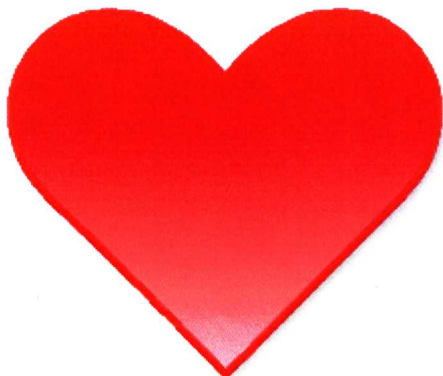


Valentine's Day, Boyfriend Candidacy, and the Single Life

By Matthew Russo 🐦 February 14, 2013



On this Valentine's Day, being a good Catholic boy, I have a confession to make. I have never had a girlfriend.

"The quiet kid with the long hair doesn't have a girlfriend? I am flabbergasted," I imagine you saying.

I assure you, valued reader, I am telling the truth.

It's not that I don't meet attractive women. In fact, I'd say that the majority of the women I've met at Fontbonne are quite good-looking. Now that I've successfully creeped out our female readership (all eleven of them), allow me to add that appearances don't really matter to me. Anyone who has seen me over the past three years can vouch for that. If you haven't had the pleasure of my acquaintance, I'll sum up my appearance in one word: scruffy.

Of course, there are women who I have felt more than mere physical attraction toward, but they almost certainly don't know who they are. So, why didn't I ask any of them out on a date? Or, even better, why don't I do it in time for Valentine's Day? The same reason that I would never run for office. Let me explain. There are a certain set of expectations that the public has of political candidates. I do not fulfill these expectations. For one, I don't own a suit and a solid blue or red tie.

"Look at him," my opponent would say. "Is this what a leader looks like? If he gets elected, greasy-haired teenagers will think it's okay to walk around like that."

"No, it's not okay to walk around like that" will be the voting populace's consensus. Thus, the problem is not whether or not I can perform the duties of a governmental office but the fact that I would never be elected into one.

In the same way, it's not that I think I'd be a bad boyfriend (although I am untested). However, a friend of mine did ask me once if the reason I didn't have a girlfriend was because I was afraid I couldn't take care of her. That's not the case at all. Rather, I don't think I'd get elected to the office of boyfriend even though it only takes one vote (maybe two or three, depending on her relationship with her parents).

Again, there are certain things that many women prefer in a significant other that I just don't satisfy. I'm not tall. My regular attire consists of t-shirts of bands who are long past the height of their popularity. The amount of effort I put into grooming myself is minimal. Hell, I didn't even have a vehicle until I was twenty-one (the age I still am). The fact that my vehicle is a van that looks like you might never be seen again after you enter it isn't helping my cause.

As I prepare to spend my twenty-second consecutive Valentine's Day alone (I feel like I'm trying to break some kind of record), I can promise that I won't be buying any cards, heart-shaped chocolates, or singing stuffed animals. I'm certainly not going to be pining over any women I let slip away. Moping around takes up too much time, and I'm a busy man. As such, I do have plans on the holiday: poetry class. I sincerely hope no one in the course would even consider bringing in a love poem on that day, but that's probably wishful thinking.

I'm not entirely sure why Valentine's Day even exists (or why it's in the winter instead of the spring). Shouldn't people show their love for one another every day? And for established couples, don't anniversaries already serve the purpose of celebrating one's relationship? It's really a useless holiday, a vehicle for heart-shaped merchandise and an excuse for grade-schoolers to waste half a day handing out cheap cartoon-themed valentines. Not to mention, it places unnecessary pressure on adults who have been conditioned to feel that they should be in a relationship at this time of year.

Luckily, I don't give in to such pressure and have no problem being single on Valentine's Day or any other day of the year. Others may fret about having a date on the day we celebrate love, but I will not let our culture make me feel bad about being a bachelor.

My advice to any single people reading this: forget about Valentine's Day and have fun doing whatever you want. Watch a movie, hang out with your friends, run through the streets half-naked screaming about how the G-man is out to get you (you know, the usual).

Besides, if you actually think the G-man is after you, you have bigger problems than being single on Valentine's Day.

Prvi Mart: Voting for Change in Bosnia-Herzegovina

By Matthew Russo 🕒 February 16, 2013



On Sunday, February 10, on campus, Dr. Emir Suljagić, Refik Hodžić, Edin Ramulić, and Patrick McCarthy launched the US side of the Prvi Mart (March First) Initiative. The aim is to register exiled Bosnians to vote to elect representatives within Bosnia, who would change the political system to ensure civil rights and to end genocide denial.

Hodžić, Director of Communications for the International Center for Transitional Justice, said, “If I were to draw a parallel between this movement and any other movement, it is very much like the Civil Rights Movement in the United States. This is a fight against discrimination. This is a fight against racism. This is a fight against outcomes of the worst violence being employed to implement racist and discriminatory policies.”

Dr. Suljagić, the leader of the Prvi Mart Coalition, explained, “We’re doing this because we strongly believe that, as a generation, we cannot stand by and see how genocide has become a legal and legitimate way of creating and establishing majorities in our own country,”

Hodžić outlined the goal of Prvi Mart to register 100,000 former residents of Republika Srpska, one of the two political entities of Bosnia-Herzegovina. On March 1, 2014, these new voters would then elect into the state parliament five representatives who do not deny genocide and who support equality in the country.

From 1992 to 1995, the genocide in Bosnia-Herzegovina forced many to leave the country, but the Dayton Peace Agreement that ended the war gives them the right to vote.

“Why voting? Why not Arab Spring-like popular revolution on the streets?” Hodžić said. “Because we believe that there is a framework in the country, as flawed as the Dayton Agreement was, to implement the conventions of human rights, to secure equality for all the citizens, to stop genocide denial.”

On the opposition, Dr. Suljagić said, “The people who are on the other side of this campaign or this movement have been willing not to die but to kill, and kill innocents, for their own vision of our own country. They’ve been willing to shoot at their neighbors for their own vision of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

And all we have to do is vote to ensure our own vision of Bosnia-Herzegovina, to ensure a vision of a country in which we're all equal everywhere."

Through a translator, Ramulić said, "This is a huge challenge for all of us. One of the reasons why is that it requires the involvement of more than, possibly, a hundred thousand people. But, at the same time, it's a great hope and it's a great opportunity that with a hundred thousand people we show that with a little effort we can do a lot more."

By electing representatives who acknowledge the genocide, the Prvi Mart initiative aims to change the government and policies of Bosnia-Herzegovina from the inside. In an interview, Patrick McCarthy, who has been involved in the Bosnian community for the last twenty years, stated that these changes would be aimed at creating a more unified Bosnia, one in which the power structure is not about control. Other changes that are hoped for are the facilitation of the return of property lost during the war, laws against discrimination and genocide denial (Hodžić proposed laws that would prevent discriminators and genocide deniers from holding office), and the integration of Bosnia into the international community (McCarthy mentioned Bosnia joining the European Union and becoming a full member of NATO).

However, before these changes can even become possibilities, Bosnians living in diaspora must be registered to vote. Throughout the presentation, the importance, both economical and political, of those who left to those who remain was stressed. According to McCarthy, registering voters will be "a process that will occur one by one, individual by individual in the same way that lives were destroyed in the war in Bosnia." Hodžić described the campaign as grassroots and added that 59,000 Bosnians living in the United States are already registered to vote. They just need to exercise that right. Part of the outreach, McCarthy shared, will be to use existing Bosnian communities, such as religious organizations and social clubs, to spread the word. Both Hodžić and Suljagić stated that help with registering would be available to those who need it.

Regarding how to encourage displaced Bosnians to vote, Dr. Moore, Director of the Bosnia Memory Project, said, "We need to emphasize that it is their right to do so. And we need to emphasize that it will make a difference. It's a way that people living here can positively affect the conditions in their homeland."

Despite this chance to make their ancestral home a better place, Hodžić listed the apathy of Bosnians living abroad as one of the two main obstacles to the Prvi Mart initiative. The concern was vindicated by the small audience on Sunday. The other obstacle was the response, such as death threats from the people in power in Bosnia-Herzegovina who would be challenged by the movement.

All the speakers admitted that it is not going to be easy, but they also firmly believe that only the people of Bosnia, through democracy, can fix the system in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Even though there will be some odds to overcome, Dr. Suljagić is undeterred: "It is possible. It is doable. It is going to be difficult to get where we want to get, but if you look at the recent history of this country, we've never had an easy moment anyway."

A few weeks before the presentation, Dr. Moore expressed his view on the importance of exercising the right to vote: "I'm convinced that if there's not a greater degree of participation in government by all ethnicities in Bosnia, the economic and political conditions in Bosnia will deteriorate further. If this happens, could we see another war? I wouldn't rule it out."

Although much is at stake within Bosnia, Ramulić sees Prvi Mart as having effects outside the country:

“After the elections in Bosnia in 2014, the world should not be the same again.” He elaborated that the initiative will send a worldwide message that crimes against humanity will not be tolerated and will act as an example for other coalitions to bring change to other countries.

These global ramifications may overshadow the importance of Prvi Mart to the St. Louis community. However, Dr. Moore catalogued the reasons why non-Bosnian St. Louisans, and especially university students, should care. “First of all, the Bosnian population is a really important population here in St. Louis. We’re talking about our immediate neighbors. And Second, it’s a question of social justice, and the mission and values of Fontbonne are centered on social justice. And Third, it’s a great way to learn something about the world. And Fourth, it’s something that Fontbonne’s students, staff, and faculty can be really proud of.”

McCarthy praised the university’s involvement with Bosnian immigrants: “Fontbonne has played an important role in providing support to the Bosnia community and then also in representing the needs and concerns of the Bosnian community here in St. Louis, and I think it is to Fontbonne’s credit that, through the Bosnia Memory Project, it is both preserving the memory of what occurred but also contributing to permanent solutions to improve the situation for Bosnians here in St. Louis and for the country they came from.”

Photo courtesy of Margaux Sanchez.

Everybody Needs Undies

By Erica Van Buren February 19, 2013



“I thought it was a catchy title for an event helping a worthy cause!” Leslie Doyle said regarding the campus emails that went out pertaining to the “Everybody Needs Undies” drive. Starting February 15th, the University will be collecting children’s socks and underwear in connection with the Little Bit Foundation, an organization who helps students in need.

“The goal is to bridge the learning gap,” says Jamie Sokolik, University Communications Coordinator, of the Little Bit Foundation. The foundation was created in 2001 out of a request from an inner-city teacher and has grown into an organization servicing around 3,400 elementary and middle school students in the St. Louis area. 90-100% of the students in Little Bit schools are at or near the poverty line. The volunteers who help make this a success develop strong partnerships with sponsored schools to offer consistent, empowering hope to the students in need of help.

Little Bit donates clothing (underwear, shoes, and coats) and hygiene kits including a toothbrush and washcloth along with a week’s supply of shampoo and lotion to children in need. Because of the services that are provided to the schools, attendance increases, discipline issues decline, and test scores improve.

For the last year and a half, Sokolik has been involved with billboards, writing pamphlets, video, news releases, and anything promotional pertaining to the University. She was introduced to the Little Bit Foundation by her mother and Program Director, Nancy Sokolik, and has taken over as Little Bit Program Director since October 2011. Nancy explains how Little Bit was founded saying her friend and Executive Director, Rose Hanley, wanted to host a clothing drive to collect coats for students. This inspired a friend at another St. Louis public school to hold a drive. When Hanley realized the great need for clothing and services for underprivileged students in the city, she created The Little Bit Foundation, which received its 501c3non-profit designation in 2006.

Beyond being the University’s communications coordinator, Sokolik is also responsible for Little Bit’s school programs and relationships. “It’s different than other non-profits. It’s an instant gratification when you volunteer with Little Bit.” she said after spending time with the children.

On top of providing the necessities, the foundation has a “Books and Buddies” program that provides books to the students. Each child receives a fully stocked backpack and a stuffed animal to increase

interest in reading. Partnering with Operation Food Search, Little Bit is also able to offer emergency food kits to kids. Best of all, each school receives a washer and dryer in order to keep kids' new clothes fresh and clean.

Currently there are 15 schools under the aid of Little Bit with a total of 3700 students. In order to qualify for the free lunch program, schools have to have 90% of the students at or below the poverty line. Little Bit programs and services fulfill the basic needs of underprivileged school children in the sponsored schools. "Our delivery model is completely unique," says Nancy. The way the process works is when the school liaison or a teacher identifies a need, they fill out an order form with the desired items, appropriate sizes, etc. and forward the list to the Little Bit warehouse. Each week, two trained Little Bit volunteers per school fill orders, deliver items to the school, and stay to ensure each child receives what he or she needs.

Little Bit provides new clothing, including new (not used) tops, bottoms, and underwear. "Working in the Little Bit 'boutique,' a room designated to our organization, the school reps work one-on-one with the students to be sure their school uniforms, coats, shoes, etc. fit them perfectly. Every interaction is handled with complete care and respect, always with the dignity of the child in mind. In the Little Bit room, everyone is treated with respect."

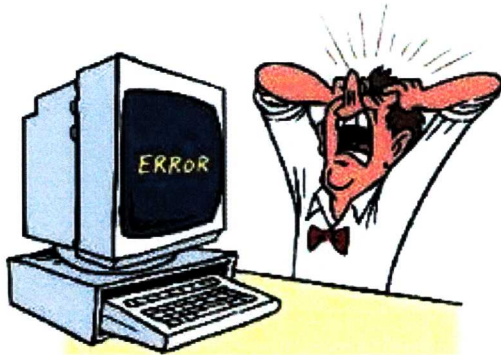
Each Friday, Little Bit hosts an informational session with coffee so volunteers can learn more about the foundation. Sokolik looks forward to bringing their model to more colleges to inspire more people to donate.

To add a little more incentive to donate, the University is holding a contest to see who can collect the most: students, faculty, or staff. The contest ends on March 6th, and everyone is asked to participate. Don't forget, everyone needs undies!

For a full list of acceptable items to donate and to see how Little Bit makes a difference, visit www.thelittlebitfoundation.org.

GriffinNet Woes

By Zakiayyah Geraldts February 19, 2013



It's November 12, near the end of the semester, and it's time to register. Steve has all his classes ready and his advisor's approval to register. He logs onto GriffinNet, and all his planning goes down the drain. He doesn't know where to click or how to register on the new portal. Frustrated, he slams the laptop shut. Many students have fallen victim to the new portal known as GriffinNet. A variety of students, staff, and faculty have had their share of woes, from not being able to access something, to being kicked completely out the system, and altogether feeling completely lost.

GriffinNet is the new portal used on campus to access grades, find unofficial transcripts, run degree audits, look at financial aid award letters and more. Before GriffinNet, the University used Student Information Management. The transition lasted from the end of the 2012 Spring semester until Fall 2012. Many students complained about not being able to find the variety of information needed, leaving them frustrated. Kayla Hite, a fashion merchandising major, said "I don't like it at all. It's confusing and difficult to access the things I need. I just wish it was easier to use like the one before. I knew where everything was... With GriffinNet, I feel like I'm clicking aimlessly for hours until I just happen to stumble upon what I was looking for." Speech Path major, Vonya Ranciville said, "At first I didn't like it because I didn't know how to navigate the site, but now it's okay."

Some students may be wondering what happened to the old portal, and Vice President of IT, Mark Franz, has the answer: "The vendor of Student Information Management stopped supporting the old version of the web portal. GriffinNet is a rewrite of the vendor's new web software. We also like the different look, feel, and components of GriffinNet." Other students and faculty are wondering how the department came up with the layout of the portal to make things easier to find and use. "A group of about six people from Student Affairs, Academic Affairs, and IT got together to redesign the system to flow better," says Franz. "We tried to make tabs on the portal to make it easier to find the different things that people would need. We do a re-review every 6-8 months." Franz also explains that students from 2011 and up started fresh on GriffinNet and didn't receive an account for Student Information Management. This tactic was meant to work out any kinks and view what initial problems would arise. Franz assures that IT is working to fix and better any issues from the trial period.

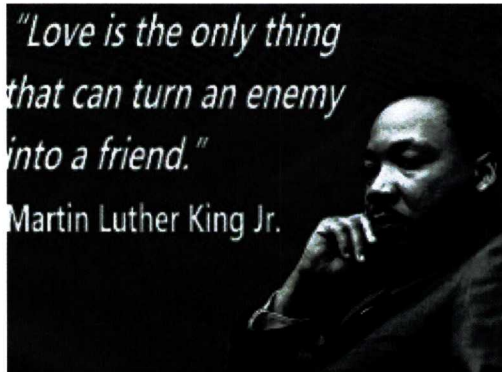
The main question students and faculty have is how does the IT department plan to resolve further issues that may occur. "Well we would have to know exactly what the issues are so we could resolve them. We do have a guide on the very first page that can help navigate you to the correct spot," says Franz. "Maybe we could make it more noticeable so that people can find it. Lastly, we could

implement a form or suggestion box on the first page so that students, faculty and staff can tell ideas of how to improve the portal.”

Steve can take some comfort in knowing that he’s not alone in his tribulations of GriffinNet, and that improvements are being made so that this year’s registration can go as smoothly as possible.

Remembering the Dream: Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Campus Celebration

By Erica Van Buren 🕒 February 19, 2013



“We need to wake up, swing our feet off the bed, lace up our boots and go to work.” said Dr. Stefan Bradley on January 18, commencing the Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration held in the Doer Chapel. The small crowd looked with full attention as if he awakened something in them to come to the rescue of others. Everyone applauded and others even gave an occasional “Amen,” in tradition with a typical Baptist church service which entails the crowd cheering on the pastor for his heart felt sermon. “That’s why I came here today. I came here to remind myself and you that it’s cool to dream, but that we have to wake up, swing our feet off the bed, lace up our boots, and go to work,” concludes Bradley. “We need to stop worshipping King and recognize that he was just a man—a man who happened to say ‘yes’ to the hard work of helping others—of serving others.”

Dr. Stefan Bradley is an Associate professor at Saint Louis University. His primary research area is in recent U.S. history with an emphasis on the African American experience. His first book, *Harlem vs. Columbia University: Black Student Power in the Late 1960s* deals with black students who risked their educations (and potentially their lives) during the famous controversy that took place at Columbia University in 1968-1969. The students' activism resulted in the alteration of university policies toward the neighboring community of Harlem and a change in the university's curriculum. The efforts of these young people, and many others, undoubtedly contributed to the larger cultural and political shifts that occurred in American society after the 1960s.

Even though Dr. Bradley brought the crowd to cheers and applause, our University also had some wonderful things to add to the celebration. Student Adonika Smith welcomed everyone to celebrate and reflect on the work of the youth who have upheld lives in providing service to others, keeping the legacy of Dr. King alive.

Anthony Hall, University staff member, led the group in prayer. After introducing himself, the people in the front row leaned forward as to give their full attention, awaiting his contribution to the celebration. Following the Christian tradition of prayer, he ended with: “To God be all glory, honor, and praise.”

Rayne Saddler talked about students who, like Dr. King, fought hard to be a part of a cause for the greater good, also mentioning Rosa Parks and her contribution to change. While attending the

Highlander Folk School from 1955-57, which consisted of white and black activists, Parks and Dr. King talked about what needed to be done in order to change the South. It was during this time activists prepared for the Civil Rights Movement. Because of its controversial teachings the Highlander Folk School was closed by the state government and its assets were seized. At a later date an organization known as the Highlander Research and Education Center was opened in its place and still exists in East Tennessee.

Isabella Liu, University student, performed a song in Italian that demonstrated how much of a strong and determinate man Dr. King was. Student Yedata Demisse described how students took on an active role in the civil rights movement in the 1960s. Alyssa Lindsay offered a Native American Traditional prayer saying, "Sacred One, teach us love, compassion, and honor that we may heal the earth and heal each other."

Professor Corinne Taff recounted how on October 24, 1970, eight young, female University students headed to the campus library with the intent of making a difference. The group (Cathy Batiste, Jeanette Gauda, Rita Hunt, Collette Lamelle, Yolande Nicholson, Gwendolyn Perry, Antoinette Smith, and Sharon Walker) risked their scholarships, their only funding to stay in school, to protest the unfair treatment of African-American students and visitors to the University. These women came up with a proposal outlining the issues they wanted addressed. One of the concerns was more recruitment for African Americans. Even though the protest ended when the students were removed from the library the next day, their legacy continues to live on.

Saeed Al Ghamdi offered words from the Islamic faith "As-salaam-alai-kum" and a prayer which comes from the Muslim tradition. He left the audience with the following words "He begetteth not, nor is He begotten; and there is none like unto Him."

Marcella Meyer talked about the movement that took place in 1985 at Columbia University. The students demanded that the university dissociate its holdings in companies that do business with the South African government. This was to bring awareness of the effects of apartheid going on in South Africa.S

ydney Frassure was welcomed to the podium with her prayer which came from the Baha'I faith. "That our thoughts, our views, our feeling may become as one reality, manifesting the spirit union throughout the world."

Student Erica Garcia spoke on the United Teen Equality Center that was founded in 1999 and how it is the result of an organizing movement that is driven by young people to develop their own teen center in response to gang violence. Its long term vision is to serve as a model for other youth agencies across the Commonwealth and beyond.

The celebration closed with Sarah Boul giving thanks to everyone that participated either with a prayer, musical piece or speech that helped keep Dr. Martin Luther King's legacy alive. Students, staff and faculty participated in gathering together to partake in fellowship and in the refreshments that were offered. Dr. Bradley stayed to sell autographed copies of his books: Alpha Phi Alpha: A Legacy of Greatness, The Demands of Transcendence, and Harlem vs. Columbia University: Black Student Power in the late 1960s. With this event, each individual offered a prayer or an offering that came in the form of spoken words or a song. Each of these pieces to the puzzle created something worth attending here at our University to remember a great and influential leader.

Apartment Hunting, Lying Landlords, and a Little Wrestling

By Dino Hiros February 25, 2013



Apartment hunting might be one of the more depressing activities that a college student has to partake in. At first one might feel a sense of excitement and hope, but don't be fooled. There is no hope and you should only be excited if you enjoy getting your hopes up. But then again it isn't all bleak; it provides that one great intangible gift that adults speak of: experience. And if experience isn't what you are looking for then comedy will definitely be a worthy substitute.

I never really understood why it was termed "apartment hunting." Although I have only been "hunting" for about three weeks, I haven't sat 100 yards away from the apartment and tried to shoot it with a rifle. But if I did I would assume that I would aim for the front doorknob. That would probably be a killshot. Then another thought comes to mind, maybe the term comes from the homicidal thoughts that one might experience after seeing the apartment. My homicidal thoughts tend to gravitate towards the landlord in most cases. For instance, when an "800 sq. ft. loft in Soulard" turns out to be a small living room with an uneven floor, a section of new paint on only one wall, and 150 sq. ft. are actually located in a closet under the loft which isn't even tall enough for me to stand upright in, I become angry. When asked, "So what do you think?" I hold back from saying "I think we have a problem because you, sir, are a liar." Instead, I just ask a question back, something stupid like, "So how long has it been up for rent?" This distracts me and helps me keep cool, and the temptation of putting the landlord in a full nelson drifts away into my subconscious.

After seeing a few apartments that didn't match their online pictures I figured out how these magicians were creating the illusion of space. By going to the corner of the room and taking the picture from the floor and pointing the camera in an upward angle, the picture will disguise how tiny the room really is. This in most cases is a clever trick to pull. It will probably increase the attention to the apartment and ultimately lead to a quicker lease. But a landlord is going to have a hard time leasing the apartment if he/she is in the hospital due to blunt force trauma.

Another apartment I looked at which was located in Dogtown featured "an updated kitchen and new carpeting throughout." It's very possible that the kitchen might have been updated, just not in this millennium. And the carpets could have been new at some point, but the brown stains took away from

their luster. When I asked my go to question, “How long has this apartment been up for rent?” the landlord replied with, “It’s been a few months, I still haven’t gotten in here to fix and clean some stuff up.” In other words, he hasn’t done anything since the past tenant left. “But I plan on having the carpets cleaned and fixing some little problems.” In other words, he also sees the stains and knows about more problems that I can’t see or am unwilling to look at. And as my interest suffers a quick and rather painless death, I tell him that the apartment is as big as the pictures implies and thank him for his time.

After being disappointed a few times I decided to expand my search. I headed downtown to look at a loft listed for rent at \$600. It was perfect. The appliances were brand new, the floors were real hardwood, and there was gated parking. The only problem was that the rent was actually \$900 per month and the parking costs an extra \$150 per month. I asked the realtor why it was listed for \$600 a month with parking included, and she said that was for a different property owned by her client, but it was rented out just before I called to make an appointment. Luckily, if I was really interested in this place I could sign a lease for 2 years and the rent would be \$850 a month. I could do that or I could kick you in the stomach and give you a Stone Cold Steve Austin Stunner and then give you the middle finger as you lay on the ground in pain. Since neither of us liked the other’s suggestion, I found myself leaving yet another disappointment behind me.

As I continue this journey I realize that literally everything is relative. What someone might call new and clean could actually be old and dirty to another person. But then this is where that intangible gift of experience comes into play. Dealing with new people provides new circumstances and situations. And how one deals with these new situations will provide that experience. I can either freak out and fight every lan lord who bends the truth or I can just move on and keep looking.

Love It or Hate it (You're Still Gonna Hate It): The Only Way to See Vday

By Rachel Lalk February 25, 2013



HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY! Oh, what's that? A monotone groan? A huffy sigh? Who isn't a fan of the day dubbed "Singles Awareness?" Given all the hoopla in retail and the overly-romantic couples going to all ends to have the most perfect day, you'd think the holiday was a huge success. On the contrary, Valentine's Day seems to be a burden to anyone who gets out of bed on the dreadful day of February 14th.

Let's say you're in a relationship this Valentine's Day. Splendid. That means everything is honky-dory and peachy-keen for you. Being the gentleman you are, you've booked a romantic dinner, bought the biggest bouquet of roses, and dropped an entire paycheck on something sparkly and silver. Oh, and don't forget tickets to the newest Channing Tatum movie. I hear he's more shirtless than he was in Magic Mike.

And as the perfect girlfriend, your recent dieting has finally allowed you to slip into those frilly unmentionables from Victoria's Secret, and you baked his favorite chocolate covered whatevers that you plan on serving on a candlelit balcony. You two are going to have a magnificent night filled with hearts and stuffed bears and lots of pink.

That is, unless he didn't get that exact shiny trinket you hinted at two months ago—and brought up in every conversation since—and posted on his Facebook each week. Or she accidentally made those sweet goodies that her ex used to love—and then burned them. To top it off, she prepped for too long so you're late to dinner, and your reservations went to that single guy who treats himself to a 16 oz steak every Vday to celebrate another year of bachelorism.

So now you two are splitting a shake parked outside Micky D's to save the only shred of romanticism you can still fathom. I'd say things couldn't get worse, but of course a rain cloud would inevitably appear.

Well what about you single people? I wasn't going to leave you out. But that's what all of you expected, isn't it? For every couple in love on Valentine's Day, there's 52 solo hopeless romantics crying their eyes out, 89 singles who are outlandishly happy being single, and 167 cynical uncoupled people holding rotten fruit, ready to pelt. (And 76.6% of all statistics are made up on the spot.) While couples are busy saying, "Look at us! We're in love!" singles are in an equally loud and obnoxious uproar. The cries of "Single Awareness Day," or "Valentine's Day sucks," can be heard muttered under breath or chanted from the rooftops. Are they really jealous that they can't have that fun-filled, magical night described above? I wouldn't wish that kind of stress or disappointment on my greatest

enemy. Maybe on Taylor Swift though—we all know another great single would come out of her Valentine's Day heartbreak.

But back to you single folks. What's to hate about February 14th? You have a better chance of seeing a movie since you only have to find one seat. Even better, you'll be the only one in the theater for the new Die Hard movie because, let's face it, no girl is dragging her guy to see Bruce Willis blow stuff up. Yippee-Ki-Yay. Did you want a box of chocolates? You can get a whole bag of assorted chocolate for half the price. Thanks, after Halloween clearance. Need to hear "I love you?" Call your mom—she probably doesn't hear it enough from you anyways.

Think of it this way, Valentine's Day is just another day that you're single, so what makes it more crucial on this day to not be single? Instead of being cynical or depressed one day of the year, make Valentine's Day your day to celebrate you. Then you can hate couples just a little bit the other 364 days of the year instead of putting all your loathing into one day. Doesn't that sound easier?

You're right; that's a bad idea. Definitely stick with what you're doing. To make up for the "your mom" comment, I'd like to make a donation to the rotten produce fund.

So it would seem no one wins on Valentine's Day. Couples overcompensate for all the days they aren't going above and beyond, and singles do the same. A note to both groups: treat every day like Valentine's Day. Couples, do little acts of love each day, not grandiose gestures on one day. Singles, don't let one day get you down; despise couples with just as much fury and disgust each and every day of the year.

The Flavors of Love

By Amanda Teeter 🕒 February 25, 2013

On February 7th from 12:30 to 3:00, love-struck students could be found in Ryan Hall pondering carefully over a display table adorned with a banner of pastel pink, red hearts, and a teddy bear. A mere week from Cupid's big day, the crucial moment was at hand where plans needed to be finalized, nerves gathered, and a Valentine chosen. But the question on these students' minds was not who to send a heart-shaped greeting card to; it was Vanilla Vanilla, Chocolate Chocolate, or Confetti with Strawberry?

Such was the case at the annual Valentine's Day Cupcake-Gram table presented by the Student Human Environmental Services Association (SHESA). The organization's president-elect, Amber Bernel, enthusiastically hosted the booth beside her "helper" Mary Gillman.

The money raised from selling the cupcake-grams benefitted the Leukemia and Lymphoma society (LLS), a volunteer-based organization dedicated to helping patients suffering from various blood cancers.

During the event, cupcake-grams could be purchased in any of the three flavors for one dollar. The buyer would leave a message for their intended recipient who would be notified by email to come pick up their cupcake on the 14th. Bernel feels that the romantic theme really helped get people involved and raise more money for the cause.

"Love is in the air," she says. "It's Valentine's day and everybody wants to be loved!"

The University was very receptive of the tradition, giving to charity while spreading love across campus. Bernel spent February 13th with her colleagues baking around fourteen dozen cupcakes. Bernel says the event has seen a great turnout, and that students aren't the only ones who want to share the romance.

"Professors, staff, students..." she says, "there have been a lot of donations, too, which is great."

SHESA is an organization dedicated to community service and leadership, they have been involved in many charity and service events such as food drives, aiding the homeless, and contributions to Fontbonne Service Day. Their winter event this year was helping out with the 7 Days of Christmas initiative, and this is their first event this spring. Also involved in the event was current president Charity Brennan, May Smith, and faculty advisor Janine Duncan. This year, SHESA managed to raise \$240 for LLS with their cupcake-grams.

The Life of a (Travelling) College Athlete

By Justin Williams 🐦 February 25, 2013

One thing about charter buses that those of you that are not regulars don't know, they are not as fun as they look, especially after a few 6 (or more) hour drives. While many people may think of them as being spacious and luxurious, the buses tend to get cramped when riding with not only a full men's team, but sometimes a full women's team.

We all know what ends up happening on these cooperative rides: the women get to sit wherever they want and spread out to their heart's content, while the men double up every single seat in the back of the bus. I would like to say that we may get annoyed, but hey, this discomfort is no big deal because we all know chivalry isn't dead, right? There are always those people that lay across the aisles, all the while having people periodically climbing over limbs and even sleeping forms on the ground, just to get to the bathroom in the back. As cramped as it is, we chivalrous men can take it.

This may not seem horrible, but once on the bus it's every person for themselves. If you fall asleep leaving something out for others to mess with, like a cellphone or food, it's sure to be eaten or thrown. (Disclaimer: we have yet to have a cellphone swallowing incident). Or if you are sleeping with your mouth open, you are bound to be awoken with something being shoved in your trap. (Seriously, no phones have been ingested). If you mess with someone, you are in turn bound to see some retaliation.

There is almost an unspoken rule book for bus travelers, including things like not going number two on the bus and, well, that's about it. The bus can be pretty hectic, but once off of the bus and at the sight of the game or hotel, finding something to fight the boredom becomes a priority. Something University Soccer players Tim Menzel, Joel Laney, Ethan Kristek, and Charlie Chaffin came up with this year was a miniature, hotel suitable version of washers.

The innovative men used two separate ice buckets from their rooms, filled up with rice and another cup in the center also filled with rice, and quarters were used as makeshift washers. For those of you that have never played washers before, we used the rice to weigh down the buckets so the quarters landed without jostling them. The fun began with senior Charlie Chaffin's brilliant idea: "We should use quarters to play washers," thus the mini-game of washers was born. Things like this are a daily occurrence when travelling out of state with a group of college student athletes.

You would think there can't be much more to the life of a travelling college athlete, but there is one more thing to talk about. The return trip. Depending on if the team(s) won or lost their games during the trip, the fact of the matter remains the same, and that is the bus ride isn't going to be fun. For the most part, the return trip almost always includes shower-less boy's and/or girls who put off a stench that rivals that of week old McDonald's fryer oil mixed with spoiled dairy products and a trashcan with contents of which we don't speak of. Added to this stench is the never-ending filling up of the toilet on the bus which, when sloshing around on the way back, smells just as strong, if not worse than all three of the nose-pluggers mentioned above. Even so, the times we have as college athletes will be remembered and shared with later generations as stories that I'll fondly remember as 'the good ol' days.'

What Lurks Beneath

By Justin Williams 🐡 February 25, 2013

Now I know what you all are thinking. Was it a shark? Did Jaws himself rise from the depths to prey on five unsuspecting athletes? Yes, we all found ourselves in danger that day, but it was from something completely unexpected. But hey, we escaped with our lives, and a story to tell that no one else had the chance to experience! Anyway, let's look back to where the story unfolds.

We arrived on a Thursday morning at Burbank airport, which was around 30 minutes from our near-coast hotel. It was a beautiful day, and we wanted to make the most of it. We didn't have to play until later that next day, so we decided to go out and explore the west coast in all of its glory. While walking the boardwalk, University alumni Daniel Lourie, Ted Gansmann and Grant Osbourne, as well as senior Charlie Chaffin and myself came upon a surf shop. It was a hole in the wall, but the owner, a very friendly "surfer-dude," rented us wet suits and body boards for three hours for thirty bucks.

After what felt like hours trying to slide on the skin-tight fabric of the wetsuit, we walked out to the beach in preparation of catching that 'perfect wave.' Enjoying the water, we ventured farther and farther out to where the big waves were. The day was a perfect— seagulls flying overhead, high swells, and surprisingly warm weather compared to the near 60 degree water. We started to get the hang of the process of getting onto a wave when Daniel calls out that he gets the next wave. He balanced himself on the board and rode the wave all the way in at full speed, and Charlie, Teddy, Grant and I all look back at him standing in knee deep water when he points behind us.

A look of horror spreads across each of our faces as we followed his arm to where he was pointing. It was like we were in slow motion, not completely sure of what we would find swimming towards us that day. Although somewhat hard to believe, a seemingly bus sized shape breaks the surface of the water, one long tusk following another preceding the whiskered face of a walrus. After simultaneously yelling out in terror, the walrus was 10 feet behind us and swimming our way. As we started paddling, it was on the wave behind us and approaching fast. If we didn't catch the first wave it would have surely attacked at least one of us.

As luck would have it that day, we all miraculously caught the first wave of that set, out-swimming the walrus. Charlie and Teddy were to my left while Grant was on my right, and we hurried onto the beach. When I turn back to where I was going, I find Daniel looking directly at me, a wide-eyed expression on his face. We collide, like football players, in the knee high water and fall to the sand.

I look back on that day, and I can clearly recall when we all got up and stared at each other. My teammates' faces of shock and disbelief will forever be planted in my memory. To this day, if anyone asks us about it, we can say we successfully caught a wave to safety outrunning something that we never thought we'd have to outrun. I mean, we are soccer players, we have the endurance to go up and down a field for hours, but being in the water trying to outswim a beast like that was not only exhilarating but a story I will never forget.