" plans that threatened to cut service and raise fares. The Illinois General Assembly reluctantly bailed out the CTA, but advised the transit authority not to ask for more funds in the future. Instead of a "doomsday" prophecy this year, the CTA calls the budget "Transit at a Crossroads," and is again asking the state for money, but this time twice as much.

Although the \$1.13 billion budget CTA president Frank Kruesi recommended on Oct. 12 does not include any service cuts or fare increases, it rests on \$110 million of additional public funds that the CTA has yet to acquire.

"I've made 10 sets of budget recommendations over the years I've been here as the president of the CTA, and there has never been a single year in which we were certain how much money we had, either from the state or from the federal government, in terms of funding," Kruesi said at the Oct. 18 CTA board meeting. "That's always been the case."

After the meeting Kruesi said he attended an event earlier in the day where Regional Transportation Authority chairman Jim Reilly talked about the need for CTA funding. The RTA oversees the Metra, Pace and CTA transit systems in Chicago and surrounding areas.

"A key theme of [Reilly's] was the fact that people in this region for generations literally have invested substantially in transportation of all sorts, which is the reason [Chicago's] economy is as robust as it is," Kruesi said about Reilly's speech. "It is such a great place to live and work and visit and those investments will be continued because transit is a key part of that. It's been taken for granted for a long time."

Kruesi attributed the increase in necessary funds to high power costs and fuel prices which are 20

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Fight for treasurer heats up



Mauricio Rubio/The Chronicle

Republican candidate for Illinois State Treasurer Christine Radogno stares at her Democratic challenger Alexi Giannoulias during a debate Oct. 17 at Maggiano's Banquets, 111 W. Grand Ave.

Candidates spar on job qualifications, personal ethics

By Eric Kasang
City Beat Editor

With phrases like "right-wing extremist" and "association with organized crime" flying back and forth, the 90-second speeches

sounded like typical political banter between two candidates. The accusations this time came from the candidates running for Illinois treasurer at Oct. 17's City Club of Chicago-sponsored debate at Maggiano's Banquets, 111 W. Grand Ave.

While the treasurer's race walks in the shadow of the gubernatorial election, the campaign is

starting to heat up; yet, people may not realize the actual function of the treasurer's office. John Hoffman, chief spokesman for the Illinois treasurer's office said: "The basic job of the treasurer's office is to invest the state's money."

Hoffman said the department's overall yearly budget is \$48 billion. At any given time, the trea-

surer's office has \$12 billion invested in various financial institutions like banks. Hoffman noted that the amount of money flowing into the department fluctuates, but said more rolls in during tax time near April. The Illinois comptroller's office is responsible for spending the state's money.

Investing the state's money is not the only function of the treasurer's office. Hoffman said that current treasurer Judy Baar Topinka, who is running as the Republican gubernatorial candidate, has promoted a program that offers small business owners low-interest loans to help them create new jobs in Illinois. Hoffman noted that about \$800 million is marked to help small businesses.

As for digging Illinois out of its \$5 billion budget deficit, Hoffman said Topinka has obtained high rates of return or interest rates from various investments with the state's money during her time as treasurer.

Another part of the treasurer's office includes the unclaimed property division. Each year, the department publishes a list of unclaimed or abandoned assets, such as money and property.

See Treasurer, Page 39

Ballot battles plague Cummings

Green party candidate battles legalities for state representative

By Chris Cascarano
Staff Writer

With only a handful of volunteers, Green Party candidate Kathleen J. Cummings entered this year's race for state representative in Illinois' 4th District against Democratic incumbent Cynthia Soto. Soto, who represents part of Chicago's West Side, including Humboldt Park, Logan Square and Wicker Park, challenged and defeated Cummings' attempt to be listed on the ballot.

As the Nov. 7 elections approach, Cummings is trying to get the Illinois state Supreme Court to hear her case and get her name listed on the ballot as a Green Party candidate.

At an Oct. 9 speech at the New World Resource Center, 1300 N. Western Ave., Cummings said she fulfilled all of the state's requirements to be on the ballot by obtaining enough signatures to meet the 5 percent of the past presidential election's votes from that district—1,531.

Cummings acquired about double the required signatures, but

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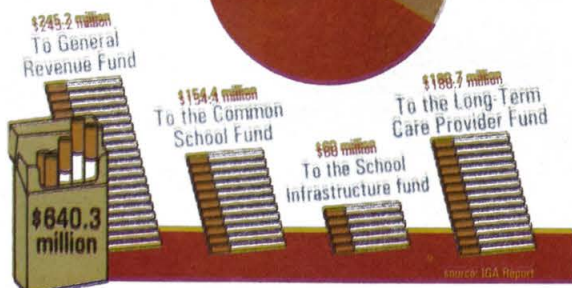
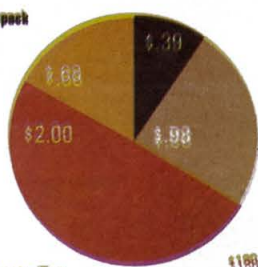
Kieth Bishton/The Chronicle

Kathleen Cummings, Green Party candidate for state representative in Illinois' 4th district, stands in front of her honey bee hive and organic garden in Humboldt Park. Cummings is currently fighting to get her name on the Nov. 7 election ballot.

Cigarette taxes

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Joshua Covarrubias/The Chronicle

Taking the hike for a cheaper smoke

Chicago, Cook County losing money to outside cigarette sales

By George Slefo
Staff Writer

Once a week Jeremy Cohen, a junior broadcast journalism major at Columbia, takes a trip out to Waukegan from his Lakeview apartment. Twenty-two-year-old Cohen has developed an addiction, and gets his fix substantially cheaper if he takes a 20-minute drive out to the north suburbs. He likes to leave at night because heavy daytime traffic just makes the whole process more frustrating. His drug of choice isn't marijuana, cocaine or heroin—it's nicotine, and \$40 of savings is what drives him to the suburbs every

week.

"What I get out [in Waukegan] is 10 packs of Newports for 34 bucks; it costs twice as much where I live," Cohen said. "I used to get my cartons online, but [those cigarettes] are all from Europe and don't taste the same."

With Chicago taxing each pack of cigarettes at \$4.05, averaging \$7.50 for a pack of smokes, the highest price in the nation, smokers are beginning to look elsewhere to purchase cigarettes. This trend is increasing revenue in neighboring counties and states, while decreasing sales in Cook County.

Making the trip to neighboring counties on a weekly basis saves Cohen more than \$31 a carton in taxes alone. These

cheaper taxes are causing Cook County smokers to purchase cigarettes elsewhere, therefore taking away sales from the cash-strapped county.

According to a report published by the Illinois General Assembly in April 2006, roughly 634 million packs of cigarettes were sold in the fiscal year 2006—that's almost 1.8 million packs a day purchased by Illinois citizens. That number has declined over the last four years by 21.4 percent because of Cook County's high tax on cigarettes, according to the report. Any further tax increases, either state or local, could jeopardize Illinois into losing more cigarette tax revenues, according to the report.

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