Budget cuts on the way for NECC

NECC received the news last Wednesday that its budget will be reduced by almost $1 million as part of statewide budget cuts, which will mean possible tuition increases next fall and layoffs next year.

The state budget appropriation that NECC receives for the upcoming year was cut by $958,000, which represents a reduction of about 5 percent of the college’s total budget, according to Vice President of Administration and Finance Sue Wolfe.

In addition to these cuts for the upcoming fiscal year 2009 the college was told in a meeting with state education officials last week that these are not one time cuts and that they should begin to plan on this being a three to four year problem.

“Things are not going to get better anytime soon,” Wolfe said.

While specific cuts at the college have not been decided yet Wolfe said students and staff can expect potential tuition increases and layoffs.

“We expect that given the scope of the reduction this year and that we will be looking at flat or slightly declining state support next year, we expect that there may be layoffs,” Wolfe said.

At this point NECC will not be raising tuition for the spring semester.

“We will be looking at tuition and fees for the following fall and I would expect an increase,” Wolfe said.

At this time it is unknown as to what that increase will be.

The specific details of these budget cuts will be determined later in November when President Hartleb meets with his cabinet, which consists of the senior management of the college.

“With all of this in mind our ultimate objective is to maintain the integrity of our academic curriculum and to maintain essential and critical student services,” Wolfe said.

President Hartleb has already contacted the members of his cabinet and asked them to start thinking about how the college is going to deal with the reduction.

“It’s going to be a challenge to realize these cuts. It’s a large cut for this institution and a lot of people have spent a lot of time thinking about how we can do this in a way that minimizes the effect to our students and employees,” Wolfe said.

The effect on student clubs and activities is not yet known.

Student clubs are funded by a budget controlled in part by the Student Senate. The senate dictates the allocation each club receives.

The student activity fund currently receives $365,000 as the budget for funding student clubs, activities and athletics. Whether that amount will be reduced is still yet to be determined.

The college is also looking at some actions that they can take in the short term to reduce spending, including limiting out of state travel, curtailing nonessential conferences and delaying the rehiring of vacant positions.

“We will be looking at tuition and fees for the following fall and I would expect an increase.,” Wolfe said.

The cabinet was willing to approve a costly budget item, acknowledging the importance of this service to our students to be able to go back and forth from Haverhill and Lawrence campuses and have that available at no cost. But any additions to this service will be considered after the students and employees, “ Wolfe said.

The budget cuts to NECC come at a time when enrollment at the college has increased 7.6 percent, a trend that is expected to continue as enrollment surges when the economy slumps, with students looking for lower education costs, but as the state deals with economic crisis colleges often see their budgets drop as well.

The recent budget cuts have greatly affected state universities and community colleges. The public colleges across the state have received an average 5 percent reduction in their state subsidies.

All of these colleges, like NECC, are now faced with making difficult decisions as to where they will cut their budgets and how this will impact their students.

“We will look at everything with an eye towards minimizing the effect on services and the quality product that we provide for our students,” Wolfe said.

No third shuttle bus coming soon

No relief in sight due to financial concerns says Sue Wolfe

By Julie Varney
News Editor

Despite students’ complaints about the shuttle bus service the college is not considering adding a third shuttle bus due to financial concerns. What would have been a possible solution for some students, who were arriving to class late as a result of overcrowded buses, will no longer be an option for them. Many shuttle bus riders requested that NECC provide an additional shuttle bus but with the budget cuts from the state it is cost prohibitive to add an additional shuttle bus at this time, according to Vice President of Administration and Finance Sue Wolfe.

“I want to acknowledge that students aren’t able to get the shuttle when they want it sometimes because it’s full and we’ve looked into some options to alleviate that and right now it’s cost prohibitive to do anything more about it,” Wolfe said.

The cost of the shuttle bus is $41 per shuttle trip, or approximately $5.50 per student trip, according to Wolfe.

“The budget cuts will be determined later in November when President Hartleb meets with his cabinet, which consists of the senior management of the college.”

The shuttles are not as full as they once were. It remains to be seen if the demand will decrease if students have simply regulated their trips more efficiently.
Opinion

What’s the most embarrassing thing you’ve been caught doing?

Serena Tyrie, Web Page Design
“I fell up a hill. I was walking up a hill and I fell backwards.”

Chris Hassard, General Studies
“I was 14 and I played a prank to pee in somebody’s mailbox, the door was down and as I was running down the street I peed in my pants.”

Ian Sanford, Electrical Engineering
“Backing over someone else’s mailbox while they were watching.”

Vote please

Youth apathy is killing our country. It is the role of youth in society to demand change because they are not indoctrinated into the system. This Nov. 4, you need to vote. But do not vote idly, take the time to learn the issues and see how you feel.

Do you support the legalization of marijuana, do you feel strongly about income tax or do you really care about the economy. As citizens of the United States the weight of your freedom lies on your shoulders. You must work to preserve it, guard it and defend it.

The Observer does not have a history of endorsing candidates, and we won’t here. But we will endorse something that every politically minded person can agree on. The future rests in your hands, so vote, and vote intelligently.

Remember, if you don’t vote, you can’t complain.

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

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 Rm. 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.

The debates: more like prizefighting than politics
By HANSEL LOPEZ  
Opinions Editor

With all the hype and the expectation that has gone into the presidential debates one would think it’s a prizefight being held in Vegas rather than two dudes talking. It does have a tendency to come across with prizefighting in a way, like boxing, matches the debates have been well publicized, drawn comparisons to a past quarrel (in this case Richard Nixon vs. John F. Kennedy) and by far more people tuned in to watch it.

Joe Biden. Joe Biden seemed more like the winner in my scorecard, but there were a few surprises.

The most surprising or odd aspects of the debates were the introductions of Joe Six-pack and Sarah Palin. Joe Six-pack is the imaginary working guy, who in reality is a blue collar American man; he’s kind of like Rosie the Riveter for drunk guys. Or maybe it’s what Palin thinks a man should be, which prompts the question am I Joe Six-pack? Are you? It’s either that or my original theory that Joe Six-pack is the imaginary husband of hockey mom and they live a peaceful life hunting, drinking beer, child raising, and raising their kids in middle of nowhere Alaska.

Joe the Plumber. Joe the Plumber on the other hand is real and was brought up live a peaceful life hunting, drinking beer, and raised in the same hand. In reality, he’s an imaginary character made up by McCain’s campaign. Joe the Plumber was a character made up by McCain to tarnish Obama’s tax plan, but the next day I saw him on the news. Joe Wurzelbacher didn’t seem too excited about his newfound sudden celebrity status which doesn’t suit him well because his 15 minutes won’t be up any time soon. I’m sorry to say Joe, but you’re the new poster boy for the GOP. They’ll use you for everyman appeal even if most Americans really can’t relate to you.

Something that also caught my attention was that the co-main event aka the vice presidential debate was a lot more interesting than the three presidential ones. It was because of the wildcard Sarah Palin who was fresh off her Katie Couric interview debacle and a debate and it was a chance for voters to get a feel for Joe Biden. It also managed to draw 70 million viewers making it the most watched debate so far.

Although Biden didn’t go for the same grand statement I was hoping for against Palin he held his own against the much more popular celebrity and did deliver some stinging remarks, a good one was something regarding a certain point out there. I will give Palin credit for not choking on the big stage and for delivering some good arguments herself, she has debate experience but it definitely was not over this one. I was worried that Palin’s odd character would be too much and brainwash viewers into believing she was winning, but Biden was competent and his responses were sharp and were mainly focused on McCain. Palin was clearly follow-ing the game plan drawn up by her advisors which was to have a shout out for Ronald Reagan, include as much Alaska references as possible even though it wasn’t relevant, and most importantly try to play to her middle America strengths and distance herself from Washington politicians.

The ending to this debate was far more amicable than the Obama and McCain affairs, as both candidates didn’t make it personal and join them afterward. The debates: more like prizefighting than politics

Barack Obama has proved too elusive for John McCain in their debates.

And now for the main event, the long awaited showdown between McCain and Obama. Nobody knew what to expect, was McCain’s temper going to bar Joe Six-pack? Was Obama going to be linked to yet another controversial figure? We wouldn’t know from watching the first debate.

The first debate was spent almost as a feeling out process which made for pretty boring TV, but I figured that it would pick up in the later two. However I do think that McCain should have been a little more active in the first, considering that it was focused more on foreign policy which is his area of expertise. It was vital for McCain to start strong and carry some of that momentum with him into the next two debates that dealt with more domestic issues namely the economy, Obama’s strong suit. This debate was hard to call because of both candidates relative lack of activity so we’ll call it a draw.

The second debate will be remembered for McCain’s hubris for/bettering the best of him. In an attempt to look more confident McCain resorted to lightly mocking Obama for things like a request for an overhead projector for a Chicago planetarium and referring to Obama as “that one.” Obama worked a little more on this one and by simply evoking McCain’s arguments he began to look like the clear winner. There was a hint of Kennedy vs. Nixon in this one, as Obama appeared to be the more confident and level headed of the two and McCain had moments that he seemed awkward. This really shouldn’t matter but potential American voters really take this into consideration and it’s beginning to show in the polls.

The final debate McCain came out more aggressively and looking to finish, but it seemed too little, too late. McCain did deliver the best statement in all of his debate performances in an attempt to distance himself from George Bush when he said, “If you wanted to run against President Bush, you should have run four years ago.” Other than that what sticks out from the debates was Joe the Plumber being mentioned over twenty times and McCain being way too interested in link-ing Obama to William Ayers and ACORN. The way McCain should’ve brought this up was by briefly mentioning it and letting the viewer think about it rather than beating it into people’s heads. Once again by keeping his cool Obama was looking like the winner, maybe it was a part of the Democratic strategy to bait McCain into losing his temper and portray him as not being level headed enough to be president. Barack Obama takes this one by the slightest of margins.

Overall Obama is our winner by split decision in a grinding series of debates. I feel that both candidates should have focused less on negative remarks and should’ve been a little more descriptive of their policies rather than tearing them down.

“I Love to be a winner in the voting, but the next day I saw him on the news. Joe Wurzelbacher didn’t seem too interested about his newfound sudden celebrity status which doesn’t suit him well because his 15 minutes won’t be up any time soon. I’m sorry to say Joe, but you’re the new poster boy for the GOP. They’ll use you for everyman appeal even if most Americans really can’t relate to you." -Friedrich Nietzsche

“Love is the delightful interval between meeting a beautiful girl and discovering that she looks like a haddock.” -John Barrymore

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Deregulation and how it affects you

Who is really to blame for the current economic crisis?

By Mark Palermo

Guest Columnist

If you only listen to conservative political commentators, you get the idea that the banking crisis was caused by liberals. They compelled banks, so the story goes, to make millions of high-risk loans to low-income homeowners, most of them Black and Hispanic, who later defaulted on these loans. If you like a simplistic analysis, there it is—frame the predigested for Rush, Acosta and predigested for Rush, ditto-heads, Howie Scurpax and Bellicose Bill O'Reilly enthusiasts. No further discussion necessary for these folks.

Here's the rest of the story: the lion's share of blame for the current economic crisis? Greenspan and others rode the deregulation bandwagon. John McCain was still touting deregulation as late as last month.

To find out why, we have to go back to the banking failures that followed the stock market crash of 1929. In order to restore confidence in the banking industry, Franklin Roosevelt's administration enacted legislation to regulate banks. In the early 1930s, the Glass-Steagall and Bank Holding Company Acts prohibited banks from engaging in conflicts of interest, pyramid schemes, commingling of funds, leveraging and speculation. The act prohibited savings banks from merging with investment banks and mandated frequent government audits, all of which contributed to the sound banking practices that lasted until the Reagan administration. If you are over 40, you remember when the banking industry was the most ultra conservative, traditional, and boring industry imaginable. In other words, the ideal banker's friend. After 12 years of deregulating banks because the industry was regulated, the awesome power of free markets would be unleashed. And so Reagan deregulated banks with the Garn-St. Germaine Act of 1982, much of which was written by lobbyists for the financial industry. The resulting orgy of greed and looting was so rampant that even loan sharks, shady real estate developers and gangsters were purchasing savings and loan institutions, granting themselves massive loans, and then defaulting on them. Is that what they mean by free markets? Within a decade, the savings and loan crisis resulted in a $500 billion bailout. Deregulation should have ended then, but it didn't. Big business wanted even more banking regulations lifted and they spent millions of dollars lobbying for it. Perhaps no one was more a champion of deregulation than Senator Phil Gramm, who single-handedly almost killed Glass-Steagall and Bank Holding Company Acts. A law co-authored by Gramm said nothing about the banking system would be reviled, censured, perhaps held up to ridicule, but today, Gramm serves as co-chair of the McCain presidential campaign. Since retiring from the Senate, Gramm has secured a lucrative position as vice president of UBS/Switzerland, the world's largest private bank. And until recently, Gramm was being seriously considered by John McCain for the post of—are you ready for this?—Treasury Secretary.

Are you surprised or shocked that we might face a Latin American style era of runaway inflation?

“The fever for deregulation grew in the 1980s from Ronald Reagan’s promise to ‘get government off our backs.’ Deliriously happy throngs cheered Reagan as he pledged to clear the way for his vision of ‘Morning in America.’ Those natty liberals had created those barriers to commerce. If we just removed the offending regulations, the awesome power of free markets would be unleashed. And so Reagan deregulated banks with the Germ-St. Germaine Act of 1982, much of which was written by lobbyists for the financial industry. The resulting orgy of greed and looting was so rampant that even loan sharks, shady real estate developers and gangsters were purchasing savings and loan institutions, granting themselves massive loans, and then defaulting on them. Is that what they mean by free markets? Within a decade, the savings and loan crisis resulted in a $500 billion bailout. Deregulation should have ended then, but it didn’t. Big business wanted even more banking regulations lifted and they spent millions of dollars lobbying for it. Perhaps no one was more a champion of deregulation than Republican Senator Phil Gramm, the banker’s friend. After 12 attempts in 25 years, a Republican congressman (with the help of President Clinton) finally brought down the Glass-Steagall Acts. A law co-authored by Gramm repealed the offending, old-fashioned banking regulations which had been in place since the 1930s. Gramm was handsomely rewarded for his help by his banking benefactors. Gramm also sponsored the Commodity Futures Modernization Act of 2000, which deregulated the energy industry. Enron lobbyists wrote most of the bill. (Do you notice a pattern here?) which accounted for the loophole exempting Enron from energy trading regulations. In just one year, the loophole allowed speculators to plunder $11 billion from California. In return for his services, Gramm was the second largest recipient of campaign donations from Enron.

You might think that a man who single-handedly almost killed Glass-Steagall and the energy industry, Senator Phil Gramm was most of the bill. (Do you notice a pattern here?) which accounted for the loophole exempting Enron from energy trading regulations. In just one year, the loophole allowed speculators to plunder $11 billion from California. In return for his services, Gramm was the second largest recipient of campaign donations from Enron.

You might think that a man who single-handedly almost killed Glass-Steagall and the energy industry, Senator Phil Gramm would be reviled, censured, perhaps held up to ridicule, but today, Gramm serves as co-chair of the McCain presidential campaign. Since retiring from the Senate, Gramm has secured a lucrative position as vice president of UBS/Switzerland, the world’s largest private bank. And until recently, Gramm was being seriously considered by John McCain for the post of—are you ready for this?—Treasury Secretary.

Are you surprised or shocked that we might face a Latin American style era of runaway inflation? I’m not. Thomas Jefferson faced these same kinds of problems with banks as did Andrew Jackson.

In 1837, Abraham Lincoln had this to say about banks: “These capitalists generally act harmoniously, and in concert, to fleece the people, and now, that they have got into a quarrel with themselves, we are called upon to appropriate the people’s money to settle the quarrel.”

This is old stuff and we should have known better by now. Maybe before the next bank bailout twenty or so years from now, someone will have thought about regulating the banking system, but I doubt it. Most people never learn from the past.

Professor Mark Palermo is a member of the NECC faculty.
I am more qualified to run for office

If Sarah Palin can run for vice president anyone can, damnit

BY SAM SAWYER
Contributing Reporter

While seeing Sarah Palin make a complete fool of herself during her interview, press conferences and debates is wholeheartedly entertaining, it’s also terrifying. We all (myself included) ed) seem to get caught up in the pontificating and laughing at this woeful-ly unqualified, passive-aggressive, uncultured “hockey mom,” trying to say on issues she knows nothing about. But what we often fail to remember, is that this is real. She has a serious chance of becoming the second in command for the most powerful nation in the world. And with John McCain’s age and past ill-

There is a real chance that he [McCain] could die in office, leaving a simple-minded wolf hunter in charge.

Marijuana reform on ballot

The decriminalization of marijuana would be beneficial

BY RYAN JACKSON
Contributing Reporter

If you met the Oct. 15 deadline to reg-
ister to vote, then on Nov. 4 you will have the chance to exercise this privilege and be heard. However, what some people tend to forget is that there are more items to vote for other than the presidential candi-
dates. An extremely important item on this ballot will be question 2. If question 2 is passed it will motion for the decriminalization of those in possession of up to an ounce of marijuana. Those over 18 caught with up to an ounce will have to forfeit the substance and pay a $100 fine, but in addition, they will have to attend a yearlong drug awareness program. More impor-tantly, those caught in possession of the drug will not be charged with a criminal offense, and it will not be put on their record.

Steven Epstein, a lawyer from Georgetown, said in an interview with the Boston Globe, “Offenders are labeled as criminals for doing something that over half of us have done at least once in our lifetimes.”

This law can create huge barri-
ers to getting a job, loans, and stu-
dent housing.

It is completely necessary at this point and time, given the deplorable state of our economy, to pass this question. Last year, Massachusetts alone spent $29.5 million dollars to enforce the current marijuana laws. People caught with as little as a joint have been subjected to ridicu-
ously harsh terms such as up to a year on probation, random drug testing, awareness programs, etc. A lot of money spent on these sanc-
tions is coming from our pockets.

Cigarettes kills an estimated 430,000 people a year in the United States, alcohol kills an estimated 100,000 a year; there has never been more of the people of the United States due to marijuana. So this begs the question, why, if after a long day at the office, can a busi-
nessman light up a cigarette and knock back some scotch, but an equal number of them want to do to, and is doubtless that will change. People are also saying that it sends the wrong message to kids that by passing this law we’re say-
ing in OK and it isn’t that bad. But how bad is the drug truthfully?

With the presidential election right around the cor-
er, hopes for the vote of the youth are still high, although many A m e r i c a n s remain skeptical about teen vot-
ing.

Polls have shown that the major-
ty of people who vote for president are white and over 50 years old. People eligible to vote aged 18-24 are only a small portion of the people who vote, out of the 200 million eligible voters in the United States.

For the youth to vote is important because even though at the age of 18 you may not think that it matters who your president is or who you vote for, but in reality your decision will effect you and your relative’s lives now and in the future.

A woman has been elected to be vice president for the Republican Party, that is if McCain wins the presidency.

Some times may feel uninformed about the government and of how this country is ruled, and for that reason do not get involved in the voting process. A bit of research will take care of this situation, so I feel that there is no excuse for not voting, of course if you are eligible.

I say they should [vote] because the younger generation is going to be in trouble in the future unless they start becoming more involved in the government around them,” said Oliver Santana in regards to teen vot-
ing.

Only time will tell if the youth of America has decided to have more involvement with the presidential election this year. With that said, make sure you vote! You could be the one who was chosen as your candidate, not for your friends or family, but for you. Your vote counts and will make a dif-
fERENCE. Only you decide your future so make the right decision and regis-
ter to vote before it is too late.
NECC students join Habitat for Humanity rebuilding Lawrence

BY JULIE VARNEY
News Editor

When Rita Almanzar and Antonio Villa move into their first house they will remember the NECC students who helped them build it every time they look around their home.

"You see everyone in the walls, in every sin-
gle piece of the house you remember the people
who helped you work on it," Antonio Villa said.

Twenty-five NECC students and three facul-
ty members volunteered for Habitat for Human-
ity in Lawrence on Oct. 4 where they built the walls
of the house on Market Street that the Almanzar
and Villa family will someday occupy.

The site where the students volunteered,
Habitat for Humanity's Market Common project,
was the scene of a massive fire back in January
that destroyed three Habitat for Humanity homes
under construction. The damage from the fire can
still be seen in the neighboring area, but the Habitat
for Humanity homes are being rebuilt thanks
to the efforts of volunteers.

The students worked with hammers, ladders,
saws and rakes but all they were told to bring was a
positive attitude and willingness to work.

"I honestly feel like every person has the obliga-
tion to give back to the community," Crivaro said.

"I think volunteering is important for every
student not because it looks good on a transcript
or someone's making you do it, its so good for you
that you want to get outside of your own needs,
and wants and give back," Crivaro said.

Professor Linda Desjardins, who along with
Professor Paul Saint-Amand were the other facul-
ty members who volunteered, also agreed on the
importance of incorporating service learning into
the curriculum at the college.

"We're Northern Essex Community College,
conceptualizing a lot more educating our
students. I think it's important that people under-
stand we're all in this together," Desjardins said.

Both Crivaro and Desjardins acknowledged
that students sometimes need the encouragement
and motivation to get involved in community
service, and once they do, they're hooked.

"I prefer that people do it because they want to
and I hope to have the experience to see what it's
all about and see the need for it. The students get
the reward from volunteering," Desjardins said.

Student Bill Casey was an example of some-
one who at first was required to volunteer for a
class but then later chose to volunteer at this ser-
vice day on his own.

"I did at least summer as part of a class I took
with CJ and met a lot of cool people and had a lot
of fun. I came back this year just to do it for fun.
It's good to know I did something for the commu-
nity," Casey said.

Students in Desjardins' public speaking clas-
ses were offered bonus points on their grade if they
participated in a community service project and
used their experiences as the basis for a speech.

Ken Fillebrown, a student in one of
Desjardins' classes, chose to participate in the Habitat
for Humanity volunteer opportunity after he
heard about it in class.

"I didn't care about the bonus points, I heard
of that later, I did it strictly because I wanted to help.
The bonus points, if I get them, are just a bonus.

However, Fillebrown does not agree that stu-
dents should be required to do community ser-
vice.

"I don't think it should be required because if
your heart isn't into it you'll do a half-ass job,
Fillebrown said.

I think community service should be for
those who will put their whole heart into it and
who will do a good job because they want to be
here doing it," Fillebrown said.

Only about half the students who volunteered
at this service day were there because it was a
requirement for a class. A lot of them were repeat
who had volunteered before and were there because
they chose to do it, according to Crivaro.

NECC's newly released Academic Master
Plan mentions the college's need for growth and
improvement in the area of service learning and
community involvement.

One of the college's goals over the next three
years is to increase service learning and volun-
teerism at NECC, according to the Academic
Master Plan.

The college hopes to accomplish this by pro-
viding more service learning courses and giving
students and faculty more opportunities to
become involved in the community at large by
experiencing service learning and volunteerism in
and out of the classroom.

An important part of this goal is for the col-
lege to encourage and support service learning
curriculum development and provide service
learning professional development opportunities
for faculty and staff, as outlined in the Academic
Master Plan.

According to Professor Crivaro such faculty
support is critical to the success of any potential
service learning curriculum.

"It shouldn't be required if faculty are not
behind it. If the faculty can't commit to do the
duty, they're asking the students to do it shouldn't
be a requirement. The faculty need to be willing
to do it too," Crivaro said.

Though students were encouraged to
participate in the service day, the students
who volunteered still said students could
volunteer for the benefit of the students as for the
benefit of the community.

"Paul, Linda and I were role modeling for the
students. It's important we do it to show them that
we're out there doing it with them, so it's not just
something we're telling them to do," Crivaro said.

Professor Crivaro is planning another service
day volunteer opportunity for next semester.

Whatever the motivation was behind the vol-
unteers who participated in the Habitat for
Humanity service day the end result was that they
helped a family get one step closer to realizing
their dream of living in their own home.

"We appreciate it so much, it's unbelievable," the
home's owner Rita Almanzar said.

Halloween Celebration
The Student Engagement Center will be
sp torizing a Dia de los Muertos (Day of the
Dead) Halloween party "when the spirits of
the dead revisit" on Wednesday Oct. 29
from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in Haverhill at the
Sport and Fitness Center and on Friday Oct.
31 from 12 to 1 p.m. in Lawrence. There
will be games, treats and prizes will be
awarded for the best costumes. For more
information contact the Student
Engagement Center at 978-556-3739.

CAMPUS BRIEFS
Student Senate Office Hours
The Student Senate office in B108 is open
to any student looking to meet with a student
senator. The senators are in the office as a
resource for students to help them with any
questions and problems they might have con-
cerning the college. Senators are in the office
throughout the week and specific office hours
are posted on the door. For more information
contact the senate office at 978-556-3739.

Sports Briefs
The Men's and Women's Basketball teams will be
playing games this weekend at the Sport and
Fitness Center at the Lawrence campus.

Women's Basketball Game Notes
The women's basketball team will play the Nor-
esteers of Bridgewater State University on
Saturday Oct. 25 at 2 p.m. and the Theater of
Arcadia on Oct. 26 at 2 p.m.

Men's Basketball Game Notes
The men's basketball team will play the Nor-
esteers of Bridgewater State University on
Saturday Oct. 25 at 4 p.m. and the Theater of
Arcadia on Oct. 26 at 4 p.m.

Fall Center for Service Learning
The Fall Center for Service Learning offers
several opportunities for students to get
involved in service learning.

"Campustops" for Halloween
The Student Engagement Center will be
holding a "Campustops" event on Wednesday Oct.
29 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in Haverhill at the
Sport and Fitness Center and on Friday Oct.
31 from 12 to 1 p.m. in Lawrence. There
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Does your campus organization or office
have something to announce in Campus
Briefs? Please e-mail information to observ-
er@necc.mass.edu. Be sure to include "cam-
pus news brief" in the subject line.

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Want to learn more? Visit www.rivier.edu or call 1-800-447-4843 to speak with an admissions counselor, schedule a campus tour, or register for an Open House or Info Session.
Shuttle problems persist

By BRITTANY ANZALONE
Contribution Reporter

The artistic works of several creative-minded students of NECC’s “Parnassus” literary magazine were recently rewarded with a second place win in the Eastern Division of the Community College Humanities Association competition. However, with this victory comes trouble on the home front with future publications in the journal to possibly mean a budget crisis for the club.

“After 40 years in this issue was released, “Parnassus” has already proved to have staying power and continue to thrive with the help of an organized student staff under the guidance of Professor Patrick Lochelt of the English department. The staff’s latest attempt at perfecting the magazine in a more modernized fashion can be seen in its latest issue which contains better quality paper and images in full color. But with a possible strain in the budget, staff members will only be left with half of the money they were accustomed to using which would have to put an end to any further improvement and advancements in terms of production.”

The initial decision for “Parnassus” to be switched from a fall/spring publication to a yearly publication seemed beneficial to the staff who assumed they would have double the funding to put towards the new contract the college signed with Eagle Security, which was the lowest cost bids in the area. The college currently uses 12 passenger vans provided by Merrimack Valley Security has to comply with the college’s new regulations regarding van usage.

For now, eager readers can obtain a copy of “Parnassus” in the main entryway of the Spurk building. Donations are also being accepted to help protect the future of this creative arena.

“Parnassus” is open to student expressions without feeling the stress of being graded or graded on their assignments. There are also behind the scenes opportunities available for someone to step up and become a member of the staff. Individuals interested in submitting work to “Parnassus” to have until Dec. 1. to place it inside the submission boxes for consideration for the next issue.

The next issue of “Parnassus” improved or not, will hit NEC observer stands in May 2009.

Catholic women march in Rome

ROME: Catholic women seeking to become priests denounced the church’s ban on female ordination as sexist and unjust, bringing their campaign to the Vatican on Wednesday during a worldwide gathering of bishops.

The small group of women representing Catholic organizations from around the world marched across the Tiber River close to St. Peter’s Square, chanting “S.O.S. Women!” the woman chanted.

“I think this is an issue Student Senate should take care of immediately. We want to be the voice of the students, it’s our priority too, the Student Senate needs to do something to redress this,” Vice President of the Student Senate Babak Alan said. The senate urged students to submit suggestions and complaints to Linda Hudson, the administrative assistant for facilities and grounds and the designated point of contact regarding shuttle assistance at lhudson@necc.mass.edu.

Despite their efforts, the hospital was not able to provide a follow-up solution, and the students continued to face problems with the shuttle service.

Paternus’ future unknown

LONDON: If the world beyond America’s shores has a way of hiding the media from its sights, it seems the mission of women seeking to become priests in the Catholic Church is an uphill battle.

Despite there not being a cost-minded students of NECC’s “Parnassus” literary magazine were recently rewarded with a second place win in the Eastern Division of the Community College Humanities Association competition. However, with this victory comes trouble on the home front with future publications in the journal to possibly mean a budget crisis for the club.

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Another power outage on campus

With the help of Eagle Security this issue, the college was able to inform students and staff about the incidents requiring the assistance of Eagle Security in Haverhill and Lawrence. The log covered incidents in both Haverhill and Lawrence campuses from Sept. 29 to Oct. 17.

Sept. 29- A staff worker fell on uneven pavement outside of the building.

Oct. 9- A car accident occurred in the parking lot.

Oct. 11- A power outage was reported at Lawrence campus.

Oct. 15- An alarm was set off by a student at Lawrence campus.

Compiled by the Observer staff from AP wire reports

Compiled by the Observer staff from AP wire reports
Local brothers study history from urban exploration

BY JAY RYAN Contributing Reporter

Two locals explore urban mystery and keep history alive. Founders of the Institute of Urban Speleological Studies and Archeology, Robert Donnabhain, 28, and Michael “Nefarious” Donnabhain, 23, of Haverhill have been urban explorers for five years, venturing into long-abandoned dwellings in hopes to gain glimpses of the past. Interested in history and historical places, Robert will often study a place before visiting it.

“I like to research a place before I explore it,” he said.

When asked his reason for trekking into the unknown, Michael stated he does so “to preserve history through pictures.” He then chuckled slightly and added, “Plus it’s a little exciting to be where you may not suppose to be.”

Under the Pacific Mills building in Lawrence, deep in its basement, the Donnabhain brothers quickly got down to business showing their expertise, documenting and taking pictures, the flash from the camera illuminating the inky darkness for a mere moment. The myriad tunnels of the basement gave off the impression of an old mine. Dusty carts held crumbling material, one looking to be full of what appeared to be coal.

Back among the bright surface the surrounding architecture only vaguely hinted at what lay below. On a nearby building the brothers showed a marker that conveyed the extent of the Flood of 1936. The flood, caused by rainfall and melting snow, claimed nearly 200 lives and over $100 million in damage to New Englanders. Painted lines on the buildings still visible today indicate the power and magnitude of the flood, at some points submerged doors that were nearly seven feet tall. Robert told of pictures he had seen in local restaurants that had relayed the massive size of the flood.

“They showed people row boat ing around downtown Haverhill in order to get places.”

Not only exploring local areas, the adventurous duo’s intrigue and passion has brought them to the Luray Caverns in Va., a place filled with stalactites and stalagmites. In Conn. they witnessed the eerily abandoned “Holy Land,” a religion-oriented theme park given over to nuns and abandoned for decades. Also visited was Friends Cemetery in Leicester, Mass., dubbed “Spider Gates” by fascinated sightseers. Graves in the Quaker cemetery date back as far as the 1700s. They have walked among Fort Adams in R.I. which was built into the hillside and used during the Civil War. The fort still has rifle ports which were created in case of an attack.

Exploring modern ruins and learning something of an earlier age can also be done from the safety of your home. Visit the Donnabhain’s official website at WWW.IUSSA.ORG and follow their exploits. They both stressed the preservation and respect for such relics of the past as should be remembered whenever precautionary steps in order to stay unharmed and protected. Asbestos, rotting buildings still shows lively signs to this day with smoke drifting from the ground and occasional flare-ups. Safety is also another aspect to the fun and thrill of exploration. Both Mike and Rob gave insight into
Anticipation grows as “Twilight” movie premiere approaches

**CRISTINA NAPOLI**
Contributing Reporter

Days are ticking down until the release of Stephanie Meyer's long anticipated movie adaptation of her hit “Twilight.” The movie's release on Nov. 21 is something thousands are waiting for. Since Meyer's announcement on her site on July 7, 2007 told fans that Summit Entertainment had optioned “Twilight,” fans have been marking off their calendars, even before a release date was set. The announcement had been met with excitement from fans all over the world, and the age-old appeal of fans girls quite possibly killed a million innocent bats with shrieks. Bats; the fans of “Twilight” apologize for severally decapitating your numbers, but it couldn’t be avoided. Visits to Meyer's site grew with each passing day while anxious fans waited for the announcement of who would be playing the main character Isabella “Bella” Swan and her vampire love Edward Cullen. Bella's actress was announced on Nov. 16, 2007 to be Kristen Stewart (“Catch That Kid” (2004), “Zathura: A Space Adventure” (2005)) and her vampire love Edward Cullen's actor was announced by Edward's actor on December 13, 2007 to be Robert Pattinson's (“Vanity Fair” (2004)) and “Harry Potter And The Goblet Of Fire” (2005)) role. The release date had been met with a lot of disappointment, many people having had their heart set on Steven, everyone's favorite heartthrob from “Sky High” and “The Covenant.” Fans everywhere are preparing, whether it be by downloading the widget (handy little countdown that times the release to the exact second) available on Meyer's site to planning with friends when and where they are meeting for the midnight release. How many NICC students will attend the midnight release? The answer to that won't be known until later on Nov. 21 when students and professors can see just how many people remained unconcerned about the rumors, dreaming of the forbidden love that is Edward and Bella, or the other possibility—how many students (and maybe teachers) are asleep at their desks, dreaming of the same thing. No one will be sure until next month.

Stores and schools are preparing for the release as well. Hot Topic will be having a Soundtrack Listening Party at each of their stores on Oct 24 at 7 pm where fans can go and listen to the soundtrack that has bands like Muse, Paramore, Linkin Park and even a song sung by Robert Pattinson. Methuen High School is also celebrating the release with their own “Twilight Week” where they’ll be holding debates, a costume day, a trivia contest, an essay competition with an alternate ending to “Breaking Dawn” and other events. They hope to go see the movie on Nov. 21 said Ann Marie Kruzel, English Department Head. The students organized the “Twilight Week.”

The movie's original release date, slated for Dec. 12, was pushed forward to Nov 21 when Warner Brothers announced that they were postponing the release for “Harry Potter And The Half Blood Prince” until 2009. “Harry Potter fans fumed at the date change while “Twilight” fans cheered. Fans of both there season five has started out rather well, dramatic, and all warm and goopy. Everything from love/hate relationships, internships and residents, restrictions on specialties and even a water pipe leak on the surgical floor. The season has started off promising, and fans can only hope that it continues to go in the right direction. We can just hope there are no more random murder/maid attendings, horrible relationship hookups and unexpected pregnancies (though there are rumors that Rosie may be pregnant...Hmm).

Posts on Meyer's site shed the soon-to-be-released movie in a positive light, talking about the amazing chemistry on set between Stewart and Pattinson and the fun they are having.

“While watching the playback of the midnight release. How many and where are preparing, whether it be by downloading the widget (handy little countdown that times the release to the exact second) available on Meyer's site, to planning with friends when and where they are meeting for the midnight release? The answer to that won't be known until later on Nov. 21 when students and professors can see just how many people remained unconcerned about the rumors, dreaming of the forbidden love that is Edward and Bella, or the other possibility—how many students (and maybe teachers) are asleep at their desks, dreaming of the same thing. No one will be sure until next month.

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So as that ever helpful widget continues to count down the days, fans grow more excited with each passing second. Fans would like to apologize in advance to the bats that will be losing many loved ones when “Twilight” finally premieres.

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**Arts & Entertainment**

**Ha ha Hollywood**

More head spinning gossip from Hollywood land

**BY MERISSA LIVEMORE-JOHNSON**
Arts and Entertainment Editor

Once again the world of celebrity continues to amaze us with its ‘normal folk’ that don’t live in a rich fancy house or own six cars. So here is the latest celebrity gossip that makes all us laugh, giggle, maybe be even cry or die just a little inside.

Achmed the Dead Terrorist Banned in Dubai: Dubai’s puppet Achmed the Dead Terrorist has been banned from South Africa’s character, whose appearance is of the skeleton of a dead suicide bomber, was banned in Dubai after a ringtone was released that was said to mock Islam. Need to say Dubai’s pussed Achmed’s probably throwing out a few quite a few, “I keed you.”

Jessica Simpson, Country Royalty: Jessica Simpson has officially crossed over to the country-side. As if playing Daisy Duke in “The Duke’s of Hazard” wasn’t enough to show that she could act like a real country belle,” Simpson is celebrating a very incredible country debut with the release of her new album “Do You Know” soaring to No. 1 on Billboard’s Top Country Albums chart and secured the No. 4 spot on the all-genre Billboard 200 chart on Sept. 17.

“"The Duke’s of Hazard” wasn’t enough to show that she could act like a real country belle,” Simpson is celebrating a very incredible country debut with the release of her new album “Do You Know” soaring to No. 1 on Billboard’s Top Country Albums chart and secured the No. 4 spot on the all-genre Billboard 200 chart on Sept. 17.

Oh the drama. Stay tuned for the next issue on more drama, celebrity fights, divorces, and just plain headaches.

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**Dee Dee Warwick passes away:** The Dee Dee Warwick Band, and singer who won recognition for both her solo work and her performances with her older sister Dionne Warwick, has died. She was 63. Warwick was a four-time Grammy nominee, and had several hits on the soul and R&B charts in the 1960s and 70s, including “Footloose.” She sang “I Don’t Know (She Kept on Talking)” and a version of “I’m Gonna Make You Love Me” that was later covered by Diana Ross and The Supremes.

“Grey’s Anatomy Back With a Bang: For all of those Grey’s fans out there season five has started out rather well, dramatic, and all warm and goopy. Everything from love/hate relationships, internships and residents, restrictions on specialties and even a water pipe leak on the surgical floor. The season has started off promising, and fans can only hope that it continues to go in the right direction. We can just hope there are no more random murder/maid attendings, horrible relationship hookups and unexpected pregnancies (though there are rumors that Rosie may be pregnant...Hmm).

Madonna Getting Divorced: Details of the divorce settlement are yet to be finalized. Gwyneth Paltrow is helping her friend Madonna through the breakup of her marriage. The actress told reporters that she is supporting the pop star following Wednesday’s announcement that she’s separated from filmmaker-husband Guy Ritchie. Ritchie and Madonna were married in 2000, have two children, Rocco, 3, and David Banda, 3, who was adopted in Malawi in 2006, plus Lourdes, Madonne’s daughter from a previous marriage.

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**And the Emmy awards go to...**

**for those who missed the Emmys; the winners are...**

**BY MERISSA LIVEMORE-JOHNSON**
Arts and Entertainment Editor

Usually the Emmy aftermath is who was with whom on the red carpet, who was best dressed, and who was trashed. I think the original reason for the Emmy's was to celebrate a job well done, and for those of you who missed the great celebrity extravaganza, here are the big winners of the evening.

Best Drama Series: ‘Mad Men’
Best Comedy Series: ‘30 Rock’
Best Miniseries or Movie: ‘The Duke’s Of Hazard’
Best Lead Actress, Miniseries or Movie: Tina Fey, ‘30 Rock’
Best Lead Actor, Miniseries or Movie: Paul Giamatti
Best Supporting Actress, Miniseries or Movie: Eileen Atkins
Best Supporting Actor, Miniseries or Movie: Tom Wilkinson
Best Directing, Miniseries: Barry Sonnenfeld, ‘Pushing Dahnes’
Best Directing, Miniseries, Movie Or A Dramatic Special: Jay Roach, ‘Recount’
Best Writing, Variety, Music Or Comedy Program: ‘The Colbert Report’
I am the Greatest Man That Ever Lived," he was waiving his arms high, back and forth, like a rapper.

This was their first stop on their U.S. American tour. Cuomo had a mystical flow about him which I have never seen before, almost like he owned the stage. Weezer played at a perfect intensity level. It was as much as all disturbed.

Cuomo also took some breaks from singing to let his fellow band members have the stage.

The band Weezer was founded in Los Angeles by Rivers Cuomo, Jason Cropper, Matt Sharp and Pat Wilson.

The band didn't have much success at first but after 16 months they signed a record agreement with Geffen. The band moved from New York and recorded their first album produced by Rick Ocasek (The Cars).

While Weezer was recording their first album, Jason Cropper left the band to tend to his pregnant future wife. Shortly after Jason was replaced by Brian Bell. After the second album, Pinkerton, came out bassist Matt Sharp left the band to pursue other avenues. Therefore, Mike Welch from Boston was added to the band. Midsummer of 2001, was the band's last line up change from Mike Welch to bassist Scott Shin intricacy and technicality of metal by: past, present and future. It's a pretty good time to be a metal fan. It's a perfect time for trash metal in particular.

For those unaware trash is the unholy mashing of the intricacy and technicality of metal with the speed and aggression of punk. September brought two fire releases; from genre pioneers Metallica and young guns Trivium, "Death Magnetic" and "Shogun" respectively.

The style blossomed in the 80s and was thought dead as soon as the 90s rolled around, a statement I would gladly challenge and debate with anybody versed in metal. Thrash metal never went away, during the 90s we had Sepultura and Pantera and the millennium only served as an exception as it brought us bands like Shadows Fall and Lamb of God.

First things first. Metallica's new album "Death Magnetic" is their return to form. For those who were expecting a reworking of their 1985 classic "Master of Puppets" sorry to disappoint, but this ain't it. It's a near perfect album. All of the band members were more intensity than ever. Compared to their last concert, which was three years ago, that formed much more secure on the stage. Rivers Cuomo, the lead singer of the band, was more gregarious than ever. 17 years of mixed reaction albums. As weird as they were the dark blues of 1996's "Load," 1997's "ReLoad" and the now infamous garage sounding "St. Anger." From 2003 were actually good albums, but since they had the Metallica label on them fans (myself included) were waiting for something completely different.

But the wait is finally over. Metallica has finally returned to their roots of multifaceted compositions, fret burning guitar solos (yes the no solo policy from St. Anger is no longer) and playing at Daytona 500 speed. I think this can be attributed to working with super producer Rick Rubin (Johnny Cash, Slayer, Red Hot Chili Peppers) who instead of acting on "Shogun" I think it's safe to say that Metallica is alive and well. The song has a jam vibe to it as if the band just got together and started playing with- out a real direction for it. It shows that after 27 years and millions of records sold they still can get along and make uncompromising music.

The only weak spots I can think of is out of place ballad "The Day that Never Comes" which in true Metallica fashion serves as further proof that the giant known as Metallica is alive and well. The song has a loud, distorted sound to it and the bass is buried deep in the mix. I'm not sure if this was a personal choice, but it's not the first Metallica record with a weird mix it was also an issue in "...And Justice for All."

The song titles still seem like Heafy is trying to create a new subgenre within metal. Trivium hasn't done this they are simply expanding or creating their own interpretation of that style. If anything Trivium are the "Machine Head and if anybody disagrees feel free to argue with me. Calling Trivium the next Metallica is as absurd as calling Avenged Sevenfold the next Guns N' Roses.

Trivium's 2006 album "The Crusade" saw them abandoning the growling vocals of "Ascendancy" and embracing a more 80s metal approach. The album was excellent but many that they were simply plagiarizing bands like Metallica and Megadeth.

That's what makes their new album "Shogun" so interesting, it's a complete departure from "The Crusade" style wise. On "Shogun" Trivium carving their own path rather than trying to copy the foot steps of Metallica like they have been accused of doing. Vocally front man Matt Kiichi Heafy seamlessly blends his strong singing voice with the growth from the album "Ascendancy." Musically the composition are a lot longer and varied and there aren't any ballads or soft tempo songs as there were in both "Ascendancy" and "The Crusade."

Heafy also includes some of his Japanese heritage into the album (he was born in Japan) hence the artwork, title and album opens with "Kiritusute Gomen" which roughly translates to "pardon me while I cut off your head."

It's an appropriate title, as that seems to be the theme for the music, "Kiritusute Gomen" kicks thing into overdrive with its complex riffs, breakdown tempo and solos. That virtuosity carries through for the next five songs on the album which finds Trivium having more in common with the melodic death metal of In Flames and Dark Tranquillity than Metallica's brand of trash metal. They still have a Metallica vibe to Trivium, but it is few and far between on "Shogun." The album alienates some fans though as the music is more diverse than Metallica and "Island in the Sun." Hopefully it will not be another three years before we see Weezer perform again. Backing up Weezer were Toyko Police Club and Angels and Airwaves.

Toyko Police Club had a very energy charged, breackdown tempo and solos. Weezer also played plenty of new material from their self entitled "Red" album. Weezer fans had no time to be bored with the show. Everyone seemed very enthusiastic with the entertainment. Weezer played nine of their last songs of the night with a large group of Berklee students up on stage, barely fitting everyone.

From trumpets, to trombones, to flutes, to drums, everyone kept the beat during "Beverly Hills" and "Island in the Sun."

During Weezer's final encore, Rivers Cuomo came out of the dark wearing a soccer uniform, including knepads (just in case he got hurt). Only something Cuomo could wear wouldn't be pleased with their performance. Hopefully it will not be another three years before we see Weezer perform again.

This was their first stop on their U.S. American tour. Cuomo had a mystical flow about him which I have never seen before, almost like he owned the stage. Everyone seemed very enthusiastic.
The Funnies

Wow, great tiramisu! I haven't felt this fulfilled since before we met!

Slow down. This stuff is gold. I'm tellin' ya! Gold!
Humor injects new perspective in the presidential race

By Nick Rossi
Consorting Reporter

Popular comedians are some of television’s most respected writers and commentators. Through their medi-cine in interesting and hilarious ways, the comedian is able to address controversial current events without necessarily pointing any fingers. With the current presidential election looming overhead, there is plenty of room for sketch-comedy shows to parody and mock each of the running mates in some way, shape or form, generating plenty of ideas for comic material.

Tina Fey is a popular comedian who is well known for her years making audiences laugh on Saturday Night Live. The funny-girl/actress began work on SNL in 2000, working for a steady five years until her retirement from the show in 2005. Tina Fey guest starred on Saturday Night Live during the 34th season premiere which aired Sept. 13, 2008. The show opened with “Sarah Palin” (played by Fey) and “Hillary Clinton” (played by Amy Poehler) standing side by side, talking about the presence of sexism in the 2008 Presidential campaign. Her portrayal was so publicized and praised that it showed a 50 percent audience increase in the 34th SNL season.

Tina Fey’s dead-on representation of Republican Vice Presidential candidate Sarah Palin, in which she nailed everything from Palin’s Fargo-esque accent to her hand gestures, garnered her two more guest appearances as Palin on the opening scenes of the next two Saturday Night Live episodes. The second skit was a reenactment of Sarah Palin’s interview with Katie Couric, in which Palin is portrayed as someone who is all talk and not the fashion-conscious pit bull she insists on being. The funniest aspect of the skit was that Fey even quoted some of Palin’s words from the actual interview, displaying her amazing beat-around-the-bush rebuttals that got Couric evidently flustered.

POEHLER AS COURIC: “But again, and not to belabor the point. One specific thing.”

(Several seconds of FEY and POEHLER talking each other)

FEY AS PALIN: “Katie, I’d like to use one of my lifelines.”

POEHLER AS COURIC: “You don’t have any lifelines.”

FEY AS PALIN: “Well in that case I’m just gonna have to get back into ya.”

The most recent episode of Saturday Night Live opened once again with “Tina Palin” debating with Joe Biden, delivering ridiculous commentary, eventually holding her flip chart, asking, “Aren’t we doing the talent portion?”

Fey’s dig on Sarah Palin fairly well. Once again proving that Tina Fey is more than qualified to be VP than Palin.

Comedy is proving to be a powerful tool to communicate a point or feelings about a certain person, event or problem in our media. It is fantastic that celebrities are taking it upon themselves to try and make a difference in people’s minds with such important things as a presidential election. Leave it to people with an influence over a general audience to bring about change and realization, something very important in a nation already filled with biased media.

At the 2008 Emmy awards, Tina Fey spoke about her already infa-mous portrayals of Sarah Palin, stating, “I want to be done playing this lady November 5. So if anyone could help me be done playing this lady, 2008 is that, if she [Palin] wins, I’m done. I can’t do that for four years. And by then done, I mean I’m leaving Earth.”

Comedians are smart, bottom line. For them to look at a person, pick out their flaws, and familiarize themselves with mannerisms of that person displays comedy isn’t all mindless banter. Comics deserve more credit, because most of the people who are not afraid to “go there” and voice their disgust with politics in America are comedians. Tina Fey, Amy Poehler, Kathy Griffin, Margaret Cho and Sandra Bernhardt all females, are not afraid to let audi- ences know how upset they are with the state of the United States and the world as of 2008.

With the presidential election nearing closer and closer, the public opinion of the candidates still has time to change. The real Sarah Palin guest-starred on Saturday Night Live this past weekend, side by side with Tina Fey. Is this a publicity stunt on Palin’s part, to appear that she is a good sport? Who knows? Comedians are tapping one of our most revered pleasures-humor-to get us involved. Despite the hilarious impersonations, interpretations, mockeries or gags, their messages are anything but funny. Listen closely. Enjoy.

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The political landscape is ripe with material for comedians such as Tina Fey and Amy Poehler. Retrospectively, that’s probably not a good thing.

From Digg.com, “So SMART! Laugh out loud AWESOME!!! Once again proving that Tina Fey is more qualified to be VP than Palin.”

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Critical acclaimed...
When you get old what was tame becomes cool. Since the end of high school I've spent a great deal of time reminiscing about my childhood legacy. Afternoons filled with superfluous hours of cartoon animation programs were marred by persecution and prejudice on the playground. I was born a nerd, a geek, a dweeb and I had the elephant ears, giraffe neck, and buckteeth to prove it. It wasn't that I was constantly hounded for liking things that I found nothing offensive or vulgar to it's approach, but being called a poser by another six-year-old for hounded for liking things that I didn't run into my Mom's room after school because I was too young to understand the depths of the meaning of those words. Anti-cootie guns, secret code names, and a mural of the United Girls. Anti-cootie guns, secret code names, and a mural of the United

Aries (March 21-April 19) - Ownership, long-term rental contracts and passionate discussions between loved ones should accent this week. Pay attention to new agreements, property payables, promises, financial promises. Remain patient and expect outstanding details to be settled in the coming weeks. Aries' mid-week social flirts and lovers may be briefly moody or introverted. Don't take it personally - at present others may need to reflect on recent social events or business decisions. Stay focused.

Taurus (April 20-May 20) - This week is best used for finalizing permissions, securing contracts or increasing salaries. Before mid-week ask authority figures or others relatives for special favors. A recent phase of slow progress in career decisions and low self-esteem now needs to end: don't hesitate to take action. Later this week loved ones may offer powerful indications of their love, affection or long-term intentions. Respond with empathy: your optimism and acceptance will more relationships for

GEMINI (May 21-June 21) - Yesterday's love affairs or friendships are accepted but unimportant. Use this time to set fleeting unresolved emotions and watch for a new era of social involvement to arrive. After Wednesday many Gemini's will be asked to take greater responsibility in workplace decisions. They may now be easily resolved: pay special attention to the needs or suggestions of recently silenced others.

CANCER (June 22-July 22) - Close friends or colleagues may require added patience this week. Slow to act, may now watch for prude comments and possessive attitudes concerning career gains. Job proposals or public reputation. Respond with silent acceptance: at present minor disagreements will quickly escalate. Wednesday through Saturday romance and sensuality are on the rise: expect complex overtures and bold flirtations. Later this weekend energy may be low. Rest and avoid key family decisions.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) - Business ventures begun approximately five weeks ago may this week be quickly cancelled or postponed. No permanent or lasting affects can be expected but do watch for brief financial delays. After Wednesday the once closely discussed job options or outline new career pathways. Be receptive. Thursday through Friday accent romantic communications, rare social proposals and rekindled intimacy. Key relationships will soon expand: stay open to new ideas.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) - Previously withheld opinions or observations may this week be freely expressed after Monday expect minor outbursts from friends or relatives. Someone close may now need to discuss new options or feel publicly validated. Remain flexible and watch for sudden realizations. Late Wednesday a trusted friend may reveal an unexpected romantic triangle. Recent social discomfort needs to be publicly debated: pace yourself and expect honest, bold reactions.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) - Money decisions may now be fast and scattered this week. Late Monday expect a brief but intense flurry of financial details or outstanding requests. Stay focused and carefully complete all assignments before mid-week accuracy and dedication will prove vital to success. Wednesday through Saturday brightens new romantic communications and unexpected flirtations. Workplace love affairs or changing business relationships may be a key theme: go slow and wait for clarity.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 22) - Over the next few days romantic invita- tions will be intriguing but purposefully vague. Watch for potential lovers to offer coy flirtations and undefined promises. Enjoy seductive moments but avoid strong expectations: new relationships will now be temporarily delayed. Thursday through Saturday accent revised business routines and detailed discussions with authority figures. Pay close attention to new contracts or promises: a close examination of all financial facts is needed.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23-Dec. 21) - New employment assignments may now be unusually complex. Before mid-week wait for officials to resolve outstanding office disputes before taking action. At present competing sources of information may prove misleading: remain patient. Wednesday through Friday pay attention to property agreements and newly revised home budgets. Loved ones will now dramatically fade. Over the next week...recent family disruptions will now quickly move relationships.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 21-Feb. 19) - Family restrictions or tensions in the home will this week be lifted. Early Tuesday expect loved ones or friends to adopt an attitude of acceptance for older relatives, long-term obligations or group planning. Offer encouragement and fresh ideas: new suggestions will be welcomed. Later this week business officials or older colleagues may request private advice or renewed dedication to a difficult project. Take your time: added information or rare financial facts will soon be revealed.

PISCES (Feb. 20-March 20) - Workplace promises may this week be overly enthusiastic. After Monday expect key officials or older colleagues to quickly introduce changed documents, new pay- ment schedules or joint assignments. Wait, however, for further confirmation before offering a commitment: minor errors will soon demand revision. Later this week a friend or lover may discuss their emotional needs or expectations. Remain open: intimate communica- tions will now quickly move relationships.

If your birthday is this week...recent family disruptions will now dramatically fade. Over the next 4 weeks expect comfort and belonging to again be established in the home environment.
It only took a couple of games into the postseason to realize that these teams just didn’t belong there. There is a reason baseball teams play 162 games a year.

Aside from the obvious, which is to have the playoffs, it’s also about developing chemistry with teammates, establishing winning relationships with your dominant performers, arranging the most productive lineup and to work out all that needs fixing before the season ends. By that time, the teams that made the playoffs had figured out how to achieve those goals advance while the others go home for the fall. Of the eight teams that made the playoffs in 2008, there were three that failed on the fundamentals and all three went home after the first round.

It all starts with an easy note with the Milwaukee Brewers before moving on to talk about the Red Sox and the Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim and finally tear into the outrageously bad Chicago Cubs.

The Brewers didn’t do so much fail the fundamentals as a team, they just didn’t have what it takes to beat the Philadelphia Phillies. As unlikely as it sounds, there are not enough different combinations of baseball fundamentals to go World Series bound in 2

outrageously bad Chicago Cubs.

Anaheim and finally tear into the Milwaukee Brewers before moving on to talk about the Red Sox and the Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim and finally tear into the outrageously bad Chicago Cubs.

In 2004, the Sox mounted a historic run back against the St. Louis Cardinals. In 2007, we saw some of the same old song and dance when the Sox faced another deficit being down 3 games to 1, matched up against a well-balanced Cleveland baseball club. Nevertheless, the Sox remained in true form and came from behind to eliminate the Indians in game 7. The Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim have already been there before, but not in the same breath as the Chicago Cubs.

But one Manny doesn’t make a team. Clearly the Angels took the same fate as the Sox, an easy win. Jason Bay proved to be a valuable replacement for Manny, his numbers might not have been Manny-esque but who’s could? Ramirez was the World Series MVP in 2004, nobody hits like he does. It might have been a different story since joining the Majors in 2005, but Bay helped carry this team through their 11 play-

ings. The second largest disparity between the teams this post season was brought in by the Angels in 5.341 with 3 home runs, 9 runs batted in and a team leading 34. It was the teams returning victors, the men who had already been there before that could produce what was need-

ed to win. David Ortiz was in a constant struggle this post season. He had only 8 hits batted 186 and hit his only one run home. Big Papi has been known for his ability to call the game and is one of which a home run, mak-

ing him the series MVP. Big Papi became a different player in the second half.

Two of the biggest reasons the Red Sox were as dominant as they were this season were their MVP candidates. Kevin Youkilis and Dustin Pedroia. Pedroia had his professionals in the playoffs with respectable numbers (292, 2 HR, 7 RBI). Pedroia isn’t a slow start going 0-17 in the first few games against the Angels but batted back a couple of times in the third inning again against Tampa to produce solid numbers con-

sidering how his average should have been microscopic (.233 3 HR 6 RBI).

Another great story to come from is the retiring pitcher Jason Varitek. The end of the series and again against the Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim was as easy as calling for a ball. There was probably a good reason Pedroia was 1-9, that should have had each hit a run single. Jason Varitek reflected that Boston did it in the second inning of game three of the ALDS at Fenway Park. The rea-

son was no team had ever played the defense so bad. With two outs and the batters loaded, Ellsbury skied a weak pop into the right field grandstands to bring the bases loaded and expected to win the game. The Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim ended the regular season with the best record in baseball 100.62. The only team in the majors to close the regular season, they appeared to lose track of the fundamentals and the game. As easy as calling for a ball. The pitcher Avera Skow was up in and in the easiest possible place to make con-

cluded with the Chicago Cubs not winning a single game in the post season. Chicago Cubs manager Jim Riggs was able to tag out runner Reggie Willits before he could retreat back to the base. A good idea in perspec-

tive but poor production at the plate turned it into a season ending situa-

tion. Where to begin with the Chicago Cubs? There is a reason they haven’t won a world series in 100 years. They are terrible and they probably won’t win another hundred years. The Cubs ended the regular season with the second best record in baseball at 97-

65 to lockdown home field advantage through the first two rounds of the playoffs. That advan-

tage didn’t give them as much as they dropped games three in a row in the row for the Dodgers, two of which in front of their home fans at Wrigley Field. Allegedly you could say that it was just bad luck, but it was anything but. It was some of the worst baseball Chicago Manager Lou Pinella had seen all year. It wasn’t good baseball. In fact, it might have been the worst baseball we’ve played all year. It wasn’t fun to watch, I’ll tell you that.

An Autumn Fall for Red Sox Nation in game seven

The Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim have already been there before, but not in the same breath as the Chicago Cubs.

As Red Sox nation had been so accustomed to coming back from being down 3 games to 1, there is no better testament to the resilience of the Red Sox than winning the best of three series, starting with the Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim. This was as easy as calling for a ball. The pitcher Avera Skow was up in and in the easiest possible place to make con-

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Pinella sat right; the first two games of the series were embarrass-

ing. The Cubs were oustred 20-6 in the series and the Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim two even they managed to rack up more errors than they did runs. Four errors was turned right over one in the other in the second inning, which led the Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim two even errors came one after the other in the second inning, which led to five runs scoring. And all four errors were made by the Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim two even errors came one after the other in the second inning, which led to five runs scoring. And all four errors were made by the Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim.

Forgetting fundamentals forces failure in the fall

With the Chicago Cubs not winning a single game in the post season, the Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim are already on their way to eliminat-

ing hit, any way you can win games if you com-

mit more errors than runs that you score. Even Manny Ramirez knew to hustle down the line on a ground ball to get an infield single in one game of the series. Manny didn’t run always run the line during the year but even he knows when to bring what you got to the table. It’s the postseason, it’s win or go home, but there is always the kinds of mistakes being made, sup-

pesilous, by the best teams the sport has to offer.
The Ballad of Kimbo Slice

Internet phenom Kimbo Slice falls against lightweight

BY HANSEL LOPEZ
Opinions Editor

The winner for the WTF award of the year for most bizarre sports event goes to CBS for their October 4 broadcast of Elite XC: Heat. Elite XC: Heat is the third of four yearly live mixed martial arts (MMA) under contract with CBS in partnership with Showtime. This is all business stuff and obviously isn’t what made the fight card odd, it was the last minute main event substitutions that really made this must see TV.

Originally the main event was to feature MMA pioneer and way over the hill Ken Shamrock vs. Elite XC poster boy, Kimbo Slice, a former street fighter who first rose to fame via youtube with grainy videos of him pummeling random bouncers and tough guys in parking lots.

Because of the popularity of these videos and his interest in transitioning into MMA, Slice was a natural fit for the fledgling Elite XC. Slice brings two different audiences to MMA, one that would watch his fights eagerly to point out the flaws in his fighting and dismiss him as a marketing gimmick or entertainer as opposed to a real fighter.

I’ll give it to him though he has a ton of charisma and always adds colorful banter to pre and post fight interviews. Despite that I think his skills are subpar, he creates a lot of attention for the sport. Elite XC knows this all too well and handpicked all of Slice’s opponents. They felt that a win over a veteran like Shamrock despite being washed up would earn Slice a little more respect from the MMA community and give him more momentum.

Hence why they generated so much hype for this proposed main event. Then on Saturday, Oct. 4, just hours before the broadcast, something happened. Turns out Shamrock couldn’t be medically cleared for fighting because of a cut on his right eyebrow he sustained during a pre fight warm up. Management at Elite XC scrambled to find a replacement, suitable, or not for their cash cow; they figured that they would still have decent ratings as long as Slice was involved somehow.

They settled for unknown light heavyweight Seth Petruzelli, who was brave enough to take a fight on short notice and against an opponent he hasn’t trained for. It also must be noted that Petruzelli weighed in as a light heavyweight at 205 lbs, while Slice is a heavyweight weighing in at approximate-ly 240 lbs.

To be honest I didn’t even know anything about Petruzelli, all we knew was that he had fought in the UFC a couple of times. At first I dismissed this as a scheme for Elite XC to keep protecting Slice, but I still watched the show nonetheless.

This is when things got really weird. The main event begins and Slice immediately cuts off the mat and begins to stalk a very nervous looking Petruzelli. Slice must have figured it was going to be another walk in the park for him as Elite XC has always picked professional glass jawers like Bo Cantrell and Tank Abbott to use as Slice fodder.

From against the cage Petruzelli threw a push kick to create a bit of distance between him and an over eager Slice and follows it up with a counter right cross that clipped his opponent. Next thing I know Slice drops to the mat like a stack of bricks and Petruzelli starts wailing away at his downed opponent with hammer fists and after 14 seconds of abuse the match was stopped by referee Troy Waugh. Slice was so out of it that he attempted a double leg takedown on Waugh because he believed he was Petruzelli.

With the win Petruzelli improves to 10-4, while Slice is handed his first defeat, his record is now 3-1.

And the moment that many a die hard MMA fan has been waiting for arrived, I just didn’t expect it to come this early or by an unhurled fighter, which by the way wouldn’t surprise me if Petruzelli would be once again courted by Elite XC rival UFC.

I think the Elite XC matchmakers are really the ones at fault here as they weren’t able to realize that stylistically Petruzelli was a bad fight for Kimbo if you look at his stats. Sure Shamrock had a small chance at beating Slice because of his submission game, but at this point in his career someone like Petruzelli was a bigger threat to Kimbo because of his speed, youth and wrestling background.

I don’t want to rain on any Slice fan’s parade but he’s far from ready to hold his own against real fighters. This loss is a huge blow to Elite XC and Slice’s career, as it can’t be justified. A loss to Shamrock would be more plausible as he has the pedigree of being a legend in the sport and is in the same weight division. If it took an unknown light heavyweight 14 seconds imagine what a top heavyweight can do to Slice.

Interested in playing women’s basketball? Contact Sue MacAvoy at ext. 3820 or Coach Motroni at ext. 3821

ACT NOW!

SPORTS TRIVIA

1. How many times have the Philadelphia Phillies won the World Series?
2. Who was the 2007 World Series MVP?
3. In the past 10 years, how many times have the Patriots defense given up a play of 98 yards or more?
4. Of the 30 MLB teams how many have never won a World Series?
5. Who was the President of the United States the last time the Chicago Cubs won a World Series?

Transfer College Day 2008

Sponsored by Academic Advising
Northern Essex Community College

Technology Center, Haverhill
Wednesday, October 29th, 2008
10:00am - 1:00pm

Representatives from dozens of public and private colleges and universities from Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Maine will be attending this event.

Academic Advising Center, Haverhill Campus, Behrakis Student Center 978-556-3440
Academic Advising Center, Lawrence Campus, Room L-135 978-738-7423

NECC Sports Schedule

Cross Country:
October 26th, Mayor’s Cup in Boston 9:00
November 1st, Northeast District @ Holyoke C.C. TBA
November 8th, NJCAA National Champ. @ CCRI TBA

Men’s Basketball:
November 6th, vs. Massasoit @ Home 7:00
November 7th, NHTI Tournament, Away 8:00
November 8th, NHTI Tournament, Away TBA

Women’s Basketball:
November 6th, vs. Massasoit @ Home 5:00
November 13th, @ Hampshire College 7:00
Vote no on question 1

Eliminating the Massachusetts state income tax will unfairly shift the financial burden to those who can least afford it, by creating higher property taxes, higher sales taxes, higher fees and tolls, and higher tuition at public colleges.