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West Campus SGA debate Presidential candidate discusses important issues

By James Austin
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The right to vote is one of our nations founding principles. It gives us, the citizens, the opportunity to make our society better by electing leaders who we think best represent our thoughts and beliefs.

It's time again for Valencia's Student Government elections and to help the student body make an educated decision the West Campus SGA debates were held on the SSB patio this past Tuesday.

There were three candidates scheduled to participate in the debates. The two Presidential candidates, Patrick O'Conner and Wendell Smith Jr, and the unopposed Vice Presidential candidate Shardeh Berry.

O'Conner was the first and only candidate to speak, Smith and Berry could not make it for unspecified reasons and neither were available for comment.

O'Conner, the current SGA

Chief-of-staff and VCC student since Fall 2009, said that he wanted to bring back intramural sports to West Campus, would work to create a mentorship program available for



all students, and have a more open and available system for getting class and professor information.

Smith wasn't at the debate but has published his platform goals. Including wanting to continue the 'Free the Children' fundraiser to supply clean drinking water to family's in Haiti, working with the

RDV Sportsplex to host West Campus sports, and increasing school spirit by holding pep rallies, campus competitions and fundraisers to support campus clubs.

Though she is running unopposed, the Vice Presidential candidate Berry released her own platform that she will be focusing on in the coming year, including encouraging more students to actively participate in campus events. She also wants to focus on making more courses available to all campus's.

The power of the people is a guiding light in the politics of this country. Our right to vote was established in the Constitution so that citizens would always be in control of their own destiny and so that the will of the people would always be heard.

To make sure your voice is heard by Valencia make sure you go to your Atlas account Monday April 4th and Tuesday April 5th to vote for your Student Government.

Meet the candidates



Shardeh Berry
Vice Presidential candidate

- Current Parliamentarian of SGA
- Platform:
Richer variety of courses for those who can only access one campus



Wendell Smith Jr
Presidential candidate

- Current Vice President of SGA
- Platform:
Increase student participation
Partner with local sportsplex to host club sports.



Patrick O'Conner
Presidential candidate

- Current Chief-of-Staff of SGA.
- Platform:
Make class selection easier by making syllabuses available during registration.
Create a mentorship program that is open to all students.



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Spring training

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Now the FCAT matters

New bill makes teachers pay based on test scores

By Pallavi Agarwal
Highlands Today, Sebring, Fla.

Thursday, Gov. Rick Scott signed into law a merit pay system to reward teachers who do a good job.

Now, local school board officials want to know how lawmakers want the school districts to fund these pay raises, without allocating any money for them.

A day after the merit pay bill became law -- one year after former Gov. Charlie Crist vetoed a similar bill last year -- many questions remain.

School board member Andy Tuck said he intends to go to Tallahassee next week to ask that same question, namely how much teachers could make in merit raises and where the money was to come from.

Starting next school year, the new law also requires school districts to institute a teacher evaluation system tied heavily to how their students perform on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test and other exams over a three-year period.

School districts have until June 1 to submit their

evaluation methods to the Florida Department of Education.

School board member Ned Hancock said the school district has started working on the framework of its evaluation tool.

The school's Director of Human Resources Vivian Waldron explained the evaluation system they were creating was part of the requirements of the federal Race To The Top grant and mirrors what the new law mandates, mainly that half of a teacher's evaluation be linked to student growth and achievement.

Hancock added while he thought the new law would be beneficial in the long run, there were some parts he did not like.

He was concerned school districts would have a hard time instituting a merit pay system during challenging economic times.

"The most immediate impact (of the new law), it has yet to be seen," he said. Although "I'm all for good teachers to make more in line with what the rest of their profession is making."

Hancock also wondered how teachers who taught non-FCAT subjects like P.E., music and fine arts would be evaluated.

According to the Florida Education Association, school districts had to institute end-of-the-year exams for non-FCAT courses by 2014.

While the evaluation system has to be put into place by next school year, schools have three years to institute the merit pay plan.

The new law also grandfathers in existing teachers unless they move to another school district or opt to participate in the merit plan.

School board member Donna Howerton said she was happy the local teachers union, teachers and administrators have been working together to design the evaluation system that matches

what the Hillsborough County School District is doing as part of its \$100 million Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation grant.

Locally, it involves hiring six peer evaluators, who will help evaluate teachers, and that would constitute a percentage point toward merit pay.

Howerton concurred with Hancock and Tuck that teachers were underpaid but was concerned about paying for a merit pay plan during a money crunch and devising a system that was fair to everyone.

Deputy School Superintendent Rodney Hollinger said it was too early for him to make a comment on the law's impact on the school district.

He said state education legislative experts will have to first study the law and pass on their interpretation to school districts.

He hopes to have a better idea by early May.

"It (the bill) hasn't been explained to us," he said. "It was just signed yesterday."

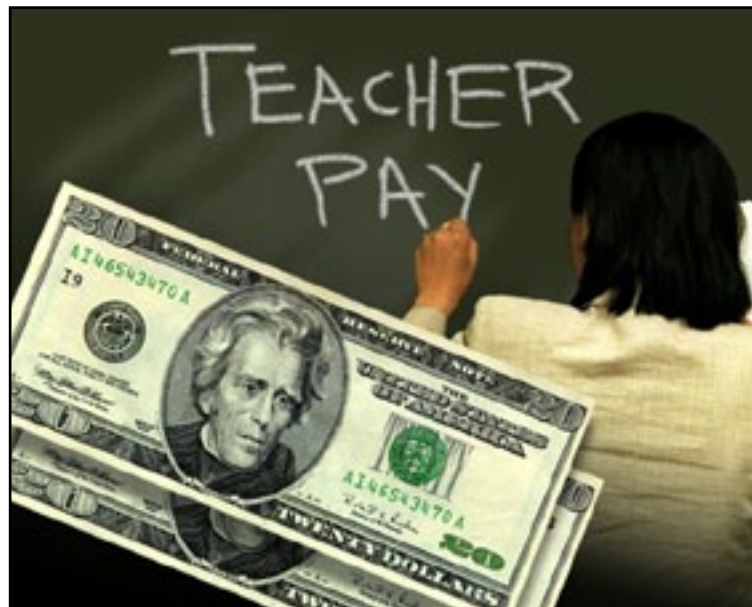
—MCT Campus

No shoe day

SGA is hosting an event to celebrate 'One Day Without Shoes' on April 5th in HSB 105 and building 3-111. 'One Day Without Shoes' is a movement started by Toms Shoes, a company that donates a pair of shoes to someone in need for every pair purchased.

'One Day Without Shoes' purports to raise awareness of the vast amount of people in the world who can't afford to wear shoes. Many people celebrate by going the whole day without wearing shoes of their own; from the moment they wake-up until they go to bed like millions who cannot afford shoes of their own.

As well as showing documentary on Toms Shoes, SGA will be giving away Toms flags to promote awareness. They will also be collecting donations of old shoes to be sent to Souls4souls, a charity focused on getting shoes to those in need.



Kurt Strazdins

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Josh Boesen '09
Master of Business Administration

Trust tested in new survey

Media trustworthiness scores all-time low

By Collin Dever
cdever@valencivoice.com

The President and CEO of Edleman U.S., Matthew J. Harrington, spoke to a small audience of honors students on Wednesday about the company's annual Trust Barometer. The report globally surveys levels of trust of government, business, and media organizations.

The highest scoring country overall was Brazil, proving to be the most trusting of the 23 countries that were surveyed, scoring 25 points above the global average.

"What you saw here was the emerging markets, the BRICs, their buoyancy in terms of their economic advancements and societal advancements and therefore trusted within all institutions," said Harrington.

BRIC, an acronym for Brazil, Russia, India, and China, all seen to be in the same stages of emerging economic development.

The United States dropped from fourth to 10th in just a three year time span. Harrington points to lack of job creation, the negative rhetoric in government, and polarization of the media as reasons for a drop in American trust.

Media in America was the least trusted source of information with only 27 percent support. Down 19 percent since 2008.

Earlier in the morning Harrington gave a similar presentation to Valencia Faculty and Staff and some members of the community. The presentations are part of a series aimed to build dialogue around the issue of trust.

Dr. Sandy Shugart, President of Valencia College, attended the first presentation and said that

Valencia was picked to host the talks because of the kind of conversation it supports.

The survey also ranked Academic/experts as the highest trusted source for information and a regular employee as the least trusted source.

"Our culture places a very high premium on expertise," said Shugart. "Educational institutions are still generally regarded as places where self interest is not so strongly encouraged."

Overall the summary emphasizes the importance of trust because of the motility it provides an organization. Public impression will sway but trustworthy groups will have the flexibility to bounce back. Trust provides a foundation that shelters organizations during rough times.

"We're tracking the changing nature of trust in our institutional segments," said Harrington. "What's most important is what the value of trust is."

The report demonstrates the building of trust through transparency, engagement, and profit with a purpose. By this model organizations should work to not be seen as hiding anything, active in dialogue with citizens, and giving back to humanity with the extra money they make.

The report was compiled by 30 minute phone surveys of 5,075 people considered informed public broken into two age groups 25 to 34 and 35 to 64. Edleman describes "informed public" as a college educated person whose income is in the top 25 percent for their age and invest time in news media and follows public policy several times a week.

For more information and to view the 2011 Edleman Trust Barometer Executive Summary go to <http://www.edelman.com/trust/2011/>.

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Being a nerd has never been cooler

Times have changed and so have the rules on what is the social norm

They are all around us and while so many of them are clear as day to spot out in a crowd, many of them go through their everyday lives under the cloak of anonymity. They can be anyone regardless of race, sex, or social status. They are your family, friends, employers and even significant others. A demographic that has, over the years, gained army-like numbers.

I speak of a greatly misunderstood group: nerds.

For almost as long as human history has been in existence, this silent minority has had its influence in so many areas of science, literature, music, and art, all while taking the ribbing of their peers in stride.

Too long has the word nerd been almost a scarlet letter of shame, branding individuals for their personal underground interests in things not meant for the mainstream and ostracizing them to a social group which has developed a reputation for socially awkward behavior.

But times have changed and in our generation, the nerds of the Earth have risen up, crawled out from the basements of parental domains, unhinged the lockers of confinement and have flooded every facet of social interactions

with their reference of specific puns.

Nerdom is back and in a big way.

Once a self-serving joke of comfort, the old saying that “the nerds of today are the millionaires of tomorrow,” hasn’t been

the minds of those more apt with talking to computers than people.

Whether their expertise is in comics, anime, science, role playing, technology, science fiction, or fantasy literature, nerds have made their mark on industries the world over.



Jonathan Terbeche / Valencia Voice

Megacon, the largest convention in Florida, brings nerds together.

more accurate than it is now in this technologically dominated, socially networked world.

Time Magazine’s Man of the year, Mark Zuckerberg, now one of the youngest billionaires in history has become an icon for what creative possibilities lie within

Even the trendy fashionistas of New York and Los Angeles have stopped to take notice of the growing population making nerd chic a popular style of clothing for many outsiders too hesitant to truly dive into the diverse pocket protector-filled

world of the modern nerd.

The movie industry of today is certainly no stranger to the odd interests and hobbies of what has undoubtedly become its biggest fan base for comic-based movies and sci-fi thrillers. They are everywhere, and their taste in overly priced movie memorabilia is insatiable.

It is difficult to imagine a world without nerds and their contributions to humanity. It would be completely unreasonable to think that some of humanity’s greatest achievements didn’t owe their success in part to the contributions of social misfits wanting nothing more to visit the stars like Han Solo, or communicate wirelessly like Captain Kirk.

Their imagination is the spark that guides the world into its creative and technological futures. So next time you find yourself sitting in a crowd, do one thing. Look to your left. Look to your right. Then look inside yourself. Chances are you will find a little bit of nerd in all three.

This past weekend the Valencia Voice went to Megacon, possibly the greatest collection of nerds in Florida. Check out our coverage at the end of the Voice.

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Superstition is the way

By Rofkens Petite-Homme
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It happens. You break a mirror, or walk under a ladder or avoid stepping on any pavement cracks. Whether it is done on purpose or not, the ideas set forth by superstition have been embedded in society for centuries.

That feeling of creepiness you occasionally get in that one dimly lit room at grandmas house has a universal theme.

Every culture has different stories that deal with items of the unknown. The Haitian culture has a rule that says you cannot sweep a persons feet or you might face a future divorce or a life with out a spouse.

Old America had a preference to the number 13 and one particular house was built to cater to that 'lucky' number. Today that house is currently one of the most scariest haunted houses in North America.

Here are my top five greatest superstitions. One is when I have a sense of déjà vu. For some reason after every instance, something really good happens or something really bad happens, like my car breaking down 54 miles away from my house.

Number two are black cats crossing my path. It is really not as bad as you might think. I find no less then five dollars lying around every time it happens.

Number three has to be keeping all the lights in my house on when I am inside by myself for more than 48 hours.

Don't ask about this one, but number four is spilling ketchup every time I see a ginger (red) haired male or female. They are scary people.

And number five has to be tying my shoelaces over my ankles extra tight before playing basketball.

Hey, different people have complex and unique things that help them cope with every day life. Poker star John Racener chewed bubble gum on his final leg of the World Series of Poker championships. He ended up winning \$8,944,310.

No matter if it is for a good cause or you just do not want something bad to happen, superstitions are a part of life and will continue to be for a long time.

What things are you superstitious about?



"I would have to say I'm superstitious about ghosts."

— Andre Simpson



"I honestly have nothing I'm superstitious about."

— Jordan Guzman



"I'm a server at a restaurant and if I spill salt, I'll pick some up and throw it over my shoulder."

— William Baudree



"I am not a superstitious person at all."

— Ata Hameed



"I'm superstitious about stepping over someone. My mom told me it stunts their growth."

— Taiama Ferreira



"I'm pretty superstitious about putting all my materials in order before I study."

— Mike Aponte



"Just walking underneath ladders, I guess."

— Holly Peacock



"I throw pennies around my room for good luck."

— Linda Bridier

About Time

President Obama speaks about Libyan intervention

By James Austin
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"Born, as we are, out of a revolution by those who longed to be free, we welcome the fact that history is on the move in the Middle East and North Africa, and that young people are leading the way. Because wherever people long to be free, they will find a friend in the United States." Nobel Peace Prize winner, and current president Barack Obama, addressed the nation this past Monday from the National Defense University to explain and justify America's intervention into the Libyan conflict.

7 days ago the UN approved Resolution 1973, a resolution to end all violence against civilians in the African country of Libya. The Resolution was supported by the United States, the European Union, the Arab League and NATO. The coalition of forces, led by the US, immediately went into action, setting up a 'no fly zone' over Libya. This eliminated General Muammar Gaddafi's ability to use air power against the rebel forces currently protesting his rule.

Obama's swift action to send troops into yet another conflict overseas caused many in the political and media community to be uneasy. Not only was the military action sudden, it's constitutionality has been called into question by lawmakers and pundits alike.

Obama addressed some of these concerns in his speech by clarifying why he felt that intervention in Libya was not only preventing a "humanitarian crisis" but also defending America's best interests in the region.

"America has an important strategic interest in preventing Gaddafi from overrunning those who



oppose him." Obama said, "The democratic impulses that are dawning across the region would be eclipsed by the darkest form of dictatorship, as repressive lead-

ers concluded that violence is the best strategy to cling to power."

The president also made it clear that while our government wants Gaddafi to be gone, it was not the goal of this engagement, saying, "If we tried to overthrow Gaddafi by force, our coalition would splinter. We would likely have to put U.S. troops on the ground, or risk killing many civilians from the air."

He also did his best to differentiate between this conflict and the Iraq war. "Thanks to the extraordinary sacrifices of our troops and the determination of our diplomats, we are hopeful about Iraq's future." Said Obama, "But regime change there took eight years, thousands of American and Iraqi lives, and nearly a trillion dollars. That is not something we can afford to repeat in Libya."

All in all this speech gave some of the best insight to date into the Obama administrations foreign policy. He made sure to mention why we intervened in Libya as opposed to other oppressed nations, and made it clear that America would sustain it's leadership position in the world.

While the speech was good, and it was delivered well, it came incredibly late. This speech should have been delivered the day of, if not the day before, the action was ordered. Obama could have avoided a week of bad press and media speculation if he had explained this reasoning about nine days ago.

Superstition-fact or myth

Studies suggest that people create superstition

By Camilo Echeverri Bernal
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A poll taken in 2007 says that one third of Americans believe in ghosts, 34 percent say they believe in unidentified flying objects, according to the poll by the Associated Press and Ipsos. You may say that you know someone who does, but is this common? Yes.

Superstition has been a part of many cultures throughout history, and it is no different nowadays, from old wives tales about spilling salt, to the number thirteen and Friday the thirteenth, breaking mirrors, stepping on cracks and the influence of the moon upon behaviour are commonly held folkloric explanations that groups still cling onto. Even in the face of scientific literature that dispels the alleged mysticism or mystery of these claims as nothing more than paranoia and psychological disturbances at times.

Some of us hold some superstitious idea to some degree, or used to. One being when we were children and afraid of the dark at bed time. We'd leave the lights on, or would cuddle up with our stuffed animals. Constantly looking at the closet--in

case anything came out of there.

There are evolutionary explanations for fear of the dark.

In the same poll, nearly 48 percent of people said they believe in extrasensory perception.



Jim Atherton / MCT

Whether they were under the influence of some consciousness-altering substance or lacked oxygen to the brain is unknown. Individuals prone to these kinds of notions tend to seek the support and confirmation of those around them in a process called confirmation bias. This is when the individual will look for the evidence they think will prove

the experience, even if the alleged evidence may be the result of wishful thinking. Not thorough research or controlled experiments.

Other results indicated that 19 percent believe that spells or witchcraft exists. The belief in witchcraft and spells is still common in third world countries and amongst the uneducated. It is also known that these segments of the population are more prone to hold the existence of demons, angels and monsters as being factual, albeit the fact that they may not have seen them themselves. Sometimes they find photographs that are dubious in nature and use them as proof. Examples are bigfoot, Nessie, and skinwalkers.

Psychologists have said causes for superstition "include the human propensity to ascribe meaning to coincidence or to assert control over uncontrollable events." And when life becomes miserable or factors and events are unknown and or undesirable, people will resort to the delusion of turning to metaphysics, divination and astrology to find answers about the outside world.

Fans give a 'thumbs up' to this playlist

First 'Playlist Live' convention brings the stars of Youtube up close with those who made them famous

By Veronica Figueroa
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Orlando, Florida became the home of the first Playlist Live convention this past weekend. It was a celebration which brought YouTube celebrities and their fans together for a weekend of being surrounded by people who love online videos.

The host, YouTube's TheWillofDC, and Kevin Khandjian, the primary organizer of this event, opened the show to 1,500 eager fans on Saturday the 26th at 10 a.m. at the Orlando World Center Marriott Resort's Crystal Ballroom.

Registration began at 8 a.m. and after receiving a Playlist wristband for the weekend, fans

were also given an official Playlist tote bag which had a trial version of VideoStudioX4, a "Music Industry Survival Manual: How Not To Get Screwed," an Orlando coupon book, and the official Playlist Live guidebook which had artist profiles and the schedules for both days.

Fan Manuel Fernandez won tickets from YouTube celeb

TheTimTracker, so he was able to come to Playlist.

"I yelled so hard, I lost my voice," he said.

The first act of the weekend, Gaby Montero and Emerson Spartz from OMGFacts were introduced and they started off the show by playing a video of unknown facts about the artists participating in Playlist. It ran for about 10 minutes, which was unusually long from their usual 1:45 shorts on YouTube.

There was a lot of audience participation throughout the weekend; meet-ups with the artists and Q&A with the crowd. Catrivic had fans compete for the best cat meow and the Vlog Candy team had small groups of fans doing improv on stage.

The stars themselves were seen around the hotel throughout the weekend.

Jenny Varner came from Austin, Texas for Playlist with her brother and when arriving at the hotel on Friday evening the fan was shocked to see some of her favorite YouTubers hanging out. "It was a stroke of luck. My brother and I were at the food court and we ran into KassemG, ShayCarl, HiimRawn, and WheezyWaiter!"

The musical performances were a big part of Playlist however, Jimmy Wong, Jason Munday,



Sebastian Arbelaez / Valencia Voice

Kassem G answers a uncomfortable fan question about his web series.

and Alex Carpenter decided to hold their own little get-together outside. They were playing their guitars and singing for a few fans outside but then decided to run back into the hotel causing a commotion and more curious fans to run after them. They played outside for about half an hour, bringing around 70 fans with them, including Youtube's Mike Lombardo, Robyn Schneider, and Nice Peter.

On the second day of Playlist there was a discussion panel on

monetizing and new media online.

When asked about where the future of brands on the Internet was going, YouTube's manager of strategic partnerships, Margaret Healy, said that brands should pick a star that will want to talk about the product. She also talked about the YouTube partner program, where YouTube takes channels into the next level by creating revenue for the vlogger and his

continued on page 8



Sebastian Arbelaez / Valencia Voice

YouTube celeb Jimmy Wong sang his song "Ching Chong (It means I love you)" to the crowd, a song inspired by an ignorant UCLA student who complained about the "hoarders" of Asians at her school.

Playlist Live

continued from page 7

or her channel.

Real-Influence.com's Marcelo Camberos added to Healy's comment by talking about his company which helps vloggers receive editorial endorsements from top influences. Real-Influence's network generates over 300 million views per month across 15 million viewers.

"We want to enable people to make a living by making videos," Healy concluded.

YouTube celebrity, Kassem G, who has a series titled "California on...", where he interviews people on the streets about current events was a crowd favorite at Playlist. His meet and greet, along with Nice Peter, went on for longer than it was supposed to, causing his performance on the main stage to be delayed. Kassem G has over 1 million subscribers on his channel.

When asked about "California on Florida,"



Sebastian Arbelaez / Valencia Voice

A lucky fan scored an autograph from Dave Days.

Kassem humorously answered, "I used to live in Kissimmee, Florida when I was six. I went to Highlands Elementary school. I know about places like St. Cloud and I remember there being a place called Medieval Times."

District Lines was a major sponsor of Playlist Live and was developed by 25 year old Kevin Khandijian. This unique company creates a "secure environment that allows artists to sell their products and consumers to embrace their passions," as said on the mission statement of districtlines.com.

All in all, it was a great first year for the Playlist Live convention. Fans have already began "tweeting" asking if there will be another gathering next year. If that's the case, surely Orlando won't mind hosting the event for Playlist Live's terrible two's!



Sebastian Arbelaez / Valencia Voice

Jeff Price, Sam Levine, Marcelo Camberos, Jason Steele and Margaret Healy led the discussion on monetizing and new media.

Visionary film delivers low blow

New movie from Zack Snyder has his look, but is lacking where it counts

By Jonathan Terbeche
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When "300" came out in theaters back in 2006, movie-goers were amazed by the gritty, stylized visuals crafted by director, Zack Snyder. Based on the graphic novel of the same name, the story was largely already established, and while good, was not the high point of the movie.

Again in 2009, fans of Snyder's dark, unique visual style were rewarded with the movie "Watchmen." Yet another graphic novel adaptation, the rich story about realistic super heroes made one of the first steps in changing a very stagnant genre. But the story still took an obvious second seat to the rest of the movie's great production.

Now it is two years later and Snyder's third major film, "Sucker Punch" makes its debut. This is the first film in which there was no source material, allowing Snyder to craft his own, unique storyline. Unfortunately, the story is not just the weakest aspect to the film, but it is just plain bad.



Clay Enos / Courtesy Warner Bros / MCT
Emily Browning is Baby Doll on "Sucker Punch."

The movie opens up with dialogue-less sequences establishing back story. It is quite emotional and jarring and sets the stage fairly well. The main character, Baby Doll, played by Emily Browning, is sold to an insane asylum by her stepfather wanting the content of her mother's will. He pays for a lobotomy to be done to her immediately after her admission.

The asylum also doubles as a strip club/sex harem and puts the girls inside to work, dancing and pleasing customers. When its Baby Doll's turn to dance, she teleports to a fantasy world. Here she meets a wise old hermit who gives her weapons and tells her she must find five items if she wants to escape.

From there, she requests the aid of four other girls and their journey through imagination commences. The worlds are certainly imaginative, and amazing to look at. In one scene you'll be flying in a WWII carrier plane, and in the next you'll be escaping the crimson flames of a dragon. The suspension of disbelief required of viewers is quite large. Everything that happens is painfully unrealistic.

Should you be able to accept the fiction for what it is, then enjoyment can be had. The visuals are amazing. The sound and music draw you into each scene. Even the acting, while not groundbreaking, is well done, using a lot of facial expression and body language.

Unfortunately though, none of these things is enough to redeem the lack of motivation for most of the story, the cheap twists it throws in at the end, and the sheer ridiculousness of it all. The entire film is one awkward juxtaposition of serious themes, to hilarious, campy action. Throw in a cast of very attractive, semi-clothed young women, and there you have "Sucker Punch."

Repetitive sound 'Limits' Blake

Self-titled debut divides fans

By Christine Saraceno
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British dubstep darling James Blake has released his self-titled debut to rave reviews. Spin magazine said "Blake's rare talent is to make music so naked seem unshakable." The great thing about music is that it's all based on opinion. What one person likes, another may hate, as in this case.

This music is not "unshakable." The whole album, on the contrary, is quite repetitive. Many people when they want to make a point about their distaste for a musician will say "All of their music sounds alike." Well in this case it's true. It's sleepy, drawn out, and boring. The lyrics are very introspective and emotional to a point.

In every single track he repeats one line over and over whether it be "My brother and sister

don't speak to me/But I don't blame 'em" on "I Never Learnt to Share" or "There's a limit to your love" on (wait for it...) "There's a Limit to Your Love".

In horror movies, there is often a lot of foreshadowing of coming ominous events, whether it be a darkening sky, or a sketchy looking man. Well the opening track, "Unluck", is this album's sketchy looking man. It just gives you this awful, uneasy feeling that maybe you should turn around and not go on, but like the plot of any good slasher film, you do anyway. It's all just downhill from there.

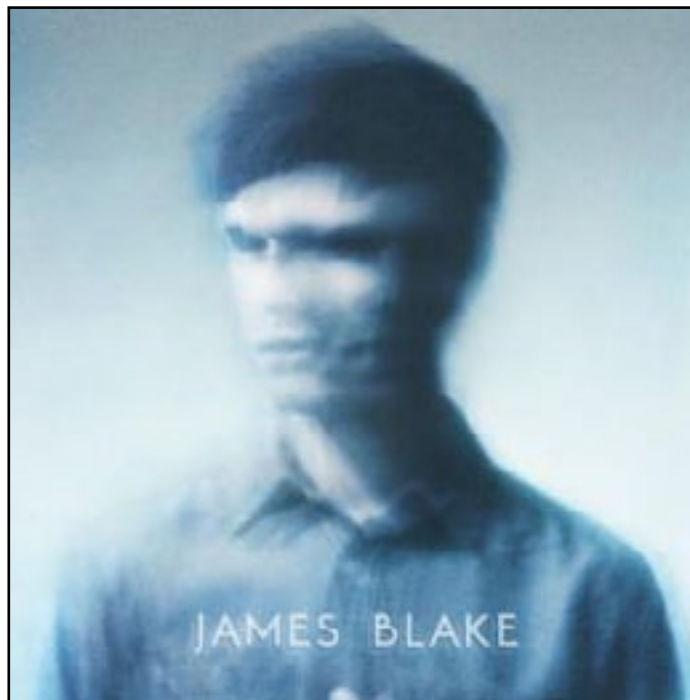
*"It's sleepy, drawn out, and boring.
The lyrics are very introspective
and emotional to a point."*

If there's any positive aspect to this CD it might be the above mentioned "There's a Limit to Your Love" who's partial piano composition serves as a nice break to the odd ambient feeling of the other songs.

The production value is also quite beautiful and it's the minor additions like the faint sound of water dropping or a distant chiming that give the songs their depth. It's usually drowned out by the heavily distorted bass beats which is to be expected from someone who made his name as a club DJ.

After listening to "The Wilhelm Scream", Valencia student Briana Mando said "That was really weird. I would not buy that album if it all sounds like that."

This month many good albums have come out and some may say this is one of them. That's up to you to decide, but hopefully after reading this review you won't bother putting yourself through the agony.



Peter, Bjorn, and John 'give us some'

Scandinavian indie pop trio engrain their addictive music into fans heads

By Christine Saraceno
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Not since the "Dancing Queen" days of ABBA has it been such a good time to be a Swedish singer or band.

"Wounded Rhymes," the sophomore release from reclusive Swede Lykke Li, has been doing well on music charts worldwide. Stockholm native, Robyn has been steadily gaining momentum in the American electropop scene since the release of her critically acclaimed "Body Talk Pt. 2."

But things are arguably the best for the innovators of this resurgence of Scandinavian indie pop, Peter, Bjorn, and John (PB&J). The "Young Folks" group, who probably still have you whistling to this day, are releasing their sixth studio album, "Gimme Some," to many positive reviews.

The album opens with the very persistent drum beat of "Tomorrow Has to Wait" almost as if the first track is it's rallying cry. Many of the tracks flirt with Vampire Weekend type guitar



riffs such as the second song "Dig a Little Deeper" which calls out artists on their "contemporary" work and the very short "Breaker Breaker" (just a mere 1:41 long) which very simply states: "Before you break my heart/I'm gonna break your arm."

During a very memorable

Saturday Night Live sketch, Christopher Walken uttered the immortal words "I've got a fever and the only prescription is more cowbell." Well if Blue Oyster Cult's "Don't Fear the Reaper" didn't cure him then PB&J's "Second Chance" just might do the trick. It beautifully incorporates the cowbell into its 1960's melody as it snakes its way towards its infectious chorus.

Valencia student, Jacqueline Tilson said "I thought 'Young Folks' was a really good song. I have it on my iPod actually. I'll probably give their new album a listen."

Peter, Bjorn, and John always seem to breathe new life into music just when it's beginning to become stale and with this new release they have done it again. It's addictive and much like "Young Folks," you'll be defenseless against it being stuck in your head.

OTHER VIEWS

"It's worth sticking around and seeing this band through."

— SPIN

"'Gimme Some' finds them grabbing at life with a rubber-band rhythmic energy."

— NME

"They aren't trying to throw a muscle shirt over their [...] lyricism, they're pumping it up."

— Rolling Stone

Nintendo 3DS adds new dimension to entertainment

3-D visuals and wireless connectivity gives this device its own set of handheld legs

By Jonathan Terbeche
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Many trends in entertainment have recurring behaviors, so that something popular twenty years ago has a high chance of being popular today. One such trend is the use of 3-D visuals in movies, television, and video games.

Popular decades ago, the use of stereoscopic 3-D with those iconic red and blue glasses in movies was the definition of a fad. Imperfect technology and gimmicky visuals resulted in an eventual loss of interest from audiences.

With a strong push by the success of movie heavy weight "Avatar," 3-D began its return. Using new technology, shutter glasses, and effective depth in scenes, if 3-D technology ever had a chance at remaining mainstream, this would be it.

The ever-innovative Nintendo, not to be left

behind, has introduced their response to the 3-D craze. The Nintendo 3DS, sequel to the Nintendo DS, is the first piece of technology to feature full 3-D graphics without the need for glasses.

Skeptics having a difficult time accepting the effects of the device have the chance to test it out for themselves at any local GameStop. What makes it work is the top screen of the device. Built in are two screens with shutters that filter light to each eye. Of course this means that the 3-D effect is only effective from the perfect angle. But when it is...

The visuals of the 3DS are without a doubt amazing. Not only is the 3-D impressive, but the graphics are truly the best ever displayed on a portable device, comparable to those of a home console.

Though it is called the 3DS, 3-D is not the only, or even most impressive feature about the device. It includes Wi-Fi, Infrared, wireless connectivity,

and a new feature called street pass, where the 3DS constantly looks for, and locates other 3DS devices and communicates with them.

It is able to play all previous DS games, and will have an eShop selling Game Boy and Game Boy Advance games. Only the 3DS games can support the 3-D visuals however.

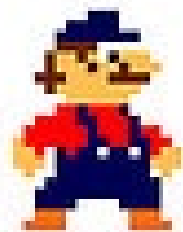
Included in the system are app-like games. One called Faceblasters, one in which you can create Miis (Nintendo avatars) by taking pictures, and one called AR Reader in which you play games using altered reality cards.

Overall, the many features of the 3DS, accompanied by the impressive visuals, make it one of the most unique pieces of entertainment technology ever made. Already cell phones, tablets, and other handheld devices are being developed with this technology in mind. But it looks like Nintendo get's the 1-Up on this one!



2011

Released this past Sunday, the 3DS is capable of viewing 3D without any special glasses.



1989

The Game Boy was the first major hand held game system.



One of the makeovers of the Game Boy was the Game Boy Color.

1998



2001

The release of the Game Boy Advanced allowed Super Nintendo games to be played in the palm of your hand.



As of 2010, the DS is the top selling hand held system with over 144 million units sold.

2004



2006

As the successor to the DS, the DS Lite features a more lightweight and slimmer design.



Astros have big offseason

Houston never takes off, still falling short in division

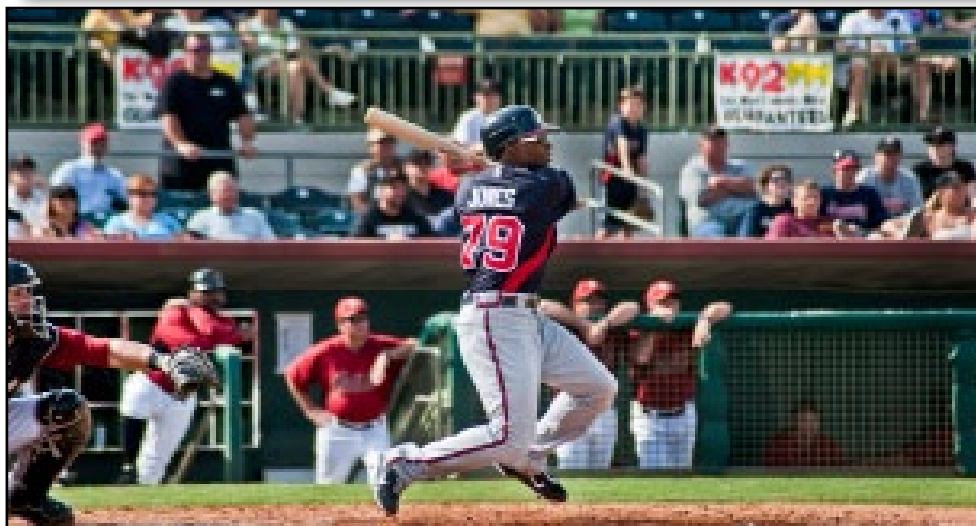
By Alex Barrett
abarrett@valenciavoice.com

"Spring Training is necessary," said Houston Astros veteran pitcher Brett Myers, after one of his first starts. "In the off-season, you forget how to think and eat seeds at the same time, so you have to work on getting that down first, then worry about getting back to game-form. We're all down here to figure some things out, try some new things, and when the real show starts, we will all be ready."

Myers has been, as usual, the most reliable option

to handle the duties this spring, but is still allowing at least one run per inning he has been a part of, only fanning 11 batters while allowing 18 runs in 18 innings pitched. Myers carries a hefty 9.0 ERA into the season, the highest among the Astros starting rotation; Wandy Rodriguez isn't far behind though, with an 8.04 ERA, and isn't faring much better against hitters so far in the year posting a WHIP of exactly 2 in the spring, hardly what you want from your young prospect coming off a career year.

Continued on page 12



Photos by Russell Griner / Valencia Voice

Continued from last page 11

The Houston Astros have had a rocky start in the past few MLB seasons, something they hope can be turned around in 2011. The Astros helped their pitching staff this offseason after losing long-time Texas ace Roy Oswalt to the Phillies last season with the promotion of J.A. Happ to third in the rotation, behind veteran Brett Myers, who was also named opening day starter, and upstart Wandy Rodriguez.

Perhaps the most promising aspect of the rotation this season would be young Bud Norris, who has had a slight leg strain late in the spring, but as he says, "is fine." Norris hasn't gotten the run support the other pitchers have to this point, but has more wins

than Myers and Rodriguez put together, one. Norris has also set down 18 batters this spring, including seven strikeouts in three innings against the Tigers last week. Happ and Nelson Figueroa are the only rotation starters with ERA's under six, and even their numbers aren't that great, both posting WHIP over 1.5 each.

The Astros hope bullpen stud Ryan Rowland-Smith can overcome the torrid injury issues he went through in Seattle and help get the starters to new closer Brandon Lyon, who proved a valued option in Detroit before coming to Houston. Last year's closer, fire-baller Matt Lindstrom was traded to the Rockies in the off-season with SP Felipe Paulino so Colorado could have a reliable set-up man to closer Houston

Street.

In the field, the Astros brought in a mix of mid-level free agent middle infielders in Clint Barmes and Bill Hall, who will play shortstop and second base, respectively. They will be the stoppers looking to replace Geoff Blum, and can be considered a vast improvement with the bat over Blum and both adequate flashing the leather as well.

Over at first base, it appears that upstart Brett Wallace, despite looking quite out of shape in Spring Training, will play first, while hard-hitting Carlos Lee will be playing in left field. Chris Johnson will be the starting third basemen, as incumbent corner infielder Jeff Keppinger won't be ready until late April as he builds his comeback from off-season foot surgery.

The outfield is the lone bright spot for the Astros, With Lee joining under-rated batters and fielders in the speedy Michael Bourn and five-tooler Hunter Pence. Both Bourn and Pence have the chance to be game-changers fro the 'Stros, but even the above .300 averages they are posting in the outfield may not be enough. Look for Bourn to steal somewhere in the neighborhood of 60 bases, and don't forget he has led the league in both infield hits (53) and bunts-for-hits (28) over the past few seasons. Heading into his prime at 28 years old, he should again repeat those numbers and hopefully score somewhere just south of 100 runs. Pence has hit 25 long-flies the past three seasons consistently. He bats at around .300 every year, and is one of the mainstays of consistency in the majors. While not spectacular, he doesn't fall that short of it, and is a great steady hand to have on the team.

"I just go out there and play ball," Said Pence. "The numbers will come as they always do, I just try to go out and have a little fun and put the team in place to win some games."

The Astros are losing the battle for last place by a single game to the lowly Arizona Diamondbacks, posting a spring record of 11-22 so far, with only one game left to play until Opening Day on Wednesday. Houston was in the muddled-middle of the NL Central last season, with Cincinnati surprisingly winning the



Photos by Russell Griner / Valencia Voice

The Astros will have to start swinging for the fences as they come out of spring training in second to last place.



The Astros have bulked up their bullpen in the off season

division. While many think the Reds can repeat, they will again have to fend off perennial powerhouse St. Louis, and ever-dangerous Milwaukee to do so. Expect the Astros to maintain the place they held last year, probably beating out the Cubs and Pirates again, but falling very short of posing a decent threat to the top three in their division.

Tigers maul

Houston Astros lose by stellar proportions, 9-1

By Bryan Levine
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With a little over a week left until opening day the Detroit Tigers found themselves in Kissimmee, Monday afternoon, on the winning end of a 9-1 ball game against the Houston Astros. Newcomer Phil Coke took the mound for the Tigers and threw five strong innings allowing just one run on four hits. His only hiccup on the afternoon came in the first inning when he faced eight batters but managed to surrender just one run. Coke improved his Spring record to 3-2 as he hopes to make an impact in the stellar Detroit rotation.

Not to be out done, fellow Tigers newcomer Victor Martinez went 3-for-3 with two doubles and an RBI, showing the Tigers they spent their \$50 Million wisely. Prospect, Andy Dirks who has had a tremendous spring, went 2-for-5 with two RBIs as he tries to secure an opening day roster spot at the MLB level.

The Astros, who have been cellar dwellers since losing to the White Sox in the World Series in 2005, got off to a hot start in the first inning, but could not capitalize for more than one run. Pitcher, Brett Myers, allowed five runs on 12 hits in five innings of work. He fell to 0-2 in the Spring and has a dismal 9.00 ERA.

Following a disappointing 2010 season and a very eventful off-season which included big free agency singings, key losses and one DUI, the Detroit Tigers head into the 2011 season with great optimism.

The Tigers and Manager Jim Leyland hope



Russell Griner / Valencia Voice
Detroit Tiger's catcher, Victor Martinez, drives in a run.

Commissioner Bud Selig will be lenient when it comes to first baseman Miguel Cabrera's future. Cabrera was arrested mid-February on drunken driving charges and has yet to be notified on whether or not he will begin the season playing for the Tigers or sitting on the bench for an extended period of time.

Despite the off-season controversy, the Tigers feel this is their season as they head into 2011 as the front runners to win the American League Central. While the Astros on the other hand find themselves heading in the opposite direction as they will most likely battle the Pittsburgh Pirates for the bottom of the National League Central.

Spare me the news

Osceola campus bowls out the stress

By Rofkens Petit-Homme
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With the scent of pinewood, freshly sprayed shoes, and the thud of a 10 pound ball, an age old bowling tradition was about to commence.

The Osceola Campus held its first intramural event for the year at the Orange Bowling Lanes, one of three events being held this semester, the other two being volleyball and soccer.

"It's our 'bowling event,' we offer it free to all of our Valencia College students," Alan Dunn explained.

He is the intramural director for the Osceola campus, and he himself has hosted the event for two years.

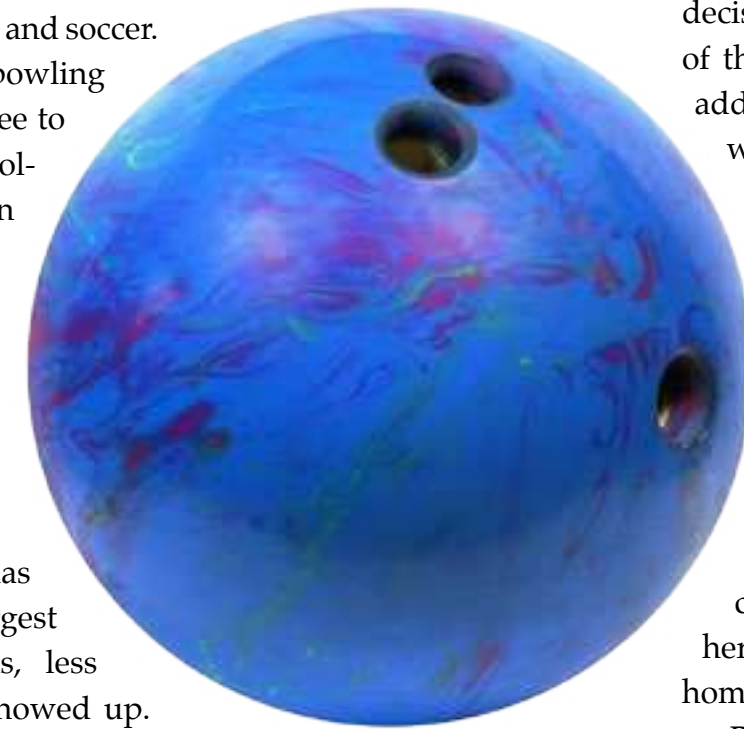
Although it has one of the largest student populations, less than ten students showed up. As the games begin the reality set in, this was truly a difficult game to play.

"I've broken 200, I think it was 267 or something like that but I am very humble." Dunn then began to provide reasoning, "This event is to

provide an outlet for students to network and to enhance the college experience."

With spring break concluded and classes resuming the focus is at the finish line.

"This is my vacation right now." Harrison Navoillo dedicated Valencia student, "This is my third semester taking five classes." Navoillo is getting an A.A. in general



Graphic by Falcon 1961 / Flickr

studies and continues in the summer for his A.S. He is also going to be a transient student at UCF to obtain his Bachelor's in Restaurant Management.

When asked the name of his restaurant, "Harrison's fine Italian cuisine."

The event consisted of rises and falls, literally. Dunn took a spill releasing his bowling ball and watched from the ground as the ball knocked down all ten pins.

"Valencia has been here... ten years," attendant Linda Hershey explained. "The most I have ever seen here at once was twenty people."

As Valencia continues to grow and looks for more 'community' for students, Dunn praised the board for its decision to 'raise the prestige of the school.' "I think it will add a nice touch, the fact that we will be offering four year degrees."

"I am an outgoing person, I can talk to anybody, unless the disrespect comes in," Navoillo expressing his content for the event. "I was at home doing homework so I came here, after I am done here I go back home to doing homework."

Bowling is held every semester at the Orange Bowl Lanes located in Kissimmee, Florida about five minutes away from the Osceola campus.

As the pins fall and the balls crawl, the difference between a strike and spare is nothing left.

Houston we have a problem, no top seeds in Final Four

Busted brackets lead to an exciting tournament

By karlvyn louis charles
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The NCAA final four teams are Uconn, Kentucky, VCU, and Butler, and it truly has been 'madness' for the entire tournament.

The president's bracket was busted way before the sweet 16 and after the first round of games one of the only people in America that had a perfect bracket was ...me. I saw all the games and so called upsets as I quietly filled my bracket. My talents in bracket-ology are special but I'm willing to share my logic with you.

First came the Moorehead State win over Big East powerhouse Louisville. I saw it coming, Moorehead was 25-9 coming out of the Ohio valley conference, it only ma sense they would beat a 4th ranked Louisville team to open the tournament.

Georgetown, a Big East team had no chance against a VCU team, which no one felt deserved to be in the tournament. A VCU team that had a play-in game just to meet Georgetown two days later. Against every one's 'better judgement,' I had VCU crushing Georgetown.

Marquett over Syracuse was too easy of a pick. Syracuse had beat Marquette 81-56 in the Big East Tournament, just a few days earlier. It made all the sense in the world that a lower ranked Marquette would come back to beat Syracuse in the tournament.

Every year there is one lower ranked team that pulls off a few wins and go deep in the tournament. Last year that team was Butler, when I was filling out my bracket, Butler over Pitt was an obvious pick. Cinderellas always come back to the ball and I just knew the shoe still fit Butler.

VCU and Butler both went on to beat more

NCAA men's



basketball

SEMIFINALS

4 Kentucky

April 2

8:49 pm ET
Houston

3 Connecticut

NATIONAL
CHAMPIONSHIP

April 4
9 pm ET
Houston

© 2011 MCT

SEMIFINALS

VCU 11

April 2
6:09 pm ET
Houston

Butler 8

good teams, like Purdue, Florida State, Kansas, Pitt and Wisconsin in order to earn a spot in the Final Four. When CBS paid millions for exclusive rights to the Final Four, they must have had a Butler vs VCU match up in mind.

Uconn plays Kentucky in their Final Four Match up, but the real icing on the NCAA March Madness cake is knowing the winner of VCU vs Butler will be in the championship game.

As expected, I saw it all happening, duh!

"I predicted that the Florida Gators would go all the way. Most of the top teams got kicked out early in the rounds. Florida got beat out by Butler, so that was a big upset. I thought they were going to win it all."

—Sadarius Gray
West Campus Student



Football fans left in the dark

NFL lockout replaces quality for bottom line

By Karlvyn Louis-Charles
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The NFL lockout began earlier this month and there will not be any meetings between the NFL owners and the NFL players association for months. The Player's union dissolved themselves in order to pursue a case against the owners, until the NFL draft, it's all lawyers and legalese.

The fans? What about us? What can we expect of all this? One thing is for sure, no football, not until the rich guys decide how to split the billions. We can expect NFL withdrawal to begin long before training camp and pre-season games are or were scheduled to begin.

We should be hoping our team lands a big name free agent or hoping one of our rivals makes a bad business decision, but instead teams have not met with their players and are not allowed to consulate with any free agents.

The NFL draft is a month away, unfortunately the draft is the last normal thing we as NFL fans can expect for awhile. The rookies coming into the league will not have mini-camps, and off-season workouts with their new teams, effecting how fast they pick up the playbook, and even more important, it effects how soon we get to see the new prospects on the field.

There has been talk about owners going with replacement players, yes I said REPLACEMENTS. The replacements would be a combination of American Football League (AFL) and Canadian Football League (CFL), and even holding regional tryouts. Is that what we really want?

I'm not sure about amateur football on Saturdays and following it with even less talented

amateurs on Sundays. It would be like having steak on Saturday and expecting better on Sunday morning only to wake up to a bowl of Ramen noodles.

Would you rather not have football on Sundays or watch a product that is less talented? Truth is your opinion, my opinion, and the opinion of millions of NFL fans across the country are also locked out.



John D. Simmons, Charlotte Observer/MCT
Despite the ongoing NFL lock out, Panthers players have worked out on their own, to stay in shape and prepare for next season.

Pulling Merlin's beard

Magic resort to growing facial hair versus playing better

By Rofkens Petit-homme
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Sports beard. Words which can mean the start of a professional sports dynasty or a very stupid idea that everyone gets blamed for when it fails miserably. To quote- in the famous thoroughly modified words of Kanye West, "If you don't know by now, I'm talking about O-Town."

The Orlando Magic basketball team to be specific the players, have apparently placed simple a mandate among fans and players. This task is extremely superstitious and unreasonable... growing pre-post-season beards for their victorious or disappointing NBA playoffs.

For the last few years a number of popular professional sport teams have been dawning 'the beard' for successful playoff purposes. A Prime example would be San Francisco Giant,

Brian Wilson, who grew out a ferocious beard, dyed it black, and coined the slogan 'fear the beard' for the 2010 World Series Champions.

The Magic have all placed this mission in effect for some kind of bonding experiment. Why do I feel like I'm watching another episode of HBO's Hard Knocks? Players like Jameer Nelson, J.J. Redick, Hedo 'Turk' Turkoglu, and superstar center Dwight Howard will grow the facial hair and not cut it until their season is finished.

Now, as a beard holder myself there are a few issues that come with a beard. Issue number one, can the beard sustain a healthy and physical lifestyle while under constant pressure? For me no, a constant 'hand' seems to rub itself over it consistently.

Issue number two, what can be done to control the amount of hair if it grows too rapidly? For me, I have a good pair of clippers with the appropriate attachments to obtain constant even length.

Issue number three, can the beard justify the reason of its existence by being the life of the party? Yes, absolutely yes.

Issue number four, can ladies love cool beards? Put it this way, my goddaughters call it an African jungle, complete with wildlife.

And the final issue, can a band of beards unite as one to obtain true glory and success? That question will be left up to the players and the fans that bleed blue and white. As for the staff like head coach Stan Van Gundy he doesn't care, as long as they play better.



REVENGE OF THE NERD

FOR TOO LONG NERDS HAVE BEEN TREATED AS SECOND CLASS CITIZENS SIMPLY BASED ON THEIR INTERESTS IN VARIOUS ODD OR SOCIALLY STRANGE HOBBIES AND SOURCES OF ENTERTAINMENT BUT NOW IS THE TIME FOR THE NERDS OF THE EARTH TO RISE UP AND STAND PROUDLY TOGETHER IN SUPPORT OF ALL THEIR QUARKS AND WEIRD FACINATION MEGAICON WAS THE PLACE AND WE HAVE THE COVERAGE



Live long and prosper at MegaCon, true believers

The largest anime, sci-fi, video game, and comic book convention returns with two very big differences

By Jonathan Terbeche
jterbeche@valenciavoice.com

Once a year people unite in a single place to celebrate, indulge, and praise the stars and fellow fans of their favorite hobbies. MegaCon, Florida's largest comic convention, took place this weekend, March 25-27, in the Orange County Convention Center, to the joy of nerds everywhere. Even those living over seas made the trip to Orlando for a weekend of pure nerd indulgence.

Like every year, the con included a plethora of panels and costume contests, a dance party,

and a dealer room big enough to fit a Boeing-747 inside. Certainly the hardest part for those in attendance was determining exactly what to spend their precious time doing.

With official sponsors, Funi-mation Entertainment, Students of the Unusual, and many more, this year's convention was literally larger than ever. Not only does the bulk of the convention, the dealer room, take place in the main Hall D of the convention center, but the large auditorium in Hall F, and every room in between, was also used this year.

This was in large part due



Michelle Normand as Harley Quinn and Sofie Biglari as Poison Ivy.

to the fact that two very special guests, the likes of which Mega-Con had not seen before, were in attendance this year: comic book legend, Stan Lee, and original captain of the USS Enterprise, William Shatner.

They had panels and signings that were available to everyone, but advanced seating and placement, and photographs were for VIP ticket holders only. Much more people were in attendance than previous years, and this year's special guests were undoubtedly the reason.

After being asked what coming to conventions meant to him, Stan Lee said, "It means a lot to me. Seeing the enthusiasm from some of the fans means that some

of the work I've done was well received. I love to see how the comic book business that I spent so many years in has become so important to so many people...and the enthusiasm of the fans is such a beautiful thing, that I just keep wanting to come back. I don't have that much time, but whenever I can I love coming here. I love talking with people like you, and I love seeing how interested you are. In today's world, with so many rotten things taking place, it's nice to know there's something that can bring people together to enjoy talking about and dealing with. Some people take vacations, I go to comic book conventions."

Many comic book artists were also present doing custom inks and signings. Other guests included actors Kevin Sorbo, John Schneider, Doug Jones, Vic Mignogna and many more. One of the other popular names in attendance was Matthew Senreich, producer for the Adult Swim show, "Robot Chicken." During his panel he made an impromptu phone call to "Robot Chicken" creator, fellow producer, and nerd icon, Seth Green.

When asked for a preview on the next season Seth said, "Well we're doing a trailer for 'Sex and

the City 3.' We've also got a recreation of the scene from 'Back to the Future' with Christopher Lloyd providing the actual voice work for Doc. And for episode 100 we've got more action than your TV can handle!"

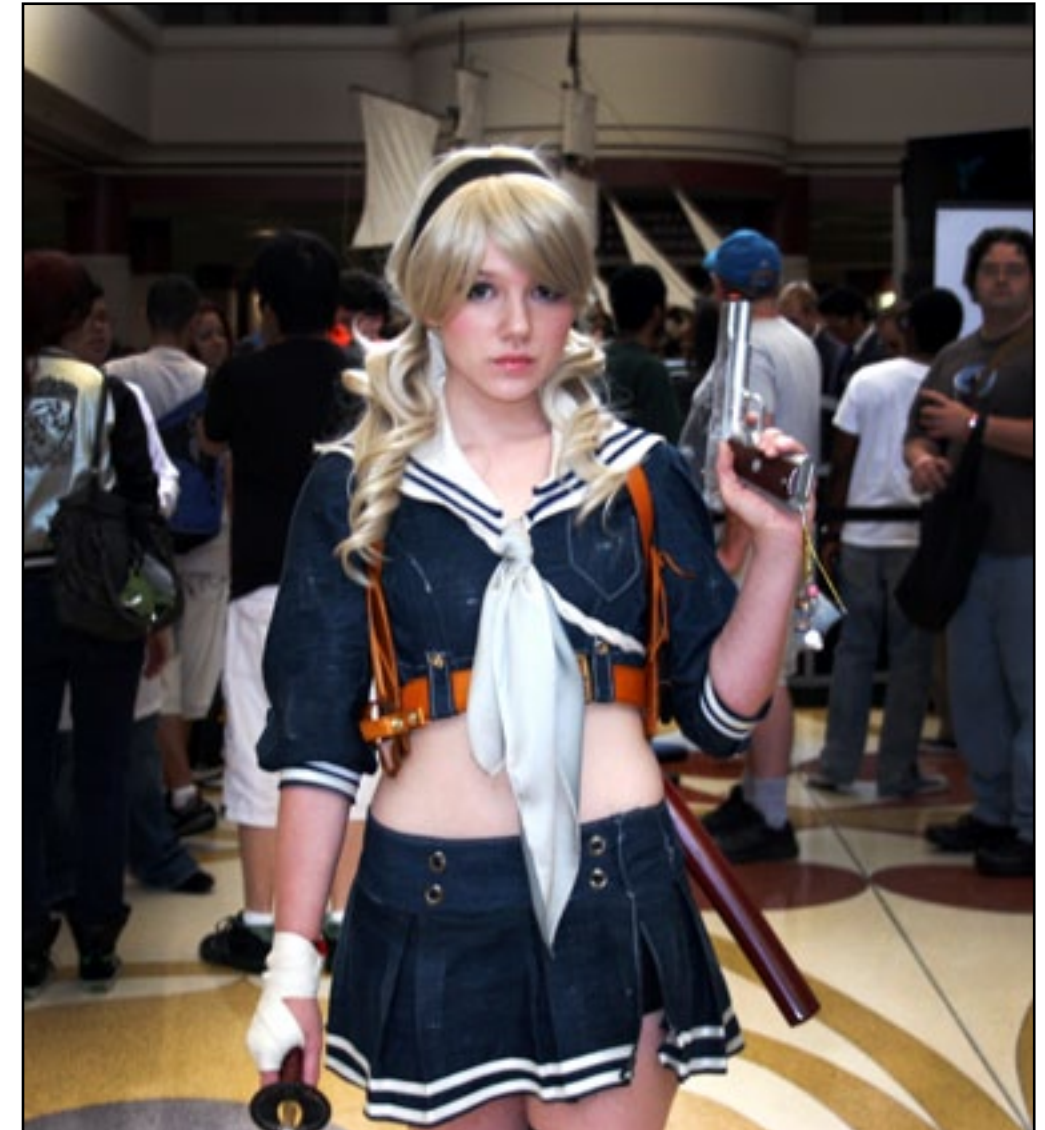
Other than the numerous

guests, there are also panels to attend and take part in. Ones for creating manga or comics professionally, ones dedicated to table-top and card gaming, and ones showcasing trends in cosplay (dressing up and taking on the persona of a

continued on page 18



Photos by Jonathan Terbeche / Valenica Voice
The Dealer room in Hall D is filled with countless toys for collectors to buy.



Though the movie just came out this weekend, many girls cosplayed as the main characters from "Sucker Punch." Baby Doll was most popular.

Oddballs coming together

For many, MegaCon means a lot more than dressing up

By Victor Ocasio

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This past weekend, the Orange County Convention Center was host to MegaCon, one of the largest comic, anime, movie, television and gaming conventions in the country, and after spending the weekend running around and talking to so many individuals in attendance, I learned a great deal on what the event is all about.

Walking along the sidewalks of International Drive this weekend, it was completely evident even to someone not in the know that MegaCon was in town. With floods of comic, anime and movie characters surrounding almost every business along the small stretch of road, attendee dedication was palpable.

People from all over the country filled the convention center dressed from head to toe in costumes and gear both recognizable and strange just for the opportunity to see their favorite stars, compete in a wide variety of gaming events and get their hands on low priced merchandise from vendors.



Photo By Jon Terbeche / Valencia Voice
Pokemon fans embrace their wildside.

For many in attendance the whole of MegaCon is just about the opportunity to meet up with old friends or make new ones with similar interests in the many genres of entertainment that the convention tailors itself toward.

Cosplay, or costume play, is a form of performance art in which individuals dress to represent a specific character or idea from various Japanese cartoons, comics and video games; this plays a huge part in the overall feel of the weekends events.

"For me, MegaCon is all about the costumes and all the random happy people taking pictures of us," said cosplayer Otto Paras.

But for many, MegaCon is about something much greater and far more personal, and it gives them the opportunity to really dig inside themselves and show a part of their personality that under the normal standards of everyday life would make them strange or unaccepted.

"I just like coming here and being given the opportunity to be yourself. You know, be a nerd," said MegaCon regular Mike Sanchez.

Although the point of the convention is the same as any other business venture, what it does as a byproduct for so many fans of the event is that it brings such a diverse group of people together from every walk of life and background all to same place to express their love of a multitude of creative mediums.

As strange as some of the activities that go on during MegaCon may seem, and be assured that many of them are, the overall message of it is far more basic than the confusingly large event might suggest. Acceptance and having a great time.

"It's about acting silly without getting made fun of for it," said attendee John Thompson.

Return of MegaCon

Continued from page 17

character from anime, gaming, comics, etc.)

Panels may be held all weekend, but the official MegaCon cosplay contest, presented by Anime Sushi, is held only once a year, on Saturday. Since most of the entrants dress up as characters from anime, many have Japanese names and are not the easiest to pronounce, making the host's role vital to the success of the show.

With last year's show going awry due to a poor choice of host, this year's had little room to fail. Thankfully, the host was well-versed, the entrants were unique, and the skits were entertaining. Even the opening of the show, the children's portion, had great costumes, making this year's show one of the best.

As soon as the cosplay show ends, the line for the other traditional Saturday event, the cyberia dance party, begins. Essentially a rave, what makes this dance so special is the fact that a large number of those dancing, are the very same who cosplayed. Where else are you going to see a giant panda twirling glow sticks and dancing past midnight?

By the time Sunday comes around, most of the excitement of the convention is replaced with exhaustion. This makes Sunday the best day to relax, walk around the dealer room, and make some good, discounted purchases from vendors wanting to get rid of their products.

When asked about why she attends MegaCon, Valencia student, Jack Howlett, dressed up as X-Men's Phoenix said, "I like all the hot cosplay guys. I get the chance to make a costume and people here appreciate the work."

What is MegaCon to the unknowing person?



Jonathan Terbeche / Valencia Voice
Comic book legend Stan Lee makes an appearance.

It's a gathering of like-minded people, all excited about celebrating a culture that defines who they really are. At MegaCon you will find awesome anime, collectible comics, crazy costumes, friendly faces, grand guests, great games, pertinent panels, sweet snacks, and a community of people who just want to have fun, even if they smell bad. MegaCon is fun!