Solar Decathlon: The ENJOY House

NJIT and Rutgers’ students combine their skills to show their might.

Balaji Sutharsanam
Contributing Writer

In an empty parking lot behind Laurel Hall, you can find the campus’ newest decoration, The ENJOY House. With its concrete frame and energy-efficient design, the ENJOY house will be Team New Jersey’s entry into the 2011 Solar Decathlon.

The Solar Decathlon, which is administered by the United States Department of Energy, challenges collegiate teams to design solar-powered houses that are both cost-effective and attractive. The contestants represent Universities and Colleges from across the world: Tongji University in China, University of Calgary in Canada, Stevens Institute of Technology in Hoboken, The University of Tennessee and many more.

Team New Jersey, which is comprised of members from both The New Jersey Institute of Technology and Rutgers-The State University of New Jersey, will present their ENJOY house design against various other eco-friendly and sustainable models on September 23rd, 2011 at the National Mall in Washington, D.C.

Led by project manager Jen Switala, a master’s student at NJIT’s College of Architecture and Design, Team New Jersey brings a unique feature to the Solar Decathlon: it is the first construction in the competition’s history to be made entirely of pre-fabricated concrete, which contributes to the project’s cost-effectiveness and sustainability. With its sleek angles and thoughtful design, the ENJOY house is sure put up a fight against its competitors. The house features an inverted-hip roof that allows for rainwater collection and concrete walls which require little up-keep. The home also incorporates natural ventilation, using wind flow through operable windows on the building’s south and west faces to cool the home.

In addition to architectural fortitude, the ENJOY house employs a strength in its strategically placed technological additions. Solar thermal tubes and a photovoltaic system provide the high-performing and energy efficient improvements that judges are sure to pay attention to.

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Square: The New Portable Card Reader

As the world starts to feel the effects of technology both socially and environmentally, a new device/application is affecting individuals financially. Square is a revolutionary new way to conveniently and efficiently accept credit and debit cards. Along with the interactive and user-friendly app, the Square card reader gives any owner of an Android, iPhone, iPod touch, or iPad the accept funds anywhere they have a mobile device, giving them power to not only simplify the way they provide their services, but also gain a huge market of costumers. With the unbelievably low transaction rate of just 2.75%, Square makes money transfers cheaper, easier, and faster. Founded in 2009 by the creator of Twitter, Jack Dorsey, Square is headquartered in San Francisco and is available throughout the United States. Called Square for its one square inch card reader that plugs into your device, the application is changing the way people not only run their business, but run their lives. From a technological standpoint, the Square application and reader are not only genius, but something that we as students of a technology school can truly understand and appreciate. From a logical perspective, Square makes sense. A great idea, paired with great talent in app development, engineering, and design, yields what is now considered and left for a business/organization to profit more.

Unlike most traditional credit card readers used by businesses, Square does not charge unless a transaction is made. This means that whereas in the past, one would have to pay monthly fees for usage of a card machine, those extra charges are now eliminated and left for a business/organization to profit more. To find out more about the Square device and application, go to squareup.com or contact Carmel Pratt, the New Jersey Institute of Technology campus representative for Square at cp92@njit.edu.
Understanding the truth behind the organization and what is going on.

Luis Gonzales  Contributing Writer

The Higher Education Student Assistance Authority (HESAA) stands as the foremost state agency in financial aid, providing students and families with monetary and informational resources that help students as they pursue their education beyond high school. This is the body that reviews FAFSA, determining the kind of financial aid package students receive. Though I can feel the anger boiling up in all my readers as I mention Financial Aid, let us keep perspective on the topic at hand, HESAA.

This summer I was selected to be a part of the HESAA Student Advisory Board, an organizational body comprised of various New Jersey college students charged with making recommendations to the agency regarding financial aid matters affecting students. Such a body is significant, as important decisions regarding college academic should include input from the very people who are supposed to benefit from it. I joined the student advisory board because, as a student, there are times when I feel that people who are out of touch with the struggles of being in college are mortgaging my future for their own personal gain.

Upon joining the Student Advisory Board I could not wait to express my thoughts pertaining to the financial aid process as a whole in the state of NJ, thereby speaking up for all those students who have had their refunds delayed, have received insufficient aid packages, and are finding themselves in massive debt at the age of 20!

All of my heated passion towards HESAA, however, was immediately subdued when I saw firsthand that the organization is not the enemy, but rather the scapegoat. HESAA has little to no control over the money redistributed to college students in NJ, as their budget is decided upon by the state legislature, which predetermines how much aid students receive based on their income level.

I was floored while at a HESAA meeting as the committee chair read back this year’s budget handed down by the state. He didn’t start lambasting the budget, or devising ways to combat it. Rather, the chair had more of a defeated tone to his voice. At that point it hit me: these are state employees who are just doing jobs handed down to them by the state. The real grip is not with HESAA, who come off as middlemen, but with New Jersey elected officials (as it always seems to be). I did, however, find my spirits being raised from the Student Advisory Board meetings I attended, as HESAA seems to be an organization genuinely committed to helping students as much as is conceivable. HESAA continually tries to secure as many government loans as they possibly can, helping college students avoid private loans with high interest rates.

Organization representatives also travel around the state to various high schools and colleges in order to give seminars on how to apply for special grants and scholarships as well as money managing education.

The true purpose of the advisory board as I see it is to make the pennies handed down to HESAA by the state of NJ as accessible to students as possible. Granted, calling the funds pennies may be a bit uncalled for since the state of New Jersey is ranked second in the nation in distributing need based grants. Unfortunately, the state falls behind in the direct aid it provides to colleges.

At this point, the best I can do as a member of this Advisory Board is to keep my ears open to the students and how they can be helped. I urge everyone to submit recommendations to HESAA and myself about problems with applying for financial aid. Past Advisory Boards were successful in getting the FAFSA form altered so as to be clearer to understand. While the usual complaint of slow paper processing was something I was able to bring up at such one meeting, it was quickly answered by outlining a reduction in staffs coupled with the handling the financial aid for the entire state of NJ, which is now including a new college. When getting down to the nitty-gritty, students must seriously ask themselves what is the true grip they have with financial aid in New Jersey. More importantly, identify the true source of the problem and address it in a proper manner.

Too often do we find the emotion driven student whose anger drives them to throw unwarranted accusations at the wrong people. Once again, I am a student who has been guilty of such anger; after all, this is our education we are paying for. The key is to inquire as to the source and how it can be solved in the quickest way possible, because as we all know time is money in college.

Luis J. Gonzales is a senior history student and can be contacted at lg3@njit.edu

NJIT Dining Choices

Susan Abocelea  Contributing Writer

When hungry on campus, there is an assorted list of options to choose from, located right in the campus center and managed by Gourmet Dining Services (GDS). There’s the Continuous Dining Hall, Tech Cafe, the C-Store, Taco Bell, The Grill, Leans and Grains, and The Highland Pub on the third floor. All this may be new to incoming freshmen or transfer, but there are also quite a few changes this fall semester that are new to us all, which have been made possible by student feedback on satisfaction surveys.

The first noticeable change is longer Continuous Dining hours, which have been extended to 10 PM Monday-Thursday and 9:00 PM Friday-Sunday. Students taking a night class now have time to not miss dinner. Inside there have also been some new changes. The Steamed to Perfection Station has been replaced for a Whole Grain Bar, where you can find fresh produce salad offerings and dressings. The Make Your Own Soup Station has also been replaced. It is now Fixin’s & Nacho Bar. At this station you can find a variety of toppings for burgers, hot dogs, or custom-made nachos.

At the C-store there are now freshly made smoothies and milk shakes. In addition, Cafe Spice now has an extended menu with combo specials including new beverages. You will also notice significantly reduced pricing.

Changes have also been made at Tech Cafe. The Starbucks “Proudy Brew” program is expanding the availability of Starbucks’ beverages and food items. You may now be able to fill your cravings and have your favorite Starbucks drink. Last but certainly not least, no longer is cash and flex points the only way to purchase food! All Gourmet Dining locations will now be accepting credit and debit cards.

NJIT welcomes everyone back to campus dining and hopes all will enjoy these new developments.
GREEK LIFE

NJIT Construction on Greek Village Set to Begin March 2012

The Gateway Project Plans are beginning to bear fruit.

Andrew Mohammed
Contributing Writer

The New Jersey Institute of Technology is beginning its first major construction project in years, with plans for new student housing facilities targeted toward NJIT’s sororities and fraternities.

Dubbed the Greek Village, this $60 million construction will be bordered by Warren Street, Colden Street, and Raymond Boulevard, occupying the existing parking lot located across from Tiernan Hall and Lubetkin Field.

Construction is set to begin in March 2012 and will last 18 months, according to Dr. Joel Bloom, Vice President for Academic and Student Services and Dean of the Albert Dorman Honors College. According to Dr. Bloom, students can expect to be living in the new housing facilities by the fall of 2013.

Plans call for the construction of a 300-bed dormitory that will include dining area, laundromat, pharmacy, supermarket, gym, convenience store, and dining areas on the lower level of the building; five duplexes providing space for 10 Greek organizations; and an academic building that will house over 650 students attending the Albert Dorman Honors College in dormitories the third through sixth floors.

Besides funding from NJIT and the project developers, Greek Village and the new residence hall will be financed through fundraisers hosted by Greek organizations, the Albert Dorman Honors College, and rent and other fees paid by students living in the residences.

Because construction will overtake the existing parking lot, the administration is hoping to redirect parking to other areas belonging to NJIT. In addition the current decks, lot 18, located at 111 Sussex Avenue, will be opened to accommodate parking during construction.

The Greek Village will be independent of the university with a private landlord allowing students to feel free while living close to campus; it will also feature a common place for students known as a “Green”.

Although some Greek organizations fear that the development of a Greek village is a way to regulate the organizations within the university, administrators are hoping to allay those fears by emphasizing their hope of cleaning up the surrounding community by building new housing that will revitalize Greek organizations and increase attendance at NJIT.

“There is no hostility towards the Greek Sororities and Fraternities in any form, and houses cannot be taken away from the Greek organizations by the school’s administration,” said Dr. Jack Gentul, Dean of Students at the New Jersey Institute of Technology.

According to Dr. Gentul, an investigation in 2008 revealed that the Greek organization facilities along Martin Luther King Boulevard were not being properly maintained. There were concerns that fire safety and rodent problems within the Greek housing would hurt the potential for Greek life growth at the university.

“We began to investigate the housing on MLK and were very concerned about the safety of our students,” said Dr. Bloom.

According to statistics from the NJIT Campus Gateway Plan website, there was a decline in membership of the Greek organizations from 30 members per organization in 1990 to only 18 members per organization in 2006.

The plan’s objectives are to bring the Greek life membership to levels above those of 1990 and to enhance the community surrounding the university. The NJIT Campus Gateway Project, which encompases plans for Greek Village, is aimed at developing a “college town” neighborhood with amenities for students, faculty, and staff.

According to the Gateway Project Status 2010 update, The New Jersey Institute of Technology signed the development agreement with Jones Lang LaSalle in December 2009. He has completed similar projects at the University of Houston, George Washington University, and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

“Jones Lang LaSalle is one of the best developers in the country,” says Dr. Bloom.

Future construction plans envision:

• A deck to be built on the current surface parking lot of St. Michael’s Hospital on Martin Luther King Blvd. This project is in its first phase and an agreement has not yet been fully executed between the developer and St. Michaels Hospital.

• Renovations to St. Michael’s Hospital and construction on University Park – which is located along Central Avenue – with plans for retail, residential, and academic buildings, a conference center, and a hotel.

Further balance of the cost and revenues needed to pay for the project will be determined as the phases of the NJIT Campus Gateway Plan are developed.

“Down the road, it’s going to be a real help,” says Dr. Gentul.

Andrew Mohammed can be contacted at aam4@njit.edu

For More Information About Greek Life
Visit NJIT.edu/GreekLife or go to Campus Center Room 493

Stay updated! Stay connected!
A Newark Getaway Review: Art Kitchen

A little bit of Newark, a breath of Art, and decadent food to take a break in.

Art Kitchen pulses with a vintage feel and the hum of the lunch crowd. Bold graphic black and white damask wallpaper envelops the cozy, light-filled space. The doorway is flanked by two elevated seating areas, which are nestled in the large windows that look out on the Newark skyline. Students and business professionals stream in around noon, ordering fresh fruit smoothies or chickpea sandwiches. "Most of our food is made to order" says co-owner Octavio Pires, as he sits across from me at the long white table in the back of the café, which is conveniently located just blocks from the NJIT campus on the intersection of Halsey St and New St. Since opening in 2008, it has become a popular haunt for health-conscious creative types, including many students from Rutgers and NJIT.

Art Kitchen has unique, healthy menu offerings and an extensive selection of coffees, teas and fresh juices. Many of the employees, including Pires, are vegetarian, and this is reflected in the menu. The most popular items, in his opinion, are: The raw juice bar ($4.45), turkey sandwich ($4.95), tuna melt ($4.95) and the hummus ($3.75). An underrated favorite? The vegan peanut butter cupcake ($1.50). What makes Art Kitchen different from Starbucks? "Specialized, trained baristas," according to Pires. He believes that the appeal of Art Kitchen lies in the service, which is "young and hip." The café’s name is a clever complement to Hell’s Kitchen Lounge, another stylish Brick City hangout which Art Kitchen co-owner Anthony Moraes opened in 2007. It is located on 150 Lafayette in downtown Newark, just a few blocks away from Penn Station. When asked about the origin of their idea for an art-centric café, Pires noted that they used to share the space with a framing store. Pires is also a patron of the arts, and many of his friends are successful artists. Art curator Rebecca Jampol has collaborated with Pires and Moraes to create a youthful but elegant atmosphere. An eclectic mix of music, which ranges from classic rock and roll to Indian music, drifts through the speakers. It complements the décor, which features many pieces culled from a flea market in Brooklyn.

The low menu prices keep the profit margin tight, which, according to Pires, is one of the challenges of operating a café in Newark. Why Newark? "Newark has that raw quality that NYC will never have again," says employee Samer Fouad, a 21-year-old graphic design student at Rutgers. "NYC has become cliché," he adds. "We are definitely adding more to the community." Although red velvet cupcakes ($1.50) are the best sellers, Fouad favors the lemon cupcakes. He prepared a delicious hazelnut latte ($3.50) for me and shared a sample of his own concoction called a “dirty chai” ($3.75): a blend of chai tea, steamed milk, and espresso.

Art Kitchen has gallery openings held at the café every 6 weeks. Openings have food, drinks, and music. Fouad has displayed some of his own work at Art Kitchen. His appraisal of the café is unequivocal: “Art Kitchen is a wonderful place to work and a wonderful place to eat.”

Art Kitchen
61 Halsey St.
Newark, NJ 07102
(973) 732-1278

Hours:
8 a.m. to 8 p.m. on weekdays
9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturdays.

Photos Courtesy of Maria Conneran
Connections Miniversity

An inside look into who planned this year’s festivities and events!

George Scoullos
Contributing Writer

Every summer, in the months of June and July, all incoming NJIT freshmen are required to attend Connections Miniversity, NJIT’s interactive freshman orientation program. This summer, Connections Miniversity, or CMV as it is commonly abbreviated, had over 1000 incoming freshmen attend the two day introductory college experience.

Despite the fact that CMV is an integral part of each student’s preface to NJIT many people are not aware of the purpose and importance of the program and the hard work it takes to plan and execute such a successful freshman orientation. The CMV program begins in the fall, when the Lead Cluster Coordinators along with the Associate Director for Leadership, Diversity and First Year Programs begin hiring their staff of 18 to 20 students known as Cluster Coordinators. The majority of the students that apply to be a Cluster Coordinator are sophomores that recently went through the CMV Program their Freshman year. All others that apply tend to be students that are actively involved in Campus Clubs such as the Student Senate and Greek Life.

The staff is broken down into 4 primary committees which are chaired by returning cluster coordinators. These committees include The Highlander planner committee, The Highlander Race Committee and the Club Fair Committee. The staff is broken down into 4 primary committees which are chaired by returning cluster coordinators. These committees include The Club Fair Committee, The Highlander Race Committee and the Club Fair Committee. This year the Highlander Race Committee was chaired by Kristen Hagen. The committee’s primary duty was to make the Highlander Planner, a booklet with vast amounts of information about NJIT’s Campus Resources. A copy is given to every incoming freshman during Connections Miniversity.

The Club Fair committee was chaired by Bernard Wylie and Christina Melo. This committee’s responsibilities included planning all the games played during Connections Miniversity. The Club Fair Committee was chaired by George Scoullos. This committee was responsible for inviting all the student organizations recognized by the Student Senate, Greek Life and by the University to the Club Fair that is held during Connections Miniversity. This gives the incoming freshman a chance to network with matriculated students, learn about all that NJIT Clubs have to offer as well as encourage them to get involved on campus.

Throughout the months of June and July, Connections Miniversity hosts five- two day freshmen orientation sessions. The staff would arrive on campus on Sunday’s in order to prepare for Monday and Tuesday. During their two days here the incoming freshman get the opportunity to meet their peers, become familiar with the campus, and have some fun playing all the games the Highlander Race Committee has prepared while they learn as much information as possible about NJIT and the college experience. The Connections Miniversity Staff also hosts Transfer Connections, which is a one day session for students that have transferred from another institution or community college. During Transfer Connections, many student services departments, from Financial Aid to Public Safety come and speak to the students. I have been part of the Connections Miniversity Program for three years, and I have had a chance to work with a lot of great people and meet a lot of the incoming freshman. If you enjoy working with others, meeting new people and are seeking a professional experience that further connects you to NJIT, apply to be a Connections Miniversity Cluster Coordinator today!
What Every Freshmen Expects from College!

Expectations, examinations, and education. First glance at college.

Danielle Judka
Contributing Writer

Freshman orientation is important to any college in keeping their incoming students excited for the upcoming year. Some orientations are dull and boring, while some are exciting and keep the new class optimistic the next four years of their lives.

Connections Miniversity (CMV) is NJIT’s freshman orientation program, but unlike other orientations, it is a two day overnight event! This orientation is interactive and has selected sessions in which connections groups participate in contests to see which the best is!

After taking the grueling and ever so annoying placement tests, freshmen are then assigned their CMV dates and then continue to prepare for their stay. Upon arriving at orientation, the students are separated into their respective session groups, which are led by upperclassmen who go through the ropes of a basic NJIT experience. Students participate in numerous contests such as a banner competition, relay race, quiz challenge, skit arrangement, and whatever else the group leaders can think of and plan during the event. Most of the students regarded the CMV experience as “full of activities that kept you from getting bored”. This was also a great opportunity to immerse freshmen in the diversity that NJIT offers. One student showed his surprise in getting to know the cultures of his group mates. “I didn’t realize that so many different kinds of people could have similar interests,” the incoming freshmen said, “You get people from all across the radar coming here to learn the same things you want to learn!”

Though some students showed how nervous they are about coming into the school, others expressed enthusiasm. “No pain, no gain,” an eager student expressed at the end of the CMV experience, “You have to work a little to get by a little.”

Many incoming freshmen are excited to start a new page in their lives, and welcome new opportunities at their doors. CMV was the gateway that allowed these freshmen to get a feel for NJIT before they even begin classes! With class right around the corner and fall semester starting, these freshmen are up and ready to go!
The panel of jurors includes prominent speakers that will judge the house on certain criteria including: architecture, engineering, market appeal, communications, and affordability. Contestants earn points by completing certain tasks during the course of the competition, and the judges will evaluate how well the teams meet these objectives in their respective houses. In addition, the judges will put to the test how formidable the energy-efficient improvements truly are. The ENJOY house has been sponsored for over $600,000 by local New Jersey companies including the PSE&G Foundation, SKANSKA USA and Northeast Precast L.L.C. In addition, Team New Jersey received a $100,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Energy. The ENJOY house is 960-ft² and intended for couples that retire to the Jersey Shore. Thus, the house is accessible to people of all ages and levels of mobility. The ENJOY house is due to ship out towards the end of September in order to be reassembled in D.C.

Visit www.solardecathlon.gov for more information on Team New Jersey, their competitors, and the 2011 Solar Decathlon.
Priyanka Rana  
Contributing Writer

College freshman: “I am afraid; what will it be like?” Community Connections will not only answer this and other questions, it will engage incoming freshmen with a network of peer mentors and advisors from different NJIT communities.

Incoming freshmen who are part of neither the Albert Dorman Honors College nor the Educational Opportunity Program are enrolled in Community Connections, and will be assigned a peer mentor according to their respective majors and colleges. Peer Mentors were once freshmen themselves, so they can act as guides that will facilitate the transition from high school to NJIT. They act as friends who will provide incoming students with encouragement and support they need to be successful.

Move-In Day!

Upperclassmen aide students and their families as they move into their dorms (top left) and the U.C. CAs welcome each students with a smile (top right)

Different organizations and members of greek life lend their time and effort into helping new students move into their respective dorm rooms.
Well howdy and welcome to a new semester of movie fun, breakthrough fans. I can bet that for many the summer went by too fast, so let's take this time out for a bit of immediate nostalgia. After all, it hasn't been summer for a few hours (If we count Labor Day as the summer's end). What better time to reminisce and look back at the beauty that was the summer of 2011?

For many, Summer mean BBQ's, days at the beach (or shore if you wanna roll that way), vacations, or jobs/internships. That's all fine and dandy for those summer days, but Ohh Ohhh those Su-uh-mer Nights! Those summer nights were built for packing the theaters with the family or friends and letting the pop corn fly.

This year's blockbuster season had the expected failures and the unexpected triumphs which have come to be expected from Hollywood's summer crop. I've narrowed the summer season down to the five movies that are certainly worth your time, delivering a pleasant surprise. This list should cover a wide enough range of film types to please even the pickiest movie goer.

1. Midnight in Paris (Woody Allen)
   - A trip into the past, the film is a magical exploration of nostalgia and love in the beautiful city of Paris. That combination just seems perfect for a clear summer night.
   - Perfect Woody Allen film.

2. Beginners (Independent)
   - The movie feels incredibly personal, and with a story that stems from writer/director Mike Mills' real life experiences in dealing with an un-closeted elderly father.
   - The movie's unique style perfectly personifies the tones and messages of the film. When it ends, with little resolution, we come to realize the depth and beauty of the title as we can expect that we are only beginners.

3. Bridesmaids (Comedy)
   - If you followed my initial rave, Fast 5 was a breath of fresh/mindless/fun/fast/furious air. Where some movies mixed dealing with the Cold War, X-Men First Class, or WWII, Captain America, in with their action, Fast 5 had the good sense to simply deliver what we really want in a Summer blockbuster: a laugh. It's mindless fun! Also, it is worth noting that this movie was the only one summer movie to be expected from Hollywood's summer crop. I've narrowed the summer season down to the five movies that are certainly worth your time, delivering a pleasant surprise. This list should cover a wide enough range of film types to please even the pickiest movie goer.
   - Super 8 was by far the super heroes were all on a serious trip, Fast 5 was a breath of fresh/mindless/fun/fast/furious air. Where some movies mixed dealing with the Cold War, X-Men First Class, or WWII, Captain America, in with their action, Fast 5 had the good sense to simply deliver what we really want in a Summer blockbuster: a laugh. It's mindless fun! Also, it is worth noting that this movie was the only one summer movie to be expected from Hollywood's summer crop. I've narrowed the summer season down to the five movies that are certainly worth your time, delivering a pleasant surprise. This list should cover a wide enough range of film types to please even the pickiest movie goer.

4. Super 8 (Family/Adventure)
   - Super 8 is super great! If you followed my immediate nostalgia joke earlier, but didn't like it and are in the mood for real nostalgia, then Super 8 is the flick for you. Paying homage to the child-centric block busters of the 1980's, Super 8 is a big budget picture to offer an ethnically diverse cast; and yes it does get bonus points for the Brazilian butts.

5. Fast 5 (action hero)
   - Fast 5, or "5 Fast 5 Furious" as I like to call it, serves a high 5 for breathing new life into a tired series. This movie settled all my immediate nostalgia joke earlier, but didn't like it and are in the mood for real nostalgia, then Super 8 is the flick for you. Paying homage to the child-centric block busters of the 1980's, Super 8 is a big budget picture to offer an ethnically diverse cast; and yes it does get bonus points for the Brazilian butts.
The Need to Know Basis on Anime

A perspective on the influencing culture of Japanese Animation.

Danielle Judka
Contributing Writer

It is hard to miss the influence of animation in today’s entertainment. It has enhanced how we can visualize a story in ways a physical actor cannot. Imagine how a group of artists can get together, form a story, draw it, and bring to life such amazing pieces; well, Japan’s had that concept down since almost the 1960s! What makes anime stand out above other forms of animation, such as the rendered animation of companies like Pixar, is its already deep involvement in modern entertainment and its ability to connect with the audience in ways similar to a common drama or comedy. Though it may appear just to have cute girls and handsome guys in a common school setting, anime hosts a variety of stories and plots that may surprise you! Genres range from cute comedies to dark tragedies, and everywhere in between! Anime is extremely open in terms of what you can pick up or watch, so it is easy to satisfy anyone’s tastes! Like any form of entertainment, there are the classics, masterpieces that America and the world have loved for decades. Of these, we have My Neighbor Totoro, which portrays an ideal type of childhood. Sailor Moon, a very well recognized anime that focuses on cute girls fighting evil for the sake of love and peace, justjumpstarted the “magical girl” concepts commonly seen today.

Akira is a sci-fi cult-classic anime that highlights gangster motifs with a futuristic spin, and was revolutionary in crystalizing those characteristics which define anime. The well-known Gundam series is famous for introducing the “mecha” and space-war genres, though it has several different series that can appeal to almost any audience. Neon Genesis Evangelion is another sci-fi / mecha classic with a psychological feel; it is also extremely popular and has gone through numerous remakes. The more commonly known titles are the “shonen” (action) based titles. DragonBall Z is a cult-classic that has become a part of most cultures and has provided a heavy influence over a long span of years. Despite the fact that action titles tend to win most audiences, others are story based and meant to strike at the heart or lighten up a mood.

“Shojo” (romantic based) or slice-of-life titles are also pretty popular. Of these titles the most well-known are Ouran High School Host Club, a romantic comedy about a female student stumbling upon a school host club; Baccano!, a 1930s based comedy about a group of thieves; Durarara!!, a new title about gang wars in one city; K-ON!, a light-hearted music based series; and also many more! Newer titles include Death Note, a psychological thriller; One Piece, a comedic pirate-based action; Fairy Tail, another comedic adventure-action series; Trigun, a wild-west based sort of anime; Full Metal Alchemist, an adventure based title centered around a alchemist and his brother; Tiger and Bunny, a new title about televised superheroes that compete to save their city from evil; and many more! Is anime hard to come by? Not if you know your resources! Though most titles are found only in Japan, dedicated groups are devoting themselves to keeping people around the world involved in the progression of anime by adding English subtitles to presently running series. To get a feel for different series, for online anime subgroups streaming sites like Hulu or Youtube. If you need more information on what anime to look for, you can search Google for popular titles or visit anime-newsnetwork.com.

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**Sudoku Challenge**

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**Weekly Horoscopes of Awesomeness**

**Aries** (March 21-April 20)

Things aren’t look’n so hot for you this week Aries. Remember that thing you did last week that raised a lot of eyebrows? (yeah that thing… you know what I’m talking about) Well, you may have had your fun, then, but no one around you was enjoying it, so you’re about to get some pretty intense backlash. The stars say you should find somewhere to hide for at least two days before the blowback finds you. Preferably hide on one of those dangerously steep cliffs that rams typically climb on. No one’s likely to find you there, or have the urge to go looking.

**Taurus** (April 21-May 20)

Good lord Taurus, why did you have to eat so much last night? What were you thinking? The Sun told me that’s not very good for the digestion, so I bet you’re gonna be in and out of the bathroom more often today. It’s all good though, I’m sure you enjoyed that meal more than anyone knows. just don’t do it again anytime soon. Wait a week before the urge to be a gluton overwhelms you, or you may find yourself having your last meal way too soon!

**Gemini** (May 21-June 20)

So the stars aren’t being straight up with me this week Gemini. But I’m gonna be straight up with you, I promise. Things are a bituzzy in the sky this week, but here I go! I see…two melons…no…wait…two kiwis. Well, it’s definitely two of some kind of fruit, but I can’t be too sure. You like fruit right? Sure you do! There’s definite something fruity about this week for you Gemini, so go out there and grab some melons! (or kiwis if you prefer).

**Cancer** (June 21-July 22)

Well gee Cancer, aren’t you just prone to heroics this week. I mean, I know you’re a swell person and all, but damn! You’ve been saving so many people recently you can’t even count them all! Keep at it Cancer, cause there may be a damsel in distress one of these days, and she’s bound to be grateful. Whoops! I forgot about all the lady Cancer’s out there. But don’t worry, the stars don’t discrimi-nate…often. There’s bound to be a strapping young lad in danger for you as well.

**Leo** (July 23-August 22)

For once Leo, the stars chose to be very specific about you this week. Like, this doesn’t ever happen Leo, EVER! The stars are telling me that you, yes you, are bound to have a pleasant cruise this week. And like, it’s gonna be on a boat. ON A BOAT Leo! Can you believe it? I bet you’ve never been on a boat ever. But do remember to take swimming lessons before leaving Leo; don’t go drowning on me now!

**Virgo** (August 23-September 22)

The Maiden is weeping this week Virgo. Oh no, she’s not weeping because she’s sad, don’t worry about that. She’s weeping because you Virgo’s have made her so happy recently, what with all your good attitudes and efforts out there. But seriously, you’ve all been such great people recently that you made your starsarsign cry…YOU MADE HER CRY. You are a terrible person and need to recon-sider your life because you made such a great lady cry. Make her stop crying! I can’t bear to look at her anymore!

**Libra** (September 23-October 22)

Everything must be in balance. You know this better than the other stars Libra. Like two wrongs don’t make a right, and two lefts…well, almost put you back where you started…or something like that. Trust me I know what I’m talking about. The stars never lie and are always in balance. But wait! A streaking comet has just tipped the scales. Best get your bookshelves in order this week all you Libras, or the delicate balance you have on them is bound to come toppling down.

**Scorpio** (October 23-November 21)

Games games games games games, huh Scorpio? You just love being fun, and there’s been no other way to go about things recently for you. Fine then! If there’s a board game, video game, or some other form of entertain-ment enticing you this week, go for it. See if care…I know the stars don’t pay any mind. Why do you get to have all the fun while the stars have to hang in the sky for your amusement? Are you even amused by that, you funny person you? I bet you are.

**Sagittarius** (November 22-December 21)

What if I told you that for nine easy payments of $5.55 you could have a great new blender for your kitchen? Well don’t buy into that crap this week. You’ve already bought enough things from the shopping channel that are piling up in your home. Have you ever watched that show “Hoarders” Sagittari-us? DON’T IGNORE ME! I know you have! The stars are implying something here, and it is best you take heed.

**Capricorn** (December 22-January 19)

Whoa, that’s seri-ously awesome for you this week. I just looked at the stars, and man have I got to tell you, there has never been a better arrangement for good luck than that. Just to give you an idea of how awesome it looks, imagine if the stars told you there was a billion dollar lottery on the horizon, and then 200,000 people win the lottery. If you play the lottery, you win $20. But if you don’t play the lottery, you win $0. And then out of a sudden the moon burst and the gold turned into diamonds that rained down on the Earth. Um, but that wouldn’t be so good for the tides I suppose. Just know that some luck is bound to come your way this week (and the moon isn’t going to explode ei-ther; lucky break I suppose)

**Aquarius** (Janu-ary 20-February 19)

The trade winds are blowing in your favor this week. A suave and dapper gentleman is coming your way this week with a business offer that will blow your mind. Or perhaps an of fer you can’t refuse (I can’t account for every Mafioso out there dude). Whichever comes your way, know that you need to accept. This offer of a lifetime will either make you or break you. But if you get the Mafioso, it’s probably best you start packing heat.

**Pisces** (February 20-March 20)

I want to say one word to you, just one word…plastics. The stars told me to tell you that. Hope you know what that means, cause I don’t.

**Random Thoughts**

“How long does it take for a chocobo (or panda, if you don’t know what a chocobo is) to reach adult hood? At what age is it considered an adult? When can it start pay- ing its own bills?”