

'Best' content, no filler, lures visitors

Jeff Sorensen
ÜBER NERD

Take a simple layout, some comedic ranting about the aggravations of daily life, throw in some sarcasm and hate mail, and the man known as "Maddox" has created The Best Page In The Universe." A full-time programmer and full-time student at the University of Utah, Maddox has devised a simple concept that has made a name for himself worldwide. In his little spare time, he has managed to drive more traffic than Coca-Cola, Pepsi and McDonalds combined, and all without spending a single red cent on his site. Although his schedule can be rough, he still manages to keep his site refreshingly interesting,

In fact, the counter on his home page tracks anywhere from 100-200 hits a minute.

"It's not hard to keep it interesting," said Maddox, "when the awesomeness flows naturally. There was a period in 2000 when I felt like I had to update my site once every week, and my writing suffered because of it; it sounded contrived and flat, like everything else you read on the Internet."

However, Maddox made a quick recovery and his writing came back stronger than ever. What's most interesting, though, is that when asked if he attributed any of his writing abilities to his college education, his answer was simple:

"Hell, no," he said. "Everything I learned in college can be written on

the palm of one hand." Just what does this Maddox character write about that so many people seem so interested in? Most



frequent are the articles ranting hilariously about things that tick him off. Every once in a while, however, he'll have something else he feels he wants to express about his life, his

adventures and the occasional movie review. Still he has friends, favorite restaurants and favorite pets like anyone else.

"I have two dead praying mantises by my door," he said. "One is yellow; the other is brown. I have threatened to kick friends and family members out of my house if they touch the bodies. I yelled at a spider the other day and the cocky son of a [gun] kept charging at me. So I wrapped it in paper and it down the toilet. I must give it credit for its resilience, though; he climbed back up but didn't survive a second flush. Usually, I let bugs off the hook if they survive the first flush. I made the exception in this case because of the spider's sheer arrogance."

In addition to sifting through e-mails ("I have 75,000+ unread messages," he said) and managing his website, Maddox spends his spare time playing video games.

"It's the whole reason I ever touched a computer in the first place," he said. "Of course, I had to battle powerful forces that tried to prevent me from enjoying videogames as I grew up."

Maddox can be found at www.thebestpageintheuniverse.com. His writing, although sometimes blunt, is almost always entertaining. He also has other projects in the works, but nothing confirmed as of yet. He promises, however, that he will definitely have work published in "mediums other than the web." The question is: Will we be ready?

Promotion lacking, jazz band pleases both students in attendance

Joel Gaynor
THE CLACKAMAS PRINT

CCC's spring-term Jazz Night was held Wednesday, May 26; for most readers, the previous sentence will be the first mention of the event you'll have come across.

I, also, would have been among many students cheerfully ignorant of the festivities held in the category Forum by jazz band director Tom Wakeling and his group. I was assigned, by this fine periodical that's kind enough to publish each week, to do a review on the performance. And I'm glad I was.

However, the majority of students had no idea that, for a \$5 donation, they too could have been treated to an hour and a half of good jazz music featuring our school's own jazz ensemble and special guest, local saxophone player John Gross who, as Wakeling put it, "has played with 'anyone and everyone who's anyone.'"

Wednesday afternoon, I called a friend, who met me on campus, and we walked over to the forum. I didn't see any signs or flyers on the way. Looking at the forum, I wouldn't have been able to tell there was anything happening, other than the sporadic

uniformed band member walking in or out of the building.

When we arrived, it was obvious the evening wasn't well promoted. In fact, there was more information available for one student's own off-campus wine tasting. The closest thing to advertising was the whiteboard easels freshly erected next to the entrance that were being written on as we arrived ten minutes before show time.

The lack of promotion is a shame. I don't know where the blame lies or even if there is a need for blame. Maybe the people involved or the music department

just didn't realize the number of students that would come to these events if presented with the opportunity. There were a total of maybe 20 people (a generous estimate) at this concert, and my friend and I appeared to be the only students, but the band deserved much more for their efforts; they can really play.

One thing I was struck by watching the band perform was not that they were amazing; they were good, yes, but with room to grow. What really got me was how much fun they were having. They were laughing (when appropriate, of course) and just plain enjoying

themselves. It was jazz, the way it was intended to be. It was the kind of thing people will go to if they know it's there to attend.

Maybe the music department should promote more (as if they aren't busy enough). Perhaps the band members should take it upon themselves to get the word out. It might be that students in general should make an effort to be more up-to-date on campus happenings. (It's more likely that a combination of all the aforementioned is needed). I don't know the answer. What I do know, is people will come; they just need to be informed.

Students garner, publish early literary compilation

Writing class has pupils cull and edit campus magazine

Isaiah Creel
A&E EDITOR

Each year, Clackamas' Editing and Publishing class produces a magazine compiling the literary and artistic efforts of contributing students; *Synesthesia*, as it is called, is free to students and will be available June 9.

"Synesthesia" [syn- (together) -esthesia (as in anesthesia)] is evocation or transportation of one sense (such as a sound) by another (such as vision). The device is much used in poetry and oration speech. It can also be called synaesthesia.

"Her nerves were like a nettle st," said John Simpson, describing Sylvia Plath to demonstrate synesthesia.

Amanda "The Mild-Mannered" Coffey, Michael "Firefly" Cooper, Stacie "Captain Sarcasm" King and Marilyn Davis make up this year's WR 246 class. This small but mighty editorial staff is in charge of the publication of *Synesthesia* as well as weeding through the stacks of entries they receive from as early as winter term.

Where do they get the material put together a 50-plus page magazine? All entries for the Writers Club Contest are passed along to the *Synesthesia* staff for evaluation. Additionally, the group makes flyers encouraging students to submit material as well as relying on the primitive "word-of-mouth" technique.


Since the literary magazine is designed to highlight only the best writers, it would behoove the applicant to remember some of the criteria involved in the selection process. One of these criteria, and probably the most important, is having a firm grasp of the English language.

"We look for things with thought put into them," said Coffey, "with no surface errors. It needs to be interesting and engaging from a literary view ... the cleaner the better."

Although the majority of applicants submit writing (things like poems, short fiction, short non-fiction and even the odd play), no form of expression which is translatable to print is turned away.

"No one submitted art this year," said Coffey, "so we took it upon ourselves. We went to the student art show, found some things we liked and asked for permission to use them."

Synesthesia has been produced annually since 2001 and has become more professional with each consecutive year. So support the WR 246 class and pick up this free publication June 3.



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