THE SABER

Cougar Memes
Behind the Scenes

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With Columbus State’s soccer team coming off a 22-3-1 season, it’d be fair to say they had a good year. As of Sept. 8 Lady Cougar’s Soccer is ranked number one in the country. To most people the status of being number one so early on would be ego boosting, but to Coach Jay Entlich it doesn’t hold much weight. “It’s so early in the season and we’re such a grounded team, really in the end is when we want to be #1.”

He likens it to college football. “Nothing matters if you don’t win the BCS bowl,” he said. With nine freshmen and two trans-
This October, the inaugural Way Down Film Festival (Wdff) kicks off on the main stage of the Springer Opera House. Founders Stacy Cunningham, Jacy Jenkins, and Cora King are striving to infuse Columbus’ thriving art scene with an exciting new venture aimed at bringing a community together through the art of film.

Ticket prices start at $75 for the VIP pass for all events and screenings, $45 for access to all the screenings and some events, and $10 per event or screening entry. The festival will be held October 21 and October 22.

The WDFF boasts a lineup of short films of many different genres, and will include Q&A sessions with the filmmakers at the conclusion of each viewing. Audiences will have the chance to learn more about the people and ideas behind the films, as well as the effort involved in crafting them.

The founders also want to showcase the work of student filmmakers and provide them with an avenue to share their films with the general community. They hope to eventually partner with Columbus State University and get students more directly involved.

The founders of the Way Down Film Festival have envisioned a new way for the Columbus community to draw in talent from the city’s surrounding areas. “My parents live in Columbus, so I knew that I wanted to be here in the hotspot of filmmaking,” said Stacy Cunningham. “I was able to connect with Cora and Jacy after doing some research of who here had the pulse on culture and art, so after I met them we realized one thing that was lacking here in Columbus was a really cool film festival.” Cunningham has extensive experience in the entertainment industry with a history in film, television, and theater.

Jacy Jenkins and Cora King run the website Electric City Life, which serves as a doorway into local culture. They are active members in the community with an interest in adding to the city’s downtown charm.

“The film academy just came here to Columbus. The Springer and CSU decided to join forces,” said King. “What better way to form an event to celebrate our budding filmmakers and our film enthusiasts and really get the community on board with just celebrating filmmakers and what it takes to create a film.”

In addition to screenings, events will include: a VIP sunset champagne reception, morning filmmaker coffee hour, network after parties, and a closing night awards ceremony gala. The festival will award one grand prize of $2500 for best overall film and six $250 prizes to best directing, best cinematography, an audience award, and other categories. For additional information about the Way Down Film Festival, visit waydownfilm.com.

If you would like to volunteer to support Columbus’s first film festival, you can email contact@waydownfilm.com.

Lady Cougars have started the season off well with a 4-1 record. CSU’s Peach Belt Conference opener was a victory (7-0) against USC Aiken for military appreciation day where CSU wore camo jerseys to auction off and raise money for Fort Benning’s MWR program.

Senior players Mandy Janowitz, Maylyn Parsons, and Taylor Marks have played all four years for CSU and have watched the team grow in size and leadership, and they all share the opinion voiced by Marks that “all that matters is when we’re number one at the end of the year. It just puts a bigger target on our back, too.”

In order to hold the players to last year’s standard, Coach Entlich makes sure “every day is a competition between the team for playing time, starting spots, [who’s] first off the bench, and [placement on the] travel roster.” It keeps them on their toes to play at their best.

The goal is to be a championship team, and Coach Entlich and the ladies are working hard to achieve that.
Columbus is divided. From the historic mansions in downtown Columbus to the red brick suburbs of Oakland Park, homeowners’ yards are sprouting signs asking you to either “Keep the Freeze” or “Thaw the Freeze.”

But what is the Freeze, and why is it suddenly such a big deal? The answer is important (yes, even to students), because the outcome of this year’s vote on whether it stays or goes could determine the future of Columbus.

First, we have to get some background information out of the way. All homeowners in Columbus pay a mandatory yearly tax on the value of their homes.

The city calculates this tax using the following equation:

\[ \text{Property tax} = \text{millage rate} \times (\text{assessment rate} \times \text{FMV} - \text{exemptions}) \]

A millage rate is the amount per $1,000 used to determine taxes on a property. For example, if the city applies a millage rate of 10.00, the taxpayer will pay $10 on every $1,000 of property that he owns.

The assessment rate is the amount of property value that is taxable by the city. Columbus’ assessment rate is 40 percent, and so for a house worth exactly $100,000, the city is allowed to collect taxes on 40 percent of $100,000. The fair market value (FMV) is just that—current value of the property. Finally, the homestead exemption is a tax break provided to homeowners by the city.

Columbus has control over two parts of this equation—the millage rate and the homestead exemption. The State of Georgia controls the assessment rate and independent agents assess the fair market value.

Today, property assessors are heavily regulated, but it wasn’t always this way. Aggressive property appraisers rapidly boosted the value of properties throughout the 1960s, which caused homeowners to pay more and more in taxes, year after year.

Homeowners felt cheated, so they passed the Freeze as a defense against future tax spikes. The Freeze permanently fixes a homeowner’s annual property tax rate at the time of purchase. Once you buy a house, you pay the same amount of property tax on it each year regardless of how much your house grows or lessens in value. It remains in place today.

This election, Columbus residents will vote on whether to keep the Freeze or “thaw” it. Thawing it would allow those who have the Freeze to keep it until they move to another house. After that, the property would be on a free market system. New citizens would forego the Freeze entirely.

Mayor Teresa Tomlinson, a strong supporter of the Thaw, explains the Freeze this way: “You can buy a house exactly like your neighbors. Same size, same footprint, but your property taxes can be thousands more simply because you bought your house at a later date. Currently, we have homeowners paying $400 on $800,000 homes. People see these inequities and are discouraged from buying property, and discouraged from moving to Columbus in general.”

Mayor Tomlinson says that this is the reason Columbus’s population growth has been stagnant since the 1970s. Without new people bringing jobs, businesses, and families to Columbus, it will be difficult for the city to grow and evolve. Whether that stagnation is due to the Freeze is not 100 percent clear, but the U.S. Census Bureau estimates that between 1970 and 2012, the city’s population grew by about 25,000. That number pales in comparison with similarly sized cities like Athens, Huntsville, Rome and Augusta, which all saw population increases of more than 25 percent in the last 40 years. Some of those cities don’t even have an interstate. None of them have a property tax freeze.

Dr. Benjamin F. Blair, associate professor of economics and
The Mayor says that students face a big hit as well, because apartment complexes must keep rents artificially high to compensate for people paying low taxes under the Freeze.

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The advocacy group Citizens to Keep the Freeze says that any attempt to remove the Freeze is merely a cash grab from a greedy city government that cannot budget properly. “Instead of bemoaning the supposed negative effects of the Freeze, we should be promoting to every prospective homeowner the benefits of protection from increased taxation and one of the highest homestead exemptions in the state,” says a statement on their website. “The new homeowner who has stretched his budget to the limit to afford a home has the protection and peace of mind of knowing that his tax assessment will not be raised as long as he occupies the home.”

Mary Sue Polleys, a political advocate for Keep the Freeze and longstanding Columbus resident, says that the constitutionality of the Freeze implies its fairness. “The U.S. Supreme Court upheld [the Freeze] as constitutional in 1992 and again in 2003... because, it treats every single home buyer the same,” Polleys said. Polleys, along with many other supporters, believes that if the Freeze is thawed it will create two groups of taxpayers.

Freeze supporters argue that the courts would rule a dual-tax system unconstitutional, and consequently take away the benefits of the Freeze for everybody in favor of the new free-market system. They believe that if this happened, it would put the livelihoods of hundreds of people living on fixed-incomes in jeopardy.

Mayor Tomlinson, along with the Columbus Chamber of Commerce and City Councilor Walker Garett, says that there is no danger of the Thaw being challenged or struck in court.

Voters will have the opportunity to decide for themselves in November. Until then, concerned citizens may find more information at www.thawthefreeze.com and www.keepthefreeze.com.
Enter the world of performing and visual arts. This is a place of contrasts, where on one hand students are learning to build their wild creative side, while on the other they’re learning the iron rules of their art. RiverPark campus is chock full of students who devote their lives to bringing their art to life, spending inordinate amounts of time practicing, perfecting, and polishing. What makes their experience different?

The Schwob School of Music is a big deal. If you walk its hallways, you’re likely to run into any number of successful professors and students, people who have performed in major cities and venues, or mastered some obscenely difficult piece of music. There’s nothing quite like the sight of a hallway crowded with young adults carrying expensive collections of wood and metal and hair.

Getting into the Schwob isn’t a casual affair. After applying to CSU, there’s a second audition, a performance in front of a faculty panel on campus or by video for international students. Schwob Director Scott Harris outlined what is already expected at that time in terms of proficiency.

“Typically a musician has been performing, taking lessons, and thinking about majoring in music for many years before they come to college, so it’s almost a given that the level of performance expected at the auditions is very high,” said Harris. “The expectations vary; for instance, a prospective voice major needs to demonstrate the ability to handle singing in different languages, and an instrumentalist may need to read music at sight as part of the audition.”

There are numerous areas to specialize in at the Schwob, including voice, strings, percussion, brass, woodwind, or piano, in performance or education. Currently the big degrees are in Music, Music Performance, or Music Education, along with graduate degrees - Master of Music in Performance or Music Education.

While students are learning core skills such as sight reading music and ear training, they’re also busy balancing performances, rehearsals, competitions, weekly group studio classes, individual lessons, and mandatory concert attendance. Education majors are also observing and working in K-12 classrooms. “Students are expected to practice several hours every day; that can range from a couple of hours to seven or eight hours a day,” added Harris. “The best students are saturated with music that allows them to be deliberate in their practice.”

Harris says that the experience is tough, but rewarding. “Everyone who’s gone to music school knows that the schedule can be simultaneously hectic and exhilarating. It’s worth it because students get to do what they love…and students are amazingly supportive of each other.”

“It’s the only way any of us survive the busy music student life. We have to lean on each other for encouragement to persevere,” said Stephen Clayton, a senior studying trombone. “Even though the music school is competitive by nature, there is a lot of that mutual encouragement and persevering because we’re all in it together.”

So is there a difference between the experiences of music students and others? “Probably the biggest difference is that they arrive on campus having known for years that they wanted to major in music, and having worked hard to achieve that goal while also meeting all the academic requirements to go to college,” said Harris. “For many students college represents the beginning of the process of determining where your passions will direct you, but for music majors that determination has already happened.”

“A lot of the drive of my success and progress as a musician is not about external expectations, but internal ones. I expect myself to deliver at a professional level every time I put the trombone up to my face.”

-Stephen Clayton, music performance
Though a small program, you won’t find a group of people who enjoy what they study more than the students in the art school. What’s more, the program is one of the most open of all the artistic programs offered at CSU, where people from all walks of life can express their creativity.

Art Department Chair Joe Sanders explained that the program does not have a portfolio requirement, and utilizes the same criteria CSU as a whole uses for entering students. “We accept anyone into the art department who is accepted by CSU. We feel that everyone has the potential to be creative, to develop skills in scholarly research, and to be a productive member of society, and so we have an open door policy.”

Having found a calling for art, students come into the program from numerous majors and during different points in their academic careers. Many take non-major classes and then choose to pursue art, while others are transfer and military students, making the program very diverse.

Students have many opportunities in the program to grow independent of their studies. For example, convocation is a requirement of all students; it’s taken every year and four are required to graduate. Convocations disseminate information about topics such as studying abroad and visiting artists, and they also showcase guest speakers.

“One of the requirements of the convocation class is that the students attend either lectures or exhibition receptions or other types of presentations that are part of the arts event calendar. The calendar consists of lectures, exhibitions, receptions, films, and quite a lot of things that are geared both toward the students and oftentimes the community at large,” said Sanders. This creates a value-added component to the students’ education where they can learn how other artists or scholars approach their research, and develop their own skills by exposure.

Other opportunities for students include meeting with visiting artists, internships with and without credit, studio work, volunteering, and research. “Those students that work with the faculty in the technical internships learn how to manage studio spaces, they may get involved in ordering supplies, understand what’s needed in that space and how those supplies are consumed, how to maintain the equipment properly, [and] how to maintain the studio properly. They also contribute as assistants in faculty led demonstrations and workshops,” said Sanders.

Other activities include large events students can volunteer at such as the All State Art Symposium. Students can sit at tables, greet guests, lead vendor tables and the like. Students can also work with professionals in the field of conservation, as they did with the Pasaquan exhibition. These are all great opportunities for building resumes. “It really helps to accelerate their careers and allows them to be more competitive both in the job market and also if they’re applying for graduate school,” said Sanders.

Part of what makes the art program so unique is the amount of hours students are spending in their classrooms and art facilities. Lectures are an hour and fifteen minutes, but studio classes are two and a half hours, and students often stay much longer to work on projects. Depending on the ambition and scope of a project, says Sanders, a student is “probably putting in anywhere from five to ten hours a week per class, depending on what kind of projects they’re working on.”

In terms of expectations for students, Sanders said, “All the students on campus can really decide how hard they want to work, how much they want to apply themselves to their studies. We encourage our students to apply themselves pretty strongly to their studies and we have a real high expectation for them in terms of what they accomplish, and we also try to stress to them that all of the effort that they’re putting in while they’re here will help them when they graduate.”

“We don’t see it necessarily as just productivity, we want them to have an overall experience on campus, and to us that’s just as important as making artwork in the studios or doing research in the library,” Sanders concluded.

“Painting is my life, and I am thankful I am able to pursue it every day. I paint to inspire and invoke thought in myself and others to think about the meanings we attribute to interactions with others and the environment.”

-Julianna Wells, art

Read Stephen, Julianna, and Amanda’s spotlights at The Saber’s website: thesaber.wix.com/thesaber
It’s amazingly competitive, and taken very seriously. The theatre department at CSU is an intricate and intimate community, where students can be found working on every part of production, from the backstage shadows of sound, lighting and design, to the spotlight on stage.

To enter the theatre program, all students have to audition, regardless of degree. Performance majors will do a traditional acting audition, while someone in design will have an interview and portfolio review.

Theatre Department Chair Larry Dooley said, “A majority of students have a performance background, so that tends to be more competitive,” adding that “We also want students who will be successful in all of their university studies, so we typically look for at least a 3.0 GPA out of high school. That is not a hard-and-fast rule, but it is a general expectation. Students who do not maintain at least a 2.75 GPA in the CSU Theatre classes are put on academic probation and must raise that up before they can participate in the production program.”

As with the other RiverPark programs, there is a convocation class requirement that involves attending department meetings and performances. Students also have to “see a performance of each of our shows and they are also required to attend auditions that other students prepare for national and regional competitions,” said Dooley. There are also opportunities for students to take private voice lessons and to sign up for faculty coaching sessions to get individual feedback.

As would be expected, there is a large time commitment for students cast in plays, with rehearsals five or six days per week. Interestingly, most of the theatre classes have a lab element. “Acting students have to rehearse with scene partners and Design/Tech students have to work on their projects. If a student is acting or designing a show, there are weekly production meetings as well,” said Dooley.

According to Dooley, even students who are not cast in shows or designing one are rarely idle. They tend to seek out other projects, including one-acts, directing scenes, and independent projects. Plus, Dooley said, “Like other students, they have to take care of their non-theatre classes. Homework can be a challenge because of our productions, so they usually have to look for gaps in the day for that.”

In the midst of this, the competitive atmosphere heightens the experience. “They are competitive, and they have to be competitive to succeed. However, the more successful students are competitive like members of an Olympic team are competitive. You want to succeed, but you want the whole team, or department, to thrive as well. You want to come out of a successful program. If someone starts to believe that ‘your failure is my success,’ that ends up hurting them in the long run. No one wants to work with those folks, and theatre is a very small world.

“We have great students. It’s often said that you should not pursue theatre unless you simply cannot think of another option. You have to be driven to deal with all the demands it presents. Not all of our students will pursue theatre for the rest of their careers, but the work ethic, collaboration, creativity, and responsibility they develop here will help them in whatever they choose to do in life.”

“Watching and listening to the audience respond to my work in such a positive way was the most satisfying moment for me. I was proud of my director, the great cast, the incredibly talented designers, and I was even proud of the audience for being open to the story I was telling.”

-Amanda Black, theatre
CSU DOESN’T NEED A FOOTBALL TEAM

It’s time to support the top-ranked sports we already have

Football season is upon us, but most students will spend this fall cheering on the Bulldogs and Tigers rather than the Cougars. Columbus State University doesn’t have an NCAA football team, though it’s fair to say that many students would like one. And if we really wanted to, we could get one.

But that’s not the point. The important question is not whether we can get a football team here at CSU, but if we should.

When someone mentions the University of Georgia, the first thing that comes to mind is not, “Oh they have a fabulous law school there.” The people with flags waving in their yards and decals on their trucks aren’t boasting about how stellar UGA academics are. Their love and support for the school flourishes because of the powerhouse of their football team.

What does a 45-year-old alumni have in common with an 18-year-old first-year student? Football. They may have studied different things and walked different halls at the school, and the school may have been changed or renovated since, but the traditional fight song or chant will always remain the same. College sports bring even the most unlikely people together. It even bonds those who have never taken a college class at all.

College football has the ability to unite different people from all walks of life through tradition. From the “Script Ohio” band formation at Ohio State University to the Florida Gator hand chomp, all of these traditions have been passed down from generation to generation and will continue to live on. Now, this doesn’t mean that one cannot take pride in their school and all the things their institution has to offer. Football on a college campus, however, has the ability to bring out the love in everyone, all united around one thing. It’s a great thing to have.

But there is a football team here at CSU. It is not a Division One team or even a team affiliated with the NCAA at all- it is a club team. But it is our team. The team practices regularly on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday at seven on the intramural field. They accept walk-on players who would like to be a part of the organization- and they are a winning organization that deserves our support.

If CSU were to transition into a “real” football team, the cost would come out of student pockets. Valdosta State University is one of a few schools in Georgia that is about the same size as CSU, but it has a football team. Full time students that live on campus with a meal plan at VSU are paying $7,105 per semester. Full time students living on campus with a meal plan at CSU are paying around $5,793 per semester. Now, not all of that difference is because of the football program, but it’s definitely a factor. Would that extra cost really be worth a stadium and a few months of excitement?

Todd Reeser, director of athletics, believes that supporting school athletics is “where you build your pride for your university.” Would an NCAA football team spark a wave of student involvement and support for CSU? Maybe. But there’s no guarantee that starting a football team will pay off. just ask Kennesaw or Georgia State.

There is nothing quite like being a part of that stadium environment, yelling and screaming for the same cause. But we could do just as well without one. There are many sports teams to take pride in and rally behind now. Reeser remarked that people are “going to come out and be a part of a winning program,” and our teams win. That includes the football team and all our other athletes. We all look for different things in the college experience, and those experiences can be the difference in “I went to CSU” or “Yeah, I went to CSU.” Getting out there and supporting our athletes is a huge step to getting there.

By Javere Johnson

Illustration: Kayleigh Dickson
The robo-calls began at noon, but nobody knew where the man with the gun had gone. Police rushed towards the freshman dorm where someone had allegedly been seen carrying a firearm around the building. Students locked themselves in their rooms, and frantic texts flooded in from worried parents and friends.

A few hours later, police completed their sweep. Whoever it was, if there was anyone at all, was long gone. People resumed their studies, students went back to their rooms, and everyone relaxed. The incident was over.

Then, they waited for Cougar Memes to drop some dank posts about it.

The Cougar Memes page is one of hundreds of school-themed meme pages that have sprung up on Facebook in the last few years. Georgia College has one. So do UGA and Yale. Some Columbus State Professors follow Cougar Memes. The official CSU Facebook page follows Cougar Memes (and actively participates in the comments). It’s kind of a big deal.

Josh Staples is an amiable, bearded fellow, quick with a laugh and a story. He’s a senior computer science major and the current president of Young Americans for Liberty, a student political club that discusses libertarian issues.

He’s also the founder and administrator of Cougar Memes.

“I guess I started it roughly around the beginning of fall semester last year. You may not recall, but parking was a complete nightmare,” he recalled. “I wasn’t sure where I was going to go with it. I just had one meme when I started, and I couldn’t have imagined how far it was going to go. That was the one where it was a completely jam-packed parking lot, and it said ‘Columbus State be like ‘no parking problem.”’

Indeed. The Great Parking Crisis of early 2015 was the dominant topic of discussion around campus for several months. Staples’s meme was his attempt to tap into that frustration in a humorous way. “It was how I felt, and at that time I was kind of scared of retribution. [That’s why] I started Cougar Memes, to anonymously post memes making fun of the school.”

That original post blazed through social media. Cougar Memes netted hundreds of new “likes” within days. People began submitting their own memes, adding their own rants about parking, textbook prices, and how “cougarnet” sounds suspiciously like something a little less than academic. Eventually, the page caught the eye of CSU’s official social media page, which cheekily added its own submission two days after the original.

“When they posted the meme, that was probably one of the best days of my entire college career,” said Staples with a grin. “I sent it to my mom, I posted it all over my personal Facebook page…it was just too perfect of a moment.”

Still, Staples considers it more than just silliness. In their anonymity, he says that the memes open up a dialogue with the school where students can express their thoughts, frustrations and observations without fear.

“[When CSU posted their own meme], it said OK, everybody is good in taking a joke, so that’s great. But I also have legitimacy now, I’m becoming noisy enough of a voice that the school administration is turning around and saying ‘We have to address this guy.’ It’s kind of this thing where we have a common forum for discussion.”

It hasn’t always been a smooth ride. Some of Staples’s memes have ruffled people’s feathers, and at one point he even began receiving threats against his family. He has been accused of racism and insensitivity at posting memes about crime.

“Every time we have a meme about Peachtree Mall, we do get a little bit of kickback, and I have sympathy for that,” he said. Peachtree Mall, which is directly across the street from Main Campus, was recently the site of several shootings, one of them fatal.

“The larger issue is that Peachtree Mall has a ban on firearms, so they’ve made a statement that you can’t defend yourself or your community on Peachtree Mall’s property. I think that’s
ridiculous, and worth making fun of.”

The worst wave of criticism came only a few weeks ago, in August. “That one was actually kind of interesting,” said Staples. “You may remember the South Park episode 'Trapped in the Closet.' R. Kelly was randomly showing up throughout the episode, pulling out his gun, so I took that and made it about Peachtree Mall. And you know, the fact that R. Kelly was black automatically made that meme ‘racist.”’ The post was reported so many times that Facebook flagged it for removal.

One commenter began tagging people and encouraging them to find Staples’s place of work and where he lived. “There was one person who perceived that I was making fun of people dying, and they said, ‘Hey, two shots to your dome.’ So now, it’s gotten to a point where people are advocating physical harm sometimes.”

Staples, for the most part, says that he understands that a lot of the criticism is symptomatic of larger issues that need to be discussed “It seems to me that it’s more frustration with racism in general and I just became a focus point for that,” he said. “Just look at what’s been happening over the past few years. You’ve had people in power telling people of color that they need to be quiet and put up with oppression. And we’ve pushed it down so long that many of these people feel like they can no longer have a reasonable conversation.”

Most of the controversy has since died down, and as the year goes on, Staples says that he has become more preoccupied with finding a replacement to run the page when he graduates. “I have two classes on campus next semester, so my involvement on campus is about to go way down, and I can’t stay connected enough to run a memes page semester-round when I don’t know what’s going on.”

He says he is thinking about tapping one of his regular contributors to take over the page full time. “One thing I’m huge about with Cougar Memes is that I try to keep as many user submissions in there as possible, it’s very democratic like that. It’s possible that I might just get one of the comment submitters to take over the page. I’m throwing a lot of ideas around.”

Until then, he’s still making sure to have fun. “Anything from making the memes to watching people’s reactions to it, I love it. It’s probably weird, and maybe a lot of people will be changing their privacy settings after they read this, but I love clicking on the little “shares” button and seeing what the conversations are, what people are commenting and discussing.”

More discussion about things that matter to students is essential, and based on the number of hits his memes get, more people seem to be joining the discussion every week. Maybe memes will eventually become our primary method of public forum. Until then, we can at least count on Cougar Memes to keep the funny stuff coming.
Sometimes you just need to get away from Columbus. If you’re feeling a little stir-crazy, just grab a few friends and head out for a quick change of scenery. You don’t need to go all the way to PCB for a little R&R. There are mountains, beaches, rivers and small towns to be explored within a short drive from Columbus. Here are a few of adventure-filled places to visit.

Mexico Beach, Florida  
Bay County  
3 hours and 37 minutes - Driving

White sandy beaches and crystal clear waters can’t be found just anywhere. The Florida Panhandle offers many beautiful beaches, but Mexico Beach is unique. The town has remained unchanged since 1966 due to restrictions on commercialization in the area. Unlike other beach towns, the shops and restaurants are locally owned.

Their close proximity to the water allows restaurants to serve fresh fish daily, and charter boats for visitors interested in fishing are available. Sea turtle nests dot the beaches, and you may witness a bale of baby sea turtles scurry to the waves.

By Maddie Fuerte  
Photos: Scottie Declue, Maddie Fuerte
**F.D. Roosevelt State Park**  
*Pine Mountain, Georgia*  
*45 minutes - Driving*

This state park was originally built by the Civilian Conservation Corps during the Great Depression. President Roosevelt loved the area and spent most of his time in office at the Little White House in Warm Springs. His favorite picnic area was Dowdell’s Knob, the highest peak of the park.

The park offers a variety of activities. Camping is offered year-round in the campgrounds for 26 dollars a night or on the 43 miles of trails for 10 dollars a night. The Liberty Bell Pool is opened in the summer and there’s also horseback riding. You can visit the 9,049-acre state park for only a $5 daily parking pass.

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**Providence Canyon Outdoor Recreation Area**  
*Lumpkin, Georgia*  
*45 minutes - Driving*

If the Grand Canyon is too far away, Georgia’s own Little Grand Canyon is right down the road. The 150-foot-deep gullies were formed by poor farming methods in the 1800s. Guests today have access to hiking trails and camping along the ridges and inside of the gullies. As a state park, a $5 daily parking pass is required for a day full of fun. Camping in the pioneer sites ranges from $40 to $80 a night, but camping along the trail only costs $10 a night.

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**Senoia, Georgia**  
*Coweta County*  
*1 hour and 24 minutes - Driving*

Senoia, Georgia is home to several movie and TV show settings, the most popular being “The Walking Dead.”

Alexandria, a fictional community from the TV series, is a neighborhood located at the end of Main Street. Tourists flock to the community to browse the storefronts and experience the “Walking Dead” museum located beneath the gift shop offering “The Walking Dead” merchandise.

Actor Norman Reedus, better known as his crossbow-wielding character Daryl, opened Nic & Norman’s, a restaurant on Main Street, with one of the show’s makeup artists. The chic burger joint is in high demand for visitors.

In addition to the Main Street attractions, there are also tours designed to showcase various filming locations in Senoia featured in movies and television shows. For a two-hour guided tour, prices start at $25. If they’re lucky, tourists may even get a wave or “hello” from cast members on set.

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**Helen, Georgia**  
*White County*  
*3 hours and 13 minutes - Driving*

Helen, Georgia is located directly outside of Unicoi State Park. The town itself is a recreation of a Bavarian alpine village. Visitors can spend hours wandering the cobblestone streets, perusing knickknacks lining the shelves of gift shops, or find their way to Habersham Winery for a tour and tasting costing $15 per person.

If shopping isn’t what you’re looking for, Helen offers tubing on the Chattahoochee River for $8 and short hiking trails leading to scenic waterfalls. The city also hosts Oktoberfest each fall. Dining at the festival and throughout the city ranges from German food to good ole’ southern cuisine.
Netflix has really amped up its game in the entertainment sector, going from delivering DVDs by mail to becoming the biggest online streaming service in the world. As a result, the digital giant has a diverse catalog of films and shows, many of which are incredible productions. But there are a lot of awful ones too. Here are our Top 5 Worst Films on Netflix:

5. The Ridiculous Six
Adam Sandler continues to make the most out of his deal with Netflix to create more films that no one will care about.

With a movie starring Terry Crews, Adam Sandler, the alpaca from “Twilight,” Rob Schneider, the fat guy from “Lost” and Owen Wilson’s less successful brother, a lot could’ve gone wrong. A lot did go wrong. The six “brothers” are searching for their missing father, whose only success was how many times he got it in. Six times apparently.

If you’re up for watching a movie that’ll still be bad even if you watch it drunk or high, you should skip “The Ridiculous Six.”

4. The Cobbler

Apparently Hollywood will let famous people make anything. The cliché of “Take a walk in another man’s shoes” has been taken too far with Sandler’s “The Cobbler.” More than just a cautionary tale about judging others without knowing them, “The Cobbler” lets Adam Sandler save his neighborhood by stealing the plot of “Quantum Leap” in a way that only a foot fetish will allow.

Despite the mostly good cast with veterans Dustin Hoffman, Lynn Cohen and Steve Buscemi, the film flops as hard as the shoes Sandler is supposed to fix.

3. That’s My Boy

If you’ve ever eaten Taco Bell too late at night, you’re very familiar with that burning, roiling feeling in your stomach as all of those burritos scream at you to get to a toilet and let them out. That instant regret is a classic sign that you need to rethink your choices.

Adam Sandler’s “That’s My Boy” is that in film form. As far as burning piles of trash made into a movie go, “That’s My Boy” is about as close as you can get to a train wreck without actually being in one.

2. The Do-Over

If any movie title fit the film best, it’s “The Do-Over,” where they pushed through when they really should have let it die. No do-over is coming for this utter failure of a movie. There aren’t many comedies that involve faking your death as a way to get away from your wife. Even fewer involve Adam Sandler getting cancer as an actual plot device, but that’s “The Do-Over” for you.

All the movie does successfully is give the viewers their own cancer as they struggle to find a way to understand the film’s shaky premise and even shakier camera work. On a scale of 1 to vomit, “The Do-Over” scores a solid wet fart.

1. Pixels

“Pixels,” Sandler’s attempt to get rich off of the gamer crowd, basically defines the problem with Hollywood’s inability to make something truly original and successful.

Starring Pac-Man, Galaga, Space Invaders and other classic games, the movie uses its budget to absolutely shit on the source materials while pretending to honor them. The only way this movie could’ve been saved were if the titular pixels were covering up all of the plot holes that fill every Sandler movie.
Who says college classes can’t be fun, or even thrilling? Columbus State University offers a few unique classes that may capture your interest and have you running to a computer to register. Okay, maybe not running, but at least wiping your groggy eyes at 5:55 A.M. to save your spot for what could become your new favorite class.

1. Lord of the Rings (ITDS 1145)
   Are you one of those people who always thinks that the book is better than the movie? You have the opportunity to prove that theory with this class on J.R.R Tolkien’s novel “The Lord of the Rings.” You will compare major themes and narratives between the novel and films. This class will be a great way to fulfill one of your humanities course requirements over the summer.

2. Pickle Ball (PEDS 1349)
   Do you need an innovative way to motivate yourself into physical fitness? CSU offers a class in pickle ball, a fun sport that combines different aspects of tennis, badminton, and ping-pong into an indoor or outdoor activity that can be played in either singles or doubles. With this class, you will be able to knock out your physical fitness course requirement.

3. Swahili (SWAH 1101/1102)
   Have you always wanted to acquire a skill that you can brag about to all of your friends? Speaking Swahili can become your new talent. CSU offers a cool way to complete your foreign language requirement with this unique language. After taking this class, you’ll always have something to show off.

4. Paranormal Psychology (PSYC 3105)
   Have you ever found yourself wondering about the spirit world? Maybe you doubt that it exists. Maybe you are confident that it does. Whatever your stance may be, you can explore the science behind paranormal phenomena in CSU’s Pseudopsychologies and the Paranormal class. If you loved your PSYC 1101 class, take the next step into the psychology world with some paranormal activity.

5. Breaking Bad (ENGL 1102)
   Are you dreading taking that traditional English class, and being forced to read and write long essays about well-worn classics? CSU offers an English course dedicated solely to the popular television show Breaking Bad. All of your assignments (yes, even essays) and class activities will be about the meth-infused show. You will even get to watch TV in class.
Anyone who’s ever been in a long term relationship can tell you that it takes lots of work. As time stretches on and the relationship progresses, you find yourself slipping into a routine. It isn’t good or bad; it’s just something familiar and constant. Go to work, go to school, go home. Girlfriend comes over. She spends the night. You go to work in the morning. The cycle repeats itself.

After a year and some months together, I went with my girlfriend to the airport, telling myself it’s just three months. It was supposed to make me feel better about our time apart, but three months is a long time, no matter what anyone says. It’s three full moons, twelve weeks, or 94 days.

As the time got closer to her departure, things changed from dates and getting closer and talking all the time to a frantic rush to do as many things together until both of us were exhausted. I felt like I wasn’t good enough because things were happening so quickly and I couldn’t keep up, but I love her, so of course I kept trying. I was so tired that I didn’t want to go out anymore. Now, as if out of nowhere, she’s gone. For three months.

We both felt a change happening, or that one was bound to happen. Eventually, there were only a few days left and while we tried to make every day special, now we’re stuck thinking about the next few months. All we had left was laying in bed together, holding hands and wondering how this was going to play out until December.

Calling internationally still costs you with an unlimited plan, so you have to use apps like Facebook messenger and WhatsApp to communicate for free. Now we’re on Skype every night, and we text all day and I want to believe everything’s going to be just fine. Unfortunately, that confidence doesn’t last. By this point, just hearing her voice is almost too much. I miss her, and it feels like my heart’s going to burst through my chest at any moment. After a day of classes and work and missing her, even just a few minutes together online makes it all worth it.

Distance makes it hard to be sure that what I’m trying to do is working, even if it has to work, for both of our sakes. Mostly though, I’m not sure how long we’ll be able to cope without seeing each other every day.

For anyone who’s been in a long term relationship, distance can be the ultimate test. You don’t get to see them every day and you never know if the time will be right on both ends to call for more than a few minutes. Each second seems precious.

The hardest part of making a long distance relationship work is patience. You have to remember that the one you love is coming back.
I’ve taken the long route to getting my college degree. When I first started college, just out of high school, I had grand aspirations for the immediate future. My classmates and I bantered and dabbled in the creation of our own versions of words. We would say phrases such as “word up” or “let’s bounce” each day with good cheer.

Life happened and years later I’m still trying to get my bachelor’s degree in English and Spanish, but now I’m considered a nontraditional student. This time, I’m a decade older than my peers and possibly a bit out of touch with youth culture. My use of colloquialisms from the 1990s and early 2000s confuses young students.

For the most part, I’ve remained knowledgeable about new speech trends. The age gap hasn’t caused any major issues outside of minor glitches, but speaking with younger students can come with new dialectical challenges. Only one problem exists that confounds me to no end—new-fangled variations of the English language “slang.”

One of the first words I’ve heard upon returning to college was “ham.” I thought they were talking about getting a sandwich. Everyone seemed really angry about said ham. Imagine my surprise when I discovered that the use of the popular deli meat in conversations cleverly disguised a NSFW phrase of which I am loathe to repeat. At least I didn’t say I would “go ham” to one of my classmates in an attempt at camaraderie. That probably would have ended badly.

The language barrier doesn’t end there. Words like tea, shade, and extra have also gained a secret meaning that eluded me up until now. “Tea” is used in place of the word gossip. To spill “tea” is to, in essence, spill the beans and inform the listener about the dastardly deeds of another.

“Shade” refers to behavior that can be construed as disrespectful by the recipient of disregard. “Extra” is one of the words that I find the most interesting. Someone that is overly dramatic in their speech or actions can be labeled using this term.

One of these days I’ll figure out a way to communicate using this new vernacular. Maybe I should go get a “ham” sandwich with “extra” mayo and then eat my sandwich in the “shade” while I sip a glass of “tea.”
With exams around the corner and the days becoming shorter, many students are struggling to find the time to study or finish all of their homework. In order to catch up on everything they’ve missed, they resort to pulling an all-nighter. It’s not the healthiest option, but sometimes it’s necessary. Here are a few quick tips for successfully pulling it off.

**Manage Your Chamber of Study**

In order to stay bright-eyed and bushy-tailed, you’ll need to keep your room brightly lit. According to the National Sleep Foundation, darkness produces melatonin, the hormone that makes us tired, so avoiding dark rooms will help prevent exhaustion early in the night.

Don’t let yourself get too comfortable, or you may be lulled to sleep. In order to stay alert, a change of scenery may be necessary throughout the night. Once things start to get stale you’ll need to find a new area to study in. After a few hours studying in your bedroom, try working in the living room or kitchen to spice things up.

**Your Body Is A Temple**

Unlike electronics, humans can’t recharge with a cord. Our power systems require maintenance, and once you’ve decided to pull an all-nighter your battery will die quickly. In order to manage your body’s reaction to sleep deprivation, you will need to take some precautions to keep yourself awake and working.

To start the night, take a nap to recharge and improve your mood. Studies from Paris Descartes University show that the optimum nap time is 10 to 15 minutes, as your mind will become more alert and suffer from fewer side effects of sleep deprivation.

As the night goes on, you will battle drowsiness. If taking a nap doesn’t help, try exercising. According to a study from the Journal of Clinical Endocrinology and Metabolism, taking a 20-minute break every few hours to exercise can keep you energized. If heavy exercise isn’t your forte, that’s okay. Light exercise like walking around the neighborhood or doing some yoga poses will have the same effect.

**Arm Yourself with Sustenance**

If you think coffee and other highly caffeinated drinks are the key to a successful all-nighter, think again. Caffeine is often the downfall of students attempting marathon study sessions. Drinking too much coffee might keep you up for a little while, but is a sure-fire way to crash and burn in the long run. The best tip for staying awake is to avoid caffeine. Instead of chugging cappuccinos, try ice water.

You don’t need to cut caffeine out completely. If you just have one or two cups of coffee throughout the night, with ice water thrown in between each cup, the crash will be less detrimental.

Since you’re staying up all night, you’re definitely prone to getting the late night munchies. Avoid obvious go-to snacks like candy and other sweets, which will result in another crash. Light proteins like beef jerky, goat cheese, fruit or yogurt will get you through the night.

By Taylor White
Illustration by Madi Steele
Pull an All-Nighter

work, work, work, work, work!

"mumble mumble~"
DIRT, DIRT, DIRT
DIRT, DIRT, DIRT~

Buzz

With no headphone jack, they could have at least included wireless charging...

At least then I could charge and listen at the same time~

OH!

IT'S THAT CUTE GUY AGAIN.

MAYBE...

I SHOULD SAY SOMETHING.
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