Geeks Assemble at St. Louis Comic Con

One of the things that I was looking forward to about Comic Con is all the celebrities. For the younger crowd there were not as many celebrities as there were for the older ones on this tour. There were however plenty of panels for those who ventured into horror there was John Berendal of Walking Dead. For those of the older generation there was Burton Ward and Adam West of Batman, and William Shaner of Star Trek.

For those a little more in the middle there was a little more selection. The biggest draw was Matt Smith of Doctor Who. There was Eliza Dushku from Buffy The Vampire Slayer and Nathan Fillion from Serenity. There was also Ralph Macchio and Chris Jericho. I got the chance to meet Lou Ferrigno and Burt Reynolds.

There was Eliza Dushku from Buffy The Vampire Slayer and Nathan Fillion from Serenity. There was also Ralph Macchio and Chris Jericho. I got the chance to meet Lou Ferrigno and Burt Reynolds. One thing that I was not expecting was to get to see Captain Jack Sparrow. The cast of the film Pirates of the Caribbean had a booth where you could get autographs from Johnny Depp.

For those who were interested in dressing up there were costume parties. Some of the best were hosted by the fans themselves. There were also contests for the best costume. One of the winners was a group dressed as the characters from Lord of the Rings. They won for their creative interpretation of the Lord of the Rings characters.

The largest complaint I heard from most people though is simply the cost of the event. You pay a large amount of money for the weekend, anywhere from around fifty dollars for a one day base ticket to three hundred or more for a VIP pass for your favorite celebrity. This does not include things like autographs, photo ops, or even parking. These things you have to pay extra for.

Some VIP passes might include an autograph of the person you are wanting to see, for instance Matt Smith, but it is not guaranteed on all of the VIP passes and if there is any one else you want to meet you will have to pay extra for those. Most autographs run from twenty dollars to fifty dollars or more. It is up to the celebrity. And photo ops are just as bad if not worse. Yes, you get a nice 8x10 photo to keep but at what cost. The parking was also outrageous. Three to four blocks away you are looking at paying at least $10. A parking lot that was $5 dollars on Thursday night jumped to $20 on Saturday morning. I know that this is up to the city and those who own the parking lots, but if I am going to be paying for an event that is three days long, I would like to have parking included.

Over all this was an experience I would not have missed for the world. I will be going back next year, perhaps even in costume. I look forward to seeing everyone there and seeing what the most popular costumes and guests and booths are for next year.

Campus Memorial

Flags flew at half-mast following the death of James Sybert on March 25. Sybert was a graduate of the Jefferson College Law Enforcement Academy and began work with the sheriff’s department when he was killed by a wrong-way driver in a crash on Highway 21.

Pottery Sale

The Jefferson College Art Department will hold its annual spring pottery sale on Wednesday, May 7, from 10 a.m.-6 p.m. and Thursday, May 8, from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. in the Ceramics Studio in the lower level of the Fine Arts Theatre building on the Hillsboro campus.

The sale is open to everyone and will feature hundreds of student-made items including bowls, cups, plates, vases, candle holders, and sculptures. All items are hand-made, one-of-a-kind pieces of art.

Prices range from $2-$200 with most items costing $3-$25. Only cash and checks will be accepted.

Proceeds from the sale will be used to expand facilities and purchase new equipment for use by students in pottery/ceramics classes who learn clay techniques including coil and slab construction, three-dimensional design and sculptural aspects, wheel throwing, glazing, and firing.

Jefferson College Art Department

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Memorial
Notable Note-Taking
by Angelica Fletcher

Have you ever sat in class during a lecture and wondered if typing your notes would be more efficient than writing them out? While it could be significantly faster if you’re computer savvy, studies have shown that the act of writing helps you clarify your thoughts and make you remember things better. I prefer taking notes by hand,” Jeffco student Erica Burney said. “It gives me a better visual and it helps me rememer when it comes to studying.”

Writing stimulates a bunch of cells throughout the brain, including the reticular activating system. This system acts as a filter for information, helping a student know what’s important and what’s not. Students can use the process to highlight and prioritize information, and some students use a weekly or monthly calendar so that they can make arrangements for larger tasks like finals and projects. They can also use calendars to review upcoming assignments.

Along with helping you remember your information better, writing also proves to be an easier note taking method. When you are in class trying to quickly get the notes down, you don’t have to worry about taking precious time away from your note taking to search for a specific letter on the keyboard. “I’m not the fastest typer,” Jeffco student Demi Neubrand said. “I write faster than I type.”

Even if you are handy with a keyboard, technology can be distracting. It could be so tempting to interrupt your note taking by sneaking a peak at your Facebook page or watching the latest funny cat video on Youtube. Hand writing is great for focused, no-distractions writing, and has been proven to be more efficient. Of course everyone is different and may not particularly enjoy writing to the point of hand cramping, but it has been proven by many studies that most people respond to and remember material better by hand writing notes.

The Jefferson College Student Senate and President Recognized Among Best in Missouri

The Jefferson College Student Senate and President, Dr. Mindy Seller, recognized by national and local organizations, have been named among the best in the country.

The awards included SGA of the Year, SGA Student Leader of the Year (Jefferson College Student Senate President Annie Mbale of DeSoto), and SGA Excellence in Leadership.

Student Loans Are Risky Necessity
by Andrew Poe

It’s relatively safe to say that if you are attending college, then at some point you will have to take out student loans. Taking out these loans can be a daunting task. The student loan debt crisis is turning really problematic. Most people do not have tens of thousands of dollars stuffed away to attend school. So, student loans are a way for people to get to attend school and achieve their dreams.

According to the website asa.org (American Student Assistance) more than 26 million people attend college each year in the United States. Of those, around 11 million take out student loans each year to pay for their college educations. At some point almost everyone will have to take out a student loan to help them with school. It is relatively safe to say that most Americans cannot shell out $80,000 or more dollars for a college education. Once all other forms of financial aid are used up, the only other option is student loans.

According to the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, there is currently between 902 billion and 1 trillion dollars in outstanding student loans currently in America.

As of the year 2012, the current average student debt load is around $24,300. Broken down into groups, that would be 25% of deboners owe more than 28 grand. Ten percent owe more than 50 grand. And 1% owe more than 200 grand. Yes, there are some people out there that have more than 200,000 dollars worth of student debt.

Not everyone takes out federal student loans; sometimes people take out private loans. Private loans can be easier to default on because generally the interest rates tend to be significantly lower than the rates of federal student loans.

Some borrowers become delinquent on payments and there may go into default. There are many reasons why people become delinquent on their student loans. A lot of it has to do with the amount of money you make when you get your first job once you finish college. The economy had also taken a turn for the worse in the past few years. Large amounts of personal debt that do not even involve loans are also a problem.

Loan borrowers may also be able to enroll in income based repayment plans. Currently only 700,000 borrowers are enrolled in these plans. The White House estimates that 1.6 million people are eligible to enroll in these plans. That means over double of these 1.6 million people could be making lower monthly payments simply because of their current income. About 65% percent of student loan borrowers who were in high in their debt misunderstood the aspects of their student loans or the process of student loans.

The largest group of people having issues with repaying their student loans are people who have dropped out of school and defaulted on their loans. These borrowers are forced to continue working in their low paying jobs. Instead of getting a higher paying job with a degree. Nearly 30% of students who have taken out loans have dropped out of school.

Student loan debt is just a fact for the majority of Americans who attend school. You realize that you will probably have to take out loans the main thing is to be smart about how much you take out and how well you are at paying your loans back.

April 25, 2014
How to Make a Smooth Transfer
by Andrew Poe

Transferring to a four year college can be a stressful operation. Especially if you are confused as to what you need to accomplish to successfully transfer. If you know what to do then transferring will be a success. There are several things that you should know to help your transition from community college to a four year university a successful one.

The main thing to do to ensure in a successful transfer is to start the process early. Often times transferring can be a lengthy process that can take up a lot of time.

The first thing to do before you transfer is to go and talk to an admissions counselor so you will be able to better know what credits will transfer from the two year university that you are currently at or have been at in the past. It pays to know which of your credits will transfer and which will not. That way you know what you are getting into.

The earlier you apply to your desired college or colleges, the sooner you’ll be on your way to a successful college career. Often times, there is an application fee that will need to be paid when you submit your application either online, by mail, or in person. Once you get accepted, there are a few more steps that need to be completed before you can sit back and relax.

After you get accepted you will need to talk with your admissions counselor at the school to find out the next steps. These next steps typically include turning in all necessary paperwork, applying for financial aid and registering for classes.

The paperwork that needs to be turned in will oftentimes vary between the schools that someone chooses. And the same goes as when you apply, timing is key. The sooner you turn everything in and register for classes the better off you will be. Usually there is a deposit that you will have to pay after you are accepted. This deposit essentially “holds” your spot so the college you are transferring to knows that you are interested in going to school there.

Financial aid is another important step you need to take when transferring. Not many people have thousands of dollars sitting around to pay for school. So financial aid is an important factor for most people. It stands to reason that the sooner you are able to do all your financial aid paperwork the better.

Typically in regards to financial aid there are set dates that paperwork and forms need to be filled out so you can get the maximum amounts of aid that you are entitled to. You can talk to your financial aid advisor at the school and they will be able to help you. Colleges are usually only allotted a certain amount of money in aid each year that they are able to give out. So again the sooner the better.

You will also need to apply for student loans through the government. In most cases scholarships and grants will not be enough to pay for the cost of schooling so you will have to take out loans which will have to be paid back.

After you have done all of that, then the next step is to register for classes. You will sit down with your academic advisor and they will be able to help you figure out which classes you will need for your desired major.

It all boils down to budgeting your time accordingly so you can get everything done in time for your first semester at the transfer school of your choice.

Stranger Things Have Happened
by Kelli Poole

You’ve probably seen the video that has been going around Facebook about the professor who was pranked by one of his students. He had a policy that if a phone rang, it had to be answered on speaker phone. One girl had one of her friends call her during class, posing as a worker at a pregnancy clinic.

Long story short, he basically told her that her test results came back positive and that even though she didn’t know who the father was, there were support groups she could join. After she hung up, the professor offered an apology, to which she replied, “It’s alright. I already have a name picked out. The first name is April and the middle name is Fools.”

While something this extreme probably hasn’t happened in any of your classes, there are things out of the ordinary that happen. These are some of the “out of the ordinary” stories that have happened in college life at JeffCo and beyond.

Professor Michael Rose: Talk about dedication. It was a Monday morning- the worst time to be taking a final. But the day turned interesting when a student came in to take the final who was already in labor- and had been for one or two hours.

“I was sitting right here,” Professor Rose said, pointing to a seat towards the front of the class. He was silently praying that she wouldn’t have the baby in the classroom. “I told her she could go but she refused and said she wanted to finish the final.”

There was a student sitting towards the front of the class who was the son of a faculty member. He was the one who was designated to go for help if she did happen to go into labor. But she finished the final and turned it in before driving herself to the hospital. “She saw me the next day and was telling me about the baby,” Rose said. “She ended up getting an A on the final, too.”

Sophomore Janis Francis: There was dead silence in the room after the professor asked for a volunteer to read a section from the play out loud. “I- and another guy- always volunteered to read, so I decided not to volunteer to give someone else a chance to read,” Francis said. The other guy must have done the same thing, because no one volunteered.

“I guess she got fed up with us or something, because she told everybody to leave,” Francis said. It was then that people started to volunteer. “People started to volunteer, but she just said “no, everybody get out!” and as we were walking out of class, a classmate looked at me as if to say “what just happened?” It’s probably safe to say that there were no problems with volunteering after that.

Professor Matt Keeney: “My library is a place where people can come and study in a quiet environment- and the last place for commotion to be expected to happen.” Professor Keeney worked in the library at Truman State University. It was an uneventful night until a student walked in and started creating havoc.

“I was sitting behind the reception desk reading my book and this guy walked in and slammed the recycle bin down on the floor,” Keeney said. The guy walked away after that and it appeared as if he’d left the library.

“I thought he’d left because I couldn’t see him anymore,” Keeney said. “Then he came running from the back of the library screaming. He kept repeating a name and saying that the person was coming for him.” Keeney called the campus police and they came and arrested the student. It was later found that the student had taken mushrooms.

If you have a strange story that you would like to see shared in a follow-up article, send the details to The Harbinger at harbinger@jeffco.edu.

Role Models Offer Inspiration
by Brian Moss

Being a role model is more than just being a good person, it is setting a good example for the people around you. Anyone can be one, it’s just not people who are close to you. It could be a baseball player for crying out loud who does things the right way by not cheating and working hard to achieve his lifelong dream.

Being a role model is helping others around you who need help. Role models are modest who don’t brag about what they have done, they just do it without any questions asked. Being a role model isn’t always easy, sometimes they have to take the high road no matter if they are wrong or right. This is what makes role models amazing people, they look out for others and not just themselves.

Being a role model is accepting your faults and trying to fix them rather than leaving them alone. Role models will admit when they are wrong and will allow others to criticize them, they will accept opinions from others. They will never single someone out and make them feel alone, they will comfort people who need it and will defend against the wrong and will allow second chances. They will stand up for what’s right and will oppose what’s wrong.

Being a role model is the willing to accept the way people are, and will not force to change them. They will help people who are willing to change for the best, and will try to help people who have done badly. They will not discriminate against others, and actually encourage diversity among people. They will be the force that will help people interact with different cultures and religions.

They will not judge you if you do something that you’re not supposed to, they will just try to help you fix the problem or just be there to help you get through the last place for commotion to be expected to happen. All they want is for you to better yourself anyway possible. This is why being a role model is amazing and hard. But then again, nothing worthwhile in life comes easy.
To Spank or Not to Spank: That Is the Question

by Kelli Poole

I used to work at a daycare. And for those of you that have ever worked at a daycare, wiping snotty noses, changing dirty diapers, wearing shoes, ending fights, and putting kids in time-out are all in the job description. In a daycare setting, all that can be done to punish a child is putting them in time-out, but sometimes, simply placing kids in timeout does not work. What I figured out at the daycare after being cussed out, disrespected, and getting a chair thrown at me— all by a five year old boy- is that sometimes, all kids need is a spanking.

But several countries have moved away from spankings because of the supposed harm they do to children. In America, the boat has been rocked. Let’s not sink it. Spanking is not harmful to children and should not be banned in the United States.

Spanking is simply a form of discipline. David and Kathryn Anderson point out that most parents spank their children to teach them self-control so that they will become law-abiding, non-violent adults and that these parents feel that, in spanking, they are disciplining their children for their own good.

British child psychologist Penelope Leach writes, “Spanking is wrong because we all agree that hitting people is wrong and children are people.” But we can’t make this argument because in many situations, most of us agree that hitting people is “necessary.” For example, if you start a fight in a bar, the bouncer may throw a chair at you to put an end to the fight in a bar, the bouncer may throw a chair at you to put an end to the fight.

Michael Gray makes a good point on his blog: “Seeing people equate spanking with full-on physical abuse only serves to render the term “abuse” completely meaningless. That’s akin to saying that scolding a child equals verbal abuse.” If this was the case, parents would have no means by which to discipline their children.

The anti-spanking movement has done a phenomenal job at publicizing the view that spanking is abusive, but it is not the only thing they have done to make parents scared to spank their children. This brings me to my third point.

Spanking does not result in psychological/behavioral problems. Most parents are not just frightened of appearing abusive; they also fear that an occasional swat to the behind can turn their child into an aggressive adolescent and an uncorrectable criminal adult. Anti-spanking advocates point out that children were spanked tend to have more behavior problems, but in reality, it is children’s defiance that makes them more likely to be aggressive, not the disciplinary methods used to try to improve their behavior.

Even without a PhD in sociology, the average person should be suspicious of studies that claim spanking increases societal violence. Was there more violence and crime in the 50s and 60s than there is now? If you said yes, you would be wrong. There is at least three times more violence now than there was then.

But if the theory that more spankings equals more societal violence is correct, the ’50s and ’60s should have been a dark period of violent crime. Parents spanked more than then. In fact, 99% of parents spanked in the 1950s and 1960s, whereas only 70-90% spank today.

The Swedish government outlawed spanking in 1979. Since then, reports of teen violence have soared six fold and most of it is gang violence. This quote from Psychologist Robert Larzelere sums it up perfectly. “Since there is no sound evidence that appropriate spanking harms children, there is no reason to take this disciplinary action away from parents.” The key word here is “appropriate”. There is an inappropriate way to do everything— spanking is no exception.

Editor’s Note: This piece was adapted from a speech Kelli Poole gave in Oral Communications class.

Agree? Disagree? Somewhere in between?

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Headlines Give the Full Story

by Jordan Freeman

You should never judge a book by its cover. If you did, how could you know the true story? This is true for news headlines as well as more and more headlines are becoming misleading and can throw the article out of proportion. Some headlines are meant to draw readers in with attention-grabbing words. There are many websites on the web covering the same stories, and getting visits to their websites starts with the headline.

Many websites have articles on the recent stabbings in Pennsylvania. The headline from New York Daily News reads “Two-knife stabbing rampage at Pennsylvania high school…” Another headline form Time read “At least 22 injured in mass stabbing at Pa. high school…” For this story, those headlines certainly fit the bill, but if you only read those headlines you would miss all of the details. There were 22 injured, but were there any fatalities? What were the motives of the attacker? Without reading the actual article you would know little about the story.

Some headlines are more misleading; sometimes a headline can make a generalized statement and can upset its audience. Can the reader really know the story is without reading the story? The answer is no.

Vince Macini from Uproxx.com wrote a small article about what he calls NPR’s April fool’s masterpiece.” On April first NPR (National Public Radio) played a prank on some of its “readers” on Facebook. NPR posted a headline reading “Why Doesn’t America Read Any More?” When a reader clicked on the headline they were sent to a page that congratulated them on being genuine readers and instructed them to like the post but not to comment on it or to see what those who commented without clicking on the headline had to say. The result was as effective as it was ironic; the comment section began filling with comments from people who stated how much they read.

Of course the internet is not the only guilty party of misleading headlines; magazines often have shocking headlines which immediately grab your attention. A recent issue of Globe magazine had a headline on its cover that read “THE PENTAGON WANTS TO HIRE OBAMA!” There were several sub headlines on the cover such as: “giving away U.S. nuclear secrets to our enemies?” and “why he’s worse than Nixon” and “Michelle storms out as angry Americans demand Prez’s impeachment.”

A cover page like that should be enough to entice readers to actually read the articles inside the magazine, which usually means purchasing the magazine.

Unless you read the article, you’re tough to call the sub heads actual facts. Stating Obama is worse than Nixon is not factual because it is an opinion. Again only reading the article will give you the actual facts. If everybody only read the headlines they would lose sight of the truth and that can be a scary place in journalism.

There is a reason not to judge a book by its cover, or an article by its headline. So if you come across a headline that generalizes or over the top remember you will never know until you read it. So before you voice your opinion be sure you know what the story says before you judge its headline.