

Vietnam's culture sparks discussion

By Martin Chang
Opinions Editor

As a part of the Norman Levan Colloquium, Jeannie Parent shared with fellow Bakersfield College teachers, staff and administrators, her study of the Vietnamese culture on March 9.

The Norman Levan Colloquium was established in 2005 after BC Professor Mike McNellis asked Levan for a grant.

Since then, around every semester, professors share their study in a specific subject. As a part of the Colloquium, the professors are also awarded \$1,000 in order to further their studies.

According to Susan Pinza, the chair of the Colloquium's steering committee, Parent was picked because of her subject's relevance to the community.

"We thought her topic would be of interest to the BC faculty. She does tie in what she does to the classroom, and so we were able to learn a little about methodology and pedagogy."

Parent's presentation focused on her time spent in Vietnam as a part of The Fullbright Group Project Abroad, in which she learned about the culture of Vietnam.

She learned of the culture by doing everyday things like eating the food and looking at art. But she also learned from interviews she conducted with many people

from many different areas of Vietnamese life, from young artists to monks.

She also heard many different speeches from different areas of academia in Vietnam.

"It was very enriching. It was different than going as a tourist. It was much more educational because it was a study," she said.

Parent's inspiration to study Vietnamese culture goes back to when she taught Vietnamese refugees in the '80s. She was inspired by the quality of its people.

"It was so difficult for them and yet the resilience, the persistence and the humility was so inspiring to me. They were so appreciative."

This led to a lifetime appreciation of Vietnamese and Asian culture for Parent.

"Somehow, I have a connection. I've been to Nepal, China, Thailand. I think the humility of the people [is why I have a connection.] I feel that humility is really important in a person. Less ego is better."

She took her experience from her time in Vietnam and created a three-week project for her listening and speaking class where students interview their parents to learn about their own culture. Parent believes that her students learn about themselves and others through the project.

"We'll have 12 to 14 different



ANGIE DELGADO/THERIP

Jeannie Parent gives a presentation March 9 on her quest to learn about Vietnamese culture.

cultures in the class, so this is one way to expose them to different cultures. But in their own interview process they actually learn about their own cultures and it often brings them closer to their own family and friends."

Parent has, with others, started a nonprofit called South East Asian School Project or SEASP. Its goal is to provide education for Cambodian children that do not get education.

After she connected with the children in Cambodia, she

learned that many do not have an education and are orphans, so her and a roommate decided to do something about it.

"My roommate and I really wanted to do something for them, so she and I and others started a nonprofit. We just did it."

The nonprofit group has already helped some of the children of Cambodia.

"We were able to collect some donations and some supplies, but we had to deliver it personally because of the corruption."

HAMMAD: Coping with conflict

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on the ground dead in front of you. I know I say this a lot, but I was only 8 years old and I was scared," said Hammad.

In January of 2012, Hammad experienced another conflict with Israeli troops on his way back home. While standing in line at the last checkpoint, he was approached and pulled away by security.

Hammad was questioned for six hours about his stay in Palestine, if he was involved in resistance groups, and even if he was in a relationship. After a few hours, the security left and came back with a laptop showing Hammad's Facebook and his personal blog.

"At this point, I found it creepy that they found it that quickly, but things like that happen all the time," said Hammad on the situation.

"They asked me why I do this, and if I was going to stop. I told them no and that I would probably record what is happening right now," said Hammad on his interrogation.

Hammad was then asked for his password to the blog, to which he refused. Eventually, he was let go, but his cell phone and camera memory card were wiped. Hammad also experienced another confrontation this

past year when he went with friends out to eat. On the way home from Ramallah, they were stopped by a checkpoint. Hammad was unaware that the car they were in was an Israeli car, which is not to be driven by Palestinians.

"I'm sitting here cursing him [his friend] in my head, wondering why we are in this car," said Hammad on driving to the checkpoint. The main soldier had a scent of alcohol on his breath and proceeded to let Hammad and his male friend go, but they had to leave the two girls they were with.

After refusing and arguing, the soldier pulled out his M16 and pointed it directly at Hammad.

"At the time, I felt somewhat scared, but I was in the zone ... who knows what a drunk soldier is going to do with two young girls," said Hammad. Eventually the soldier put the gun down and they were let go.

"It was a crazy night." Hammad elaborated on his experiences and reactions he gets when bringing them up.

"Most of the people here [in the United States] don't want to believe what happened to me, so I direct them to my friends who were there ... they don't want to believe that things like this actually happen."

International students share experiences in Cup of Culture

By Angie Delgado
Reporter

Students looking to further their knowledge of other countries and cultures or would like to know how they can become a student abroad through the Atlantis Project, can attend the Cup of Culture event on March 21 at 1:30 p.m. in the Fireside Room.

The Cup of Culture event is an annual event that is held in the spring semester to promote an understanding among college students around the world.

This semester, four Bakersfield College students will be in the exchange program. Two are going to Italy and two are going to Spain.

Students going to the event will gain a lot of knowledge of other cultures and an understanding of what it's like growing up in different areas of the world, according to Shohreh Rahman, counselor at BC and International Student Services coordinator.

Rahman believes that students need to broaden their horizons and take trips abroad to learn of other cultures and take the knowledge that they gain back to their homes.

"This knowledge could help create a more peaceful world," she said.

This year, the event will have presentations, performances and cultural activities from students of countries all around the world. Students from Cameroon, Croatia, Honduras, Italy, Poland, Mexico, Sri Lanka, Spain and Venezuela will be presenting.

The Atlantis Project is the first official study abroad program at Bakersfield College which is sponsored by the Atlantic Degree Program. This program is a one-semester program that allows students to study abroad. Students can apply on the BC website.

TINER: More than a professor

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stylistically inventive artists as well as international musicians that come to town. The label is co-owned and operated by Ron Ramirez, the owner of Going Underground Records in downtown Bakersfield.

The record label's debut release, "Ritual Inscription," is just a taste of what is to come from Epigraph Records which will incorporate experimental jazz, electronic music, classic music and a number of other styles that involve original composition derived from artistic creation. The album "Ritual Inscription" was recorded live at a midnight concert at Metro Galleries, featuring Tiner on trumpet, percussionist Tatsuya Nakatani from Japan and guitarist Jeremy Drake from Los Angeles. There are a limited number of albums available, released strictly on vinyl format.

"Every time we do a concert, I get to encounter people who are hearing this music for the first time. As an artist, that excites me because it makes me feel like there's some relevance to this thing that I've been studying and doing," said Tiner.

The next live performance scheduled to be recorded and released under Epigraph Records is local musicians the Invisible Astro Healing Quartet. Their eclectic style ranges from electric jazz to funk with a psychedelic element thrown in the mix. Members of the quartet were all former students who have gone through Tiner's music program.

"There is a great audience here who are appreciative of unusual music. With the record label, I want to prove that it's happening and also have something to give to the local community as a way for people to see what's going on," said Tiner.

Tiner's ambition to bring awareness and deepen support in Bakersfield has extended beyond the creation of music and into the realm of booking agent

for venues around town. He has made a number of connections along the way, leading to projects that have afforded him the opportunity to travel across the country and to Europe.

While at first the improvised creations of jazz music may have been foreign to the local music scene, Tiner hopes that this is no longer the case having been involved in it for 25 years. He explained that local audiences are often enthusiastic.

As a music instructor working at BC and part-time at CSUB, Tiner is constantly producing ideas that are customized to his student's particular interests. As the director of the jazz ensemble, he explained that oftentimes he doesn't know which direction they will go until they meet and decide if they would like to take a more traditional or progressive route.

"I try to engineer my appreciation classes so that students who aren't musicians come away with a deeper sense of what music is," said Tiner.

Born and raised in Wasco, Tiner began playing the trumpet at the age of 10. He played in school bands and received his first trumpet lessons from his father. He played a broad range of styles and, by the time he was a teenager, he began to focus solely on jazz music. He received his degree at CSUB in music and attended the California Institute of the Arts for his master's degree in African-American Improvisational Music. He's been a music instructor at BC since 2004.

The decision to teach music was made early on in Tiner's career, opting not to struggle as an artist trying to make it. As a result, he has been able to share his knowledge with aspiring musicians and perform the music that he loves.

"When you do a performance, you don't have to worry about making a thousand dollars. You can put more time and energy and thought into the artistic side of it," said Tiner.

JOURNAL: A first of its kind

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Stiles said.

Students will have two different ways to get work on the website. The student's work can either be submitted by professors with the permission of the student, in which case the work is automatically accepted, or the students may submit their work on their own.

In the latter case, the student's work will go through a review process.

The Roughneck's editorial board already consists of several professors, but Stiles is determined to round it out more so that every piece of work is critiqued and reviewed properly.

The Roughneck, according to Stiles, is a rarity that he's had as an idea for over 10 years.

Stiles has put together one of these journals before. When

he was employed at Clackamas Community College in Oregon City, Ore., Stiles created the Banyon Quarterly, which showcased the work of students from that school.

Stiles said that he used that as a model for the Roughneck.

Stiles often used the Banyon to bring up essays to provide examples for his students on various topics. This eventually led to the idea to create one dedicated to BC so that students could use their peers' work as an example.

The Roughneck will get a proper introduction later this semester, according to Stiles.

"We're hoping to have some events to launch the [Roughneck], including a public presentation and reading, so the students can see their work and present their work to other students," he said.

100: Celebrating BC

Continued from Page 1

aspect of BC but will encompass the whole collegiate experience including athletics and the arts. There will be a joint choir comprised of alumni and the current BC choir, and alumni will be working with students to plan the homecoming game.

The Steering Committee will also be working with the Student Government Association. They have worked with the current SGA and will be working with it more closely next year as the centennial gets closer.

"We tried to work closely with SGA a year ago, but then we got a new set of officers so it's difficult to start and stop," said Suderman.

The committee is hoping to end the celebration with a big event as well, something like a festival. They are hoping to have a 5K run and a family fun run as well as booths offering food at the same cost that it was 100 years ago. "We are trying to make as many activities as

we can that are low cost or no cost so that the community can attend," said Suderman. They are also hoping to hold an event or two every month.

There will be a waterfall that will be known as Centennial Falls built and donated to BC, located in the garden area. According to Suderman, "we're hoping to get events that students here will enjoy, but also bring alumni and retirees back on campus too."

Suderman is disappointed that they haven't heard a lot from current students and welcomes their input. She says, "We would really like to hear from students and how they would like to celebrate. That would be very important. They can contact me, and we would love to have them on our committee or just give us ideas or let us know where they would like to work with us."

We certainly don't want to have ideas that sound dull or boring to the current students."

News Briefs

Turner Memorial Dinner

On Saturday, March 24, the Bakersfield College Swim Team is hosting the Turner Memorial Dinner and silent auction which will be 6-9 p.m. in the BC Cafeteria for \$25. There will also be an open water swim on Saturday morning at the BC pool, and costs \$20. Contact the pool office for tickets, registration and information.

Theater games

The Theater Club will be performing theater games in front of Daddy O's Yogurt and Gelato Shoppe in the Albertson's shopping center on Mount Vernon on Thursday, March 29, from 5-9 p.m., and anyone purchasing yogurt or gelato will help the club.

Breakdancing battle

Breakemoff 2, a breakdancing battle for cash prizes, will be held on Saturday, March 24, from 2-10 p.m. at the Garden at 900 22nd Street. Entry is \$15 or \$12 for entrants. The first place prize is \$1,000.

CSU Mentors

CSUB representatives will be on campus to aid with admission and financial aid on March 14-15 from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. in the Fireside Room. Bring your transcript and CSU Mentor application.

You and Your Orgasm

"The Healing Power of Women's Sexuality: You and Your Orgasm" will be held on Thursday, March 15, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. in the Fireside Room. The talk will cover the role and nature of orgasm in women's sexuality.

Fighting to survive

"A Walk to Beautiful," a film about Ethiopian women who recover from devastating childbirth injuries, will be shown March 21 at Forum East 101 at 6:30 p.m. Afterward, there will be a discussion led by Patricia Thompson.

Cup of Culture

Learn more about international cultural heritage, language, family values, art and music from international students from nine countries when they present Cup of Culture on March 21 at 1:30 p.m. in the Fireside Room. Contact Shohreh Rahman for more information.

Correction

In the Feb. 15 issue of the Renegade Rip, a chart of Bakersfield College's demographics was incorrectly sourced. Institutional Research and Planning provided that information.

Campus forecast

The Renegade Rip		
Wed. March 14	Thurs. March 15	Fri. March 16
Hi 77 F Lo 54 F	Hi 79 F Lo 55 F	Hi 74 F Lo 53 F
Mon. March 19	Tues. March 20	Wed. March 21
Hi 60 F Lo 41 F	Hi 63 F Lo 42 F	Hi 72 F Lo 43 F
Thurs. March 22	Fri. March 23	AVERAGES
		Hi 70 F Lo 47 F
Hi 68 F Lo 47 F	Hi 86 F Lo 31 F	RECORDS
Mon. March 26	Tues. March 27	Wed. March 28
Hi 87 F Lo 21 F	Hi 90 F Lo 32 F	Hi 71 F Lo 47 F
RECORDS	RECORDS	RECORDS
Hi 87 F Lo 21 F	Hi 90 F Lo 32 F	Hi 88 F Lo 24 F

SOURCE: weather.com
Gathered by: Rip Staff

Column Check into this musician to get your fix

AS MY BRAIN EXPLODES | Martin Chang's take on people and culture.

Daniel Johnston's music has an undeniable quality. He's the reason I write music, so if you ever hear me wailing one of my songs, it's his fault. He's influenced musicians such as Conor Oberst, Wayne Coyne of The Flaming Lips, and Kurt Cobain, so I'm not the only one that finds his music to be extraordinary.

His most powerful music was not recorded in a studio, he simply sang his songs by himself, where he lived, with whatever was available, whether it was a boom-box or a tape recorder.

Listening to this music you can tell. You can hear pop and hiss and sometimes the vocals are hard to hear.

Yet this is what makes his music special. By recording his music this way, he leaves no space between the emotions of his songs and the recording. The intimate portrait that emerges has a power like no other.

You feel with these recordings the emotion of the moment, of the song. In the comfort of his home, Johnston lets the song take him away. There is no hesitation.

He is singing his heart, and his soul. He's revealing his artistic vision with directness and honesty which only he has been able to accomplish.

Not just any musician can make singing into a boom box this powerful. Johnston has a connection to music that he simply has. It's something you can't teach.

This connection goes deep into the spirit of music, deep into the part of music that transforms, that changes lives. People talk of a muse in a distant way.

To Johnston this musical muse isn't a far away concept.

He lives inside it and expresses himself in a way that shows he knows that mysterious place.

It goes beyond technical skill or talent. His voice cracks and his playing is simple. He expresses himself quietly over start and stop piano, while singing in a natural, easy way that reminds of the innocence of children. His voice is brimming with emotion yet he never screams or yells, it gives songs that could be quiet and boring a monumental emotional punch.

A part of that punch is how deep he goes into the highs and lows of life. His first album is called "Songs of Pain" and that title is a good summary of his work.

He sings of lost love and his lifelong struggle with mental illness in a way that lets you know he has felt the pain of both deeply. He makes much of the music that covers the same territory cliché and soulless. Even the musicians that do it very well, like the music of Alice in Chains, don't hold a candle to the power of Johnston.

Yet it's not all darkness and depression from Johnston. The flip side to all that pain is an undying belief in the beauty of the world. He sings of the beauty of nature, of women, of love, of the quiet moments of struggle and introspection that is life's journey. The joy of these songs is pure. These songs are brilliantly alive. They reach a spiritual level that is the most inspirational music I have ever heard.

Not many of the people that I play Johnston's music for hear what I hear. But that doesn't matter. As long as there's people like me, musician and non-musician alike, that can feel his music, his music will inspire and live on for anyone to hear, feel and know the extraordinary gift he has given the world.



Martin Chang

The Rip compares the incomparable

After historically trying to keep their distance, apples and oranges fight for dominance

By Metiqua Eng
Reporter

By Ruben Perez
Reporter

Apples vs. Oranges. It's the historic rivalry that still leaves people with the solid question of, "Which one is my favorite?" But why question when it's evident that most people fall into the category of team apple.

From the tasty delight of caramel apples, apple cider, apple sauce or all-time favored apple juice, the scrumptious temptation of the apple stems all the way back to Adam and Eve with its alluring sweetness. The apple is so tantalizing that Adam couldn't resist taking a bite.

But does this mean the apple is the most wicked of all fruit through its illustrious appeal? No, the apple is just so appetizing that one would be bizarre not to covet the most desired fruit.

Why do you think that New York City is called "The Big Apple?" The city has attraction, and it's fascinating as well as alluring. No one calls New York City "The Big Orange!"

Many could argue that an orange is delightful and sweet, but can you even enjoy that sweetness? What's the first thing you have to do when eating an orange? Peel it. It feels like it will take a decade just to unravel the complexity of an orange peel. Why waste the time? Why waste the energy? By the time an orange is halfway peeled, I'm exhausted and I've lost my appetite.

That's when I look over to see a shiny refined apple staring me in the face saying, "Eat me! Eat me!" And in half the time it takes to peel an orange I've already halfway eaten my yummy apple.

Not only can it be a healthy treat to start your day with, but you can also easily turn an apple into a nice evening treat. Nothing quite compliments caramel like a crunchy, sweet apple underneath its silky goodness.

The apple also comes in different colors and tastes. The appetite for sweetness can be stimulated in a red apple or the thirst for a hint of sour sweet delight can be found in a green apple. Either way, it's the best of both worlds.

Some of the greatest benefits of an apple are all the rich vitamins and nutrients that it offers. An orange only offers the simplicity of Vitamin C when an apple offers Vitamin A, Vitamin C, Iron and anti-oxidants.

Being that an apple isn't nearly as acidic as an orange, it won't eat away at your teeth or cause acid indigestion inside your stomach. It can also benefit health tremendously as it has been proven that eating apples reduce blood cholesterol, improve bowel function, and reduce risk of stroke, prostate cancer, asthma and type II diabetes. But all health mumbo jumbo put aside, whether team apple or team orange, it is apparent the apple dominates over all and is defined as Mother Nature's sweetest temptation.

Apples and oranges have been compared for years, but the answer is obvious, oranges are better. First off, the fruit came before the color. That's right, oranges are so awesome they get a color named after them. Oranges are the superior fruit because they are healthier, last longer and don't bruise. Oranges have seven nutrients in them, which makes them the healthier than apples that just have fiber and other less important nutrients.

An apple a day will only keep the doctor away if you're chucking it at him. If you are throwing apples be prepared to clean because they make a mess. Unlike oranges, they tend to splatter when you throw them at people. Also, apples leave bruises so you can get in trouble if you're hitting kids with apples at school. Plus oranges don't leave bruises so whenever you hit has no proof you were chucking oranges at them.

Also on the topic of bruising, if you drop an apple, they bruise or sometimes break, because they're so freaking delicate.

If you drop an orange it stays intact, doesn't bruise, and it's protected by a peel so you can still eat it or throw it at someone eating an apple.

If you're hot and you have to choose which fruit is going to cool you down, you don't choose a lame apple, you take the orange and eat it like a real man.

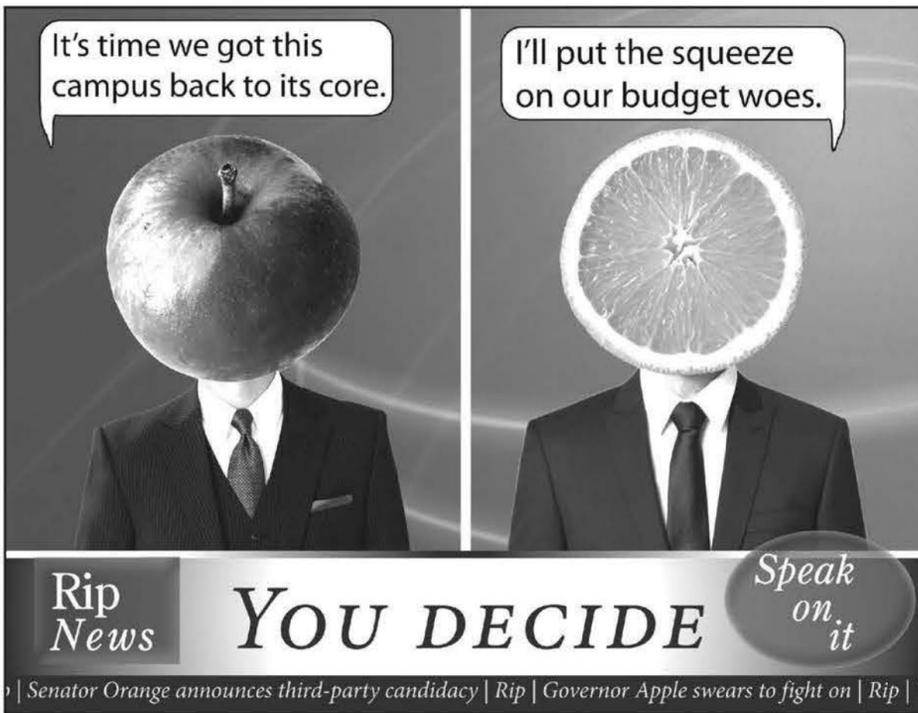
Apples are not very juicy and are kind of a pain seeing as how you have to eat around the center.

You can just peel and eat oranges, or if you're a real man you can cut open your orange with your pocketknife. Orange juice is also better than apple juice in taste, convenience and health.

Commercials always say you can have a glass of orange juice a day and you're good to go. Why don't they do this with apple juice? How the hell do you even get the juice out of an apple? With an orange you can just squeeze and you're good to go. Orange juice is basically an orange on the go. This is probably why it's more available to us, unlike apple juice.

If apple juice was any good it would be served at places like Denny's or McDonalds, but it isn't. Another reason apples are bad is because they are a gateway for school kids to get high. You can put a hole in the top and the side of an apple and smoke drugs out of it.

With their bad reputation, apples are not even worthy of having a soda. Who loves orange soda? Everyone loves orange soda. It's true. Whether it's trying to be a juice or a convenient snack, the apple just falls short compared to the orange, as it should.



ZAK S. COWAN / THE RIP

Senator Orange announces third-party candidacy | Rip | Governor Apple swears to fight on | Rip |

'Lorax' wins over Seuss fan with visuals

By Jon Nelson
Features Editor

The three types of films I despise the most are crappy adaptations of books I love, musicals and morality tales. I don't need "Naked Lunch"

made into a movie. I don't need washed-up startlets doing high kicks and I certainly don't need Hollywood reminding me of what a terrible person I am.

Having said that, I really wanted to hate The Lorax. On the surface, it seems like everything I dislike rolled up into a nice, neat package. Combine that with a theater full of screaming children and I'm done before I can even find a seat.

As a kid I was obsessed with Dr. Seuss. I wanted the Cat in the Hat to show up at my house on a rainy day. I wanted to eat green eggs and ham on a train

and I'm sure my mom is still tired of reading "One Fish Two Fish Red Fish Blue Fish" to me. Even today, it's just not Christmas without watching the animated version of "How the Grinch Stole Christmas" at least 15 times.

The original "Lorax" book is about a boy who travels to see a man named the Once-Ler to find out how their world became so desolate and polluted.

The Once-Ler reveals to the boy through a series of flashbacks that it's because he cut down all the trees to mass-produce a sweater-like invention despite warnings from a mustached creature called the Lorax. The Once-Ler then entrusts the boy with the last tree seed in order to right his wrongs. The book is worth checking out even today if nothing other than because it's so uncharacteristically bleak for Seuss.

The movie holds true to the spirit of the original story with added details and plot points to

make it full-length. The love story between the main character, Ted Wiggins and the girl-next-door is cute without being generic. I loved the idea of having the story take place in a town that is completely artificial, even down to the flora and fauna.

Betty White as the voice of the main character's grandmother is a nice addition to the story and Danny DeVito is charming and fun as the Lorax. I was smiling and engrossed in the story before the beginning credits had finished rolling.

My favorite part of the movie, by far, was the animation. Because it was done entirely in CGI and, because it's a Seuss story, the visuals were non-stop psychedelic bliss. The texture of the "Truffula trees" has to be seen to be believed. Each one looks like a puff of cotton candy from a 5 year-old's dream.

The message of the film, that we need to protect the environment before the effects of



COURTESY OF UNIVERSAL STUDIOS

The film-version Lorax is a bit less menacing than his counterpart in the original Dr. Seuss children's book.

deforestation and pollution become irreversible, was apparent without being preachy.

The combination of the plot and animation was enough to even make the musical numbers and screaming babies bearable. My only gripe with the film was that I wish the Lorax was more aggressive and menacing like in the book.

Overall, the Lorax is a great effort. It's smart, funny and has a great message. It's almost enough to make me want to check out all those other Seuss remakes that I've been ignoring.



Winner of the 2003 and 2008 JACC Pacemaker Award

The Renegade Rip is produced by Bakersfield College journalism classes, printed by Bakersfield Envelope & Printing Co. Inc., and circulated on Wednesdays during the fall and spring semesters.

The newspaper is published under the auspices of the Kern Community College District Board of Trustees, but sole responsibility for its content rests with student editors.

The Rip is a member of the Journalism Association of Community Colleges and the California Newspaper Publishers Association.

The Renegade Rip

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The Rip reserves the right to edit letters, however, writers will be given the opportunity to revise lengthy or unacceptable submissions.

If an organization submits a letter as a group, it must be signed by only one person, either the leader of the organization or the letter writer. Pen names are not allowed and anonymous letters will not be published.

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Staff Editorial

Let the success carry over SGA

With the spring semester comes sunshine, allergy attacks and Student Government Association elections.

While students (and the Rip) may criticize SGA, they've also done some great things for Bakersfield College. Like most things in life, the SGA seems to have positive and negative elements. With the incoming officers, there are some changes that need to be made and a few things that should stay the same.

The Renegade Food Pantry is one program that's at the top of the positive list. The non-profit program takes food donations

and hands them out to students that need them.

Last semester alone the pantry gave away food to over 6,000 students. It's great to see that even in these hard economic times, there is help and hope available. It's even better to know that over 6,000 students didn't have to choose between gas and dinner.

Another noteworthy contribution is the Be Fit program that started last semester. Be Fit was implemented to encourage a healthy lifestyle in BC students. The activities have included exercise classes, demonstrations and starting a Weight Watchers

group on campus.

At a time when most of us are living off of coffee, peanut butter sandwiches and good intentions, it's a welcome change to be able to do something healthy like take a Tai Chi class or pick up actual fruits and vegetables from the Renegade Pantry.

Although the BCOUGH campaign has had debatable success, the SGA should be commended for trying to reach out to students and staff and consider their opinions. The planned poll to vote on the campus smoking policy might be beating a dead horse, but democracy is important, es-

pecially at BC where SGA officers are paid with money from students.

One issue that the SGA needs to improve upon is their transparency to the student body. Rumors of mismanaged funds, suspicious resignations and a strange policy of privacy still surround the SGA and all its officers. The fact that the Renegade Rip has had problems getting in touch with various officers over the last few semesters and that their meetings are all but exclusive events doesn't help matters.

The SGA needs to be more open about the goings-on of of-

icers that have been elected to serve the student body and where our money is being spent. It also needs to be more available to the newspaper whose job it is to inform students about what's going on around them. They're only hurting themselves and their credibility by remaining silent on important issues.

Another welcome change would be to see SGA officers finish an entire term. Over the past few years, there have been several instances of officers resigning for no given reason and elected candidates not even being put in office. Again, students

deserve the right to be kept up to date on their elected officials and when the SGA provides no answers, it's only giving students reason to be suspicious.

In the past elections, less than 1,000 BC students voted. The SGA is about to bust out a campaign that includes raffles and special events. (Please disregard the fact that funding to the tutoring center has been cut, but the SGA can give away iPads.) It's in everyone's best interest that as many students as possible vote this semester and that everyone keeps their elected officials accountable for their actions.

Video game trilogy sees tremendous finale to series

By Martin Chang
Opinions Editor

Mass Effect 3 tells an in-depth story with many great moments, from an alien race nearly wiped out by the horrors of war, to the tragic deaths and unsung heroes that such a war brings, to more quiet moments between friends. In Mass Effect 3, these moments have an emotional impact that is unique in video games.

They have this impact because there is an attention to detail, a sense of craft that oozes from the game. The way the writing, voice acting and combat integrate into a fantastic story is a high watermark for games.

In Mass Effect 3, an alien race called The Reapers is attempting to wipe out all other life in the galaxy. It is up to you, the captain of the ship The Normandy, to build a coalition among the many races of life forms that could defeat the threat of The Reapers and then try to defeat this force that has you greatly outnumbered.

From the start of the game in which you watch the devastating Reaper attack on Earth, it is clear that you are playing a game of high quality. This starting moment makes a strong impression. It right away tells you how dire The Reaper situation is.

The rest of the big moments of the game have this same impact. In fact, the further you get into

the game, the moments of the game, big and small, have a surprising emotional resonance.

From the quiet moments you share with your shipmates where you share hopes and memories of destroyed home worlds, to the epic moments of character sacrifice, these moments are touching in a way that is rare in video games.

These moments shine because of the quality of the writing and the voice acting. The writing emphasizes character development and storytelling techniques, like pacing, that you would expect from a great novel or movie.

The writing here is brimming with life. It is descriptive and the way that the different races talk seems real and true to life. The characters and races have distinct personalities.

You know that the Asari are quiet and thoughtful, that the Krogan are boisterous and aggressive, and the Salarians are intellectual and cold. When these races face the incredible losses of having their planet destroyed and their race nearly wiped out, you truly feel for them.

In fact, when I made a choice that killed off the Quarians, a sad, quiet race that I liked, I felt so bad that I just had to start over and make the other choice. I felt the choice I made in a way that I never experienced playing a video game.

This all would fall apart if the voice acting was not up to the quality of the writing. But the voice acting never falters. The game handles the emotional mo-



COURTESY OF MICROSOFT

ments with a sensitivity that is rare in games.

The larger moments are given the correct gravitas by its many actors. Many times the writing in video games are ruined by bad voice acting, so the quality acting stands out even more here.

The world of Mass Effect is extraordinary in detail and scope. The many races and many planets to explore, it's all given life through the writing and acting. There is fun in simply walking around and observing the life

and landscape of the many planets and interacting with the many races, in learning about the large world that has been created. Not all of it is gold, some of the side-quests can be a little boring, but you can ignore that content.

Much of the game is also third person combat such as the combat in Gears of War. This even is a great experience. The combat is snappy and is given great variety with its attack and weapons options. Yet what really makes it great are the combat scenarios.

The places and obstacles you fight give the combat challenge and variety, even though you are fighting the same enemies in much the same way. The different areas are just well designed in terms of art design and giving you different strategies to employ and stuff to do, plus you care about the combat because it's integrated in the story well.

The multiplayer part of the game is disappointing. It is a wave-based survival mode that is generic and not exciting. It sim-

ply does not have the same variety in the combat scenarios or attention to detail that the single player does.

Plus without the connection to the story, it just seems tacked on. It is not important though and, like the lower quality side quests, easy to ignore.

Yet this doesn't get in the way of this fantastic world that has been created, a world this large, with this much emotional power and polish is an experience worth having.

Ron Paul was the right choice

By Nicholas Sparling
Reporter

With the 2012 election right around the corner, one candidate stands like a lone wolf among a herd of elephants.

That man is Ron Paul, a republican congressman and doctor from Texas, although we won't hold that against him.

At this point in the game, it looks like the match has already been called for him, and that greatly saddens me.

Ron Paul's ideas, though they could be considered somewhat radical, are received poorly by the GOP, who considers him to lean too liberal.

Still, the party could use a breath of fresh air with his set of fresh ideas.

It is surprising that someone who has been in the game as long as Ron Paul could be the most controversial of all his congressional peers.

Ron Paul himself is an on and off member of congress and the disillusioned game of politics, and at the age of 76 he is no spring chicken.

Despite his age, Ron Paul has a way of keeping his mind open and his ideas new, making him the prime choice for office with college students over the better

part of a decade.

As a member of congress, Ron Paul has taken a difficult stand on difficult issues.

Issues like dissolving the war on drugs, mostly in part to try and end the related violence.

He also advocates stopping America from acting as world police in matters of foreign affairs, stating that "[We] can't spread goodness through the barrel of a gun."

Ron Paul's ideas are a double-edged sword for him and his popularity with his party.

What other Republican candidate supports completely equal rights for homosexuals and heterosexuals?

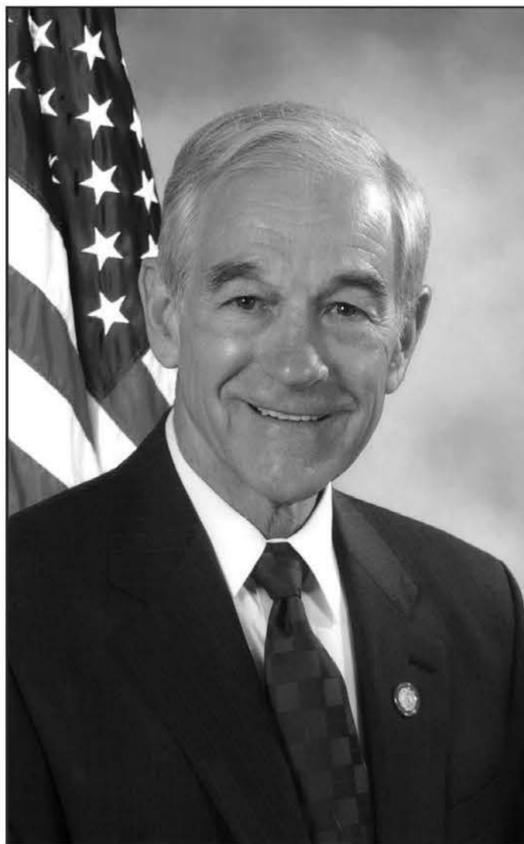
Or thinks evolution should not only be taught in school, but can peacefully co-exist with the idea of creationism?

Or voted for the legalization of medical marijuana, and believes that we should eliminate the death penalty?

What other elected official would vote to cut his own salary, so much so that, if elected president, he would earn as much as a well-paid teacher?

Of all the candidates in the running, Ron Paul seems to have his finger on the pulse of the national character.

He isn't so detached from the



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common American working class that he might as well be living on the moon, and he isn't so hung up on ideology and conservative doctrine that he should be seen in a literal plastic bubble.

As far as 2012 goes, you can count Ron Paul down, but don't count him out.

When it's all said and done this is not the end.

Ron Paul is doing better than he did in the 2008 election and, with any luck, he'll run again.

He may not overtake the White House in a grand blitzkrieg, but for those of us looking for a new face with new ideas we can only hope for a slow, but strongly persistent crawl for the presidency all in due time because there's still hope for 2016.

Ja Rule's time in prison didn't help his music

By Esteban Ramirez
Sports Editor

Ja Rule is back with the new album "Pain is Love 2" and it's his first album in almost eight years. The album was released on Feb. 28.

"Pain is Love 2" was a pain to listen to because of the mediocrity and the fact that it could've been better.

He's still the same Ja Rule and still has that famous raspy voice and good hooks, but still lacks the lyricism that can make an album great.

This album is the same as all his other albums. It has a couple of songs that are catchy, but the rest of the album is mediocre and lacks clever wordplay.

"Pray" is the best song on the album. It has the deeper meaning that should have been throughout the album.

I thought he could've put out all his struggles and tribulations on this album instead of just in a couple of songs.

In "Pray," not only do you hear everything he's been through, but you also get that catchy hook that has been synonymous with Ja Rule.

In this song he really expresses what he's going through when he says, "Everybody shedding a

tear for me. It's lonely the way I walked in and I'm practically lying in a coffin."

He could've done so much more with this album since he will be serving a 28-month prison sentence for tax evasion, and he just didn't express himself through this album like I thought he should've.

Songs like "Superstar," "Strange Days" and "Black Vodka" just didn't give me a sense of what he was going through. These songs were very simple and these songs were a perfect example of why mainstream music is so horrible now. He could've done so much more lyrically with these songs.

With all the legal trouble he's faced and the 28-month prison sentence, I expected an album where he put all his emotions and feelings on the album, but he only expressed that in a few songs.

"Parachute" is the other song that will catch your attention because it's got a catchy beat and probably the only song with some clever wordplay.

The rest of the album isn't bad, but they're not songs that you will keep repeating over and over.

This album has the two songs "Parachute" and "Pray" that you will get hooked on, but "Pain is Love 2" is definitely not worth getting.

First two-day blood drive on BC campus

By Hannah Breeland
Reporter

For the first time, the National Cesar E. Chavez Blood Drive Challenge was held for two days instead of one at Bakersfield College.

It was held in the Fireside Room on March 7-8. On the first day, 168 people registered, but only 131 could give.

On the second day, 112 registered, but only 85 people could give.

In total, 216 people gave blood and 280 people tried. The Student Government Association and Houchin Community Blood Bank combined to bring the two-day event to BC.

Stephanie Gibbons of Houchin

said that even though they don't have anything to compare to this blood drive since it was held for two days, it was definitely a success.

"There was plenty of food and enough staff on hand to accommodate all the donors. It's really amazing how well it turned out. This surpassed our expectations," said Gibbons.

Donors were drawn to giving blood for different reasons.

"I did it because I thought it was the right thing to do, and even though it took up a lot of my free time, I would do it again," said Natalie Rocha, BC student.

Some students did it for the free food. "I did it for the free pizza," said BC student Alex Mora.

Some participated because of peer pressure. "My buddies were talked into it by their girlfriends. I wasn't going to, but I figured, 'why not?'" said Jay Rodrigues, BC student.

To give blood, donors first had to answer a questionnaire. Blood pressure and iron was checked after that.

It's estimated that the whole process took 30 to 45 minutes. Donors had to be at least 16 years old and weigh 110 pounds. Unfortunately, some students were sent away because they didn't weigh enough.

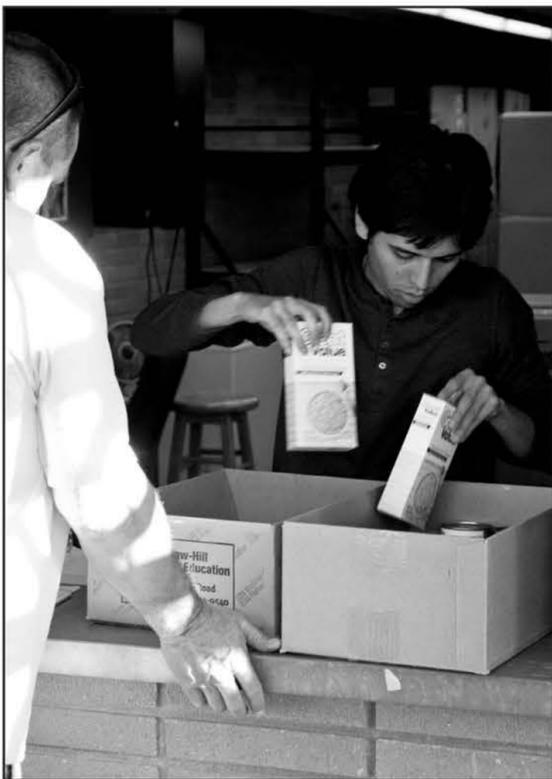
"I would give blood if I could. I just don't weigh enough," said Elizabeth Parnell, BC student.

The next blood drive will be held at BC next spring.



MEGAN LUCKE / THE RIP

Bakersfield College students donate their blood during the school-wide drive on March 7.



GREGORY D. COOK / THE RIP

Nick Acosta loads food into a box for a student during the pantry's March 8 distribution in the Campus Center.

Pantry receives food donations

By Gregory D. Cook
Photographer

With rumors of even deeper budget cuts to student-aid programs looming on the horizon, the Renegade Pantry is looking to increase the donations it receives in the hopes of putting more food on its shelves for students in need.

In an email distributed to faculty and staff, Nick Acosta, student coordinator of the pantry, encouraged employees of Bakersfield College to donate to the pantry, either by giving non-perishable food, monetary donations or through payroll deductions, and according to Acosta, a little bit from everyone would add up to a lot for the pantry.

"We looked at how many people we have on campus that are employed by BC, and I totaled up that every person gave just \$1 a month for the whole year it would come out to over \$21,000," he said. "That could almost run us for the whole year."

Acosta is pleased so far by the results his email has generated.

"Ever since that email went out, donations have been rolling in, and not just from the campus," he said. "State Farm brought almost a truckload of food. They really stepped up to the plate and helped us out a lot."

The Renegade Pantry first opened its doors in January of 2010 in response to cuts in the state budget to special needs programs for students. Every other Thursday, the pantry distributes boxes of food to around 100 or more students.

To maintain consistency in what goes in the boxes, the pantry purchases the core ingredients, and then fills out the boxes with donated items.

"Because our distribution is

of this magnitude, the majority of the food we put together into a box we buy ourselves," said Acosta.

"We have an account with U.S. Foods, and they give us a good discount. "We also get produce from the Gleaners at cents on the dollar."

Care is also taken to ensure that the food given out is nutritional as well.

"We switched from popcorn to oatmeal to be more healthy," Acosta said.

"A normal box will have a bag of rice, a bag of beans, two cans of soup, vegetables, tomato sauce, spaghetti and tuna."

Vegetarian boxes can be requested, and students with children are also given additional soup, Graham crackers, canned fruit and macaroni and cheese.

Peter Flores is a single father of two who returned to BC to pursue a degree in sociology.

"I worked in the community for years with just a GED," said Flores. "But now it's hard to find a job because you have to have a degree."

Flores was taking part in the pantry's distribution for the first time. "It helps out, you know," he said. "This is going to give me some relief as far as being able to have some healthy meals for my kids."

Students wishing to take advantage of the Renegade Pantry's services must visit Campus Center 4 and sign up before the day of distribution. Delano Campus students can sign up at Admissions and Records.

Acosta encourages students that need the Pantry to take advantage of the service. "If you really need help, this is here for you," he said. "If you are in need, please, do come, because we are here to serve you."

Transferring a step-by-step process

By Crystal Sánchez
Reporter

For many students at Bakersfield College, finding a major and taking the steps to graduate can be difficult. Biology major Oscar Gomez said that finding his major was rather hard.

"Finding a major was difficult because I had to find what interested me the most. I had to decide between biology and history. In the end, I went with the one that I loved the most," he said.

Transfer services counselor Sue Granger-Dickson said that students should find what it is they are passionate about and what interests them in order to find a major.

"In many cases, you don't have to have a specific major because lots of majors are good for different things."

Granger-Dickson, who has been a counselor for 18 years, said that students must be specific in what it is that they want to do.

"Students need to figure out

what they want to study, what careers they want to be eligible for, what kind of money they want to make, and then set a goal," said Granger-Dickson.

Taking an educational planning class the first semester at BC will help students set a goal, create a plan and receive priority registration.

Marina Torres, a freshmen at BC, said that taking the educational planning course her first semester at BC definitely helped her narrow her options on picking a major.

"I wanted to be so many different things from a business manager to a model. I eventually found a balance and decided to become a theater major."

Torres plans to hopefully graduate next year with a degree in theater arts.

If a student wants to be eligible for graduation, they must complete 60-degree applicable units and must meet one of the general education patterns.

The general education patterns can either be BC's own pattern or the California State

Universities general education Breadth list or the IGETC pattern.

Then, on top of all that, students need to complete major requirements. Students could often get confused when looking at assist.org because not all of the majors match BC's majors said Granger-Dickson.

"What many students do who are transferring is that they are looking at assist.org and following major prep, and sometimes the majors don't always match. So they'll end up getting a liberal arts major."

The state of California has a new associate degree for transfer program called the SB1440. This program will allow an upwards of 25 associate degrees for transfer. BC currently has 3, that require 60 units here and 60 units at a California State University.

"It guarantees your admission into a CSU campus, not necessarily a particular campus or major, but with a 2.0 GPA, 60 transfer units, and completion of the IGETC or Breadth pat-

tern," she said. The new SB1440 program is something students at BC should be very excited about because all of the degrees are the same at all community colleges.

"A student can now start at Porterville and come to BC without having to take any extra classes. When they transfer, all of their classes will be recognized as being valid for the degree. It will save time and money; it's creating clear-cut pathways for transfer students."

Remembering deadlines is another important thing students need to remember. The deadline to file for graduation is Apr. 2. Students must come into the counseling center and see a counselor or advisor and fill out a candidacy form.

"It's actually an application where they need to apply and then the counselor or advisor must sign it and do a degree audit," said Granger-Dickson.

Last year, 679 students graduated from BC, and this year Granger-Dickson hopes the numbers will be even higher.

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