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April 16, 2008 Vol. 23, Issue 13

I WEAR MY GREEN ON MY SLEEVE

Being good to Mother Earth rules. Check out how one ASU student is doing her part to make recycling on campus fashionable and feasible.

A GIFT FROM NINA

At 31, Mary Manning was unsure of her life’s direction. Then, thanks to the Nina Scholars program, she received a chance to earn her degree while raising her newly adopted son.

BEAUTY AND THE UGGO

Ever wondered why the hot girl was paired up with an ugly dude? A new study has the answer.

ETC.

Are your parents acting all crazy-like lately? We’ve got the Top 5 signs they might be going through a midlife crisis.

OUT

We went to Frank and Lupe’s came with high expectations, but they let us way down.

REVIEW

We’re tired of spending so much money on textbooks. Check out the Web site that lets you rent them for a lot less.

SOUND

His girlfriend may not like his music, but singer-songwriter Austin Gibbs from Mesa is becoming a Valley sensation.

CLOTH

Head to a local consignment shop for your high-quality but discounted fashion finds.

HOT SPOT

We all love a good dive bar. Check out the funkiest ones around campus that win our seal of approval.

GAME

Pool is more than just a drunken bar game to these guys. Meet the masters of the Sun Devils Billiards Team.

FACES

Tech-support man by day, ninja by night. Check out the secret, badass life of ASU employee Jason Wulf.
Have a story idea for us to check out? Did we screw something up or do something well? Got some general bitchin’ to do? We want to know what you think. E-mail us at spm@asu.edu with “Letter to the Editor” in the subject line. Please keep your letter to 150 words or fewer. Your full name, major and contact information must be included with the letter, which may be edited for clarity and length before being published in print, electronic or other forms.
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HOT DAMN

Country Thunder
Thursday, April 17 to Sunday, April 20

Get out your cowboy hats and pull on those boots. The four-day country music festival will feature artists like Sugarland, Dierks Bentley and Kelly Pickler. Two-for-one tickets can be purchased online at countrythunder.com.

Cat Power
Thursday, April 17

Cat Power has nothing to do with felines and everything to do with music. The musician will perform with Apaloosa at 7 p.m. on Thursday at Marquee Theatre, 730 N. Mill Ave., in Tempe. Tickets are $24 in advance and $25 at the door. For more information, visit luckymanonline.com.

Pat’s Run
Saturday, April 19

Join in on the 4.2-mile run to celebrate the life and legacy of former Sun Devil football player Pat Tillman. The event begins at 7 a.m. Saturday at Sun Devil Stadium, near Rio Salado Parkway and Packard Boulevard. Money raised goes toward the Pat Tillman Foundation and Tillman Scholars at ASU. For more information, visit patsrun.com.

Signs your parents are experiencing a mid-life crisis

It’s inevitable — your parents will eventually become temporarily insane when they hit about 45 years old. Here are the top five signs they are going through a mid-life crisis.

1. They purchase a sports car costing no less than $50,000.
   It’s really weird seeing your dad check out chicks in his bright yellow convertible Ferrari.

2. They’re always on vacation.
   Do they even go to work anymore?

3. They get creepy plastic surgery.
   Couldn’t your mom smile at one point?

4. They live vicariously through you.
   They really do want to know every single detail of your day.

5. They start collecting weird stuff.
   Seriously, ceramic puppies aren’t that cool.

— megan.pantak@asu.edu

Up-to-the-minute and not a second stale — SPM’s timely guide to keeping you current

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TOP FIVE...
Frank and Lupe’s

Hours of Operation: 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily
4121 North Marshall, Scottsdale
(480) 990-9844 • frankandlupes.com
Entrée Price: $ (under $10) • Dress Code: Casual • Need a Reservation? No

Story by Jessica Kokal
Photo by Chelsea Kent

It’s always unpleasant to have a disappointing meal, but it is especially so when diners come with high expectations. Frank and Lupe’s has been awarded for its delicious Mexican cuisine for years, as can be seen by the certificates adorning its walls. Unfortunately, my experience there was little deserving of praise. Dining at Frank and Lupe’s only left me irritable and unimpressed, albeit it with a full stomach.

Frank and Lupe’s is a small restaurant with two adjoining rooms and a larger, more boisterous patio around back. The place looks cheery, festive and cozy upon initial appearance. However, seating in the front room leaves diners feeling left out in the cold, positioned inconveniently between the kitchen and the front door, where small tables and nighttime breezes give the illusion of being sent to the kids’ table at Thanksgiving dinner.

Service only exacerbates this feeling, with curt treatment and little extra attention. Water glasses were kept brimming by courteous busboys, but servers were not quick to their tasks and tables often felt neglected. Our order was both taken and delivered painfully slowly, to the point where the lull between appetizers and entrees was too long to be pleasant and rather dulled the appetite, making the entire meal less enjoyable.

As for the food, once it arrived, it seemed hit-or-miss. In addition to complimentary chips and salsa, our table ordered guacamole, which was well presented in crisp tortilla, cups and served with bean dip. But, while the addition of the slightly spicy refried bean dip was a tasty surprise, the amount of guacamole provided was disappointing. The guacamole itself was even more dissatisfying. The texture was runny and the flavor was bland.

Entrees were more pleasant. The enchiladas are made with thick, moist tortillas and topped with egg, which adds great flavor and texture. The red- and green-chili sauces are both zesty and well-spiced. Most dinners are served with warm, doughy sopapillas and a side of honey. The crisp chimichanga was also good, but not easily discernable from the average chimichanga. Rice and beans are unremarkable. The stuffed poblano pepper sounded better on the menu than it was on the plate, with dry chicken and an absence of flavor beyond the subtle spice of the poblano leaving taste buds wanting something stronger.

What can be appreciated about Frank and Lupe’s, however, are the reasonable prices. Entrees are sizable and most are under $10. And unlike many Mexican restaurants, garnishes like sour cream and guacamole are inexpensive to add. The menu is conveniently numbered so ordering is quick and breezy — once your server arrives, that is. Frank and Lupe’s can also be commended for their list of tequilas and beers, and it can be noted that service seems to improve with every drink order.

Frank and Lupe’s could be worthy of a try if dining was only about the food. Unfortunately, today’s diners expect a bit more from their experience. The poor service, disappointing appetizers and somewhat uncomfortable atmosphere equate to little reason for a return visit.

— jessica.kokal@asu.edu
In the mood ... for Counter Strike

Sex. It’s something many college students think about, and some may daydream about it as often as two or three times a day.

When the opportunity arises, many will answer the call and get things going. There are times sex may not be possible, so let’s at least keep things in perspective.

Having said that, I was completely baffled after listening to a phone conversation that was posted on the website You’re The Man Now Dog at csownssexyytmd.com.

The title, “Counter Strike > Sex,” pretty much describes a unique relationship these two lovebirds share. In this phone conversation, a young woman “who has sexual needs” tries to coax her boyfriend into coming over for an hour to get things going.

The boyfriend, on the other hand, says the only way he would agree to do it is in a ROFLcopter (though he says he would allow her to drive it).

It goes on from there with the girlfriend pleading for her lover to come over and satisfy her, only to have him retort that he has a scheduled match coming up.

I’m not really sure which cracks me up more though: the fact that someone turned down his girlfriend’sorny requests to play a video game online or the fact that the same person recorded it and posted it on the Internet.

Whichever the case might be, it’s still a benefit for the rest of us to sit back with a bag of popcorn and enjoy the drama unfold.

To listen yourself, visit csownssexyytmd.com.

———

Chegg it out!

Everyone has had that one class — the class that requires about 13 books with a complete disregard for a student’s time, cash flow and backpack size.

Chegg.com can’t help anyone with time management or backpack size, but it has cash covered.

This website allows students to rent textbooks.

According to the website, there are more than 2 million books to choose from. Just enter the ISBN, author or title of the book to see its availability.

After registration, Chegg.com takes students through four steps. The first is to search and rent textbooks. The second is to receive the books by mail. The third is to use and benefit. Lastly, return the books to Chegg.com in the mail.

Chegg.com saves money and the time spent in bookstore lines and at the shelves.

A commonly needed book at ASU is the seventh edition of “Macroeconomics” by William Boyes and Michael Melvin. This textbook costs $83.25 used and $111 new. At Chegg.com, this textbook can be rented for the semester for $22.46.

The savings can range up to 92 percent on a textbook, according to the Web site. Chegg.com accepts MasterCard, Visa, American Express and Discover credit cards.

Students can keep the books until the semester ends, saving the haul back to the bookstore to sell back textbooks. Chegg.com even offers the option to buy the book.

Students can return the books to Chegg.com through the mail using a pre-paid label that is provided by the Web site.

Chegg.com also plants one tree for every book that is rented. The website claims if a publisher sells 1 million copies of a 250-page book, it will take 12,000 trees.

Therefore, the Chegg.com go-get-em slogan is, “Together we can make a difference, one book at a time.”

———

The B-52s

Funplex

The world’s greatest party band, The B-52s, has released its first original album in 16 years. “Funplex” instantly resurrects the upbeat, syncopated sound that this band has held down for over 30 years. The two singles “Pump” and “Funplex” easily fit in with the remembered, classic tracks that made The B-52s famous. The harmonizing voices of Cindy Wilson and Kate Pierson have not gone stale. Fred Schneider’s lyrics have remained as simple yet witty jargon in true B-52 style. The entire length of the album is energetic and danceable, proving The B-52s has not grown up much, and that’s a good thing.

———

M83

Saturdays = Youth

Most bands who steal the stylish sounds of the ’80s tend to mask their admiration for the decade with layers of irony and self-consciousness. Anthony Gonzalez, the sole member of French electronic outfit M83, isn’t ashamed of his love for John Hughes films, synth-pop and big hair — in one interview, he admitted he still cries when he listens to Kate Bush songs. Luckily, Gonzalez’s kind-of-wussy adoration translates into one of the best albums of the year. “Saturdays = Youth” is unapologetically, unironically gorgeous. “Kim & Jessie” and “Graveyard Girl” hit somewhere between classic new wave and dreamy Stars-esque indie-pop, sounding like “The Breakfast Club” in space. “Highway of Endless Dreams” is a pulse-racing trip into the sunset, and “Coulours” is a nine-minute club track that morphs into a stunning hip-hop coda. Although it doesn’t match the wild apocalyptic heights of 2005’s epic “Before The Dawn Heals Us” this reviewer’s favorite album of all time, “Saturdays = Youth” is full of starry-eyed songs for the romantic in all of us.

———

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Dumb luck and moving up

Story by Sam Gavin
Photo by Ashley Harris

When Mesa singer-songwriter Austin Gibbs began writing songs nine months ago for his girlfriend, she didn’t like them.

Turns out she was the only one.

In just a few short months, Austin Gibbs and the States have gone from tiny Valley venues to Tempe’s biggest stage at the Tempe Music Festival on March 29.

The group, whose folky indie-rock is quickly earning fans online and off, is already achieving an impressive amount of success.

Its main-stage slot opening for local legends Gin Blossoms was a combination of good fortune, dumb luck and great songs.

“My mom was actually searching Craigslist, and found this garage-band competition,” frontman Gibbs says.

The band had already built a decent local following, and success in the Cox-sponsored competition — complete with a giant check for $2,500 — helped things “snowball.”

“We played with [headliner] Fergie, which is what it comes down to,” Gibbs says.

The pop princess isn’t the only big name the States have shared a bill with. The band is fresh off a set at the Bamboozle Left festival, where Jimmy Eat World, New Found Glory and fellow locals Dear and the Headlights played just days ago.

It’s a big step up for the band, which formed around Gibbs’ songs less than five months ago. The States, composed of Robert Ferrin (electric guitar, harmonica), Kody Herring (lead guitar), Loren Brinton (drums), Marshall Hunt (bass guitar), and Johnny Slyjax (mandolin and “good vibes”), all met through mutual friends after Gibbs decided he “needed to pump up the jams a little.”

Now the band is hoping to have an official release out by the end of June. In the meantime, the members are spending most of the next month recording and setting their sights on playing some of the new songs live beginning in late April.

“Not too bad for a band who’s only had a name since around Christmas.”

— sam.gavin@asu.edu
Dealing with a noisy roommate may be annoying at times, especially when said roommate is holding band practices.

Political science and statistics freshman Jared Neufer’s roommate just had to deal, before they moved practice to drummer and architecture freshman Alex Atallah’s house.

The band started when bassist and psychology freshman Mark Reineke entered the wrong ASU 101 course and met Neufer. Atallah came next. They were later joined by lead singer and mathematics freshman Taylor Smith, then by guitarist and pre-med freshman Joey Russo to form The Pedestrians.

The band has been in the works since August 2007.

Neufer says the band’s music is influenced by many genres including pop, progressive rock, alternative and heavy metal. “We like to be flexible and experimental a little bit,” Neufer says. “I guess we’re trying to make pop music, but at the same time, more complex — something new.”

The band unites atypical instruments such as the saxophone with off-the-cuff influences to create a distinctive sound unusual for bands in their infancy.

The Pedestrians can agree that as a band, Tally Hall, Porcupine Tree and Queen have been major influences.

The band has yet to perform any shows, but don’t worry, the members say they know what they’re doing.

They are working on songs that will soon make it to an EP. “Our goal right now is to get a solid half hour of music so when we perform live with other bands we can start giving them out,” Reineke says.

Other students might think it to be difficult to mix homework with band practice, but The Pedestrians think otherwise.

“If I don’t play music, I’ll go insane,” Russo says.

— lauren.cusimano@asu.edu

Crossing the street

Story by Lauren Cusimano
Photo courtesy of The Pedestrians
Thrift... with standards

Sifting through T-shirts with mysterious stains and interesting odors at the local thrift store is one way of finding that designer fashion gem.

Some of the Valley’s consignment shops are an alternative option for those that don’t want to pick through someone’s messy leftovers.

The term “consignment shop” has been loosely used to describe just about any resale shop. However, a true consignment shop is one that takes high-quality clothing from consignors and sells the clothing at a discounted rate.

The shop then gives a portion of the sale to the consignor at the time the piece of clothing sells, says Tempe’s Back to the Rack owner Karlene Ochoa.

Consignment shops are known for having a very high standard for the clothing they take from consignors.

“Clothes have to be cleaned, pressed, on hangers, nothing [can be] over two years old, and better labels are appreciated,” Ochoa says.

A Second Look in Phoenix also requires that its clothing come from more upscale stores, and doesn’t accept inexpensive pieces from lower-end stores.

My Sister’s Closet in Phoenix sells recycled designer apparel and gives its consignors 55 percent of the sale in store credit or 45 percent in cash, assistant manager Jamie Guildig says.

Although the store concentrates on designer labels, the price of everyday clothing starts at $5, Guildig says.

A Second Look is one of the largest clothing, houseware and furniture consignment stores in the world, according to its Web site.

“We are so large that we cater to all ages,” Watson says. “We have lots of brand names that would cater to the college student. We have a whole section that is nothing but designer items and a large selection of designer jeans.”

The store generally prices items 40 percent less than retail value, Watson says. However, the more expensive the piece of clothing originally costs, the less the store sticks to pricing it at a 40 percent discount.

The store has more than 24,000 consignors and gives them 40 percent of the sale, Watson says.

“The benefit of consigning is that of course, you’re recycling,” Watson says. “It’s good for the environment. It’s also a good way to make some extra money.”

Many consignment shops, like My Sister’s Closet, donate the clothes if they don’t sell, and then give the consignor a tax receipt.

Back to the Rack owner Ochoa says consigning is a win-win situation.

“You get rid of stuff and you make money with it,” Ochoa says. “You can also buy really inexpensively and reasonably.”

—megan.pantak@asu.edu
Michelle Mellinger, a marketing freshman, stands out from a sea of T-shirts and jeans on campus this spring. She says she describes her style as eclectic with bright colors. “I like dresses because they are easy,” she says.

**Flip-flops**
A simple shoe with this outfit is ideal because there are bright colors and accessories also at work.
» Target, $10

**Bag**
Her sunny bag parallels the warm-weather attitude that has been circulating campus lately. Bright, primary colors are a big trend for spring and summer style.
» Target, $20

**Sunglasses**
Sunglasses are an accessory to have fun with. Her Urban Outfitters glasses are both trendy and useful as the days become brighter.
» Urban Outfitters, $18

**Jewelry**
Mellinger’s metallic accessories are very hip this season. Metallics are always a cool way to add a unique factor to an outfit. The different shades add dimension to her wardrobe and add a chic element to her easygoing style.
» Urban Outfitters, $15

**Dress**
Mellinger’s dress is a perfect neutral to complement the rest of her outfit. The eyelet detail makes it unique and seasonal.
» Nordstrom, $44

**Leggings**
One of the best ideas to make the transition from cooler weather is to layer summer dresses with leggings.
» Macy’s, $12

By Jessica VanZalen
Photo by Sam Nalven
Diving into Tempe’s dive bars

Story by Amanda Fruzynski
Photos by Dylan Winkler

Mill Avenue is great … except when you don’t want to be desperately vying for the attention of the bartender along with 87 other people. Scottsdale is fun and fancy … but sometimes a cushy couch and mirrored walls don’t make up for the $11 drinks. This is where the beauty of the dive bar falls in.

The dive bar is the perfect option for a night when being seen by dozens of people doesn’t matter. At most dive bars, the drinks are cheap and there’s a free bar stool, even if the décor or the other patrons are questionable. Tempe is full of them. Here are the few better ones, for anyone feeling adventurous on their typical bar crawl.

Groggy’s (2207 W. Main St., Tempe) — By nature, most dive bars are supposed to be tiny. This is where Groggy’s would surprise most people. While it has the other elements of a dive, the place is huge. It’s big enough to fit six pool tables and an expansive bar. There’s also a kitchen behind the bar for patrons who want a little food with their brew. There are a few TVs around for anyone who wants to catch a game. And the drinks are fairly cheap. A whisky sour and a bag of chile cheese Fritos cost $4.75.

Yucca Tap Room (29 W. Southern Ave., Tempe) — The Yucca Tap Room is easy to miss. The side that faces Southern Avenue is right on the street, so it takes driving a little further west on Southern past Mill Avenue to get to an entrance into the strip mall, where the bar is located. The dive bar is basically two parts. There’s a small stage on the left after walking in, and a large square bar, with an eager bartender trapped in the middle. It’s one room, and when a good band is playing, the place can be packed. It’s also slightly reminiscent of your uncle Fred’s basement back in Wisconsin — wood-plank walls, some deer horns and an orange-ish light fill the room.

Palo Verde (1015 W. Broadway Road, Tempe) — This is quickly becoming an SPM staff favorite. Like most dives, this place is tiny. It’s a small room with wooden beams separating the bar from the pool table area. Walking in, it almost feels like someone’s garage that was turned into a neighborhood hangout. As you may have read in a previous issue, the jukebox at Palo Verde is the best. A mix of New Order, Patsy Cline and Guns and Roses keeps patrons rocking as they sip. This isn’t the type of place for ordering a pink martini, but a Jack and Coke costs $4.

— amanda.fruzynski@asu.edu
To recommend a future Drink of the Week, e-mail sam.nalven@asu.edu.

The Viaka Incident

Before I get into this week’s tale of DOTW, I would like to announce that for this school year’s final installment of DOTW, we are going back to our roots. As of late, we have been doing small side projects and college beer-fest drinking games, and I think we need to bring back the old grain-alcohol-infused DOTW. Next week’s drink will be one to remember. Aside from the promise of a rockin’ beverage, I feel that after two semesters of anonymity, it is time for me to participate in this monstrosity that I have created.

This week, DOTW convinced the participants that a $5 bottle of kitchen-sink vodka was actually a $50 bottle of exotic, Russian-imported vodka made from the seeds of the poppy plant and that it had hallucinogenic effects. Long story short, they drank many shots of really cheap vodka under the impression that they were indulging in a high-quality beverage. Hilarity ensued.

DOTW even managed to coerce Bruce into thinking that a beer bong of Viaka was a good idea (Disclaimer: A beer bong of Viaka is not a good idea).

How did DOTW pull off this elaborate scam? We had our local liquor store make a tag that read $49.99 and put that over the old one. My conscience hurts, but not as much as their pride after I revealed the true nature of Viaka.

I’m tired of the lies, DOTW fans. Let’s drink some Everclear and kiss another semester goodbye.

Oh. And Bruce found a Russian high-altitude suit and refused to take it off. It must have been the hallucinogenic properties of the alcohol.

To prepare: Acquire the cheapest and most unknown bottle of bargain vodka available. Replace the tag with one that reads 10 times the original price. Make up elaborate lies about the background of the distillery, such as that they used plastic for the bottle because experiments showed that plastic holds the flavor in better than glass.

Clancy SanDiego said...

After 1 shot: “The key to drinking a fine vodka is alcoholism.”

After 8 shots: “How am I going to get home?”

Bruce Campbell said...

After 1 shot: “Hail to the king, baby!”

After 8 shots: “I’m a cosmonaut, baby!”

Viaka said...

Full: “Don’t be fooled by my true price tag, I’m worth at least $12.99.”

Half empty: “From me, with love.”
Some might say billiards is just a recreational game used to pass the time. Others might suggest it’s something to do at a bar while drunk.

And while all of that may be true, psychology sophomore Freddie Anibal Pastrana believes there is a lot more to it than that.

“Pool is a game that is very deep,” he says. “You have to think very hard about your shots, and it’s a lot of geometry.”

Pastrana is the president of the SunDevil Billiards Team. The club team was only founded in 2006, but is already competing against other schools.

The team participates in region 13, which includes schools in Utah, Colorado, Wyoming and New Mexico. They play in nine-ball tournaments with a women’s bracket and a men’s bracket. And while the club is open to any student on campus, the majority of the members are men. “We don’t get that many women who want to play,” Pastrana says.

Despite the low number of women club members, Pastrana still enjoys his time with the team. “All the friends I have made here, I met them through the team,” he says. “We really have a lot of fun.”

Pastrana says experience is not required to join the club. Members will teach anyone the basics, if needed. Club fees range from $20 to $30 for the semester.

The club practices Mondays and Wednesdays from 6 to 8 p.m. in Sparky’s Den in the basement of the MU. Engineering sophomore Ouray Kinsel works at Sparky’s Den, and says he’s a bit envious. “I know a few people on the team, and they all seem to have a lot of fun,” Kinsel says. “I would join, but I just don’t have the time, unfortunately.”

Pastrana says he couldn’t run the club alone. “This club wouldn’t be here with out our treasurer, Elizabeth Guffre,” Pastrana says. “She takes care of all of the paperwork.”

—mel.flores@asu.edu
Cricket is not America’s pastime.

But this sport is quickly making a distinction in the Valley, starting with increasing membership in the Arizona Cricket Association.

Since 2004, the number of teams in the group has doubled from 10 to 20, Chairman Krishna Parna says.

“We started off with about four or five teams 15 years ago, and now we are a 20-team league,” he says.

The association has nearly 500 members, 90 percent from foreign countries, Parna says.

A majority of these players, 80 percent, are international students attending Arizona State University, he says.

“The students of ASU are a major portion of the association,” he says. “It’s pretty active in the University.”

The association’s league has two divisions, which play September through May, Parna says. In the summer, it hosts night cricket games.

Cricket is traditionally played in one- and five-day matches, which Parna says deters Americans from participating in and watching the sport. The association’s matches are generally one day and last six hours each.

The Twenty20 cricket match, first played in 2003, lasts three hours.

Electrical engineering doctoral candidate and Indian emigrant Karthik Rajagopalan says the new Twenty20 format is providing a reason for Americans to watch and play the game.

“There is a chance for the Twenty20 version to catch on, mainly because people here simply don’t have the patience for a one-day or five-day game,” he says.

Rajagopalan says he represented his city and university in India before coming to ASU.

Brett Slaven, an ASU business management junior and Zimbabwe emigrant, agrees the new match will help encourage cricket play in the states.

“Twenty20 is nonstop action from beginning to end, and right now it is changing the face of cricket around the world,” he says.

Slaven says cricket is picking up in the U.S. because of the multitude of immigrants coming from countries like India and Pakistan.

“Cricket is like a religion there,” he says, and Rajagopalan agrees.

“Growing up in India, you cannot escape from cricket,” he says. “Kids always grow up dreaming to represent their nation in cricket.”

Anjan Kumar, a computer science graduate student, began playing cricket at four, which he says is normal.

“People adore cricketers more than politicians and film stars,” he says.

Kumar says, in addition to intramurals, the Indian Student Association holds tournaments twice a year. This is a testament to its growing popularity, he says.

But it may take some time, he says.

“I tried talking about cricket to a few Americans here, and they feel the game is boring, lengthy and a bit complicated,” he says. “They find it hard to understand and they easily lose interest in the game.”

Parna says he compares cricket’s popularity to soccer, which has grown in recent years with children but has not caught on entirely in the U.S.

“Soccer was never heard of 20 years ago,” he says. “It’s not going to happen overnight. But our goal is to get it to that level.”

— celeste.sepessy@asu.edu
A gift from Nina

Story by Kendall Wright
Photos by Sam Nalven
The white Ford Bronco lurched to a stop under the red light hanging above the Loop 202 on-ramp. Although the truck rumbled loudly, its engine noise still couldn't drown out the voice of her father inside her head. Mary Manning realized she was more nervous than she had been in a long time.

“What makes you think you can handle a kid?” he had said. “You are 31 years old and have trouble committing to a new car payment or even a place to live.”

Only 15 minutes until we get to Sky Harbor Airport, she thought. Only 15 minutes until everything changes.

The terminal was filled with people, but the boy was suddenly there striding toward her in his red and black plastic tennis shoes.

With sandy blonde hair, bright blue eyes and round cheeks, the striking family resemblance told her there was no mistaking it was he.

Manning’s life had changed direction innumerable times — managing horse barns all over the country with no commitment to anyone or anything before the summer of 2001.

That was when Jake Nanney, the 6-year-old son of a cousin who she had never met, came to live with her when no one else in the family could take him.

It was a crucial event that would change her from unpredictable tumbleweed to a stable parental figure and student.

In the six years since Jake became her legally adopted son, Manning moved on from working in the horse industry and returned to school full time, expecting to graduate this spring.

Adult students were at one time few and far between, but have now become influential fixtures in many of the University’s classrooms.

Manning is now one of 41 students between the ages of 18 and 52 who has been able to afford a higher education from ASU because of a private scholarship called the Nina Mason Pulliam Legacy Scholarship.

“I loved the horse industry, but there was nothing there for me anymore,” Manning says. “I never felt intellectually challenged like I do in school, and there wasn’t a whole lot of reward. ASU was a lifestyle choice I had to make for myself and Jake.”

The Nina Mason Pulliam Legacy Scholarship is a $70,000 scholarship allotted over a six-year period that helps students like Manning work toward a college degree.

The scholarship was started in 2001 and gives adults 25 years or older with a dependent, youth who have spent extensive time in the welfare system and adults living with a physical disability a chance to go to college when they could not afford it otherwise.

Manning became a single mother after she adopted Jake, which made her eligible for the scholarship.

She is now in the final stretch of her education. In May she will graduate along three of her fellow scholars with a Bachelor of Arts in political science and hopes to pursue her dream of attending law school.

However, the road to graduation was rough even before she decided to return to school.

Just a tumbleweed

Manning was still managing horse barns for the first three months after Jake came to live with her.

The two shared a musty old room with a loft at a ranch in Rio Verde, Ariz., and he was missing school at least once a week to travel with her to horse shows around the state.

She knew that this way of life was not suitable to raise a little boy, so Manning quit her job. She also moved into a small apartment with her brother and his fiancée to have help with Jake and relieve her financially.

“I had never shared a space with a kid, or a boy for that matter,” she says. “I didn’t even know how to cook macaroni and cheese or let alone grocery shop. I had to read the directions to make Kool-Aid! I was completely lost on raising a child.”

The confusion culminated when Manning was called into the principal’s office at Jake’s school.

In his first week, Jake had been bullied by a few other kids who had spit on him while he got off the bus. In turn, he punched them and was sent to the principal’s office.

This was not the first time Manning had witnessed Jake’s behavioral problems.

He had an innate fear of the interstate, for instance, and would sometimes become angry or scared to the point where Manning would have to restrain him until she could pull off the road.

In general, Manning says Jake was unbelievably strong and well-mannered for a child who had come
from an abused home. But Manning still had a desire to somehow gain his trust and understand the reasons why he sometimes acted out.

Manning says the principal was one of the first that realized the strains of the new living arrangement. It was then that the two began attending counseling, family-strengthening classes and social skills classes in order to help them both adjust.

**The first step**

Manning says she had only casually thought of returning to school until one day when Jake’s third-grade teacher, Mrs. Hebert, struck up a conversation with her as she had done many times before.

An older woman who had become wise from decades of teaching, she connected with Jake as no other teacher had and had become a mentor to Manning.

This wasn’t the first time she had talked to Manning about returning to school, but for some reason that day she said her pestering had finally sunk in — or maybe she was just out of excuses.

“She knew that was the only way I could really make something of myself and something for Jake,” Manning says. “I remember laughing when she first brought it up but she kept on with the idea. I didn’t even know how I was going to pay for it; but she just told me it would work out, and it eventually did.”

But when Manning applied to ASU for the spring semester of 2003, the response was humbling. She didn’t get accepted.

She says she knew she had to start from scratch in order to get to where she wanted to go. She found her first dingy apartment in an overcrowded family-style complex where she could start to earn credit.

Within the next week, she had enrolled as a student at Chandler-Gilbert Community College.

During that semester an adviser told Manning she had found a scholarship called the Nina Mason Pulliam Trust that could help her afford the rest of her education. It was then that she applied and was selected for a competitive panel-type interview.

“I remember she had a strong interview,” says Cory Gonzales, program director for the Nina scholarship at ASU. “She demonstrated commitment, perseverance and intelligence in her manner with us. Mary also had a straightforward attitude and seemed open to the close-knit approach we take with the program.”

When she was notified that she had been chosen as a scholarship recipient, Manning decided to take a chance and apply to ASU for the upcoming semester.

“All that she knew for certain was the $2,750 living allowance granted by the scholarship would be
enough to afford an apartment big enough that Jake could have his own room for once.

**The Real Turning Point**

It was 9 a.m., but she had already been up for about three hours — enough time to feed Jake breakfast, fight rush hour traffic, drive him to school and get herself to school before her first class. However, that wasn’t what was making her exhausted after only her first few weeks of college at ASU.

Seemingly standing in the middle of it all, Manning says she watched as people shuffled by in hordes or whizzed by on bikes and skateboards with looks of sheer determination to fight their way to class.

“Really, I was just trying not to laugh,” she says. “I felt
like I might as well be back on the ranch since the students all looked like cattle being shuttled into pens.”

But while the crowds were a lot to handle, the noises were what she said overwhelmed her.

Manning was diagnosed as a teenager with a form of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, also known as ADHD.

Unlike other people, she hears everyday noises amplified to 8,000 frequencies above what the average person can hear, and she struggles to focus in classes because of it.

In high school, she said the noises had driven her to levels of anxiousness that caused her to fail classes.

And during the first test in her college geography class of 500 people, she said she felt she would face the same failure.

“I remember how loud everyone flipped the pages of their test to refer to the maps on the front page,” Manning says. “No one was talking, but after about 10 minutes I couldn’t concentrate. The papers sounded
like a barrage of crashing waves, and I was paralyzed at the center of it.

During the test, Manning said the professor must have noticed the look of shock across her face because he motioned for her to crouch behind the emergency exit of the lecture hall to finish her test.

After that experience, she said she invested in near sound-proof earplugs and has since worked on calming herself into a state of meditation while taking tests.

With support from Manning’s scholarship classmates that year, her academics improved over the following semesters, and her relationship with Jake became more comfortable.

“I was in awe of her when I first came to ASU as a Nina,” says Rhonda Hemming, a friend and classmate of Manning for three years. “She was everything I was not, or didn’t know I could be. I am still amazed by Mary’s unbelievable strength, but as I have come to know her I have realized that she is human, just as I am.”

Hemming says Manning does well juggling motherhood and student life.

“She struggles to be a good student, like when she is being a good student she feels like she is not doing her best as a mother,” she says. “She still works on finding balance like the rest of us.”

But Manning says the fear of failure has always been her demon. And more than anyone, she says Jake is the one who can see through her outward confidence.

“You can tell she’s nervous because she starts organizing things around the house, especially the soups,” Jake says. “She got that way when she was taking that lawyer test last semester. Even though she didn’t talk to me about it, I knew she was kind of afraid. She worked really hard studying for it.”

In the spring of 2007 Manning took a semester-long course to prepare her for the LSAT, or Law School Admission Test, which would determine whether she was accepted to law school.

Although she did reasonably well, she said she decided to delay her graduation until this spring. This will give her a chance to retake the test for a better score and allow her more time to prepare for life after college.

“Mary, like many of our students, does not only have a financial need,” Gonzales says. “They have the need to be recognized as the smart, capable, motivated, and intelligent people they are.”

Gonzales says Manning’s past is providing her excellent motivation for the future.

“They want the opportunity to prove, if only to themselves, that even though they have challenges and barriers and have faced more adversity in their short lives than most people can dream, and that they are talented,” he says. “Mary has many of these traits, and she is going to go far.”

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Beauty and the uggo
Flipping through magazines, one can’t help but wonder why some gorgeous women chose, ahem, less-than-gorgeous men as partners. A new study has the answer.

According to a report from the University of Tennessee, women who marry less attractive men have happier marriages. The study, which was published in the Journal of Family Psychology in February, suggested women who married more attractive men are more likely to have negative feelings about their marriages.

Men who married more attractive women are simply happy to enjoy their partners’ beauty, and are thus generally happier about the union.

Men who were more attractive than their wives would typically be less emotionally supportive.

The study consisted of 82 newlywed couples in their first six months of marriage. The spouses reported their own levels of happiness along with trained observers reporting on the interactions with each other and levels of attractiveness.

“I don’t consider myself to be an ugly guy,” Joe Russo, a recently engaged film senior, says. “But I sure am happy with my pretty girl, and she’s seems happy with me.” Russo then jokes of his fiancée. “But she does say ‘What the hell was I thinking’ a lot, so maybe she’s not all that happy.”

The study says attractive men have more short-term mating partners available to them. Thus, good-looking guys are generally unhappy to stick with just one partner.

Laura Handlery, an education freshman, says she can see why an attractive woman would be happier with a less attractive man.

“The guy would be less conceited,” Handlery says, “and you’d feel better about yourself — as bad as that sounds.”

Handlery says this study could possibly influence her future choices in men, saying she might now re-consider men she has gotten close to as friends.

“Initially you look at someone’s physical appearance, but maybe it’d better with guys you became friends with and got to know not based on looks,” she says.

ASU housing and urban development senior Joshua Yen makes his own interpretation for the findings of the study.

“Based on stereotypes, uggos are supposed to be nicer,” Yen says. “So then the cute girls, though initially attracted to the asshole ‘hot’ guys, are happier with the uggos if they date them because he’s the nice guy to bring home to mom and dad.”

Blowing his own theory though, Yen
goes on to say, “But who knows, I’m an uggo and I’m not nice, so there goes that.”

ASU sociology professor Beverley Cuthbertson Johnson disagrees with the study, saying, “It is the ‘person within’ who counts the most.”

Johnson says people’s happiness does not rest on such superficiality as attractiveness when it comes to marriage. The idea of beauty changes depending on whichever culture you’re in, she says.

“There is no ‘right’ beauty framework,” says Johnson. “Why do you think we have so much anorexia and bulimia? Our society puts too much emphasis on tall and thin.”

A good relationship, Johnson says, is built on the ability to “know, understand and love,” the unique qualities of one’s spouse and the ability to work together on differences.

A different study done by the University of Texas at Austin published this month in *Evolutionary Psychology Journal* suggests women will adjust what they desire in a mate based upon her own attractiveness.

The more attractive a woman considers herself, the higher her standards for potential partners.

The study also detailed that if a woman has difficulty finding an up-to-standards potential partner, she will often lower her standards.

The University of Texas study also detailed that women did not only base their standards on men’s appearance. A man’s resources, parenting skills, and loyalty and devotion were also taken into account.

Though women’s selectivity is dependant on how beautiful others perceive them, men on the other hand didn’t vary their desires based on their own attractiveness.

Who knew it would be the guys who come out sounding like the decent ones?

— lana.burke@asu.edu
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Recycle Bins? on ASU campus? Where?

Story by Lana Burke
Photos by Chelsea Kent
Many people dream of making a positive impact on the world, whether it be by living a green lifestyle, opening an orphanage or creating a nonprofit to help those in need.

Chiu-Chu Ting, an ASU student getting her master’s degree in fiber art, actually acted on that dream of changing the world. Or at least ASU’s campus.

In an effort to raise awareness for recycling, Ting is asking students to give white or pale-colored shirts to her so she can print the location of recycling bins around the Tempe campus on them. Ting will then return the newly printed shirts to their former owners in hopes they will wear them around campus promoting the cause. At press time, Ting had 20 participants.

According to the Global Institute of Sustainability, there are currently 1,200 recycling bins on campus, not including desk-side bins, which number in the hundreds.

Ting says she was inspired by Jack Johnson’s song “3 Rs,” which appeared on the Curious George soundtrack. The Rs the song is referring to are reduce, re-use and recycle.

Ting, who grew up in Taiwan, says she found the lack of places to recycle on campus disheartening, along with the lack of variety of what she could recycle.

“At ASU, I did not see any recycling bins, outside of bins expressly used for recycling paper, except in the Fine Arts area. This made me sad,” Ting says. “I thought it was ironic; we are advertising sustainability so much now on campus, but not taking proactive steps.”

Ting says Johnson was the one who helped her make up her mind to do something about the problem.

“As a singer, he is trying to make this issue important to society,” Ting says, “As an artist, I can do so too.”

Melissa Budzak, an ASU art education and photography student, said she heard of Ting’s project originally through a flier on campus.

“I’m normally more of a quiet environmentalist,” says Budzak, who takes her bottles and cans home with her from school to recycle. “But having [more] bins on campus would be much more convenient.”

Ting is also hoping the recipients of her printed shirts will participate in her Earth Day activity April 22.

Ting plans to wear one of her printed shirts and collect recyclable material on campus in bags made from recyclable clothes around campus. Ting will then take the recycled items to the Global Institute of Sustainability.

Trace Main, a global studies junior, says he will participate in Ting’s Earth Day activity if he finds time between writing papers.

Main used an organic cotton “Sustainable Edition” American Apparel shirt for the printing project, as did Budzak.

“It seemed appropriate,” Main says.
Main became interested in Ting’s project after seeing her wearing one of her shirts on campus.

“This issue demands social responsibility,” Main says of environmentalism. “It’s really about ethics and awareness.”

Main says he believes that if people realize their actions have an effect on everything and everyone around them, then there is a duty to be environmentally friendly.

Dawn Ratcliffe, the Global Institute of Sustainability’s recycling coordinator, says the institute is working on improving the recycling options available to students at the Tempe Campus by the summer or early fall.

“It’s just a matter of funding and finalizing contracts right now,” Ratcliffe says.

Bonny Bentzin, the manager of university sustainability practices at the Global Institute of Sustainability, says the proposed new recycling program is key to ASU’s long-term environmental goals.

Bentzin says the new recycling program will increase the rate and profile of recycling on campus through more recycling bin locations and by educating students.

“I think it’s important for students to get involved,” Bentzin says. “I hope that [Ting] will be just as willing to contribute time to helping make the new program a success.”

If you are interested in getting your own shirt with ASU’s recycling bin locations printed on it, or participating in recyclable item collection on Earth Day on April 22, please contact Chiu-Chu Ting at Chiu-Chu.Ting@asu.edu.

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In the movie “The Matrix,” Keanu Reeves’ character is actually two different people. The first, Mr. Anderson, works for a software company, sitting in a cubicle. The other, Neo, fights off criminals and knows kung fu. Though this is a fictional movie, it’s not too far off from a description of someone here at ASU.

Jason Wulf is an IT professional for student media. By day, he fixes computers and makes sure all the technology at the Matthews Center is running smoothly. But at night, he is a force to be reckoned with — he is trained in several forms of martial arts. Don’t expect Wulf to go on a power trip and take down a room full of people. He says he’s found more effective ways to end fights before they even begin.

**DON’T I KNOW YOU?**

By Greg Ralbovsky
Photo by Sam Nalven

*SPM:* Don’t I know you?
*Wulf:* Maybe.

*SPM:* What is your title here?
*Wulf:* Technology sport-analyst principle.

*SPM:* But what is your job ... at night?
*Wulf:* I take martial arts twice a week. I’m a black belt in To-Shin Do, which is a form of ninjutsu.

*SPM:* How long have you been doing this?
*Wulf:* Three to four years of this art. Before that I took karate for about four years. I received a green belt and I went to a few tournaments and have some trophies.

*SPM:* How did you get interested in all of this?
*Wulf:* When I was younger I used to read Spiderman comics. I knew he wasn’t real and then I thought, “Oh, ninjas are cool,” and they’re kind of the same thing. The only martial art that was taught in my area was gosha-ru. Then I moved to Phoenix and found an art by Stephen Hayes, who originally taught it as ninjutsu but then changed the name of it in the ’80s because of all the American ninja films and the bad press.

*SPM:* What kinds of exercises do you do for fun?
*Wulf:* These are some kids’ games that get integrated into our classes. One game we play is called Tiger’s Tail. You put a rope on your belt behind you or on the side, and the other person has to get it without getting hit too bad. We also practice with weapons and throwing stars.

*SPM:* Do you feel like you double-up on security?
*Wulf:* Only on computer security.

*SPM:* Have you ever used your skills against other people?
*Wulf:* Never anyone outside of class, but I’ve had people try to pull things on me.

*SPM:* Why didn’t you fight them back?
*Wulf:* In my style we learn we don’t always use martial arts to get out of everything. You can also use your voice, for example, to use as a weapon. You never have to lay a finger on them. You learn more skills and you get more tools where you don’t have to fight. You learn to avoid situations.

*SPM:* What’s the most important lesson you’ve learned from martial arts?
*Wulf:* Know your environment. If you know your environment and if you’re aware of your surroundings of people you care about and people that could hurt you, then you have a better view of life.

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