Helping hands

Artwork from Instructor Lance Hidy’s Digital Imaging Photoshop class is displayed on the third floor of Spark building.

Internship opportunity offers credit, pay

**BY BRITTANY ANZALONE**
Correspondent

The famous words by Walt Disney: “If you can dream it, you can do it.” have never rang more true in the lives of college students looking for an internship opportunity.

And the magic all begins at the Walt Disney World Resort.

“I imagine having the freedom to ride Space Mountain before heading to work.” John Stephenson, the extremely animated college recruiter for Discovery. “It is a wonderful opportunity to work,” said Morel. “It gives students the opportunity of staying employed with Disney while still in school.”

The final part of the Disney experience is earning. Unlike most applications for employment, Disney gives students choices of over 20 different possible job positions all based on their own interests. Individuals interested in working outdoors on a theme park ride can choose a job in attractions while those who prefer to be indoors can work in merchandising. Other available positions include: housekeeping, food and beverage, and hospitality. The average work week consists of between 30 to 50 hours with earnings ranging from $7.22 to $8.25 an hour. No matter what job is chosen, these lucky students will be working in the heart of Disney interacting with guests and fellow workers all at the place where dreams come true.

For more information, contact Sue Chory at scbory@necc.mass.edu.

Necc hopes for stimulus money

**BY JULIE VARNEY**
Editor-in-Chief

With the $787 billion federal economic stimulus package approved by Congress in February, NECC is hoping some of that money will soon come their way, but not too into the near future.

“It has the promise of greatly reducing our budget problem, but given the other demands in our state, I’m not very hopeful,” President David Hartleb said.

Massachusetts has allocated $813 million for education, but that money has to be split among 872 schools and also between all the state and community colleges.

According to Vice President of Administration and Finance Sue Wolfe, the amount for higher education could be from $100 million to $400 million over a three year period. The amount NECC will receive has yet to be determined.

“Any money we get is much appreciated, but we do need to level people’s expectations around this,” Wolfe said.

NECC could also tap into money designated in the stimulus package to promote green energy and sustainability. The money NECC receives could come for projects on the Haverhill and Lawrence campuses deemed “shovel ready” by the state.

According to Wolfe, the projects NECC has in line include a $5.8 million renovation to the first floor of the library, energy efficient lighting for the sport and fitness center, $1.5 million for window replacement in the Spark building, solar panels for the roofs of B and E buildings and a $2.4 million request for demolition and hazardous material removal at the new Allied Health and Technology building in Lawrence.

“We have done a lot of background work, to the extent we have federal stimulus money we have plans in hand and we’re ready to execute on the projects very quickly,” Wolfe said.

Wolfe said that she had received a call from Congresswoman Niki Tsongas last week stating that the new Allied Health and Technology building in Lawrence is one of her priority projects.

Heigh-ho! It’s off to work we go...at Disney

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How do you deal with the stress of midterms?

Alex Edny, Writing
“I don’t know. I don’t stress. I just studying.”

Joseph Mendelsohn, English
“I eat away my worries. I become fluffy.”

Chris Hassard, Journalism
“I don’t stress out.”

Arthur Finke, Accounting
“I’m patient about it. Don’t get too anxious and study.”

David McDermott, Business Transfer
“Depends on how I’m doing. Make sure that you’re not coming behind the eight ball. I’ve made that mistake before so I know how it feels.”

Mic Booth, Chemical Engineering
“I take time for recreational purposes. I’ve been going to school for long enough that I know stress doesn’t help you.”

It was announced this past week that the unemployment rate has reached a 25 year high, at 8.1 percent of Americans without a job. More and more this is affecting students who once held the entry level jobs in areas that have long been the stronghold of young people, like retail and food service. Now these jobs are increasingly hard to find. In the current economy, the jobs that were once held primarily by high school and college students are being competed for by out of work people from across all ages and walks of life.

For students who may be in this situation, the fact that you are here at NECC is one of the wisest moves you can make in your financial, and future career, life. In this difficult job market, the best thing you can do is stay in school. Your best investment is the investment in your education. This is especially true with the value of the education, both financially and academically, you are receiving here at NECC.

The statistic that is always thrown around is that college graduates earn an average of $1 million more over the course of their career. Think about how much money that is. With the economic stimulus plan recently passed by Congress it was said that everyone will see an average of $13 more in their paycheck every week. With a college degree, it would be about $500 more in your paycheck every week. In this economy, a college degree is the ultimate economic stimulus package.
Ignorance is everywhere

Homophobia is alive and well in the most unexpected places

By HANSEL LÓPEZ
Opinion Editor

It was a sad day in video gaming history. For the first time, the absurdly hardcore gamer on the front page of the Wall Street Journal was not a video game enthusiast online, but an actual human being in the meat of this world. In fact, the very same person who had written the article was online when I ran across the piece, but found no escape from the reality that our society has utterly failed to understand the import of this genre.

Some might argue that the problem lies with the industry itself, and indeed, they have a point. However, it is also true that media is a reflection of our society, and as such, it can neither create nor eradicate homophobia, but merely amplify it. The recent surge in violent video game sales is a case in point. The same individuals who could not imagine a world without video games are the same who feel threatened by the sudden increase in their numbers. And so, they turn to their usual scapegoat: the gamer.

The term “gamer” has become synonymous with violence, sex, and disregard for the law, all because of its association with video games. Yet, this is a far cry from the reality. The vast majority of gamers are not violent, sex-mad outcasts, but rather regular individuals who enjoy playing games in their free time. It is the media, with its constant portrayal of gamers as criminals, that has turned a blind eye to the reality of this sector.

The media’s portrayal of gamers is a reflection of our society’s fear and ignorance, and as such, it is a cause for concern. It is time we start to understand the truth about gamers, and realize that they are just like anyone else in the world.

Why is this guys? Who is this guy?

Apparenty Rush Limbaugh is the new Republican leader

By HANSEL LÓPEZ
Opinion Editor

What the hell happened to the Republican Party? Apparently desperate times do call for desperate measures. Or at least the only thing I can think of when I tune in to CNN in the morning and see another story about Rush Limbaugh is that people being considered as the new leaders. It makes one wonder what kind of future we have ahead.

My guess is that amidst the dire state the economy is in, the fallout from this past presidential election which saw John McCain lose in a landslide to Barack Obama has left some Republicans searching for something to believe in. They need a scapegoat or someone to fault them and make them feel empowered.

The lack of a leader or larger fraction within the party can also attribute to why politicians such as Limbaugh and his rants about liberalism destroying our country are so appealing to a real presence anymore. Sarah Palin always had a foot out of her self when she opened her mouth in front of a camera and Mitt Romney doesn’t have that blue collar back ground to win him any conservative fans.

As far as I’m concerned the Republicans should go with Texas Governor Rick Perry to be the new face of the party. He’s very intelligent, well spoken and has years of political experience. Paul probably has the same chances as Ralph Nader to make it big in the U.S. political scene plus his opposition to the war in Iraq and criticism of other conservatives won’t win him any supporters (don’t worry Paul you’ll always have my vote though).

So in the lack of any leaders Republicans decided to go with a caro,on of a conservative. Enter Limbaugh. Why is he all of a sudden such a well respected and feared figure in politics? As far as I’m concerned he goes back to the old school whose sole interest is stirring up some kind of controversy in order to gain attention. For a guy who’s up all along with his $31 million salary.

Another interesting aspect of this is that Limbaugh is now feared by people who should be above him. Republican Party Chairman Michael Steele dismissed the notions of Limbaugh being the leader of the Republican Party and called him “an entertainer” on CNN only to call him out again on HBO’s Real Time with Bill Maher.

As far as I’m concerned the Republicans need to stop trying to be the new TV talk show host who is critical of global warming as their new leader. They need to find a real presence. They need to find a real voice.

The problem now is only a matter of time before Limbaugh’s many listeners begin to pick up on his mantra of “I don’t care” with regards to the President Obama. I’m not sure if Obama will be successful as a presi- dent. I’m only sure he can’t lose our last president.

If the Republican Party wants a national leader, they need to start seriously talking about the issues the country is facing. They need to find a real voice, a real presence.

Letters

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Dear Editor,

Just before Christmas, Cecile Luman, Director of the Migrant Resource Center in Naco, Mexico, wrote an op-ed in The Arizona Daily Star about the deserts that many migrants have to traverse the deserts of Arizona.

Noting the dangers that many migrants face during their journey, Luman wrote that “The journey of Mexican and other Central American immigrants is one that most do not wish to experience.” She continued, “The journey to the United States is a journey that many do not wish to experience.”

Luman went on to describe the dangers that migrants face on their journey. She wrote, “The journey is one that most do not wish to experience.”

Luman’s article was an important reminder of the dangers that many migrants face during their journey.

Dear Editor,

Oxy Contin epidemic is deeply affecting our youth

Dear Editor,

I have been following the news about the Oxy Contin epidemic with great concern. As a parent, I am worried about the safety of my children and the impact this epidemic is having on our community.

The Oxy Contin epidemic is a serious issue that affects not only our youth, but also our families and communities. As a parent, I want to do everything I can to protect my children from the dangers of Oxy Contin.

I believe that we need to take action to address this epidemic. We need to educate our children about the dangers of Oxy Contin and the importance of staying safe.

As a parent, I also believe that we need to support our schools in their efforts to prevent Oxy Contin use.

I urge you to take action to address this epidemic and support our schools in their efforts to prevent Oxy Contin use.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]
College should be more flexible

Balancing school and personal issues can be a hassle

BY MERISSA LIVERMORE
Arts & Entertainment Editor

Everyone graduates thinking either, "Oh! God I have to go to college or I’ll be stuck at McDonald’s," or, "Yay! I can further my opportunities in life with a degree." The third smaller ratio that many don’t know about are the ones that go because not only do they have to for family but they do for only certain classes. Its trouble when they get there and find out that they have to take at least three subjects two classes in each that they do not like.

These are the students that do so well in one subject but horrible in something that should be so easy. These are the students that tend to not get a break. Community colleges are around so that all people can get the education they want. Some go directly out of high school, others wait years and years and sometimes well after having grand-children to return to or even begin school. The community college system is there because they know life happens and some people just can’t do all morning classes when they have two kids at home, and others can only go Saturdays because they have to work all day. There are the the run system understands, and that is great.

The problem comes when these people can actually get back into the school systems and then life hits hard. A family death happens, a divorce, cancer or even just some un-diagnosable sickness. These people have to miss class and there are some teachers that understand this. They get that life happens, they themselves get sick and have family problems. But there are those teachers out there that see nothing but the classroom and the required work that needs to be done. Some even try to require perfect attendance even if the school’s usual syllabus says three absences or more is punishable. These are the teachers who don’t care if you are in the hospital for two weeks, to them you missed class and that is all there is to it.

As previously stated though, not all teachers are like this. Some understand and give you time to make up the work. Usually not much time because this is a short amount of period to be learning an entire class, but they still give you that chance. So now it comes down to working your ass off for those teachers that are willing to let you prove you want it, and the teachers who want you to drop the class or automatically drop you.

Everyone comes in knowing attendance is key to a successful edu-
cation, but so is leniency. It sometimes gets to the point where a parent is afraid to get sick because then they may lose financial aid and not be able to return to school, which makes it hard to get better if you are sick. Some parents have found a way to get so sick they are practically dead. If so, there should be a policy that all classes must have a site on blackboard so if a student is sick they can still see the lesson and get the work done. At first it would be a lot of work for the teachers, but in the end it would be a win win situation because more people would finish classes with better grades and less people would have to panic over losing financial aid or money for a class they paid for but then got dropped from.

Wrong place, wrong time for generator

Newburyport doesn’t need wind power generator

BY BEN KNIGHT
Correspondent

A new wind-power generator in Newburyport has nearby residents outraged. People are saying that the 200 foot structure is noisy, causes light pollution and is dangerous.

The wind turbine, built behind the Mark Richie woodworking building in the industrial park in Newburyport, right along the side of U.S. Route 1, went up a month or so ago, and just began operating recently.

People are saying that the 200 foot structure is noisy, causes light pollution and is dangerous.

According to Fran Larchen, a resident of Hill street nearby the wind turbine, other turbines have been reported to have caught on fire and have caused death as a result, and sixty instances of catastrophic structural failure, in which “the whole thing goes down.”

“It looks like it’s in my neighbor’s backyard...” says Hill street resident JoePhillipone, “It’s really, really big.”

Others complain of the noise, which is a constant whirring sound known to keep human beings awake at night. Even more complaints are coming from residents who can’t seem to get used to the light flicker caused by the enormous blades on the turbine. Apparently the light flicker can cause nausea, and distract people from the corner of their eyes, which brings a whole new idea into perspective, drivers.

The turbine is clearly visible from Route 1, and I don’t know about you, but a giant swirling blade in the sky is enough to distract me from the long stretch of asphalt lying ahead of my vehicle. I could easily be drawn to the turbine, causing me to ram into the car in front of me. Don’t get me wrong, I am all for wind power, but...
 Opinion

Why don’t gays have the same rights as the rest of us?

By JOSHUA THERRIEN
Correspondent

Gay men and women are just like you and me. They watch some of the same movies and have some of the same dreams and aspirations.

The only thing that makes them different is to whom they are attracted and even that isn’t all that different. It is, however, strictly personal. They aren’t trying to convert anyone. They are simply trying to live their own lives with the same freedom and happiness that we are. Yet they don’t enjoy all of the same rights we enjoy.

Marriage today is an institution where one person makes promises of love and commitment to another person. Whether those persons are male, female, or a mixture of the two has no impact on the institution itself. At www.hrcacenter.org wedding registry, Marc and Joanna of New Haven, Conn. are a straight couple who bicycle to school and show support for gay men and women who couldn’t marry. They have since changed their minds and will be married on Aug. 8 and ask that donations to the Human Rights Campaign website be made instead of wedding gifts.

Gay men and women seek what most of us seek: someone to care for someone who cares for them; someone who makes him/her/him/herself happy. I fail to see where being gay comes into this at all. Even though couples declare their love to whoever is willing to listen, marrying someone is still a personal act. Therefore it should be beyond the scrutiny of sexuality. If people are worried that gay marriage will somehow ruin the institution, www.divorcerates.org says, roughly 50 percent of marriages end in divorce. It seems to me like allowing gay marriage would actually help the institution of marriage.

One of the biggest struggles gay men and women face is adoption. According to the website, only 12 states in the whole country allow same sex couple to petition to jointly adopt a child. Children that are orphaned, given away, or abandoned who get adopted by someone to care for them just like any other child on this planet. Many grow up without that need being filled. We are the worse for it. Human Health Services, www.hhs.gov says, “For all States, most of the children in foster care for more than 2 years, up to 5 years of time were still in foster care by the end of the year.” These findings suggest that these children are fundamentally hopeless.

Gay couples are more than willing to adopt and care for children for them, but because of some outdated belief that being gay isn’t normal, the forces that deny them without even the cursory inclination that is given to straight couples. What a vile world we live in that would actually allow a child to grow up without any one to care for and guide him than allow, nay, encourage a gay couple to adopt them.

Most of us are all born different, in our own little ways, but we all deserve the same basic rights. I am both a gay and a student of Hispanic heritage. In the 21st century, something like gay rights is not an issue. Think of what we could accomplish if the money, time and energy spent fighting gay rights were used appropriately. The economy is dammed near failing apart yet and we waste money, and time on a problem that is as simple as first grade math. I am not a member of the Gay/Strait status quo and I know unfair and unjust treatment when I see it. For more information about gay rights and issues go to www.hrc.com.

What I learned from living in Venezuela

An unbiased look at what life is actually like there

By JEFFREY ORTIZ
Correspondent

As Americans have different images of different countries, there are positive and negative images. If someone were to say what do you think of Venezuela, most Americans wouldn’t have anything nice to say about that country, and also vice-versa.

Having spent two years in Venezuela, my image about this country has changed dramatically. I took a trip to Caracas, Venezuela to stay with my sister, because her mother unfortunately passed away and I wanted to be there with her. It was 2004 and I was just 14 years old. We both have different mothers and I had never seen her until that time.

While my sister and her brother, George, picked me up from the airport, she turned on the radio and I asked her who was talking on the radio and she told me that it was President Hugo Chavez. She told me that he was talking to the people of Venezuela and how he was going to protect them from the American imperialism and that he would die trying to protect them. Now that’s dedication.

During the beginning of his presidency, Chavez was very popular despite what others might have thought. He used to go to poor villages and towns giving food to the needy and talks regularly to the public. (I've said this before, I think). There are many voices from the outside of our world that state that is not a major problem here in Caracas and we have never heard the crime in Venezuela and if it was dangerous. I talked to George about the crime in Venezuela and if it was true that it has become very dangerous.

He told me, “Yes, it has become a major problem here in Caracas and Venezuela in general. Since the guerrillas have come in, it has become difficult to do the things we used to do without having someone else to walk with carrying a machete in the side of their pants to come food for dinner.”

My image of Venezuela has become a mixed bag of opinions, at the time I was there it was not as calm, there wasn’t anything to worry about other than what we were going out to, but now that image of the once peaceful Venezuela I experienced is now shattered. Now governed by a socialist president who has been accused of corruption and now violence roaming the once orderly dirt roads and streets of Venezuela.

When I asked my parents to let me visit Venezuela, it was the way it was now, they would never let me go. That gives you an idea of how the Latin American country has changed over the past few years.

I am a dancing Rhino. Between classes you will find me performing an echopop ballet in the effort to maneuver through crowd-ed halls. Not too crowded to cause indigestion or Armageddon but rather an intricate strategy of unconscious movers and shakers that you must coordinate with if you want to reach the classroom.

This isn’t a community-wide epidemic though it does have a habit of showing up at the least opportune time.

I was walking up a stairwell in the Spark building when these two young men nearly collided with one of us. It only took about three minutes to walk from Spurk to the Behrakis Student Center. Take in the sights and the people. Take in the walking, breathing culture.

All we need is a little patience

Try to have a little consideration for others in the hallway

By NICK SERMKINS
Alt. Ed. Editor

I am a dancing Rhino. Between classes you will find me performing an echopop ballet in the effort to maneuver through crowd-ed halls. Not too crowded to cause indigestion or Armageddon but rather an intricate strategy of unconscious movers and shakers that you must coordinate with if you want to reach the classroom.

This isn’t a community-wide epidemic though it does have a habit of showing up at the least opportune time.

I was walking up a stairwell in the Spark building when these two young men nearly collided with one of me. They were trying to enter the hall by squeezing through doorways and other such tight locations where one person at a time works better than two.

People need to slow down. I need to do the same thing. We need to readjust our pace and turn on our consciousness. I tried to wrap my head around why people seem to lose track of each other, or maybe they are just like you and me. The room is filled with people and there are forces in our world that are out of our control—right now—but we can work with what environment we co-exist in here, at Northern Essex.

It’s easy to fall in to your own routine at a commuter school where you’re in one door and out the other. You are sucked into the fact that there is such a diverse array of characters attending Northern Essex that I think shouldn’t catalogue their woes and daily hardships but I think we’ve become so wrapped up in maintaining our own sense of security that we’re beginning to forget about others around.

Realistically, no one should feel responsible for another living being outside of their choosing but as members of the same species we do have a familial bond with one another whether acknowledged or not. The least we can do is be considerate.

Paralleling hallway traffic with humanitarian consideration might seem a bit of a stretch but it starts in the smallest of places.

We need to pause for a moment and truly understand a sense of community in our humble, little community college. Be patient. Open your eyes.

You have a solid 10 minutes between classes and according to an experiment it takes about one minute to walk from one end of the Spark building to another. You take about three minutes to walk from Spurk to the Behrakis Student Center. Take in the sights and the people. Take in the walking, breathing culture.

We want to hear from you.

Send letters or opinion columns to the NECC Observer: observer@necc.mass.edu Include “Opinion Editor” in subject line.
Bone marrow drive

NECC’s Student Senate is holding bone marrow donor drives for the Harvard Medical School’s Lawrence campuses in the hopes of finding a match for hundreds of leukemia patients whose only hope of survival is a bone marrow stem cell transplant.

The Lawrence drive will be held on Tuesday, March 10 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the atrium of the Dimtry Building. The Haverhill drive will be held on Wednesday, March 11 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the Spark building lobby.

Students, faculty and community members between the ages of 18 and 60 can register to be a donor with a bloodless test. Participants must fill out a simple health questionnaire followed by a short screening interview, along with a mouth swab test.

The cost of the test is covered by Massachusetts health insurance policies. Participants should bring their health insurance cards.

Injunction with the Caitlin Spurk building lobby.

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For more information, contact Jody Paciulan at tpaciulan@necc.mass.edu or Amy Zimmerman at azimmerman@necc.mass.edu.

Ojito’s ‘Finding Mañana’

BY CESAR SEGURA

Who would you say that a Cuban refugee from the Mariel boatlift would eventually write for The New York Times and be a best-selling author? Mirta Ojito has gone through several phases and challenges in her life, one of them adapting to the American culture. After working for the Miami Herald and prestigious New York Times, Ojito is now an Assistant Professor at Columbia University’s Graduate School of Journalism. She has recently been traveling around American cities, most recently Lawrence, Mass. promoting her best-selling book, “Finding Mañana: A Memoir of a Cuban Exoduster.”

Ojito gave a presentation on her book at the Lawrence campuses on Thursday, March 5, as part of the White Fund speaker series.

Ojito was born in 1964 in Havana, Cuba. Ojito lived in a Cuba dominated by communism, where people had few rights and were expected to do as they were told. Ojito described youth in Cuba as a multi-artisturic, where everything was very well organized similar to the military. Ojito was always a good student as well as a good leader between her classmates.

“Twas a communist pioneer at day, and a worm at night,” says Ojito.

Ojito describes a worm as a term used in Cuba for Cubans who wanted to leave to the Island. Ojito found herself forced to leave church, as Cubans were supposed to be “Ateïcns.” Once Ojito was 16 she told her family the idea of leaving Cuba to seek a better life, but her parents were against her idea.

Once Ojito’s family decided to leave Cuba, they lost all their belongings, and were seen as traitors by the Cuban government and their supporters. Ojito’s family left in a boat from Louisiana, which was chartered by Ojito’s uncle.

Upon her arrival to Miami, Ojito was very disappointed.

“Miami was a disappointment; I expected tall buildings and wide avenues. Miami looked pretty much like Cuba at the time,” said Ojito.

But the disappointment in the infrastructure was the least of Ojito’s worries; she faced two bigger problems which saddened her deeply. For the first four days, all Ojito could think about was how much she missed her native Cuba, and not knowing any English.

“To leave one’s country is an incredibly difficult thing to do,” says Ojito.

Ojito says there were times when she wanted to take the same boat back to Cuba. Ojito’s post English cost her to graduate high school with a 2.2 GPA, but it did not stop her. Ojito’s thirst to learn English and succeed led her to enter Miami-Dade College, which she says, saved her life.

“The people who were there there because they wanted to be,” says Ojito. “Community colleges are the real heroes of America, because their main priority is to educate and not to financially grow,” added Ojito.

Ojito was beginning to understand the language in 1985, when she joined Florida Atlantic University via a scholarship she had earned. She graduated in Journalism and soon got a job at the Miami Herald.

After nine successful years in the Miami Herald, Ojito received a phone call from the New York Times. She was offered a job there. Without hesitation Ojito, packed and left to New York City. While in New York, Ojito fell in love with New York, and she remained highly popular because of her articles. In 2002, Ojito got a contract for her first book, “Finding Mañana.”

“I wanted to write a book about my life here as an immigrant, and I knew that the place to start was finding the people that made my dream possible,” said Ojito.

Ojito’s family left in a boat from Louisiana, which was chartered by Ojito’s uncle. Upon her arrival to Miami, Ojito was very disappointed. But the disappointment in the infrastructure was the least of Ojito’s worries; she faced two bigger problems which saddened her deeply. For the first four days, all Ojito could think about was how much she missed her native Cuba, and not knowing any English.

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“I wanted to write a book about my life here as an immigrant, and I knew that the place to start was finding the people that made my dream possible,” said Ojito.

Ojito’s book was the captain of the boat she came in. The boat was name “Mañana” which was where Ojito had gotten the title of her book. After finding several people who had helped her arrive to Miami, and so on, Ojito was able to finish her book. “Finding Mañana” resulted in a best-selling book, which she is still promoting around America. "Journalism is needed more than ever, especially in democracy."
Life long learning hosts party each week

Compiled by the Observer staff from AP wire reports

Correspondent

BY RYAN JACOBY

The bitter cold and uninsured winds have kept the majority of students trapped indoors this winter and away from the game in Calabar. But as the days go by, and colder air is seen, spring is on the way, and with it the warm weather followed by fun outdoors. In the distance, and the jaded masses are losing hope. The Life Long Learning program, however, has organized some events on campus with that any luck could help spring come that much quicker.

St. Patrick's Day came early this year, as the event was held on Long Long, held which their annual party on March 5. This is considered one of their most fun and happiest parties of the year, and has always had an excellent turnout. There was food and drinks, as well as music for people to sing and dance to.

To finish off the month, Andy and Gus Reusch and their sisters, Mary Henan and Kate Howland, all retired teachers, will be presenting a program in observation of Pulitzer Prize win-

Correspondent

BY MICHAEL ANDERSON

With the economic climate in such disarray, one student asked the guest speakers an interesting question of, "What is the best strategy for a business in today's economy?" All the panelists agreed that networking is the way to go, and meeting people is one of the best ways to make a business successful.

For about 50 people, mostly students, who poured into the Technology Center on Feb. 26, they all learned that running a successful business is no easy task. Success can depend on how well you know your marketing strategy is, and how well they network. Those were some of the topics that were discussed by four local business owners and former graduates of Northern Essex Community College during the third Entrepreneurship Panel Discussion of the semester.

Catherine Chang, said meeting people is one of the main reasons why her business, Chang's Tae Kwon Do, in Bradford and Methuen is such a success.

"For me, getting out into the community and meeting people was one of the main reasons why my business flourished. For any business to succeed, networking is very important." Chang also knows that to meet people, a person must be willing to take action. If they just sit around, and don't do anything, then their business will fail. People must be willing to go out, take the next step, and the steps that follow until they accomplish what they want to do.

Nancy Glover, founder of Occupational Health Connections, a medical staffing agency, also said that meeting people is very important. However, she cautioned people to not network because just networking, and instead go out and look for long term relationships.

"I highly encourage people to do community service and join clubs at your local university. Other clubs - work on your resume, and join business associations. Do whatever you can to get your name out in your business."

Also, said learning new skills, like doing internships and taking extra math courses, will help someone out a lot in the future as well. "Plus, to improve networking skills, people should also learn some business etiquette," he said. "This will help a person networking, because they will know how to talk to people and make business presentations."

"Always say please and thank you. Make eye contact, and always make your customers feel special." After some time has passed since the audience, Clover talked about her "25 Random Thoughts About Business" which she thought would help those at first thing people see and will remember to be the logo of the company on the card. He said that he made all the logo interesting and, as it is something that will distinguish one company from another.

"Take your time and put some thought in when creating the logo. This is one of the most important parts of marketing your business. If people see your logo and message of the company is consistent, then they will get interested. If the logo is confusing, then you aren't ready yet," he said. "Like the tales of urban legend, the business needs to be memorable. Clover believes that giving out and meeting people is the key to getting a business going.

To some people, this discussion is the type of education that can't be found in a classroom, or as Entrepreneurship Professor Pat Morrow put it: "Instead of reading books, see people who have done stuff make a huge difference."
Fashions that are fine and fashions that should be fined

BY PATRICE SMITH Features Editor

Recently I’ve been able to dress more the way I like that thanks to some of prices opening up in my local mall. I’m not trying to label myself as some sort of a fashion guru, but I have been receiving a ton of compliments lately on a lot of the outfits that I have been wearing. And the best part about all of it? You don’t have to break the bank to wear them. So without further ado I present you with some of my favorite fashionable trends of 2009 that you don’t have to break the bank with.

1) Scarves – I’m not talking about the kind that you wear in order to bear the cold. I’m talking about the light kind that you can wrap swiftly around your neck. You can spice up any dull or boring outfit simply by adding a scarf to it. These are great fashion fixes for last minute choices that you just happened to throw together before school or work.

2) Headbands – In order to wear them you have to have a bit of confidence. And you have to be able to pull them off. My coworkers used to wear them like a accessory or as quick fashion fix to their locks to spice up even the dullest dress code oriented outfits.

3) Black pumps with thick ankle straps – I recently bought a pair of my own from Forever 21 and tried them out for a night out on the town (see above picture and I absolutely adore them). I received at least seven compliments from complete random strangers, three of them being men (who were being absolutely dead serious). My friends and I concluded by the end of the night that these shoes might be able to cause world peace. Although Forever 21 is no longer be carrying them, you can still pick up a cute pair of Cape heels that are just as cheap. And, I just wanted to add that I’ve noticed that a lot of women have been wearing high ankle boots lately. I have no opinion on them.

4) Pencil skirts – These skirts can flatter just about anyone. They are long enough to cover up your legs, making them workplace appropriate, but short enough to not act as an extra mop on the ground.

5) Cool sock sweaters – These are really flattering and a great look for appearing clean cut and sophisticated. So if you want to appear clean cut or sophisticated, wear them (even though the person underneath them may not be).

Now that I’ve told you about the fashions that I love, I thought that I would tell you about the fashions that I loathe. Because really, what is an article without it being fair and balanced?

1) High waisted jeans – You know them. You’ve seen them. You might even like them? However, don’t be fooled by these ones. High waisted jeans do not look good on anybody. Let me reiterate that: high waisted jeans do not look good on anyone. Just ask Jessica Simpson on the Feb. 16 issue of People Magazine. A seeming-ly healthy girl wearing her picture taken from a seemingly unfortunate angle wearing seemingly unfortunate pants.

2) Crocs – I don’t even feel like explaining this one. I think that they’re only acceptable on kids, family members being cute or those who are working a shift at your local hospital.

3) Uggs – Can we cool it with the Uggs? They have been more played out than the 1976 Frampton Comes Alive CD. Don’t get me wrong. I like them, and I bet that they’re mighty fine and f un t a b l e.

However, I can only take so many pictures of these ones. I think they’re even more annoying when you’re out shopping for new clothing. “Hey check out this cute... Aw man it’s cut out this cute!”

4) Mini cardigans – I don’t think that I’ve ever seen those cardigans (that cut off right above your stomach) look good on anybody. I think they’re even more annoying when you’re out shopping for new clothing. “Hey, you look good in that... Aw man it’s cut in half!”

5) Velour jump suits - I’ve saved the best for last with this one. Once trendy in 2002, every now and then you see somebody braving the out-side fashion world wearing them. Like someone who needs to be fined by the pages of the fashion police, ask Jessica Simpson on the Feb. 16 issue of People Magazine. A seemingly healthy girl wearing her picture taken from a seemingly unfortunate angle wearing seemingly unfortunate pants.

March madness ski fun

Brings student leadership knowledge to campus

BY THOMAS KIEJNE Correspondent

Amy Zimmerman is the real deal. She is a person who believes her individual drive for success is her ability to constantly seek out ways to help the student community in Northern Essex Community College.

Since joining the Department of Student Activities and Leadership as assistant coordinator in September 2008, she has become an integral part of the college community and its frequent events.

She grew up in Weymouth, Mass., and attended Rivier College in Nashua, graduating with a B.A. in Communications.

Zimmerman recalls dot-t ingly and with twinkle in her eyes her love of college, and says that her desire to go to college, and it didn’t matter how they paid for it. College she says presented her with the perfect opportunity to pursue her dreams of helping people and public service.

Zimmerman got involved in student activities in college from the get go. She was a member of class officer and vice president of student government respectively, was one of the first students to work and held student leadership positions at the University of Connecticut and Hesser College. At}

Northern Essex Community College she is currently involved in implementing the student leadership development program, a program that provides students with leadership training, community service learning, career training and shops on basic life skills.

“I am an extrovert,” she says, “as a student I got really involved, it fuels me, I love being involved in college life and campuses. It is just like the weather in New England, it is constantly changing, and offering new challenges.”

Zimmerman says she college community in Northern Essex Community College has afforded her the perfect opportunity to help students be successful in life. She also appreciates the fact that the student body is non-traditional and diverse, they seem to really want to be here she says. Zimmerman’s ability to relate to the students has helped her tremendously. She attributes her successes to hard work and she also strongly believes that her success depends upon the achievements of those she comes into contact with.

NECC is dedicated to student success she says, “I want to contin-ue with the same philosophy of helping,” she adds.

Zimmerman is getting married in October, loves to spend time with family and friends and is extremely passionate about her job.

Within the seven days of madness, every day consists of something different. Monday, March 9 through Saturday, March 14, the first 1,000 customers to purchase a night lift ticket will receive a March Madness hat and key chain (while supplies last, of course) and will automatically be entered to win a free 6-pack of lift tickets. Saturday, March 14 is known as “Wearing of the Green Day,” which docks $5 off your lift ticket if you are wearing the color green. A variety of different games will be offered that Saturday, ranging from youth based “Egg Hunts” starting at 10 a.m., to the baseball fans “Spring Training” event which is a competition on how far you can hit a tee-ball starting at 11 a.m.

Sunday, the last day of March Madness, is a jam packed day filled with an assortment of activities. Simply showing up in a costume will substitute as your lift ticket for the whole day. A full disc jockey will be on everyone in attendance. The last event of the day is the most anticipated and talked about event of the week. “The Wet & Wild Puddle Jump & Skim,” starting 2 p.m. is the cherry on top of Haverhill Madness. The resort creates a massive puddle in which contestants attempt to leap over the puddle. And it’s entirely, striving to not fall in.

“Not many people make it over,” Chris Barland, Ski Bradford Event Coordinator says. “It’s the funniest part of the day, everyone loves to watch people fall and then get extremely wet and cold!”

NECC student Kaitlyn Maylin of Haverhill is a March Madness fanatic who attended the event for many years.

“Allways I go! Me and my broth-ers. I don’t ski or snowboard, but they do, and it’s fun to hang around, eat some food, and watch them make fools out of themselves trying to compete in all the different games.”

Ski Bradford is a staple of Haverhill, and March Madness is the most anticipated event of the ski season for the skiers, snow boarders, staff, snow lovers and Haverhill residents alike.
The “Resident Evil” franchise is more than just video games

BY MERISSA LIVERMORE
Arts and Entertainment Editor

The “Resident Evil” franchise has been around so long since the PlayStation was a two-year old invention, or more appropriately, 1996 for the PlayStation.

It started out as a video game based in a fictional place called Racoon City with a population of 100,000. What the poor people of Racoon City didn’t realize was that one of the major corporations of the world, the Umbrella Corporation, was responsible for the grisly deaths that were happening out next door to clayton. These deaths were by mutated creatures affected by a bio-weapon called the T-Virus that the Umbrella Corporation created under mutant and uncontrolled. This is the basis of the story of how the video game started.

Since the very first video game there have been countless others including the obvious follow-ups of Two, Three, Four, and the long awaited Five that will be released Friday, March 13. There are also countless amounts of spinoffs, from “Dead Aim” or “Outbreak: File #2.” There are “Resident Evil” games for the Wii, PlayStation One, Two and Three, Game Cube, Nintendo DS and now even X-Box 360. Needless to say the franchise is doing well, but video games are not all there is to the “Resident Evil” phenomenon.

In the year 2002 “Resident Evil” was made into a TV show. Granted this movie didn’t have too much in common with the video game except the basic subplot, but it grew. In 2004 “Resident Evil: Apocalypse” was released in theaters to the first movie, and then again in 2007 “Resident Evil: Extinction” was released that was a follow-up of the video game. It was made by the same creators of the video games and supposed to be considered “Resident Evil 4.5.”

Even more than movies and video games, there are comic series that were created by Japanese novels under the game’s Japanese title “Biohazard.” There’s a book series called “The Umbrella Conspiracy” that was written by S. Lane, and it’s all about the video games, as well as all of the same plots that could have been going on outside of the situations presented in the video games. There are even two original novels that came out in Japan. In all, the series includes “Resident Evil: The Umbrella Conspiracy,” “Resident Evil: Code Veronica X,” and “Resident Evil: Code Veronica X: The Umbrella Conspiracy.”

The four main characters of “Resident Evil” are: Leon S. Kennedy, and his adoptive brother, Tom (Luke Benward); the perky cheerleader whom is responsible for the other main character’s fate will go; which is like, because this is reality, “The Umbrella Conspiracy” follows the first video game’s plot involving the Special Tactics And Rescue Squad (T.S.A.R.S) members such as Chris Redfield, Barry Burton and Albert Wesker. They are sent to a mansion that is basically like a laboratory breeding ground for The Umbrella Corporation. The other members of the characters as well, usually killing them off eventually. The only people who the “Resident Evil” fans are aware that still be alive in the game are: Leon Scott Kennedy who comes in for games Two and Four and mentioned in others, Claire Redfield, who also appeared in game Two as Chris Redfield’s younger sister and then in “Code Veronica X,” a spin-off video game where both the Redfield’s appear along with Wesker. Fans are also aware of Ada Wong, a protagonist in Two and Four, and some fans wrote the whole section was alive, but trainer trailers for the upcoming “Resident Evil Five” video game shows a grave with her name on it, so who can know for sure when she’s actually dead.

All of this pales though in light of March 13. “Resident Evil Five” will be released and a whole new excitement for “Resident Evil” fans awaits. At the end of “Resident Evil: Degeneration” there is a scene of a company called Tri Cell that has a Dr. Albert Wesker. He was always cocky to begin with and way too self assured but now he’s at a whole new level. The only question in place with this all new “Resident Evil” game is just how much of the game is with so many trailers to be found on You Tube to hold you over and all the comics, books, movies and games, two days won’t seem so bad once the day finally comes.

Secret Life of ABC family won’t be kept quiet

By Nicole Scopa
Correspondent

The “Secret Life of American Teenager” watch. It can be geared towards anyone, unlike some shows that may just be good for girls, or some for guys. There’s also no age limit, anyone of any gender or age can watch this show and enjoy it.

This is one show that you can watch and take seriously, and yet still get laughs at here and there. All the main characters that have very good things to say about this show and believe that it’s a great way to show people that there what reality really is like, because this is reality and this is what we must face everyday.

Expect the rather unexpected

The four main characters of “Resident Evil: 5” from left to right: Excella, Sheva Alomar, Chris Redfield and Albert Wesker.

The cover for the hit ABC family’s show “The Secret Life of the American Teenager” watch. It can be geared towards anyone, unlike some shows that may just be good for girls, or some for guys. There’s also no age limit, anyone of any gender or age can watch this show and enjoy it.

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Dead men are walking...

The semester’s dramatic performance is well on its way to opening night

BY CRISTINA NAPOLI Correspondent

Stage right, stage left, turn just a bit more to the right.

Rehearsals for NECC’s upcoming production of “Dead Man Walking” are up and running as the date of opening night inches closer. Sets are being built as rehearsals go on, jail cell bars standing tall on the stage in the Top Notch Theater as each member of the cast puts in hours each day to tap into their carpentry skills. The three-day a week practice schedule, stretching from an hour and a half in length to as long as four hours, is a continuous effort on the part of each cast member.

Custodian Carly Starr says that the practices are “Professional yet fun. Always a good combination.”

“Starr plays Sister Colleen, a fellow nun and friend to Sister Prejean, the creator of the play. She says that practices are going well and that almost everyone is working without their books (scripts). ‘It’s fun, not too stressful, everyone’s really fun to be around and chill with,’ says Starr.”

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Dead man walking will be performed on March 27 and 28 at 7:30 p.m., March 29 at 7:00 p.m., April 1 at 4:00 p.m., April 2, 3, and 4 at 7:30 p.m., and on April 5 at 3:00 p.m. The play will be performed in the Top Notch Theater on the third floor of the Spark building on the NECC Haverhill campus.

Rihanna in the red with Brown

Even after Chris Brown battered Rihanna, she still is taking him back

BY MERRIS LIVERMORE Arts and Entertainment Editor

With all the drama happening in the media these days it’s not one of the most surprising thing’s to see that some couple have had a brutal face off that arrests were made. What is uncommon is to have that couple be Rihanna, whose given name is Robyn, and Chris Brown. Rihanna is a 21-year-old Barbados native who whose given name is Robyn, and Chris Brown. Rihanna is a 21-year-old Barbados native who sky-rocketed to fame not too long ago and has had smash hits like, “Umbrella,” “Disturbia” and many others. She is a major female figure-head as one of the strong women who can take care of themselves, but now things are starting to change.

Everyone heard about how Rihanna and Brown, a 19-year-old top-star and Rihanna’s boyfriend, could not perform let alone appear because they got into a fight. Since then rumors have grown, some saying things from Brown sent her to the hospital, to Rihanna started a fight by hitting him. No matter what was heard it was brutal and definitely something that should not have happened to two celebrity icons, but it did and now things are about to get worse.

Brown was at court earlier last week and it was there that certain details pertaining to this case were released. Rihanna herself did not appear at the court hearing, but she did request that Brown not be given a restraining order so he only be able to make sure he doesn’t “annoy, molest or harass” Rihanna. Good if we’re trying to save a relationship that has a chance of survival and it was just a slip down the steps that caused a bump on the head that was taken out of context, but this is none of those. The LAPD affidavit was released during the trial and some of it was read aloud on ABC News after they told the audience that Brown has been charged with felony assault, likely to cause great bodily injury and threatening. The affidavit stated:

“Brown pulled Robyn F. close to him and bit her on the left ear. She was able to feel the vehicle swerving from right to left as Brown sped away.”

“Brown did not know what she did with the key and began punching her in the face and arms. He then placed her in a head lock, positioning the front of her throat between his hoop and forearm. Brown began applying pressure to Robyn F.’s left and right carotid arteries causing her to be unable to breathe and she began to lose consciousness.”

These details are not good. Either way Brown is going to be in trouble in the view of his fans and his credibility, and if Rihanna takes him back that will shatter the image of the strong woman who will stand up for herself. The problem now becomes does she listen that he wants to be with him even though he has done these terrible things, or does she go with his mind, that may or may not know that once a man begins to hit you, he will not stop, no matter how many chances you give him. The problem is that she is a woman in love and reports over the weekend of Feb. 26 that Rihanna did actually forgive Brown, and they are now working on their second chance together.

This not only worries friends and family about whether she is making the wrong decision or if she’s hurt her again, but it is also worrying publicists over how this will affect her career. Every magazine cover for the last two weeks has Rihanna’s face on it, and every one of them is either talking about how this is so confusing or how this is so shocking that she could even possibly think about taking him back. No matter what it comes down to Brown has been charged with two felonies and Rihanna has suffered a great deal by his hand already. Time will tell where this story leads to.

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“Watchmen” is like a Stanley Kubrick film just happened to have Batman in it, then secure the $120 million budget. It's the most celebrated graphic novel of all times and even landed a spot on Time magazine's list of the 100 best graphic novels ever. Other films based on Moore's work include impotence, psychosis, alienation, dys­function and disharmony. Other films based on Moore's work include “V for Vendetta,” a house without being let in)—and it's the owner's permission (the standard interpretation). But when Haxan is...
Post a secret, save a life today

Blog uses anonymous postcards to promote suicide awareness

BY CHRISTINA SCHNEIDER Correspondent

Suicide is something of a lot people don't think about very often or at least they don't talk about it. Recently I was at a friend's house with a group of people I picked up a book from the coffee table and it was titled “My Secret.” It was a collection of postcards sent by different people from around the world, all anonymously, to one man whose goal as of November 2004 has been to raise suicide awareness. This man is Frank Warren and he not only accepts the postcards through the mail but also created a website, www.postsecret.com, and every Sunday uploads new secrets that people submit. So far he has received about 200,000 secrets from people of all ages and from all around the world. The postcards range any- where from “My mom thinks she fat. I think she's perfect.” To “9 years ago I was raped. It finally stopped hurt- ing. I think I'm okay now. Thanks for letting me tell my story. You listened last night.”

My friends and I were just sitting there reading this book and sharing some of the secrets out loud some of the time laughing with the people and sometimes crying with them. These books help people to know they are not alone. And in this world today at any one point or another in time needs to know they are not alone. After reading that book I went to the bookstore and spent over an hour there looking through the other three books that are published so far. They are captivating and make you feel so good and again make you feel that you are not alone in your thoughts. I think Frank Warren alone as one man is taking a stand against suicide prevention and one that actu- rally might be working. It’s a way for everyone to get something off their chest without having to worry about people knowing who you are and what you did or what you said or how you feel.

The website Warren has created has won two Webby Awards in 2006 and in 2007 was named Weblog of the year at the seventh annual Weblog Awards. His PostSecret proj- ect also received a special award from the National Mental Health Association for raising awareness and funds for suicide prevention. Just to give a general overview of what Frank Warren has set out to do with, here are some statistics about suicide in the United States. Over 32,000 people die by suicide every year. Suicide is the fourth leading cause of death among adults ages 18-24 and among ages 15-14 years and the third among ages 15-24 years. After about 16 minutes a person dies by suicide and about every minute a suicide is attempted. There are four male suicides for every one female suicide. Every day approximately 80 Americans take their own life and about 1,500 more attempt to do so. So here's my attempt to help Frank Warren spread the word about this terrible issue that is plaguing the United States and the world. Hopefully more and more of you will go out and buy the books or at least go online to read the postcards and make an attempt to save our people. Maybe some of you will even send in a secret of your own just go to the website to get the information of how to do so.

Frank Warren is doing his part to promote suicide awareness by letting people unload their insecurities (among other things) through PostSecret.

ARIES (March 21-April 20) - Early this week close relatives may present unique social ideas or business arrange- ments: expect group interactions or planned gatherings to be strongly ac- cepted. Remain thoughtful, how- ever: before the end of the week revised financial plans and rural social information will arrive. Some Aries natives may encounter a com- plex but seductive romantic invita- tion. After Friday someone close may now offer a glimpse into their private world: expect compet- ing overtures and intense discus- sions.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) - Friends, lovers and close relatives may this week ask for your advice or emotional guid- ance. Areas of concern may involve past romantic promises and stalled relationships. If so, watch for ongo- ing miscommunications or family differences to require firm attention and expect loved ones to follow your lead. After Friday a recently moody or withdrawn colleague may offer an unusual explanation of their behav- ior. Be gracious: your wisdom and compassion will be appreciated.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) - Short-term money contracts may this week require careful evaluation. Before mid-week avoid quickly signed agreements or vague contracts: reliable definitions will soon ensure fast results. Tuesday through Friday highlights subtle breakthroughs in romantic or social relationships. After a friend or lover to provide an unexpected glimpse into their private lives, obli- gations or family matters. Later this weekend vivid dreams will provide meaningful and lasting insight: stay alert.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 22) - Recent feelings of isolation or loss will soon fade. Many Scorpions will this week begin a lengthy wait to resolve a potentially rekindled optimism and renewed faith. Areas strongly affected are lost friendships or broken promises. Vivid dreams or sudden glimpses of the future are also accentuated: responses quickly to all hunches and intuitions. After Friday someone close may reveal an unexpected business change or financial goal. Remain cautious: new ideas may be unreli- able.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23-Dec. 21) - Potential lovers may this week openly compete for your attention. Friends and relatives will likely react with mistrust or minor jealousy. No long- term affects are likely but do expect hectic romantic triangles. Maintain a social balance: loved ones will need continual reassurance. Friday through Sunday accents important discussions with a partner or older relative. Key concerns may involve complex finances or long-term pay- ments. Stay focused: small details will reveal the correct path.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) - Popular projects and concrete deadlines. Before mid-week avoid impulsive proposals: new business offers may now be presented. Carefully research all options and expect more promising routes to lead. After Friday a recently moody or withdrawn colleague may offer an unusual explanation of their behav- ior. Be gracious: your wisdom and compassion will be appreciated.

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Sports

The Mayhem of March Madness

Preparation for yet another exciting finale to the NCAA season in 2009

By Christian Stone

Sports Editor

It is the most wonderful time of the year, for college basketball fans that is! It's mid-March and the NCAA basketball regular season is coming to an end. It's time to look forward to the possibility of yet another college hoop year, the March Madness Tournament from March 17 to April 6.

The brackets have yet to be set due to the unfinished regular season but there are a few teams as predict- ed that will make the tournament and perhaps some underdogs, like last year's 10th seeded Davidson Wildcats (yes, there are other Wildcats) lost their main scorer in Blake Griffin but will make a statement in NCAA history that all four number one seeds were the last four teams standing.

Much like the woes facing Kansas, a lot of other teams that stood out in the tournament last year lost vital players to the NBA. Stanford was the number three seed in the ACC conference but lost in the second round of the tournament because of former NBA player Del Curry, son of former NBA player Del Curry. Last season, the Wildcats won the championship under the leadership of Stephen Curry, son of former NBA player Del Curry. Perhaps some underdogs, like last year's standout Mario Chalmers, the Kansas Jayhawks, the Jayhawks, however, will be without last year's standout Mario Chal- mers, who was drafted into the NBA after last season. Duke's performance in the tournament has been subpar the last few years. Last season they represented the second seed in the West bracket but lost in the second round to the seventh seeded West Virginia. Duke is third this season in the ACC conference behind North Carolina and Wake Forest. The old rivals will always find their way into the tournament but how they prosper from there depends on the X factor players of the other teams. Last March was upset central until the Final Four, which was the first time in NCAA history that all four number one seeds were the last four teams standing.

What I love most about the March Madness tournament is the fact that it represents basketball in its purest form. Watching the college players that have yet to accept multi-million-dollar contracts and endorsement deals play the game adds a spark to their play. It adds fuel to the fire, because as so now they're playing for the love of the game but their also playing with the effort to make it to the big time.

As I said before the brackets have yet to be solidified but the 2009 March Madness tournament promises to be everything it has been in the past; two weeks filled with the most competitive college basketball from the best teams around the nation.

World Baseball Classic 2009

Competition will not be short-handed in the 2009 World Baseball Classic

By Christian Stone

Sports Editor

In 2006, Japan clinched the inaugural World Baseball Classic, introducing the world to the talents of players such as Daisuke Matsuzaka and former Red Sox player Adam Stern, who played great baseball for Canada despite not being able to do so in the Majors. The WBC represents the Olympics of baseball, where the best players from around the globe fight for the honor of top nation on the diamond. The best of the best of the MLB return to their home countries to prove their dominance over the rest. Now it's 2009 and time for the second annual World Baseball Classic.

The teams are broken up into four different pools. Pool A plays in Tokyo and includes team China, Chinese Taipei, Korea and the reigning champion Japan team featuring Matsuzaka of the Red Sox. The most feared team in Pool A has to be Japan due to their top-current player, the all-star power hitter, the Red Sox second baseman Dustin Pedroia.

Pool B consists of Australia, Cuba, Mexico and South Africa. The Mexican team consists of seventeen players collected from around Major League Baseball. Most of which don't qualify as superstars but nevertheless they have solid talent such as R-Col, Francisco Rodriguez, whom set the new single season records for games saved last season, and San Diego Padres first baseman Adrian Gonzalez.

The United States plays out of Toronto in Pool C along with Team Canada, Italy and Venezuela. The entire USA team is made up of all Major League Players, headlining the pitcher staff is National leaguers Jake Peavy and Roy Oswalt, but the key team to USA is their underestimated offense. Last seasons MVP and Red Sox second baseman Dustin Pedroia joins teammate Kevin Youkilis as a pair of outfielders on the team as well as Derek Jeter, Chipper Jones, Jimmy Rollins and David Wright. With Atlanta Braves catcher Brian McCann, the best hitting catcher in the game, behind the plate, team USA appears to be in good shape.

The only area of the team that could use some bolstering is the outfield. Only four outfielders are listed on Pool A's WBC roster. Adam Dunn Ryan Braun, Craig Biggio and Shane Victorino. Although Granderson and Victorino provide plenty of speed and defense, their offensive numbers don’t stand out compared to the elite players of the game.

The final pool, Pool D, could be the most competitive of all the pools. Because of the number of Dominican and Puerto Rican players that are highly skilled when it comes to baseball. The Dominican team would feature Alex Rodriguez had he not elected to have hip surgery this week, but regardless of A-Rods absence the team still has what it takes to compete at a ferocious rate. The two best shortstops in baseball, Jose Reyes of the Mets and Hanley Ramirez of the Marlins, both play for the Dominicans. The rest of the roster reads like the starting line-up of an All-Star game. Pedro Martinez, Adrian Beltre, Robinson Cano, Edwinson Valozquez and Big Papi, David Ortiz, are just a few of the names of the Dominican players. Ivan "Pudge" Rodriguez, first base- man Carlos Delgado and outfielder Carlos Beltran headline the Puerto Rican team. Aside from the Dominican and Puerto Rican teams, Pool D also consists of a team from the Netherlands and a team from Panama.

The first round of the tournament goes from March 5-12, the second round continues from 14-19 and the semifinals and finals will conclude between March 21 and 23, right before the MLB regular season gets underway. Does team USA have what it takes to take down team Japan this year? Or will the Latino nations to the South prevail as the better baseball venues of 2009? The end of the 2009 World Baseball Classic will determine all.

Oklahoma’s Blake Griffin sends a shot attempt by Texas Longhorn Justin Mason in the other direction during a semifinals game of the Big 12 tournament.

Daisuke Matsuzaka, top right, and Team Japan won the inaugural 2006 World Baseball Classic. Now, three years later, Team USA seeks retribution.
Sports

Knights Notebook

Knights come close to tournament berth but get derailed by Mass Bay

BY CHRIS RYAN
Correspondent

Mass Bay Community College stopped Northern Essex dead in their tracks in the Sweet 16 match up Sunday, March 8, in Worcester, defeating the Knights handily, 81-66, and ending hopes of a first ever Elite 8 bid for Coach Stratton’s squad.

“There’s no excuses, we just got outplayed,” said Knights star Anthony Siri, who added 11 points and six rebounds in the loss.

“They scored like 40 points in the first half and 30 of them came on threes.”

The Knights, fresh off inspiring victories over Bunker Hill Wednesday, March 4, and Springfield Tech just the night before, had their momentum halted by a far bigger and deeper Mass Bay lineup. Mass Bay crushed hopes of Northern Essex making a trip to New York for the Elite 8, an unprecedented accomplishment for the school’s men’s basketball program.

“Sunday’s championship game was a great game. I was incredibly proud to see how they came out and played after such a hard fought game on Saturday,” said Sue MacAvoy, Athletic Director at Northern Essex who was present for the entire playoff run.

“They gave it all they had. In my opinion Mass Bay had depth and they just wore us out,” figured MacAvoy.

Though the Knights trailed for most of the game, the large 15-point victory by Mass Bay was actually closer than the final score would suggest as the Knights were forced to foul late in the game. Apparently Mass Bay’s accurate outside shot was just too much for the Knights to account for all game long.

“That’s what we can’t understand,” added a slightly befuddled Siri. “We had hands in their faces and they just kept making them.”

Despite the loss, the Knights have quite the season to be proud of, and the heart they showcased during their momentous playoff run is one attribute that just can’t be taught.

The Knights look forward to next season with six of their eight players returning. The team’s leading scorer, Anthony Siri, one of the returning freshmen, made first-team All-Region XXI and is currently being looked at by seven Division III colleges. Sophomore Timothy Bent also received honorable mention for the All-Region team.

“It was a great season and one that the coaches and players should all be very proud of. I can’t wait ‘til next year!” expressed MacAvoy.

The Knights finished the season 16-11, just one game away from the NJCAA National Tournament.

Extreme Sports: Boston Paintball

By CHRISTIAN STONE
Sports Editor

On Saturday, March 7, I took advantage of an open afternoon in my schedule to partake in an activity that I had never done before, paintball. It wasn’t that the idea of firing a weapon in the direction of another person doesn’t sound appealing; lord knows everybody gets angry in the direction of another person doesn’t sound appealing; lord knows everybody gets angry sometimes, but the thought of being shot had turned me away from the activity throughout my life. I stayed away from the extreme sport of paintball, mostly in part because of all the stories you hear afterwards, and the welts that you would observe, but Boston Paintball of Everett, Mass. provides paintball in a way that you would observe, but Boston Paintball of Everett, Mass. provides paintball in a way that everyone can participate in.

Since 2002, Boston Paintball, the largest indoor paintball facility in New England, has been providing the community of local patrons and tourists alike with the ability to engage in simulated warfare. Being a cowardly fellow who would only enlist if drafted, paintball seems to be the closest thing I would ever come to being a soldier. The indoor facility caters to all types of skill level. Whether or not it’s your first time or you’ve been playing for years, there will always be a game that is tailored to your ability. You are allowed to provide your own equipment but if you don’t own equipment they provide moderately priced rentals. When in competition they break you down into two groups, those who brought their weapons from home and those who rented them from Boston Paintball. The reason for this separation is because most people who bring their guns from home have higher powered guns. The rentals fire paintballs at a rate of 275 miles per hour. The guns people bring from home can shoot up to 500 mph.

Despite having never played before, it turned into one of the most intense sporting events of my life. Two of my friends and I wound up staying there for the entire afternoon. My biggest fear, my reason for postponing this wonderful activity for so long, turned out to be nothing at all. For the most part, people fear being shot, not in the chest or the legs but in the places where I got hit. The first game we played I got shot in the finger, the tiniest most fragile bone in my body. If that wasn’t bad enough the second game out I got shot in the neck! But to my surprise it didn’t hurt whatsoever. After that I didn’t feel the need to protect myself as often as I did. I got lit up and I loved it.

So, if you were like me, always enthralled by the idea of paintball but could never muster up enough backbone to try, give Boston Paintball a chance. It’s a high energy, war-like, indoor atmosphere but without the pain and agony of maximum pressurized paintball guns.

Weekly Sports Trivia

QUESTIONS:

1. How tall is an official goal in Soccer?
2. Who was the first player in the NFL to have his number retired?
3. Who was the first African American Head coach in the NBA?
4. Who was the first MLB relief pitcher to win the Cy Young Award?
5. What NHL player has the most points in a single game with 6 goals and 4 assists?

ANSWERS:

1. 8 feet
2. Bill Russell
3. Mike Marquardt
4. Mike Marshall
5. Darryl Sittler

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A song in Spurk

The NECC chorus during a recent rehearsal for their concert to be held on May 3.

Maxwell Baptiste gives the piano a workout.

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