It’s now official—a campus-wide smoking ban will be put into effect in either the upcoming spring semester or fall semester of next year. The ban will include all sites on campus, except the privacy of a personal motor vehicle.

Students wishing to smoke will either have to leave school property or smoke in their cars. At a recent Management Association Committee for Employee Relations (MACER) meeting, Professor Suzanne Van Wert asked what students and faculty who do not have a car to smoke in would do. President David Hartleb said that the matter was not completely settled yet. He went on to say that given the college budget he would be reluctant to dedicate a space on campus to smoking.

Further, this means that even the designated smoking areas on campus, like the outdoor hall between B and E buildings, will be off limits to smokers. It has also been confirmed by President Hartleb that smoking on campus will become a punishable offense. "The ban will be a punishable offense once it is fully in place. We may, for spring semester, elect to emplace the ban on an honor system, with the understanding that in the fall it will become a punishable offense," said Hartleb.

Many students are not aware of the impending ban.

Asbestos found in floors of NECC

State pays $500,000 for new floors to fix problem

Students returning to NECC may have noticed the new floors in the hallways. This sudden change was brought about by the discovery of asbestos used in the original construction of the building.

The flaking of the floor tiles could pose significant health risks if the asbestos were to get put into the air.

In an email to all the staff, Linda Hudson, staff assistant in Buildings and Grounds Maintenance, describes the scope of the problem.

"In most areas, the flooring is over forty years old and is the original asbestos-based material from that period," wrote Hudson.

Asbestos is a group of long, thin, fibrous crystal minerals that was widely used in the construction of buildings after World War 2. The material was praised for being flame retardant and able to withstand a lot of damage. However, it is now known that breathing in the fibers can be highly toxic, and can sometimes cause cancer.

Often the most dangerous part of dealing with asbestos is its removal. For the particles to be dangerous they must be inhaled in large quantities over a period of time. Removing asbestos can cause it to get into the air, aiding in inhalation.

In the email Hudson spoke about the process of maintaining safe air quality.

Caution tape blocks off the bathroom hallway as workers remove the asbestos.

See and page 7
Opinion

Would you give your cell number to NECC in case of an emergency?

Photos/Interviews by Hansel Lopez

Maurice Peterson, Music Option

"Yes, just in case of a financial emergency or if someone you know is in trouble."

Ethan Santiago, Physical Education

"Yeah, I already have. I don't know why it would be a problem."

Jahaira Polanco, Business Mgt. and Hospitality

"Of course, no doubt about it."

Kristina Coddens, Liberal Arts

"Definitely, because I don't want to come to school for no reason."

Roaming Reporter

Myles Tandy, General Studies

"Yes, only because I never answer my home phone number."

Ben Layton, General Studies

"No, I got a house phone."

The NECC Observer reserves the right to edit, condense and refuse all submissions.

Give us two for one

As we approach an upcoming election we must make the choice between voting for our mother or father. Let me explain. The democrats are like our mother. They want to coddle us with public healthcare, make our lives safer by banning trans fats, and making sure we all wear our seatbelts. On the other side of the coin, the republicans are like our father, wanting us to pull ourselves up by our "boot straps" and be rough and tumble blue collar types.

At least on paper. But I propose a third path, a path to better ourselves. Personal freedom is the highest achievement mankind can have. By embracing it we free ourselves from the oppressive bonds of those who would seek to control us. Whether they seek to do it by acting as our nannies or stern John Wayne style father figures we must transcend the simple political binary and seek the inner path.

But one thing does remain the same, we must always protect the sanctity of the Second Amendment. For without the means to defend ourselves we cannot preserve our individual liberty.

As the old adage goes, "I protect my First Amendment rights, with my Second Amendment rights."

EDITORIAL

The NECC Observer

The award-winning student newspaper of Northern Essex Community College

Address: Rm. C222 Spurk, 100 Elliot Street, Haverhill, MA 01830

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Publication schedule

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How to submit a letter to the Observer

The Observer welcomes letters from our readers. Letters for publication may be submitted via email, mail or by dropping off the letter at the newsroom, located in Room C-222 in the Spurk building.

All letters must be signed and also include a phone number for verification. Email submissions should include Letter to Editor in the subject line or risk not being received by the Observer email system.

We prefer submissions via email: observer@necc.mass.edu

*Include Letter to Editor in the subject line.

But, if you wish to submit a letter via paper:

Letter to Editor, NECC Observer, 100 Elliot St., Haverhill, MA 01830

While we attempt to publish all letters, we reserve the right to edit or reject those received.

Opinion

The Republican empire strikes back

All of a sudden it’s very fashionable to go Conservative

By Hansel Lopez

Opinion Editor

With less than two months (48 days from today) from the presidential election, the nominees are feeling the pressure. Barack Obama certainly is, as he has seen his comfortable lead in the polls start to slip away bit by bit.

What has triggered this sudden change of heart in potential voters? Well what do you think? John McCain’s spanking new, amazing message of change (what?) and America’s love affair with Sarah Palin (uh?). That and the fact that the GOP spine has been working overtime to make sure everything Obama says is distorted as much as possible for fear and smear purposes (duh).

Although short attention span generation, I’m pretty sure that we all remember that McCain’s original mantra seemed to be experience. He said he possessed much more foreign policy knowledge and that he was a POW for five years. I respect him for his bravery, and the fact that he was a POW makes him an American. However that being said I don’t think he should use that as a qualification to run for office.

But then something happened, McCain wasn’t feeling the more traditional Republican strategy that could link him to George W. Bush policies and decided to go radical and promote a vague promise of change. In other words he realized that he was putting people to sleep with his speeches and ripped off the change motif from the Democrats. Keep in mind that he was critical of Obama for using the idea of change and his celebrity image (McCain appearance on The View will be on the same day as his People magazine cover hit stands).

I’d be lying if I said McCain pulled off this Republican upping all by himself. The McCain team behind the scenes has been busy developing a series of ads in which Obama policies are made to seem shadier than they are.

One of the ads states that Obama’s tax plan is going to raise taxes, when in reality it would actually cut taxes for most Americans and eliminate income tax for seniors making less than $50,000. Since the television says that Obama is going to raise taxes 51 percent of Americans polled by Washington Post-ABC news believed Obama is going to raise their taxes. The other ad claims that Obama supports sex education for kindergarteners, but the actual purpose of the program is to raise awareness in children against sexual advances from adults.

Obama isn’t innocent either although as he has decided to fight fire with fire as the Democratic Party is releasing their own series of smear ads. Not the option I would have chosen but, people seem to believe these ads.

What really has given McCain a boost is the introduction of his Vice Presidential nominee Sarah Palin, also known as a “hockey mom” (whatever that is) and the “moose lady” in certain circles. Who is Sarah Palin and how does this add up? We are not only being shown scenes has been busy developing a series of ads in which Palin policies are made to seem shadier than they are. The other ad claims that Palin loves guns and moose burgers, you could do no wrong. Mitt Romney need not apply.

We don’t know much about Palin as she’s been relatively low key and has never spoken with the press. I don’t mean to get preachy about journalism, but why doesn’t she want to talk to the press? People are going to eventually have to know something about her if she wants their vote. Little by little we’re learning about her policies and personality, and what we do know aside from her love of, uh hockey, snowmobiles, and hunting, is that her teenage daughter is pregnant. I don’t think that hurts Palin’s chances at all actually, I think it increases her folkway, everyday appeal. Because it shows she has flaws like everyone else and manages to keep it together. However it is egg on her face since in 2006 she stated her support of “abstinence only” sex education.

She’s been in politics since 1996 and she apparently has a lot of charisma. That’s the only way I can explain how Palin fever has swept the nation. Somehow we’ve managed to be mesmerized by her dumpy down, relatable, straightforward persona. Whatever, I don’t care, but I must warn that people thought the same about Bush, and look where that got us. I’m not saying she’s as dumb as Bush, but I’m not willing to take that chance again.

Her policies only attract conservatives. Here’s a look.

- Takayuki Ikkaku

“Behind every argument is someone’s ignorance.”

- Louis D. Brandeis

“I can win any argument on any topic, against any opponent. People know this, and steer clear of me at parties. Often as a sign of their great respect, they don’t even invite me.”

- Dave Barry

“I learned an important lesson in the art of debate. Present your argument clearly, arm yourself with cutting wit and of course, bob and weave.”

- Takayuki Ikkaku

“Arguments are to be avoided; they are always vulgar and often convincing.”

- Oscar Wilde

Income tax reform on ballot

To the students, faculty, staff, and administration,

This November, along with the much-publicized national election, a very important question will be on the ballot in Massachusetts. The question asks if the nominees will vote on the ballot in Massachusetts. The question asks if the nominees will vote on Income tax reform.

“It doesn’t stop there either. So far the most wonderful words that have come out of her mouth were that a war with Russia is a possibility in the scenario of an invasion of Georgia. Apparently restarting the cold war is as easy as hunting moose. While we’re at it why don’t we start wars with Venezuela, Cuba and Iran because Iraq and Afghanistan aren’t enough. I mean the lady believes in Bush’s preemptive strike tactic and claims that we’re on a mission from God in the Middle East.

I don’t mean to sound morbid, but McCain’s advanced age worries me a bit because what were they all talking about in 2006 she stated her support of “abstinence only” sex education. She’s been in politics since 1996 and she apparently has a lot of charisma. That’s the only way I can explain how Palin fever has swept the nation. Somehow we’ve managed to be mesmerized by her dumpy down, relatable, straightforward persona. Whatever, I don’t care, but I must warn that people thought the same about Bush, and look where that got us. I’m not saying she’s as dumb as Bush, but I’m not willing to take that chance again.

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OPINION

The fans have decided with their disposable income and the verdict seems to be that videogames have earned their place in the entertainment mantle along with movies, music and books. As far as I'm concerned videogames have long been part of this group, but it's taken a lot longer for people to realize this.

I think to be honest that since the release of the Famicom or the Nintendo Entertainment System as it was known as in the U.S. as it reenergized the industry after the crash of 1983 and it became one of the best selling consoles of all time. At one point one of four homes in America owned a Nintendo Entertainment Console and the industry thrived for the most part afterward.

Granted there have been some flops throughout the years. The Atari Jaguar, Sega Saturn, the Virtual Boy and the Panasonic 3Do were all horrible consoles that crashed and burned upon release and I wouldn't wish playing these to my worse enemy. That being said since 1985 the industry has grown at an incredible rate.

It's no surprise that the gaming industry makes more money than Hollywood. Let's look at the number: Sony's Playstation 2 has sold over 140 million units since its release in 2000. Sure the Playstation 2 is the best selling console of all time, but the Nintendo Wii is well on its way to surpass that record. The Wii has sold 29 million units since its release in November 2006 and retailers have not been able to keep up with the demand.

And its not only Nintendo and Sony who have been having paydays either. Microsoft's (as if Bill Gates needs more money) Xbox 360 is the home of the hugely popular Halo series. Halo 3 grossed 9000 million in its first week alone and has gone on to sell 8 million copies. Blizzard studios' World of Warcraft has 10 million players each paying $15 a month just to play. I'm not much of a fan of Warcraft, but I have to say that Blizzard is doing something right.

On the business front at least videogame industry is ready to be a member of the entertainment core. I guess one of the reasons videogames haven't gotten the attention they deserve is because it is still viewed as a childish hobby. I would dismiss this idea as being no longer valid as games have evolved and have more focus on character development, epic Hollywood like theatrics and narrative. The proof is in games like Bioshock (Steven Spielberg is a fan), Mass Effect, the Metal Gear Solid series and Half Life. And if you're a casual gamer there hasn't been a better time to play since the arcade glory days. Games like Rock Band, Guitar Hero and a good portion of the Wii catalogue place more emphasis on fun, lighthearted gaming for friends and family.

So whether you're a hardcore or casual gamer (I'm somewhere in the middle) you've got to love that videogames have reached such a high plateau and that its not being looked down as much.

The Nintendo Wii is one of the reasons why videogaming has become mainstream.
Student Life Open House

Wednesday, October 1st
11:00 AM–1:00 PM

Get Connected!
Go beyond academics - enter Student Life!

• FREE GIVE AWAYS! (Limited Quantity)
• FREE FOOD!
• Join a Club! Join a Sport! Join Us!

For more information contact the NECC Student Engagement Center at 978-356-3731. Student Engagement Center is part of Student Life, a part of the Division of Enrollment Management and Student Services. To request a sign language interpreter please call 978-556-3897 (V/TTY).
All right, so you skipped class yesterday to attend the first day of Metalfest. Where you come from, that’s not a crime. But come Monday you’re going to need an excuse for your absence if you don’t want to fail, but what?

... Of course! Excessive neurosis is such an underused avenue! You need something original after all! You can’t keep killing off fake relatives; the bad karma is really starting to accumulate!

So not to worry, you’ve got your handy list of chronic neuroses to help you out. The following is a list of 15 embarrassing (yet highly effective) mental “quirks,” if you will, that can be used as a means to excuse yourself from class when you really can’t afford an absence. Enjoy.

1. CHRONOMENTROPHOBIA: You wanted to be there, but class begins right at 9 a.m. and you just couldn’t bring yourself to check the time. If only you could have conquered your horrible fear of clocks.

2. PHRONEMOPHOBIA: Because thinking is just so terrifying that you couldn’t bring yourself to do it today.

3. SCOPOPHOBIA: It’s simply too difficult to concentrate on learning when you just know that everyone in class is secretly staring at you.

4. CATHISOPHOBIA: It’s really the school’s fault. Every class you signed up for requires you to sit down, and that is a risk you are just not willing to take.

5. HIPPOPOTOMONSTROESQUIPPEDALIOPHOBIA: Chances are they wouldn’t be very good teachers if they spoke in nothing but monosyllables; but does every sentence have to contain such terrifying multi-syllabic monsters?

6. METROPHOBIA: “I don’t care if this is a literature class! Poetry has no place here or anywhere else!” Sadly the outbursts would only get worse.

7. XENOGLOSSOPHOBIA: Because you just never know when your textbooks will contain references to French, or German ... or Finnish. Stupid world history courses.

8. ZEMMIPHOBIA: Because he could be anywhere. That all powerful mole rat is really killing your thirst for knowledge, not to mention how socially awkward it was when you thought he was posing as your blind date last week.

9. GLAZOMANIA: You very nearly made it to class – your morning bi-daily inventory of the things in your home only took six hours this morning. But after realizing you had added an item to the inventory of “things I keep in my car” and had not written it down ... well. It was obvious you weren’t going to make it.

10. CLINOMANIA: Because when you say you just couldn’t bring yourself to get out of bed that morning, you really, really mean it.

11. MISOMANIA: Learning is much too time-consuming an effort. Why, hating everything is really like a full-time job; a job that doesn’t require paperwork. Because you really hate that.

12. NETOMANIA: Damn you, “World of Warcraft”!

13. COPROLALOMANIA: You would have been to class if only your dad hadn’t picked up “The Sopranos” on DVD. So many obscenities, so little time.

14. RHINOTILLEXOMANIA: And just when you thought you’d found the perfect cover with that whole “I’m fixing my nose ring” excuse... it would have helped if you actually had a nose ring. Now everybody knows.

There you have it, 15 of the most perfect excuses, stemming from mental problems you can’t control and that most people have never heard of... to get you out of class!

WARNING: DO NOT USE THESE ON YOUR PSYCHOLOGY TEACHER.
Advice for women looking to save money for retirement
By Diane Stafford
MCT Campus

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — More women than men outlive their savings, partly because they tend to live longer. But women’s work histories also set the stage for financially pinched retirement years.

As a group, U.S. women work fewer years than men, and they’re more likely to work in part-time or lower-paying jobs. Many women, therefore, build up fewer Social Security credits for retirement benefits.

And, because women are more likely to cycle in and out of the labor force for family-caring reasons, they’re less likely to accumulate sufficient worker-sponsored pensions, assuming they even work in jobs that offer pensions. Thus, they end up with less pension income to supplement Social Security.

Financial advisers emphasize that Social Security alone won’t be enough to support a woman’s one-person retirement standard of living, which means women, like men, need to build personal retirement savings, starting as early as they can.

That’s not easy advice to follow, especially for single heads of households in lower-paying jobs who need all their income to pay bills. Even so, financial advisors have one response to women who say they can’t afford to save any money for retirement:

You can’t afford not to.

Here are the stories of women from several walks of life who have heard that warning. Pay yourself first.

Sharon Holmes, 32, took that message to heart last year. When she moved to a new job, she immediately payroll-deducted an amount of her raise into her employer’s profit-sharing plan.

“We were savers. We had life insurance through our company,” Holmes said. “I didn’t have to give up anything because I never saw it. You can’t afford to not save.”

In just one year, by investing the added income from her promotion and a 5 percent raise, Holmes has put several thousand dollars toward her retirement. The feat is noteworthy in that she and her husband, married five years, have a blended family of six children, ages 12 to 19.

“Tataryn last year put $16,700 into a Roth IRA. The owner of a laboratory that makes appliances and retainers for orthodontists, Tataryn last year put $16,700 into those two accounts. She and her husband live on 15 acres near Weston, Mo., where they expect to pay off their home in four years. Her goal is to continu- ing savings aggressively and retire comfortably by age 55. She and her husband want to travel throughout North America in a recreational vehicle.”

Women’s retirement savings

Did you know that Adobe Photoshop does not support the unauthorized manipulation of images containing United States legal tender banknotes.

To get to that point, Tataryn said, they made the decision to live frugally and stay out of debt.

“I stay away from malls and shopping centers. I need something specific and don’t tempt myself by browsing,” she said, adding that they don’t buy new cars, and they drive their used cars until they won’t go anymore.

“I doubt anyone would ever think that we were financially fit based on the cars we drive and our lifestyle, but that is not important to us,” she said, emphasizing that “we are your average Joes ... anything we have we have gotten for ourselves no inheritance or help from family.”

Retirement itself.

An entrepreneurial drive to build a business and take responsibility for herself propelled Mary Miller, a career coach and independent fashion consultant who lives in Olathe.

Miller retired from a job with Exxon Mobil in 1992, then went to work for an outplacement company. Next, she started two consulting businesses. Now in her 60s, Miller is married to a man who is retired and older than her.

Miller said she had to acknowledge the actuarial likelihood that her husband would prede- cesse her, so she has concentrated her businesses to help supplement the Social Security income they’re drawing now.

“My businesses play two roles in my life. They provide an alter- native source of income and give me the satisfaction of helping others,” Miller said. “I also think I repre- sent the baby boomer generation who will reinvent ourselves and find meaningful activities following our formal retirement. We will not necessarily follow our par- ent’s example of ‘leisure’ retire- ment.”

Grab the ‘free’ money.

Fourteen years ago, without saving aggressively and retiring comfortably by age 55, she and her husband want to travel throughout North America in a recreational vehicle.

“Turn to experts."
Wall Street struggles to maintain

NEW YORK _ The demise of two venerable Wall Street giants reverberated around the city Monday as thousands of financial workers awoke to find legendary companies in upheaval, jobs in jeopardy and the city braced for the economic ripple effect from catastrophe in its leading industry.

In the wake of the credit crisis, 94-year-old financial services firm Merrill Lynch & Co. abruptly agreed to sell itself to Bank of America while 158-year-old investment bank Lehman Brothers Holdings Inc. filed for bankruptcy protection. The disintegration of the two firms has the potential loss of thousands of jobs will trim municipal and state tax receipts and undercut the New York City economy with repercussions in the computer communities of New Jersey and Connecticut.

With more than one-third of total city salaries and wages originating in the financial and insurance sectors, Wall Street's crisis affects virtually everyone from deliverers of shoeboxes, deli food and floral bouquets to gamers and Bordeaux, $3,000 suits and $3 million condominiums.

The average Wall Street salary was $387,000 last year, according to the city comptroller in an industry in which $1 million bonuses are expected. The most generous gesture of solidarity that our nation has ever seen, said President David Hartleb. This log covers assistance to address damage caused by Ike.

Hurricane Gustav, which hit the U.S. in August, posed a problem for the people who have to enforce it, namely school sponsored wellness initiatives. This initiative will include resources for smokers who want to quit, like free smoking session programs.

Our study shows that Americans are better at saving money when they are thinking about it month-to-month, on an ongoing basis rather than as a long-term goal," said Paul Dholakia, associate professor at Rice's Jones Graduate School of Management.

This research points to the most important reason behind the changes. "The initiative will include resources for smokers who want to quit, like free smoking session programs."

The initiative will include resources for smokers who want to quit, like free smoking session programs.

For the time being it is undetermined as to whether the ban will be fully put into place, but once it is in place, students will be notified.

We are in college, we should really be viewed as adults," said Danielle Dousette.

The ban comes as part of a school sponsored wellness initiative. The initiative will include resources for smokers who want to quit, like free smoking session programs.

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Have you ever tried to plan something months in advance and find yourself doing everything at the last minute? Apparently, that long-term type of thinking fails with money too.

We are more successful in meeting our financial goals when we are thinking about it month-to-month, according to research by Rice University and Old Dominion University. Participants in a study who were asked to plan about the ban will be fully put into place, but once it is in place, students will be notified.

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**MMA Academy proves dynamic  
**

An inside look at a local mixed martial arts academy  
**BY SARA PRESCOTT**  
Features Editor

Forms of mixed martial arts have been around for thousands of years. It has evolved to the now popular sport that surged its way onto the mainstream in 1993 with the founding of Ultimate Fighting Championship. Successful athletes combine key concepts of multiple forms of martial arts. Training is also important to the safety and achievement of each athlete. Gyms that focus on this sort of fighting and also form teams are being established all over the country, and the world, at climbing rates as the sport’s popularity continues to rise. A local gym prepares their athletes with intense, dedicated workouts while simultaneously preserving integrity and instilling values.

Based out of Methuen, Kenpo Academy is filled with committed athletes and takes on new members at a staggering rate. It all started when Jeff Soucie shifted his focus to martial arts seven years ago. He found an outlet in the sport for all kinds of anxiety and anger.

“It changed my life,” commented Soucie when reflecting on the beginning of this experience. Four to five guys would assemble at his house and train whole-heartedly for a couple years with the goal of Team Fury in the back of their minds. Two years later, the academy is pushing on stronger than ever, instructing kids and adults of all ages. Jeff has been competing professionally for six months along

Jeff Soucie and Ricky Hines wrestle while fellow members watch from the side

**Top 5 jobs with an associate**

In demand and rewarding careers with associate  
**BY SARA PRESCOTT**  
Features Editor

With the beginning of a new academic year many new students are faced with the decision to declare a major. Along with that, returning students are anxiously awaiting their graduation dates and entering the workforce with their education in tow. For some, this decision does not come easy, and most have no understanding what they want to do or what career to pursue. Many resources have compiled similar lists that suggest careers that are not only in demand but are also the best-paying for associate degree recipients. The following list was composed with the help of the Bureau of Labor Statistics and many websites that shared the same consensus of prevalent careers:

1. Computer Technician—$49,400: Starting off the list, an engineering technician performs many research and development related tasks. This includes dealing with equipment, carrying out experiments, collecting data and recording it.
2. Diagnostic Medical Sonographer—$52,490: Also known as ultrasoundographers, provide the digital imagery for pregnancies and other medical uses.
3. Registered Nurse—$52,330: RNs must have at least an associate degree in nursing and have passed the national licensing examination.
4. Engineering Technician—$59,480: Topping off the list, computer technicians perform a range of functions from technical support to network security. An associate degree from a computer-related field is necessary for this career.
5. Engineering Technician—$58,350: This is seen to be one of the fastest growing occupations in the past few years. It includes providing routine services during various dental appointments. To be registered one must pass both written and clinical exams.

With his fellow members of Team Fury.

Putting in one-hundred and ten percent into each training session is all these guys know, leaving their blood and sweat behind as evidence. Making the team is no easy task, at a recent practice I witnessed another member earn his position on the team. The requirements for making the team include knowing the material and proper moves, as well as demonstrate dedication to the gym and show up for practices consistently while displaying respect for others, exhibit well-mannered behavior and follow the rules of the gym.

On the contrary of many beliefs about the sport, it is not just about beating the crap out of their opponent. Each member shows respect for their competitors and understands the terms of agreement. Soucie emphasizes the importance of “bringing back honor to the sport,” for this sport has the ability to transform the lives of those who compete. Self-discipline, endurance and respect is learned, understood and displayed by each member of the gym. Another prominent aspect of the sport is the camaraderie between the fighters and the support that each finds in their family and friends. Thanks to years of hard work by Master Lenny Demers, Jeff Soucie and the dedicated members of Team Fury and Kenpo Academy, they have proven themselves to be respectable athletes and a force within the MMA community. If you would like to experience it yourself, you can check out Team Fury at a few of their upcoming fights at Rockingham Park on September 26 and a following event on November 1 or you can visit www.massmma.net.

4. Registered Nurse
3. Diagnostic Medical Sonographer
2. Dental Hygienist
1. Computer Technician
Tropic Thunder impresses

Satire pokes fun at actors who take roles too seriously

BY HANSEL LOPEZ
Opinion Editor

On paper at least, "Tropic Thunder" seems like a mess; an action/comedy hybrid that also serves as a parody of the film industry, yet somehow comes together perfectly, making it the funniest movie of the year so far.

Within the movie inside a movie premise, Ben Stiller (who also co-wrote and directs) plays Tugg Speedman, a washed up action film star who figures he can rekindle his career by starring in what will be known as "the most expensive fake true war movie ever."

Unfortunately for him the production is five months behind schedule after four days of shooting, he has to deal with fellow egotistical actors, and he is threatened by possible cancellation.

Joining Speedman in the filming of this disaster is Robert Downey Jr., as Kirk Lazarus, an Australian method actor who is so committed to his craft that he has a hard time distinguishing his inner workings is also addressed. This is evident when Lazarus explains to Speedman how to play a mentally challenged character without overacting it; and how this usually leads to an Oscar.

Hollywood's obsession with money is also addressed when Tom Cruise's Len Grossman, a big time movie executive, explains to Speedman his agent (played brilliantly by Matthew McConaughey) that the studio would make more profit by letting Speedman die in the jungle and file for life insurance than release the movie altogether. There are also, ironically, many product placements throughout the movie, such as Apple's Ipod, Sony Blu-Ray, Nintendo's Wii, and TiVo.

"Tropic Thunder" may be a little too offensive or controversial for some due to its coarse language and interesting portrayal of the movie industry. But then again, art isn't supposed to be safe, particularly when it's a satire, which I feel is especially needed in today's era of block buster films.

Art exhibits currently on display

Bentley Library exhibiting art throughout the year

BY MERISSA LIVERMORE-JOHNSON
Arts and Entertainment Editor

The Bentley Library, located on the Northern Essex Community College Haverhill campus, is holding various art shows throughout the 2008-2009 school year, one of which is currently available for viewing with Steve Palmatier as the artist on display for September.

Palmatier hails from Salem, Mass., is 29 years old, and has many paintings on display on various websites, including http://www.artbreak.com/palmatier. The Artspace website says, "Palmatier’s emotionally-charged, psychological landscapes colorfully conjure a living abstract world where thought and feeling define reality." Palmatier’s art is currently on display in the library from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday - Thursday, Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Library Director, Linda Shea, and exhibit manager, Linda Germain met to discuss plans for the upcoming school year. Several local artists have expressed interest in solo and group shows at the ArtSpace, including book artists, a sculpture group and several painters and 2-d artists. If you are interested in submitting a proposal for a show please send your submission packet to: bentleyartspace@hotmail.com. The proposal should include: Artist’s Resume and/or Bio, Statement of exhibit idea, and 5 to 10 low resolution images.

Good luck to all that apply, and make sure you visit the exhibits yourself, if only to look at a pretty picture, to improve your own art, or to critique the art of fellow students and artists.
Ha ha, Hollywood

The latest gossip from the streets of celebrity central

By Merissa Livermore-Johnson
Arts and Entertainment Editor

These past few weeks in Hollywood news have brought many conflicts and disappointments.

The Movie Voice Guy Dies: Don LaFontaine, the highly sought-after voice-over artist whose sonorous-voiced narration on several thousand movie trailers earned him the title of “The Movie Voice Guy” had died at age 68.

Tommy Lee Jones Lawsuit: Tommy Lee Jones is suing the makers of “No Country for Old Men” for more than $160 million. The Oscar-winning actor claims he is owed for starring in the 2007 hit crime thriller. The lawsuit against Paramount Pictures claims that Jones was promised “significant box-office bonuses” and other compensation depending upon the success of the film, which went on to make more than $160 million.

Stephanie Meyer puts Midnight Sun on hold indefinitely: Author Stephanie Meyer, writer of the best-selling young adult “Twilight” books, has put the fifth and final installment in the series on hold after a partial draft was posted on the Internet. Meyer, the U.S. author of “Twilight” and its sequels “New Moon,” “Eclipse” and “Breaking Dawn,” said she had good idea of how the leak of “Midnight Sun” had happened as so few copies of the book were made and each was unique. Stephanie Meyer was quoted to say on her website, “I feel too bad about what has happened to continue working on “Midnight Sun,” and so it is on hold indefinitely.”

Shaq Says When He’s Retiring: News out of Florida has

Phillip Sweet, drummer for Shania Twain’s band, had a heart attack. He was 45. Shania Twain, who has been a judge on a TV talent show, has canceled the last 12 dates of her current tour as she recuperates.

Dawn, said she had a good idea when looking at them just like her mom did, Birkhead tells Us. “Some days I think she looks just like her,” he says of the tot who turned 2 on Sept. 7.

Dearth is ready to prove their worth

Former members of Shot Down Sun give it another go

By Hansel Lopez
Opinion Editor

The rock genre can be a fickle one, that’s why an up and coming band like Dearth has to be crafty in order to find a niche for themselves.

Dearth seems well suited for the internet and short attention span age as they understand DIY (do it yourself) ethics, have a positive attitude and a killer mix of death metal and hardcore punk.

It doesn’t hurt that Dearth is a super group amongst the local scene as vocalist Alex Aro states, “It’s hard starting a new band and getting out there but it’s been a little easier to break out into the local scene because people know we used to be in Shot Down Sun.”

Dearth features Aro and bassist Matt Feuillard from popular locals Shot Down Sun. Guitarists Bobby Hoffman and Eric from Always and Forever, another scene band, and drummer Eric B.

Before Shot Down Sun decided to call it quits they were on the verge of breaking into the nation-

which hopes to complete next month, when he was approached by Hoffman with the idea of starting Dearth since he and Eric had left Always and Forever due to creative differences.

Dearth quickly made it apparent that it was its own separate entity by showing musical and lyrical improvements over Shot Down Sun and Always and Forever as evidenced in crushing songs like “You never meant much” and “Modern Horrors.”

Aro attributes this growth to a more democratic songwriting process and listening to bands like August Burns Red and Massachusetts hardcore legends Converge.

The theme of their songs seem to be what Aro sees in society “there’s a lack of intelligence, a lack of aspiration, a complete lack of good hearted people. The lyrics are about opening your eyes to reality and becoming a better person.”

Although they still haven’t found a label, Dearth is confident in their music and fans.

“It’s hard starting a new band and getting out there, but it’s been a little easier to break out into the local scene because people know we used to be in Shot Down Sun”

-Alex Aro

Dearth’s latest EP includes tracks like “Tiempos” and “The Cloud Will Not” which show their dedication to their craft.

Release Dates

BY MERISSA LIVERMORE-LEWIN
Arts and Entertainment Editor

New books and new music are on the way.

The Love Guru: September 16th, 2008: 88 minutes
The Love Guru
Made of Honor
Pushing Daisies Season 1
Hulk
Will and Grace Season 8
September 23rd, 2008:
Sex and the City
Babe
Midnight Sun
Superman Returns

CDs:
September 23, 2008:
Plain White T’s- Big Bad World
Everlast- Love, War and the Ghost of Whitey Ford
Cold War Kids- Loyalty to Loyalty
Dynamic Club- Fusion Era
September 30, 2008:
T-Pain- The Party Ring
Sidesh- Shudder
Anberlin- New Surrender
James Taylor- Covers

DVDs:
September 23, 2008:
Plain White T’s- Big Bad World
Everlast- Love, War and the Ghost of Whitey Ford
Cold War Kids- Loyalty to Loyalty
Dynamic Club- Fusion Era
September 30, 2008:
T-Pain- The Party Ring
Sidesh- Shudder
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James Taylor- Covers

Dawn, said she had a good idea when looking at them just like her mom did, Birkhead tells Us. “Some days I think she looks just like her,” he says of the tot who turned 2 on Sept. 7.

That’s the latest newsworthy stories from Hollywood land, until next time, enjoy.

Lead singer and band co-founder, Alex Aro, working hard at a show.

"It’s hard starting a new band and getting out there, but it’s been a little easier to break out into the local scene because people know we used to be in Shot Down Sun”

-Alex Aro

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"It’s hard starting a new band and getting out there, but it’s been a little easier to break out into the local scene because people know we used to be in Shot Down Sun”

-Alex Aro
The Funnies

Welcome to Falling Rock National Park by Kid They

"Roz, my phone is in the backpack — use your good arm to call and get a line on tonight's game!"

Crossword

ACROSS
1. Recreational beds (5)
2. Gaster (5)
3. Elevator man? (5)
4. On the apex of (5)
5. Maui neighbor (5)
8. Circumeral region (5)
12. Molt stadium (5)
13. Gain time (5)
16. Kilt white (5)
17. Sawbucks (5)
22. Agave's game (5)
24. Pteranodon crest (5)
25. Superstative suffix (5)
29. Pecany (5)
30. Ascending singer (5)
33. Bear's lair (5)
34. Mole's demeanor (5)
35. John's Yoke (5)
37. Put down glass (5)
38. Resourceful (5)
39. Highland money (5)
44. Old gumshoe (5)
45. Most recent (5)
49. Knaps (5)
50. Sows (5)
51. Fiercable (5)
52. Old hat (5)
55. Refrain syllable (5)
56. Dine's acronym (5)
59. Make a formal retraction (5)
60. Notes for (5)
62. Access, later on (5)
63. Japanese port (5)
66. Euphoria (5)
67. Champagne descriptor (5)
68. Accuse fresh vigor (5)
69. Wicked (5)
70. Catch sight of (5)
71. Swifters (5)
72. Bodies of water (5)

DOWN
1. Purified toners (5)
2. He who loved not wisely, but too well (5)
3. Pedestrian's target (5)
4. Burst of energy (5)
5. As well (5)
6. Habiro rival (5)
7. Santa winds (5)
8. "My Gal" (5)
9. Prohibited (5)
10. Ultraviolet filter (5)
11. Circular wind (5)
12. Proven (5)
13. Annual periods (5)
21. Ravedanced (5)
22. Severly (5)
23. Consulants in need (5)
24. Dry river (5)
25. Singer Turner (5)
15. Give an address (5)
16. Lordly (5)
17. German article (5)
18. Fixed (5)
19. Chipper (5)
20. Cowboy's rope (5)
21. Baltimore cathedral (5)
22. Overhauled object (5)
23. Armed robbery (5)
24. Hard to describe (5)
25. Piece of Russian exile (5)

Solutions

46. Nap-making devices
50. Big London bell
51. Giradon
52. Take down
54. Detectable
57. Secret
59. Licensed
61. 'Airplane!' star
74. Paulo Braz
82. Monroes and Michaels

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Classical music for modern NYC

Greg Pattillo and band rock hard

BY DANIEL A. POTOCKI
Editor in Chief

I first discovered the works of the beatboxing flute player Greg Pattillo on Youtube.com when I was looking up videos of the Super Mario Bros. intro song. I linked over to another video, as one is oft want to do in a Youtube.com like situation. I have a skinny and rather pasty dude in a black t-shirt and jeans with a flute by the name of Greg Pattillo. Honestly I didn’t hold out much hope. I couldn’t shake the idea of this being a fan boy mash-up that would in the end make me wish I hadn’t watched it so as not to be reminded that people on Youtube.com have way too much free time.

His rendition of the Super Mario Bros. intro many years and this sound is so crisp, so fresh, as to be a watershed moment for me. I had to know more about this man. Pattillo was born in Seattle in 1977 and spent most of his adult musical career between the streets of San Francisco and the bus system of New York City. In New York he was even awarded a “Music Under New York” certificate from the Metropolitan Transit Authority that honored twenty-one outstanding street and subway performers.

What strikes me almost as much as the man’s talent is the wonder of his fame. He truly demonstrated that we live in a modern, connected world. By synthesizing a wide and eclectic range of music into his personal style, and the presenting it for the world to see, at little or no cost. So for those happy few music lovers out there, look him up for a breakthrough sound, filled with personality and texture.

From left to right Peter Seymour, Eric Stephanson, and Greg Pattillo, together for the concept group Project. For those of you who may simply be idealists or dreamers, look him up to see what one person can do with the endless possibilities and freedoms of the Internet, and of Youtube, when you are not busy watching someone get there genitals mashed in that is.

Armageddon caused by cell phones

Not really but people still need to be responsible

BY NICK SERMUKSNIS
Alt. Edge Editor

The news about twenty-five passengers being killed in a commuter train collision due to the operator focusing on his text messages with two teenagers not present on the train is probably cause left a buzz.

Cell phones: Hindering our sense of responsibility?

Policy at Metrolink, the train system that runs through California and whose commuter train collided with a freight train after missing a red signal, prohibits the use of cell phones or other electronic devices while on duty. Clearly, this is a lack of responsibility that caused the deaths of innocent civilians and the operator himself.

While the train collision is an extreme example of the rampant misuse of communication devices, the nuisance of cell phones disturbing the peace of our every day lives. We can’t hear our thoughts over chatter from a gregarious 13 year old that can’t complete a full sentence but still has a lot to say. In some eyes the line between freedom of speech and consideration for your fellow human has blurred.

“You’re allowed to say what you want to say,” said Jonathan Poskus, a student at Northern Essex, “but you know, in a setting it’s: be polite no matter what is said.”

Preferably, usage of communication devices in public should be like journalism - short and to the point, or like some regions, non-existent, such as dictatorships.

It’s hard enough getting through the Spark parking lot without dealing with a driver not paying attention to his or her surroundings but more content with whatever meandering conversation is occupying their eyes more than their ears.

“I understand that people have tended to use cell phones more than they did, even just a couple of years ago,” said Dina Brown, head of Student Activities.

The lack of consideration when using communication devices is creating social unrest, making a lot of people anxious or frustrated. If someone tries to respectfully ask someone on the cell phone to quiet down or turn it off, they tend to snap back that their conversation is of universal importance, even if it’s about what kind of muffin they like.

Muffins are important, though. “People definitely are using them way too much,” continued Brown.

While not in the same family as alcohol or narcotics, cell phones share some off road similarities; similar in the sense that you’ll fly off the road and into a ditch if you make one wrong move. Though being drunk isn’t something you can drop into your lap, your focus does drift elsewhere and suddenly the front of your car is dating someone else’s front.

People need to understand that cell phones are an incredible step in the advancement of connecting the world, but it’s just as useful with connecting your body to pavement or someone else’s. When we’re in our cars, or operating public transportation, or joining others in a social setting, it’s our responsibility to respect those around us because, in the case of operating public transportation, your inability to focus could cost them their lives, just like the train operator did in California last Friday.
Hadron outages and other stories

**College community trembles during power outage**

**BY NICK SERMUKSNIS**

**Alt. Edge Editor**

With energy issues a major issue in politics and crisis after crisis not being averted, expect power outages to become commonplace.

Northern Essex was hit a devastating blow Monday morning when the entire Haverhill campus lost power. Rumor around campus was that strong winds played a role in knocking out the electricity, but that was covered for the reality: The Large Hadron Collider.

The campus was essentially shut down because most of its utilities operate on computers. With our administra- tive power unable to send e-mails to employees, late this week many students became frazzled and watch for obvious breaches of normalcy.

A college community is one that must always be prepared in the face of crisis. Diversity. Glad to have the power back, NECCo. I hope your sense of humor returned too.

**Northern Essex**

**NECC Observer**

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**Horoscopes**

- **ARIES (March 21- April 20)** - Intuitions or sudden hunches will have greater weight over the next few days. Many Aries natives will now reveal hidden links and plans into the future. Revealing comments should be closely watched. Watch for loved ones to probe for revised romantic ideas or new expectations.

- **TAURUS (April 21- May 20)** - A colleague may this week challenge the authority of a key official. Remain distant, however, and watch for subtle agreements before Wednesday workplace discussions will be complex but healthy. If possible, find positive ways to include younger or new employees. Late this week many Taureans will encounter an unexpected romantic overture. Planetary alignments indicate a few weeks of social intrigue will be present. If so, stay quiet and watch for obvious breakthroughs.

- **GEMINI (May 21- June 21)** - A new property agreement or unexpected financial obligations will suddenly change daily plans. Before October some Geminis may be asked to take on expanded home or money responsibilities. If so, remain balanced and expect work officials to also compete for your support. Thursday through Sunday highlights unexpected discussions with a close friend or romantic partner. Key issues may involve recent family disputes or last minute cancellations: stay focused.

- **CANCER (June 22- July 22)** - Lessons from the past will be a continuing theme over the next few days. After much inward reflection, key relationships will now experience an intense phase of redefined goals or revised home values. In the coming weeks fast social progress and new romantic promises will be unavoidable. Don’t be shy.

- **LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)** - Early this week business negotiations are strongly to your advantage. For many Leo natives the next weeks of dis- joined work communications and lost information is now ending. Remain creative and probe officials for valuable opportunities, new payment plans or revised agreements you won’t be disappointed. After Thursday watch for added social attention and renewed daily commitments. Go slow; a cautious approach will bring the desired results.

- **VIRGO (Aug. 23- Sept. 22)** - Recently distant friends or lovers will this week seek your approval. Loyalty is now a vital concern in all close relationships. Use this time to discuss complex family or romantic decisions: before next week loved ones will provide support, encouragement and meaningful advice. Thursday through Saturday a rare business or financial mistake may trigger short- term workplace changes: so expect ongoing miscon- communica- tions and revised team assignments for the next 20 days.

- **LIBRA (Sept. 23- Oct. 23)** - Authority figures may be critical or unresponsive this week concerning issues of seniority, regulations or time sen- sitive instructions. Play the diplo- mat and watch for revised assign- ments or new workplace roles.

- **SCORPIO (Oct. 24- Nov. 22)** - Loved ones will now regain their optimism and social vitality. Early this week watch for a powerful wave of revi- talized interest to arrive in all key relationships. Close relatives will no longer view past mistakes as overwhelming. Provide encour- alization. Monday through Wednesday Friday minor money matters may prove briefly problematic. Check calculations and avoid over- spending: all is well. Later this weekend friends and relatives will demand clear social promises: set firm boundaries.

- **SAGITTARIUS**

- **Nov. 23-Dec. 21** - Over the next 11 days your guidance is needed. Group meetings, new property agree- ments or new workplace roles may be critical or unresponsive this week concerning issues of seniority, regulations or time sen- sitive instructions. Play the diplo- mat and watch for revised assign- ments or new workplace roles.

- **CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)** - In the coming weeks invest- ments will bring lasting success. Pace for slow growth and research all long-term options.

- **AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)** - Before mid-week nostalgia will once again captivate the attention of loved ones. Old memories and yesterday’s obligations now need to be brought to the surface and resolved. Let close friends and lovers set the tone; deep emotion- al change and a renewed faith in romance may be at issue, Thursday through Sunday accepts unusual creativity and surprising business proposals. Listen to the comments, ideas or suggestions of others: unique opportunities will soon prove worthwhile.

- **PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)** - Group events and planned celebrations will be highly appealing this week. Watch for friends or col- leagues to offer unusual invita- tions. Travel proposals, cultural experiences or creative hobbies will all provide lasting interest. After Thursday check financial records for mistaken dates or missed payments. For some Pisceans key officials may this week reveal an unexpected error or series of misleading com- munications. Calculations and daily payments may require attention: stay alert.

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**McTeague courtesy photo**

Students run from the emergence of a black hole erupting underneath the Northern Essex Haverhill campus as chunks of ground were swallowed.
Sports

Brady’s bunch now Cassel’s Clan

Patriots search for the answer to Brady’s absence

By Christian Stone
Sports Editor

ESPN’s Bill Simmons said it best when he compared feel- ings about the New England Patriots season opener earlier this month to September 11. “It was like a tragic wedding experience. As a fan, or fiancé, we wait for months for the season to begin, or as Simmons puts it, ‘telling the wedding’. We prepare for the season with fantasy drafts and projections, or bachelor parties and expectations. After months of the engagement, or waiting process, the day finally comes and you find yourself at the altar, or in front of the television, counting down the seconds for 1 p.m. to roll around. Seconds start to stretch the point where you feel you could almost start counting mil- liseconds. And it is at that very moment that you discover that your bride to be was just run over by a train. We had our tuxedos on, we were ready to go, and suddenly we were sitting in a waiting room in a hot tuxedo waiting for medical updates on our common fiancé and halfheartedly trying to talk ourselves into one of the brides-maid’s. That comatose fiancé hap- pened to be beloved Patriots MVP quarterback Tom Brady, who suf- fered a torn ACL and MCL at the hands of Kansas City Chiefs safety Bernard Pollard. Pollard instantly thought trouble had lurked in his head while he listened to Brady as he lay on the field. “He was in a lot of pain. When you hear a scream, you know that.” Pollard was right. 24 hours after the hit on Brady, the team announced that he would need season ending surgery to repair the damage to his left leg. Bridesmaid, I mean, replace- ment quarterback Matt Cassel stepped in to complete the game victoriously, 17-10, while com- pleting 13 of 18 passes for 152 yards. Cassel threw one touch- down pass to star receiver Randy Moss and avoided throwing any interceptions in roughly twenty- eight minutes on the field. Not exactly Brady numbers, but then again, Tom set the NFL record for touchdown passes last year, so nobody has ever had Brady num- bers except Brady himself. This season will prove to be the excep- tion to the rule. If there is one fact you could classify under sad but true, this was it: Tom Brady will throw as many touch- down passes as you and me. In terms of replacing the injured star, the Patriots are in no rush to go out and sign a free agent. Cassel will be the starting quarterback until further notice, but other options are being explored in this dog-eat-dog industry. Aside from Cassel, the Patriots have only one active quarterback, rookie Kevin O’Connell, who hasn’t taken a professional snap yet. According to ESPN’s Chris Mortensen, for- mer Tampa Bay quarterback Chris Simms was asked to come in for a workout along with the well-traveled, sub-par veteran, Tim Rattay. However, upon arrival, Patriots vice president of player personnel told them “circumstances had changed” and had sent them back to the airport. Instead of bringing in veteran talent to assist young Cassel, the Patriots brought back Matt Gutierrez as the official team site reports he has been signed to the practice squad. Gutierrez was originally signed by the Pats in May 2007 but cut prior to the beginning of this season. He had completed 1 of 5 passes last year. It would appear that Belichick has elected to continue on with Matt Cassel under center.

Cassel is excited to finally get the chance to start in the NFL after having been Brady’s back up his entire time in the league. “This is something I’ve been preparing for [for a long time],” he told reporters after the game. “I just buckled my chinstrap and the guys rallied around me. I felt their support.” Its not that it would be absolutely impossible for the Patriots to go 16-0 again, their attitude certainly shows it, but without Tom Brady, our bride to be, the love of our franchise guid- ing us, it just doesn’t seem likely. But do not forget the last time the Patriots lost their starting quar- terback after the start of the sea- son. In 2001, Drew Bledsoe got hurt in week two, in steps 6th round, 193th overall unknown Tom Brady, and we’ve never looked back. Nevertheless, I hope your wedding gift is returnable.

If there is one fact we could classify under sad but true, it is this: this season Tom Brady will throw as many touch- down passes as you and me.

Sox set new record

Sox set record for consecutive games sold out

By Christian Stone
Sports Editor


The previous record was set by the Cleveland Indians from 1995 through 2001. A common name on both team rosters was the recently traded Manny Ramirez, who spent his first eight years of professional ball with Cleveland from 1993- 2000.

Ramirez was signed with Boston following the 2000 season and played until just earlier this year. Of the 912 combined games that made up the streaks of their respective times, Ramirez played in roughly 700 of them.

Manny Ramirez is a common name on both rosters.

September 4 - NCAA Champion Kansas Jayhawks’ Mario Chalmers and Derrell Arthur have only active NBA’s mandatory rookie transi- tion program for violating league rules.

Chalmers, drafted by the Miami Heat this offseason, and Arthur, drafted by New Orleans, were kicked out of the program for the alleged possession of drugs and women in their room. The program they were attend- ing was supposed to assist young rookies with their transition to the NBA, namely how to stay away from drugs and women.

The players were sent home for violating program rules, an NBA spokesman said. “They will be appropriately sanctioned and will have to repeat the pro- gram next year.”

In addition to returning to the program in 2009, the play- ers could also subsequently face fines and suspensions.

Being discharged from a camp that teaches you how to respect women and avoid drugs because you disrespected women and used drugs, that is the definition of irony.

Mario Chalmers in March

New England quarterback Tom Brady is helped off the field during the first quarter at Gillette Stadium.
Sports

Basketball or bust

Leo Liriano is going to be fun to watch on the court this year

By Christian Stone
Sports Editor

A group of eight men play a four on four basketball game across one half of the NECC gymnasium. On the other half a man practices solo. Leo Liriano, a transfer student from Tennessee Tech sporting the number 278 on his back, is practicing the fundamentals of the game during a break from classes. His skill is obvious, his stroke is gorgeous, and his routine is flawless. After an hour of watching him shoot around I realized what I already assumed five minutes after entering the gym: Leo Liriano is going to be a star on the court this season.

His routine started with the basics, a little dribbling, some short jumpers a few feet from the rim and rotating left handed and right handed lay ups. After a few minutes the shots got gradually tougher, moving a few feet back from the rim until just shy of the key, then at the key and even a few steps back. His shots are on target, even the misses, which were few and far between, looked to be on point until they barely grazed the iron causing their deflection. He then ended what seemed like a strenuous practice. Turns out, he just started warming up.

After he mastered the basic shots while standing still, he decided to turn it up a notch. Incorporating self passes into the equation, and multiple ball dribbling drills. Liriano first practiced his mid range jump shots while conducting passes to himself, via spinning the ball a few feet in front of him and having it bounce back as if receiving a pass. He was drilling them, one after another after another. I was trying to keep track but I blinked. After nailing down a few from each side he stepped back to a longer range and finally to the three point line where he drained his first four consecutive attempts. The fifth one barely missed, clanking the front rim before bouncing out. But four in a row in rhythm while passing the ball to oneself is impressive nonetheless. His quickness was reflected in his dribbling skills. Someone like me, talentless, has a hard enough time as it is dribbling one basketball in any which direction. Leo, on the other hand, puts people like me to shame. He took a break from sinking buckets and picked up a second basketball. With a ball in each hand he starts walking from mid court to the baseline, dribbling each ball in unison and making it look easy. After a few minutes he switched up to dribbling under the legs and behind his back, sprinting up court, still having a ball in each hand. Granted, the basketball season won’t be starting until November (try outs aren’t until October), but I am already certain to park my backside in those bleachers. Call it a pre-scouting report-report if you would like, but Leo Liriano is going to be a force on the court. His talent is unquestionable, his teammates should feel fortunate, and his opposition should be fearful.

Weekly Sports Trivia QUESTIONS:

1. Who was the last Red Sox player to win an MVP award?

2. In what season did the player above win the award?

3. Who was the last 2nd baseman to win an MVP award in either league? (National or American)

4. Which team held the record for most consecutive sellouts before the Red Sox?

5. Prior to 2008, when was the last time the Celtics won the NBA championship?

NECC Celtics Getaway

Don’t miss the chance to catch some preseason fun

By Christian Stone
Sports Editor

As a sports enthusiast I feel obligated to tell you that NECC has organized a trip to see the NBA Champion Boston Celtics play the Houston Rockets on Saturday, Oct. 11, at the Verizon Wireless Arena in Manchester, NH. Whether you feel you’re too “mature” to attend a school related function, I prom- ise this is an opportunity you should not pass up.

The Celtics dominated the Lakers last summer to catapult themselves to the status of NBA Champions, and there is no better time to see them play again than a preseason game in Manchester. The total cost for the trip is $26, which includes admission and transportation. I implore you to try attending a game at the Garden for that much with the cheapest nosebleed seat carrying a minimum of $20, and that doesn’t include transport. The value of this trip seems charitable compared to a trip into Boston to watch them play.

The Houston Rockets were able to reach the playoffs last year despite the absence of their towering 7-foot plus center Yao Ming. This game is in no way, shape or form a pushover. We’re not talking about the Memphis Grizzlies or the Milwaukee Bucks here. Throw Rocket’s All-Star Tracy McGrady on the court with Yao and we have one highly competitive, no doubt exciting game to watch.

The game starts at 7:30 p.m., but transportation leaves the school in Haverhill at 7:30. If you’re interested in attending, there is limited availability so make sure you act swiftly. Contact Moe in D104 or call X7478, post haste. I’m not trying to promote this for the schools benefit, I’m promoting it for our own. I plan on attend- ing and I hope to see you there.

Think about it...

We at the observer would like to incorporate you, the reader, as often as we can. In “Think about it...” we pose a debatable sports related question and ask for your valued opinions and comments. Submissions will be selected based on valid, logical arguments. This weeks question:

“Do you believe NASCAR racing has a direct effect on the rising prices of petroleum and oil by using as much as they do?”

Send submission columns to the NECC Observer: observer@necc.mass.edu

Include “Think about it...” in subject line.

Leo Liriano joins the NECC Knights this season.

Christian Stone photo

Paul Pierce and the Boston Celtics look to defend their first championship title in 22 years this upcoming season, but you could see them before that.

NECC photo
You can’t read all of this document. The government won’t tell you why.

There are millions of documents like this one. Few of them pertain to national security.

In a democratic society, is that right?

Original graphic by The Telegraph, Nashua, N.H.

For more information, visit www.SunshineWeek.org