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LIVESOUNDS, KAPPA SIGMA, AND SODEXHO SERVED UP A HALLOWEEN BASH IN THE WORNER CENTER ON WEDNESDAY NIGHT. VENUS AND SERENA WILLIAMS, MORE COMMONLY KNOWN AS HUGH JOHNSON AND BLAKE HAMMOND, WON THE COSTUME CONTEST AND A BRAND NEW SNOWBOARD.

NEWS



Nevada crossing nearly tragic

Incident highlights safety concerns about crossing streets on bicycles

DANIEL ANTHONY CATALYST STAFF

A driver hit senior Jacqueline Pitts as she rode her bike across a Nevada crosswalk last Monday, throwing her onto the street 45 feet behind the spot of impact and sending her into intensive care.

Quickly help began to arrive. A Security golf cart pulled up to the accident scene. Pitts's friend, Zachary Ramras, came and found her lying on her back in the turn lane for Nevada and San Rafael, far from the spot of the impact. Bruised and cut up, she nevertheless tried to stand. Others at the scene, by now on the phone with a 911 operator, followed instructions to keep her still until the ambulance arrived, as a precaution against internal injuries.

Though Pitts's injuries were not life-threatening, the tense minutes before the ambulance arrived and then the worried hours before friends heard her condition illustrate the constant danger passing cars pose to CC's pedestrians, cyclists, and skateboarders.

When the ambulance arrived, paramedics cut off Pitts's down vest, lifted her onto a stretcher, and sped to the hospital. Several students came to the intersection, drawn by the flashing blue lights of lingering police cars. Onlookers saw a car with a shattered windshield, and on the ground, a smashed-

up red cruiser bike. They could make little of what had happened; just as the first curious students appeared, Pitts, the paramedics, and Ramras raced to the hospital.

"I remember seeing the car coming. That's the last thing I remember," said Pitts.

Though eyewitnesses suggest that Pitts was conscious at least part of the time after being hit, she blacked out after the impact. Her first memory after seeing the black Pontiac coming at her was waking up in the hospital.

"The first full day was pretty fuzzy. I just remember bits and pieces."

Doctors told Pitts that she had suffered multiple brain contusions from hitting the pavement. As Pitts put it, her injuries were "a little bit worse than a really bad concussion." She is expected to fully recover.

On Wednesday, Pitts reported feeling better than she imagined possible only a week earlier.

After her release from the hospital, Pitts returned to her home in Florida, where she will take this block to heal. She said that her friends back at CC have been "amazing, supportive, and helpful" through her ordeal.

Jacqueline Pitts's story underscores one of the hidden dangers of casually moving around CC's usually pedestrian-friendly campus. Pitts lives off-campus, and she routinely crossed at the intersection where she

was hit. She saw the car in the far lane stop, but did not see the one in the near lane until too late.

According to a listserv post last month by Ron Smith, chief of campus security, most drivers on Cascade know pedestrians may step into the street at any time, and they usually drive with appropriate care. This is not the case for drivers on Nevada. Nevada has far more traffic, a higher speed limit, and a lower percentage of local drivers who know to watch for students. The driver who hit Jacqueline Pitts, for instance, was an FBI agent visiting from Virginia.

"It's something I took for granted, that I didn't have to be careful. It's so easy to get stuck in that mindset, to say 'Whatever, it's going to be fine,'" said Pitts.

Nevada has a speed limit of 35 mph—far faster than what it takes to cause serious injury. The driver said that hit Pitts had almost completely stopped by the time of impact, and from the skid marks on the pavement, police determined that he was driving a legal 34 mph when he slammed on his brakes.

Pedestrians on the Nevada crosswalks do not have right-of-way, as many students assume. Drivers may choose to yield, but both practically and legally, pedestrians crossing Nevada are responsible for their own safety.



Top: The car that hit senior Jacqueline Pitts was badly damaged by the impact.

Above: After campus security, police, and an FBI agent conducted their investigations, the car was towed away.

Bottom Left: Security hauled Pitts's wrecked bike away after she was taken to the hospital.

Bottom Center: Security interviewed eyewitnesses to compile an accident report.

Bottom Right: Despite the danger, bikers immediately resumed riding across Nevada.



Emergency messaging unveiled

System employs phones, loudspeakers to spread warnings and directions

ELIZABETH FINDELL CATALYST STAFF

A mad gunman is loose on campus and students need to barricade themselves inside dorms and classrooms. A fire starts in Bemis and everyone must evacuate as flames rapidly spread. A chemical truck has overturned on I-25, and toxic gases are wafting towards campus; people should stay indoors. A science project using dangerous materials has gone terribly wrong.

How does CC prepare for such scenarios, and how is the school community informed about emergencies?

CC has been working to refine its emergency communication techniques, making sure everyone can be immediately contacted in case of a crisis. The college recently became part of Connect-ED, a service that has increased in popularity since last year's Virginia Tech shooting. In case of a campus emergency, Connect-ED sends out messages to students via e-mails and cell phones. Over 150 college campuses currently use the service.

CC has one e-mail and one phone number programmed per person, but the system has the potential for up to six phone numbers, two e-mails and one text-message number per person to receive emergency alerts.

Independently of Connect-ED, CC has also programmed the Shove Chapel bells to sound an emergency alert.

On October 18, CC conducted a test of the new system, which administrators considered a success. About 83 percent of calls and nearly all e-mails successfully went through to the campus community with a message from President Celeste. While messages to



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY OLIVER PARINI

cell phones went quickly, messages to campus phones took up to 25 minutes to go through, and many of the messages rolled to voicemail. Additionally, high winds rendered the chapel bells inaudible for those who were not in its immediate vicinity.

Two more tests of the system are planned, one within the next two weeks.

Randy Stiles, chairman of PreEMPT, the CC Emergency Management Planning Team, emphasizes the importance of students making sure emergency contact information is updated. He also adds that Connect-ED will never be used for a non-emergency, except for the tests. Depending on the situation, an emergency message would likely ask the

school community to either evacuate buildings, or to barricade themselves within buildings.

While CC has considered emergency plans for years, the Virginia Tech shooting catalyzed the development of a widespread communication system.

"It is important to get good information to people quickly," Stiles said. In addition to random violence, PreEMPT considers possibilities of accidents, pandemics, weather crises, and other hazards.

"People need to talk about it and think about it," Stiles continued. "If there were a fire, how would you get out of the building? If there were a shooter, how would you bar-

ricade yourself inside it?"

The Office of Campus Security has been increasing its preparedness for possible emergency scenarios.

"Probably fire, chemical, or weather [is] the most likely," said Chief of Security Ron Smith. Security notes that city law enforcement support is strong and nearby in case of a real emergency.

Thankfully, CC has yet to experience an event that warranted the use of an emergency communication system, but a strong campus core is working to make sure that such a system will be in place if it is needed.

In Stiles's words, "You can only prepare as well as possible to get information out."

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The wildfire burns west of the Stevenson Ranch, a community in Los Angeles County. A number of CC students come from areas affected by the fires.

COURTESY OF PABLO SANTIBANEZ

California blaze strikes close to home for some at CC

JOEL MINOR CATALYST STAFF

As wildfires burned in southern California this week, their affects were felt across the nation, including at CC. As of Tuesday, Oct. 30, approximately 500,000 acres had been burned, 1,600 homes had been destroyed, 21,000 homes were still threatened, and 7 people had been killed. Thousands remain evacuated from their homes and schools.

"It's important for people at CC to realize that it's not just an out-of-state issue and affects all of us from California," said Meredith Mantik, a freshman from Palm Springs, CA. She went to Idyllwild Arts Academy in an area directly affected by one of the fires.

Mantik recalls previous evacuations caused by fires throughout high school, and states that students still at her high school are going through the same evacuations this year.

"They had to herd the students to the dorms this last week and cancel classes due to power outages and unsafe windy conditions. That area has been at a high danger fire alert for years now and the school and my house have come close to burning down more than once," Mantik said.

She continued, "Idyllwild is a very small town of 2,500 people, so when news of a firefighter's death arrives, we all knew them in some way and were all affected."

Freshman Sammi Wallace, from Orange,

CA, reiterated Mantik's frustrations with the destruction caused annually by wildfires in the area.

"It burns down the same areas every year—it burns the canyons," she said. "Actually, we're all kind of used to it. I have a friend who is a sophomore at Pepperdine who gets evacuated every year."

"It's important for people at CC to realize that it's not just an out-of-state issue and affects all of us from California."

MEREDITH MANTIK

For Janne Barklis, also a freshman, the fire hit closer to home. Her parents called her last week to let her know that they were evacuating the family home.

"My mom only took photographs," she said.

By last weekend, her parents had returned to the house, which was unscathed. Still, Barklis remembers the frightening experience of being unsure if her home would be there when she next saw it.

"It was hard to tell what was going on from here, because it was hard to find on the news. It was really scary for me—it's

hard being out here and having things happen there. But it was definitely not scary in a worry-about-my-family sort of way, which would have been so much worse. It was more material."

Freshman Kieffer Katz's family was only under a voluntary evacuation order and never actually evacuated, but the situation was still stressful for him.

"There have been a lot of fires in the area over the years, but the fact that my family was in jeopardy—and potentially my house, neighborhood, etc.—was terrifying since I was so far away and unable to really do anything at all about it," Katz said.

Though fires happen every year in various parts of southern California, their extent is unusual this year, because of uncommonly powerful and dry Santa Ana winds. The smoke they create is visible for miles around, and citizens as far away as San Diego are negatively affected.

Kylie Birnbaum, a senior from San Diego, CA, reported that according to her parents, "the air quality is horrible, and people are picking food off the grocery shelves, fearing a disaster."

The extreme damage caused by the fires is prompting questions about the fire management practices currently in place. Fire ecology experts are suggesting that the current practice of putting out all forest fires as fast as possible is resulting in buildup of underbrush that would normally be burned away

naturally, which causes fires to become more severe more quickly when they do occur.

CC students are already joining others around the nation in beginning outreach efforts for victims of the fires. According to Kappa Kappa Gamma member Lauren Hughes, the sorority will be donating a portion of the proceeds from its annual Mr. CC contest, which will be held on November 11, to wildfire victims.

"Many of the women in the house felt strongly about helping the victims of the wildfires, and we believed it would be a cause students across campus would like to support," Hughes said.

"It was hard to tell what was going on from here, because it was hard to find on the news. It was really scary for me."

JANNE BARKLIS

As the fires are increasingly controlled, life is slowly returning to normal for the many families evacuated throughout southern California and their members at CC.

CATALYST

The *Catalyst* is a weekly newspaper produced and managed exclusively by students of The Colorado College. Published for the benefit of the college community and the surrounding local area, the *Catalyst* aims to bring general interest and academic-oriented news, ideas, and opinions into greater collective view -- to act as a catalyst for informed debate. The newspaper is published under the auspices of Cutler Publications, a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit independent of The Colorado College.

Phone: 719.389.6675
Fax: 719.389.6962

Newsroom: newsroom.catalyst@coloradocollege.edu
Letters: letters.catalyst@coloradocollege.edu
Advertising: ads.catalyst@coloradocollege.edu
Subscriptions: subscriptions.catalyst@coloradocollege.edu

The Catalyst
1028 Weber St.
Colorado Springs, CO 80946

NEWS

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INTERNATIONAL MEMO

From Across the World to the Rocky Mountains

Why International Students Choose CC



Sophomore Jayash Paudel is an international student from Nepal. "It has always been intriguing to me that different students come to CC for different reasons," Paudel explains.

ERYNN LEFILS-SHAW CATALYST STAFF

JAYASH PAUDEL GUEST WRITER

As an international student, I often come across the same question when I meet new people. "How come you ended up at CC?" I have always found this question interesting.

Although I just finished freshman year, I still can't believe that I am going to spend four years of my life at Colorado College. I had heard of John Denver's songs about the mountains of Colorado before, but I was blithely unaware of what living and studying at CC would be like.

When I was a kid, I used to watch BBC World International. All I knew about the U.S. then was the name of the president and some big states like New York and California. I still remember how I decided to apply to CC when one of my friends from Nepal told me that he was applying here. I had not heard of CC before, nor had I ever imagined coming here.

Even though I wrote an application essay on a three-and-a-half-week adventure, I didn't know how exactly the block plan worked and how I would study under it until I eventually got accepted by the college. That's when I started exploring in detail the block schedule and what it offers. That's how I came from Nepal to Colorado.

Many international students on campus are exchange students. CC offers a number of study abroad opportunities. Many CC students change places with students from Europe and South America to go study abroad for a semester or a whole year. It's easy for these international students to get a better idea of what life at CC is like, as the schools they attend back home have affiliated programs here and these international students can meet people who have studied at CC previous years. Thus, it should be easier for them to point out an aspect of the CC culture they like before even coming here—they just are familiar with more of these aspects.

It has always been intriguing to me that different students come to CC for so many different reasons. The scholarship I received was definitely one of the main reasons I

I still can't believe I am going to spend four years of my life at Colorado College...I had not heard of CC before, nor had I ever imagined coming here.

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came here—or, to be more precise, I would not have been able to come study in the U.S. if I had not gotten it. Another international student I know applied to 29 schools in America.

CC offered this student a scholarship, enabling her to study here—and luckily, she found the block schedule fitted her personality very well. Some people can't afford to choose which college to go to, but are lucky to end up at their best match.

Another international student I know came here because her mom insisted that she go to a small school where she could better concentrate on her studies. "You know what? I love big cities, but I came to a small city like Colorado Springs, taking my mother's advice. She strongly believed this was the right place for me," she told me.

Still another international student I know comes from a southern country where it never snows. He told me that when he got admitted into a couple of different colleges in the States, he had hard times deciding whether to go to CC or Middlebury. "I decided to get enrolled at CC, as Vermont offers colder weather than Colorado does."

Besides which, because of the extremely complicated political and economic situations in his country, he found it difficult to find and exchange money and buy a plane ticket to the States. CC offered to assist him in buying the ticket so that he could actually come here, while Middlebury did not seem interested in helping him out. That's when his decision to come to CC became final.

International students would ultimately prefer to be at a place where they can rely on people working and studying on campus. After all, they usually don't have many other people to count on in this country, where they have not lived before.

I think international students like me are lucky to study at a college offering a very friendly environment and a good faculty/student ratio. It's good that we know people here can support us and pay more attention to our problems if they notice we need their support. That's not only valid for international students—it's valid for all CC students as well.

SCENE

Shiny Toy Guns Shocks the Fillmore

CHIP SILVERMAN CONTRIBUTING WRITER

What happens when you mix male and female vocals, old school rock and roll, and a high tech synthesizer? Some might say mayhem, but it is in fact sheer musical bliss.

This performance came courtesy of a few Los Angeles that call themselves the Shiny Toy Guns. Never heard of them? That's not surprising, but consider yourself warned: this band, with a high-energy debut album called *We Are Pilots*, is going to blow out your speakers with swift and original rock beats intertwined with a unique mix of electronic instruments.

Shiny Toy Guns further distinguish themselves with contrasting yet complimentary male and female vocals provided by singers Gregori Petree and Carah Charnow.

In mid-October, the Shiny Toy Guns played at the Fillmore Auditorium, opening for a rock band by the name of Blue October. When the Shynys came out amid a flurry of colored lights, strobes, and fog, synthesizer expert/keyboardist Jeremy Dawson wasted no time before pounding out the opening notes of "You Are The One" on a virtual organ.

The atmosphere was not unlike that of a rave, a highly energized room jam-packed with young people, unaware that they were about to witness one of the best live shows of any touring artist.

Soon thereafter, drummer Mikey Martin joined in with a pulsing rock beat, and finally Gregori Petree began nailing chords on his guitar before belting out the lyrics. To accomplish all of this in the first 45 seconds or so is pretty impressive.

But the moment when Carah Charnow chimed in

for a few lines was the moment that took most people aback. To the fans, the duo's ability to go back and forth singing provides such a unique and unexpected but refreshing twist to the group's sound. This factor alone really makes the Shiny Toy Guns distinct among the countless other bands out there today.

Holding true to the album's theme of alternating male and female-led tracks, the next song was "Jackie Will Save Me." The song begins with a slow, almost robotic synthesized beat behind Carah Charnow's voice, which was appropriately soft and slow. The guitar and drums then pick up, slowly and relatively quietly before gaining speed.

Just as the song seems to be in full swing, the lights go dim and the Fillmore Auditorium falls silent. A brief pause ensues before the audience is taken aback as the song picks back up with a pace more vigorous than before; simultaneously, the stage is basked in strobe lights of different colors synchronized with the beat of the song—all led by Carah Charnow's now melodic and highly versatile voice. The Fillmore is alive again, the whole audience, at one time still, looking like a churned-up sea: jumping, dancing, and simply having a great time.

Through these first two songs alone, it is apparent what the Shiny Toy Guns are about: their live shows and their music in general are composed of a vast array of opposites and contradictions, from mixing rock with electronica to the obvious male and female vocal differences. This gives their music an energy that's present in each and every one of their songs, spanning from fast and loud to slow and quiet.

If the band continues to use these differences as a driving force behind their music, I don't see any way the Shiny Toy Guns will ever be stopped.



Shiny Toy Guns drummer Mikey Martin.

CHIP SILVERMAN CATALYST STAFF



Carah Charnow, the female singer of Shiny Toy Guns, performs at the Fillmore.

CHIP SILVERMAN CATALYST STAFF



Sodexho and Colorado College Sustainability Grants

At Sodexho we are charged with 'making every day a better day', and what better way to accomplish this than to provide funding to address issues of sustainability here at CC. Sodexho Campus Dining Services is pleased to announce that we will award a total of \$8,000 in grants to students, faculty or staff of The Colorado College during the 2007-2008 academic year to help with one of the college's core values of "nurturing a sense of place and an ethic of environmental sustainability". These grants may be used in areas such as but not limited to; to further research, purchase equipment to enhance sustainability, or to support an educational campaign on sustainability.

The Process:

Students, Faculty and Staff are encouraged to participate. For more information please contact Sodexho Dining Services at (719) 389-6152

Deadline:

The deadline for grant submission will be the last day of Block III. All submissions must be delivered via email to Shawn.Finnegan@SodexhoUSA.com no later than 5:00 PM on November 21, 2007.

Award:

The awards will be announced no later than the end of Block IV

Clooney's latest effort fails to stimulate

TENDO KIRONDE STAFF WRITER

The Michael Clayton mantra of "the truth can be adjusted" rings even more true than I think the filmmakers intended. Rarely do I come across a movie so well accepted by critics that leaves my date sound asleep and me asking for my two hours back.

Even with its premium cast, this movie simply failed to deliver on almost all accounts. In short, the new and edgy lawyer drama Michael Clayton is the biggest upset in law since the O.J. Simpson trial.

Michael Clayton starts off with some high-stakes class action suit on the brink of settlement when, out of nowhere, the main defendant of the corporation has a psychotic breakdown and changes sides. The firm, worried about being sued for malpractice, sends Michael Clayton (George Clooney) in to rectify the situation.

Clayton, unable to change the mind of his slightly delirious colleague, has to cover for his friend's behavior and buy time in order to figure out just what is going on in this case. He soon discovers the unethical and horrible truth about the corporation his firm is defending, and is caught in the thick of it, along with his mental colleague. Meanwhile, the corporation is unhappy with their discovery, so they do what any company would do—assassinate people until there is no one left to argue.

This, along with the several other tedious side plots that seemed to be thrown in to hide the dullness of the main story, had me thinking, "If the plot don't fit, you must acquit."

Really, this movie begged for some kind of twist or big reveal that would speed things along; however, it never got one. In fact, the people accused of being guilty in the beginning are the people found guilty in the end. Simple as that.

However, I think the worst part of it all was that the film wasn't even remotely intellectual. If you are going to sit there and talk to me for two hours, you better have something intellectually stimulating to say. Clayton, however, did not.

The characters were just as ill-developed as the plot. Clayton was kept in a shroud of mystery, probably to stimulate some sort of interest, yet when you are an hour in and you still have almost nothing to hold onto except for his gambling problem, you start to lose interest. George Clooney and the rest of the cast tried to keep this boat afloat, but good acting can only go so far when what's being portrayed is so lackluster.

When it comes down to it, this movie is a shining example of why you can't always trust big-name movie critics. Whatever it was the New York Times saw in this movie eluded me. If you still want to see this movie, catch it on DVD, and if you end up wanting your two hours back I'll just say "I told you so." This one's not even worth the matinee.



George Clooney plays the lead role of Michael Clayton.

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Dancing while the sky crashes down: The Jason Webley Quartet

A conversation with lead singer of an experimental folk-rock quartet

A few years ago, singer-songwriter Jason Webley was accused of being a cult leader. Unwieldy amounts of charisma will qualify a musician for such a title. Likewise, it can make for an incredible concert experience.

On October 21, Denver's quirky little folk venue, Swallow Hill, played host to the Jason Webley Quartet and more musical talent than I expect to be in a room with ever again.

When Swallow Hill's elderly staff tore our ticket stubs and informed us about the venue's folk music school, my unwitting friend, a thrash metal drummer, eyed me skeptically. No, I assured him; this does not qualify as folk or any other conceivable genre.

Baffled by how to describe this remarkable music, I took the opportunity to interview Jason Webley and pose the unanswerable question.

DVD: Jason, how would you, if backed into a corner, describe your music?

Jason Webley: Yea, um, I hate having to do that. It doesn't sound that unusual to me. Folkish-rockish I guess. I'm a singer-songwriter. I've listened to a lot of punk rock music, that's had an influence; and I listen to a lot of singer-songwriters [like] Dylan. I've gotten lots of comparisons with Tom Waits.

After leaving the show dumbfounded and speechless, I will now exhibit the limitations of words in comparison to sounds.

The show technically began before Webley even graced the stage. As a humble solo performer who has taken on a quartet of musicians, Webley allowed his band mates to strut their solo stuff.

First up was viola player L. Alex Guy, who used live electronic sampling to record and layer the very complex "Million Stars," "Dark Like Night," and other songs from her gorgeous new LP, *Led to Sea*. Despite having a viola pressed up against her chin, Alex Guy's vocals are somehow both crisp and ethereal.

For an absolute change of pace, she introduced drummer Michael McQuilken, who came crashing down the aisle, beating on a marching harness comprised of a water cooler jug, PVC pipe, and a turkey pan. After such an entry, he preceded to set down his harness and sit to play acoustic guitar with his hands and drums with his feet.

Despite hiding shyly behind a scenerster haircut, Jherik Bischoff proves to be stand-out talent in the world of experimental music. With the same loop technology as Alex Guy, Bischoff used his upright bass, a guitar, and a smattering of McQuilken's drums to yield avant-garde music. It was not so much which or how many instruments Jherik used, but how exactly he used them that made every spectator a little slack-jawed. In perfectly calculated and hypnotic movements, he scraped the bow against the bow bag, wrapped the side of the bass, and beat a snare drum until it toppled over.

Finally, the last soloist was none other than that marvelous street performer, Webley himself. With only an accordion and a vodka bottle filled with an international coin collection, he leapt down off the stage and came directly over to the seated audience.

Perhaps to separate his die-hard cult following from the newcomers, he began his set comedically with "The Sneezing Song." "The Sneezing Song" is a "sing-along" that became relatively famous thanks to a YouTube video of Webley and his six-year-old niece performing it.

Now that my metal-head friend was reaching the peak of skepticism, Webley laughed about starting his set that way and proceeded to play a melancholy rendition of "Last Song," which caused a mass eruption of goose bumps and spine-tingles.

At this point, Webley returned to the stage and the audience got to their feet and followed, due to his promise to "sweat a little" on them. And sweat he did, as he and the quartet began playing the intensive narrative of "Icarus" with their unbridled combined strength.

Though they played together excellently, Webley remained the spectacle on acoustic guitar, vodka bottle percussion, and frantically stomping feet.

Since the tour was a CD release for *The Cost of Living*, the set list included several new songs. The melodic "Almost Time" slowed the pace to a contented sway, but "Little Sister" and "They Just Want" recommenced the gypsy-influenced stomp and swagger. "Ways to Love," which Jason claims as a personal favorite on the record, marks the album's new "rock" sound while preserving Jason's signature gypsy-punk sound.

The macabre tango, "Dance While the Sky Crashes Down"—arguably Webley's most famous song—took on staggering momentum as the quartet backed the fierce accordion, which was squeezed until its strap broke in the final beat.

The Cost of Living's final song, "There's Not a Step We Can Take That Does Not Bring Us Closer," was actually played twice. The second time, the audience was divided and was asked to sing along, not to the lyrics, but in lieu of the viola and trombone parts to create an "orchestra effect."

As is customary at a Jason Webley show, the night climaxed at 11:11 with the crowd swaying in mock debauchery and belting along to "The Drinking Song."

As we walked out with gleeful smiles plastered on our faces, I turned to Joey Gudenas, my drummer friend, who was by then well-versed in the world of Webley.

"No," he breathlessly admitted, "That wasn't folk. That was, well, that was something else entirely!"

What was it exactly? Listen for yourself at www.maycontainmoxie.blogspot.com

D.V.D.



"That wasn't folk. That was, well, that was something else entirely!"



Top: The Jason Webley Quartet are known for their experimental approach to folk-rock. Above: Webley and his band appeared in Denver on October 21. COURTESY OF ELEVEN RECORDS



Rob Sonic provides additional vocals. CHIP SILVERMAN CATALYST STAFF

Aesop Rock and Black Moth Super Rainbow deliver

ARI MARGOLIS CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Aesop Rock was in fine form at Colorado Springs' Black Sheep last week, as he had the diverse crowd bobbing their heads and waving their arms in unison. The usually uncomfortable and empty venue on East Platte felt downright cozy as a mix of CC students and townfolk filled the place up by 10 p.m.

The dynamic at local shows like that—where Springs natives form the bulk of the crowd but a sizeable and "socially lubricated" CC contingent is present—can be weird. But it was all good between CC princes and princesses and local wannabe hard knocks last Wednesday.

Aesop Rock shared the stage with his longtime turntablist DJ Blockhead and fellow MC Rob Sonic. The New York native had the crowd in a frenzy from the first low, monotone line he spat. His trademark cry-

stal-clear, ultra hard-hitting delivery came through over the massive bass in the mix, and every word was heard as well as felt. He sang plenty of crowd favorites, along with some tracks off of his killer new album, "None Shall Pass" (Def Jux Records).

Black Moth Super Rainbow, a weird psychedelic trance band, opened for Aesop Rock; despite mixed applause and booing, they were the most memorable part of the evening. They have an instrumental techno sound that one might call ear candy: their female drummer lays down irresistible backbeats along with the band, which features electric bass, synthesizer, keyboards and a prominent vocoder robot voice part.

Had the band not projected grotesque images of blood, '70s porn and Richard Simmons on a screen behind them, their trippy sounds might have been better received by the less than open-minded crowd.

"It was all good between CC princes and princesses and local wannabe hard knocks last Wednesday."

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 COMMENT & DEBATE

Anti-tax sentiment harms communities

Why we should not grumble about tax increases

BRENNA SWIFT STAFF WRITER

When I was a sophomore in high school, my school district proposed a bond issue and mill levy financed by an increase in property taxes to fund renovations to school buildings and make some other much-needed changes.

My school, Woodland Park High School, was in an especially bad state. The building was around 40 years old and had been designed with just one long hallway that extended from end to end. During passing periods between classes, this hall would be absolutely packed with students, and traffic would reach a standstill. We all felt like sardines or cattle being prodded from pen to pen. I remember being bumped and jostled as I tried to make my way to my locker and then to my next class. I had to temporarily suspend my need for personal space just to get through the day.

The “freshman hall” on the north end of the building was not a very nice place to be—the lockers were bright orange, the carpet was ratty, and things just felt old. The classrooms were in bad shape and the gyms were dilapidated. Of course we had to use modular classrooms just to accommodate the growing number of students who enrolled at the school.

The vocal music program, one of the only truly stellar programs at the school, operated out of an undersized and overheated classroom with no windows. The counseling center was housed in an area that really did resemble a closet rather than a viable space for students. The “career center” was hidden somewhere above the north gym, and the room was awful—not exactly the most uplifting place to plan a life after graduation.

I could go on and on about the sad state of our school. Woodland Park Middle School was a newer building, but it had been designed much too small and badly needed to be expanded. Even the elementary schools had their problems.

Then there were the teachers. Our teachers were among the lowest paid in the Pikes Peak region. As a result, the district could attract only a few experienced teachers. These teachers stayed out of loyalty and dedication—nothing else. Many of the other teachers were straight out of college, and they typically left after only a year or two. The high turnover rates compromised the quality of education we got. When the school district put the higher property tax on the ballot, it emphasized the higher salary it could pay its teachers.

And did the bond issue pass? Drum roll, please...
Nope.

I was sitting in biology class when the news came in. All of us groaned aloud. My teacher made some joke about starving because he would not get a raise, but it was too true to be funny. I just could not believe the tax increase had not been approved. I remember

wondering how the high school and middle school would even stay open.

What would happen? Would the district have to send a certain number of students to Colorado Springs schools, which were a half-hour drive away at the very least? It was one of the biggest disappointments I have ever gone through, and it was the first time a “political” event really had an effect on me. Politics did not seem so distant anymore—something I could safely watch on TV and forget about as soon as I changed the channel. They had a definite impact on my own life.

What is more, I got to see people’s reasons for voting down the tax increase. Woodland Park is home to a lot of retirees with no kids of their own. But there is also a lot of wealth in the town. Could people not afford to pay a slightly higher property tax to make a big difference in education? Apparently this was too big of an incursion—on individual bank accounts, on “freedom,” on who knows what.

Someone even had the gall to write in to the local newspaper about Woodland Park’s “pot-smoking” youth not deserving better schools. Did it even occur to that person that the equation could be reversed; that the lack of emphasis on education might cause the pot smoking and delinquency? I was appalled. The writer said he did not want his own property funding school renovations for students who would turn out worthless anyway.

I realize that many of you might think Woodland Park is an all-around backwards town. It is “conservative,” not very forward-thinking, etc. The failure of the school bond issue should not have surprised me, you say. But if you think this was an isolated incident, you are wrong. It’s part of a state- and nationwide trend that has been going on for years.

In Colorado, the TABOR amendment—the Taxpayer’s Bill of Rights—caps the state’s revenues to what it collected the year before (<http://www.ncsl.org/programs/fiscal/taborpts.htm>). TABOR allows for percentage increases in revenue that correspond to inflation or population growth in the state. However, the state’s overall economic growth has slowed.

Most importantly, TABOR does not account for economic recessions. In a year following a recession, it still limits the state to the revenue that it collected during the economic downturn. This is the amendment’s most crippling—and most reviled—feature. TABOR is also responsible for other restrictions on tax increases, and was the reason my school district had to run the bond issue past stingy voters in the first place.

The result? Colorado has some very severe budget problems now. There is limited funding for basic things like highway repairs. In spite of all this, the emphasis continues to rest on “taxpayer’s rights.”

Who says taxpayers need more rights than they have already got? Every time there is an election, candidates try to accuse their opponents of supporting

tax increases. As if tax increases would not be a good thing at this point. Do we not need roads anymore? Do we not need police and fire departments? Do we not need schools?

I think many Americans live under the illusion that things would get along fine with no government or infrastructure whatsoever. They do not fully realize how much of our “quality of life” comes from the government and the taxes it receives. When the Woodland Park School District bond issue was turned down in my sophomore year of high school, I felt the consequences of this attitude firsthand.

Like I said, it is a nationwide pattern, too. Anyone who has read Jonathan Kozol’s *Savage Inequalities* or *Shame of the Nation* knows that education is sorely underfunded and that problems with property taxation are at the root of the issue. This summer, the Minnesota bridge collapse was a jarring reminder that our infrastructure is literally crumbling in places. Many other bridges are in need of repair or outright replacement. If tax increases are not passed, where will the money come from?

According to last week’s *Time* magazine, states are beginning to privatize their highways (“They Really Do Own the Road,” Oct. 29 issue). This means that private companies will build, repair, or add new lanes to existing highways in exchange for the right to charge tolls for very long periods of time—say, 75 or 99 years. The rates can get quite high.

I do not know about you, but I would avoid those roads. I would much rather pay a gas tax that would go directly to the state or federal government, not into some investment banker’s pocket. My dad says that the privately funded “express lanes” in LA are almost totally empty—all the traffic stays in the other lanes, and the congestion problem has not been solved.

I really don’t think privatization is the answer. Why can’t we just increase taxes by the small percentages that would really solve these issues? We might also stop pouring cash into the military-industrial complex and quit sending troops into the Middle East.

In Woodland Park, the school district’s bond issue passed the year after it was turned down—after much debate, wrangling, and pleading. Construction started in my senior year, but I did not really get to enjoy the new building before I graduated. Now the school is an entirely different place, and the renovations have gone hand-in-hand with other beneficial changes.

If only voters had agreed to the tax increases when the need first became apparent. Then I, along with thousands of other students, could have had a very different educational experience. I hope people reconsider these issues as the 2008 elections approach and the debates heat up.

Someone even had the gall to write in to the local newspaper about Woodland Park’s “pot-smoking” youth not deserving better schools.

How to choose between two historic underdogs?

Rooting against Red Sox in World Series seems ironic

EMMA CALABRESE STAFF WRITER

As the World Series approached during the past few weeks, I felt a definite sense of confusion. I was rooting for the Rockies, of course. My only impression of them up to this point, based on the jeers and scorn of boys I have known ever since kindergarten, was that the Rockies “suck.” It was refreshing to see that change so completely in the course of less than a season.

But of all the teams I could have picked to go up against the Rockies in the World Series, the Red Sox would have been my last choice.

I admit to being almost embarrassingly ignorant on baseball matters, but everyone likes a good underdog, right?

The Red Sox were always that underdog for me, and when they won the World Series in 2004 I envied the fans who packed the stadium or glued themselves to their televisions. Watching the final game—with the memory of Curt Schilling’s bloody sock from the playoffs against the Yankees, the total lunar eclipse, the sense that maybe there really was a curse, and maybe it was about to be broken—I felt like an outsider or intruder. I was looking in on something that only really belonged to the fans that had been glued to their sets even when the Sox were not winning.

So I felt a little conflicted as both the Rockies and the Red Sox each won game after game in the playoffs, culminating in the final match-up between the two.

The Sox used to be David; now they’re Goliath.

The Sox used to be David; now they were Goliath.

Again, I was on the outside looking in at the tremendous anticipation, fervor, and enthusiasm exuded by my friends and family. The Rockies were finally good and they finally had a shot. Finally, the Rockies did not suck, and that was enough to make me forget about the Red Sox altogether.

So, in my mind—completely uneducated in baseball lingo or history, save for a few iconic moments and people—the Red Sox became the Yankees, and the Rockies became the Red Sox. The delirious excitement of those around me was contagious in the same way that it was back in 2004, and once again I envied those fans who had stuck it out this far, who had really earned the chance they had now through years of loyalty in the face of the team’s seeming incompetence.

I was disappointed that the Rockies did not win the World Series this year; my disappointment is, I am sure, nothing to that of other, better, fans. I regretted not jumping on the Red Sox bandwagon a little earlier back in 2004, but this year I felt a little lucky to have avoided the heartache felt by Rockies fans across Colorado on Sunday.

Still, though, I cannot help feeling that maybe the heartache is worth it. In the end, losing does not cancel out the ecstatic disbelief we felt as our team did something that we never thought they could do. I saw it in 2004, and I saw it again over the past few weeks: the excitement comes with the anticipation, and that excitement is not lost in defeat.

AASU celebrates multiculturalism with tea and food

RAKHI VORIA GUEST WRITER

The mission of Asian American Student Union (AASU) is to provide representation and advocacy for the Asian American community at Colorado College. We help promote pride and spread awareness by educating the campus about Asian heritage and culture through various events and activities.

Despite the popular misconception, AASU is open to anyone and everyone interested in learning about and preserving Asian culture, regardless of ethnicity or race. As a group, our activities range from discussing important matters facing Asians all over the world today to planning campus-wide social events to educate and unify the Colorado College community about Asian culture. Just this past weekend, we had a taste of Vietnam when we went to Lemongrass together, a Vietnamese restaurant located on Academy Blvd.

Two of our most recent events include bringing “boba” tea to campus and having an Eggroll Fundraiser.

In partnership with South Asian Student Awareness (SASA) and Coffee & Tea Zone, AASU brought boba tea, commonly known as bubble tea, to Colorado College on Monday, October 8. Boba tea is made with milk, tea, and a variety of flavors. The drink originated in Taiwan but is now popular all over the Asian continent, primarily China, Korea, Thailand, Vietnam, and Singapore.

Members of AASU and SASA handed out free samples of several flavors of boba tea in Worner Center, all of which were donated by Coffee & Tea Zone. The purpose of this event was to promote our group on campus, as well as the name of a local business, while allowing Colorado College students the opportunity to try a piece of popular Asian culture. If anybody missed this great event and would still like to try a

taste of this popular Asian drink, Coffee & Tea Zone is located in downtown Colorado Springs on 25 N. Tejon Street, a popular spot just a few blocks from Colorado College.

On October 31, the Glass House hosted a multicultural haunted house open to the public to diverge cultures and celebrate Halloween! The event was open to people of all ages. On October 15, AASU members held their first ever Eggroll Fundraiser to raise money to buy Asian candy for the haunted house. The eggrolls were made from scratch by AASU members and were sold for a dollar each in Tutt Library.

With the help of Colorado College students and faculty, AASU was able to earn \$97 through the Eggroll Fundraiser, and this money helped the Glass House with their haunted house. (A very special thank you to Nguyen Nguyen and her mother for helping put on such a successful Eggroll Fundraiser!)

AASU has many upcoming events planned for the rest of the semester, specifically our Asian Film Festival Week. Every evening, AASU will have a nightly showing of an Asian-related film so that students can take a few hours each night to simply relax, while simultaneously emerging themselves in the Asian culture. Because AASU is still in the process of organizing the event, we ask students and staff for their suggestions on any appropriate Asian film they would like to have shown at Colorado College, and we will do our best to provide your selections. Suggestions can range anywhere from *Mulan* to *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* to even an actual Asian film with subtitles. Please feel free to provide us with any feedback on this event.

AASU is always looking to expand and diversify its members and the Colorado College campus in general. If you would like to be a part of this multicultural event to promote Asian awareness, please feel free to contact us or simply show up at the weekly meetings! Meetings are upstairs in Worner Center every Thursday at 5 p.m., and usually last about 30 minutes.

Two of our most recent events include bringing “boba” tea to campus and having an Eggroll Fundraiser.

The green hue taking over campus interest

MEREDITH BUSH & JESS GRINGOLD GUEST WRITERS

Lately we can’t help but notice the green buzz on campus. We are truly impressed with the student body’s mobilization for the environment, and we are full supporters.

However, somewhere in the midst of all the greenness, student activism on other issues has seemed to drop out. As co-leaders of VOX, Voices for Planned Parenthood, we have struggled to make reproductive rights and sexual education important issues on campus. At our last event, where only one non-VOX member showed up, we joked that if we could just put “green” in front of our events perhaps more students would show up.

It is true that unwanted pregnancy occurs more often among low-income women.

It is true that health insecurity is not a worry of many liberal arts college students.

Does this mean that we should just ignore these issues and solely focus on the things that seem to most directly affect us?

Of course we can see how everyone is going to suffer if the air we breathe is no longer clean or if the food we eat is hurting our health. However, according to a study released by the University of North Carolina, one in two sexually active college students will get an STD by the time they’re 25. This does directly affect you.

But even if it didn’t, don’t we have an obligation as the privileged college students that we are to work for the health and security of those less fortunate than us? And maybe—just maybe—it could even be “green” to do so. When Bill McKibben spoke on our campus in September, he discussed the importance of community, conversations, and family dinners to the strength of the green movement. What is at the heart of a community? Health. Without our health, we are nothing.

When reproductive health (birth control, pap smears, STD testing, abortions) is accessible and affordable for women, there are likely to be less unwanted children. Fewer unwanted children mean fewer unstable families in unstable communities. Fewer unwanted children mean less consumption and less pollution.

It is reducing our consumption that will truly protect the planet. Just because you ride a bicycle around campus, it does not validate the ownership of an SUV. Buying individually packaged organic food products is not any sort of an improvement.

The United Nations estimates that we will have to accommodate for 2.5 billion additional people between 2007 and 2050. We seem to have shut a blind eye to the population bomb, instead focusing attention (although not underserved) on abnormal weather patterns and the treatises of politicians with no real background in climate change. Starting at the lowest level, right here, we must shift the paradigm, and bring reproductive health and family planning to the forefront of all environmental discussions.

Access to health care is a green issue. The green movement is a health care issue. These are both very political subjects. The prevention of unintended pregnancy is the cause that should unite all activists on our campus.

According to a study released by the University of North Carolina, one in two sexually active college students will get an STD by the time they’re twenty-five.

"Bikes and Crosswalks Do Not Mix"

Collision with car throws student 45 ft., results in head injuries

DAN ANTHONY, NEWS, P.2

PLUS

Wildfires in southern California: the CC connection _____ JOEL MINOR, NEWS, P.4

Four parts produce aesthetic whole in Webley quartet _____ DANIELLE DUBLER, SCENE, P.8

Aesop Rock: Frenzy at the Black Sheep _____ ARI MARGOLIS, SCENE, P.8

Consequences of low-tax bias a nation-wide problem _____ BRENNA SWIFT, COMMENT & DEBATE, P.10

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Students should submit proposals to the dean's office by the second Friday of every block. Up to \$2,000 can be awarded for each proposal.

For more information and applications, see the dean of the college Web site at <http://www.coloradocollege.edu/resources/dean/ventureGrants.asp> or contact Rita Zook at (719) 389-6686 or rzook@coloradocollege.edu