



The Storm Watch

12.22.2011 || V.8 I.6



Sturgis Charter Public School East Student Newspaper

A Sturgis Alum Out in Africa

By Anna Campbell, *staff reporter*

Here at Sturgis, we constantly hear from teachers and other authority figures that the school, and the I.B. will help us in life; and not only through college, but preparing us for any difficult achievements. Most of us have probably wondered at some point after pulling an all-nighter to write an essay or enviously watching students at other schools glide through easy classes with straight As, where is the proof?

So finally we found a case study: Mathew Chamberlain, an alum just completed his scientist on a research trip in Africa. He began his sojourn in the first weeks of early September, 2011, and

unexpectedly returned in the last week of October. Mat is a fourth-year physics major at Northeastern, and before your eyes glaze over at the mere mention of physics, he has been doing some pretty fascinating research. After graduating Sturgis and attending Northeastern, Mat has traveled to Zambia and Botswana, Africa, with a co-op from the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute (WHOI) to detect naturally occurring electromagnetic fields in the Earth's surface. Electromagnetic fields are physical fields produced by moving electrically charged objects. They are one of the four fundamental forces of nature; their importance to science is something Chamberlain has been studying. Chamberlain got together



Mathew Chamberlain, a 2009 Sturgis Graduate and current senior at Northeastern University

with WHOI after his co-op advisor at Northeastern's job database sent his resume to WHOI. "We connect because

(Continued on page 3)

Festivus: The Holiday for the Rest of Us

By Anna Campbell, *staff writer*

We know the holidays. They come every year without fail, and we're always pleased about it; the time off from school, the food, the gifts, the family love, the holiday spirit, the

food, the food. And we know what holidays we'll be celebrating: Christmas, Hanukkah, perhaps even Kwanzaa or some other holiday of which I am unaware.

But, this season marks the dawn of a new age, one in which we will all, like it or not, be celebrating a new and worldwide holiday: Festivus.

Festivus marks its birth in a memorable episode of Seinfeld, proclaimed 'Festivus, the holiday for the rest of us'. But beyond that little rhyme, the ideology and traditions of Festivus are deep-rooted and long ago found their way to the Internet. The spirit of Festivus is one of mutual exasperation, aggressive competition, and boundless joy. Festivus-believers are unconcerned with material goods, but all believe in Santa.



Festivus is celebrated on December 23. When the feast commences, the holiday traditions begin with the "Airing of Grievances," in which all participants lash out freely and tell each other how they have disappointed each other this year. It's an emotional catharsis and wholly therapeutic. After the meal, the "Feats of Strength" are performed in which participants try to wrestle the head of the household to the floor. The holiday is not over unless the

(Continued on page 2)

In This Issue

FEATURES

Pages 2: "Puss in Boots" Review

Page 4: "Tower Heist" Review

Page 4: Short Story: Head of the Dragon by Cooper Heilmann



NEWS



“Puss in Boots” Isn’t Another “Shrek” Sequel

By **Sara Prygocki**, *staff writer*

Come to see the new “Puss in Boots” movie if you’re looking for a fun family movie, but not if you’re looking for another Shrek movie. DreamWorks Productions new movie, Puss in Boots works as a standalone and has no reference to the original Shrek movies.

The movie takes place in Mexico, where Puss grows up in a small town as an orphan. He is the odd man out, being a cat, and soon befriends Humpty Dumpty. They have dreams together and are the best of friends before a falling out causes Puss to become an outlaw. After a while he meets up with Humpty’s right hand woman Kitty Softpaws. Humpty tells Puss that he has changed his ways and is ready to be friends again in order to find what they

had been searching for their entire lives. Soon Puss is off on the adventure of his life.

The movie is filled with classic Mexican type music, including cat dance numbers. The one thing that remains similar to the original Shrek movies is the sly hilarity that makes both kids and adults alike laugh. Antonio Banderas as Puss and Zach Galifianakis as Humpty Dumpty helped to add comedic talent to the voice actors.

Many entered the movie theatre with low expectations, expecting a cheap Shrek sequel. This film is nothing like that, with its dry humor, new characters and new action sequences defining it as an



entirely different film. My only complaint would be that it took a very long time to get to the climax of the film. Overall it’s a good movie to watch with your family, and one of the best animated features of the year.

Festivus: The Holiday for the Rest of Us

(Continued from page 1)

head has been pinned to the ground.

Festivus’ origins can be traced back to ancient pagan traditions among the Celts and the Picts, before Christmas was ever thought of. In fact, Festivus is actually so old that the Latin word ‘festus’ meaning a joyous day, a festival or a holiday, is derived from it. Its religious text is Wikipedia. In those days of old, joyful believers would dance around a tall, factory-made aluminum pole, signifying the beginning of life and the celebration of the universe. The traditional meal prepared was generally meatloaf, and although the Festivus meatloaf has evolved to include ground beef, in the olden days woolly mammoths and the like

would have been standard fare.

Perhaps the oldest rite of passage, however, is the time-honored Feats of Strength. This tradition dates back past Seinfeld, past A.D. anything, and possibly even past the Ice Age. In this, the head of the household must challenge a Festivus participant to a wrestling match. The challenge is rife with caveman symbolism; a new leader taking control of the cave, a proud new lion challenging the old, like Simba did to his evil uncle Scar. The participant, once challenged, can evade the fight if they claim they have something else to do, like watch It’s A Wonderful Life or Elf for the fiftieth time, but they will lose their honor, and shame will fall upon them. So it is written.

Festivus has been incorporated into countless cultures - for example, the tradition of the Christmas tree originally came from an old and long-forgotten Festivus ritual, as did that of sitting on Santa’s lap at the mall. Those who want further proof need only go to Ben & Jerry’s; they have named an ice-cream after the holiday.

As we break for vacation this Thursday, we at the Sturgis Storm-Watch hope that everyone will be happily celebrating Christmas and Hanukkah. But for those who lack a stirring cause, a custom that may well enter family legend, think about getting behind Festivus: the holiday for the rest of us.



NEWS



A Sturgis Alum Out in Africa

(Continued from page 1)

we have a passion for science and we want to do field work,” Chamberlain said of his relationship with the WHOI scientists.

WHOI is in Africa to measure electromagnetic waves that occur from the interaction of the solar wind and the earth’s magnetic field, Chamberlain explains. The scientists measure the intensity of the electric and magnetic field in three components using magnetometers, electrodes and coils and then forward model the rock layers. If the rock layer are very conductive it might indicate that the East Africa Rift extends south into the continent. The East Africa Rift is important for seismologists trying to understand the flow of partial melt. In other words, the tectonic plates making up the continents are slowly but steadily shifting, and Chamberlain is analyzing the possible consequences of the rift.

While understandably, thinking about how the earth moves occupied a great part of his time, Chamberlain has been known to come back to his roots at Sturgis. Jeff Hyer, who is the former CAS advisor and is still a well-loved history teacher - though admittedly something of a relic by now - can testify to Chamberlain’s visits now and then and says Mat has really applied his talents well.

Chamberlain for his own part credits Sturgis with giving him confidence in his ability. Although the interview was conducted over email, and sarcasm doesn’t translate very well over HTML, I found some evidence of humor in his answers. “Sturgis is the foundation of my intellectual swagger,” Chamberlain says of how his experience at Sturgis

prepared him for the research trip. After

taking H.L. math and physics, the very thought of which makes me wince in horror, Chamberlain was more prepared than most college graduates to write a 26,000-word science blog in two months while working in Africa.

The blog itself reads easily, and the reader is drawn in by Chamberlain’s natural prose, which reflects on his meeting local villagers as well as guides in Zambia. His titles range from the trivial: “CONSTANT CAR TROUBLES;” and to the philosophical: “DO YOU BELIEVE IN GOD?” He notes that he has popularized the thumbs-up signal in several remote signals. Though often couched in understated wit, the places he travels to are often dangerous, and he recounts the hazards as well as humor in traveling. His attitude towards the villagers and tour guides is empathetic, not patronizing, and in his experience, most Africans are genuinely friendly people. He describes how he would sometimes meet a person in a situation that an American would see as devastating, nightmarish at the least - they were starving, stranded or detained without representation - and how they normally took it in stride. Since this is the norm, he explains, many of them are very laid-back about it. They appreciated what they had, and he says that most of the people he talked to would always enjoy a conversation about life under the shade of a date palm tree. Chamberlain is all too aware of his own advantages, and grateful to them. The experience of going to Africa paints a picture of how life is for people in many third-world countries. He has seen villagers beg for water, clothes and books. “I can imagine what they would do to have a Sturgis,” he notes. “Sturgis drives me to know I am capable of achieving more than I believe I can.”

Although Chamberlain’s impressive

resume may seem effortlessly intimidating for current students (like us) who wonder how to survive the next exam on Red Bull and M&Ms, he is modest in discussing his accomplishments in academia. He also acknowledges that Sturgis played a part in shaping his future. And isn’t that what we are all here for? Sturgis, Chamberlain observes, clearly paves a successful road to college. And though his outlook is balanced, like a good Sturgis student, he looks ahead, not to the past. After eight weeks on a research trip, he had planned on backpacking in South Africa with a colleague. However, denied entry to South Africa because he had no proof of his vaccination for yellow fever, Chamberlain recently returned to America. He plans on sending his pictures and videos to Northeastern for his blog, finding an apartment for next year, and working on a one-dimensional inversion code for MT data in a Matlab Graphic User Interface, or GUI, which is the design of the graphical component of a program to make it easier to use (. He will also be going on a research cruise in the South Pacific on Columbia’s vessel the Langseth, spanning from the middle of November to the beginning of January, again with WHOI (at this point our reporter was overcome with jealousy). He will then be in Boston for a semester of classes. After that, who knows?

The story of Mat Chamberlain is an intriguing one, full of complex words and physics we don’t understand. One can argue that it can be simplified to that old Dr. Seuss title which so many seniors overuse in their ‘quotes’ section of the yearbook: “Oh, The Places You’ll Go!” In Chamberlain’s case the overwrought phrase has certainly proved true. And after this year, who knows where he’ll go?



Read Mat’s Blog about his trip and work: Scan the QR code to the left or travel to:

http://www.northeastern.edu/cos/about/news_items/summer2011/matchamberlainafrica.html



FEATURES



Short Story: *Head of the Dragon*

By **Cooper Heilmann**, *staff writer*

The little boy stood on the docks, waiting. Waiting for the head of the dragon. The waves splashed against the frozen shores and rocked the moored karfi and other boats. Mist spread out across the fjord, reaching halfway up the steep, rocky cliffs. Smoke from thatched roof houses rose into the air above one of the cliffs. This was where young Eric's village lay.

His mother stood next to him, holding his shoulder. They waited and waited like all the others on that shore. The long-boats and karfi should have been coming by now. The sun hung low in the gray sky. Eric looked up to his mother. She just stared blankly out into the open ocean, waiting as he was. Eric's uncle, Bjorn, walked over and stood next to them. He towered up about six feet and three inches tall, and he was built like a bear. He stood there, hand in his thick, blond beard, waiting.

Just then, a shape could be made out approaching the fjord. It was a ship. The sails were being rolled up. People—tall,

strong people were running about on the deck.

On the prow of the boat stood the figure of a mermaid. The ship beached ashore, and the people cheered as the men jumped out of the ship. Each held treasure of some kind. It ranged from rice, salt, and meat to gold, jewels, and weapons. Each man had an axe at his belt and a heavy wooden shield on his back. They held horned helmets in their arms. They walked victoriously onto the shore. One walked right past Eric as if he wasn't there. Eric's uncle ran up to the man.

"Sven! Sven! Do you know the tidings of my brother?" The man shook his head.

"Thought 'e was 'ere," he replied, and walked off. Ship after ship came into the harbor, but none of them belonged to Eric's father, Hrothgar. The sun soon set over the ocean, and Bjorn and Eric's mother turned away and headed back to the village. Eric stared out at the open ocean, and a small tear ran down his cheek. He stood there for a while, before trudging through the snow back to the village. Eric was only eight years old.

To be Continued...

"Tower Heist" Offers Chuckles Despite Plot Holes

By **Lucie Palmeri**, *staff writer*

On Thanksgiving after being in a turkey coma for hours after my family and I had feasted, a few of us in the Palmeri household decided to catch a late night movie. To our dismay, there was little to select from so we were going to see Hugo, a movie about a young boy living in the walls of a busy Paris train station, but protested against it once I found out it was a 3D movie. Instead, I tried to preach how spectacular Breaking Dawn-Part I had been, but alas none of them were interested in it. We ended up choosing Tower Heist on a spur of the moment thing as we were buying our tickets.

The movie was about a hotel manager, Josh Kovaks (played by Ben Stiller), planning to rob Arthur Shaw, a Wall Street titan that has been put under house arrest after being caught stealing two billion from his investors which include all of his hotel employees. With the help of some of his co-workers and an his ex-convict neighbor, Kovaks outsmarts the system and the FBI to get back the money they had invested in him. Overall the movie was pretty good and had some humorous parts. For example the first time Slide, the ex-convict (played by Eddie Murphy), is meeting up with Kovaks and his accomplices at the food court in the mall he doesn't believe that they're being serious and that he's being Punk'd. To make sure that they're not tricking him, he



tells them to go steal \$50 worth of merchandise but to leave their wallets on the table so that he can be sure they didn't go out and buy the stuff. When they come back 15 minutes later, all four of them have accomplished the task, but they had also learned their first lesson because you should never trust a robber with your wallets-Slide had taken the liberty in stealing all the cash the four men had left him with.

One thing that I would change about the movie was how obvious it was when "unimportant" scenes had been deleted. For example, once they steal Arthur Shaw's treasure from Point A, the audience never actually finds out how they got it to Point B. It just shows the minor obstacles they faced with the FBI and security. Other than those minor loop holes, I would recommend this movie to anyone in need of a few chuckles.