

December 1, 2010

Players overdose on gaming

Video games another drug?

Pg. 6



THE CAMPUS
Chronicle

covering the campus beat

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covering the campus beat

Volume 10, Issue 11 Copyright 2010

THE PUBLICATION

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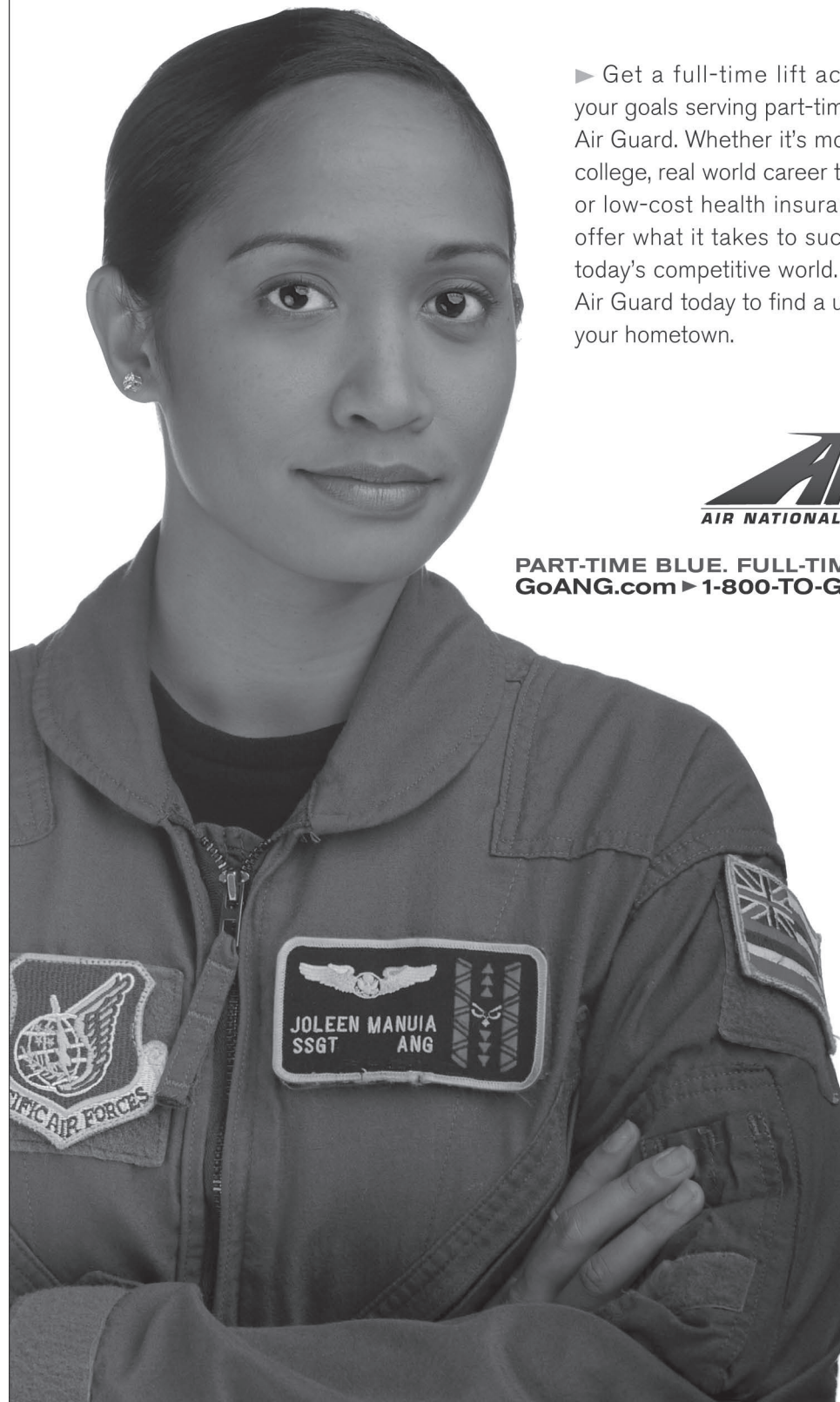
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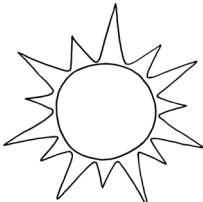
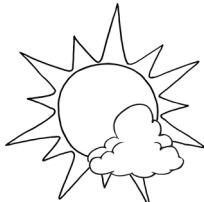
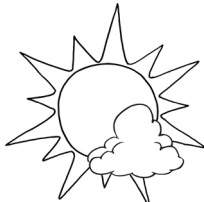
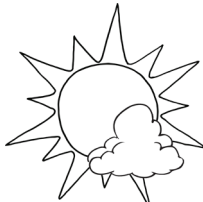
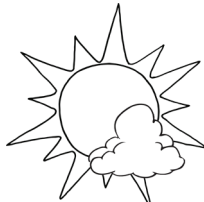
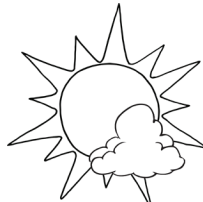
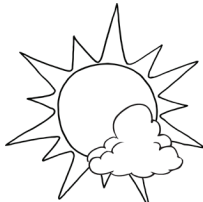
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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 8:00 AM Blood Drive 7:00 PM Movie - "Eat, Pray, Love"	2 10:00 AM Nurse Practitioner	3	4
5	6 11:00 AM Be the Match - Marrow Donor Registry	7 10:00 AM Stress Free Zone & Massages 6:00 PM Ankeny Campus Fall Graduation	8 10:00 AM Stress Free Zone and Massagers 5:00 PM Carroll Campus Fall Graduation	9 10:00 AM Nurse Practitioner	10 5:00 PM Urban Campus Fall Graduation 7:30 PM Winter I Choral Concert	11
12	13 10:00 AM Chair Massages On The Go	14 4:00 PM Licensed Mental Health Counselor 5:00 PM Newton Campus Fall Graduation	15 10:00 AM Student Assistance Program Counselor West Campus Fall Graduation	16 Last Day of Regular Term Classes 10:00 AM Nurse Practitioner Boone Campus Fall Graduation	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
College Closed -- Happy Holidays!						
26	27	28	29	30	31	
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*For more information on events and their locations, go to dmacc.edu and click on the calendar.

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Wednesday 1	Thursday 2	Friday 3	Saturday 4	Sunday 5	Monday 6	Tuesday 7
						
Sunny 34°/21°	Partly Cloudy 39°/20°	Partly Cloudy 39°/25°	Partly Cloudy 35°/23°	Partly Cloudy 34°/22°	Partly Cloudy 30°/18°	Partly Cloudy 35°/19°



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Write to win

By CJ EILERS
STAFF WRITER

The Creative Writing Contest is coming to all DMACC campuses and it will give students a chance to show their creative side.

The contest is held every year to find the best creative short stories or poems. Coordinator Lauren Rice is excited about her third year organizing the contest. "It's a great opportunity for students to show their creative abilities," said Rice. "We are adding more prizes for our students to win."

This year's prizes are two DMACC scholarships, first place is \$1,000 and second place is \$500. If students don't plan to stay at DMACC, cash prizes are also available. First place is \$100, second is \$50 and third is \$25. Scholarship entries are also automatically considered for cash awards.

Every DMACC student from any DMACC location is eligible. Entries must be typed and titled. Students may submit up to three poems or short stories, but they must each be less than 20 pages. The author's name should not appear on the draft. A code system is used to keep entries anonymous and fair. To identify their entries, students should fill out the sign-up sheet or submit works with a cover letter including name, address, student ID number, and title of the piece. You should

also specify a preference for the scholarship or cash only prize and grant permission for DMACC to reproduce the material. Entries will be used to create the DMACC publication "Expressions," a book Urban Campus professor Michael Bryant uses to showcase the entries. The last day to submit stories and/or poems is Dec. 10. For more information, contact Lauren Rice at lrrice@dmacc.edu.

A panel of DMACC professors judges the stories and poems. The judges take the stories home over winter break and review them. The judges get back together in early February to decide which are the best and reach a decision in early March. The decisions must be unanimous to be chosen.

Marc Dickinson, a creative writing professor, has been judging the contest for four years. "The thing students need to do is to have their story or poem peer edited," said Dickinson. "If you're doing a short story, then make sure your [story] has plot and conflict. If you're doing a poem, make sure it has an image, strong sense of language and sees the world differently."

To get a sign-up sheet or for questions, contact Lauren Rice at lrrice@dmacc.edu.

Submit work with cover letter to: Lauren Rice, DMACC Ankeny, 2-5DX, 2006 S. Ankeny Blvd., Ankeny, IA 50023. No faxes please. Deadline for entry is Dec. 10 at 5 p.m.

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Chronicle connects

Alum makes mark at Meredith

BY ALLISON BUCKALEW
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Becoming an editor requires creativity, multiple skills and a lot of self-determination.

Joanna (Smith) Linberg, a DMACC alum turned assistant editor at Meredith Publishing, has all three of these and more.

Linberg has three tips for students aspiring to be editors.

First, work on your writing. It can be a standout quality and it's a great skill to have. "Work on really making it your passion," she said.

Second, get to know digital technology and how social media is affecting everything. "Especially look into blogs."

And third, strive to be respectful. "At times it can seem like those who make it all about themselves get all of the big projects, and perhaps it can make you successful, but being nice and able to communicate and connect with others is so much more important," she said.

Linberg recalled some of her previous aspirations before becoming an editor for Better Homes and Gardens magazine.

"At one point I wanted to be a doctor, but I think we all go through that doctor phase. I realized that didn't really fit me. I also thought about being a literary agent or going into book editing. That is still something I think about for the future."

Linberg started at DMACC, where she took

her first journalism class. While there, a visiting broadcast journalist advised her not to go into magazine editing, but to go into broadcasting.

However, she went against the grain and chose to do what she loved most, editing.

She knew it would be a difficult choice, but she knew what she wanted and went after it, she said.

From DMACC, Linberg transferred to Drake University in 2004 when she discovered it had a Magazine/Journalism program. She had to complete a four-year program in just two years because she transferred as a senior.

"It was worth all the effort. I was glad to be close to home," she said.

She went on to do an apprenticeship at Meredith her senior year of college. "I worked with an awesome editor on a kids magazine. She was a great mentor and a phenomenal teacher. She is the reason I got into home design."

Linberg's workday appears to be endless. She starts by looking at freelance work, or potential stories, and doing a first read-through and then hands it to the next editors in line.

Next, she is in charge of copy-fitting the story into the layout, which means adjusting the size of the copy and spacing to have the story fit into its allotted space. She also has her own two-page spread in each issue of the magazine. It features a color and a

designer who puts that color into the designing of a room or furniture.

Linberg additionally works with the social media aspect of the magazine. She is getting used to "tweeting" information and constantly updating Better Homes and Gardens' Facebook page.

There are ups and downs to her job as there are to any job. "I love planning issues and stories. Of course meetings get old, but looking at story ideas for different seasons or how a story will be run, the potential motivates me. I love writing my color story every time and freelance writing as well. Any time I get to look at another person's writing, it helps me with my own."

Sometimes it is a struggle trying to find the time to accomplish everything that needs to get done. "I have to get things approved by several layers of people. It would be easier if I could make my own decisions, but that isn't the way things work. I don't mind deadlines, but there are so many sometimes." Linberg continued saying, "I do not have time management conquered yet, but I'm definitely continuing to work on it."

Where will Linberg be in 10 years? "For the immediate future, I love Meredith and my current job. I love the fact that there are lots of creative people and it is an intelligent environment to be in. I'm not sure of my future plans, but I am happy right where I am right now."



DMACC alumni Joanna Linberg is now an assistant editor at Meredith Publishing in Des Moines.

Photo contributed by Allison Buckalew

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From pg. 6

to keep playing," Gentile observes. "The person has allowed his/her computer or game habit to get out of balance with the rest of life."

With the fact that the actual player is addicted to the game in mind, once people become addicted to a game, it can begin to affect social and personal health. Like with all addictions, there are ways to break it and there are groups willing to help the addict.

Websites like Online Gamers Anonymous, www.olganon.com, are available for people to go to if they feel like video game addiction is a problem for them. Offering a 12 step program, the website encourages people to come together and face their addiction.

www.netaddictionrecovery.com offers a retreat program, dubbed ReStart, where people stay for 45 days in a "safe natural family setting designed to feel like home." Located just east of Seattle, WA, the resort offers a facility that focuses

on nature. Participants are encouraged to "unplug" from society.

No local support groups or facilities for video game addiction exist in the metro Iowa area. However, students can talk to people locally about time management, which is a good deterrent for addiction.

DMACC counselor Penny Schempp talks about dealing with addictive tendencies by offering basic time management skills.

Schempp offers the strategy she calls "Time Monitoring," which she describes as keeping track of your day. The strategy includes writing down what you are doing every 15 minutes, for a week.

With this information, she suggests you split your daytime activities into a pie chart. Going back to look at how your day is divided into undesirable categories can really help you realize what you need to do to balance out your life.

"The key is to adjust your life slowly but surely with

Symptoms of video game addiction may include:

- most of non-school hours are spent playing video games
- lying about computer or video game use
- gaming rather than going out to see friends
- dropping out of other social groups (clubs or sports)
- irritable when not playing a video game or on the computer
- aggressively responding when one tries to stop the others play
- computer or video game use is characterized by intense feelings of pleasure and guilt
- obsessing and preoccupied about being on the computer, even when not connected
- hours playing video games or on the computer increasing, seriously disrupting family, social or even work life
- lying about computer or video game use. Incurring large phone or credit bills for online services
- online fantasy life replaces emotional life with partner

the changes, something that you can realistically control and change."



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Video Games:

fun, ENTERTAINING, and... **addictive?**

BY JAY WARREN
STAFF WRITER

Cody Darr, a student at DMACC, will be the first to admit that his playing of a popular mid-90s game called "Diablo 2" got a little out of control at times.

"Once you get going in some of these games that really pull you in, you don't want to stop," says Darr. "I was living with two other people at the time, and there would be periods where we wouldn't take care of ourselves, one guy didn't bathe for a month. I was the only one with a job, and the other two guys just sat around and played 'Diablo 2' all day."

Video games, while seen mostly as a harmless pastime, can be the source of major addictions. The Entertainment Software Association, or ESA, estimates that roughly 67 percent of households play video games, and 10 percent of those people are addicted to video games.

One of the most common video game addictions is a game genre known as the MMORPG, or Massively Multiplayer Online Role Playing Game.

Blizzard Entertainment, an American video game developer, has created a common MMORPG known as "World of Warcraft," or "WoW," where players are immersed in an online virtual world.

Players participate in the game with other gamers and are given tasks or "quests" to complete individually or with a group of people through the game.

Andy Vandenberg, a local DMACC student and a regular "WoW" player, describes what makes some of these MMOs so addictive. "Once you hit the max level, it's like the game has really just begun. [Blizzard] is constantly updating it, so it feels like you get a new game every couple of months."

Vandenberg says that every week he would participate in "raids" where he and 24 other people would go through dungeons to get better gear

in the game. "I'm part of a guild in the game, which is a network of players that play together and go on these raids."

Vandenberg describes these raids as, "how you get better gear, and how you get to know the people you raid with, over time they become your friends online."

A report known as the Daedalus Project, which conducted an experiment on the nature of MMORPGs, and how they draw people in, helps explain why players may feel so attached. "Achievement in MMORPGs is seductive because the goals are well-defined, the journey is well-defined, and the rewards are social and persistent."

The report goes on to say that achievement is revered in the game's own online community, "You accumulate what you have achieved in a character that is a part of a community

that recognizes your power

showing up on the raids he

games is characterized by intense feelings of pleasure and guilt.

Right now, the American Medical Association, or the AMA, does not recognize video game addiction as an official psychiatric illness.

Even though it is not considered a serious health issue, the AMA has recognized the problems that some video game addicts have experienced.

Video game addiction is being considered for the AMA's diagnostic manual, which lists all known addictions and medical conditions. The manual is up for review in 2012. Game addiction could then be considered a true illness rather than being treated as an irregular social issue.

Gentile states in his research on addictive game qualities that, "The person becomes addicted to the game," rather than the game being addictive itself.

He attributes this behavior to what is known as impulse-control disorder, which is defined as the irresistible urge to do something harmful to themselves or others. Eating disorders, compulsive gambling and compulsive hair pulling are all categorized as impulse-control disorders.

"The gamer knows he should do his homework, but he can't stop the impulse

"Once you get going in some of these games that really pull you in, you don't want to stop," says Cody Darr, DMACC student.

and competence. Your efforts and achievements in MMORPGs gain a consequential realism."

E-mailing Blizzard for comments on the nature of their game leads to inconclusive results. An automated response from Blizzard states they do not intend to make addictive games and are just trying to produce a good product.

Concerned people on parents.berkeley.edu who are expressing concern for their loved ones describe how MMOs draw the gamer they know in by "peer pressure and guilt." Some comments go on to say, "The gamer might let other people down if they didn't log in at a certain moment to play."

While Vandenberg does not recount any times that he got yelled at for not

attends, he says that the top guilds in World of Warcraft do exhibit this behavior.

Josh Bowen, an ISU and DMACC graduate, describes himself as a person who plays video games, but he doesn't categorize himself as an addict.

"While being a serious issue, not all gaming is qualified as an addictive quality," he says. "It's a fun pastime that allows me to hang out with friends and is more of a social tool than an anti-social time dump."

So how do people know when video games have become a serious issue in their lives rather than just a pastime activity? Douglas A. Gentile, a professor at ISU, has done extensive research on video game addiction, and has published his findings at his website, drdouglas.org. Gentile reports that symptoms include lying about computer video game use, being irritable when not playing a video game and playing computer or video

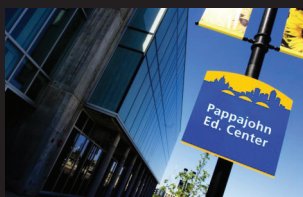
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Listen Local

Profile: Young Slim

Want to suggest a band to be featured in Listen Local? Drop me an e-mail at cjeilers@q.com or Chronicle@dmacc.edu.

BY CJ EILERS
STAFF WRITER

This week we will be looking at Young Slim, a rapper from Des Moines.

Manny Seay has been going by the name Young Slim as a rapper for five

years now. Formerly a member of the rap duo enVus, he began his solo career a few years ago. Young Slim is influenced by such rappers as Ludacris and Lil Wayne, but listens to many genres, except country. Young Slim's older

stuff is more "clubby," but he has recently gone in a straighter rap direction. Young Slim can freestyle, but he likes "pen on paper" better. He has collaborated with other local artists such as YellaBoi, Juliand Dock and his producer, Chuch

Beats. "Chuch Beats has been the one to help my directions," said Young Slim. "I'll come in with an idea and he'll make a beat for it and we make music for it."

Young Slim released his first solo album, "Ain't

Ready," in August. The album has sold well and has received positive reviews from critics. Young Slim is currently working on his second album, "Still Ain't Ready," which is planned to be released in the spring. He has played

at The Vaudeville Mews, Margaritas and several venues in Ames.

For more information on Young Slim, check out his Facebook, Myspace and Twitter pages. Young Slim also has videos on YouTube for fans to check out.

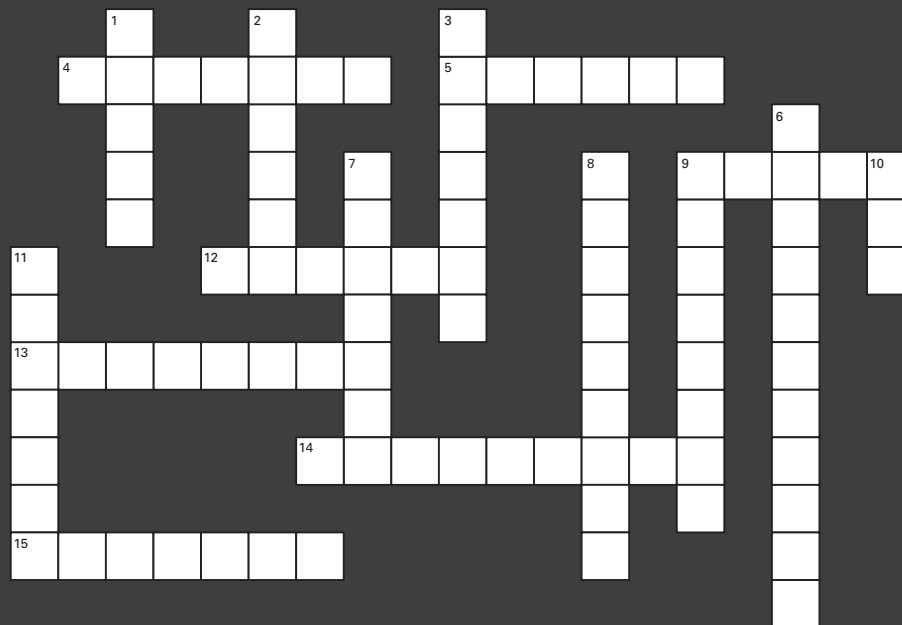
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ACROSS

- 4 This campus lake is named after a member of Iowa State's first graduating class.
- 5 This small steam engine ran between downtown Ames and Iowa State from 1891 to 1907.
- 9 Iowa State has more than 800 of these.
- 12 Name of the campus bus.
- 13 Iowa State is a land-grant and this type of university.
- 14 Iconic structure on central campus.
- 15 As an APP student, this building is one of many you'll have access to on Iowa State's campus.

DOWN

- 1 Name of Iowa State's student newspaper.
- 2 This Iowa State residence hall is one of the largest residence halls in the nation.
- 3 Through APP, you'll work with this person at Iowa State for your specific transfer needs.
- 6 Reiman Gardens at Iowa State is home to nearly 1,000 of these.
- 7 Name of the student-run festival held on campus each spring.
- 8 The first African-American athlete to compete for Iowa State in 1923 (2 words).
- 9 Iowa State is the birthplace of the first electronic digital version of this.
- 10 Iowa State has this many undergraduate colleges.
- 11 The Christian Petersen Art Museum is located in this hall on Iowa State's campus.

Burlesque: one big music video

BY BETSY SHARKEY
LOS ANGELES TIMES
(MCT)

LOS ANGELES Think of "Burlesque" as one ginormous music video theme party thrown by Christina Aguilera, with Cher in the house, plus boas, bustiers and dancing girls and about a thousand humongous Broadway-style showstoppers. Which is a far better way to consider "Burlesque" than thinking of it as a movie - there, words fail. (Their words, not mine. I'm a long way from finished here.)

But should you find yourself in the mood for Big Musical Numbers by the score rather than a film, there's a lot to like about "Burlesque." Anyone who's listened to Top 40 radio in the last decade has no doubt been blown away by Aguilera's powerful pipes and wide vocal range that puts her in Whitney Houston territory. She's pure pleasure to listen to, for a while. The singing-song-writing pop phenom is a cutting-edge maestro of the music video too. She was creating provocative pomp and circumstance extravaganzas long before Lady Gaga was saying "gaga." (OK, that might be a slight exaggeration.)

"Burlesque," then, is a safe place for Aguilera to show off her song and dance chops. And that she does, belting out bluesy songs left and right, many inspired by that smolder-



ing torch queen Etta James, while bumping and grinding around the stage with other pretties for roughly two hours straight. Whew.

It's a visual feast of feathers and rhinestones and pearls that makes you want to use words like razzle-dazzle amazing when talking about costume designer Michael Kaplan. Shot with a gorgeous lushness by Bojan Bazelli ("Hairspray" and "Mr. and Mrs. Smith"), the entire world of "Burlesque" evokes an earlier, vaudevillian era. But it's not set way back then. A ghastly "Dancing With the Stars" line lets you know that "Burlesque" is taking place "now," as does the mega real estate development that's putting the old L.A. club's fate on the line.

Writer-director Steven Antin, making his feature film debut, has borrowed the oldest story in the Hollywood book. Young girl from Iowa or somewhere



in the American middle , so she's blonde, comes to Tinseltown to find fame and fortune.

First she will face hard times, then find a big-city cheese to woo her (Eric Dane's Marcus), a sweet Kentucky farm boy to maybe love her (Cam Gigandet's Jack), and an aging diva (Cher's Tess) who will take her under her wing. And when she finally gets her shot at the big time - why gosh, that girl can sing.

The film begins back in the heartland with Aguilera's little orphan Ali taking cash from the register in the diner, just enough to cover what she's owed. But before she packs up and heads to the bus depot, there's that stage in the corner of the diner that beckons. ...

Once in L.A, Ali hits the streets looking for work and ends up on the Sunset Strip, where the neon Burlesque sign calls her in from the night. "Is this a strip club?" she asks, blinking those baby blues at the guy in the ticket booth,

played by Alan Cumming. To wit he answers that the only pole in here is Natasha (or Svetlana, or something equally cringe-worthy). Before you know it, Ali's chatting up that hunky Kentucky wonder who happens to bartend at the club, grabbing a tray and serving drinks, and vowing to convince Tess that she ought to be on the stage.

The filmmaker is apparently not only into borrowing plots, but recycling too since so many lines get reused like: "don't call me Ma'am" (that's Tess), "don't touch my stuff!" (that's Kristen Bell's Nikki, the young starlet who drinks too much, is always late, has a bad attitude and is about to be replaced by Ali), and "that's just the kind of friend I am" (Jack and Ali do multiple readings of that one, clearly a keeper). It's a shame because if you've ever seen "Moonstruck," "Silkwood" or "Mask," to name a few, you know that Cher can act, something she's never pressed to do here. Meanwhile, it will take more than "Burlesque" to know whether Aguilera will ever be able to make the transition.

Now when it comes to Stanley Tucci, it's another story. Truthfully I can't

remember anything he says, though there was some warning about an expiration date on milk, or maybe that was love, but God bless him, that man can read a phone book and make you feel the pathos. As Tess'

main confidant and best friend, stage manager Sean, he's tangy and tart and the only one you'd want to take home (though possibly Jack too, but just because he's so pretty).

On the story front, things unfold exactly as you would guess, not one surprise squeezed in anywhere no matter how hard you look. But with Aguilera and Cher center stage, there shouldn't have been any vocal issues to contend with. And yet ...

As much as I love the seductive low rumble that Cher still commands (and I will pay to see her in her latest Final Concert Tour, of which I think there have been three thus far), and while I'll take a jolt of Aguilera in the morning over Red Bull every time, any world-class singer knows you don't keep the volume blasting and the beat rocking hard the whole time.

It is a tip they should have shared with their director, one that might have led him to add shadings and nuance, a quiet ballad here and there, a moment or two with no spangle-y things to distract you. But no, "Burlesque" is top-heavy from start to finish. Maybe that's what you do when you have nothing new to say.

Upcoming Movies in Theaters

BY RENE RODRIGUEZ
MCCLATCHY NEWSPAPERS
(MCT)

"Enter the Void" (unrated) - The new film by Gaspar Noe ("Irreversible") arrives almost a half hour shorter than the version that premiered at Cannes, but this is still a cinematic endurance test (2 > hours) that should attract the boldest and staunchest movie buffs. Nominally about the death of a young drug dealer in Tokyo, the film is an essentially plotless, hallucinatory experience, with stunning camera moves you won't be able to figure out no matter how hard you try, stunning visuals and a hardcore (like NC-17) rating. It is definitely not for children, or the meek.

"The Warrior's Way" (unrated) - Korean star Dong-gun Jang stars in this martial-arts western about an Asian assassin who bails out on a job and seeks refuge in a small town in the badlands of the United States.

"Tamara Drewe" (R) - This adaptation of Posy Simmonds' graphic novel, in turn loosely based on Thomas Hardy's "Far From the Madding Crowd," follows the comedic and sometimes disastrous effect the presence of the beautiful eponymous heroine (Gemma Arterton) has on a peaceful writers' colony in rural England.

Texting ban designed to put brakes on accidents

BY CJ EILERS
STAFF WRITER

Many DMACC students are taking seriously the ban on texting while driving that took effect in Iowa in July.

"I did sometimes text before the ban, but I never do it anymore while driving," said first-year student Jessica Torres.

Iowa outlawed texting while driving to prevent drivers from getting distracted with text messages.

The new law was meant to prevent accidents caused by distracted drivers.

Eighty-one percent of the U.S. population admits to texting while driving at some point.

A study by The Virginia Tech Driving Institution says that those who text while driving are 23 times

more likely to have an accident.

"Texting requires hand and eye coordination, just like driving," said Steve Martin, a criminal justice professor at DMACC. People who try to drive and text at the same time often find they can't do both.

Some students already knew texting while driving was a bad idea before the ban took place. "I never texted before the ban be-

cause I never needed to," said second-year student Matt Hackett.

According to Martin, the best way to prevent accidents and enforce the ban is through education. "Officers aren't sure if they should arrest everyone they catch texting while driving, so the best way is to teach youth not to text and drive."

Statistics are not yet available to show if the law is making a difference.



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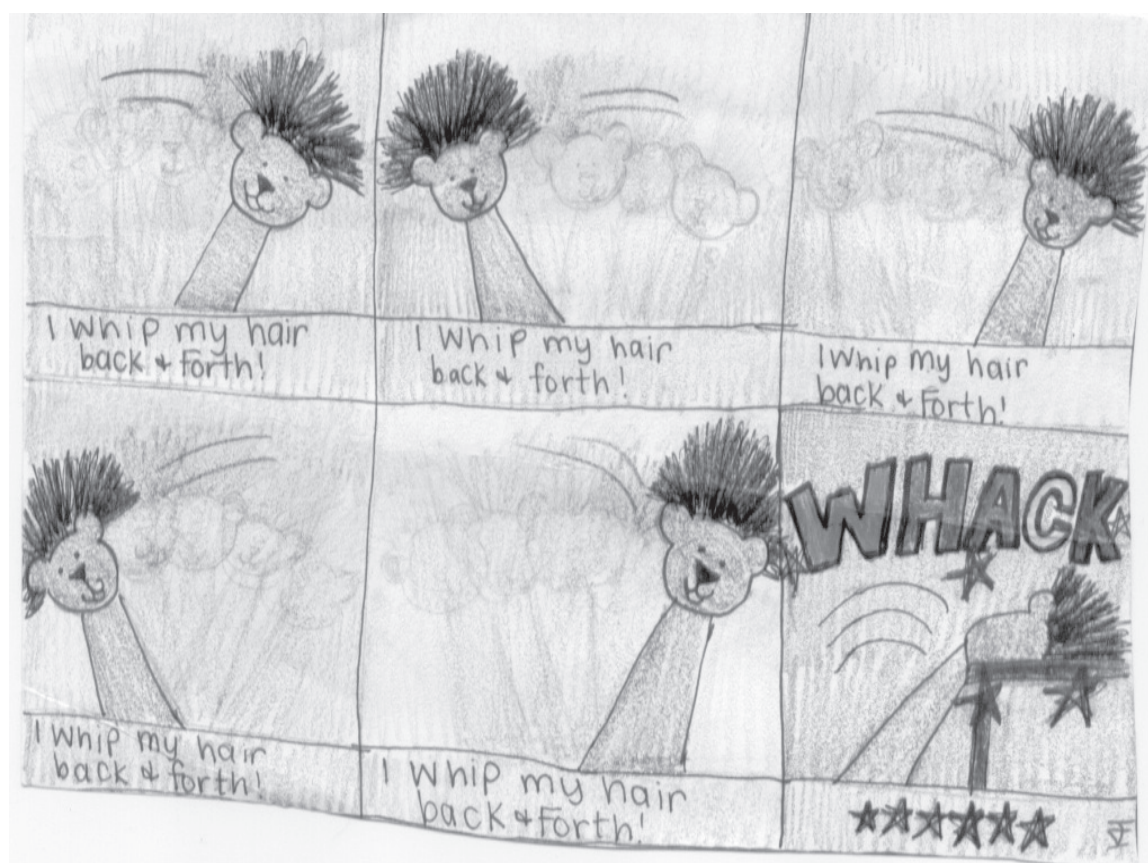
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Crazy Season isn't holding back

BY CJ EILERS
STAFF WRITER

Pull up the NFL standings, take a look at the NFC West, and feel free to scratch your head.

What the L is going on?

The Seattle Seahawks and St. Louis Rams are both 5-6. They're also the leaders in the NFC West, a division moving backward so quickly it should be beeping. On Sunday, the Rams stepped forward by winning at Denver, and the Seahawks stepped back with a home loss to Kansas City.

The mild, mild West is a microcosm of a league where mediocrity reigns, where the middle of the road is as busy as a Thanksgiving traffic jam — the bad teams getting better, and the good teams getting worse.

The league calls that competitive balance, and it makes every weekend a crapshoot. That was the case Sunday, when eight of the 11 day games were decided by a touchdown or less.

The two-win Buffalo Bills showed a strong heartbeat, coming oh-so-close to beating the first-place Pittsburgh Steelers in overtime. Instead, after Bills receiver Stevie Johnson let a soft, 40-yard touchdown pass slip through his hands, his fifth drop of the game, the Steelers responded with a field goal to win, 19-16.

"I had the game in my hands and I dropped it," Johnson said. "Humbled. Humbled."

The Carolina Panthers have been humbled all season, cycling through quarterbacks and winning just one game. But they nearly reversed their fortunes for a day, giving the surging Browns a scare in Cleveland before losing, 24-23. The Panthers, with rookie quarterback Jimmy Clausen at the helm, came within inches of victory, John Kasay's 42-yard field-goal attempt on the final play grazed the outside of the left upright.

Kasay missed, but Atlanta's Matt Bryant didn't. He made a 47-yard field goal with nine seconds left to lift the Falcons to a 20-17 victory over Green Bay at the Georgia Dome.

In what was billed as a possible preview of the NFC championship game, the Falcons (9-2) showed again that they are devastatingly efficient at home, where they are 19-1 with Matt Ryan at quarterback. Four of Atlanta's final six games are against losing teams, including two against the 1-10 Panthers.

Then again, records can be deceiving. Just look at the Chicago Bears. Yes, they came into Week 12 at 7-3 and on a roll, but their four previous victories were against teams that were a combined 11-29. How good could the Bears really be?

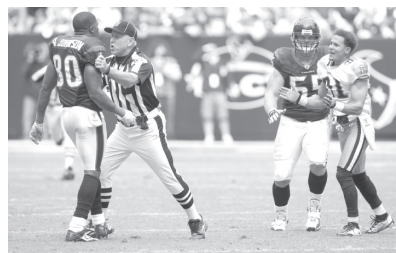
They showed the football world Sunday, knocking off Michael Vick and the torrid Philadelphia Eagles, 31-26, with a four-touchdown, zero-interception performance by Jay Cutler.

It was the first Eagles loss in a game in which Vick was the quarterback

throughout, and the first time Vick had an interception since Christmas Eve of 2006. What's more, it was a reminder that there might not be a clear-cut favorite in the NFC all season.

FEELING PUNCHY

Most weeks it's a helmet-to-helmet hit that has everyone buzzing. But in Sunday's incident, neither player was wearing a helmet.



(MCT) and they're

Houston receiver Andre Johnson and Tennessee cornerback Cortland Finnegan were ejected after ripping off each other's helmets and brawling, the culmination of tensions that were brewing all game.

"He kept doing little things and I told him: 'Just because you're frustrated, you need to stop what you're doing,'" Johnson said. "I guess he thought it was funny."

The normally soft-spoken Johnson conceded: "I lost my cool."

Finnegan did not speak to reporters after the game, but Titans Coach Jeff Fisher, co-chairman of the competition committee, said the incident "is not good for the game."

CANTON-ESQUE

Cleveland's Peyton Hillis rushed for three touchdowns against the Panthers, pushing his season total to 11. That puts him in some lofty company, the only other Cleveland backs to run for that many in a

season are Jim Brown and Leroy Kelly, both Hall of Fame members.

"That's absurd," Hillis told reporters after being informed of his place in team history. "Those guys are legends and I'm a nobody."

CHANGE FOR THE BETTER

The Dallas Cowboys changed coaches, then won their next two games.

The Minnesota Vikings are hoping they can do the same, (MCT) and they're

halfway there. In beating Washington on Sunday, the Vikings won their first game under interim Coach Leslie Frazier.

From the sound of things, Frazier already has something former coach Brad Childress did not: Command of the locker room.

"He's well-respected. It felt like when he talks, guys' ears are pinned up; they listen to everything that's coming out of his mouth," running back Adrian Peterson said of the promoted defensive coordinator. "It's just a feeling that I really can't explain, a feeling of just being sure about the words that are coming out of his mouth and trusting them."

NFL Standings

AFC North

Baltimore Ravens: 8-3
Pittsburgh Steelers: 8-3
Cleveland Browns: 4-7
Cincinnati Bengals: 2-9

AFC South

Indianapolis Colts: 6-5
Jacksonville Jaguars: 6-5
Houston Texans: 5-6
Tennessee Titans: 5-6

AFC East

New York Jets: 9-2
New England Patriots: 9-2
Miami Dolphins: 6-5
Buffalo Bills: 2-9

AFC West

Kansas City Chiefs: 7-4
San Diego Chargers: 6-5
Oakland Raiders: 5-6
Denver Broncos: 3-8

NFC North

Chicago Bears: 8-3
Green Bay Packers: 7-4
Minnesota Vikings: 4-7
Detroit Lions: 2-9

NFC South

Atlanta Falcons: 9-2
New Orleans Saints: 8-3
Tampa Buccaneers: 7-4
Carolina Panthers: 1-10

NFC East

Philadelphia Eagles: 7-4
New York Giants: 7-4
Washington Redskins: 5-6
Dallas Cowboys: 3-8

NFC West

St. Louis Rams: 5-6
Seattle Seahawks: 5-6
San Francisco 49ers: 3-7
Arizona Cardinals: 3-7

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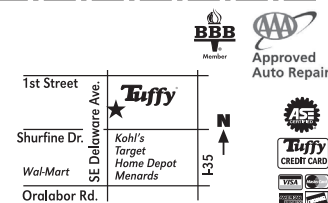
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