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November 2012

Long Island U. 2

Op-Ed 3

New to You 6

Crime 7

Sports 14

Advice 17

Business 18

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Politics, 5



Adopted, 7



Lovely, 6

Laura LaVacca
Campus News

For the low price of \$50, you too can get a mediocre paper written by somebody else and a chance at rejection from your dream school, a zero for the course and even expulsion. Sound good? Well to some students, it does.

Both high school and college students are increasingly taking part in hiring people to write papers and college application essays. While this practice of "essay trafficking" is not anything new, it is becoming less secretive and more popular with writers blatantly advertising their services on Craigslist and other sites.

Current ads exclaim, "Don't hire a tutor, hire us! We do all assignments!" or private writers boast, "I am a professional at taking online courses and writing essays."

'Essay-trafficking is a just click away, but why do it?'

There are even websites devoted to these services includ-



ing "Writemypaper.org" where both high school and college students can pay anywhere from \$13-17 dollars per page. More advanced level papers for such programs as Master's degrees and Ph.Ds are available for \$28-50 dollars per page.

"Some of my friends

hired people to write their college application essays. I wanted mine to actually sound like me and not like a parent with more experience wrote it," explains Long Island high school student, Emma Crispina.

"It's completely unfair for the students who do their own research and whatever other work the paper entails," ex-

plains Hofstra graduate student Lisa Rosse, "When a paper is assigned, it's assigned to a student not a professional."

This also begs the question of the integrity of the professional writing it. Are the writers just as much to blame as the students and parents who hire them? In addition,

continued on page 9

Is e-learning all it's cracked up to be?

Maria Mirakaj Brownsell
Campus News

So you want to take a class but you just can't get yourself on campus. Or maybe you can't manage to get a long enough stretch of time all together at once. Whatever the case may be, online classes have become the norm.

When I was in college seven years ago, we didn't have the option to take a class online at my school. We had to get out of bed and walk ten miles in the snow uphill both ways! Or something like that. Sometime in the past few years, this new way of getting course credit has grown exponentially, but is it all it is cracked up to be?

SUNY Rockland is no different than the rest of the colleges when it comes to online education. This fall they offered over one hundred online courses taught by many different instructors in subject areas varying in topics from art history to biology to literature. As the classes keep filling up, the number of courses available continues to increase. A large amount of the students that go to SUNY Rockland are older with jobs and families or if they are fresh out of high school, they need to work to pay for their tuition. By making this virtual option available, opportunities that would have never before been possible now are at the tips of people's fingers.

On the SUNY Rockland website, online classes are called E-learning and go through a program called ANGEL. You can even make phone calls through the

continued on page 18

Nyack College Division of Adult Education

"I felt a responsibility to the other students to keep up my end of the bargain, which was to be a vital part of the team and to give all I had so that we all succeeded."

Michael O'Halloran, Cohort 403

Find out more about Michael's story by visiting www.nyack.edu/dae

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Op-ed: Cheating and the online student

Darren Johnson
Campus News

In this issue, we have cover stories on essay-trafficking and online education, and I had been meaning to write an opinion piece on both. Here goes...

When I was a college student, at a small, liberal arts college at the end of Long Island that no longer really exists as it once did, I had a roommate who bought his papers through a service.

He was a bit older than me, and had been in college a couple of extra years. He had rich parents and seemed to have a business mind. He managed a local fast-food joint, as well.

While I had two majors, the primary being English-Writing; the other, Pre-Law, was mostly housed in a small department with very stodgy professors who rarely seemed to give out more than a "C" grade. They were under the impression that a "C" should be a "C," whether it be from tiny Southampton College, or Harvard, and surely we were not of the level of Harvard

students, one poli-sci professor, whom I had for five different courses, would remind us.

My roommate was only in this program, while I was in the two programs. One, the Writing, built me up, while the other tore me down, killed my overall GPA, but did make me feel as if college

graduation was a true accomplishment.

I'd go look at the grades on the department door for that particular poli-sci professor and his colleagues. All C's and C+'s; maybe the occasional B, and a smattering of D's and F's for those who gave up.

This department's faculty had come of age as instructors during the Vietnam Era, when giving an F could result in a student being sent to the front lines, so they generally did not give out those. But I would not be surprised if they truly conspired to deliver a 2.0 as a department.

(Funny, in my 30s, I ended up running the communications effort at a law school, realizing there that I was just as bright as everyone else. I also created a third-party that ran scores of candidates. In retrospect, I think I probably deserved better poli-sci-grades!)

My roommate would call some long-distance number (this was before the internet was big), tell them his needs, and a paper would arrive by fax or in the mail in the amount of time he needed. I guess he paid by credit card. The papers were real

poli-sci professor and only got a B.

I have a feeling that this guy is wealthier than me today. He was raised rich, and the rich tend to be outsourcers by nature. Delegation is their way of life. Meanwhile, I was raised in a lower middle class household in a struggling Upstate town, the first in my family to even consider going to college. I always had to do everything myself.

And, as I usually teach two or three courses a semester along with all of the other things I do, I sometimes tell students the story of my cheating roommate, and get philosophical - why? End of the day, you can learn a lot more from a C, anyway - if it is YOUR C.

I have caught a few students plagiarizing over the years. Normally, it is not the C (or below) student, but instead a student on the cusp of getting an A. They feel that they cannot settle for less, so they will copy some words off of the internet. I can see the change in their writing style, go to Google, and catch them. It's always a sad conversation after.

I have taken a few online courses as a student, and have taught a few. As a student, some courses did seem to be the equivalent of a brick-and-mortar course as far as the time requirement went. Others could take over 20 hours a week, for a measly three credits, the instructor was so demanding.

As an instructor, I try to recreate the amount of work for a brick-and-mortar in an online world, mostly using posting boards. I try to ask questions that require unique thought, answers that are not easily found on Google.

Still, I feel that the online experience is a less genuine experience. How do I know

these students themselves are actually writing the responses to my questions? I know there is supposed to be an honor code in the academic world, but a time-constrained student with some disposable income could simply give his username and password to someone smarter than him in India, PayPal him \$20 per module, and I'd be none the wiser.

Or when does "editing" become "writing?" If a student writes a mediocre, sloppy essay and has a friend, neighbor, spouse, parent, etc., go over it with a fine-tooth comb and give it a thorough copy-edit, the paper will shine.

But as a writing instructor, I want to see the unpolished paper.

In my brick-and-mortar classes, I usually teach in a computer lab, and I could give writing assignments right there; there is no way for a paper to be outsourced. They print their work at the end of class, and then I mark up the papers and hand them back to the students the following class. No grades, no personal judgment. They find this level of attention very helpful.

I find that the online students are generally better writers. Maybe they are a bit older, and maturity helps one's writing. Maybe it's because they take many online classes, unable to attend traditional classes, and learn to write in a certain style that works in online classes. Maybe the peer pressure of seeing their fellow students' posts ups their competitiveness and attention to detail.

Or maybe they have a friend helping them out here and there.

There's no way for me to know for sure. So maybe I should just give everyone C's and see how long I last!

Pro: The students seem more mature and are better writers.

Con: How can an instructor gauge their true effort?

papers, written by other students and submitted at top colleges. He once laughed that he'd bought a paper that had gotten an A on it at Berkeley, but he retyped it, put his own name at the top, handed it to the

An anniversary gift to Japan - dogwood trees

Jory Heckman
Scripps Howard Foundation Wire

Cherry blossom trees donated to the U.S. are a springtime favorite in the capital. Now the State Department is returning the favor by sending American dogwood trees to Tokyo.

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton made the announcement April 30 during an official visit to the United States by Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda.

A ceremonial sendoff of the first 150 dogwood trees was held last month at the National Arboretum.

But sending thousands of trees across the world requires attention to detail. State Department officials must make sure the trees meet customs standards and guarantee that the trees will survive the journey.

Richard Olsen is a research geneticist with the National Arboretum. He's been leading the effort to manage the logistics of getting the dogwoods ready to ship.

"The major push has been preparing the plants for shipment - to meet the requirements of our own Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services and meeting the requirements for the Ministry of Agriculture in Japan," Olsen said.

To meet regulations, the trees must be grown in nurseries free from sudden oak death, a disease that causes rot in a variety of plant species.

"It has a broad host range of plant materials, not just dogwoods," Olsen said. "Japan does not have it, and they certainly don't want it."

Olsen said the trees were grown in North Carolina and Maryland and were certified as healthy by state agriculture inspectors.

This first wave of dogwoods will be planted Nov. 16. Olsen said the rest will ship this winter, which is the easiest time to export plants.

"This is not a very difficult thing to do in the winter, when plants are dormant and they don't have any leaves on them," Olsen said.

Clinton announced the gift on the 100th anniversary of the cherry blossom planting at the capital's Tidal Basin.

"Tonight, I am pleased to announce a gift of 3,000 dogwood trees for the people of Japan from the American people," Clinton said.

Noda said the gift symbolized the friendship of the United States, especially after the U.S. provided assistance following the March 2011 earthquake.

"I believe that this is a wonderful



chance to plant the seeds of trees that will still be blooming 100 years from now, in much the same way as the relationship between our two countries will be," Noda said.

Because the trees in the first shipment are alive and still growing, Olsen and his team had to clean the roots of all traces of the soil they were grown in.

"Countries do not want to import plant material in the potting mix that it was grown in, because the mix itself can harbor pathogens or hide

pathogens from inspection," Olsen said.

Many of the protocols used today in shipping plants stem from lessons learned during the first cherry blossom shipment, Olsen said.

In 1910, U.S. officials had to destroy the first batch of cherry blossom trees sent by Japan after discovering they were rife with harmful nematodes and fungal cankers. This gave rise to the creation of APHIS. The cherry

continued on page 15

Make sure your cover letter and resume stand out

David L. Podos
Mohawk Valley CC

If you are like most students, you want to do your best academically. Perhaps your goal is to achieve an Associate's degree, maybe you will have a desire and a need to pursue your studies further, and enter into upper level education, working towards your Bachelor's degree, Master's, or PhD. For sure, you will be faced with many choices. Regardless of the degree you eventually obtain, you will want to find suitable employment once your academics have ended, and that's quite a challenge in today's world when we look at the dynamics of our economy. If you want to get a heads up on the competition, and there is plenty of that, you need to be aware of and coherent in two of the most important documents that you will ever send to anyone, your resume and cover letter.

Unfortunately, many students do not understand the significance of these documents as well as the nuances between the two, and there are differences; in fact, both are quite different and denote different aspects of the applicant to the potential employer.

Let's take a look at each one, first your resume.

Resumes are for one purpose and one purpose only, to inform your potential employer about what credentials you have. These would include, your educational credentials, any written works that you have authored and your work history (this would also include any volunteer positions that you may have had). That's it, period! Your resume should not be more than two pages, and for most college grades with little work experience, you should be able to put all of this on one page. Of course, the need to not make any spelling mistakes, and to set up your resume grammatically spot-on, is critical.

Employers are inundated with hundreds of resumes daily, so, stick to the metrics I have outlined above, and make their job easy. Also worthy of mention is to add what is called "bragging rights." For resume purposes you can list this right after your work history or college history as "awards and mentions." For instance, let's say you had a part-time job in a retail store and while you were employed there, received employee of the month award for outstanding customer service. Put it down! Employers love this kind of stuff; it separates you from the rest of the pack, and shows that you are a dedicated worker. The same would be applicable in regards to your education, if you received high honors (Dean's or President's lists) for academic excellence, put it down. While this may sound like a no-brainer, you would be surprised by the number of grads who fail to mention these very important pieces of information. Your resume is factual, no emotion and fanfare here folks. Stick to the facts; do not hype it up to be something it is not. If you are called into an interview and are seriously being considered for a position, the employer will do a background check, and, if they find out that your resume is basically a bunch of bull, you can forget about ever getting a position with them. So don't lie, be factual and honest.

Now, onto your cover letter; this is sometimes referred to as a letter of application.

Unlike your resume, your cover letter is a brief inside look into what makes you tick, it gives the employer a momentary glimpse into your psyche, contrasting your resume. Your cover letter should have a degree of emotion in it. What is going to catch my attention as an employer within the first 10-15 seconds of reading your cover

How to make an impression on a potential employer – and your rights as an applicant.

letter? If I cannot get snagged so to speak, and snagged quickly, your resume and your cover letter are most likely going into the No. 6 file (the trash can), or away via the delete button, if you sent it as an e-mail attachment.

Smart candidates do a bit of research on the company that they are applying to before they send out anything. If you really want to impress someone, find out what their mission statement is; most companies, private as well as public have a mission statement, and you can find that usually on their web site under "about us" or "company history." In some cases you may even see a tab for mission statement. The mission statement of any company is critical, for it is what the company believes in and stands for. Think of it as the "soul" of the company. A company that I was employed for as their Executive Director worked with adults and youth who were recovering from a mental illness. This organization used trained volunteers in a friendship capacity with either an adult and/or child, to support them and encourage them in their recovery. Their slogan was "Making Friends Changing Lives." If you were a student who recently graduated with a degree in Human Services and/or Psychology and were looking to work in such a place, you would be smart to mention in your cover letter how important friendships are and have been in your life, while speaking about the healing power that can come from a true friendship. See my point? You need to resonate with what is most important to that company and find a way to articulate that (with a degree of emotion) in your cover letter. Convince me as your potential employer why I should consider you!

Of course you should also mention any experience that you may have (even if this is on your resume); just take a snippet of that experience that is appropriate for the position you are applying for and work it into your cover letter. For example, you may have applied for a job as an educational program coordinator for a local college, working to bring classroom courses into a corporate setting. Elaborate a bit on how your experiences (if you have them) make you an ideal candidate, what moved you, what you find so intriguing about doing this kind of work, why do you think bringing classroom instruction to the worksite is important, and finally how you can use

your passion and experiences to be successful for this position. If you do not have direct experience, then capitalize on some other aspects of your skill sets (outlined in your resume) that you feel are applicable to the position you are applying for. Follow this rule and you can create a convincing cover letter.

Cover letters and resumes are your calling cards, and when each is prepared properly, they can be a great ally in increasing your chances of getting

that job interview. If you are lucky enough to get an interview, here are a few tips that will

empower you, along with a few labor laws that you should be aware of as well as interview questions that could be biased and/or discriminatory.

Besides the obvious of being on time (I would rather be fifteen minutes early for an interview than five minutes late), and dressing appropriately, make sure you bring a copy of your resume with you as well as a copy of your cover letter. In the interview, your interviewer will be referring to those two documents often, and unless you have a photographic memory, it's good to have your copies in front of you basically to confirm the information that they have, as well as expound on any portions of your resume and or cover letter for their clarification or self-clarification.

Some questions that your inter-

viewer should not be asking:

What is your date of birth? They can ask are you over 18 or 21, but they should not be asking for your date of birth at an interview. Many employers are found to have discriminated against a potential employee because of their age, while much of this is towards older applicants (age 40 and older), many younger applicants are discriminated against, as well.

For female students looking for work, the interviewer simply cannot ask you if you have children, are pregnant, or planning on getting pregnant. This is out right discrimination and is protected under the Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978.

Your interviewer should not be asking what is the ethnicity of your last name? You can simply say, what does my ethnicity have to do with me performing this job satisfactorily if I am hired?

Finally, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and subsequent amendments prohibit discrimination of any kind on the basis of race, color, religion, sex and national origin.

Best of luck on that job search!

David L. Podos is an adjunct instructor for the Center for Social Sciences, Business, and Information Sciences.



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Reaction to candidates

Jory Heckman

Scrrips Howard Foundation Wire

After squaring off in the second presidential debate, President Barack Obama appealed to viewers on the host campus in a way that he failed to do in the first debate. "Unlike the last debate, he actually targeted Romney on things that a lot of viewers think about when they think about criticisms for Romney," Sarah Realbuto, a junior at Hofstra University, said after last month's debate there.

"Things like flip-flopping and his 47 percent comment, those were actually touched upon," she said.

During the debate, the candidates sparred over their plans for energy independence. While Mitt Romney accused Obama of killing jobs in the coal industry, Obama turned the tables on his challenger.

"When you were governor of Massachusetts, you stood in front of a coal plant and pointed at it and said, 'This plant kills, and took great pride in shutting it down,'" Obama said. "And now suddenly you're a big champion of coal."

Realbuto was one of 300 lucky students inside the David S. Mack sports complex to see the debate live. Like 6,500 others, she applied online for the coveted red tickets with a silver hologram.

"I'm starstruck. I saw Michelle Obama, I saw Ann Romney - just all the players, right there on the stage," Realbuto said. "I had an upfront view. I was right in the middle too."

Other students watched at the student center or in their dorms.

Joseph Sica, a Hofstra sophomore and Mitt Romney supporter, said Obama performed much better tonight than he did in Denver on Oct. 3.

"It was much closer than the first debate. I think President Obama did a lot better - it's hard for him to have done much worse than the first debate," Sica said.

"I think Governor Romney did very well, though," he said.

In the end, Sica said Romney pulled ahead to win the debate.

"I think governor Romney eked out a very small victory. Probably a one-run, bottom-of-the-ninth comeback victory," Sica said.

"It was close, but I think Governor Romney made the right points, he had the right facts. He had the right demeanor, and I think people will see that," he said.

Romney spent the first half of the de-

bate criticizing the president's economic policies, saying recovery has been too slow.

"We have not made the progress we need to make to put our people back to work," Romney said. "That's why I put out a five-point plan that gets America 12 million new jobs in four years and rising take-home pay," he said.

Sica said both candidates could have done more to answer the town hall questions.

"The idea of it is that people were supposed to talk to the voters who were asking the questions, not really argue with themselves. But both candidates did it," Sica said.

Realbuto said the town hall format gave the candidates the chance to be more confrontational.

"It was interesting to see how the candidates interacted with each other," Realbuto said. "They actually went up to each other and got up into each other's spaces."

At the student center viewing party, Cassandra DeMarco, a Hofstra junior, said the cameras kept an eye on the time - but only for one candidate.

"When Romney went over the clock, the clock was always showing. A lot of the times with Obama, the clock was not showing, so we didn't know that he was going over time," DeMarco said.

"I think the audience was able to react more viscerally when Romney was going over the time, because we could see it right there," she said.

Steve Ferdinand, a Hofstra senior, agreed the crowds in the student center



Students Hannah Cohen and Cassandra DeMarco.

were hostile toward Romney when he went over time.

"There was an outcry for the hanging of Mitt Romney whenever he went over the clock," Ferdinand said.

Ferdinand said Romney made a significant gaffe in linking two-parent households with a decrease in gun violence.

"He pretty much said that the way to solve gun violence in this country is to get married - to encourage marriage," Ferdinand said. "I think Obama got a lot more shots in on him."

Hannah Cohen, a Hofstra junior, said Romney failed to acknowledge the root of the gun violence problem.

"Most of the issues that happened with gun violence have been because of education's oversight of these individuals," Cohen said. "But because of the lack of funding for education, there's not always that opportunity to have the type of relationship that you should have with the student," she said.



Stephen Ferdinand.



A Hofstra student in character.

Hofstra students feed debate circus

Jory Heckman

Scrrips Howard Foundation Wire

In the hours leading up the second presidential debate on October 16, students at Hofstra University are gearing up to participate in the action.

"I think this entire process is amazing, and getting to experience this firsthand is really great," Caitlin Spiess, a Hofstra senior and debate volunteer, said.

Her duties include coordinating a discussion panel for students before the debate.

"It's just such an honor to have a sitting president come to Hofstra, and to have the governor as well. It's a great thing to have both of them here," she said.

Julio Villarman, a Hofstra freshman, said the increased media attention on campus has meant new rules for students.

"In the past few days, we've been getting notices of no guests in our dorms. We've had helicopters patrolling everywhere. I believe we've had Secret Service around," Villarman said.

"There are so many people, different organizations everywhere - and camera crews speaking to a lot of students on campus," he said.

Villarman, who is 17, said he's frustrated that he won't be eligible to vote on Nov. 6, but said he would vote for President Barack Obama if he had the chance.

"For the past four years he's been very strong," Villarman said. "The first debate that I saw with Mitt Romney - his views, I just don't agree with them."

Spiess said that the town hall format

for Tuesday's might force the candidates to focus on issues that matter most to her.

"There's a very good chance that someone could ask the questions that are most pertinent to me, as opposed to the moderator just asking questions," Spiess said. "I just think this format is really quite wonderful."

Spiess said women's rights is a key issue for her.

Reb Powers, an actress from Sterling, Mass., who graduated from Hofstra in 2009, wandered through crowds dressed as the Statue of Liberty.

Powers said that, when she was a student, the 2008 debate that Hofstra hosted felt like a nuisance and got in the way of her studies.

"When I was on campus, and it was happening, everywhere it was in my face, and I was like, 'This is kind of annoying at this point. I just want them to get off campus so I can think about what I have to do in school,'" Powers said, pausing to pose for photos.

"For this one, I get to really focus on the issues instead of what's happening around me on campus," Powers said.

For Election Day, Powers said she's made up her mind, but wouldn't say who she'll vote for.

"There is one that I'm pushing towards, but I won't say who - because I'm the Statue of Liberty and I should be impartial."

All of the top shows have lots of death

Darren Johnson
Campus News

Here is a helpful tip for you loyal readers of "It's New to You!," the column that's mostly about hidden gems on Netflix and cable TV:

I know your inclination may be to watch "The Walking Dead," which many critics say is the best show on TV right now, live on Sunday night, but here is a better strategy.

Hold off watching it, and instead watch one of the good premium cable shows. "Dexter," for example, also airs at 9 p.m. on Sundays and is about on par from a quality perspective with the zombie-themed blockbuster.

Why? "Dexter" has no commercials. Then catch "The Walking Dead" later, on DVR, on-demand or whatever. Thus, you can fast-forward the commercials!

Yeah, I know, the networks make money off of the commercials, and, thus, can spend more money on the shows, making them better, but commercials are so 20th century.

Now, which show is better is very debatable. While some critics argued that "Dexter" - the series about a serial killer who also happens to work for a Miami crime lab, and thus can cover up his crimes while also scouting out potential kills via a criminal database, as he only kills people who seemingly deserve it - took a step backwards last year, this current season, seven, is excellent. He's pretty much taking on a whole

Eastern European drug cartel. As well, his sister,



A herd of zombies on "The Walking Dead."

prison full of zombies (former inmates and guards) to hole up in while a couple of stray characters encounter a militant group that seems a bit too comic-book-like. Its leader is willing to kill other non-zombie humans just for their supplies, while keeping zombie heads suspended in liquid in jars for amusement.

While I love the end-of-the-world genre, and do buy into the basic premise of this show, I get a bit annoyed

when the non-infected humans act bizarre. If the world is about to end, sci-fi is supposed to teach us, our humanity is

all that we have left. At this point - and both of these shows are stellar - "Dexter" wins by a nose ... and an arm, and a torso ... mainly because his killing is not interrupted by commercials for the University of Phoenix or the Quicker Picker Upper.

Bronson Becomes Dirty Harry

Speaking on serial killers, Charles Bronson takes on a really weird one in "10 to Midnight," which has been on Netflix for a while.

This 1983 forgotten cop/slasher hybrid did not make a lot of money back when. Roger Ebert gave it zero stars, saying, "This is a scummy little sewer of a movie, a cesspool that lingers sadistically on shots of a killer terrifying and killing helpless women, and then is shameless enough to end with an appeal to law and order. The people who made 'From Ten to Midnight' have every right to be ashamed of themselves - and that includes Charles Bronson, whose name on the marquee is the only reason anybody would come to see it. ...

This movie indicates that Charles Bronson just doesn't care anymore, and is just going through the motions for the money. I admired his strong, simple talent once. What is he doing in a garbage disposal like this?"

Yikes. Harsh words from The Critic God.

About half of the critics agreed with that assessment at the time. How-

ever, the film has a strong four-star rating amongst Netflix viewers. So, what's the truth?

ciary's liberal interpretation of the Bill of Rights. Like Harry, and Dexter, he is willing to break the rules to mete out justice.

However, I believe that "10 to Midnight" is so popular as a cult classic because it is so odd.

Like the bygone covers of the now defunct "True Detective" magazine of that era, the murdered women are at-

Roger Ebert thought this was one of the worst films ever, but Netflix viewers have voted otherwise.

tractive yet submissive,

ever, the film has a strong four-star rating amongst Netflix viewers.

So, what's the truth?

If you read my previous "It's New to You!" column, "Go Ahead, Make My Instant Queue" (see Campus News issue 4-4 on www.ccnnews.info), you'll remember I compared the "Dirty Harry" films to Bronson's classic "Death Wish" series.

So finding this movie was a treat. Instead of playing a mere vigilante, he instead plays a character more similar to Clint Eastwood's Harry.

He is a disgruntled cop, sick of seeing known criminals get out of being convicted because of the judi-

clothes falling off. They run in slow motion. There's lots of nudity.

Meanwhile, the killer is truly weird. He must be naked when he stalks his prey. Even "Dexter" hasn't had a killer like this.

At one point, during an interrogation, Bronson pulls out some sort of male "pleasure device" and throws it on the table, accusing the suspect of being a masturbator.

At just an hour and a half, "10 to Midnight" may be worth a view. While it's clearly in the so-bad-it's-good category, it is sure to be completely "New to You!" and inspire a few cringes, and maybe an unintended laugh.

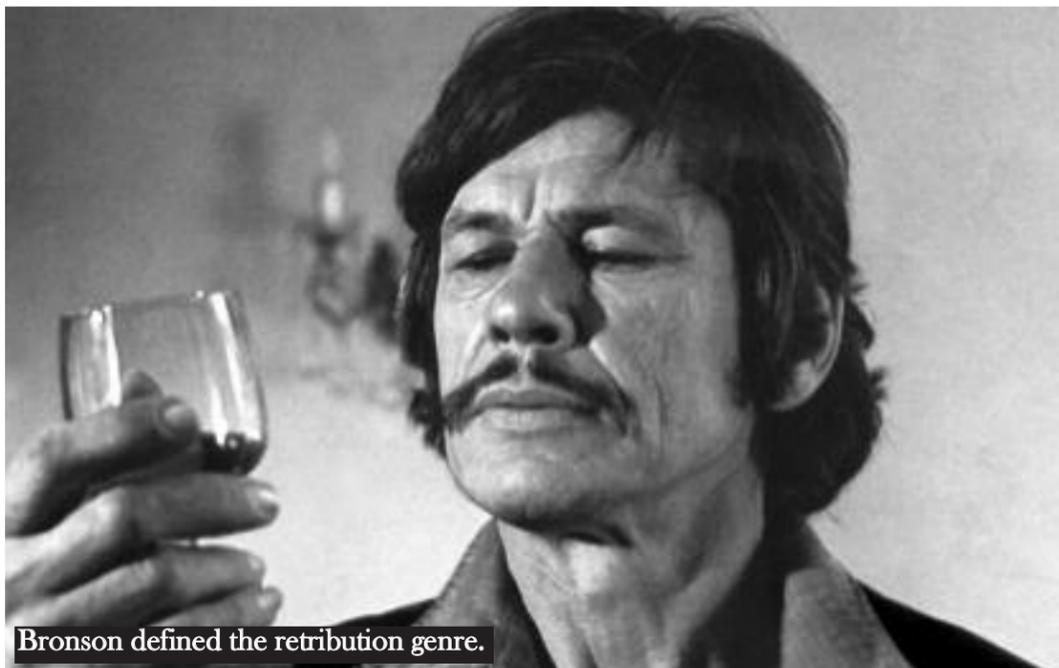


Michael C. Hall ("Dexter")

Debra, the lab's lieutenant, is on to Dexter and henpecks the poor guy about his killing. The whole dynamic resembles a man caught cheating on his wife who promises to cheat no more while the wife becomes overbearing and paranoid.

Meanwhile, "Walking Dead's" new season is also excellent, with lots of zombie killing - the best part of the series. As well, viewers can catch up with seasons one and two on Netflix while "Dexter" takes some getting used to; it's more complicated.

"The Walking Dead" team - what's left of them - takes over a



Bronson defined the retribution genre.

Amtrak to aid fight against human trafficking

Emily Wilkins

Scripps Howard Foundation Wire

The fight against human trafficking is getting reinforcements from Amtrak employees, who will be trained to identify and report potential victims of human trafficking they might encounter on the job.

Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano and Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood announced a new partnership with Amtrak last month at Union Station in Washington, D.C.

Napolitano, who referred to human trafficking as “modern day slavery,” said DHS has worked to educate its employees about human trafficking, but more partners were important to end the practice.

“Even through human trafficking can happen anywhere, it’s often a hidden crime,” she said. “That’s why we wel-

awareness program DHS began in 2010. It covers physical, behavioral and social signs victims might display, such as not having control of their traveling documents, not having a logical means of reaching their destination or showing signs of fear and stress.

Employees are expected to be able to identify potential human traffickers and victims and then report the incident to Amtrak police. Boardman said Amtrak also has contact with nearly every local police station its trains travel in 46 states (all but Alaska, Hawaii, South Dakota and Wyoming), the District of Columbia and Canada.

Although exact number of human trafficking victims is difficult to determine, the United Nations said 2.5 million victims worldwide is a



The DHS and DOT announcement comes a week after President Barack Obama addressed the topic before world leaders at the Clinton Global Initiative. LaHood said Obama has “directed all of us in this administration, in his cabinet, to strengthen the administration’s effort

to stop human trafficking.”

Napolitano said that from October 2010 to September 2011, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcements initiated 700 human trafficking investigations, which lead to 900 arrests and 270 convictions.

‘Even though human trafficking can happen anywhere, it’s a hidden crime.’

come partnership that expands the reach of individuals.”

Amtrak President Joe Boardman said senior-level officials at Amtrak have already begun training to identify and report human trafficking victims and will begin training the rest of the company’s 8,000 employees.

The training is an extension of the Blue Campaign – human trafficking

conservative estimate. Napolitano said the number of victims is 20 million.

Boardman said no human traffickers have been caught so far but since the service is available to anyone who buys a ticket, people of all types use it. An estimated 30.2 million passengers rode Amtrak in the year ending in September 2011 – the largest annual total in Amtrak’s history.

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‘Adopt-A-Palooza’ event is for the dogs (and cats)

Tanya Parker

Scripps Howard Foundation Wire

More than 30 cats and dogs sought forever homes last month in Silver Springs, Md., at the “Adopt-A-Palooza” event sponsored by a partnership between Petfinder and Animal Planet’s R.O.A.R. animal advocacy initiative.

A component of the Discovery Impact initiative, Animal Planet’s R.O.A.R. national campaign, which stands for “Reach out. Act. Respond,” seeks to improve the lives of wild and domestic animals in the U.S. and abroad.

Seven Maryland shelters brought dogs, cats and one rabbit to the Discovery Communications headquarters to meet and greet prospective pet parents and members of the community. The shelters encouraged families and individuals to “adopt, not shop” in celebration of Adopt-A-Shelter-Dog Month.

Puppies and dogs of all ages roamed a small garden wearing halters and leads that said “Adopt Me.” Just inside the Discovery Communications lobby, cats and the rabbit snoozed in cages while community mem-

Planet gift baskets were raffled off and pet products were available to purchase. A design-your-own pet tag machine allowed pet parents to create nametags for the new addition to their families.

Discovery Communications publicist Kate Delmonico said the “Adopt-A-Palooza” event was an opportunity to raise awareness and demonstrate several pet adoption options.

“We are celebrating by trying to get the word out about adoptable pets,” Delmonico said. “If you’re looking for a pet, there’s all different types of animals for your needs.”

Marylanders met Labradors, Shih Tzus, German shepherds, pit bulls and other mixed breeds at the adoption event. Prospective pet owners must fill out applications and submit to interviews and a home visit before a shelter dog may find a forever home.

From tabbies to calicos, kittens and cats were adopted and taken home that day.

Mutts Matter Rescue foster pet parent Lisa Schwartz said finding a new pet should be a process not an instant decision.

dog and really take some time and do your due diligence.”

More than 6 million cats and dogs enter animal shelters each year, according to the Humane Society of the United States. About half of these shelter animals are adopted each year while the other half may be at risk for euthanasia.

There are more than 3,000 animal shelters across the U.S. with pets looking for homes. One place to find these pets is Petfinder.com. Petfinder Director of Shelter Outreach Sara Kent said there are more than 300,000 adoptable pets available on the website and prospective pet parents should do research before adopting an animal.

“If you’re looking to adopt a pet, we encourage you to really explore your own lifestyle and determine what you want to spend time with that pet doing,” Kent said. “And then pick a pet whose lifestyle matches yours.”

Director of digital communications and social media at Discovery Communi-



cations Amber Harris said adopting shelter pets is a lifesaving opportunity.

“Shelter animals aren’t damaged and usually are homeless because of issues beyond their control,” Harris said. “They end up being appreciative, loving additions to the family.”

Petfinder.com offers advice on what a potential new pet owner should consider before adopting a dog or cat and supplies a checklist for potential dog owners.

Petfinder continues Adopt-A-Shelter-Dog month through Halloween. To find other Petfinder adoption events around the country, visit the event calendar on Petfinder.com.

‘If you are looking to adopt a pet, pick one whose lifestyle matches yours.’

bers searched for a perfect pet.

Adults and children snacked on bone-shaped cookies and popcorn, Animal

“You have to really consider the dog that you want, and not just immediately just take any dog,” Schwartz said. “You really need to investigate the breed and meet the

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Students who hire ghostwriters (cont. from cover)

can students be sure of the quality, or lack there of, that they will receive?

“Getting into college is hard and being in college is hard,” student Theresa Eliza states. “Some students just look for the easy way out...I’d be far too nervous to take that chance. How do you even know if the paper is good? I don’t deserve to be in college if I can’t take the time to write my own paper. The repercussions aren’t worth it.”

Eliza brings up the consequences of such acts. For college application essays, students will be instantly rejected. Enrolled college students can be subject to expulsion. Colleges and universities have clear guidelines for plagiarism and attach such to the back of the syllabus of every course. Often students think they won’t get caught. However, when large discrepancies between student’s grades and quality of writing are noted, investigation usually follows.

St. John’s University Professor Theresa Collins explains, “Last year at my university we had a large issue with cheating. The student repeatedly claimed the paper was his when it clearly was not. He ended up getting

expelled...I also had another student who stole a paper from someone else,” she continues. “I’m also a mother of a high school student and the pressure they put on kids is extraordinary.”

Increasing competitiveness or just pure laziness? Numerous articles have noted the added pressure put on students to perform academically. Therefore, hiring others is not just a practice limited to paper writing, but also larger examinations as well. Most recently, Long Island high school administrators uncovered a large SAT cheating ring where higher-scoring students took SATs for other students. Involved stu-

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dents were arrested, fined and charged with a felony. Consequently, the SATs have put into effect stricter security measures including uploading a picture the day of registration.

These cheating practices are not exclusive to any one group or age level. The New York Times ran a large piece last fall, “The China Conundrum,” noting the propensity of non-native English speakers to utilize such services. College officials and consultants say they are seeing “widespread fabrication on applications, whether that means a personal essay written by an agent or an English proficiency score that doesn’t align with a student’s speaking ability.” Culturally, essay-trafficking is used

to gain admittance into American schools.

In either case, cheaters cannot always prosper, as high school student Kaylee Miller notes, “I really don’t get it. How is anyone going to succeed in life, in a job where they can’t hire somebody to do their work for them? Are they going to hire someone to write their business emails? Meeting reports?” she adds emphatically, “Just don’t do it.”

‘Getting into college is hard and being in college is hard ... some students look for an easy way out.’

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Exhibit looks at Cuban Missile Crisis

Matt Nelson

Scraps Howard Foundation Wire

How does a president thank the advisers who helped him avert a nuclear war?

With fancy paperweights, of course.

President John F. Kennedy commissioned 34 silver and wood paperweights from Tiffany and Company in the wake of the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962. The weights depict the calendar month of October, with the 13 days spanning the crisis – Oct. 16 to 28 – embossed in dark black.

One of those celebratory weights is now on display at the National Archives as part of an exhibit that opened last month, “To the Brink: JFK and the Cuban Missile Crisis.” It will remain on view until Feb. 3.

Laura Diachenko, a public affairs specialist at the National Archives,

said the exhibit featured some never-before-displayed items taken from the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library. These items include personality profiles of Cuban leader Fidel Castro and Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev created by the CIA.

The display includes secret White House recordings made at the height of the crisis, including tense discussions between Kennedy and the executive committee of the National Security Council, whose members can be heard debating the cost of nuclear war.

Stacey Bredhoff, curator at the Kennedy Library, helped assemble the exhibit. She said the taped conversations were some of the most interesting pieces.

“As the discussions progress, it’s really kind of a race against the clock, because minute by minute these mis-

sile sites are getting closer to being fully operational,” Bredhoff said. “I think you get a sense of that building tension.”

The conversations reveal the technological hurdles Kennedy and Khrushchev had to overcome when negotiating and how miscommunications brought both countries to the brink of nuclear war.

“The exhibit shows that, even though there were negotiations between President Kennedy and Premier Khrushchev, the events are beginning to slip even out of their control,” Bredhoff said.

Ray Hanson, 65, toured the display on opening day. A retired writer from the Department of the Army in Huntsville, Ala., Hanson was 15 during the Cuban Missile Crisis. He said the

taped conversations

‘It wasn’t simply a series of incidents. It was very complicated negotiations between Kennedy and Khrushchev.’

among staff members were the most interesting part of the exhibit for him.

“I just enjoy hearing it as it happened,” Hanson said. “I think it was probably the first time I’d heard it. Maybe bits before, but not to the extent that I heard it in there.”

Hanson’s friend Mike Stringfellow, 60, who is a writer at the Department of the Army in Huntsville, said the exhibit helped him see the complexity of the crisis.

“It wasn’t simply a series of incidents,” Stringfellow said. “It was very complicated negotiations between Kennedy and Khrushchev. It was very delicate, very complicated.”

Stringfellow was 10 years old in October 1962 and only vaguely remembers people talking about the crisis.

“I was more interested in my bicy-



Scene from a California department store on Oct. 22, 1962. Photo by Ralph Crane ©Time & Life Pictures/Getty Images.

cle than in nuclear war,” he said.

Stringfellow does remember the duck-and-cover drills that U.S. schools often practiced at the height of the Cold War, when schoolchildren would be instructed by their teachers to hide under their desks for protection.

“Even then, it didn’t seem to me that this tiny wooden desk would provide much cover to our safety,” Stringfellow said. “It was kind of strange.”

Bredhoff visited the exhibit on opening day to see how visitors would respond.

“What people are saying is that, ‘It really got my heart racing faster,’ or ‘I felt a knot in my stomach,’” Bredhoff

said. “They are really getting a sense not just intellectually, but emotionally about how close we actually came to utter destruction.”

The Cuban Missile Crisis ended when Khrushchev agreed to disassemble the missile bases in Cuba if the U.S. promised not to invade Cuba and secretly removed missile bases in Turkey. The crisis also sped the development of the Limited Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, which was signed by the U.S. and the Soviet Union in 1963. The original signed treaty is also on display.

Nearly 900 people toured “To the Brink: JFK and the Cuban Missile Crisis,” on its first day, Diachenko said.



Khrushchev and Kennedy.

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Supreme Court case looks at affirmative action admissions

Emily Wilkins

Scripps Howard Foundation Wire

Again and again the question was posed – if the University of Texas at Austin was striving for diversity through the admissions process, what was the school’s goal?

It was something of a Catch-22 for the lawyers representing the school in a case argued in October at the Supreme Court. A young woman sued UT, claiming it rejected her application while admitting lesser-qualified non-white students.

UT defended the practice as necessary to reach “critical mass” – enough minority students for the university to offer students a beneficial and diverse experience.

But defining critical mass was hard to do. That is the standard set in the last major case the Supreme Court decided in race and university admissions, *Grutter v. Bollinger*.

In that 2003 case, the court said in a 5-4 ruling that having a quota is unconstitutional but allowed race to be a factor in the admissions process.

“We should probably stop calling it a critical mass then, because mass, you know assumes numbers,” Justice Antonin Scalia said. “Call it a cloud or something like that.”

The decision of eight justices could end affirmative action or hold colleges accountable for showing that policies to increase diversity are needed for the benefit of the student body.

Justice Elena Kagan recused herself, presumably because she worked on the case as solicitor general before being appointed to the court.

If there is a tie, the Fifth Circuit Court’s ruling in favor of UT would stand.

Abigail Fisher, who was not accepted to the school in 2008, although her sister and father had both attended, was present for the argument. She graduated from Louisiana State University.

Amicus briefs – arguments from par-

ties not directly involved in the case – totaled 72 supporting UT and 17 supporting Fisher. About 100 colleges signed onto briefs supporting UT’s position.

The attorneys for both parties were careful to say they did not wish to see the *Grutter* ruling overturned.

But Justice Sonia Sotomayer questioned the line between promoting diversity to benefit all students and creating a process that is unfair to non-minority students.

“When do we stop deferring to the university’s judgment that race is still necessary?” she said. “That’s the bottom line of this case.”

In the *Grutter* case, former justice Sandra Day O’Conner wrote the majority opinion. With a more conservative court, Justice Anthony Kennedy may provide the deciding vote.

He asked Fisher’s attorney about other race-neutral methods UT could use to promote diversity and joined Chief Justice John G. Roberts in repeatedly questioning UT’s attorney about how the university would know when it has truly reached its goal of providing students with a diverse experience.

The justices also asked about the numbers of minorities at UT, which can tell two different stories.

One is that without race as a factor in admissions, a Texas law requiring colleges accept students ranked in the top 10 percent of their Texas high schools brings in the necessary diversity. Diversity increased after the law was put into place.

The second is that not all minorities increased their representation under that law. Some racial groups’ presence increased only after race once again became part of the admissions criteria.

Fisher’s attorney, Bert W. Rein, said that an estimated 1 percent, or 55 students admitted to UT each year, are admitted because of race, a number that could be recreated with race neutral admissions.



Abigail Noel Fisher.

UT surveyed students when the top-10 law was in place but before race was part of the admission process. Most students said the campus needed more diversity. The lawyers did not say if the university had done a follow-up survey.

After the arguments, Fisher and her lawyers held a brief news conference. Fisher said she was grateful the court heard her case, and she thanked her family and her lawyers. “My parents always taught me that it is wrong to discriminate,” she said. “I hope the Supreme Court will decide that all future UT freshman applicants will compete without their race or ethnicity used in the school’s admissions process.”

UT President William Powers Jr. said Texas has come a long way since the days of segregation and the university is proud of being “on the right side of history.”

He praised Fisher for her bravery.

Before and after the arguments, a crowd of more than 100 demonstrated in favor of affirmative action.

Joshua D. Tang, 22, a UT senior was among the protesters. The Asian American Legal Defense Fund, which wrote a brief in support of UT, flew him to Washington.

Tang said more diversity is needed at UT and race needs to be recognized as “an important fact in how a person lives their lives.”

Despite the importance of diversity to Tang, he was quick to point out how little it factored into UT’s admissions process but that it’s an important part of college life.

“Race is just a part of a part of a part of a seven-part system in our application process,” he said. “It couldn’t be any less important to UT’s admissions process.”

Paul Wolfson, a partner at Wilmer-Hale law firm that submitted a brief on behalf of multiple Ivy League schools in support of UT, said universities are concerned that a ruling for Fisher would greatly complicate the admissions process.

“Many universities are concerned ... universities will be held to an excessively rigorous standard of proof demonstrating that race-conscious policies are absolutely necessary to accomplish the educational benefits of diversity, and there’s no race-neutral means of accomplishing that,” Wolfson said at a press conference last month.

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Tips for buying and styling jeans

Marie Frankson
Campus News

Jeans. Everyone has a pair... or two... or twenty. Jeans are a closet staple; they can be styled a million ways. In this article, I'll highlight some tips for buying and styling that perfect pair of jeans.

Tip #1: Consider jeans the way you would a pair of dress slacks — **THEY ARE ALTERABLE.** No item of clothing fits perfectly right off the rack.

Tip #2: Jeans can work on all women, no matter what age, size, etc.; however, not all styles work for all women. Wear a style because it's flattering, not just because it's trendy. Also, always bring a friend when you go shopping for jeans to give you an honest opinion on how you look.

Tip #3: If you find a great-fitting pair, always buy two — one to hem and wear with flats and one to wear with heels.

Tip #4: Jeans are a great blank canvas. You can try out trends by pairing them with jeans rather than trying to do a whole trend "look," **HOWEVER,** jeans are also good to experiment with. There are so many cool

jean styles and colors now. Sure, the go-to blue jean will always be in style, but now we have jeans in a variety of colors such as black, khaki, pink, purple, green, orange, red, yellow and a hundred others. Don't even get me started on printed jeans!

Tip #5: What is a jegging and how can you wear it? Jeggings are jeans that fit like leggings. Mind you, not everyone can pull them off. However, since they're skinnier than skinny jeans, they can be worn in a variety of ways. Converse low-tops and a plaid shirt can be worn with jeggings for a laid back look, or you could wear a solid print top, a scarf, and knee-high boots for a classic Equestrian/fall look.

Tip #6: The darker the jean, the better. It's easier to dress up or down a dark jean than a light jean; and a dark, 5-pocket, boot cut jean looks good on every woman. My favorite thing about jeans, in fact, is how they can be dressed up and down. Obviously, I wouldn't recommend jeans for a semi-formal or formal occasion, but perhaps a dark, tailored pair to work with a blazer or cardigan and a blouse. When I go to my weekly internship at a state museum, I usually wear black slacks or a black pencil skirt. Lately, I figured that if the State Historian can wear

jeans on a Wednesday, then so can I! I like to pair my jeans up with a pair of black peep-toe pumps, a black, white, or gray blouse, and a statement necklace (usually one given to me by my fiancé or one I made myself). It's comfortable, yet still looks professional.

Tip #7: Accentuate your assets. If you have a great butt, don't be afraid to show it off by wearing jeans with high, or no, back pockets. If you have a flat butt, go with pockets that slightly sit under your butt crease to go for a little lift or go for a jean that has a design on the back pockets.

Tip #8: Sexy is an attitude; don't be afraid to flaunt what you got!

HOWEVER, I know that not all women out there reading this are tall and statuesque (I'm only 4 feet and 10 inches tall!), so here are some tips especially for those petite women.

Tip #1: Select jeans by your hip size, rather than your waist size. In some cases, the waist will then need to be altered. Whether you do it yourself or have your jeans professionally altered, it's relatively easy to take in the waist, but it's difficult to let out side seams on jeans because the seam allowance is usually scant. I may be small, but I have some curves, and buying jeans is harder than the calculus class I had to take this past spring. I know that I'm a size 0 at Old Navy, but am a size 1 at Pacsun and sometimes a size 2 at American Eagle. Each manufacturer is different, so it's also important to try on every pair you pick out before you buy it.

Tip #2: When shopping for petite jeans, inseam can



be your worst enemy or your best friend. Because there's no standard for inseam length in petite jeans, there's a lot of variation, all the way from 25" in some extra-short styles for petites to 32" in some others. Like I already mentioned, **JEANS ARE ALTERABLE!** They can be hemmed to fit perfectly.

Tip #3: With so many jeans styles on the market and more manufacturers offering petite jeans, it's becoming a little easier to find a style of jeans that flatters. For petite women, straight-leg and boot-cut fit best, but it also depends on your body type. However, try to avoid cuffs, pleats, bell-bottoms, high-rises, and pockets with flaps or embellishment on areas you prefer to de-emphasize. Also avoid rolling up jeans at the hem if you want a longer, leaner look.

Remember everyone, jeans will never go out of style, so keep these tips in mind while you're at the mall with some friends and have a longing for those new jeans on the mannequin in the store window.

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MMA needs to jazz it up, or lose it all

Darren Johnson
Campus News

When the MMA and Ultimate Fighting became somewhat mainstream several years ago, my younger students seemed excited. They insisted that this was a real sport, and that it was way better than boxing, a sport I enjoy watching.

(Yes, I know, the athletes scramble their brains, as they do in football, but that's a whole different column.)

I guess this was my first experience being on the other end of a generation gap.

But I don't hear the same buzz anymore. I believe the main reason why isn't because many of the fights simply break down into two guys rolling around on the ground all match, nor is it because most of the matches seen on TV are pre-recorded, the results already known to any viewer with an internet connection, nor because the announcers are pretty low-rent. I think the sport is becoming increasingly dull because individual

can figure out whom to root for. Often, the main event in boxing may have two undefeated fighters going against each other. Or there may be a former champ, perhaps past his prime, going up against a cocky young gun. Compelling.

Whereas, sports like MMA haven't been around long enough. There are no 20-year veterans.

Sometimes in boxing there is an upset. Sure, there are upsets in all sports, but an upset in MMA usually seems like a twist of luck for the underdog. Perhaps he catches the favorite in some toe-hold.

Maybe it's the way they are presented, but the MMA guys don't seem to have personalities I can identify with.

While I don't watch WWE wrestling, I do think the WWE, when it was the WWF in the 1980s, had a good model to go from a fringe sport to mainstream.

Here's what MMA, or Ultimate Fighting, could learn from 1980s pro wrestling:

Have undefeated stars. The WWF stars, like Hulk Hogan and Andre the Giant, fought what were called jobbers every week. Like "tomato cans" in boxing, they were meant to lose. Once or so a year, a couple of super stars would be matched up and interest was at a maximum. Who would win? Both seemed invincible.

That's high drama.

Abandon the weight classes. Some-

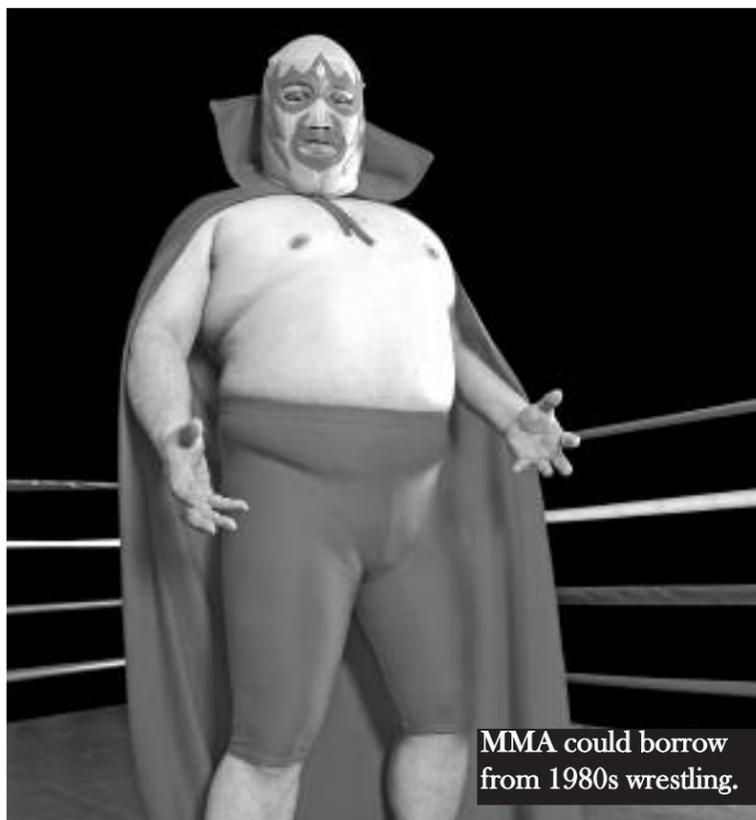
times someone like Andre would fight three little people at once on a Saturday morning show. Sometimes a local judo instructor would try to take on one of these monsters, only to get tossed around like a toy.

Maybe it would be interesting to see a really tough

150 pound guy take on a somewhat tough 250 pounder in the octagon? I'm curious to know the result.

Have heels. The old WWF had some great heels - so bad, they were good. Rowdy Roddy Piper was brilliant as a diabolical bad guy. Surely, some of these MMA guys are bastards in real life. Let's make that known and have fun booing them.

Break up anything resembling amateur wrestling. There is a reason why am-



ateur wrestling never took off as a sport viewers were interested in. It's too up-close-and-personal. The refs should be instructed to break up any ground action that is going on for more than 20 seconds. Get them standing and slugging.

Give them funny managers who hang out outside the ring. The fighters are usually not articulate, but someone like a Classy Freddie Blassie could do the trash talking for them. What fun!



matches are not special.

Watching boxing on Showtime, for example, we get polished announcers telling the back story of the fighters so we

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Online videos can make or break a race

Matt Nelson

Scripps Howard Foundation Wire

A great political video has to stand out from more than 1.4 million other clips currently tagged on YouTube as “politics,” but it can’t be too weird.

“I don’t think a politician would want to be on stage with a dancing cat,” said Charlotte Grimes, a professor at the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications. “But you never know.”

A great political video on YouTube is between 30 seconds to a minute long, and is both visually and intellectually stimulating, Grimes said. The online medium lets campaigns or campaign supporters send and share videos quickly and cheaply.

The videos are a way for campaigns to engage with voters with whom they cannot interact.

“That’s the way most campaigning is now,” Grimes said. “At a distance and impersonally, without much personal contact.”

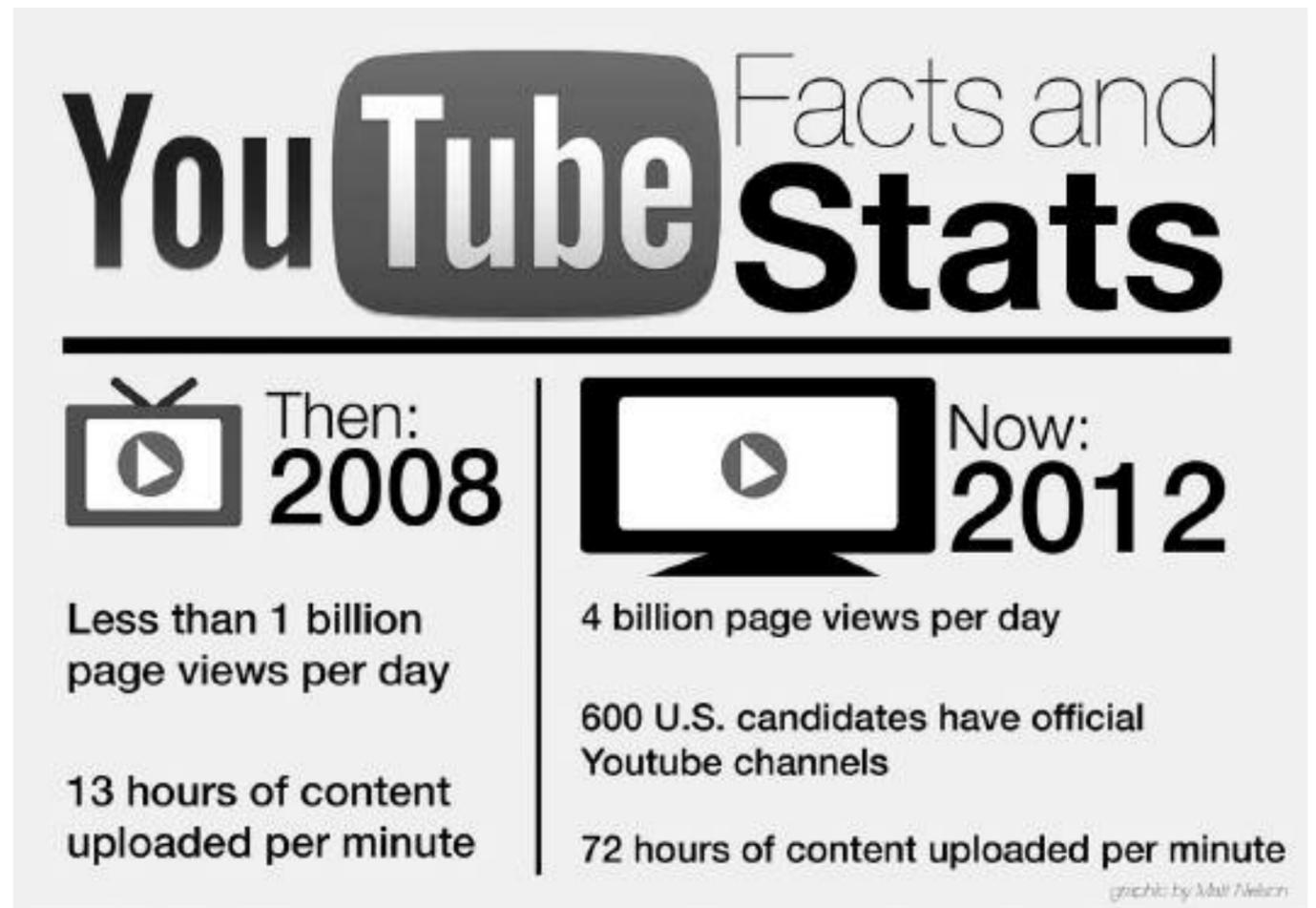
One of the most notable videos of the 2012 presidential election was one that caught Mitt Romney making frank statements about the 47 percent of Americans he expected to vote for Obama, Grimes said. In the video, Romney said that the 47 percent are dependent upon government, believe they are victims and believe they are entitled to health care.

“This election will probably be very much remembered for the 47 percent, as one of those moments captured on video that politicians would just as soon not have happened,” Grimes said. “But that’s another factor that’s influencing politics. There’s really no privacy in this era.”

Who’s watching?

In 2012, nearly 600 U.S. candidates for political office have official YouTube channels. Collectively, the official videos from presidential candidates have been viewed 75 million times during the 2012 election cycle, according to statistics emailed from YouTube. No one from the company replied to a request for an interview.

When it comes to traffic for political videos, party affiliation isn’t important,



Aaron Smith, a research associate at the PEW Research Center, said.

“It doesn’t matter if you’re a Democrat or Republican, liberal or conservative,” Smith said. “What matters is your general level of interest in the campaign.”

Smith is in the final stages of assembling the Internet and American Life project, a nationwide survey examining how people are sharing and recommending online videos. In a broad sense, Smith said, people who are using online platforms to share political discussion are the ones who have the strongest team affiliation with either of the two candidates or parties.

While the majority of voters have reported that online engagement makes them feel more connected to the issues, there are some who feel otherwise, Smith said.

“They also say that this type of engagement allows more extreme voices to dominate the discussion,” Smith said. “They sometimes have a hard time telling what’s accurate from what’s not accurate in terms

of political information.”

Going viral

A video that goes viral can be a blessing or curse to the campaign that creates it.

George Allen, R, a former Virginia governor and senator who is seeking his former Senate seat, is still asked about the infamous YouTube video that derailed his re-election campaign in 2006.

“In 2006, he was pretty much poised to win that race,” said Caitlin Huey-Burns, a reporter for Real-Clear Politics who covers congressional campaigns.

Huey-Burns remembers the video in which Allen, campaigning for Senate, used the racial slur “macaca” when referring to an opposing campaign volunteer of Indian descent. The video went viral.

Huey-Burns said she initially did not realize the impact of the Allen video. At the time, YouTube had been officially launched for less than a year, and the site hit 100 million page views a day. In 2012, the site receives 4 billion views per day, ac-

ording to YouTube.

Allen lost the Senate seat to Jim Webb, D, who is not running for re-election.

“That comment on YouTube, through the Web, became a really defining moment for that campaign,” Huey-Burns said. “It really raised questions about his character, about his campaign.”

Six years later, the “Macaca Moment” continues to dog Allen, Huey-Burns said. Because of the immortality of the Internet, campaign managers are becoming more careful.

“Google never goes away,” Huey-Burns said. “And you really can’t escape it, once it is there.”

Grimes said that an influx of technology has led to less privacy.

“Everyone’s got a telephone with a camera in it, and everyone can upload to YouTube and Facebook,” Grimes said. “If you ever think that you’re saying something that’s going to be a secret, you better think again, and that goes for all of us.”

A gift to Japan – dogwood trees (cont. from page 3)

blossoms that survived were planted in 1912.

“All the hurdles and hoops that we’re jumping through are the result of the very first cherry trees being burned on the National Mall. We want to make sure that are plants don’t go there and get burned,” Olsen said.

President William Howard Taft first made the effort to send dogwood trees to Japan in gratitude for the cherry blossoms.



Ichiro Fujisaki

Bob Taft, former Ohio governor and a great-grandson of the former president, continued the family tradition in 2000. He sent 50 dogwood trees, which stand outside the Japanese parliamentary building.

Taft said in a phone interview that the dogwood represents a change in the seasons for the U.S.,

while the cherry blossom represents the arrival of spring in Japan.

“Dogwoods, like cherry trees, bloom beautifully in the spring – they are a sign of spring,” Taft said.

Shinju Karasawa, a press representative from the Japanese Embassy, said the dogwood trees will be planted in the Tohoku region of northern Japan and in Yoyogi Park of Tokyo.

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Crystal clear shots from Curiosity on Mars

Tanya Parker

Scripps Howard Foundation Wire

NASA's Curiosity rover proves the third time's the charm after successfully collecting and ingesting a Mars soil sample last month for mineral composition analysis.

The rover's chemistry and mineralogy instrument, otherwise known as CheMin, will X-ray the sample to determine what, if any, microbes it contains.

NASA dumped the second soil scoop when FOD, or foreign object debris, caught the scientists' eyes.

John Grotzinger, Mars Science Laboratory project scientist at the California Institute of Technology, said the first two scoops were discarded because the scientists worried that unnatural shiny objects in the scoop areas would skew the soil results.

"After we dumped scoop two, we then did a very extensive review,"

Grotzinger

said. "We went super paranoid."

Curiosity cleaned out its

sampling system before swallowing the new soil.

Curiosity will remain at "the promisseland" of Rocknest until it has finished analyzing the soil sample. Scientists said results should be available by the end of next week.

Richard Cook, Mars Science Laboratory project manager at the Jet Propul-

sion Laboratory, said the team still doesn't know what the bright specks are. He said the team has seen more than just one FOD in images collected over the last week at Rocknest.

At first, the team thought the material was plastic debris from Curiosity, but now they aren't so sure.

"We don't know whether or not they're plastic or they're something else, nor do we understand the source of them," Cook said.

The team played it safe and decided a third scoop was necessary to ensure that Curiosity didn't ingest manmade materials.

Grotzinger said scientists agreed that the pale specks are not just on the surface of the soil, which indicates that the material is probably indigenous to Mars.

"If it's foreign, and it has fallen off of the spacecraft, it will only be on the surface, it won't be under the surface,"

Grotzinger said. "We feel very confident

that there is no foreign object debris that went into CheMin, and that if there

are little white flecks of some type that went into CheMin, they're going to be part of the analysis of natural materials because they were in the subsurface and not on the surface."

Curiosity has been on the red planet for more than 70 days, and this is its first soil collection. Grotzinger said the Mars Science Laboratory team is excited about

After 70 days there, its first soil collection.



the progress the rover is making and are relieved that there haven't been any serious issues.

"We're excited about it because we look at the images and we see things that promise a lot of excitement in terms of understanding the environmental history of Mars and maybe giving us further clues into the habitability search," Grotzinger said. "These are questions that have been around forever. ... Now, once and for all, we really hope to address what's in the soil of Mars miner-

logically — what's actually in there."

The rover's sights are now set on the Glenelg area where Curiosity's images suggest a promising drilling location.

"When it comes to drilling, it's probably going to be about a month," Grotzinger said. "I would hope we'd be on our way by the end of the year."

To stay up to date on Curiosity's Martian adventures, follow the witty bot on Twitter.

A busy presidential inauguration, for sure

Jory Heckman

Scripps Howard Foundation Wire

President Barack Obama, or President-elect Mitt Romney? Regardless of who gets elected, the capital is bracing for a busy Inauguration Day.

While organizers behind the inaugural parade aren't expecting the historic turnout of the 2009 inauguration, getting a space to watch the ceremonies from the National Mall or the parade from Pennsylvania Avenue is still going to be an ordeal - whether it's to watch a second-term Obama or a newly installed Romney.

The area's transit agency is also getting ready.

"Because of the historic nature of the inauguration of the nation's first African-American president, that really led to ridership numbers and atten-

dance numbers at the event that were greater than anything that we've seen before," Dan Stessel, spokesman for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, said.

Even choosing the day of the ceremonies is more trouble than it sounds. This is because Inauguration Day falls on a Sunday in 2013 for the first time since Ronald Reagan's second inauguration in 1985. The public inauguration will be pushed back to Jan. 21 - Martin Luther King Jr. Day - but the president will be sworn in during a private ceremony the day before.

Army Master Sgt. Jerry Amoury works in the Band Control Office of the Presidential Inaugural Parade Management. He said he's already received 200 applications for groups wanting to march in the parade. After Election

Day, he's expecting 600 to 700 more.

Though the numbers are down from 2009, when the parade management received 1,400 group applications, Amoury said his office still has plenty of talent to choose from.

"You're going to have a whole menagerie of different types of groups," Amoury said. Contenders include college and high school marching bands, dance troupes and vintage vehicles such as a World War I ambulance and a 1950s police car.

While the parade management reviews the submissions for quality, the Presidential Inaugural Committee - the organization of the incoming president - makes the cuts and compiles the final list.

Once the PIC decides, Amoury said his department "will go back to

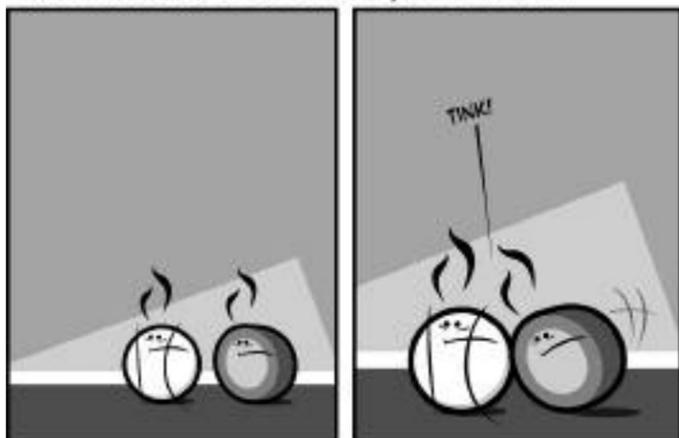
the drawing board and map out what the parade will look like from beginning to end."

As for security for the parade and on the Mall, Secret Service spokesman Brian Leary said information would be available to the public after Election Day.

Meanwhile, the Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies will oversee the inaugural ceremonies at the Capitol.

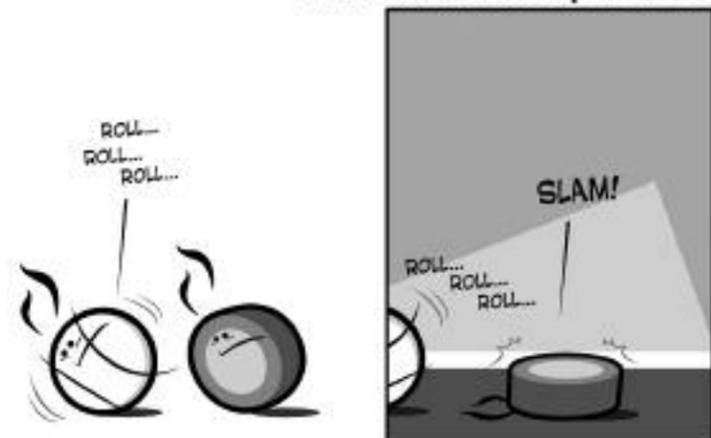
On Sept. 20, construction workers began building the inaugural platform and media stand on the west side of the Capitol.

SMALL MARKET SPORTS by Bill Charbonneau



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Follow your dreams? Well, kind of...

Darren Johnson
Campus News

Recently, I was in a discussion with another writer – someone who only makes his living off of writing – about people’s perceptions when one says simply, “I am a writer.”

(Or, for the sake of this piece, an artist, actor, etc.)

To the average person on the street, when one professes to be a writer or similar, it is met with incredulity. “OK. What do you really do?” may be said, perhaps that bluntly, or perhaps with more diplomacy.

My writer friend seemed bothered by this. If one professes to be a lawyer or a plumber, he surmised, there

their notebooks?

Those in creative majors continue to put out litmags, put on shows and exhibits, but the rest of the students barely care about these works and don’t bother lending support.

In the creative workshops, a few students rise to the top, others wilt with the classroom criticism (which is usually relatively mild compared to the real-world rejection beginning writers and artists face).

Shortly after graduation, those few brave souls who are left attempt to enter a creative field. Many give up too soon and end up selling insurance and the like while spouses and kids make the creative dreams deferred, but as I said above, creativity can just disappear in that time.

Some, like myself, who studied writing very intensively, get into

fields that are an adaptation of their training. I mostly write in the journalistic style, though preferred fiction back when and had a novel that did not do so well.

Though now I own a couple of small media properties, I do understand people’s skepticism. While I have met many people who only live off the income derived from being creative, they are very few in numbers compared to the overall population. And while we know that a lawyer probably makes about \$100,000 and a plumber \$50,000, we don’t know if someone who calls himself a writer is making \$5000 or \$500,000, or anything at all.

But mostly I think the skepticism comes from people who are jealous that they gave up on some vague creative dream many years ago. Few kids hope to someday, if all goes right, sell insurance.

So, if you have a creative dream, start goal-setting. Here is my advice for realizing goals:

1. Put on blinders and don’t let negative (jealous) people get in your head.

2. Read books written by people who have succeeded, especially in a field similar to yours.

3. Test the market; poll those people who will be your customers/constituents/etc. as to what they would like so that you can tailor your plan for success. Involving them in your process may lead to them giving you money some day!

4. Start small – do all the work yourself in years 1 and 2, and then start to delegate some business responsibilities, if possible.

5. Don’t be afraid of the competition or angering people. Whenever you take a chance, you will anger the status quo. Grow a backbone and take them on.

Most of all, don’t look at anything as a failure. I’ve had little magazines that only lasted a few issues, but I learned a good deal about layout and the business by putting them together. I learned Photoshop and web skills by

poking around fun web sites, playing with images and posting my work and determining which ones worked and which ones didn’t by thumbs up and responses from people better than me at the skills. Even if I found myself in a mundane day job, I would keep freelancing, even if just for \$50 per article, just to keep my creative muscles limber.

I’ve found that teaching, too, keeps one in the game. Students like it when the instructor is a practitioner of the art that they are studying.

I know “follow your dreams” is the clichéd sendoff you may get at graduation, but, more specifically, don’t defer your dreams. Even if you are selling insurance to pay the bills, have a sideline as a writer/actor/artist. Work lunchtimes, nights and weekends on your art – quit the video games, the softball leagues, the bars and clubs. Don’t waste any time.

Else, you will become one of those bitter people who rolls their eyes when meeting a younger person who says he or she works in a creative field. Strive, instead, to be an inspiration.

Practical advice for students in impractical majors.

would not be any cross-examination after. Why assume he also busses tables to pay the rent?

But the skepticism is totally understandable to me.

It’s true that most people who study an art as a college student rarely make a go of it in the real world, and their creative abilities wither and die before age 25 or so if not practiced. And one doesn’t need a fancy degree or certification to hang a shingle up and call oneself an artist or writer.

At one point, most people had a creative dream. They didn’t have the energy to pursue it or let the naysayers bring them down, and their abilities disappeared. You walk through the halls of grade schools and see tremendous art, poems and other creative works posted all over the walls. The potential!

Then it’s gone. By college, how many students are even doodling in



Suffolk ‘Dig Pink’ Fundraiser

On Thursday night November 11 at 6 p.m. in the Brookhaven Gymnasium the Suffolk County Community College Volleyball Team will be hosting their 3rd annual Dig Pink Game for the Side Out Foundation and breast cancer awareness.

The previous two events raised \$7980.00. Any person making a donation of \$20 or more will receive a Suffolk Dig Pink t-shirt.

Donations will be accepted in the form of cash or checks made payable to the Suffolk CC Association. Donations can be sent or delivered to the Athletic Departments at both the Ammerman and Grant Campuses to the attention of Joe Kosina.

In lieu of admission, donations will also be accepted at the door. All donations are tax deductible and will go to The Side-Out Foundation, which was established in 2004 to unite volleyball players and coaches and to have them work toward the common goal of furthering breast cancer awareness, education and patient services.

The term side-out refers to a situation in volleyball when one team wins a point while its opponent is serving, thereby regaining serve or control of play. It is hoped that this foundation will do the same for breast cancer patients, providing them with the support, education and best available treatments to resume control of their lives.

Through volleyball tournaments, clinics and other events, Side-Out raises funds to donate to organizations that share the idea of a cancer-free world.

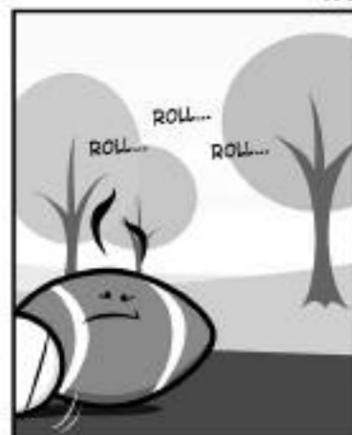
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Can the US really double exports?

Jory Heckman

Scripps Howard Foundation Wire

President Barack Obama reminded viewers at last week's presidential debate of his plan to double U.S. exports during by 2015. The question remains, however: What is the country exporting, and where is it going?

"We signed three trade deals into law that are helping us to double our exports and sell more American products around the world," Obama said Oct. 3 at the University of Denver.

Lauren Airey, director of trade facilitation policy at the National Association of Manufacturers, said the United States exported a record \$1.48 trillion worth of goods in 2011.

The top export for the U.S. is transportation equipment - aerospace parts, motor vehicles and parts, and ships and boats - and is worth \$217 billion, Airey said.

Other leading exports include computers and electronics, worth \$201 billion, and chemicals, worth \$197 billion.

Airey said most U.S. exports are sent to Canada (19 percent), Mexico (13 percent), China (7 percent), Japan (4.5 percent) and the United Kingdom (3.8 percent).

The data reflect the U.S.'s focus on producing highly specialized and technical goods - which is where the country should be focusing its attention, according to a panel of economists at the Heritage Foundation, a

conservative think tank.

"Fifty-eight percent of our import value last year was intermediate goods. Those are the purchases of producers," Daniel Ikenson, director of the Herbert A. Stiefel Center for Trade Policy Studies at the Cato Institute.

While the U.S. exports goods that require advanced science and technology skills, Derek Scissors, senior research fellow in Asia economics at the Heritage Foundation, said the country imports items, such as clothes and toys, that can be made by unskilled labor.

"There's a lot of jokes about all your toys are made in China, and everyone's wearing clothes that are made in China," Scissors said. "Both parties seem to like to bash China, especially right now."

At the debate and on the campaign trail, Mitt Romney has called for a policy that would "crack down on China if and when they cheat."

Ikenson said Romney's platform

to the U.S. come from China.

Scissors said China has been used as a scapegoat during the election because of its size.

"There's visibility here. China's trade policy is far from perfect, but there are countries that are worse, but they're not as big," Scissors said. "You can't say it's all Belgium's fault."

Scissors, the co-author of a Heritage paper on U.S. imports, said goods imported from China helped create 576,000 jobs in the U.S. with an average salary of \$60,000 a year.

Edward Gresser, director of the ProgressiveEconomy Project at the GlobalWorks Foundation, outlined where imports help create jobs.

"You have boxes of clothes and toys. They come into a port where someone operating a crane picks them up and puts them on a truck. Someone's driving a truck to a store, you need more people to unload it and bring it into a store. If there's a whole lot, they have to build another store. Then you have people that are in stocking and sales," Gresser said. "Those are really direct and clear effects of a greater flow of boxes coming into the country."

Scissors said the public - and the president - should think of economic growth as more than manufacturing jobs.

"We have an argument that manufacturing jobs are better - that we should have manufacturing jobs and should export those goods because then we're making things," Scissors said, "but is a manufacturing job automatically better than a sales job if the

compensation is the same or better?"

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, as of May 2011 a worker in manufacturing and production earns an average of \$34,220 a year, and a tractor-trailer driver earns an average of \$39,830 a year. The average retail salesperson, by contrast, earns \$25,130 a year.

Scissors said increasing exports means investing in the U.S.'s faltering manufacturing industry and hoping for positive results. The infrastructure for imports jobs, he said, is already there.

"Exports could create these jobs, and we have nothing against trade surpluses. This is not an argument that exports are bad, or trade surpluses are bad. This is an argument that imports are also good and trade deficits are fine," Scissors said.

Stephen MacDonald, an economist for the United States Department of Agriculture, said the country remains an important player in the world's food supply.

"The U.S. has consistently accounted for 10 percent of world trade in recent years," MacDonald said in a telephone interview. The U.S. is followed by the Netherlands, Germany and Brazil.

From October 2011 to July, the United States exported \$27 billion in grain and feeds, a decrease of 12 percent from last year. The exports included \$16 billion in soybeans, a decrease of 11 percent, \$10 billion in red meat, an increase of 12 percent, and \$9.8 billion in corn, a decrease of 9 percent.

Though goods imported from China helped create 576,000 jobs in the United States.

could backfire in swing states like Ohio.

"They're doing well," Ikenson said, citing Ohio's lower unemployment rate - 7.2 percent - than the national rate of 7.8 percent. "Their fastest-growing export market is China. Why do you want to bash China in Ohio?" Ikenson said.

More than 18 percent of imports

Are online classes the real deal? (cont. from cover)

ANGEL program, if you don't want to use your cell phone to get help from your instructor. In this program classes are held with chat forums, messaging with the teachers and other students, and timed tests. Everything is done virtually. Not a foot needs to be stepped into a classroom. Even registration and payments can be done remotely.

SUNY Rockland also offers hybrid classes where one day a week there is a physical class with a real live instructor, while the rest of the class is completed virtually. With so many different options, not having time to take class seems like an implausible excuse.

Although the convenience factor is there, not all students are happy with their experiences. One student who took a course at SUNY Rockland a few years ago complained that it was hard to be able to sign on every day and post in the forum as often as the teacher required. "The tests were tough because you have no one teaching the material and have to learn everything on your own," said Anthony Wargo.

Jill Perrello took some online classes more recently. One class was a math course, while the other was a science course. Jill spoke of big differences between the two types. "I've always liked math, but learning it on-

line was impossible. I had to pay for the course, pay for the textbook, and then they wanted me to pay for another computer program to run the math portion of the course. So I dropped it. That was crazy," she said.

"As for the science course, it was hard, but I stuck with it. There's so much more work to do when the class is online. You have to constantly read tons of material, take quiz after quiz, and when it comes to the tests, they are timed, so you can't stop and go back. If you stop, it's over," she continued. Even though the class was online and could be done on your own time, the time required is a lot, possibly even more than one would spend in the classroom, according to Jill. "It wasn't worth it. I could've got a much better grade if it was an in-person class."

"I think online classes are great for English or classes that are mostly based on discussions and writing assignments. I think if you are trying to learn something like math or a science or a language, it would be really hard to complete the class without direct instruction," explained another student, Kathryn Tsiavos. "I also don't think it's quite as personal of an experience."

These negative feelings seem to be a similar reaction amongst students, yet the classes are continuing to be offered



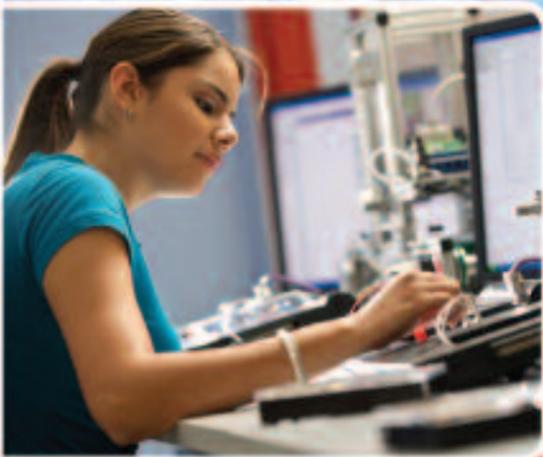
and enrolled. If these classes are not so great, why are they so popular? Kathryn believes it has to do with the ease of access and lack of time in people's lives to dedicate directly to school. "These classes, although maybe not as effective to actually learn, provide people who work or stay at home moms the ability to take college classes that fit and are flexible to their schedules," added Kathryn.

All in all, online classes seem to be helpful for certain lifestyles, but seem to disappoint many. If someone is looking for an easy class where they won't have to devote much time, they may wrongly turn to e-learning. If someone is looking for a way to take a class in between other activities but has plenty of time to put into, then they shall succeed!



where are the thinkers

who will foresee the forces of nature?



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