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Monday, January 24, 2011

Carnegie Mellon’s student newspaper since 1906

Volume 105, Issue 15

Washington study abroad offers its students unique experiences

JENNIFER THARP
Staffwriter

As a new selection of students prepares to study in the nation’s capital, the Washington Semester Program (WSP) is in the midst of evolving its traditional programs as well as maintaining successful staples, such as an invaluable internship experience. Ten students will travel to Washington, D.C. this semester just as four students from the fall 2010 semester will reintegrate into campus. This is a record number for the program, sponsored by the Center for International Relations and Politics. In addition to the increased participation, there have been other transitions. Emily Half, the academic adviser for the Global Studies and International Relations and Politics majors

and former Study Abroad adviser, will handle the advising for the WSP. Students attend either Georgetown University, American University, or a separate program called the Fund for American Studies (FAS) through Georgetown University.

Students attending the FAS program pay tuition directly to FAS for the semester. Similar to American University, Georgetown University now has a consortium agreement in place with Carnegie Mellon so that any financial aid can transfer between the two institutions. In addition to traditional financial aid, the Friedman Fellowship provides an opportunity to further reduce costs by up to \$3,000 through an application due March 1, 2011. In accordance with the standards of Georgetown, Carnegie Mellon’s preferred

partner campus for its students, the suggested QPA requirement has been raised to 3.0, although lower QPAs can still be accepted based upon letters of recommendation.

Through four focuses in American Politics and Public Affairs, International Affairs, Law and Society, and Religion and Politics, Georgetown University offers an integrated experience of classes and internship work three days per week. To find an internship, students work alongside an adviser to help them find a job aligned to their individual interests. The FAS offers Public Policy and Political Journalism tracks while American University provides ten tracks ranging from Peace and Conflict Resolution to Global Economics and Businesses.

See **WASHINGTON**, A3



Courtesy of Alisa Deychman

Students in last semester’s Washington program enjoy its unique and valuable experiences.

CulinArt pushes new green water options



Kristen Severson/Photo Staff

CulinArt has installed new, “greener” water dispensers on campus.

JACKSON LANE
Staffwriter

CulinArt is moving forward with one of its “Green Initiatives” to reduce bottled water usage on campus. Students may have already noticed the new Aqua Health fountains at Carnegie Mellon Café, Tartans Pavilion, and Schatz Dining Room.

“In early October CulinArt staff had met with students that represented the Tap Water Project,” explained Shelby Cole, student activities director of CulinArt. “We did a cross promotion, supporting their interests to reduce carbon footprints by requesting cups of water rather than bottles. We placed signage at our fountain locations encouraging students to grab a cup of water, rather than a bottle.”

The fountains also offer flavored water in addition to regular water.

“[The Tap Water Project] began about two years ago [with] Dyanna Becker, a civil and environmental engineering major and current senior in CIT,” explained first-year civil and environmental engineering major Roger Romero, the current president of the Tap Water Project.

“She learned that other college campuses across the nation were eliminating plastic bottled water entirely, including Wesleyan and Washington University in St. Louis. As an advocate herself for the use of reusable bottles in place of plastic water bottles, she thought it was incredible that students were able to do something like this on such a

large scale.”

For the Tap Water Project, the next step is to encourage students to start carrying around their own reusable bottles. Romero explained, “Thanks to our previous efforts, last summer’s freshman orientation was bottle-free. The incoming students (undergraduate and graduate) received stainless steel reusable bottles as gifts during Orientation. This policy is going to be implemented in future orientations as well.”

Since the 1950s, bottled water has been recognized as a source of pollution and waste. Only a fraction of bottled water bottles are actually recycled, and the majority of the bottles go to a landfill where they do not decompose.

“Creating the actual bottles is also extremely wasteful,” Romero said. “It consumes a ton of energy, it pollutes the environment ... and more water is used in creating the bottles than is actually inside of them.”

According to www.greenlivingtips.com, “With the addition of a home water filter, you can have water as good, if not better than many bottled water brands — as some of the bottled water brands pull their water directly from municipal supplies and at times don’t even bother filtering it.”

But even outside of an environmental perspective, Romero emphasizes that reducing bottled water still has its benefits.

See **CULINART**, A3

MLK keynote address leaves an impression

TURI ALCOSER
Staffwriter

“This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine, let it shine,” proclaimed the straight-line march through the Carnegie Mellon University Center, up the staircase, and into Rangos Hall, as a crowd flowed from the vigil for Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. to the speaker series. Led by such voices as President Jared Cohon and Vice Provost for Education Amy Burkert, students, faculty, and staff marched proudly to hear the words of President Julianne Malveaux from the Bennett College for Women as the Martin Luther King Day featured keynote speaker.

Cohon gave the opening remarks, noting the push for diversity at Carnegie Mellon as a powerful and personal effort. Cohon currently leads the Diversity Advisory Council (DAC), which was implement-

ed to study and provide solutions for increasing diversity throughout the campus.

According to the DAC website, www.cmu.edu/diversity-guide, the council strives “to not only heighten awareness and encourage civil debate on the issues that surround diversity, but also to implement activities that support mutual respect and community success.”

Maggie Soderholm, a junior philosophy and statistics major, stirred the audience with an opening speech, translating her experience as a child to communicate the responsibility of privilege. Claiming King as an inspiration, she learned of the black population’s struggle for civil rights and found the lackadaisical response by the white community unacceptable.

Soderholm touched on the issue of equal rights by regarding the struggle for

gay marriage as a parallel effort.

In a powerful yet light-hearted tone of voice, Malveaux took the stage and began highlighting King’s misrepresentation as a pastor rather than a revolutionary economist. “We have sanitized this man,” said Malveaux, trailing off into a systematic account of the economic segregation that plagues modern America. “Economists looked at everything without the African American....no one will say ‘black unemployment.’”

Malveaux claims that America’s economy discriminates against African Americans and Latinos through aspects such as credit, which affect one’s ability to obtain higher-paying jobs and opportunities and which directly relate to both communities.

According to her personal website, www.juliannemalveaux.com,

Malveaux is “a committed activist and civic leader” and “has held positions in women’s and civil rights and policy organizations.”

“I have the audacity to believe that peoples everywhere can have three meals a day for their bodies, education and culture for their minds,” Malveaux read from an excerpt taken from King’s speech upon receiving the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964.

She believes that health care and education have become stratifying factors for low-income people. “This is not a personal problem; it is a structural one,” Malveaux said. “Our nation is choosing to be a developing nation because we refuse to invest in education.”

Malveaux stressed the means of King’s visit to Memphis, in which he championed

See **MLK**, A3

National Mentoring Month is celebrated through inspiring programs



Devin Beahm/Photo Staff

Members of Strong Women, Strong Girls, one of Carnegie Mellon’s many mentoring groups.

CHRISTA HESTER
Junior Staffwriter

This January marks the tenth anniversary of National Mentoring Month, “a time each year when our nation spotlights the importance of mentors and the need for every child to have a caring adult in his or her life,” according to www.nationalmentoringmonth.org. Mentors can be a substantial influence in a child or young adult’s life and impact them in unforeseeable ways. What would Henry David Thoreau have been without his mentor, Ralph Waldo Emerson? Or, perish the thought, Harry Potter without the guidance of Professor Dumbledore?

Students are constantly being mentored by professors and teachers who continually encourage them to think

deeply, act judiciously, and strive confidently toward their goals. By becoming mentors, they can switch these roles and give someone else the gift of guidance and the encouragement to go after their dreams and goals. At Carnegie Mellon, students have the opportunity to be mentored or become mentors through several different programs offered on campus.

Those who wish to find a mentor can apply for the Heinz mentor program, where students are matched with alumni based on personal priorities and career goals. Another mentoring program, through the Career and Professional Development Center, trains students to assist their peers with career choices through outreach activities and events.

One mentoring program

that is particularly hands-on is Strong Women, Strong Girls, a group-based mentoring program between college-aged women and at-risk girls in grades three through five. Katherine Yang, a member of this mentoring team, said, “the goal of Strong Women, Strong Girls is to pass on the lessons learned from strong women throughout history to encourage girls and young women to become strong women.” The mentoring group meets once a week for about 90 minutes to learn about and discuss women who are making a positive impact in today’s world.

Becoming involved in mentorship is surprisingly easy; in fact, students do not even need to join one of the aforementioned groups to become a mentor. Carnegie Mel-

See **MENTOR**, A3

Statistically Speaking

Oscar nominations are around the corner, and predictions of what movie will be nominated for what award are in full swing. Blockbuster movies, such as *Black Swan*, *Inception*, *The King's Speech*, *Toy Story 3*, and *The Social Network*, are the top picks to be nominated for the Best Picture award. *The Social Network*, in particular, is favored to win considering its reception in theaters. Here are some of this movie's past successes:

\$22,445,653

domestic gross during opening weekend

22

nominations for the Screen Actors Guild Awards

4

Golden Globes won

\$94,828,518

current domestic gross

Sources: www.imdb.com and www.moviefone.com

Compiled by
EMILY DOBLER

Lecture Preview

University Lecture Series: Rachel Maines (HS '83)

Today at 4:30 p.m.
Gregg Hall (Porter Hall 100)

Rachel Maines, a visiting scientist from Cornell University, will speak on "Engineering as Law: Injury Epidemiology and Consensus Codes."

Maines' principal research interests are in the history of technology, especially issues relating to technology and the body. Such issues include sexuality, medicine, technological risk, and injury epidemiology.

Maines' lecture will focus on how "the development, incorporation into law, and enforcement of consensus safety codes for the built environment makes safety engineering the instrumental arm of injury epidemiology in industrial democracies."

James R. Swartz Entrepreneurial Leadership Series: Alden Mills

Tuesday at 5:30 p.m.
Posner Hall 151

The Donald H. Jones Center for Entrepreneurship at the Tepper School of Business presents Alden Mills (TPR '00), CEO and co-founder of Perfect Fitness LLC. Mills is the maker of the Perfect Pushup, the Perfect Pullup, and the Perfect Counter. In less than seven years, Mills' fitness products went from "as seen on TV" to the top-selling fitness products in many retail stores.

For more information and to RSVP, visit www.tepper.cmu.edu/faculty-research/research-centers/donald-h-jones-center-for-entrepreneurs-hip/index.aspx.

Data Privacy Panel Discussion

Wednesday at noon
Hamburg Hall 1000

The Heinz College will be hosting a poster session and panel discussion with Carnegie Mellon privacy researchers. The event will

cover a broad spectrum of timely privacy issues, including protecting confidentiality in census data, understanding how individuals make privacy decisions, designing privacy interfaces for Twitter and Facebook, and using formal tools to detect flaws in privacy policies.

Radical Cartooning in the Labor Movement as History

Wednesday at 6 p.m.
McKenna/Peter/Wright Rooms, University Center

Gary Huck is an internationally syndicated political cartoonist who has co-authored six collections of political cartoons with cartoonist Mike Konopacki. Huck is also a cartoonist for the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America, an independent, progressive, national union based in Pittsburgh.

Huck will take an insightful look at the radical artists that illustrated America's class wars. This lecture is co-sponsored by the Center for the Arts in Society and the Humanities Scholars Program.

OnStar Student Developer Challenge Kickoff

Thursday at 5 p.m.
Gates Hillman Center 6115

Voice application experts from General Motors' OnStar and QuickFuse will host a campus kick-off workshop for its OnStar Student Developer Challenge, an initiative that encourages students at participating universities to submit voice-enabled applications using OnStar vehicle data.

The experts will give advice and tips on creating entries using the QuickFuse Voice app platform.

The grand prize is a \$10,000 package of development tools including iPads, MacBook Pros, and more.

Compiled by
COURTNEY WITTEKIND

CAMPUS NEWS IN BRIEF

Computer software helps to create song titles and lyrics

A new songwriting tool called Titular has been developed by Carnegie Mellon post-doctoral fellow Burr Settles of the Machine Learning Department.

Titular, paired with another program created by Burr called LyriCloud, helps to reduce writer's block for those attempting to write titles or lyrics for the next hit songs. These novel tools offer an automated analysis of 137,000 songs, concluding with both title and lyric suggestions for the user.

When a word is entered by a user, LyriCloud evaluates other words in its collection based on a similarity score it generates for each potential option. This similarity score is calculated based partially on how many times the word

appears in the same line of a lyric that also contains the user-inputted word.

Titular tags words based on their part of speech, then creates templates that can be used to create new titles.

For example, in a university press release, Settles explained that a template such as "(adjective) (common noun)," might yield the title "Irish Rover." The template "you're so (adjective)" might yield "You're So Vain." And the template "(-ing form verb) with a (common noun)" might yield "Walking With a Zombie."

"Writing lyrics that succinctly tell a story, express emotion or create an image in the listener's mind is challenging," Settles said in a university press release.

Student creates children's game for \$100K challenge

A Ph.D. student in Carnegie Mellon's Human-Computer Interaction Institute, Derek Lomas, won Marvell Technology Group's \$100K Challenge, which encouraged the creation of educational applications for tablet computers. "Marvell's goal is to launch a revolution in the delivery of education, and these prize-winning apps have the potential to do just that," said Tom Hayes, vice president of corporate marketing at Marvell Semiconductor, Inc, in a university press release.

Lomas took home the \$50,000 grand prize for his game called Battleship Numberline. Lomas' game is a multi-touch educational game that encourages math skills.

"Improving your ability to

estimate along a number line correlates with math performance all the way up to sixth grade," Lomas said. "Marvell is doing great things for the future of education by seeding a development community for educational apps."

Lomas is also a founder of PlayPower, an organization that offers educational eight-bit games to children in developing countries. While this technology has become obsolete within the United States, inexpensive computers with eight-bit processors are accessible to children in other parts of the world. PlayPower has received support from Carnegie Mellon's Project Olympus.

Compiled by
COURTNEY WITTEKIND

Campus convenes to donate blood in Rangos



Jonathan Carreon/Photo Staff

A blood drive occurred in UC Rangos 3 from noon to 6 p.m. this past Tuesday. Sponsored by MAPS, the event was geared at generating blood donations for the American Red Cross. Students from all over campus had the opportunity to donate their blood to the organization, whether through an appointment or by simply showing up. Participants and supporters of the event received refreshments.

Campus Crime & Incident Reports

Theft

Jan. 13, 2011

A theft occurred in the men's locker room in the University Center. The victim reported that his backpack was stolen from an unlocked locker. In his bag were clothing items, an ID card, cash, and a bank debit card. The debit card was used to make fraudulent purchases. The theft is currently being investigated.

Theft

Jan. 13, 2011

University Police responded to a theft in the Kirr Commons area of the University Center. The victim reported that her ID card was stolen from inside one of her textbooks while she was talking to a friend.

Theft

Jan. 14, 2011

University Police responded to a theft in the men's locker room in the University Center. The victim reported that his iPod was stolen.

Intoxication

Jan. 15, 2011

University Police responded to a report of an intoxicated student in Stever House. The student was transported to an area hospital for medical treatment. The university's amnesty policy was applied.

Intoxication

Jan. 15, 2011

A student was reported to be intoxicated in Resnik House. The student was found

to be semi-conscious and non-responsive. Police transported the student to an area hospital for treatment. The university's amnesty policy was applied.

Disturbance

Jan. 15, 2011

University Police reported to the Residence on Fifth to investigate a disturbance. Three students were cited for underage drinking, and two students were cited for possession of marijuana and drug paraphernalia.

Burglary

Jan. 15, 2011

A burglary occurred in a Resnik House room. The victim reported that his laptop was stolen while he was sleeping. The actor was able to en-

ter due to an unlocked door. The case is being investigated.

Intoxication

Jan. 16, 2011

Police reported to the third floor of the Residence on Fifth to assist with an intoxicated student. The investigation resulted in the student being cited for underage drinking.

Burglary

Jan. 19, 2011

A burglary was reported on the second floor of West Wing. The victim left his dorm room unlocked and was gone from the room from about 7:40 to 10 p.m. Upon his return, the victim discovered that his laptop had been stolen from his room. The burglary is being actively investigated.

Corrections & Clarifications

If you would like to submit a correction or clarification, please e-mail The Tartan at news@thetartan.org or editor@thetartan.org with your inquiry, as well as the date of the issue and the name of the article. We will print

the correction or clarification in the next print issue and publish it online.



WEATHER



TUESDAY
High / Low
33 / 26



WEDNESDAY
High / Low
33 / 24



THURSDAY
High / Low
27 / 21



FRIDAY
High / Low
26 / 23



SATURDAY
High / Low
35 / 25

Source: www.weather.com

Study abroad students gain valuable insight

WASHINGTON, from A1

Apart from the academic component, the internship has proven to be a valuable source of experience and future contacts. “Experience is really important in today’s global economy to get a job: It is not just the academic background but also practical application through internships that matters,” Half said.

The four returning students certainly gained practical experience through their broad spectrum of opportunities. Brice Relaford, a junior Ethics, History, and Public Policy major, interned in the International Affairs and Foreign Policy Office of the U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters. “The Washington Semester will probably end up being the best semester you experience as an undergraduate. It will provide you with so much more than you think. It helps to shape

you academically, professionally, and personally,” Relaford said. “It gave me tremendous insight and perspective as to what I want out of my EHPP major, and how I can go about achieving my academic and career goals.”

Alisa Deychman, a junior in the Science and Humanities Scholar program, worked for the Booz Allen Hamilton Consulting Group in D.C. Her first project involved studying the projected nuclear economy for 2016 to 2020 for the Office of Nuclear Proliferation and International Security, a subdivision of the Department of Energy. “There is only so much to learn in a classroom, and so I had to expand, network, and meet the people that I will be working with in the future,” Deychman said. Also interning in a field of her interest, junior Ethics, History, and Public Policy major Nancy Brown worked for the National Acad-

emy of Social Insurance, a policy think-tank that researches policy issues of social security, Medicare, and Medicaid. Her advice to students going to D.C. was “Washington, D.C. is what you make of it. There are lots of different people there and a lot of different things to do, so take advantage of it, especially since a lot of them are free or inexpensive.”

To encourage interest in the program, the Center for International Programs is hosting three information sessions on Jan. 27, Feb. 9, and Feb. 22 in Baker Hall 154R from 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. During the Feb. 22 visit, a representative from Georgetown University will be available to answer questions firsthand. Applications are due on March 1 to Emily Half, and decisions will be released on March 15. Before considering the program, students are encouraged to speak with Half and their

primary advisers about how courses can count as credit toward their major. The program is open to students in all departments on campus.

The ten students participating in the program will include Srujana Penumetcha (U.S. Global Leadership Coalition), Peter Hendrickson (Bureau of International Security and Nonproliferation in the Office of Missile, Biological, and Chemical Nonproliferation), Celeste Kato (Command Consulting Group), Emily Baddock (The Daily Caller), Carmen Easterwood (Millennium Challenge Project as a Private Sector Development Intern), Kimberly Miller, Billy Joraskie (Republican National Committee National Affairs Division), Jong-Min Sung (Counsel for Court Excellence), Victoria Velazquez, and Minseung Kwag (intern for Congressman Chris Van Hollen (D-Md.)).

Green water fountain options help campus

CULINART, from A1

“For starters, the ‘purified’ water within the plastic bottles is municipal tap water that has been chemically treated 44 percent of the time, and the other 56 percent is simply ground water. The tap water from local reservoirs must pass multiple safety tests before it can be distributed to the public. Essentially, tap is often safer than bottled.”

Both Carnegie Mellon and its students will save money from reduced bottled water usage. “The amount of money Carnegie Mellon spends indirectly on transportation and processing bottled water could be eliminated,” Romero said.

“There’s also a very obvious reason why we should

reduce usage: Why should we have to pay for something that is normally free? Bottled water is convenient, but we believe that with the wide-range distribution of reusable bottles, convenience will be reassured without the plastic bottles.”

CulinArt will also save money, since they will no longer have to provide bottled water, a salable commodity, to students using meal blocks. “This not only falls upon our initiatives to support environmental conservation, but we also hope that students will notice CulinArt’s efforts in listening to student concerns, and implementing solutions. This decision is not only a win for the environment, but it is also a win for CulinArt and the Tap Water Project,” said Cole.

Mentoring groups help students across Carnegie Mellon campus

MENTOR, from A1

lon offers the class “Literacy: Educational Theory and Community Practice,” that pairs college students and urban high school students from the Fox Chapel area together in a writing mentorship. The goal is to help the high school students learn “new strategies for writing, planning and decision making” that will aid them in transforming themselves and their community.

Professor Linda Flower teaches the class and, through her extensive involvement in Pittsburgh’s Community Literacy Center, strives to turn literate action into social change. Flower’s class is yet another way to become in-

involved and joining is as simple as clicking the “add” button on the Online Registration website.

Becoming a mentor is a big responsibility, but many students find the rewards are plentiful. Having a lasting positive impact on a person’s life is a priceless gift that will continually repay itself. All one has to do is give up a few hours a week and devote that time to enriching someone else’s life.

“Mentoring is a way for us to ‘pay it forward.’ Most of us are where we are today because of people who’ve helped us along the way; mentoring is important because it allows us to help people see the potential they may not see in

themselves,” Yang said. There are many resources available to aid students in learning how to be good mentors and become involved in “paying it forward” through the mentorship of kids, the world-changers of tomorrow.

For more information on the Heinz mentorship program, visit www.heinz.cmu.edu/jobs-and-internships/mentor-program/index.aspx.

For the Career and Professional Development Center’s program, see www.studentaffairs.cmu.edu/career/about-us/career-peer-mentors.

To get involved with Strong Women, Strong Girls, contact them at swsgcmu@gmail.com.

MLK speech embraces diversity

MLK, from A1

efforts for African American garbage workers and their equal wages. King fought for impoverished citizens in the years leading up to his assassination, which occurred April 4, 1968 in Memphis, Tenn.

The crowd listened in earnest through the closing statement by Malveaux, “Economic justice means [King] had the audacity — do you?” A resounding applause roared from the audience.

A crowd surrounded Malveaux after she exited the stage. She met with attendees in the hallway, where she signed copies of her book titled *Surviving and Thriving: 365 facts in black economic history*, which has been nominated for a NAACP Image Award.



Marcy Held/Photo Staff
Pictured above is Julianne Malveaux, the MLK day keynote speaker.

COLLEGE ESSENTIALS 2011

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Science & Technology

RNA synthesis research assisted by users in *eteRNA*

COURTNEY CHIN
SciTech Editor

For many years now, video games have been labeled as being brainless and unproductive with little to no educational value. However, a joint team of researchers at Carnegie Mellon University and Stanford University has developed a way make online games fun, challenging, and mentally stimulating — while simultaneously tapping into an enormous resource of human brainpower. Computer science and robotics professor Adrien Treuille and doctoral student Jeehyung Lee are two of the main minds responsible for creating *eteRNA*, an online game in which users build RNA strands and then predict how they will synthesize or fold. Rhiju Das, the other co-creator responsible for the original idea of trying to predict RNA synthesis using models, is a biochemistry professor at Stanford. This project can help researchers uncover properties about RNA behavior.

“Right now, the initial challenge is, why don’t the RNAs synthesize in reality the way our models predict they do? What’s wrong?” Treuille said. Lee added, “It’s really easy to come up with puzzle solutions with computer [algorithms], but quite hard to come up with solutions that fold correctly in nature.”

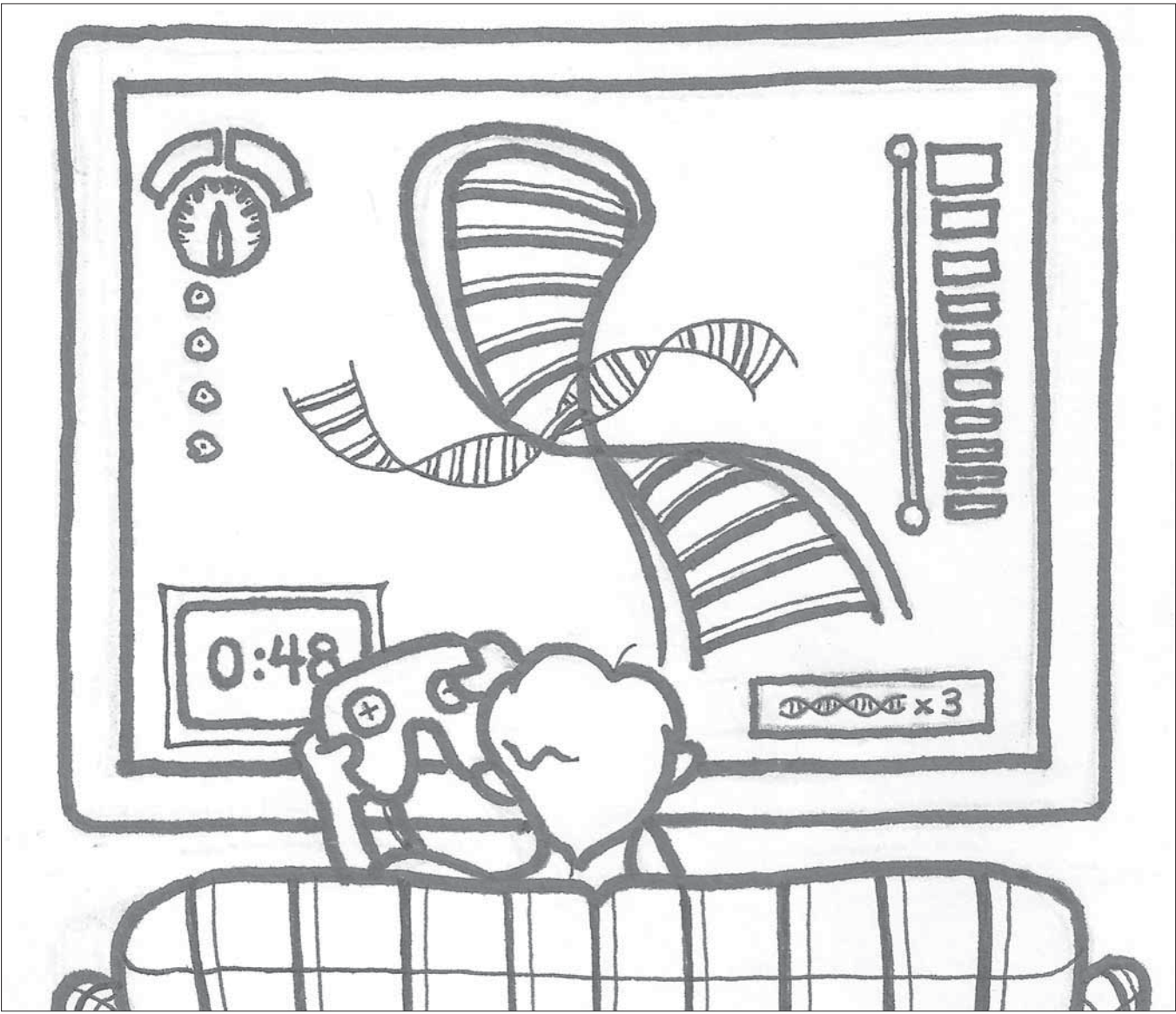
In *eteRNA*, users are presented with a 2-D model of an RNA strand and are challenged to recreate an existing model using the four base amino acids — adenine, guanine, cyanine, and thymine. Challenge puzzles are taken from RNA examples found in nature — ones that have already been categorized in existing databases. After solving puzzles correctly and gaining points,

higher-level users are allowed to enter the RNA lab, where they can vote on top designs; the top eight are sent to Stanford for real-life synthesis.

Since its inception 13 days ago, the game has already gained a dedicated base of players. *eteRNA* already has over 15,000 mostly U.S.-based registered users, producing 300–400 designs a week. “There are people who sort of live in the website, solving every puzzle that we give them. Actually, some of them are solving puzzles faster than we make them,” Lee said.

On the research side of the game, Treuille and Lee have found success; they have reported several successful designs that synthesize in reality. This empirical project allows the team to compare how their theories about RNA folding match up to live results in a lab. With each round of puzzle solving and experimentation, the team receives more and more information about how to perfect their theories and update their models. Treuille is especially excited about utilizing *eteRNA*’s massive online user base to collect RNA designs — ones that contain nuances and randomness a computer algorithm wouldn’t normally produce. “Citizen science opens up the possibility of doing research to a huge number of people instantly. Within that large group, you will find people who are very, very good at it [due to] the law of averages,” Treuille explained.

“We’re slightly making the designs a little more complicated and giving it to the players, and it’s actually a learning process for them,” Treuille said. For the next round of puzzles, the team plans on shortening the stacks and lengthening the loops in an RNA strand, a type



Adelaide Cole/Art Editor

of formation not yet seen in the game.

“The game that the players are playing now will not be the same game they will play in a year. It will be a lot more refined and perfected based on what the player community said,” Treuille commented. The team also closely monitors the online forums to spot player criticisms and deliver a better experience. Ideally, with funding, Treuille hopes the project will have a lifespan

of three years.

eteRNA’s origins come from a previous program designed by Treuille and Das called Foldit, a game in which the user is challenged to predict how proteins will fold. Foldit was slightly more complex than its successor, containing 20 amino acids and being in 3-D. Lee, who is responsible for video game programming and design, created a prototype for determining protein research and presented it with

Treuille and Das at Rosettacon — a conference for software design — and soon after the idea for *eteRNA* was born. While *eteRNA* started out as a 3-D program, Treuille and Lee thought that such a game might be too complicated for users. Coupled with the fact that RNA can be fully represented in 2-D using four base pairs, the team decided the best method to get designs would be with a simple 2-D game. “It’s just like Tetris, all

in 2-D,” he added jokingly.

Treuille is excited about the current results and is optimistic about future findings. “If we can take that knowledge and turn it into a set of rules which tell us when RNAs will synthesize properly, and also ultimately computer programs that automatically generate RNAs which do synthesize property, then that is a highly exciting scientific result. And we would have done it with 15,000 people.”

HOW THINGS WORK

Solar technology could power hazard-free ‘smart’ roads

DYLAN MORI
Staffwriter

We, as Pittsburghers, are no strangers to snow. Many upper-classmen fondly remember the three days of canceled classes last February, while the rest of Pittsburgh raged against the poor safety conditions of the roads and the lack of plowing. Almost 12 months later, the eastern United States has experienced a series of crippling blizzards. The complaints of citizens in New York City and Atlanta, Ga. echoed those of Pittsburghers, as dangerous conditions ruined travel for many Americans. New research, however, suggests that solar power may be the answer to making the roads safer for

driving and reducing the need for road-clearing crews.

The focal points of this new research are “smart” roads, which would utilize heat energy to melt snow and ice on the roads. According to a feature article on the CNN Tech website, these roads would work like giant solar cells, with large glass panels replacing traditional asphalt.

An article in the Oct. 6, 2009 issue of *Scientific American* describes the prototype, which consists of 1024 modules sandwiched between a layer of glass and a conducting material. The new “smart” roads would be self-cleaning, water resistant, and would contain heating elements that would keep them ice-free. In

addition to melting snow on the roads, the solar cells could tap into an untouched source of energy. The absorbed solar energy could be channeled and used worldwide, reducing global carbon emissions.

The engineer behind the project, Scott Brusaw, is in the process of developing a new type of glass with increased strength and consistent traction. Collaborating with researchers at the University of Dayton and Pennsylvania State University, he will attempt to synthesize a stronger type of glass, since “glass, especially when fused together in layers, is stronger than most people think.” He also estimates the average absorption of sunlight, even when intercepted by traf-

fic, will be at the minimum 50 percent.

The issue has also crossed into the political world. On Brusaw’s website, he discusses what he perceives as the failures of the highway infrastructure, blaming the lack of highway construction and maintenance costs, along with higher oil prices, which “have raised the cost of asphalt and diesel fuel needed to power road-building equipment.”

Others are also supportive of infrastructure reform. According to a speech given by New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg, which was also broadcast on CNN, he praised the workers of the sanitation department for their timely response to the winter storm,

but conceded that the success should be viewed as “an opportunity to do better the next time.... We always want to improve, and in every case it’s going to be a different situation.”

The Federal Highway Administration and Virginia’s Department of Transportation granted Brusaw \$100,000 for research and have devoted money and resources to similar research groups around the country.

Critics have slammed the plan by pointing to its hefty price: \$4.4 million per mile. These costs are in addition to the already immense price of the research, which the *Scientific American* article estimates at \$15 to 25 million over three to five years, and unknown

future costs of repairs and upgrades. The efficiency of light absorption has also been questioned, since the roads would require a texture to allow tires to grip, but the texture may reduce the amount of light absorbed.

Other self-heating options have also been explored. Rajib Mallik of the Worcester Polytechnic Institute has conducted research in freeze-resistant fluids in pipes that run alongside the pavement. The fluid would be heated during the warmer seasons and stored in nearby buildings, and during the colder seasons, the fluid would warm the streets. But for now, this promising research is a step toward shifting to greener practices.

SCITECH BRIEFS

Bard College starts mandatory science program

Aspiring toward well-roundedness, Bard College in New York has instituted a new graduation requirement: a mandatory science class. The liberal arts college’s president, Leon Botstein, created a program called “Citizen Science” in order to diminish the “profound lack of scientific literacy” in non-technically focused Americans. The program is intensive and immersive, requiring six hours of lab daily for three weeks. Bard College aims to combat the United States’ falling academic standards in science and math, which rank it lower than countries like China, South Korea, and France.

Source: *The New York Times*

Laser pointers negatively affect pilot performance

The Federal Aviation Administration released data on 2,836 reports of lasers being aimed at airplanes in 2010. This poses a great danger to the pilot because the sudden, intense beam of light shone into the dark cockpit can induce temporary blindness or distract pilots. The FAA’s administrator is contemplating a public awareness program, or a ban on lasers if extreme measures are required. Many of the incidents involved lasers that are far more powerful than the law allows, furthering the cause for legislative action.

Source: *The New York Times*

Star Betelgeuse approaches death, supernova

The star Betelgeuse is approaching gravitational collapse. Stars radiate electromagnetic radiation in the form of light and heat by using fuel at their cores, such as the hydrogen in the sun, and performing nuclear fusion. Once a star begins radiating more energy than it produces, its mass decreases and it begins to collapse into itself due to its core’s own gravitational pull. When Betelgeuse collapses, which could occur as early as 2012 or as late as a million years from now, it will explode in a supernova millions of times brighter than the sun, and will create constant daylight on Earth for a few weeks.

Source: *Time Magazine*

Mexico to begin using iris scans on ID cards

Today Mexico will begin issuing ID cards that include photographs of the cardholder’s iris in order to improve national security. It will be the first country to do so, and its ID cards already contain fingerprint images and other personal data. Critics of the initiative, such as the National Human Rights Commission, worry about the invasion of privacy. The \$25 million cost of the proposal includes 28 million minors, and adults will be integrated starting in 2013.

Source: *The Telegraph UK*

Ancient pterosaur fossil and egg discovered in China

Scientists located a 160-million-year-old pterosaur adult fossil and egg belonging to the *Darwinopterus* species. This finding is especially significant for revealing the gender of the fossil (female) and thus allowing paleontologists to draw conclusions about physical variations between male and female pterosaurs. Pterosaurs were airborne reptiles that lived concurrently with dinosaurs, but are more closely related to extant reptiles like crocodiles. These animals laid soft-shelled eggs, which were most likely buried in the ground.

Source: *The New York Times*

Johns Hopkins researcher studies brain activity

Charles Limb of Johns Hopkins University has been studying the brains of rappers engaged in freestyling for over 10 years. When freestyling, the rappers in the study activated their medial prefrontal cortex, which is important in self-expression and individualism. Simultaneously, the dorsolateral prefrontal cortex decreased activity, which led to less self-censoring and planning of actions. The rappers also showed an intensification of visual activity in the brain even when their eyes were closed, possibly signifying a link between the brain’s implementation of sight and a person’s creativity.

Source: *Time Magazine*

Tool developed to help with information overload

DANIEL TKACIK
Staffwriter

The U.S. mortgage crisis, the O.J. Simpson trial, the Florida recount of the 2000 presidential election, and the Monica Lewinsky controversy; these stories were big issues during their time, resulting in hundreds — sometimes thousands — of news articles being written about them. In this age of the Internet, with so many options for news sources and types of media, this so-called “information overload” can cause us to miss the big picture on various important issues. So how can we keep up? How can we sift through so many articles to retrieve the most useful information? Researchers at Carnegie Mellon are in the process of developing a tool to help us understand the big picture.

Graduate student Dafna Shahaf and her faculty adviser Carlos Guestrin in the computer science department have developed a model that can make connections between various news stories in an effort to communicate the big-picture meaning of certain issues. Guestrin draws analogies between his research and issue maps, which graphically show the deep structures of different issues and the connections between the various subparts of each issue. “The goal here is to mathematically construct an issue map for any

story,” Guestrin explained. In creating this virtual issue map, one can optimize the massive amounts of information about an issue or subject to help users retrieve the most useful information.

The model, put simply, works via the following process. The user supplies the model with two news articles, and based on the words or certain phrases used in the articles, connections are formed between the two. These connections take the form of other articles. For example, the model can form a chain of articles starting with the mortgage crisis and ending with the ongoing debate over health care. However, if the user finds the resulting chain of articles unsatisfactory, he or she may make refinements to the chain, such as removing an article that does not seem to fit or adding an article that may make the connection smoother or more coherent. Additionally, users may make changes to what the connections focus on. For example, instead of focusing on DNA evidence during the O.J. Simpson trial, users may choose to focus on the racial aspects of the trial.

The results from Shahaf and Guestrin’s study with this model showed that users of the model seemed to better understand big-picture issues after being exposed to the chain of articles than before.

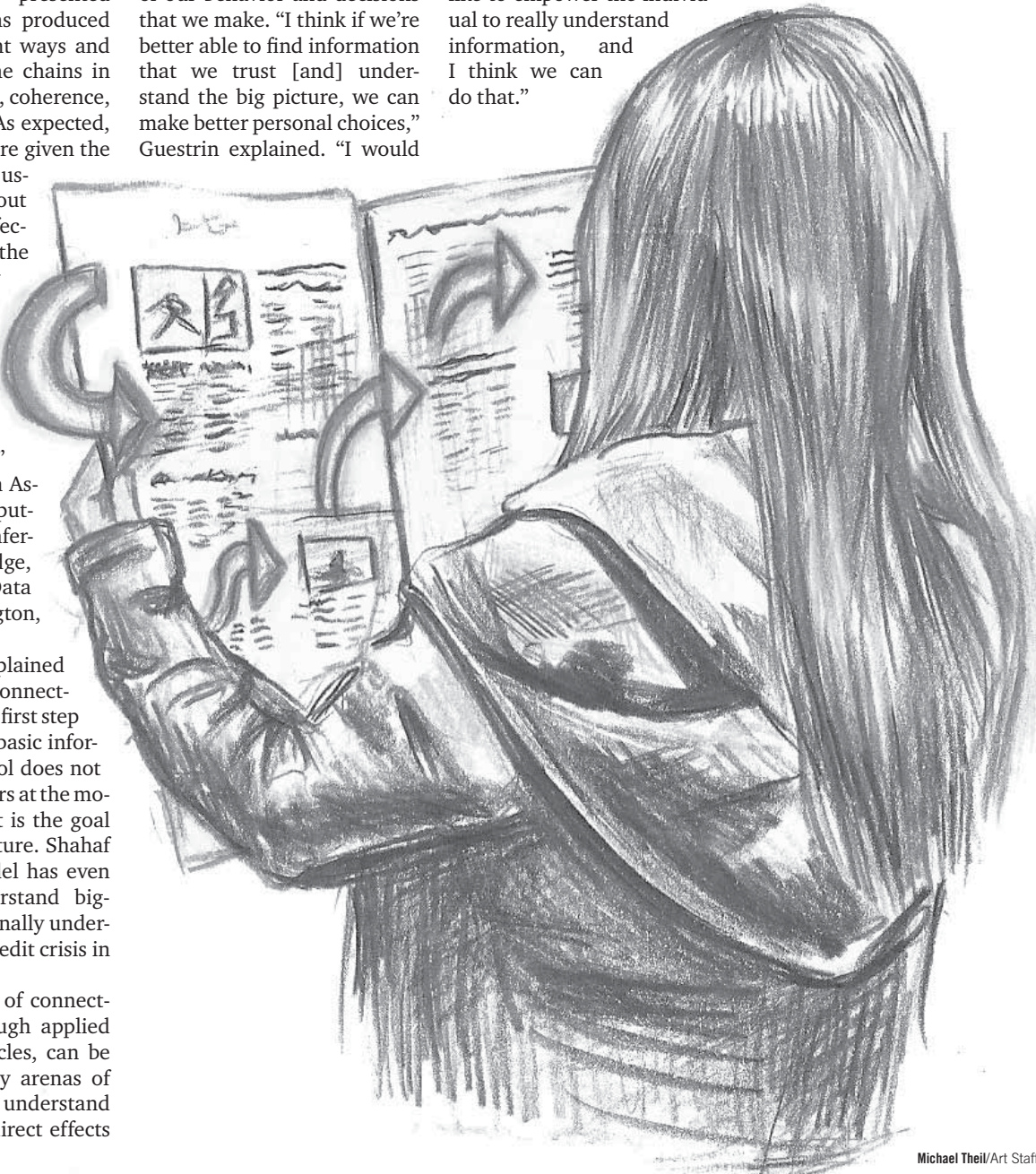
Users were also presented with article chains produced in several different ways and asked to grade the chains in terms of relevance, coherence, and redundancy. As expected, the chains that were given the highest grade by users also turned out to be the most effective in increasing the users’ familiarity with the subjects of the news articles. The results were written up and received “Best Research Paper” honors at the 16th Association of Computing Machinery Conference on Knowledge, Discovery, and Data Mining in Washington, D.C. last July.

Guestrin explained that the idea of “connecting the dots” is the first step in understanding basic information. Such a tool does not exist for public users at the moment, though that is the goal in mind for the future. Shahaf said that her model has even helped her understand big-picture issues. “I finally understand the Greek credit crisis in Europe,” she said.

This technique of connecting the dots, though applied here to news articles, can be expanded to many arenas of life, helping us to understand the direct and indirect effects

of our behavior and decisions that we make. “I think if we’re better able to find information that we trust [and] understand the big picture, we can make better personal choices,” Guestrin explained. “I would

like to empower the individual to really understand information, and I think we can do that.”



Michael Theil/Art Staff

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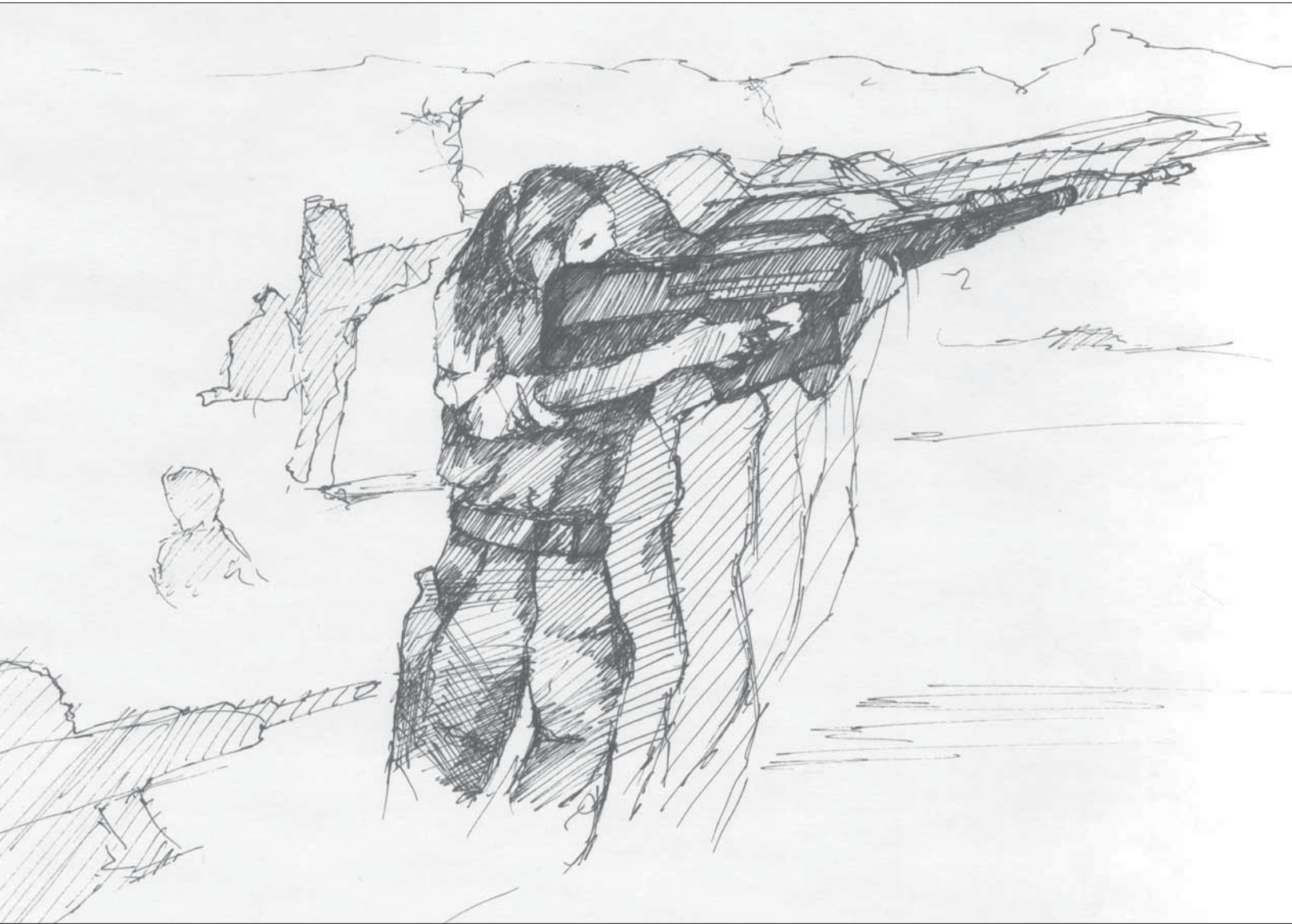
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FROM THE EDITORIAL BOARD



Courtney Wittekind/Contributing Editor

Women should not need to face combat exclusion rules in U.S. military

Just this month, the Military Leadership Diversity Commission (MLDC) released its recommendation that “combat exclusion policies” for women in the armed forces be removed.

Though laws that prevent the assignment of women to various areas of the armed forces have been slowly dismantled, there still exist many barriers between women and their desired positions in the armed forces. For instance, women are still not allowed to engage in direct ground combat, and promotion for women is therefore much harder to achieve.

Thus, we greet the MLDC’s recent proposal with a hearty, “It’s about time!”

The recommendation was one of 20 changes the commission proposed in a draft of the report it plans to send to both the president and Congress this March. When it was formed in 2009, the MLDC was charged with conducting a “comprehensive evaluation and assessment” of policies relating to “opportunities for the promotion and advancement of minority members” of the armed forces. Though the commission seems quite insular, with 24 of its 32 members

represented as either active or retired military personnel, its members do seem to be quite diligent in conducting their research and progressive in making their recommendations. In addition, the commission focused on multiple issues in its research and even proposed a few practical steps toward achieving its recommendations.

We not only applaud the commission for its rational decision with respect to women in combat, but we also commend it for its policy of transparency: All of the MLDC meetings have been open to the public,

all of its documents and papers have been published online, and all of its members have been identified.

It makes sense for the United States’ armed forces to adopt a policy that most of the country holds dear: that minorities should have equal rights and that diversity is a great force toward the achievement of success.

It seems that the work of the MLDC reflects the desire of the nation as a whole, and we can only hope that the president and Congress will embrace the recommendations they will be given in March.

To give value to an education, prioritize the first two years of college

This past week, *USA Today* published an article commenting on the intellectual value of the first two years of a college student’s education. The article based its claim on a report originating in the book *Academically Adrift: Limited Learning on College Campuses*, by New York University professor Richard Arum. In a study, scientists surveyed 3,000 full-time students on 29 different campuses nationwide, and they investigated the transcripts and standardized test results of those students over time.

In a result that would probably prove shocking to most students and

faculty members alike here at Carnegie Mellon, a surprising 45 percent of students involved in the study showed no significant gains in learning during their first two years of college. Data also showed that today’s students, in comparison to those enrolled in universities a few decades ago, spend 50 percent less time studying.

For most Carnegie Mellon students, these statistics aren’t exactly believable. For someone who has spent all day working in a cubicle on the third floor of Hunt Library or slaving away on a Friday night in a Gates computer cluster, no nation-

wide report can take away from the effort one puts into his or her education here. Furthermore, for college students who pay roughly \$200,000 for a four-year education, most of us would like to believe we’re getting our money’s worth. That being said, it’s safe to say that the value of our education is dependent on our individual efforts as well, throughout all four years of our time here.

The first two years of one’s college education should be about the building blocks. The general education classes and the experimental courses we take when finding a major

are the most important, as they work to create the foundation of the rest of our education. If the majority of the nation’s college students are unable to get anything out of their first two years, perhaps a re-evaluation of the way students structure their time is necessary. Many students work to cram the idealized “college experience” into their freshman and sophomore years, spending their time partying instead of focusing on schoolwork. Putting the money we spend on our education to good use should be the main priority of the collegiate population.

Tiger Mother’s harsh parenting techniques do not ensure superiority

We read with alarm the controversial article “Why Chinese mothers are superior” published by *The Wall Street Journal* two weeks ago. Amy Chua, a successful Yale Law School professor, author, and Chinese mother, presented audiences with an excerpt from her upcoming book, *Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother*, detailing exactly what the article title suggests in a rather arrogant and close-minded fashion.

At first glance, the glowing accolades Chua says her daughters have received for their piano prowess, perfect grades, and being great at life in general would intimidate the average bystander. But what we see

in this praise is just one facet of success. Chua’s parenting ways do have merit, and stereotypes often have a kernel of truth, yet Chua’s article is just a self-serving glorification of herself.

To be fair, the entire “Asian parent” stereotype does have wide acceptance and an impressive track record. Singapore, South Korea, and Japan consistently compete for the top spots in science and math test scores, with up-and-coming China not far behind. While Asian-Americans make up only 5 percent of the population in the U.S., their presence is disproportionately represented in universities. But before

we give Chua and her stereotype too much credit, how do we explain that Asian-Americans — especially young Asian-American women ages 15 to 24 — have the highest suicide rate in America out of all minority groups? Unyielding pressure to succeed may have tragic consequences.

Chua’s blunt glorification of Asian parenting cannot justify itself with her or her children’s success. One nasty line, “Western parents have to struggle with their own conflicted feelings about achievement, and try to persuade themselves that they’re not disappointed about how their kids turned out,” is just one example of racism and arrogance com-

bined with an inflated self-worth. Parenting is one of the most unconstrained jobs there is, and each parent instills diverse values that he or she deems vital to healthy growth, both physically and mentally. Condensing an 18-year stretch into a formula is not smart at all, but rather pessimistic — strict parenting, no independence, and a nothing-but-perfectionism attitude suggests that Chua does not believe she can raise two “successful” daughters by being nothing short of a tyrant, but also that she thinks that only by imposing mental duress and pressure will anyone find happiness. At the very least, she could be tactful.

Pride meets new politics



MEELA DUDLEY

While I would never go as far as to call myself a sentimentalist, I do believe that when it comes to national politics, Americans need more faith.

Wrapped up in a preliminary election, voters are so quick to get behind a candidate and slap a bumper sticker on their car. I like to refer to this stage of the election process as the “Honeymoon Stage”; much like the first few months of a relationship, voters are enamored with their candidate of choice — oftentimes to a point of irrational confidence.

The Honeymoon Stage, however, is only temporary. In the past handful of presidential terms, recognizable trends have developed within the way Americans perceive an elected official. While timelines may vary, the majority of voters tend to lose a significant amount of faith in their president around the second-year mark of his term.

Unfortunately, in the past this tendency has propelled American politics into a state of constant inconsistency. Because it has become so difficult for Americans to stand behind a party’s political choices, power is constantly transferred from political party to political party. It seems as though, with a lack of continuity, it is becoming increasingly difficult for elected officials to accomplish long-term goals and political agendas.

While this change of heart has been especially conspicuous this year with President Obama and the November-elected Republican House, this trend has not developed surreptitiously.

On July 15, 1979, President Jimmy Carter referred to this sort of movement as a “crisis of confidence” in a public address, highlighting the people’s doubt in their government, the economy, and a better future for their children. Ronald Reagan too addressed America’s lack of confidence in the national economy and employment when he famously asked, “Are you better off now than you were four years ago?” in an interview during October of 1980.

These past couple of years have only added to the building blocks of American pessimism. The Survey Research Center at the University of Michigan has been tracking American sentiment since the 1950s, and data show that Americans are more pessimistic about their situations and their government than they have been for more than a quarter of a century.

So what’s the solution? It’s always been true that a government works more efficiently if backed and supported by its people. This fact does not suggest, however, that all Americans should sport a pair of rose-colored glasses, but merely that instead of starting last-day-in-office online count-downs and #obamaistheantichrist trending topics on Twitter, they should work to find and maintain a medium between construction, criticism, and confidence.

Meela Dudley (mdudley@) is publisher for The Tartan.



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The Tartan is a student newspaper at Carnegie Mellon University, funded in part by the student activities fee. It is a weekly publication by students during the fall and spring semesters, printed by Trib Total Media. **The Tartan** is not an official publication of Carnegie Mellon University. The first issue is free; subsequent issues cost \$0.50 at the discretion of **The Tartan**. Subscriptions are available on a per semester basis.

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Library of Congress ISSN: 0890-3107

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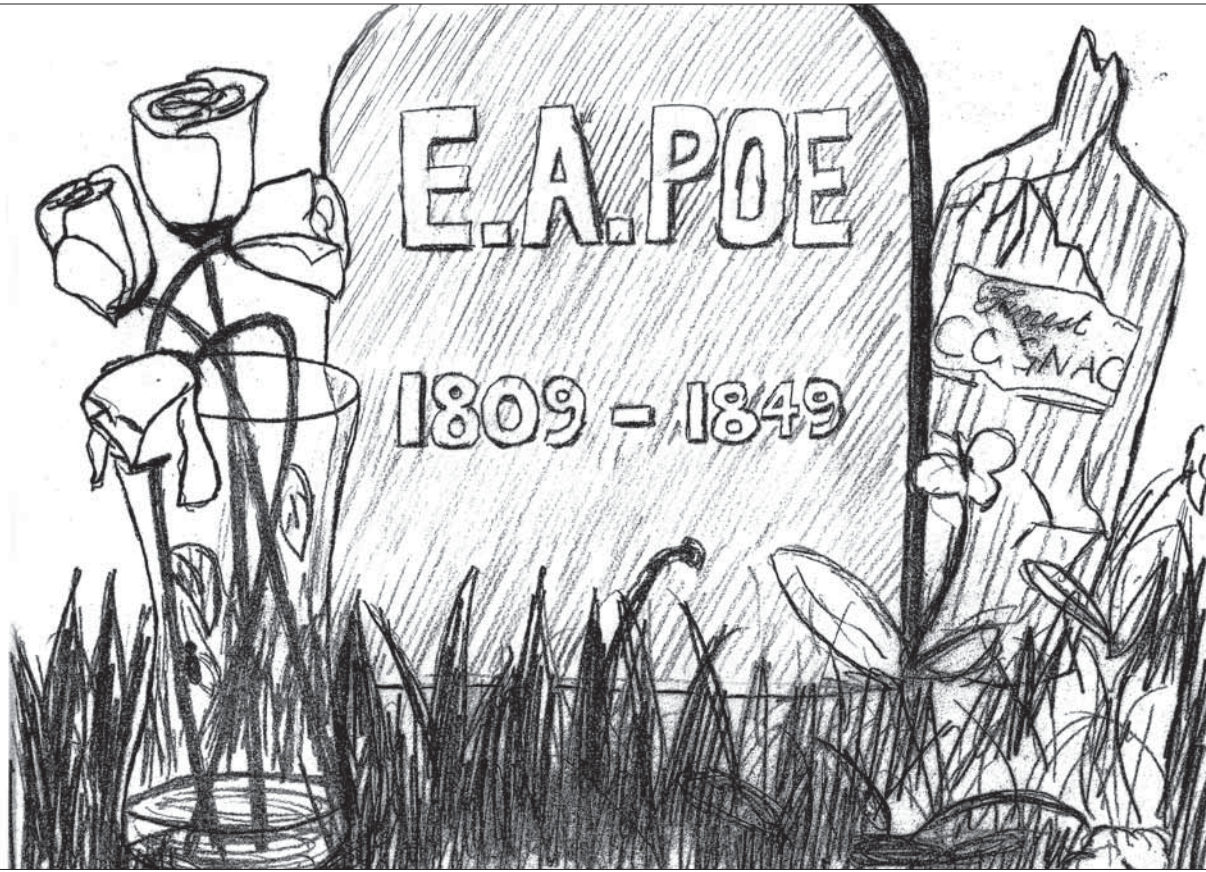
Tell-tale guilt should follow end of Poe tradition

Courtney Wittekind
COURTNEY WITTEKIND

The mysterious figure who has been a longtime visitor to the grave of Edgar Allan Poe may be no more. Often referred to as the “Poe Toaster,” the figure appears at the grave each year on Jan. 19, the date of the author’s death. For the past 60 years, the toaster has been a welcome guest to the Baltimore graveyard where he leaves a note, a half-empty bottle of cognac, and four roses for Poe. Last year, however, the Poe Toaster failed to show — and this year, after a second year of absence, it seems that we can be sure that the toaster is no more.

The toaster has been a figure of mystery since his first visit to the author’s grave. And while a dedicated fan of a long-gone author may not impress many, the Poe Toaster has gained somewhat of a following among fans of the 19th-century writer. Each year, a crowd has formed at the main gate of the graveyard, where visitors huddle and hope to catch a glimpse of the toaster. After last year’s absence, this year, four impostors dropped by the grave, seemingly trying to uphold the long-held tradition. The real toaster, however, never showed. Only two of the impostors left notes, and none of the four gave the secret signal that only Jeff Jerome, curator of the Poe House and Museum, knows.

Many have assumed that the Poe Toaster died, which would seem to be accurate had he begun the 60-year-old tradition as a young man. The plot thickens, however, when the content of the notes is considered. The first note, left in 1993, seemed to signal an inheritance of



the toaster role, reading: “The torch will be passed.” A note in 1998 indicated the original Toaster had died and passed the tradition on to his two sons.

The sons, however, did not seem to be nearly as devoted to Poe, or even to the toaster tradition, as the father once was. The notes left in later years have been an unfortunate mix of sad Poe allusions, pop culture references, and political commentary. In 2001, the note read: “The New York Giants. Darkness and decay and the big blue hold dominion over all. The Baltimore Ravens. A thousand injuries they will suffer. Edgar Allan Poe evermore.” The 2004 note seemed to have political undertones, criticizing the French opposition to the Iraq

war: “The sacred memory of Poe and his final resting place is no place for French cognac. With great reluctance but for respect for family tradition the cognac is placed. The memory of Poe shall live evermore!”

Perhaps the sons were a little shaky on the appropriate sentiments to be left on the grave of one of the country’s most famous literary icons, but these missteps can be overlooked. The surrender of a long-held tradition, however, cannot.

I can only hope for one scenario, these last two years: The toaster’s sons have sat in their warm homes, sheltered from the blustering winds and winter temperatures, their coats in their closets, an open bottle of co-

gnac on the table and the roses left unpurchased. I like to envision the two sons struggling under insurmountable guilt and sadness at destroying the legacy of the father and, by association, the mysterious aura that has long surrounded Poe’s death. I hope that the sons have nightmares of Poe’s forgotten grave, their hearts beating quickly in terror. I hope that they can’t shake the feeling of their father’s disappointment, or perhaps they can’t ignore the quiet beating of his restless heart.

This, we can only hope, is the conclusion for those so fully intertwined with a Poe story.

Courtney Wittekind (cwitteki@) is a contributing editor for The Tartan.

Facebook keeps users vulnerable

Jesse Kummer
JESSE KUMMER

For all that it has to offer people in terms of keeping in touch, Facebook sure likes to hide its true face sometimes. Throughout its expansion as one of the best social networking websites, Facebook dealt with a large amount of criticism about its online privacy issues. Just this past week, a new feature was released allowing applications on the site to ask users for access to their home addresses and phone numbers. While Facebook has disabled the feature for the time being, some feared that users would allow access to this secure data without knowing it.

That may not seem like too big of a deal, but pile that on top of countless other issues, including constant updates to the site’s almost 6,000-word-long privacy policy, data mining of private individuals, and permanent changes to Facebook’s design and layout without any options for users. On top of these broad issues, more “unique” concerns have been voiced after Facebook disabled the search function to find *MoveOn.org*’s page after it organized protests against the site, Facebook’s canceling accounts of users who uploaded breastfeeding photos, and its censorship of editorial content critical of Facebook.

This is still just the tip of the iceberg. The recent release of the movie *The Social Network* has pushed Facebook and its founder Mark Zuckerberg to the forefront of not just social networking news, but the general news of the world as well. And this newfound surge of popularity and good spirit has done a swell job distracting people from Zuckerberg’s efforts to encourage people to share more information publicly. I know it’s hard to keep up with the new features rolled out seemingly weekly when all you’re really trying to do is stay in touch with someone you went to fourth grade with. The fact is that if you are on Facebook, it is almost inevitable that you have shared information with companies and people you have never heard of.

Yet we’re all still on Facebook, along with 500 million other people across the planet. There aren’t any signs of people deleting their accounts in record numbers either; in fact, the company is stronger than ever. It took in hundreds of millions of dollars of investments this past year from Microsoft, Goldman Sachs, and other investors who want to see the company, currently valued at \$50 billion, move forward as quickly as possible.

So, what to do? Is there an answer to this multitude of concerns over your privacy? I’m not sure, but I do know that if Facebook had a “dislike” button, I’d be all over that like white on rice.

Jesse Kummer (jkummer@) is a staffwriter for The Tartan.

Campus community thrives by diversity of ideas

Michael Kahn
MICHAEL KAHN

When I began writing this article, I thought I was going to be discussing President Cohon’s recent semesterly e-mail, which he sent out Friday morning. As I thought about this effort to update the campus community on larger events, though, I decided to try and figure out what exactly the term “campus community” means. It is, after all, a term used frequently enough. A quick search through my e-mail shows over 150 references to the term since I arrived at Carnegie Mellon less than three years ago. Certainly a literal definition would include the students, faculty, and staff here in Pittsburgh, as well as those in Silicon Valley, Qatar, and Carnegie Mellon’s other locations abroad. It might include alumni or others with less immediate university connections. These groups, surely, make up the nebulous concept of the “campus community.”

In spite of this deceptively simple explanation, a community is more than a collection of independent groups — there must be some more profound connection to treat our

university as a community, rather than merely a school. Shared challenges and successes make a community, and while moaning about the weather and homework contribute some small part to that, they are not sufficient reasons to call ourselves a community.

Once these superficial explanations are discarded, the underlying causes become clearer. Whereas many colleges are bound together by

A community is more than a collection of independent groups — there must be some more profound connection to treat our university as a community, rather than merely a school.

their football teams and school pride, we are united by something more profound: diversity. It is our differences, and the different communities they create, that lead to our greater unity.

When I speak of diversity I do not mean primarily ethnic diversity, though certainly that is an important part of our university identity. I mean diversity of thought and action. At first, it may seem that an undergraduate voice major and a

tenured computer science professor have little in common. But that voice major will have a love and talent for music that she would share with her professor. And that music professor and the computer science professor together would be researching new algorithms for computer creation of music, or developing robotic appendages to allow amputees to play instruments. At the same time, the voice major could be involved with

a student organization that includes students from every college at Carnegie Mellon, and this organization would interact with staff from the Office of Student Activities.

At the surface, it would be easy to say that Carnegie Mellon is divided into insular departments and groups with little concern for the university as a whole. That was, in fact, the disappointing conclusion I was going to reach in response to Cohon’s e-mail. This conclusion is not entirely invalid

— few students will have taken the time to read that entire 2,000-word missive, and many of them feel little connection to the university as a whole. They do, however, feel connected to those groups and subcommunities in which they participate directly. Little about Carnegie Mellon is monolithic. We have our individual and group goals, and we identify much more as editors for The Tartan or undergraduate computer science majors than we do as university community members.

What makes Carnegie Mellon great is not the strength of its individual groups, nor is it our underwhelming Tartan pride. What makes us great is the interconnectedness among those groups. Our organizations and departments are not insular, and when they come together, they can produce amazing results. We should care about our university as a whole, and President Cohon should continue informing all of us about these issues. But we should also recognize that our strength comes not from a single, overriding belief, but from the combination and transformation of diverse viewpoints and unique individuals.

Michael Kahn (mkahn@) is editor-in-chief for The Tartan. He welcomes all reasonable responses.

A PERSON’S OPINION

Compiled by Jonathan Carreon

A recent study claimed that students don’t learn much in classes the first two years at college. So we asked,

What’s the most useful non-academic thing you learned in your first year?



Kunal Natu
CivE
Junior

“Finding my place in college.”



Pralav Bhansali
Social & Decision Sciences
Sophomore

“How to organize an event.”



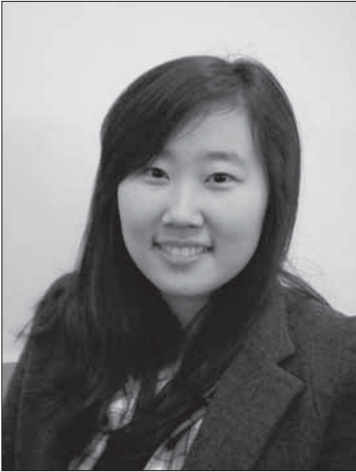
Suraj Baxi
Social & Decision Sciences
Junior

“How to binge drink.”



Emma Bright
Psychology
First-year

“Learning how to live with a roommate.”



Sun Bin Yim
Architecture
First-year

“How to mix a salad without utensils.”

Women’s basketball continues the struggle to improve record

MAX GORDON
Staffwriter

The Tartans women’s basketball team lost a tough game last Friday night at the University of Rochester, 66–38. The game started out close and competitive with the Tartans building a 10–7 lead in the first half, but the Rochester Yellowjackets, nationally ranked No. 14, were able to open it up and take a commanding lead by the half. Unfortunately, the Tartans, led by junior Jen Larsen, sophomore Emily Peel, and first-year Jacquie Shaw on Friday night, couldn’t successfully fight back, and Rochester pulled away for the win.

Starting junior guard Alex Hansen spoke about the loss, saying, “Our defense usually leads to our offense, and our defense just wasn’t there on Friday. It’s hard to win a game that way.”

Despite the loss, Larsen, Peel, and Shaw recorded solid games. Peel had a team-high 12 points and six rebounds, Larsen had nine points and seven rebounds, and Shaw contributed eight points and four rebounds. Shaw started the game in place of injured junior captain Jacki Cortese. Cortese returned the following game against Emory University this past Sunday.

The loss puts the women’s basketball team at 2–13 for the year and 0–4 in UAA play. Rochester moves to 12–3 on the season and 2–2 in UAA play. The Tartans were not discouraged, and they got right back on the court Sunday in Atlanta against Emory University. Going into the game, Larsen said, “This game [vs. Rochester] made us see our weaknesses, and the best thing we can do now is move on to the next game and



File Photo



File Photo

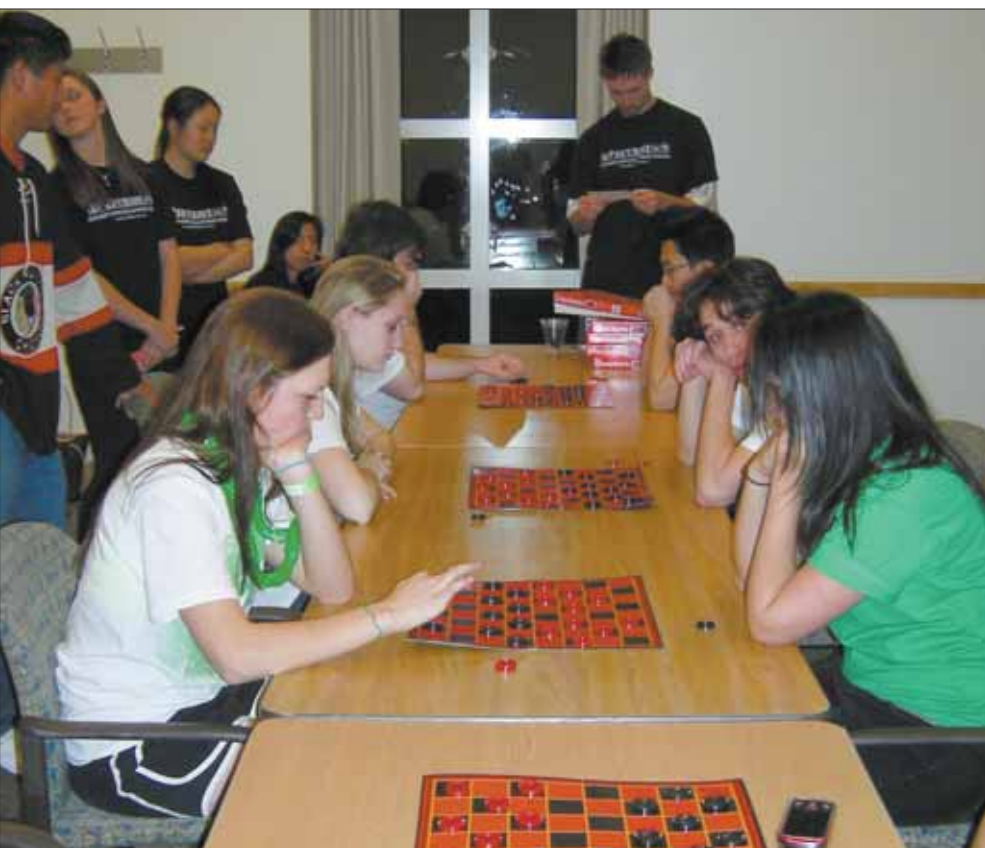
Top: Tartans go for the hoop. Bottom: Junior Jennifer Larsen prepares to shoot.

fix them.” The results and statistics for the contest against Emory can be found on the Carnegie Mellon athletics website.

After the Emory game, the Tartans take the court again this upcoming weekend, traveling to play away against

Washington University in St. Louis and the University of Chicago. The next home games for the Carnegie Mellon women are on Feb. 4 and Feb. 6 in Skibo Gym, against Washington University in St. Louis and the University of Chicago, respectively.

Third annual Tartan Olympics brings out Tartan plaid pride



Courtesy of Josh Centor

Tartan Olympics participants compete in a game of checkers.

CARINEH GHAFANIAN
CLAIRE USIAK
Junior Staffwriters

Rubik’s cube? Potato sack race? Word search? Golf? All in one event? It could only be the Tartan Olympics.

Over 15 teams duked it out Jan. 15 in Wiegand Gym at the Tartan Olympics to see who had the most Tartan talent. Competing in events such as a pizza-eating contest, an egg drop contest, karaoke, checkers, and a trivia contest to name all 150 Pokemon, students of all types were brought together to showcase their Tartan pride.

The event was hosted by the Carnegie Mellon Student Athlete Advisory Council in an effort to form a bridge between students and the ath-

letic department, as well as to have a good time in the spirit of friendly competition.

Some of the teams included sororities and fraternities, as well as different student organizations and the athletic staff. Some particular highlights included the Kappa Kappa Gamma performance of Mandy Moore’s “Candy” in the karaoke competition, Fifth Floor Stever’s determination to put away an entire pizza in seven minutes to win the eating contest, and a domination by 3ver, a team comprised of first-years, in the opening relay race; the team broke the existing record by over 50 seconds.

When asked what his favorite part of the competition was, first-year student and 3ver team member Max Wil-

son replied, “Dodgeball. Definitely dodgeball.”

At the end of the night the scores were close, and the winners were announced in the closing ceremonies at halftime of the women’s basketball game on Jan. 16. Coming in first place was the Bomb Squad, who won the dodgeball event; second was Fifth Floor Stever, who posted large points in the relay race as well as the eating contest; and third place was 3ver, who won big in the trivia challenge and opening relay race.

At the end of the night, first-year KJ Lee remarked, “I really felt like we came together as a team. It was a great bonding experience as well as a great way to meet new people. I had a lot fun.”



CARNEGIE MELLON UNIVERSITY WASHINGTON SEMESTER PROGRAM FALL 2011

From embassy headquarters to nongovernmental organizations, think tanks to advocacy organizations, and consulting firms to media outlets, Washington, D.C., is a focal point for many international and public policy activities. Undergraduates from any course of study who would value first-hand policy experience are invited to apply to Carnegie Mellon University’s Washington Semester Program (<http://www.cmu.edu/ir/wash-dc-semester-program.html>), which is sponsored by CMU’s Center for International Relations and Politics. In this semester-long program, students live, work, and study in Washington, D.C., coming into direct contact with political, business, and community leaders and learning about the most pressing policy issues of the day. The Center for International Relations and Politics will sponsor policy events and forums for CMU students participating in the program to further enrich their experience and to help them better understand how Washington, D.C., functions as a hub of international and public policy decision making.

Carnegie Mellon students accepted to WSP are eligible to apply for Friedman Fellowships, which help defray the costs of a semester in Washington.

Fall 2011 deadline for WSP and Friedman Fellowships: March 1, 2011

Upcoming Information Sessions:
Thursday, January 27
Wednesday, February 9
Tuesday, February 22

All sessions will take place from 4:30-5:30pm in Baker Hall 154r

For more information, see <http://www.cmu.edu/ir/>,
or contact cmuwsp@cmu.edu. Sponsored by the Center for International
Relations and Politics.

Carnegie Mellon

Men’s basketball squad takes down another top-ranked team



File Photo

First-year Christian Manoli passes the ball to a teammate.

ADAM GRUBER
Junior Staffwriter

This week the Tartan men’s basketball team played twice, splitting the two games.

In the first, on Sunday, Jan. 16, the Tartans faced their second consecutive top-ranked Division III team, the No. 25 New York University Violets. The Tartans took down the Violets, beating a ranked team for the second time this season, by a score of 76–70 in this game.

The Tartans’ victory came on the tails of a stellar performance by senior Shane Rife, who scored a career-high 25 points and added six boards in the game.

With the game tied 8–8 in the first half, the Tartans went on an 8–0 run, ignited by Rife’s step-back three-pointer. He made his third three-pointer of the half on the following possession.

Quickly the 8–0 run became a 21–5 run, and it

seemed the Tartans were rolling.

The Violets soon halted the Tartans’ spurt, as they closed to within two of the Tartans at halftime, with a score of 33–31.

The Tartans controlled the second half, as the only lead the Violets held in that half was in the first 30 seconds. After a layup by first-year Christian Manoli, the Tartans maintained the lead for the duration of the contest.

After clutch free throws by first-year Asad Meghani, the Tartans secured the 76–70 victory, upsetting the Violets.

The Tartans forged this victory with their offensive domination, outshooting the Violets 46.8 to 35.6 percent.

Along with Rife’s 25 points, junior John Duhring poured in 15 points, and first-year Sean Brophy scored a career high of nine points. Brophy also added five steals and six rebounds.

On Friday, the Tartans

faced the University of Rochester Yellowjackets.

The Tartans never led in this game, losing 77–60. The Yellowjackets opened an 8–0 run to start the game. This was not the Yellowjackets’ only run of the game, as they went into halftime with a 37–22 lead, and were firing on all cylinders throughout the game.

The Tartans shot just 38 percent from the floor and were outrebounded by the Yellowjackets 39–27. Sophomore Andre Moore led the Tartans in scoring with a career-high 15 point performance. Duhring and Manoli each added 10 points.

After the two games this week, the Tartans are 5–9 on the year and 2–2 in UAA competition.

The Tartans look to play the type of offense that led them to upsetting the Violets in this week’s game against the Washington University in St. Louis Bears on Friday.

Favre? Rodgers owns Green Bay

JEREMY KING
Staffwriter

If you have followed the NFL in any way, shape, or form over the past three years you should know all about the Brett Favre saga. Every year we have to go through the painful process during which Favre decides whether or not he's going to come back and play for another year, which always ends up with him coming back and playing for a team other than the Green Bay Packers — the team that he created a legacy with. Three years ago, when Favre was traded by Green Bay to the New York Jets, many speculated that Green Bay's string of successful seasons was about to hit a snag.

In 2008, Aaron Rodgers' first year as the starting quarterback in Green Bay, the critics seemed to be correct about Green Bay's outlook, as the Packers went 6–10 on the season. The season before that, they made it to the NFC Divisional Round of the playoffs with Favre at the helm, losing to the future Super Bowl Champion New York Giants. Although the Packers had a losing season, Rodgers' playing was definitely not the reason. Rodgers posted over 4,000 yards, 28 touchdowns, and a quarterback rating of 93.8 that year, easily giving him a season worthy of a top-10 quarterback in the league. However, there were still doubts as to whether or not Rodgers could lead a team to the playoffs and display the leadership skills that it takes to play the most important position in the game.

Moving on to 2009, many of those critics were silenced as Rodgers put up a top-two performance at the position, easily beating the numbers he had just posted a year before.

Rodgers reached over 4,400 yards, 30 touchdowns, and only seven interceptions that whole year, leading Green Bay to an impressive 11–5 record and a wild card berth into the National Football Conference playoffs. Unfortunately for Rodgers, Favre joined Green Bay's hated rival, the Minnesota Vikings, and was having an even better season, with a higher quarterback rating than Rodgers and a better touchdown-to-interception ratio. In addition to this, Favre beat the Packers twice that season with exhilarating performances, outplaying Rodgers and further adding to the belief that the Packers made a huge mistake by letting Favre go. The Packers still made the playoffs, where Rodgers had an excellent performance, although the Packers lost 51–45 to the Arizona Cardinals. What hurt the most was that the deciding play of the game came in overtime. Rodgers fumbled the ball, which was returned for a defensive touchdown to seal the Packers' fate. Now the critics were quick to point out Rodgers' next flaw: his inability to win a playoff game.

In the football world where every player is under a microscope, the critics seemed to be terribly unfair to Rodgers. He had no playoff game in which he did not put up four touchdowns, and somehow he has the inability to win a playoff game. How is Rodgers supposed to put up 52 points in a game against a playoff opponent? It already took a valiant effort to even bring the game to overtime, let alone win the game with a flawless performance. Yet, people still put Rodgers under Favre's shadow, as Favre brought the Vikings one win away from the Super Bowl and didn't look like he was going to stop playing.

So, we enter 2010, Rodgers' third year as the starting quarterback, and his second year with Brett Favre leading the Vikings as his main competition. This time around, Rodgers has repeatedly shown why he is one of the best in the league. Also, with Favre posting one of his worst seasons ever, Rodgers has become the best quarterback in the division, and is making a case for being the best quarterback in the league. Just last week, he had one of the greatest playoff performances in NFL history, playing against the highly regarded Atlanta Falcons, who had the best record in the NFC at the time. In a surprising blowout, Rodgers completed almost 90 percent of his passes for over 300 yards, including three touchdowns en route to a 48–21 dismantling of the Falcons. Just the week before, Rodgers beat the Philadelphia Eagles to notch the first playoff victory of his career.

So, what do the critics have to say now? Favre only had one Super Bowl ring, and Rodgers is one game away from making the Super Bowl in just his third year starting. He is already regarded as a top-three quarterback in the league, and has full respect of his teammates in the locker room. Other than winning a Super Bowl, Rodgers' résumé looks to be filled with impressive stats. The critics will always be looking for something, and just last week Rodgers was criticized for not signing an autograph for a former cancer patient. It was uncovered that Rodgers had already signed plenty of autographs for the patient, and had met with her on multiple occasions. It seems as if Rodgers always has an answer to the pessimists, and that's just how he likes it.





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Sports



Basketball
MEN's Overall: 5–10
Next Game: Friday at 8 p.m.
@ Washington University in St. Louis
WOMEN's Overall: 2–12
Next Game: Friday at 6 p.m.
@ Washington University in St. Louis



Swim and Dive
Next Meet:
Saturday @ Denison University



Track and Field
Next Meet:
Saturday @ Case Western Reserve University



IM Registration
Badminton (singles): Through Wednesday



SPORTS COMMENTARY

The Cutoff Man: Same great player

JONAS ALTMAN-KUROSAKI
Assistant Sports Editor

As the off-season quickly becomes the preseason, there are still some proven veterans on the market. A few of them, such as Manny Ramirez and Johnny Damon, found new homes last week, while other players who already had homes found themselves new ones. Now that most teams — most, not all — have gotten the basic architecture of their rosters built, the last few weeks of the off-season are for shoring up their weaknesses and looking at all available options to improve on their team's core. For some, that means adding depth. For others, it means finally getting a difference-maker. For free agents and trade candidates, it means getting ready to scour the real estate pages.

The Tampa Bay Rays made the biggest splash this past week when they signed proven veterans Ramirez and Damon to surprisingly cheap one-year deals. The Rays have been utterly depleted this winter, losing perennial Ray and star outfielder Carl Crawford to free agency along with first baseman Carlos Pena and closer Rafael Soriano, and trading pitcher Matt Garza. Signing Ramirez to a mere \$2 million and Damon to \$5.25 million (with incentives that'd push it to an even \$6 million) not only allowed them to spend less than the Yankees did on Soriano, but gives the Rays low-risk, high-reward solutions to fill the holes in their lineup. Damon, who played mainly designated hitter for the Tigers in 2010, gives the Rays a relatively potent bat at the top of their lineup who could be a serviceable replacement for Crawford if he stays healthy and maintains a high on-base percentage.

Ramirez is a bit more of a wild card — wild indeed — but could end up giving the Rays a very big bat to protect Evan Longoria in the lineup and fill the hole that Pena's bat left. A new uniform helped his production when he was traded from Boston to Los Angeles, but not necessarily after his 2010 deadline trade to the White Sox; however, if he truly enjoys playing in Tampa, the young Rays may prove to be the perfect environment to foster the best in Ramirez once more. Ramirez's cheap deal sur-

prised everyone after he held out each of his past two years of free agency for too much money, so perhaps this is a sign that Ramirez just wants to play some good ball and prove himself again.

Meanwhile, the Angels and Blue Jays pulled off a big trade on Friday when Vernon Wells was sent to Los Angeles of Anaheim in exchange for catcher Mike Napoli and outfielder Juan Rivera. The Angels' *MLB.com* beat reporter, Lyle Spencer, said on Twitter that Wells is "that big bat fans want." Technically, yes. But there is a reason the fans wanted a big bat: The Angels completely wiped out in their lackluster attempts to lure both Crawford and third baseman Adrian Beltre, and they seemed essentially to be banking on the return of Kendry Morales to be their big off-season improvement. Getting Wells, a three-time Gold Glover who averages 26 homers and 95 RBI a year, gives the Angels a solid outfield and a much more complete middle of the order. Wells is not only the big bat the fans want; he is the big bat the team needs.

For Napoli and Rivera, the deal provides a chance to start anew. While Napoli most likely will not be a starter, I expect him to serve as a veteran presence on the bench who can help mentor both the pitching staff and the team's highly-touted rookie catcher, J.P. Arencibia. Rivera, the other guy in the deal, never really got going in 2010 after hitting 25 home runs in 2009. There was really no place for him in the Angels outfield, and starting over in Toronto — where it seems everyone on the team gets a power boost — could be just the thing for Rivera to establish himself as a feared and productive Major League hitter.

Spring training is now only three weeks away. Teams are still looking to improve, so look for the number of last-minute trades and signings to keep picking up. Soon, teams will see what the future holds for their has-beens and could-bes.

At the end of the season, every team wants to hear, "What a bargain those guys got! That pickup really worked out for them!" Which team will hear that come November 2011? We'll soon find out.

Track and field team starts off on right foot

ALLYSON KOYEN
Staffwriter

The Carnegie Mellon track and field team kicked off its indoor season with a tri-meet, traveling to Denison College. There, the team faced the host Big Red as well as Washington & Jefferson College. The men took home nine wins, while the women grabbed seven of their own.

On the track, the women's team showed its strengths in the distance events. Senior Courtney Baker won both the 800-meter run and the mile with times of 2:25.26 and 5:25.88, respectively. In the 800, first-year Maritina Tsembeles finished just behind Baker, placing second with a time of 2:25.47. Sophomore Emily Wobb placed first in the 3,000-meter run with a time of 10:49.15.

For the sprint events, first-year Jacqueline Guevel made her mark by setting a new school record in the 55-meter hurdles with a time of 8.72 seconds, finishing second in the event. Guevel also took second in the 200-meter dash, finishing in 28.12. Another win was added to the Tartan repertoire when junior Luci

Laffitte, senior Danielle Fisher, Guevel, and Baker joined forces to win the 4×400-meter relay.

On the field, notable performances were given by senior Melissa Hwang, first-year Marissa Bynoe, and junior Morgan Heskett.

Hwang won the long jump, clearing 4.90 meters, while Bynoe won the triple jump with a distance of 10.16 meters. Heskett scored the final win for the women by winning the shot put with a throw of 6.19 meters.

The men's team displayed its depth of talent by winning events across the board in sprints and distance and on the field. Sophomores Essien Ohues and Dan Cardenas-Rivero took first in the high jump and the pole vault, respectively, clearing distances of 1.90 and 3.95 meters. Meanwhile, in the sprint events, sophomore Noel Titus won the 55-meter dash with a time of 6.85 seconds.

First-year Timothy Kikta made his debut by winning the 200-meter dash in 24.01. Dustin Musselman brought home another first-place finish for the Tartans in the 400-yard dash in 52.31.



File Photo

The men's team won events across the board in last Saturday's meet.

In the distance events, sophomore Evan Gates and senior J.P. Allera took the No. 1 and 2 spots in the 3,000-meter run with times of 9:00.54 and 9:13.98, respectively. Senior John Briguglio took first in the 800-meter run in 2:03.42, while fellow senior Nate Busiere won the mile in 4:20.98.

Look out for the Tartans on Saturday as they travel to compete against Case Western Reserve University.

Swimming and diving push out opponents



Celia Ludwinski/Managing Editor

Junior Jen Sung placed third in the 200-yard butterfly last Saturday against SUNY Geneseo and Westminster College.

ALEX TAPAK
Sports Editor

The men's and women's swimming and diving teams hosted SUNY Geneseo and Westminster College last Saturday. The women's team topped both opponents, while the men's team fell to Geneseo by seven points and topped Westminster. This concluded the swimming and diving team's final home meet of the season.

The Tartan women had a great showing from first-years Soleil Phan, Melissa Mohrenweiser, and Megan Garvey. Phan came up big by winning three events: the 100-yard but-

terfly, the 100-yard freestyle, and the 100-yard backstroke. Mohrenweiser came in a close second to Phan in the 100-yard backstroke, and Garvey followed Phan in the 100-yard butterfly. Senior Molly Evans set two provisional times during this meet: the first during her second-place finish in the 200-yard freestyle, and her second as she clinched the win in the 200 IM. The 200-yard butterfly proved to be a Tartan sweep as senior Rebecca Ussai came in first, followed by junior Hannah Gonzalez in second and junior Jen Sung in third. In the diving portion, junior Olivia DeFazio won the three-meter diving event

and was edged out of first on the one-meter board by 0.15 points.

The Tartan men started off strong and finished strong winning the 400-yard medley relay and the 400-yard freestyle relay, respectively. The 400-yard medley relay team consisted of sophomore Dan Glaser-Garbrick, senior Alex Hanson, first-year Terrence Wong, and junior Matt Stanton. The 400-yard freestyle consisted of first-year Edward Sears, sophomore Brandon Yee, first-year Josh Chen, and Stanton. Hanson also finished first in the 200-yard IM, while Yee won the 200-yard freestyle, 200-yard butterfly, and

500-yard freestyle. Glaser-Garbrick took home both the 100-yard and 200-yard backstroke. In the diving portion, juniors Mike Alexovich and Eli Fatsi had a solid performance. On the one-meter board Alexovich edged Fatsi out for third place, while on the three-meter board Fatsi finished fourth and Alexovich finished fifth.

Both men's and women's teams had great distance performances. On the women's side, junior Victoria Adams won the 1,650-yard freestyle. On the men's side senior Frank Olechnowicz finished second in the mile. The Tartans are set to compete this Saturday at Denison University at 1 p.m.

ATHLETE PROFILE

Senior Josh Plotnik soaks up the spotlight

ALEX TAPAK
Sports Editor

Many students talk about their growth as people during their college years, but senior Josh Plotnik has grown not only as a person but also as an athlete.

Plotnik came to Carnegie Mellon with a strong desire to swim. He began his development starting out as a walk-on to the men's swimming and diving team.

Plotnik made his first University Athletic Association (UAA) appearance last year as a junior. It was not an easy road for Plotnik to get to this point, as he had to fight his way onto the team; having the privilege of competing at UAAs was already an accomplishment. However, Plotnik was not satisfied; he continued to make a splash at UAAs, where he competed in the 100-yard breaststroke. It was his first time swimming the event in less than one minute, and he finished 10th overall.

His best performance so far this season was at the Nike Cup. Plotnik swam the 100 breaststroke and finished a half-second faster than his UAA time from last season. He is going into the UAAs with the fifth fastest time. "I feel that I am moving in the right direction," Plotnik said.

As a biological sciences major, Plotnik has found the perfect balance of academics and athletics here at Carnegie Mellon. In the future, he is looking to attend graduate school and work toward a Ph.D. in microbiology.

Plotnik feels truly grateful for his teammates who have helped him reach his goals. "It wouldn't have been possible without teammates to push me in practice; they were always willing to race me, and at the same time they always kept it light," Plotnik said.

UAAs are less than a month away, and as the swim team continues to train, Plotnik will be one to watch.



J.W. Ramp/Photo Staff

pillbox

PigPen Theatre impresses viewers around nation



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5 The Decemberists' new album surprises fans

by Jing Jing Li

6 School of Seven Bells comes to Pittsburgh

by Anna Walsh

7 Golden Globe-winning film shows royals' humanity

by Divya Krishnan

01.24.11

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...this week only



4 Washington, D.C.

The author recounts her time in the Washington Semester Program.

5 Decemberists

The Decemberists' newest album provides a welcome change from their usual sound.

6 Dream Pop

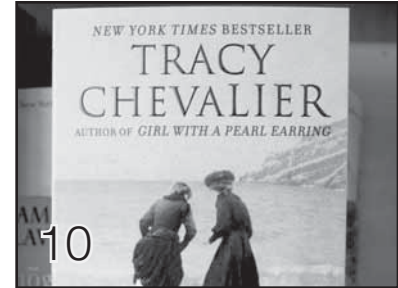
School of Seven Bells, along with three Pittsburgh bands, perform at Mr. Small's Theatre.

7 *The King's Speech*

Read about the Golden Globe-winning film that features Colin Firth.

10 Tracy Chevalier

Learn about Tracy Chevalier's latest book, *Remarkable Creatures*.



...feature

8 PigPen Theatre

Carnegie Mellon students combine talents to wow audiences across the nation.

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5 Paperhouse

The author laments the way iPods can block out nature's soundtrack to life.

7 Dollar Movie

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What do the stars have in store for you this week? Read the horoscopes to find out.

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Mattress Factory provokes thought

Latest exhibit asks questions about racism, politics

Tell someone unfamiliar with Pittsburgh that you're going to the Mattress Factory, and you might earn some quizzical looks. However, the Mattress Factory is not, as its name suggests, a factory for mattresses, but rather a contemporary art museum tucked away on a narrow street in the North Side. Currently, the Mattress Factory is hosting an exhibit titled *Queloides: Race and Racism in Cuban Contemporary Art*.

Queloides is the Spanish word for keloids, which are excessive growths of scar tissue that develop over a wound; the name of the exhibit refers to the social and cultural scars that develop as a result of racism. Although the social transformations implemented in the 1960s in Cuba hoped to erase racism, there has been a resurgence of racist attitudes and racial inequalities in Cuba ever since the Soviet Union's collapse 20 years ago. The exhibit, according to a letter published by the exhibit's curator, Alejandro de la Fuente, "is the emphatic protest of a group of visual artists against the resurgence of racism on the island."

As one might expect from an art exhibit about racism, many of the works were infused with political messages. Pedro Alvarez's "The Romantic Dollarscape Series" incorporates images of Cuban peasants with images from American dollar bills, all in a green color reminiscent of the color of dollars. Alexis Esquivel's "Mitochondrial Democracy" has an even more obvious political theme: In the right-hand side of the painting he put small portraits of all of the United States presidents, with Barack Obama

standing out in stark contrast to the pale, peach, and white portraits of the rest of the presidents. On the rest of the painting he includes portraits of working slaves and a diagram of a mitochondrion, emphasizing that there is no biological distinction between different races, even though many Europeans used to try to make scientific arguments as to why white men were superior.

Although politics was a prevalent theme in many of the artworks, not all of the exhibit's pieces were political. "Ave Maria," by Meira Marrero and José Toirac, was a collection of found statues of the Virgin Mary. René Peña, one of Cuba's best-known photographers, included a series of dark, personal photographs, including "Black Marat," an image of a black man in a bathtub that is highly reminiscent of David's famous painting "Death of Marat." Instead of clutching written political statements, as David's Marat does, Peña's Marat is holding a toilet bowl brush, evoking questions about the relationship between race, education, and social status.

Queloides: Race and Racism in Cuban Contemporary Art, on display through Feb. 27, is a diverse, thought-provoking exhibit, and although its focus is racism in Cuba, viewers may find themselves applying the artwork's questions of race, social structure, and politics to current events right here in the United States.

Anna Walsh | Pillbox Editor



Alexandre Kaspar | Photo Staff

Pedro Alvarez's "One Hundred from The Romantic Dollarship Series" combines images from Cuba with those found on United States dollar bills.

Everything you need to know

About dealing with newfound super powers

Dear Hoskins Brothers,

I recently visited a genetics laboratory and got bitten by a spider there. The next day when I woke up I didn't need my glasses anymore and I was totally buff. I now shoot sticky goo out of my hands and I can climb up walls. What should I do with my newfound powers?

**Sincerely,
P. Parker**

Dear Peter,

Rent *Spiderman*. Right now. Watch it, learn from it, live it. Take some courses on costume design so that your costume looks legitimate. Swing around Pittsburgh fighting crime. Eventually, super-villains will show up and try to fight you. You'll have a lot of close calls, but you'll wind up winning. I suppose you could use your powers for your own gain, like becoming a professional wrestler to buy a car to impress a girl or something, but that's not right. With great power comes great responsibility.

Or you're hallucinating. Who knows what kind of spider that was? You might just be really tripping right now. You should probably see a doctor. They're bound by patient-doctor confidentiality, so you don't have to worry about your secret being revealed. But make sure he's not one-armed and doing research involving lizards and limb regeneration. That won't end well.

**Stay away from blondes,
Patrick Hoskins**

Dear Hoskins Brothers,

I've been reading a lot of comic books lately, and I think it's altering my perception of reality. Whenever I walk down the street, I see "Bang" and "Ker-Pow" popping up whenever there's a real noise. The other day, I swore I saw someone in a red costume swinging through the air. Am I crazy? What should I do?

**Sincerely,
Comic Book Guy**

Dear Guy,

You and our first advice-seeker should hang out. You can stand around and say "Look, up in the sky — it's the Human Spider" (if he called himself Spider-Man, there would be copyright issues involved). Or, you can help him take out a super-villain because "Pittsburghers look out for each other." You can watch his fights and see all the cool sound effects.

That, or you're hallucinating. Unless you're living in a heavily stylized movie like *Scott Pilgrim*, you really shouldn't be seeing "Bang" and "Ker-Pow" everywhere. You should probably see an ophthalmologist. Just keep in mind that if you are in a comic book, you're an innocent bystander. Don't try to be like those guys in *The Dark Knight* who dress up as Batman and try to fight crime. No one likes those guys.

**See a doctor,
Brian Hoskins**

Need advice? Send queries to advice@thetartan.org.

Tales from Washington, D.C.

The author recounts her time in the nation's capitol with the Washington Semester Program

This past fall semester I had the opportunity to live for three months in the heart of our nation's capitol, Washington, D.C. I participated in the Washington Semester Program, which allows students to take classes at Georgetown University and work at an internship of their choosing. Over 50 students from universities across the United States participated, and we got to live in the center of it all: across the street from the Library of Congress and two blocks away from the U.S. Capitol and Supreme Court. At Georgetown, all the students took three classes: Economics, Theories of Constitutional Interpretation, and a Capitol Semester Seminar course.

All the program's students moved in during late August and spent several days getting settled into their apartments, exploring the city, and getting to know one another through orientation activities. We toured the Library of Congress, U.S. Capitol, and Smithsonian Museums, as well as the local neighborhoods. D.C. is such a vibrant, clean, exciting, and busy city, and a lot of the museums and attractions are free.

Throughout the semester, all of the students toured the State Department, Pentagon, World Bank, Federal Reserve, International Monetary Fund, and White House. We also attended a Nationals' baseball game and volunteered at the D.C. Central Kitchen. In our tour of the Pentagon, I learned that during the Cold War, the Soviets

had nuclear weapons aimed at the pavilion in the center of the building, believing there were important secret activities in the area. However, in reality, the center of the building was just a small café. For the internship component, I followed my interests in the defense and security field. I interned at Booz Allen Hamilton working on a team for the Office of Nuclear Nonproliferation & International Security, a division of the Department of Energy. My goal was to create a strategic planning initiative examining the years 2016–20 and considering possible shocks and surprises. It was an invaluable experience where I learned the intricacies of the consulting world, many of which cannot be taught in a classroom.

Being in D.C. provided great opportunities to attend many events and network with people. Upon the recommendation of a colleague, I joined Young Consultants D.C., which ended up connecting me with people from all around the nation's capitol. The Washington Semester Program also gives participants the opportunity to apply for a mentor who is an alumnus of the program. My mentor ended up becoming a great friend — we still talk every week.

I also had many informational meetings with important business people and government officials to learn more about their experiences and perspective on the industry.

Kiron Skinner, the director of the Center of International Relations and Politics program at Carnegie Mellon, arranged a dinner meeting for the students with Paul Wolfowitz, former president of the World Bank. I learned to try to find mentors around me, utilize any company forums, attend all possible lectures and conferences, and, most importantly, say yes to any opportunity. Living on my own in D.C. gave me the chance to try new things that I might not have tried otherwise. I decided to begin learning Arabic and signed up for a class on Saturday mornings. I also took salsa lessons, attended concerts, and traveled around the area outside the city. New York City is only a four-hour bus ride, and the beach is just an hour away.

My time living at the heart of the nation's capitol was incredible. It helped strengthen my conviction to go into the defense industry upon graduation. I met passionate, knowledgeable, and friendly people, upon whom I know I can rely to guide me in the future. The semester was a unique opportunity to simultaneously gain course credit, work experience, and a new perspective on the world beyond Carnegie Mellon.

Alisa Deychman | Special to The Tartan

Alisa Deychman poses with all of her roommates. The Washington Semester Program included students from universities around the United States.



Courtesy of Alisa Deychman

Decemberists' new album surprises fans

The King is Dead provides new, unpredictable sound

To be blunt, The Decemberists are pretty predictable. Ever since they released their debut album, *Castaways and Cutouts*, in 2002, they've been coming out with new albums every couple of years. They still have the same charming, part indie rock, part folk sound they started with a decade ago. They still have a thing for concept albums, as well as quirky, obscure allusions to history and literature that music nerds pride themselves on figuring out. Even Carnegie Mellon has had its own experience with the predictability of The Decemberists. On multiple occasions, the Activities Board has put a bid out for the band, only to be stalled on the bid before finally being turned down.

Anticipating The Decemberists' next move has become second nature to fans and critics alike, but let's get one thing straight: Predictability is not the same as boring, and if there is one thing this quintet is not, it's boring. This becomes more apparent with the group's recent release, *The King Is Dead*. To say that the album is a complete departure from The Decemberists' previous work would be inaccurate. Instead, the band merely took a slight detour for some fresh perspective. For one, the album is much simpler. *The King Is Dead* isn't even a concept album. There is no intricate narrative, no complex twists and turns, no epic adventures. Instead of the usual English-folk background, the band turns to American country roots. The album was even recorded in a barn. What results is refreshing and addicting.

To help in the band's dabble in Americana, frontman Colin Meloy recruited a few acclaimed musicians in the field to appear on the album, including Gillian

Welch, who lends her voice to seven tracks. Another pleasant surprise was Peter Buck of R.E.M. fame, who adds his unmistakable 12-string guitar sounds to the single "Down By The Water" and "Calamity Song," as well as the mandolin to the first track, "Don't Carry It All."

The rest of the songs in the album display a variety of inspirations. "All Arise!" begins with a country fiddle in a way that is extraordinarily similar to the way stereotypical barn dances in movies start. With a little Irish twang, "Rox In The Box" might be the track on the album most reminiscent of Decemberists' older sounds, but even this seems like a stretch. The album ends with "Dear Avery," a somber ballad lamenting the inability of a parent to protect a young boy who is growing up from experiencing the harms of the world.

For once, The Decemberists proved that they can not only embrace change, but also excel at it. The sound is still unmistakably Decemberists — the music is still charming, and Meloy's voice is still able to inspire heartache — but now it's infused with a looser, more rustic feel. The sound is new and more exciting, like that feeling when you make a new friend on the first day of school with whom you can't wait to spend more time. The Decemberists can no longer be accused of being predictable. Instead, listeners wait with bated breath to see what next epic adventure The Decemberists will bring.

Jing Jing Li | Staffwriter



Courtesy of Matthew Hickey

The Decemberists depart from the band's usual sound on their newest album, instead drawing inspiration from Americana influences.

WRCT
88.3 FM

Paperhouse

On life's soundtrack

Call me old-fashioned, but file sharing and portable music devices have spoiled us. It is my belief that the infinite world of audible vibrations has been hit hard by those iPods of ours.

Music and sound have become commodities. We buy them and sell them in cute digital packages. That's a sad thing. Why? Well, think of this: If you were now asked to act as a Foley artist to reproduce the soundscape of the world around you, you would hardly even know where to begin. Do oak trees hiss? How would you describe the song of a gutter? What about the musical interludes of the brakes on a bus ride? If you can't answer these questions, maybe you're no longer listening. Well, maybe *you* are, but there are a lot of folks who aren't.

Today, in the year 2011, we all have our own personal soundtracks. With these soundtracks, we are now capable of muting life's daily chance encounters. We dictate what plays when and thereby plan how we'll be feeling throughout the day. We are now in control of what symphony will be pulling at our heartstrings on a train ride from Lisbon to Lyon.

When we do experience life's chance encounters, there is no vibrancy to the color of these memories. It's sound that makes these realities we experience memorable. Some argue that this lack of memorability has begun to lead to a disintegration of direct human communications. That may hold true, but what I find more alarming is how this degrades our individual relationships with the world of sound.

Sound will always be that billowing force that, despite man's efforts to sculpt, will always at its core be untouchable. To treat sound in any other manner, to attempt to wield it greedily like a drug that can rocket you into states of orgiastic bliss, is hubris.

Love music and love the noise. Make the music and make the noise.

Hugs and kisses,

Juan Fernandez | Staffwriter

top 10 on WRCT 88.3 FM

most played albums of the last week

- 1 Sounds from the Ground — *The Maze*
- 2 Thunderball — *12 Mile High*
- 3 Velella Velella — *Atlantis Massif*
- 4 Royksopp — *Senior*
- 5 Neil Young — *Le Noise*
- 6 Brown Angel — *Brown Angel*
- 7 Jay Dix — *Over a Trillion Served/Mahogany the Chef*
- 8 Drugs of Faith — *Corroded*
- 9 Anthony Braxton/Ben Opie — *Duets (Pittsburgh) 2008*
- 10 Danilo Perez — *Providencia*

School of Seven Bells brings dreamy sounds

Electronic band puts on successful show, despite recent lineup changes

For fans of hypnotic beats and dreamy, sweet vocals, the School of Seven Bells' concert at Mr. Small's Theatre was the place to be last Friday.

The show, which was presented by the University of Pittsburgh's radio station, WPTS, began with three Pittsburgh bands serving as opening acts. The first was The Show, a four-man group whose music was reminiscent of any rock group that might have begun in a high school student's garage. Although the majority of the members looked relaxed on the stage, the lead singer acted almost manic, jumping around the stage in an attempt to hype up the audience. After The Show's half hour set, The Velcro Shoes took the stage. The Velcro Shoes also identified themselves as a garage rock band, with high-energy music that sounded like it had heavy influences from both Foo Fighters and Weezer.

The last opening act of the evening was The Wrong Airport, a two-man band composed of recent Carnegie Mellon alumni Ryan Woodring and Patrick Torrez. Despite having only two members, The Wrong Airport still presented fun, complex music, creating loops of synthesizers, beat-boxing, and guitar chords to play behind Woodring and Torrez's singing and guitar playing. The repetitive loops had an almost hypnotizing effect, particularly on songs such as "Highway" and "Strange How," the latter being the group's final song of the evening about losing one's virginity.



Anna Walsh | Pillbox Editor

Finally, School of Seven Bells took the stage, wandering onto a dark stage as dreamy electronic sounds played in the background, and burst into the song "My Cabal." School of Seven Bells originally consisted of identical twins Alejandra and Claudia Deheza and Benjamin Curtis, with the sisters singing vocals and Curtis creating the music to back the lyrics. However, Claudia recently left the band due to personal reasons, leaving School of Seven Bells with only one singer.

This was the first show the band had played since Claudia's departure, and the decrease in vocal strength was evident: On the first song, the instruments and electronics completely overpowered Deheza's voice until the sound levels were adjusted accordingly. Furthermore, the magic of many of School of Seven Bells' songs relies on its hypnotic vocal harmonies, and with only one singer, the vocals in the concert often felt too thin, particularly on songs such as "Dust Devil" and "Half Asleep." Although Deheza had a clear, lovely voice, her voice wasn't quite strong enough on its own to provide a fullness in vocals necessary to balance out the instruments. However, since it was her first show since her sister's departure, one could give her some leeway as School of Seven Bells adjusted to its new lineup.

The band flowed from one song into the next, only pausing once within its set after the second or third song to greet the audience. Both Deheza and Curtis were clearly deeply involved in their music, dancing around the stage as though entranced by the sounds they were creating. The seamless transitions between songs helped the audience get as wrapped up in the music as the musicians were, with many audience members swaying and dancing.

After a short set — they only played for an hour — the band's members slipped off stage the same way they had slipped onto it: quietly walking off in the darkness as their electronic backings continued to play. However, after the insistent applause of the audience, they came back onstage for an encore, Curtis putting up a finger to indicate that they would only play one more song. The band broke into a cover of a Siouxsie and The Banshees song, putting its own dreamy spin on the song. Deheza

Left: Opening act The Wrong Airport incorporated loops into their act to make their music more complex.
Right: This is School of Seven Bells' first tour with only one singer, Alejandra Deheza.



Anna Walsh | Pillbox Editor

often broke into laughter throughout the song, as she seemed to occasionally forget the lyrics, and as the song ended Deheza and Curtis both thanked the audience, beaming, before walking offstage for the final time.

Despite the vocal gap left from Claudia Deheza's departure, School of Seven Bells still was able to put on a hypnotically beautiful show, proving that they put the "dream" in "dream pop."

Anna Walsh | Pillbox Editor

The King's Speech documents touching journey

Golden Globe-winning film recounts the tale of a king overcoming speech impediment

In the 68th Annual Golden Globe Awards, *The King's Speech* emerged quite successfully, garnering seven nominations and winning the Best Actor award for Colin Firth's performance as the main character, Prince Albert. The film opens in England in 1925 as Albert speaks at the Empire Exhibition at Wembley Stadium with great difficulty. Albert, fondly known to his family as "Bertie," is the Duke of York and the second son of King George V. His royal birth — and later, the abdication of his elder brother and his resulting coronation as King George VI — necessitates that he often speak publicly. Unfortunately, Bertie suffers from a stammer.

This is the basic premise of the story. Nearly everyone closely associated with Bertie tries to help him overcome his speech impediment by bringing numerous physicians, therapists, and speech specialists to see him. In a particularly funny scene reminiscent of Henry Higgins and Eliza Doolittle in *My Fair Lady*, a famous doctor hired by Bertie's wife Elizabeth (Helena Bonham Carter) tries to treat the prince by asking him to read with several marbles in his mouth. This episode,

during which Bertie nearly chokes, causes him to abandon the entire process, and he stops searching for treatments.

Elizabeth, however, remains determined, and contacts Lionel Logue (Geoffrey Rush), an Australian speech therapist known for his "unorthodox and controversial" methods of speech treatment. Logue — who insists upon calling the prince "Bertie" to maintain equality within the patient setting — is a failed actor and is not certified to rectify speech impediments. His therapy comes from his experience with shell-shocked soldiers. Nevertheless, he applies his knowledge to Bertie's situation, using several different techniques that seriously ruffle Bertie's equanimity. These include making Bertie recite nursery rhymes, swear volubly, and put words to music — Logue even trawls through Bertie's childhood to reach the psychological roots of his stammer.

All this, however, comes to a climax when England declares war on Germany and Bertie, as king, must deliver the first wartime address. Terrified of failing his country because of his inability to speak fluently, he frequently doubts himself. "The nation believes that when I speak, I speak for them," he tells Logue, "...but I can't speak!" And yet he can. The scene where Bertie

discovers that he has a right to be heard, that he "[has] a voice" is the climax of the story and perhaps the most touching moment of the film. Bertie's self-discovery and self-actualization stand as a testament to the bravery of one man and an inspiration to audiences worldwide.

Less a film about the lives of royalty than a story of one man's personal courage, *The King's Speech* seeks to present the royal family, especially the king, as humans capable of the same fears and the same strengths as the common people. On one level, this movie is about letting King George VI become "Bertie" to the audience just as he finally allows himself to be "Bertie" with Logue. We see him at his best and his worst, from his breakdown after his brother David's abdication, to his devotion to his wife and his daughters and his unswerving sense of loyalty and duty to his country. Indeed, the sacrifice he makes becomes painfully clear when he tells Logue, "If we were equals, I'd be at home with my wife and no one would give a damn." Ultimately, *The King's Speech* is a movie where fine acting is the heart of the film. Its humor, pathos, and confidence are sure to carry it high as the Academy Awards approach.

Divya Krishnan | Junior Staffwriter



Jesse Kummer | Staffwriter

Infernal Affairs

Thursday, Jan. 27

8 10 12

Kicking off this week of movies about cops and robbers is *Infernal Affairs*. Probably best known as "that flick that the multi-Oscar-winning picture *The Departed* was based on," the original is a fantastic story of loyalty, honor, and betrayal that follows two men: a mole in the police department and an undercover cop in the mob. Their objectives are to find each other, resulting in a tangled web of lies and deceit that predictably ends in quite a bit of bloodshed. Fun fact: This movie spawned a sequel and a prequel, as well as Scorsese's remake.

The Town

Friday, Jan. 28

7:30 10 12:30

Ben Affleck is turning into quite the director, and *The Town* is his latest gem. Affleck helped write the script, and he also co-starred in the film alongside Jon Hamm and Jeremy Renner to make up a solid cast of characters in this Boston-based crime drama. In it, we follow Affleck, Renner, and company as they live the lives of career criminals while Hamm, who plays an FBI agent, attempts to track them down. As you can expect, things go awry during a heist or two and tensions rise on both sides, culminating in a stellar movie experience for anyone who enjoys seeing cinema at its best.

Training Day

Saturday, Jan. 29

7:30 10 12:30

Training Day won Denzel Washington his first Oscar for Best Actor. That should be enough reason to see this excellent police drama, but if you need more, here goes: It also stars Ethan Hawke and a host of people you'll recognize as "that guy" from other movies and shows — it even has Snoop Dogg. Denzel plays an LAPD detective who is evaluating Hawke on his first day as a narcotics officer. As Hawke is exposed to a world of corruption he wants no part of, events get real and he finds himself in a battle for his life. Featuring outstanding performances from the ensemble cast, this film is one you don't want to miss.

Scarface

Sunday, Jan. 30

7 10 1

One of the greatest crime dramas in American cinema history, *Scarface* features one of Al Pacino's signature performances as Tony Montana, a cocaine smuggler in 1980s Miami. We follow Tony's rise through the ranks of the drug world as he climbs atop the coke ladder until it all deteriorates. Famed screenwriter/director Oliver Stone wrote this cult classic that was initially panned by critics when it was first released. Fun fact: When first finished, *Scarface* received an X rating three times from the MPAA for its extreme scenes of drug use and violence.

PigPen Theatre impresses audiences around nation

Carnegie Mellon students combine talents, with enchanting results

by **Samaya Sinha** | Junior Staffwriter

It's a peaceful Sunday evening, and the campus is enveloped in a quiet, lazy slumber. There is not a person in sight, yet there is that general uneasiness in the air as another ominous Monday gradually looms closer. It is on days such as these that the PigPen Theatre Company convenes in order to rehearse for its productions, its members tearing themselves away from the realities of schoolwork in order to create their own colorful, unique productions. Their pieces incorporate folklore, fairytales, shadow puppetry, movement, music, and rhythm — a delightful blend of various aspects of theater to completely master the art of storytelling. Indeed, the ensemble has discovered “really innovative ways of portraying characters,” said Joe Mendick, a first-year acting major.

The group's talent has even earned it the honor of “overall excellence in a production” at the reputable New York City International Fringe Festival, considered one of the greatest performance arts gatherings in the nation, in 2010. According to *Newsvine.com*, “PigPen is a supreme example of low-tech theatrical splendor at its wittiest, and the results are nothing less than magical.” It is hard to believe that the PigPen Theatre Company's journey to such nationally acclaimed success began in each ensemble member's first year at Carnegie Mellon.

It all started with Playground, an annual tradition within the School of Drama that gives students the opportunity

to create and perform in original productions. As first-years, Alex Falberg, Arya Shahi, Ben Ferguson, Curtis Gillen, Dan Weschler, Matt Nuernberger, and Ryan Melia were not invited to perform in productions organized by upperclassmen. Instead, they decided to create their own piece, overcoming initial laziness and forcing themselves to work on a script that Weschler recalled as being “an abysmal piece of theater.”

However, just days before their scheduled performance, they opted to start over, instead choosing to use a plot that they had created together during a simple story-telling exercise. Ultimately, it was their instinct and their intuition that led to the creation of *The Hunter and the Bear*, the PigPen ensemble's first production. The 22-minute piece recounted the tale of a hunter's journey in search of a bear that had killed his son. Strangely hilarious, dark, and even sinister, the plot took a turn when the hunter's encounter with the bear wasn't quite what the hunter thought it would be.

Finally, the day of the PigPen ensemble's first performance arrived and the group scrambled to prepare their performance space for the show, running into a few setbacks that they had not quite anticipated. The performance required a dark area for the show's shadow puppetry component — however, the group was inconveniently scheduled to perform in a studio with large windows on a sunny day. Commotion ensued as comforters, mattresses, and sheets from various dorm rooms were dragged to the studio in a

last-minute attempt to create the dark atmosphere that was absolutely vital for the show. Although its first performance was extremely successful, it was only after the group's sophomore-year Playground experience that the PigPen ensemble considered creating a theater company, bringing up the possibility of performing together even after graduating from Carnegie Mellon.

It was ultimately their Playground experiences together that helped the ensemble members become close friends — according to Nuernberger, “everyone [had] something to contribute.” Despite disputes and disagreements as to the plot or content of their productions, a consensus was always reached among the ensemble members since “everyone [wanted] the best for the story,” Melia said.

Recently, the group's increasing involvement in setting up the PigPen Theatre Company allowed its members to develop even closer relationships with each other, rather than being “just college friends,” Ferguson said. Instead, they have become a family, and this is certainly reflected in each of their performances. As hailed by the *Vineyard Times Review*, PigPen Theatre Company's *The Mountain Song* is “a brilliantly choreographed piece of theater with a sense of continuous activity and a flow that could only be wrought by a group accustomed to working closely together.” Indeed, every member of the ensemble contributes to every aspect of each production, from the music to the script and the choreography, as well as lighting and costumes — every member is valuable to the ensemble as a whole.



Courtesy of Arya Shahi

Thus, with a combination of talent, luck, and teamwork, the PigPen Theatre Company was immensely successful at the 2010 New York City International Fringe Festival for its latest piece, *The Nightmare Story*; the company was asked to return to New York City to give an encore performance at the Players Theatre, and even gained the opportunity to perform at the prestigious La Mama, one of New York City's grandest experimental theaters.

Achievements aside, the ensemble members also felt it important to share their first performance in New York City with each other, especially after seeing one another grow and develop as actors throughout the years. The Fringe Festival opened an exciting new world for the PigPen Theatre Company — Shahi described it as a “community of young artists,” with which the group hopes to collaborate in the near future.

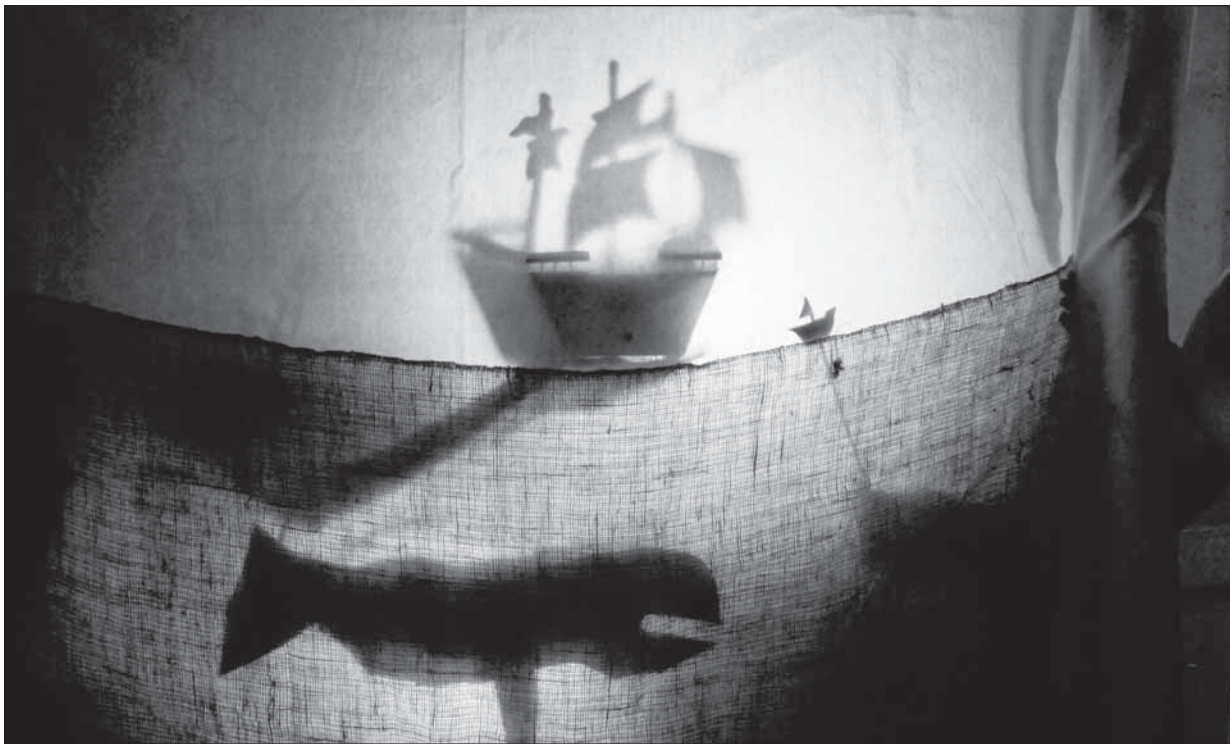
However, the ensemble also hopes to be aided by Carnegie Mellon's extensive network of artists, musicians, playwrights, dramaturgs, composers, and professors — it was particularly enthralling to hear the ensemble's first-hand account of its performance for Joan Rivers, who was told to attend the company's performance by a promotions director of the Fringe festival, who had in turn been told to attend its performance by a voice teacher at Carnegie Mellon.

Reflecting upon their time spent at Carnegie Mellon, the ensemble members are very grateful to the professors and administration members of Carnegie Mellon's acting department, who have been adamant supporters and mentors to the group, sharing and contributing to its unique interest in folklore and storytelling while promoting its productions. The group is also especially thankful for the Carnegie Mellon acting department's

unique method of influencing young actors by carefully adapting to each individual student's performance strengths. The PigPen Theatre Company is one of the few ensembles from Carnegie Mellon to become prominent in the realm of theater, following in the footsteps of the Great Samaritans, another Carnegie Mellon ensemble that has graduated. Perhaps one of the major reasons that the PigPen Theatre Company has achieved such heights of success is because each member of the ensemble is always open to new musical styles and storytelling methods that will enhance its productions — they count The Decemberists, Woody Guthrie, Johnny Cash, Jim Henson's *The Storyteller*, and *Forrest Gump* amongst PigPen's numerous influences.

It seems that all those Sunday rehearsals and plans ultimately created an extremely strong and capable theatrical ensemble, a group that will go on to achieve many more successes in New York City, perhaps continuing to strengthen its ensemble in New York or maybe even turning their attention to animation in the years to come — there seems to be an infinite number of possibilities for the PigPen Theatre Company, an infinite number of paths from which to pick and choose.

Yet, whatever the PigPen ensemble might decide to do in the future, its members will still have that wonderful ability to tell stories, to awaken the imagination of both adults and children alike, to make one feel like “being an eight-year-old again,” according to first-year drama student Josh Buckwald. They will always have that wonderful ability to take creative risks and leaps, to dare to do what has never been tried before, to leap forward. It will be interesting to see what they will achieve next.



Courtesy of Arya Shahi

Did you know?

100

Jan. 25, 1911

The Carnegie Tech hockey team was forced to disband this week after failing to secure an arena to host their matches. Apparently, Pittsburgh actually had warm weather in January, as an outdoor arena was equally out of the question. Global warming, you say? Yeah, right.

50

Jan. 18, 1961

Sigma Nu came in first place in a Marlboro cigarette contest by turning in 17,325 cigarette packets. Over 50,000 packets were collected and incinerated after the contest was over. Secondhand smoke concerns were laughed off as “silly and unmanly.”

25

Jan. 21, 1986

“The Inquiring Staff” wonders what campus building will be named after President Cyert after he leaves the university, and hazards a guess that it might be the spacious Carnegie Mellon steam tunnels. You’d think they could have guessed Cyert Hall — after all, his name’s already there.

10

Jan. 22, 2001

A Forum article this week comments how the “Ginger” project, which would later become known as the Segway, would probably not live up to its surrounding hype. The authors’ fears seem to have been valid, as today one rarely sees Segways outside of tour groups, malls, and Carnegie Mellon’s campus.

5

Jan. 23, 2006

WQED decided to dispose of 5,000 or so old records over break, so our own WRCT decided it was a prime time to dumpster dive to save the trashed records. It’s refreshing to see that Carnegie Mellon students never put personal hygiene ahead of any other cause.

1

Jan. 18, 2010

A Pillbox writer complains that the late-night controversy between Jay Leno and Conan O’Brien has taken away from media coverage of true global events. I humbly disagree — isn’t remaining oblivious to world events the American way?

Jesse Kummer | Staffwriter

Chevalier brings fossil hunter to life

Remarkable Creatures takes readers into 19th century

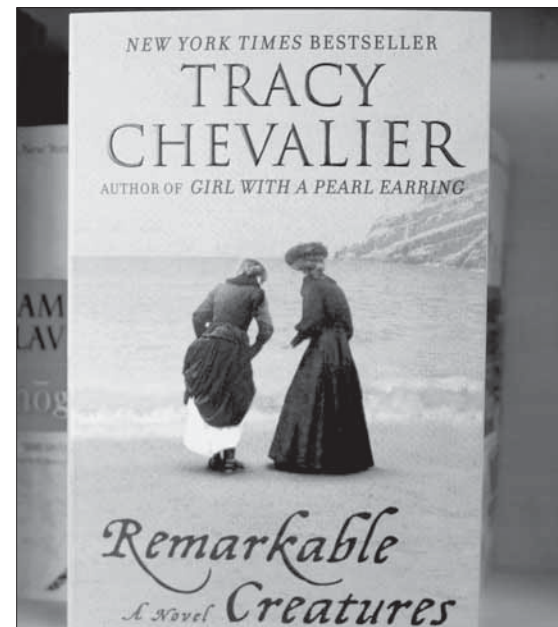
Aside from walking past the statue of the diplodocus outside of the Carnegie Library, currently wrapped in a scarf to weather the winter months, one is unlikely to encounter a dinosaur in Pittsburgh. Despite the fact that tyrannosauruses do not roam the streets of Squirrel Hill today, few would question the fact that dinosaurs once existed ages ago. However, for Europeans living in the 19th century, the idea that a creature could exist at one point, but not exist today, would have been shocking. To them, the idea was blasphemous because it challenged the priests’ literal translation of the Bible, which was interpreted to say that God did not make mistakes. The idea of an extinct creature, an animal that could not survive in its environment, would have been considered a mistake.

Within this close-minded world dominated by the Church, author Tracy Chevalier explores in *Remarkable Creatures* the true story of a working-class woman living on the English coastline who discovers an anomaly — the bones of a creature that is not quite a crocodile, but rather an animal that died out years ago: an Ichtyosaurus.

Remarkable Creatures focuses on the life of Mary Anning. Anning was a poor, uneducated, self-taught “fossil hunter” with an uncanny gift for spotting skeletons. Despite the fact that women were second-class citizens in 19th century English society, Anning’s talent for fossil hunting allowed her to carve her own place in a male dominated world — and eventually into the history books — as a woman who worked side-by-side with prominent scientists of her day. Her work helped lead the European scientific community towards a new way of understanding the creation of the world.

Told through the eyes of someone who lived her own life in the presence of the bones of those who came before her, *Remarkable Creatures* is also a reflection on life and death. The juxtaposition of life and death, which Anning encounters on her day-to-day scavenges, makes the reader acutely aware of the overwhelming age of the Earth in comparison to the briefness of one’s own life. In a world that does not encourage freedom of thought, the perspective Anning gains from scavenging helps her and the other characters to reach their own self-actualizations and cast off the weight of society in order to live their own lives, rather than suffer to fit the mold that society assigns them.

Breaking barriers for science, religion, and women’s rights, *Remarkable Creatures* is a thought-provoking story, beautifully woven together through rich imagery, compelling characters, and an enthralling plot. Historical fiction has never felt more real than when Chevalier, who also wrote *Girl With a Pearl*



Tommy Hofman | Photo Editor

Tracy Chevalier’s *Remarkable Creatures*, published in 2009, follows a 19th century fossil hunter.

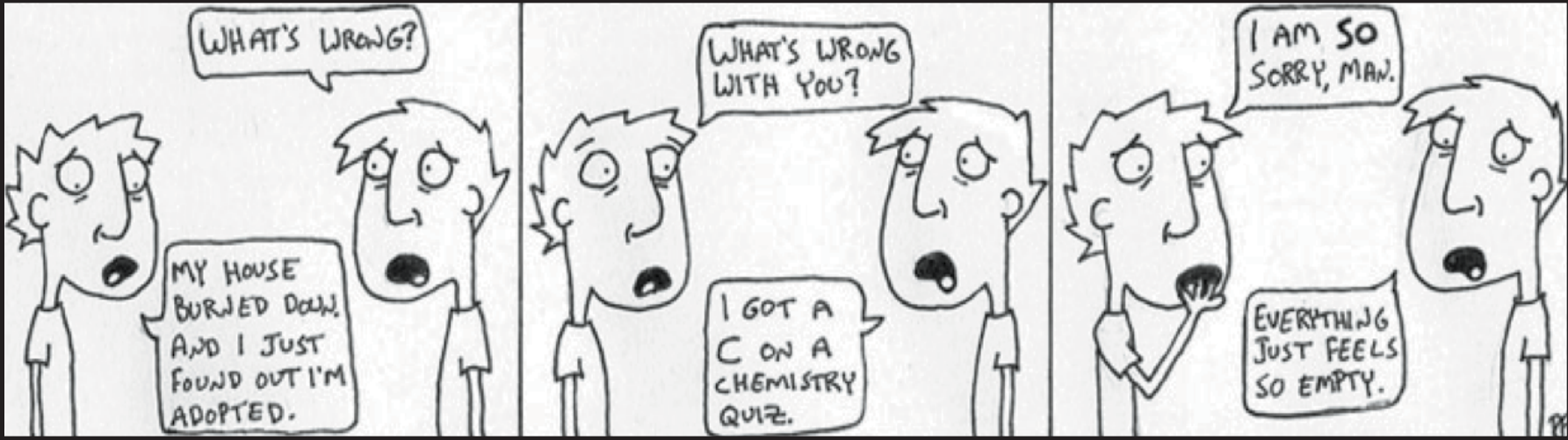
Earring, describes the way the waves lick the beach, or the jolt that Mary gets when she sifts through the sand and discovers a new fossil.

Today, Anning’s work is showcased in the Natural History Museum in London and at Oxford University. Check out *Remarkable Creatures*, available at all major bookstores and libraries. Also, for more information on dinosaurs, go see the “Dinosaurs in Their Time” exhibit, featured at the Carnegie Museum of Natural History here in Pittsburgh.

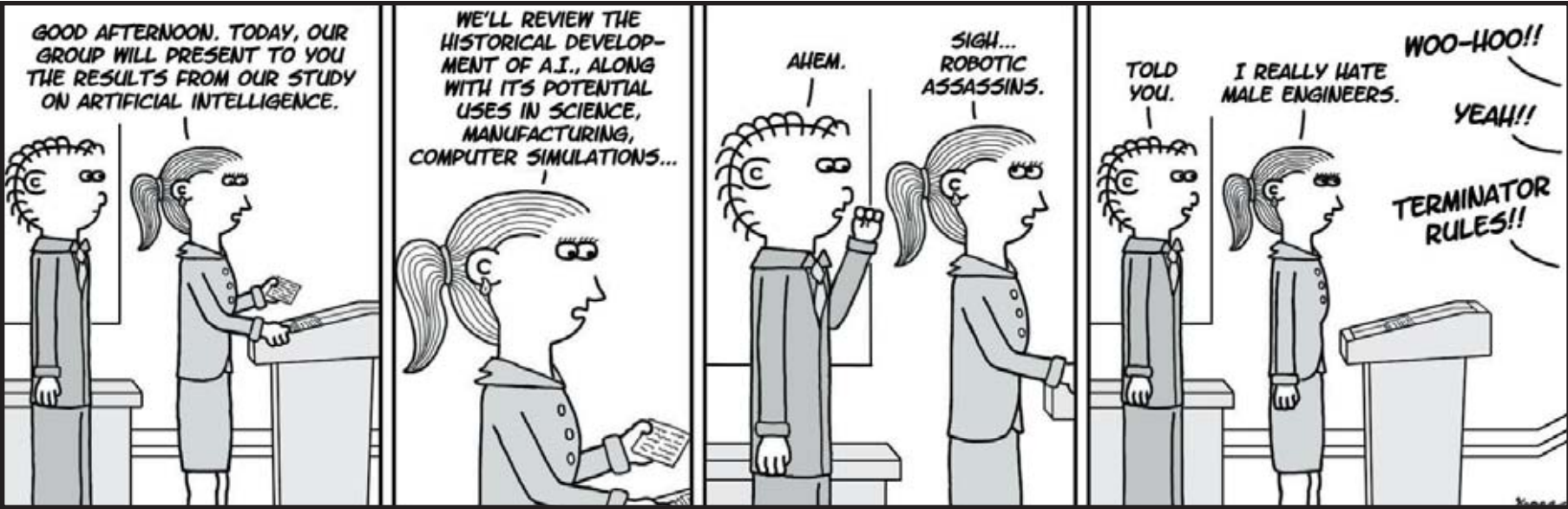
Jackie Mansky | Junior Staffwriter



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Online at www.poorlydrawnlines.com



Online at www.lde-online.com

Very Hard Difficulty

	8				3	6	9	
	5		2		9			8
		6		1				
		4					2	5
		5	1		2	9		
8	2					7		
				3		2		
3			6		5		8	
	9	8	7				3	

Easy Difficulty

2			9			6	8	
		5	8	2				
			3	5				
	7				3		4	6
3		6		9		5		8
1	4		5				3	
				4	5			
				3	2	7		
	6	7			9			2

Sudokus courtesy of www.opensky.ca/~jdhildeb/software/sudokugen/

Solutions from Jan. 17, 2011

1	E	C	R	U			D	O	A			M	A	S	C	
2	T	H	E	M			B	E	I	G	E		A	L	T	O
3	N	E	A	P			E	A	S	E	L		S	P	E	C
4	A	R	R	I	V	E	D	E	R	C		I		E	N	O
5			R	E	L							I	M	A	N	
6	I	R	E	N	I	C		G	D	A	N	S	K			
7	D	O	E		A	N	O	D	E		C	A	T	O	S	
8	E	T	A	S		E	M	I	T	S		T	O	A	T	
9	C	A	C	T	I		F	E	A	T	S		C	L	U	
10		S	T	U	M	P	Y				T	R	O	I	K	A
11			I	B	A	R					I	B	N			
12	G	U	V		M	I	S	C	O	N	S	T	R	U	E	
13	I	R	A	S		S	T	I	N	G		O	I	L	S	
14	B	A	T	E		M	A	T	E	Y		N	E	E	T	
15	E	L	E	M			R	Y	A			E	L	E	A	

Crossword

5	4	3	7	6	9	2	8	1
7	1	6	2	5	8	3	9	4
9	8	2	4	3	1	7	6	5
3	5	8	1	4	2	6	7	9
1	9	7	6	8	5	4	2	3
6	2	4	3	9	7	5	1	8
4	3	1	8	7	6	9	5	2
8	6	5	9	2	4	1	3	7
2	7	9	5	1	3	8	4	6

Hard Difficulty

5	1	2	4	8	6	9	7	3
6	7	9	2	3	1	5	4	8
8	4	3	5	9	7	2	6	1
2	3	5	7	1	8	4	9	6
7	9	1	3	6	4	8	2	5
4	6	8	9	5	2	3	1	7
1	5	7	8	2	9	6	3	4
3	2	6	1	4	5	7	8	9
9	8	4	6	7	3	1	5	2

Medium Difficulty

Horoscopes

aries

march 21–april 19

You seem to be exhibiting some hamster-like behavior this week, characterized by persistent running in place. It will be okay — you’re just experiencing the effects of too much time spent in the Doherty/Wean/Gates indoor pathways.

taurus

april 20–may 20

Your self-expression through your clothing choices is refreshing, especially during these gray-looking days, but you can’t honestly be warm in those shorts.

gemini

may 21–june 21

It’s the third week of school and work isn’t that bad yet. Take advantage of this time and go explore the city. With a charged phone, the number for a cab, and good friends, you can ensure that wherever you end up will be fun.

cancer

june 22–july 22

Trust me, the weather could be worse. Granted, it’s cold, but at least the weather isn’t so bad that the school’s wireless has been knocked out. Then again, maybe that would make things better. You might actually get work done then.

leo

july 23–aug. 22

Today is when you will realize that you added your Andrew ID to way too many d-lists at the Activities Fair. Control the wave of e-mails now or be forever doomed to sort through mass e-mails for the next semester.

virgo

aug. 23–sept. 22

Remember that you control your Google Calendar; your Google Calendar does not control you.

libra

sept. 23–oct. 22

Please do not use someone else’s laptop power adapter as your own personal heater. It more than likely isn’t that safe, and the other person probably will be less than thrilled to see you cozying with his or her stuff.

scorpio

oct. 23–nov. 21

While sitting in front of a window you will lose yourself in thought. You will be shocked to realize that you have been sitting in the same spot for hours. Yes, you missed class, but it won’t be the end of the world.

sagittarius

nov. 22–dec. 21

It’s time for you to demand the creation of a club that will bring the campus community together and aid in students’ performance in class. It is time to become president of Five More Minutes, Carnegie Mellon’s official napping club.

capricorn

dec. 22–jan. 19

Let your hair down Friday and do something that makes you happy. This treat isn’t because you have done something special, but because you need to do something special in order to have a little fun.

aquarius

jan. 20–feb. 18

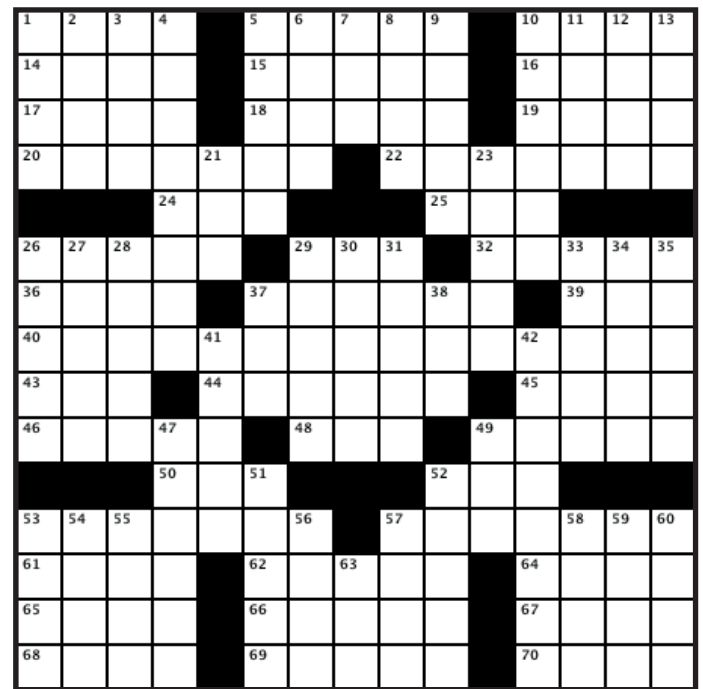
Yelling toward the street and muttering profanities under your breath won’t make the buses run any faster. Whether or not it makes you warmer, however, is still something to be debated.

pisces

feb. 19–march 20

Try to be like Thoreau this week. Find a quiet place to sit and think about something grander and more profound than what’s on Blackboard.

Nicole Hamilton | Comics Editor



Crossword courtesy of *BestCrosswords.com*

ACROSS

1. Rope fiber
5. Madonna role
10. Scarf
14. Consumer
15. Poisonous fluid
16. Inter ____
17. Appraise, charge per unit
18. Angry
19. Slender
20. Third day of the week
22. Blow up
24. Charged particle
25. Caliginous
26. Digression
29. Baseball execs
32. Seizes with teeth
36. Filmmaker Riefenstahl
37. Fit with clothes
39. Buddhist temple
40. Reticent
43. East Lansing sch.
44. Inflammatory condition of the skin
45. Hurler Hershiser
46. Simmons rival
48. Compass pt.
49. Wrong
50. Bass, e.g.
52. Play on words
53. Braided
57. 4 Seasons No. 1 hit of 1964
61. Lubricates
62. Faithful
64. Accomplishment
65. Ballet bend
66. 2, 4, 6, 8, etc.
67. Orange cover
68. Authenticating mark
69. Not hesitant
70. Corrida cries

Down

1. Injure
2. Biblical birthright seller
3. Allot
4. Military post
5. Perrier rival
6. Extremely
7. Actress Balin
8. Carry
9. Change for the better
10. Italian sausage
11. Banned apple spray
12. Vocalize melodically
13. Codlike fish
21. Anonymous John
23. Seventh sign of the zodiac
26. Grads
27. Have a feeling about
28. Become liable for
29. Surgical dressing
30. Floating bombs
31. Thin glutinous mud
33. Use a baton, say
34. Roof overhangs
35. Inscribed pillar
37. HBO alternative
38. South American tuber
41. Repasts
42. Back-and-forth
47. Pendent ornament
49. Stale air
51. Conger catcher
52. Like old friends
53. Outstanding
54. Anger
55. “East of Eden” director Kazan
56. Bird of peace
57. Monetary unit of South Africa
58. Trompe l’____
59. Alley
60. Former Fords
63. Affirmative reply

MONDAY1.24.11

AcoustiCafe Open Stage. Club Café. 6:30 p.m.
Menahem Pressler. Bellefield Hall, University of Pittsburgh. 7:30 p.m.
Liz Phair. Rex Theater. 8 p.m. 21+

TUESDAY1.25.11

Identities In Conflict: The Recognition of Migrants. Carnegie Mellon University, location TBA. 4:30 p.m.
James Swartz Entrepreneurial Leadership Series. 151 Posner Hall. 5:30 p.m.
Pittsburgh Penguins Hockey. Consol Energy Center. 7 p.m.
Brad Yoder. Club Cafe. 8 p.m.

WEDNESDAY1.26.11

Data Privacy Day. Hamburg Hall. 11 a.m.
James Swartz Entrepreneurial Leadership Series. Posner Hall 151. 12:30 p.m.
Radical Cartooning in the Labor Movement. McKenna/Peter/Wright Rooms. 6 p.m.

THURSDAY1.27.11

A Career in Pro Sports. Hamburg Hall 1000. Noon.
Is Your Job Making You Fat? Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh (Downtown). 12:15 p.m.
ULS: Brewing Tea in a Kettle of War. Porter Hall 100. 4:30 p.m.
Pour For A Cure. PNC Park. 5:30 p.m.
A Night in Celebration of Robert Burns. Pittsburgh Athletic Association. 6 p.m.
LGBT Equality Town Hall Meeting. East Liberty Presbyterian Church. 6:30 p.m.
Boilermaker Jazz Band. Pittsburgh Center for the Arts. 7:30 p.m.

FRIDAY1.28.11

Gallery Crawl. Pittsburgh Cultural District. 5:30 p.m.
Black, White, & Read All Over: John Green. Carnegie Library Lecture Hall. 7 p.m.
Jonathon Coulton. Rex Theatre. 8 p.m.
Kenny Blake. Melange Bistro Bar. 9 p.m.
Lubriphonic. Rex Theatre. 9 p.m. 21+

SATURDAY1.29.11

Ben Hackett. Club Cafe. 7 p.m. 21+
NextStage Dance Residency Showcase. Kelly-Strayhorn Performing Arts Center. 8 p.m.
Title Town Soul and Funk Party. Shadow Lounge. 9 p.m. 18+
Global Beats Dance Party. Ava Lounge. 10 p.m.

SUNDAY1.30.11

Music in a Great Space: Olga Perez. Shadyside Presbyterian Church. 4 p.m.
Sunday Night Jazz. Rivers Casino. 6 p.m.
Give a Man a Break. Howler's Coyote Café. 8 p.m.

MONDAY1.31.11

New Plays for the New Year. O'Reilly Theater. 6 p.m.
AcoustiCafe Open Stage. Club Café. 6:30 p.m.

ONGOING

Made in Dagenham. Regent Square Theater. Through Jan. 27.
André Kertész: On Reading. Carnegie Museum of Art. Through Feb. 13.
Camelot. O'Reilly Theater. Through Feb. 20.
Queloides/Keloids: Race & Racism In Cuban Contemporary Art. Mattress Factory. Through Feb. 27.

Ordinary Madness. Carnegie Museum of Art. Through Feb. 27.
Orchid and Tropical Bonsai Show. Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens. Through March 3.
The Rink at PPG Place. PPG Place & Plaza. Through March 19.
Lord of the Crane Flies. Carnegie Museum of Natural History. Through April 19.

Want to see your event here? E-mail calendar@thetartan.org.



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**MOZART'S
SYMPHONY NO. 40**

Mozart: Symphony No. 40
Haydn: Violin Concerto No. 1
Sibelius: Symphony No. 5

**THIS
WEEKEND!**

FRIDAY, JAN 28 • 8:00 PM
SUNDAY, JAN 30 • 2:30 PM
HEINZ HALL

STUDENT TICKETS ONLY \$12 FACULTY AND STAFF \$17
SUBSCRIBE FOR THE BEST SEATS* AND TO AVOID MISSING OUT ON SOLD-OUT CONCERTS!
*SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY



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dance marathon.



Jonathan Carreon | Photo Staff

This past Saturday, the Carnegie Mellon Dance Marathon took place in Wiegand Gym. The Dance Marathon was a six-hour event where students raised money to benefit the Hero Program, a nonprofit organization that serves terminally ill children in the Pittsburgh area. The marathon included contests and performances from the Dancers' Symposium.