

# THE SOU'WESTER

Vol. XCIV. NO. 12



An elaborate Italian tradition detailed inside.

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February 6, 2008

The Weekly Student Newspaper of Rhodes College

## Rhodes makes changes for the greener

By William Bruce  
Executive Assistant

### Expanded Recycling Program

Rhodes College has introduced a new innovative recycling program intended to aid faculty and students by improving old recycling policies. Originally envisioned in a 73-page petition by the student group Earth Justice, the program has motivated President Troutt to appoint a Recycling Work Group to study the campus recycling problems to determine how to fix them. The group was chaired by associate director of the physical plant department, Tracy Adkisson, who also serves as chair of the Environmental Planning Cooperative (EPC). The program utilizes volunteers to check the recycling bins in academic and administrative buildings and report when a bin needs to be emptied. Rhodes has also committed \$33,000 to buy recycling bins to be located next to all garbage cans. Adkisson enthusiastically regards the program as a "giant leap forward." That sentiment is echoed by Troutt, who said "I couldn't be more pleased."



William Bruce/The Sou'wester

### Water Conservation

The physical plant is responsible for initiating water conservation tactics to help reduce the useless consumption of water. One key approach to this is with low flow shower heads that don't spray as much water as other models. The shower heads can be found in several residences on campus.



William Bruce/The Sou'wester

## Environmental Residents

By Matt McCulloch  
Staff Writer

You probably know of an Environmental Resident who lives on your floor or in your dorm. But do you know what they are responsible for doing?

"There have been a number of environmental initiatives on campus, and sometimes students that want to get involved don't know which faculty, staff, or students are doing what," said Chris Seaton, a math professor at Rhodes who is also an Associated Colleges of the South Environmental Fellow. "The E.R.'s are intended to be a presence within the dorms that are aware of environmental activities and practices and can help other residents that are interested."

Environmental Residents, according to ACS Environmental Intern Leslie Samuelson, are expected to "actively embody environmentalism at Rhodes," as well as to "educate self on

environmental issues."

"We all wrote proposals at the beginning of the year indicating our particular area of interest and a project with a goal that we can work towards for the end of the year for the betterment of the college," explained Allie Eiland, an E.R. in Glassell.

This year, many residents have chosen to work with Rhodes' Environmental Planning Cooperative to calculate the carbon footprint of the campus. Essentially, this endeavor will help the Rhodes community analyze its impact on the earth as well as discover ways to decrease its negative impact on the environment.

"By knowing the problem we can find the solution," said Maria Cartagena, an E.R. in Williford. "If Rhodes knows where it stands on the scale of pollution, it can help reduce carbon emissions."

She and Joshua A. Anderson, also an E.R. in Williford, have developed



William Bruce/The Sou'wester

The E.R.s are an essential part of the recycling program.

a project to help calculate Rhodes' carbon footprint by measuring the amount of fuel used by commuter stu-

E.R.'s, continued on Page 5

## President's climate commitment

By Onalee Carson

On August 23, 2007, President Troutt signed the American College & University's Presidents Climate Commitment (ACUPCC). The ACUPCC is an effort to address global warming through institutional commitments, neutralizing greenhouse gas emissions on college campuses across the nation.

"Signing the commitment seemed like a natural next step for Rhodes, considering the broad variety of environmental initiatives that are already underway at the college," said Troutt. "This allows us the opportunity to coordinate and target all of our efforts toward the ultimate goal of achieving climate neutrality, which is essential to address the climate problems we're facing today."

When presidents and chancellors of America's college and universities sign the ACUPCC, they are agreeing to commit their institutions to eliminating their campuses' greenhouse gas emissions overtime.

The ACUPCC asks its signatories to do the following things: complete an inventory of all emissions from electricity, heating, commuting, and air travel; set a target date and milestones for achieving climate neutrality; take immediate steps to eliminate greenhouse gases by choosing from a given list of actions; integrate sustainability into the educational experience; and finally, make all actions publicly available.

President Troutt, continued on Page 5



Noelle Smith/The Sou'wester

Charlie Forbes will be installing a solar panel in Rhodes Tower.

## Student installing solar panels

By Daniel Jacobs  
Editor-in-Chief

Two light bulbs won't do much more than light up a small room, but for Rhodes College they might be the beginning of a whole movement towards solar power.

A project run by Charlie Forbes '11 will install two photovoltaic cells on top of Rhodes Tower, and the energy from those panels will be used to power two light bulbs in a small display about solar energy.

"This is to some degree a trial project," said Forbes. "By showing people that solar power is doable and this is

new technology we can use maybe people we start thinking about using solar power at Rhodes."

The project, titled "The Power of Solar Energy," is funded by a grant from the National Wildlife Fund. Forbes is the undergraduate in charge of the project, but overall it will be a collaborative effort including two science classes, the physics club, and the Physical Plant.

"We're excited about this project," said Brian Foshee, the director of Physical Plant, who is currently work-

Solar Project continued on Page 5

Check Page 5 for more coverage of green topics

# Harvest of innocence in India

By Rami Abdoch  
Opinion Columnist

Organ harvesting is certainly not a new phenomenon, but it is becoming widely recognized as a pressing humanitarian concern as more and more cases come to light. In 1993, Amnesty International reported organ harvesting from prisoners on a widespread scale. In 1994, Human Rights Watch also provided compelling evidence which included the text of a Chinese government decree on the subject. All the prisoners targeted were on death row – in many cases they would be executed in such a way that the necessary organ(s) would remain intact. The harvesting method is cold and calculating: A single shot to the head if chest organs are needed; a shot to the body if the brain or eyes are needed. Recently, China started using “death vans” where lethal injection is administered on the road so that all of the organs can be harvested. This barbaric practice is known to persist in China and India, largely because of the great number of people there and relative secrecy with which the crimes can be carried out.

With a larger number of people, one can reasonably suspect that there will also be a larger number of working poor. These poor are likely willing to take any opportunity they get to meet their needs as well as those of their dependents. The most recent instance of harvesting involves an illegal kidney transplant racket that involved hundreds of destitute Indians. Officials stated that 500 to 600 kidneys were forcibly taken from the victims in Guragaon, which is located on the outskirts of New Delhi. The victims were under the impression that they were being offered jobs by individuals who were supposed to take them to a private house to receive information about the job. Instead, the victims were greeted by several men who forced each of them to sell their kidneys at gunpoint. Victims were given 50,000 rupees, or about \$1,800 US. The recipients of these illicit organs were mostly wealthy Indians,



abcnews.com

The victim shown here reveals his scar after having his kidney stolen from him. It was removed from him at a house where he thought he would be given a job.

although there were also five foreigners, two of which were American. The transplants took place at the house where the Indian victims were taken. As if this wasn't gruesome enough, suspicious neighbors are said to have noticed bits of flesh in the area surrounding the house as well as balled up bandages soaked with blood.

It seems to go without saying, but these acts are clearly morally reprehensible. However, I believe there is more to be said about the attitudes of people who are willing to pay up to \$30,000 US for organs that simply don't belong to them. Anyone who would even consider making such a “transaction” cannot be any more than a resolute

materialist, in every sense of the word. For one to be so attached to something as unpredictable as a human life seems fundamentally irrational. Why go through the trouble of seeking out a way to extend one's life for even a few months when there is no guarantee that death will not come your way by some other circumstance?

This brings to mind the following story: A rich and might Persian once walked in his garden with one of his servants. The servant cried that he had just encountered Death, who had threatened him. He begged his master to give him his fastest horse so that he could make haste and flee to Tehran, which he could reach that same evening. The master consented and the servant galloped off on the horse. On returning to his house the master himself met Death, and questioned him, “Why did you terrify and threaten my servant?” “I did not threaten him; I only showed surprise in still finding him here when I planned to meet him tonight in Teheran,” said Death.

The recipient of the organ could very well have a heart attack or choke to death mere minutes after such a transplant. The mindset behind these thefts seem to fall in line with Ayn Rand's Objectivism, which holds that self-interest alone is the rational purpose of one's existence. To adhere to such a philosophy seems to undermine any sort of functional moral consciousness: everything goes so long as it gratifies one's wants or needs. To justify the taking of organs from those who are clearly unwilling to sell them is simply unethical.

Other cases exist in which people willingly sell their organs for money, which is far more complex to assess ethically. Is it proper to offer money for an organ transplant to someone when one knows that person will likely accept given his or her socio-economic status? Regardless, this morbid practice should be taken seriously and readily addressed by the international community. For it to go unnoticed any more than it has would reflect poorly on humanity. That is not to say that one is guilty for not acting to minimize the practice, but the new recognition of the crisis should prompt immediate action.

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As the official newspaper of Rhodes College, *The Sou'wester* is produced entirely by students on staff. It functions independently of faculty and administration. The newspaper is published weekly throughout the fall and spring semesters, except during exam periods and breaks.

*The Sou'wester* is a member of the Student Publications Board, a consortium that includes the editors of all student media outlets, class representatives, and at-large representatives from the student body.

All staff editorials published in *The Sou'wester* represent the majority opinion of the Editorial Board composed of section editors and executive editors. Opinions expressed in *The Rhode'ster*, opinion columns, and letters-to-the-editor do not necessarily reflect the opinions of *The Sou'wester* Editorial Board. Letters-to-the-editor are encouraged, but cannot exceed 350 words; all letters must be signed and will be edited for clarity.

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\*2007 Rhodes College Alcohol Use Survey

  
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# The candidates' environmental policies analyzed

By Joe Cody  
Opinion Columnist

As the national conventions and general election for the Presidency come closer, following the first ever "national primary" that took place yesterday, it is important for the electorate to understand the candidates' platforms and stances on issues. It is these positions that will likely determine which candidate voters endorse and vote for, and it is these platforms that determine who will be our next President. One of the most important issues facing our country this year is the environment and more specifically our nation's dependence on foreign sources of energy, mainly natural gas and oil. Outlined here is each candidate's stance on the environment and dependency issues and their solutions for leading America to a greener and safer future.

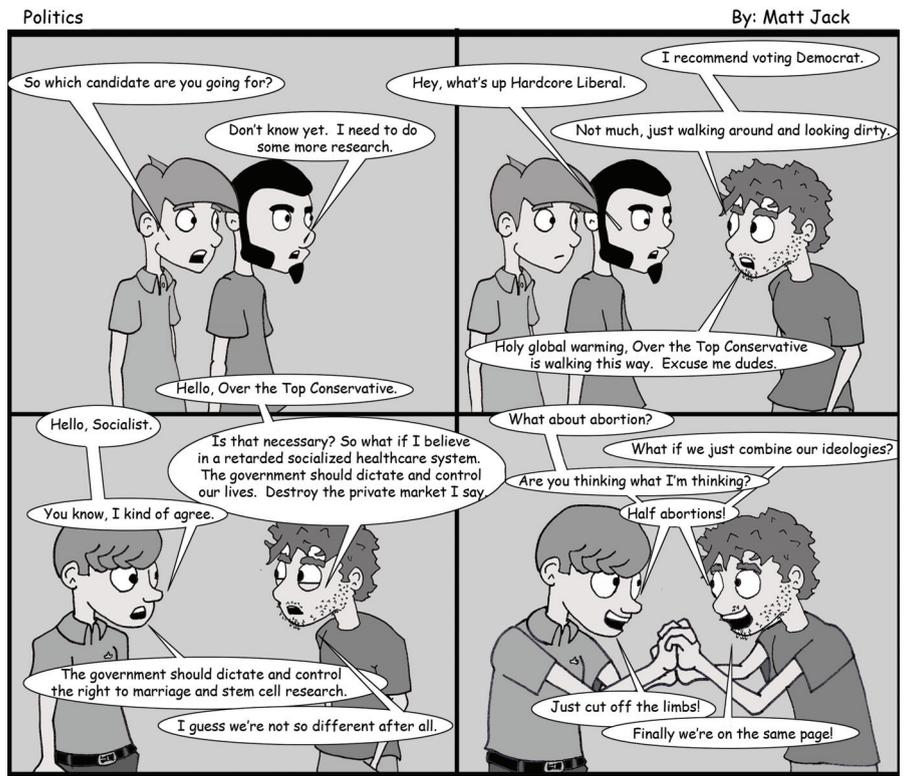
Hillary Clinton's plan is a complex reorganization of the economy and environmental protection policy through a combination of the reduction of greenhouse gases and a reduction of imported oil. Her campaign website says that her "plan would reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 80 percent from 1990 levels by 2050 to avoid the worst effects of global warming, and cut foreign oil imports by two-thirds from 2030 projected levels, more than 10 million barrels per day." These goals would be met through increased minimum fuel efficiency standards set at an ambitious 55 mpg and a large increase in federal funding transforming the economy from a carbon based to clean renewable energy infrastructure. Hillary's plan involves high government intervention and authority transforming the American economy and infrastructure into a more fuel efficient cleaner system. I fear that this would come at a high cost to the individual through increased taxes and increased prices as most of the cost will come down on the consumer.

Barack Obama has developed a platform very similar to Hillary's, calling for the reduction of emission levels by 2050 and the ending of American dependence on foreign oil through the implementation of higher fuel efficiency standards and the creation of new renewable resources and the implementation of bio-fuels, electric, and hydrogen power. He sponsors what is called a "cap and trade system," meaning companies would bid in a market driven auction for credits for their carbon emissions, with some of the revenue going to fund new energy initiatives. His policy is almost identical to Hillary's, as both adhere to the belief that government is the answer to our economic and environmental woes. You can be sure that, like Hillary's answer, the consumer will pay for these increased costs as companies rarely absorb enormous cost increases.

Former Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney's plan involves the transformation of the energy grid to a more advanced secure infrastructure that involves the redevelopment of nuclear energy to reduce dependence on fossil fuels. A reduction on foreign oil could come through drilling in ANWR and other offshore reserves like those located off of Louisiana and California, according to Romney. Finally, Romney believes that increased research by companies should be encouraged through increased federal funding; he draws parallels between these problems and solutions and the history of the space program and the development of the atomic bomb through the Manhattan project. Romney's plan to decrease foreign oil is admirable, though the former business man should realize that government funding is not the only solution and federally mandated policy without matching tax breaks will only increase costs with little benefit.

Finally GOP frontrunner John McCain's policy is the most vague of the remaining candidates, with his website listing very little in terms of solutions. Like Romney, he lists nuclear energy as one solution to lifting our dependence on foreign oil. He does not mention ANWR as a possible solution, but maintains that America's economy and environment are linked together, and if one is harmed, so is the other. Balancing his platform and strongest suit, McCain sees national security as the motivation that should lead Americans to develop new energy technologies domestically, and only by ending dependence can we free ourselves from OPEC's grip and weaken the Middle East's hold over us.

Overall, each of the candidates has some strong suits in terms of addressing the public's concerns about the environment and our dependence on foreign oil. New technology is fundamental to increasing fuel efficiency, ending dependence on foreign oil, and reducing carbon emissions, and companies should be inspired to do so, not



just because of government regulation, but also public pressure and higher profits. Federal funding combined with economic incentives through tax cuts and vouchers is a bipartisan solution that all of the candidates can adhere to without isolating their base votes, but by addressing the public's serious concerns.

Businesses will only push for change when it is in the best interest to do so, and if the government does not help them develop new technology and rebuild infrastructure, they will continue to resist and will put the rising costs on the consumer. This idea really does not do much to address the country's number one concern right now: the weak economy. It is necessary for political parties, companies, and individuals to come together in a compromise that promotes advancements in economic and environmental policy; otherwise, nothing will be accomplished and the consumer and American interests will suffer the most.

## Blogs: the emergence of a new community in our society

By Dean Galaro  
Opinion Columnist

On January 28, the New York Times ran an article describing an incident where Target, the "cheap-chic" retailer, told a concerned blogger that her thoughts were irrelevant. The woman, Amy Jussel, who runs a blog called "Shaping Youth", was concerned about the spread-eagle nature of a girl on a Target symbol sprawled out on a billboard. Target's response? "Unfortunately we are unable to respond to your inquiry because Target does not participate with nontraditional media outlets." Word of mouth, in the word-of-mouth-across-the-internet sense, spread this story like wildfire. Obviously Target has yet to try to tap into the world of blogs, and probably doesn't plan on it anytime soon; but should we care about blogs? Should we be concerned as to what they're saying and their impact on our society?

I will admit that I have started, albeit with little success, a few blogs in my time, if success is measured by the number of people reading the posts on a daily basis. Although most blogs out there, like mine, probably only get visi-

tations in the single digits per day, there are still hundreds of millions of blogs started by people all across the world. Why? In simple terms, it's because blogging is absorbing. The conversational give and take of the post-comment-reply mechanism is addictive.

For most people though, blogging is simply a hobby, something to do on a Sunday afternoon or maybe between homework assignments, but that does not mean there aren't professional bloggers out there. Most big-name news outlets also have a blog running to keep people up-to-date in a more editorialized fashion.

Even so, one does not have to be a professional to host a popular blog. Many blogs sprung up about the movie *Cloverfield* that came out earlier in January. The marketing campaign for the movie rested heavily on news being spread around the internet via Myspace and the blogging community. Numerous blogs were created by normal people to track the news on the movie and were visited hundreds of times a day.

Although blogging has become a mainstay for many people, the majority of bloggers are still average people. Any-

one with an internet connection, no matter how bad their grammar or how impotent their argument, can join the blogging community. What this means is that the vast majority of blogs have little or no impact on the world around them and those who read them. Without an audience, most blogs are just taking up space, and getting an audience is no easy task.

While most individual blogs are not important, the blogging community is. The blogosphere, as it's been named, contains all blogs and bloggers and their interconnected journaling activities. This connectivity is what is important. In his landmark article "Bowling Alone", Robert Putnam described how the US has lost its "social capital", i.e. active civil engagement. One of his examples, for which the article is named, is that although the number of people bowling has increased over the past few decades, the number of people bowling in leagues has shrunk. People have lost their communal interactions in favor of being more socially isolated.

One of the reasons for this diffusing of the community is the internet. Nowadays there is no need to go to

someone's house to talk to them, no need to write letters, no need to hold meetings in person. All can be done in the comfort of our living rooms. The emergence of the blogosphere has had a huge impact on this. People can now express themselves, not face-to-face, but simply on a blog.

Blogs do not promote going outside and experiencing the community, but instead they create a new one. The internet as a whole might be keeping people inside, but the blogs are keeping people in touch. Like a small town, news spreads through the blogosphere at the speed of light. People are talking to each other about recipes, politics,

weather, and how to properly take care of a go-kart. Most individual blogs may be small potatoes, but the blogging community as a whole, because it is a web of millions of people, has a huge impact on not only society, but also business and media. Businesses care what people think and the blogosphere is an open book into the brains of an assortment of people. The telephone revolutionized speaking, and so now blogs are revolutionizing community. They are an integral part of the way people correspond in the 21st century, but we must always be wary that we are not letting computers take away from what is right outside our doors.

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# Wattstax photo exhibit comes to Rhodes College

By Gordon Conaway

On the evening of Tuesday, February 5th, Mr. Al Bell, former owner of Stax Records, gave the keynote address for the "Wattstax: I Am Somebody!" exhibit.

The Wattstax exhibit features over 50 rare photographs from the archives of the Stax Museum of American Soul Music. Rhodes' African American Studies Program hosted the event in conjunction with The Mike Curb Institute for Music and the Stax Museum of American Soul Music. Bell's address was titled "Believing and Fulfilling the American Dream."

The exhibit, which will be located in Barret 051, chronicles the historic 1972 Wattstax concert that entertained more than 100,000 people in the Los Angeles Coliseum at the annual Watts Summer Festival.

Wattstax was seen by some as the African-American answer to Woodstock. The festival was organized by Stax Records to commemorate the seventh anniversary of the 1965 Watts riots in Los Angeles. It featured many of Stax's most famous artists, including Richard Pryor, Isaac Hayes, The Bar-Kays, and the Staple Singers.

"The Wattstax exhibit preserves the historical concert in 1972 where Memphis-based Stax recording artists stepped out into the world as civic leaders to lend support to the rebuilding of a community damaged by the inextricably tied realities of racism and poverty," said Dr. Anita Davis, an Associate Professor of Psychology at Rhodes and Director of the African American Studies program.

Under Bell's leadership, Stax Records, which was based in Memphis, produced gold and platinum hits, worked with MGM Studios on the release of the film "Shaft," and introduced marketing and promotional innovations that changed the direction of the nation's music industry. As co-owner of the studio, Bell undertook an ambitious program to make Stax not only a major recording company, but also a prominent player in the black community.

In addition to his other accolades, Bell was executive producer of the 1973 documentary film "Wattstax: The Living Word," which focuses on the Wattstax music festival and the African American community of Watts in Los Angeles. The film was nominated for a Golden Globe for Best Documentary Film in 1974.

The Mike Curb Institute for Music at Rhodes, an endowment to foster awareness of the distinct musical traditions of the South, is also sponsoring the Wattstax event. Mike Curb is a friend of Bell and veteran of the music industry. Chairman of Nashville-based Curb Records, he has used his career success to make generous investments in higher education. In this vein, he created the Institute at Rhodes in 2006 through a \$5 million donation.

Among the Institute's objectives is to preserve archival materials, and to capitalize on the resources of partner institutions, such as those of the Stax Museum, in addressing the impact of music on the Memphis region.

In addition to the exhibit itself, the African-American Studies Program and the Curb Institute will be hosting a number of other Wattstax-related



courtesy Stax Museum of American Soul Music

An exhibit of pictures from the Wattstax concert will be displayed until February 28 in Barret 051. Above is a picture of Isaac Hayes performing at the concert.

events on campus in the coming weeks.

On Tuesday, February 12th, Bell's Wattstax documentary, "Wattstax: The Living Word", will be shown by the Psychology Department on the BCLC lawn at 7 p.m.

On Sunday, February 27th, a "Celebration of Wattstax Music" will be held in the Lynx Lair at 7 p.m. The Rhodes Singers and the Stax Academy Rhythm Ensemble will collaborate on a perfor-

mance of selections made famous by Stax Recording artists.

The "Wattstax: I Am Somebody!" exhibit is free and open to the public, and it will be on display in the Barret Library, February 2 - 28, in Barret 051. Times are: Thursdays, 5 p.m. - 9 p.m.; Saturdays, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.; and Sundays 1 p.m. - 5 p.m.

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*Troutt, continued from Page 1*

Areas such as physical plant and food services will be first hand witnesses of the school's "green" choices.

"The Physical Plant will have to scrutinize closely all of the functions and operations that are carbon-producing, and find creative ways to reduce the amount of carbon produced as much as possible," said Tracy Adkisson, the director of Physical Plant and the current Chair of the Environmental Planning Committee.

Because Rhodes is still in the inventory phase of the plan, the main focus is currently on determining how much carbon the school is producing. However, the exploration of other ways to reduce the schools "carbon footprint" include such actions as purchasing more green power, implementing a solar project, and increasing the use of energy-saving equipment wherever possible.

"Our approach will be to get as much environmental bang for our buck," said Adkisson.

While students may not be directly involved in the actions the college

will be taking in the coming months and years, student involvement is a key component in the effort to reduce greenhouse emission on the Rhodes campus.

"I hope that students will continue to be interested in the progress we make," said Troutt.

One way for students to stay informed about Rhodes' involvement in the pursuit of climate stability is check the Environmental Planning Cooperative's website at <http://www.rhodes.edu/studentorgs/epc/index.html>. The Environment Residents program is also available to increase student awareness of sustainability and other environmental issues.

Still, keeping the changes at Rhodes in perspective is important.

"The bigger picture is that for real, significant, long-lasting change to occur, our country's culture has to change significantly," said Adkisson. "Science can present us with solutions, but solving this problem must first be a top priority. People can use less energy and fuel, but conservation must first become a habit in our lives."

*E.R.'s, continued from Page 1*

dents and professors to drive to campus. This month students will receive an email about how they can participate in their survey.

"Students and dorms, and thus the campus, are involved in activities regarding the preservation of the environment and help us become more conscious of how the activities we do pollute our environment," said Cartagena.

The Residents put on several activities each year.

"The E.R.'s host lectures and work on projects to encourage environmental awareness and environmentally friendly practices," said Seaton.

These activities are initiated by the Environmental Residents to raise awareness and take action about environmental issues. A long-term event taking place this spring is Recyclemania, which began January 27<sup>th</sup> and will run for ten weeks. The E.R. program, the Physical Plant, and the Environmental Planning Cooperative are co-

sponsoring this inter-dorm competition to see which dorm can recycle the most per residential capita.

"Recyclemania is a several month long program which will promote general recycling habits amongst the campus," said Eiland. "We intend to have a competition amongst the dorms to see who can generate the most recycling."

Work-study students Camielle Smith and Lucas Warth have volunteered to weigh and record the recycled materials after every weekly pickup.

"[I hope] the student community will see the importance of recycling in light of the truly excessive waste we generate," said Eiland.

Started in 2001, Recyclemania is a nation-wide project. Last year, over 375 schools recycled a total of 41.3 million pounds of material.

Students who are interested in conservation and environmental issues should consider becoming an E.R. or exploring Rhodes' new Environmental Science minor, which involves experiential learning in a field study along with class work.

One potential use for solar power would be to heat the water that is used in showers and sinks.

"Our optimal use of solar power is to heat water for use in restrooms located in academic buildings," said Foshee. "For example we could use it to heat water for the sinks. And I would love, taken all the advances in technology, to eventually heat water in residence halls."

According to Foshee, about 25% of Rhodes' energy costs go towards heating water for domestic use.

"The Power of Solar Energy" will be finished by late spring, in time for it to be presented at URCAS.

*Solar Project, continued from Page 1*

ing with Forbes on the project. "It's going to be a good project to get us into green and sustainable energy."

With the increasing emphasis on reducing Rhodes' carbon footprint, Foshee expects that the school may begin to invest more in solar power.

"I think solar power is really the future for our campus, because right now buying green power is an expensive option," said Foshee. "But solar power is something that we can invest in and it has a quick payback, so once the payback period is complete it is essentially free energy."

## Enviro Sciences to expand

By Avery Pribila  
Managing Editor

A substantial grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation has allowed Rhodes to fund three post-doctoral positions to aid Rhodes in expanding its current Environmental Science program.

The grant of more than \$500,000 over the course of three years will allow the current program to expand to Environmental Studies, which will give students the opportunity to focus on environmental policy and extend connections between the campus and the community.

The new program will be under the direction of Dr. David Kesler, a professor of biology at Rhodes.

"My goals for the program are to have creative, enthusiastic, and energetic new faculty on campus who will teach courses with environmental studies components," said Kesler. "These non-science courses will provide opportunities for students to more deeply study environmental issues without

particular disciplines."

These fellows have the task of designing and integrating courses on environmental policy. They will work with faculty mentors to assist them in incorporating the new courses and becoming familiar with teaching at a liberal arts college.

Currently there is no decision on which departments will be allowed to advertise for these new positions. Possible course offerings include environmental law, environmental history and even literature of the environmental movement.

According to Kesler, these will hopefully allow students to "gain a deeper understanding of forces impacting the environment, and in turn come to see how environmental issues impact human activities."

Faculty and students will also engage in community partnerships that will allow them to implement their research and outreach projects in a variety of areas, including environmental law and activism.

## Rhodes campus bike shop

By Daniel Jacobs  
Editor-in-Chief

Students who are looking for a cheap, healthy and clean way to get around campus or local neighborhoods need look no further than the Rhodes Bike Shop.

The shop, which was founded in the spring of 2006, is an award winning facility that checks out bicycles free of charge to students.

It originally began after a grant proposal from a student, Moss Driscoll. After receiving funds from the Associated Colleges of the South and Rhodes College, Driscoll established the shop.

"The program was originally conceived as a campus only program, where students could grab a bike to get around campus," said Tracy Adkisson, the Associate Director of Physical Plant. "We decided that the program would have more meaningful impact if it were to lend the bikes as a means of off-campus transportation as well."

In June of 2006 the bike shop won the Governor's Environmental Stewardship Award in the Green Schools Higher Education Category.

According to Adkisson, the bike shop is an important part of the campus community.

"Rhodes values and encourages creative solutions, and the bike program is a prime example," said Adkisson. "The bike shop sends a strong message

to our campus community that we support alternate forms of transportation."

The bike shop currently has about 15 bikes available for students to check out.

"Biking is a completely environmental friendly form of transportation," said Molly Bombardi, a student worker who runs the bike shop. "It's also a very rewarding form of exercise."

According to Bombardi, the neighborhoods around Rhodes are very easy to navigate on a bike.

"It's not feasible in all areas, but for the most part, especially the destinations Rhodes students want to go to, it's very easy to get there on a bike," said Bombardi. "Cooper-Young is a straight shot from Rhodes down Cooper, and the road is big enough that you don't have to worry too much about cars."

Students who have checked out bikes from the shop are largely positive about their experience.

"Having a bike gets you to your destination quicker and it's better exercise than walking," said Mark Donnelly, who has used the bike program consistently throughout his three years at Rhodes. "I just zoom by people, with the wind in my face and my hair blowing free."

The bike shop is open Mondays and Wednesdays 12-3 and Tuesdays and Thursdays 11-12:30.

## Interview with Prof. Hammock

*Professor Mike Hammock is an economics professor who teaches Environmental Economics here at Rhodes.*

**Nate Maxwell: What would you say are the 1 or 2 most interesting insights scholars in the field have contributed?**

Professor Mike Hammock: At the optimal amount of pollution, the marginal damage from pollution will be equal to the marginal benefit of polluting. This sounds very technical, but it is actually quite intuitive. It really just means that we should keep cleaning up pollution up until the point at which the benefits of doing more clean up are less than the costs of doing more clean up. If we impose a tax on a polluter to make the polluter "feel" the damage caused, then the polluter will emit only the efficient amount, and no more. However, actually measuring the benefits and costs of pollution is difficult.

The second insight is the realization that markets can fail—we have terms for these failures such as "Externalities" and "The Tragedy of the Commons". Our contribution is that we have found ways to take advantage of the ways that markets work to create regulation that can effectively protect resources. So, for example, economists favor pollution taxes, but dislike CAFE standards. Economists like tradeable fish quotas, but dislike command-and-control regulations of fishing technology.

**NM: What would be your suggestion for students who care about environmental issues?**

MH: Students who care about environmental issues are in a difficult position. On the one hand, everyone wants to do good and there are many people who tell us to be environmentally conscious in our everyday lives. On the other hand, it is hard to know what does the most good, or whether a particular action does good at all when one weighs the costs. Furthermore, this kind of individual action is not enough. We simply won't get enough reduction in greenhouse gases to make a difference if we simply ask people to "please not emit so much methane and carbon dioxide".

So instead of trying to individually trying to make a difference in the environmental state of the world, it might make more sense to push for policies that could have a real effect. Support carbon taxes or tradeable permits instead of CAFE standards, for example. These policies will affect everyone, encouraging significant conservation at a (relatively) low cost. Of course, this suggestion suffers from the same coordination problem as asking everyone to "be green". It relies on everyone taking costly action—participating in politics—with low personal benefits.

### Energy Conservation at Rhodes

Rhodes College is also using a number of energy saving strategies throughout the campus. Motion sensors are utilized in designated public areas such as community restrooms and laundry rooms to minimize the wasting of energy. Also, timers are being implicated to reduce un-needed consumption of energy, such as lighting or HVAC. In addition, the physical plant is gradually working towards changing the standard incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs that are more energy efficient and environmentally friendly.

# Behind the mask: a night of Commedia dell'Arte

By Alicia Buxton

Commedia dell'Arte is a classic form of Italian theatre dating back to the 16th century. Actors use masks, costumes, and slapstick to form memorable characters and plots. The movement of the Commedia actors is also very stylized, with cartoonish movements and exaggerated characters. Think of it as Jim Carrey meets Bugs Bunny. These characters became established personalities, and include the ancestors to the modern clown. In the 1500s, troupes performed in the backs of traveling wagons with scripted and improvised Commedia scenes. Luckily for us, Commedia dell'Arte is still studied today; although far from the back of a wagon, the students of the McCoy Theatre will be performing a Commedia show at 7:30 on February 7th in the theatre for the Rhodes student body.

Jim Short, Rhodes senior and alumnus of the esteemed Accademia dell'Arte in Arezzo, Italy, is creating and directing a show with various student performers. Short spent five months in Arezzo in the fall of 2006, learning from the masters of modern Commedia. "We worked with different teachers that came in, usually between eight to twelve hours a day, either five or six days a week," says Short. "I had an amazing experience. I was able to learn a lot and work really hard." His experience was so amazing, in fact, that Short decided to bring what he learned back to Rhodes. "Unfortunately, the show's actors have not been given the chance to study in Arezzo, so I'm trying to share my experiences with them."

As his Senior Project for his Theatre major, Short has recruited nine students to rehearse

nightly for several weeks, perfecting the stylized movement of the Commedia and creating their own scenes for the final performance. "I'm having a great time. I wouldn't be doing it if I wasn't," says performer Jack Sterling '08, who admittedly hasn't acted since he was in the 4th grade. Short has trained the students in Commedia by teaching them different games that emphasize the style; one game involves picking up a random object and creating a scene around it in moments. If the actor doesn't perform the Commedia style correctly, they're applauded until they correct themselves. "Mistakes are great. We make mistakes because we're human. Because we're alive," Short explains. "So we applaud mistakes."

The final performance will be a series of vignettes and improvisational scenes that will make you laugh and astound you with their style. The performance will feature a variety of lovable mask characters getting themselves into and out of awkward situations. "It's very funny," Short smiles.

While masks may sound like an archaic concept, Short says they allow actors to reach new heights in performance. "I find Commedia very physically freeing," he says. "It allows you to experiment and try different extremes with both your voice and your physicality that are often not possible without masks." Short teaches his students to draw their characters from the different facial features of the masks, creating physicality, voices, and personalities from the impression the mask makes on them. "It demands 100% focus on what you're doing," says Sterling. "I like the physicality of it. You have to use your whole body, instead of just your face or words."

This rare form of theatre is entertaining for everyone; it's as if classic cartoons come to life to play with the audience for an hour. As Short says, "I hope to be able to give the audience a chance to live like the masks do, as children. Experience everything for the first time, and be able to just roll with the punches and say 'yes' to everything. Give them a chance to relax, not think about the test they failed yesterday, the meeting they have tomorrow, but really to just live in the moment."

## The buzz on pop culture

By Cristina Iskander

### The Good:

ABC's *Lost* made its highly anticipated return to airwaves for its fourth season this past Thursday, and let's just say that if you aren't up to speed on the lives of the passengers of Oceanic 815, you better get there...and fast. You don't want to get left behind when your classmates start discussing whether they'd go with Jack or Locke and you really won't understand when they talk about the Others (and yes, non-Losties, the capitalization is intentional).

The Screen Actor's Guild honored Tiny Fey and Alec Baldwin for their respective turns as Liz Lemon and Jack Donaghy on NBC's *30 Rock*. If you haven't seen this show before, I strongly encourage you to go rent the first season. Because of the writer's strike, there aren't a lot of shows airing right now...what are you going to watch instead, *American Gladiators*? *30 Rock* is irreverent, wacky, and clever...and who can resist the nerd humor of the divinely bespectacled Ms. Fey?

Rumors have been running rampant that the film adaptation of the final Harry Potter book, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, will be split into two parts. I'm hoping this rumor is true. It seems like the best way to appease fans and fit all the important elements of the plot into the movie. Might I suggest having the first movie end at the climactic scene at Malfoy Manor?

Back in 1998, Britney Spears sang, "You drive me crazy, I just can't sleep." It's scary how relevant these lyrics are to her life right now. After going several days without sleep, Spears was finally put in psychiatric care. She's clearly sick right now, but I hope that with time, things will improve. I don't like thinking that Kevin Federline is the more capable caregiver. P.S. Have you checked out his stint on *One Tree Hill*? How do those actors not erupt in laughter whenever they're in a scene with him?

### The Bad:

This past weekend's new movie offerings were particularly dismal. Let's assess. *Over Her Dead Body*? I'd really love to talk to the person

According to Sterling, "It breaks the mold of what you consider theatre. I'm pretty much the stereotypical non-theatre person; I didn't think theatre could be anything like this. I thought that theatre was always curtains, costumes, and people with rehearsed lines. This is just a whole different kind. So if you're interested in expanding your knowledge, then this is something different."

that read that script and thought, "Yes! Green light this! We can have Mrs. Tony Parker play a mean, dead woman. And hey, let's put the kid from *American Pie* in the mix!" And *The Eye*? Has anyone else noticed that Jessica Alba can't actually act? I'll admit—she's attractive, but as far as I know, there's no bikini scene in *The Eye*, so I'm not quite sure what she's bringing to the film.

After watching, VH1's *Rock of Love 2*, I tend to want to go on a disinfecting rampage in my dorm room. Watching this disaster of a show where the contestants explicitly state, "Hey, it's okay, we all got tested" is enough to make anyone feel a little dirty. On the plus side, the show's dippy, rocker girlfriend wannabes will make you feel like an extremely functional, intelligent human being. It truly is a major self confidence booster.

After a Seattle tryout, *Shrek: The Musical* will open on Broadway this fall. Is this necessary? Was the tepid, misguided *Shrek III* not enough to tarnish what was an amusing concept? *Rent* is closing, and *Shrek* gets to occupy a theater on the Great White Way? This just seems wrong.

Continuing the theatre trend, producers of *Legally Blonde* on Broadway announced that they are teaming up with MTV for *The Search for the New Elle Woods*. Good job, *Legally Blonde*. That's really going to help your credibility in the industry.

The CW's *Crowned* finale was this past week, as well as the Miss America Pageant. What is it about a pageant that is so alluring? And why do we insist that Miss America is a "scholarship program"? I don't know of any other scholarship program that requires people to strut around on-stage in a bikini.

### The Awkward:

Martha Stewart has a blog. With entries like "Look at All the Gorgeous Eggs My Chickens Are Laying!" and "My Poor Stone Wall", I'm not sure what to make of it. Part of me wants to read it, part of me wants to look away, but most of all, I want to write her and ask for some stock tips.

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E-mail: china.program@gmail.com

Center for Teaching & Learning in China, 7592 W Farmington, Ste. 145, Germantown, TN 38138

V-DAY will be having an art opening from 6-8pm at Material on 2553 Broad Street. The show kicks off the annual V-Week which culminates in the Vagina Monologues next weekend. Students contributed work in photography, painting, and mixed media in the show entitled *Concerning Women*.

courtesy Donna Smith



# Super Bowl ad countdown

Ralph MacDonald

Thanks to Eli Manning doing his best Joe Namath impression (Suzy Kolber beware), the Super Bowl actually managed to be a spectacle in its own right. Nevertheless, the advertisements stood out as they always do, for better or for worse. I have compiled top ten lists for both the best and the worst that the advertisers had to offer for Super Bowl XLII.

**The Best:**

10. Career Builder - Spider: The Jiminy Cricket-type character getting eaten by a spider was a wonderful violation of Disney's once-revered warm and fuzzy ideas.

9. Bud Light - Foreign Accents: If the marketing writers for Budweiser do nothing else with their lives, then they can say that they wrote a commercial that made Ned "Carlos" Mencia funny. Ned tends to rip off his material from the best, so the Budweiser writers should be proud. Ranting aside, very funny and original, plus it incorporated the ever-funny "bood light" character from the previous campaign.

8. E-Trade - Baby and the Clown: Loved the reference that the baby made to "extra coin." It seems that creepy clown jokes never get old, and the talking baby was an original way to tell an old joke.

7. Cars.com - Circle of Death/Witch Doctor: I cannot remember any other Cars.com advertisements in the past, but the two they ran for the Super Bowl were fantastic. Using scary natives to terrify car salesmen is a long overdue pitch, plus the line "Can I go home, my head's tiny" was classic.

6. FedEx - Pigeons: As usual, The Pride of Memphis comes through with an original, outrageous, and very funny Super Bowl commercial.

5. Bud Light - Semi-Pro: It is not very original to put Will Ferrell in front of a camera and have him belt out funny commercial pitches (see *Talladega Nights*). However, the method is tried, true, and as always, hysterical.

4. Vitamin Water - Shaquille O'Neal, Jockey: If Shaq the Jockey was not enough, the announcing and extras were hilarious. Horses named "Betty the Waiter, Prime Chili, and One Trick Pony" eventually get beaten out by Shaq and his horse "Chunk of Love," who is "half Clydesdale on his mother's side," according to the frenzied announcer. Definitely O'Neal's best acting performance since *Kazaam*.

3. Amp - Jump Start: Any one of the top three could have been number one and I have not agonized over a decision like sorting out the top-three since a friend asked me which Olsen twin I prefer. Fat guy dancing to "Push-It" with plugs on his nipples to jump-start a car...what else is left to say? It was gross, original, and funny as hell.

2. Diet Pepsi - What is Love: Very original take-off of the perfect retro pop-culture reference. *Night at the Roxbury* is old enough to be out of mind, but new and classic enough to be acknowledged by the masses. Joe Buck is an excellent addition to any commercial and his head-bobbing in particular was self-conscious and funny in an awkward kind of way. It's always great to see celebrities not take themselves very seriously à la Peyton Manning and William Shatner. Another plus is it let Chris Kattan be relevant again for the first time since Corky Romano (that's if you do not count the times people thought he was the protagonist in *Moulin Rouge*). The thought of Kattan co-starring with Will Ferrell in *Night at the Roxbury* is like remembering that Peyton Manning and Ryan Leaf were once the first and second picks in the 1998 NFL draft.

1. T-Mobile - Charles Barkley, Dwayne Wade: Dwayne's long journey into Barkley's "Fave Five" finally ends, but not in the way that Wade hoped. I can say no more about this because there is no way to describe how funny Charles Barkley is. Watch the video at: <http://sports.aol.com/nfl/superbowlads>

**The Worst:**

10: Bud Light - Wine and Cheese Party: The commercial is not awful, but simply disappointing that Budweiser could not deliver a better commercial for a Super Bowl spot. Bud Light saving the manliness of an occasion is becoming a bit of a stale theme.

9. Life Water - "Thriller:" I was happy to see "Thriller" incorporated into a commercial, but the overall effect of lizards doing the "Thriller" dance with a girl dancing around randomly was weird and stupid.

8. Dell - Red: A ho-hum commercial on the biggest stage, redeemed only by the police officer slapping the antagonist's butt on a crosswalk.

7. Taco Bell - Fiesta Bowls: A yawner for a Super Bowl commercial. Taco Bell is better off advertising between 10 pm to 2 am, when they can inspire stoned teenagers to make a food run.

6. Pepsi - Justin Timberlake: This was such a waste of star power. It would have been much better if they had gotten a middle-linebacker sized Britney, wearing sweatpants and a halter top to sip Justin to her (if they could imply she was mixing the Pepsi with Evan Williams, so much the better). Britney then chases the terrified Timberlake out of the house with a cigarette in one hand while a baby cries in the background. This was a blown opportunity by Pepsi.

5. Garmin - Napoleon: WTF?

4. GMC - Mountain Top: Corny inspirational talk combined with a black and white animation of a man pushing a rock up mountain. Wake me up when it's over.

3. and 2. Sales Genie - Indian/Pandas: Until proven otherwise, I am assuming that the marketing director for Sales Genie is on drugs. I am unable to come up with any other reason that the company would have paid millions of dollars to torture the world with sorry, animated humor.

1. Under Armor - Street Training: Ghetto street training followed by a revolutionary talk heard by the masses. Was this supposed to be cool? This was a total letdown from the company that convinced Steve Spurrier to use the phrase "click-clack" as a salutation in a national advertising campaign.

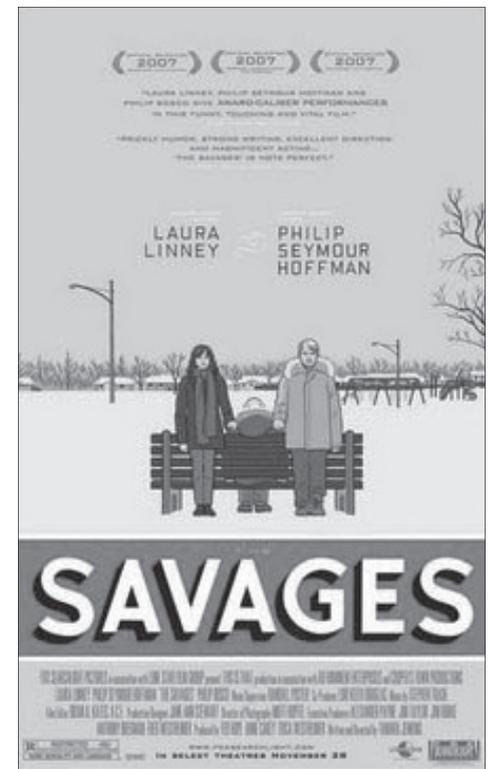
# Day in the life of *The Savages*

By Meaghan Farno

While *The Savages* markets itself as a part of the somewhat clichéd "estranged family" genre, it is interested in accomplishing much more. Its honest and sympathetic insight on life makes this more-sad-than-funny take on life worth watching. *Savages* immediately catches one's attention with its all-star cast including Phillip Seymour Hoffman, who won 2005's Best Actor Oscar for *Capote* and has been nominated for Best Supporting Actor for his performance in this year's *Charlie Wilson's War*; as well as Laura Linney, who is no stranger to Oscar nominations, snagging a nomination for Best Actress this year for her work in *The Savages*. With this being director Tamera Jenkins' second film in ten years (making her 1998 directorial debut with *The Slums of Beverly Hills*), *Savages* proves Jenkins' flair for ordinary but neurotic characters.

The film follows two middle-aged and unhappy siblings, Jon (Hoffman) and Wendy (Linney), who are brought back together when their elderly father's (Philip Bosco) health takes a turn for the worse. Since their childhood split, each sibling has attempted to cope with their troubled younger years at the hands of their abusive father. Jon has since chosen to bury himself under books in Buffalo, NY, where he teaches at a local university and fills his time with his research on Bertolt Brecht for a book he may never finish. His younger sister, Wendy, an aspiring playwright with no funds, must busy herself with mind-numbing temporary employment, a hopeless relationship with a married man and repeatedly rejected grant proposals. Although Jon and Wendy share a visible closeness and understanding of each other (an indicator of the skills of both Hoffman and Linney), both spend the better part of the movie bickering, disagreeing over everything from what they should do with their ailing father to the merits of each other's life choices.

Bosco is phenomenal as the deteriorating patriarch, Lenny Savage. Obviously a physical and domineering father in his younger years, Bosco deftly portrays a man grappling with his own mortality. Diagnosed with dementia, Lenny is forced to depend on others and accept a life of uncertainty and confusion. Scenes with Lenny are powerful but also hard to watch, the first half hour of the movie proving particularly brutal. When Jon quickly makes the decision to move his father into a nursing home in Buffalo, despite his sister's reservations, the story shifts its focus to the younger Savages. With neither sibling



savagesflixster.com

particularly eager to go out of their way for an abusive father, Lenny soon fades into the background. Unlike so many other troubled-family movies, *Savages* doesn't use the father's illness as a catalyst for the children to reconnect with their parent, but instead, it causes them to reconnect with each other. Forced to extract themselves from their isolation, Jon and Wendy can no longer avoid their questionable life choices in the face of the other's criticism.

*The Savages* proves to be two movies in one, tackling questions of death as well as life. While Lenny must prepare himself for the end, Jon and Wendy push each other to pursue new beginnings. Both characters have become helplessly consumed with life's insignificant details, whether it is Urban Outfitter pillows, extramarital affairs, academic endeavors, or pets, to avoid larger challenges and the ever-present threat of failure. *Savages* is clear and realistic in its argument that life is far from perfect. Although all movies have to end somewhere, *Savages* ends on a note of uncertainty. While life and happiness is always a work in progress, life's greatest accomplishments perhaps stem from what one does with the ends that don't quite meet up.

## ? The Puzzler ?

What is the fewest number of cuts necessary to cut a  $4 \times 4 \times 4$  cube into  $64$   $1 \times 1 \times 1$  cubes?

? ? ? ?

? If you think you know the answer, e-mail it to [rinsl@rhodes.edu](mailto:rinsl@rhodes.edu) for a chance to win two movie tickets. ?

# Who expected this? The Giants upset

By William Leibner  
Staff Writer

On Sunday night, we were all reminded why we watch sports. Why we play fantasy basketball, go to spring training, or spend autumn Saturdays and Sundays engulfed in nonstop football. Believe it or not, on February 3<sup>rd</sup>, the bad guys lost and we learned why sports keep us coming back.

Sports fans outside of a dynasty's home city always have had a hatred for such dominant teams, but it seems that the overall distaste for the 2008 New England Patriots was stronger than any jealousy directed towards the Bulls or Yankees of the late 1990s. These Patriots were *too* good. Over most of the regular season, they didn't just beat teams, they pulverized them. Scores were run up on a weekly basis. Randy Moss, an egotistical wideout who has proclaimed that he "only plays when we want to play" caught touchdowns faster than his speedy sidekick Wes Welker dashed across the middle for another first down. Tom Brady had it so good that it was too easy to envy him. He threw more touchdowns than anyone in NFL history, was the poster boy for football and went home to Gisele Bundchen every night. Junior Seau came out of retirement just to chase a ring that he never could get during his career, selling out the San Diego fans that adored him for over a decade. Rodney Harrison was suspended at the start of the season for violating the league's steroid policy, something that goes un-discussed far too much. Even worse, the head coach Bill

Belichick was abrasive and surly throughout the season. Then, there's the Spygate fiasco. The Patriots *cheated* against the New York Jets in Week One by taping their coaches' signals, an accusation that was not the first claim made against the Patriots. In the past, a Patriots worker was dismissed for Lambeau Field for the same allegation, and reports are now surfacing that the Patriots taped the St. Louis Rams practice prior to the 2002 Super Bowl. The Patriots, despite running off a historic streak of eighteen wins in a row did not have the support of many outside of the New England region.

But did anybody realistically believe what many of us were hoping and pull of the impossible? Not really. Maybe we should have though. The New York Giants played the Patriots close in the final week of the season before falling by a 38-35 margin. But, under the hot hand of Eli Manning, who came back from the proverbial dead to put together one of the greatest runs in playoff history, the Giants reeled of an incredible month of football. They beat Tampa Bay on the road, Dallas at Texas Stadium and Green Bay on the frozen tundra all with Manning morphing from a scared turnover machine ridiculed by the New York media to a 2008 version of Joe Montana. Their defense came alive to force Tony Romo and Brett Favre out of their comfort zones. Simultaneously, the Patriots began to show signs of vulnerability, after being challenged by the Giants and relatively neutralized by a LaDanian Tomlinson-less San Diego Chargers team in the AFC Championship. Yet, given all of this, the Patriots entered the Super Bowl overwhelming favorites, not to anyone's surprise. Some analysts predicted a close game, fewer predicted a possible upset, but nobody expected a Giants victory.

Somehow, the Giants did it. They were able to pressure Tom Brady, forcing him out of his rhythm. Manning was able to control the game well enough to keep it close. But, as expected the Patriots staged an impressive drive in the final minutes, with Brady hitting Moss to put the Pats ahead 14-10 and further frustrated millions of viewers across the country. The Patriots were going to pull it out yet again. But then, something happened that keeps every fan coming back to each game, training camp and sports talk radio show. The Giants drove over eighty yards with less than two minutes left to cap off a fairytale finish. Manning hit David Tyree on a miracle of third down play, evading a wave of Patriots pass rushers before heaving a desperation that Tyree somehow pulled down in all sorts of traffic to bring the Giants within striking distance. Then, with 35 seconds left, Manning found Plaxico Burress (who had predicted a Giants upset earlier in the week) in the end zone on a picture perfect fade pattern to send the nation into catatonic shock.

The villains lost. Fans felt a universal sense of relief and gratification that the evil Patriots had been dethroned. The last time such a surprise came from a sporting event was in 2004 when the Red Sox come back from 3-0 to beat the Yankees and reverse the curse. Yet this time, the joke was on Boston. And how sweet it was. Central Casting in Hollywood could not have scripted it any better.

# Federer and Nadal fall, hard

By Tyler Ponder  
Staff Writer

If you had told any serious tennis fans that the finals of the 2008 Australian Open would not feature either Roger Federer or Rafael Nadal, they would have laughed you off the planet. Call it some sort of play on cosmic justice, but that very scenario played out over the weekend. It was the first time since the 2005 Australian Open that at least one of these two men has not made the finals of a major tournament.

Yeah, this was kind of a big deal.

Federer had a fairly easy trip to the semi-finals of the tournament, dropping only 2 sets until that point. Those sets were the prize of Federer's third round opponent, Janko Tipsarevic. Nadal's trip to the semi-finals was even better; he didn't drop a single set until that match. Federer was set to play Novak Djokovic, a young Serbian who has just recently rocketed into the Top 5 in the world. Djokovic, however, has played like an inexperienced player, especially on a big stage such as the Australian Open. Nadal's semi-final match looked too good to be true. He was to face an unseeded Frenchman by the name of Jo-Wilfried Tsonga.

Who? Exactly.

When all was said and done, Djokovic and Tsonga were set to face off in the finals. Djokovic handled Federer quite soundly, beating him in close, but straight sets. Tsonga dominated Nadal, also in straight sets.

Tennis commentators along with fans were stunned. Federer had been invincible over the past few years, winning 8 of the last 10 major tournaments before this 2008 Australian Open.

Nadal, likewise, had been a dominant player. He had picked up the slack where Federer has struggled, winning the French Open for the past 3 years. If the magnitude of these two matches isn't clear yet, let me relate this to another situation. Both Federer and Nadal losing in straight sets, before getting to the finals in a major tournament is like Tiger Woods losing a major golf tournament by 20 strokes. Better yet, it's like Tiger Woods losing a major golf tournament by 20 strokes to Michelle Wie.

In the end, Djokovic overcame a one set deficit to beat Tsonga in 4 sets, thus sealing his first major tournament victory. Look for great things from this young man. Tsonga, I must say, will be a one hit wonder; this was his 15 minutes of fame.

The next major tournament is the French Open in late May. Can Nadal repeat for the 4<sup>th</sup> time? Will this tremendous loss effect Federer's game? Have we seen the end of Federer's domination? No more predictions from yours truly. I would like to stay firmly attached to this planet, thank you very much.

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