By Corrie Gray
Staff Writer

GSU evacuated and shut down the E & F wings at approximately 3:45 p.m. November 9, to address a potentially hazardous materials situation in one of the science department's labs. Faculty with offices in the area were denied entry and all evening classes scheduled to meet in the E & F wings were canceled. For hours faculty, staff and students were prohibited from entering the area while local and campus police blocked roads on the east side of campus.

For some, the Hall of Governors and cafeteria became an impromptu classroom or office as dozens of students and faculty awaited word during the evacuation. The building reopened for normal activities Thursday morning.

Although many on campus speculated that there was a chemical spill of some kind, GSU’s Director of Public Affairs and Marketing Eric Matanyi told the Phoenix that there was not a spill. “A small amount of picric acid was found during a safety inspection and it was determined that the substance should be removed,” said Matanyi, noting that it 500 grams or less and was stored properly and had been on campus for some time prior to the inspection. Picric acid is often found in science laboratories and chemical storage rooms and is used for staining of cells during biology experiments.

Continued on pg.6

Actors Rashaad Hall and Deja K. Taylor bless Governors State University’s Center for Performing Arts stage, this past Saturday at BPM, in the hip-hop theater show "Flow" written by Will Power and directed by Sonita Surratt.

By Tolulope Afolabi
Contributing Writer

"Flow" graces CFPA stage

GSU’s Center for Performing Arts welcomed “Flow” which is part of the “One More Night” series that brings productions playing at local Chicago theaters to GSU’s Center for the Performing Arts.

“I am excited about the series of One More Night,” said GSU’s President Elaine Maimon. “This is compliments of the Chicago Community Trust.”

“Flow” is about the story of a young rapper along with seven story tellers on a mission to save the African-American oral tradition. Along the journey they face the pitfalls of modern urban society. The play teaches us significant life lessons and teaches us to share our individual stories in order to teach others our life lessons.

Sonita Surratt, director of “Flow” appeared with GSU’s English Professor Rashidah Muhammad for a lecture on Nov. 9 in Engbreton Hall and to discuss the powerful narrative that runs through the show. “Flow articulates oral tradition history…hip-hop genres today are stepping up, they are using their voices in many ways,” said Surratt.

Surratt also discussed how some artists still stay in the lane of the political messages that hip-hop originally used to be about, unlike the derogatory languages used in today’s hip hop that sends out a negative message. Surratt uses Lupe Fiasco a popular hip hop artist, as an example of artists who still talk about positive and political messages in his songs, and noted that there are many hip-hop artists who send out positive messages. However, the majority of them are underground artists mainly because the recording industry wants to put out mainstream hip-hop since that is what most people are likely to listen to.

Will Power, creator of “Flow,” has been lauded as a pioneer in the emerging genre of hip hop theater and received the theater trophy at the 2004 U.S. Comedy Arts Festival for "Flow".
Editorial: American student loan program needs revision

By Oklahoma Daily
Editorial Board

On Thursday, The Oklahoma Daily published a letter from President Barack Obama outlining recent actions to reduce the burden of student debt.

His plan enables students to consolidate multiple loan payments into one monthly payment at a lower interest rate. It also calls for a program that would lower monthly payments for those students using the income-contingent payment option from 15 percent of students' salaries to 10 percent to go into effect next year, two years earlier than planned.

We have to say, President Obama, your actions are a good start. But they're not enough. Reports show student debt will reach $1 trillion this year, and almost 9 percent of student loans are in default, according to the Department of Education.

A problem this serious calls for serious reform, not Band-Aids. Students often can't get work right out of school or must accept a lower-paying position. If students lose their jobs, can't find work or can't make a living wage, they will get behind on loan payments. They are then faced with serious consequences, such as ballooning repayments, wage garnishments, heavy fines, destroyed credit scores and the inability to borrow for a house or car.

Even if they manage to get ahead financially, the burden of their debt will push them back under. They will inevitably default, costing the government — and, ultimately, taxpayers — money.

The problem is the American student loan system is not sensitive to the difficulties of those first few years out of school. Under the usual model, the payments are on a set monthly schedule regardless of income and spread over just 10 years. Otherwise, for example, students must specially apply for the income-contingent option every year.

But in the British system all loan payments are calculated directly from wages. So payments for the year are capped at 9 percent of any earnings above £15,000, or $20,405. Because of changing costs of living, that cap will be increased to £21,000, or $28,571, for those starting their loan in 2012. This money is taken directly from students' monthly salaries, like income tax, so there's no chance of default. If students' incomes drop below the cap, no more payments are taken until their income rises. The remaining debt is forgiven after 20 years.

The UK's progressive student loan system has kept student debt low and defaults lower than 2 percent, according to the Student Loans Company. In 1997, the year before this system was instituted, the Student Loans Company, which handles all student loans, estimated £61 million, or $83 million, would not be repaid because of defaults. This resulted in the British taxpayers paying for 20 percent of the balance that year. Under the new system, that monetary burden has all but evaporated.

The U.S. student loan program is hemorrhaging money. Adopting the British model may cost the government money in the short-term by lowering payments and forgiving debt after a certain time, but it ultimately will increase revenue by keeping more students paying off their loans.

Since American students pay more for their education, and thus must borrow more, the U.S. can expand the time before debt forgiveness to 30 years. Yes, students may end up paying more in interest by paying off their loans over a longer period, but this increase is vastly outweighed by the fines and fees involved in defaulting.

An income-based plan would save money for both students and taxpayers, not to mention giving the next generation of Americans a way to navigate our failing job market and economy without choosing between an education and a chance at financial success.

In your letter, President Obama, you said you hoped we would join you in your efforts. Now, we're asking you to join us in an effort to take real action to reform a broken system.

By Tolulope Afolabi
Contributing Writer

GSU’s Muslim Student Association hosted an Eid celebration Nov. 8. The Muslim Student Association (MSA) is all about bringing Muslim students together on campus, and also to educate both Muslims and Non-Muslims about Islam. Various students and MSA staff members gathered in Engbreton Hall for the ceremony as they shared their views on what the Eid meant to them. The ceremony was hosted by Rashida Muhammad, who is a faculty member in the English department and also the president for the Muslim Student Association.

“The Eid celebration is a holiday that Muslims all over the world celebrate twice a year,” said Rashida Muhammad. The first Eid, Eidul Fitr is celebrated after the fasting month of Ramadan. In 2011 Ramadan was observed throughout August. The second Eid, Eid Adha, which means the “Festival of Sacrifice” is celebrated at the end of the Hajj. This year the Hajj was observed in early November and was followed by the Eid Adha. Rashida Muhammad explains that the Hajj is a three-day celebration whereby Muslims all over the world come together to remember and commemorate the trials and triumphs of the Prophet Abraham.

“The Eidul-Adha is important to me because it’s a part of my religion. It is one of the rules of Islam to honor the Hajj,” Muhammad said. It’s also a celebration that brings communities and families together.

“The Eid all my family and friends gather together, pray, celebrate and enjoy dinner,” said Ahmad Batroukh, a student member of the MSA.

During the celebration, a goat or sheep is slaughtered to feed poor people. This action signifies the willingness to make their lives a sacrifice of service to God in order to stay on the straight path established by Him.

For more information about the event or the Muslim Student Association contact Rashida Muhammad at 708-534-6974, or via email rmuhammad@govst.edu
GSU’s Table Tennis Team wins all

By Tolulope Afolabi
Contributing Writer

GSU’s Table Tennis Team won all five of its matches at the NCTTA Upper Midwest Division Tournament held in the GSU gym on Saturday, Nov 12. The six schools registered in the Upper Midwest Division, including GSU, are DePaul, Northwestern, Purdue, UIC, UW-Madison and UW-Milwaukee. Teams from Wisconsin and DePaul tied for second with a record of 4 and 1.

“The NCTTA is an association that governs table tennis at the Collegiate level,” said Dr Ting Wang, the head coach for the team at GSU. “I practice with the teams on Wednesdays from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. The co-ed team also practices on Thursdays from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.”

“There are about 130 students participating...last year, we beat Princeton and University of Washington,” he added.

“We have five men and five women on our Co-ed and Women’s teams. They are Yuanfei (Vergil) Cai, Xuehong (Carmen) Chen, Jing (Jackie) He, Yuefan (Penn) Lin, Lishun Lu, Jada Nettle, Wenjie (Neo) Nie, Jie (Jessie) Wang, Larry Webster, and Yingyi (Angie) Zheng,” said Wang.

Tryouts have already been conducted in the early semester. If students are interested, they can participate in the tryouts for next semester.

The team also takes volunteers to keep score at tournaments. Students can contact Karen Caesar-Smith at kcaesar-smith@govst.edu to volunteer for future tournaments.

For more information about the NCTTA, log on their website at http://www.nctta.org/.

You can also find information about GSU Team’s structure and rules at the GSU website or contact Tim Wang at 708-534-4965 or via email at twang@govst.edu.

PTSA Bowling Fundraiser

The GSU Physical Therapy Student Association (PTSA) is sponsoring an afternoon of bowling and fun on Saturday, December 3. The fun takes place from 1 to 3 p.m. at Orland Bowl/Mickadoon’s, 8601 W. 159th Street, Orland Park.

The event includes two hours of bowling, shoe rental, pizza buffet, salad, and soda. Tickets are $25 for adults and $20 for children. For non-bowlers, tickets are $15 for adults and $10 for children. Cash bar available.

Funds raised will support the GSU PTSA. For more information or to RSVP, contact amyles821@gmail.com.
University Park, Illinois, November 4, 2011 – Tellebration! returns to Governors State University on Saturday, November 19 as three master storytellers will delight and captivate their audience as part of a world-wide celebration of the spoken word. The free event takes place at 7 p.m., in E Lounge, on GSU’s main campus in University Park.

Tellebration! was introduced to Chicago Southland audiences for the first time in 2010. The event originated 19 years ago as a means of building grassroots community support for the age-old art of storytelling.

GSU is now one of 400 official sites around the world hosting storytelling events on the Saturday before Thanksgiving.

"Last year’s turnout exceeded our expectations," said Lynne Clayton, producer of the event. "Several faculty encouraged their students to attend and a good number were in the audience. We are excited about this year’s lineup of storytellers and hope to exceed last year’s successful presentation."

Donations will be accepted at Tellebration!, with all proceeds going to the South Suburban Humane Society and Crossroads Shih Tzu Rescue. Tellebration! is made possible by the GSU Spirit Committee. Information is available by contacting Clayton at (708) 534-3075 or lclayton@govst.edu.

Speakers at this year’s Tellebration!

Zane Chait is a member of both the National Storytelling Network and the Illinois Storytelling Inc. He has been sharing traditional tales and personal stories for many years. He is known for his multicultural tales of wisdom, foolishness, and trickery. A former school teacher, he also offers numerous workshops and classes, most notably through the Northwestern Saturday Enrichment Program. He has produced storytelling events such as Tales from the Heller Woods Story Fest and Twisted Love Tales at the Suburban Fine Arts Center, both in Highland Park.

Dan Hechenberger is assistant professor of social studies education at GSU; his research methods include multicultural approaches and performing arts methods. He is a former interpretative ranger at the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial in St. Louis and founder of Nipwaantikaani, an educational non-profit organization that researches Midwest Native American history. His favorite storytelling venues include libraries, classrooms, nature centers, elderhostels, historic sites, and state and national parks. He has made presentations throughout Illinois, in the Midwest, and to both national and international educational groups and audiences.

Lynne Clayton has been a professional actress and member of Actor’s Equity for more than two decades. She began storytelling several years ago and has been a frequent teller at schools, day care centers, nature centers, retirement homes, and senior centers throughout the region and across the Midwest. As a GSU staff member, she has brought her stories and songs to both young children at the university’s Family Development Center and also to adult students studying to become teachers.
Better safe

Continued from Pg. 1

The substance has also found some use in organic chemistry for the preparation of crystalline salts of organic bases for the purpose of identification and characterization, according to the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee safety and health website. (http://www4.uwm.edu/usa/safety/laboratory_safety/picric.cfm)

According to the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) exposure to picric acid is hazardous in the case of inhalation, ingestion, skin, or eye contact.

Skin contact can produce inflammation and blistering. Inhalation of dust can produce irritation to gastro-intestinal or respiratory tract, characterized by burning, sneezing and coughing. The substance may be toxic to blood, kidneys, liver and repeated or prolonged exposure to the substance can produce target organs damage.

Picric acid is slightly soluble in water and highly sensitive to heat, shock, and friction. It is classified as a flammable solid when wet with more that 30% water and highly explosive with less that 30% water. The substance is toxic by all routes of entry. (http://ehs.ucr.edu/resources/picricacid.pdf)
FEATURES

11/16/11

Film review: Intimate Grammar

By Leah Chapman
Contributing Writer

This year at the Chicago Israeli Film Festival, I saw a rather disillusioned and darkly comical feature directed by Nir Bergman. Intimate Grammar (Hadikduk HaPnimi) focuses on a cheerless story about a young boy named Aharon (Roee Elsberg) struggling with the tragedy of mental and physical maturity, while surviving in a home with little love and direction. Based on a David Grossman novel, this coming-of-age film tries to illustrate the tensions of the preceding Six Day War and the economic slump Jerusalem was facing in 1967.

Even though the film is wonderfully shot and the performances were superb, the narrative failed to establish a clear motive or change in all of the characters. The audience never learns anything significant about Aharon or any of the other characters, and is left in state of shock by the end.

This feature’s lack of growth makes it less intimate than intended and provides a difficult challenge for the audience to feel connected. If the characters do not grow, how can we?

Despite the film being deeply depressing, I do recommend watching this feature. If you enjoy a tragic story at all, give this film a shot and decide for yourself.

Book review: It’ll All Make Sense One Day by Common

By Danyale Lucado
Editor-in-Chief

Honest, intimate and authentically Chicago is what comes to mind when turning the pages of the new memoir It’ll All Make Sense One Day, written by hip-hop artist and actor Common, with Adam Bradley.

In this candid memoir, which is written as a collection of letters and intertwined with thoughts from the artist’s mother, Common gives readers an intimate look into the years he spent developing into not only the artist, but the man we know as Common.

Growing up on the south side of Chicago as Lonnie Rashid Lynn, Jr. (called Rashid by friends) Common details his mischief as a young teen dealing with the commonality of gang activity and drug trafficking. The son of an elementary school principal and a local basketball star, Common knew that his life was destined to be anything but "common"—all pun intended.

Laced with references to Chicago hot spots familiar to any teen growing up on Chicago’s south side during the 90’s, Common’s Chicago roots feel more authentic and intimate than those shared by other celebrities who claim the windy city as home. Trips to the west side to meet girls and hopping on the train at 87th and the Dan Ryan to make the trip downtown takes you back to the days of WKRC and original, authentic hip-hop music—A time when lyrical content and the art form of the music took precedence over commercial sales and media sensation.

For true hip-hop heads, the book details the background stories behind some of Common’s hottest tracks such as Can I borrow a Dollar and I Used to Love H.E.R., of the early days, and Retrospect for Life and Universal Mind Control of more recent years.

Common not only takes us through his journey as practically becoming the brand for “conscious” hip-hop (hip-hop with intellectual and thought provoking lyrics) but he shows us a deeper side of himself as he journey’s to manhood and spiritual wholeness, his quest to make his mother proud and to show her that he was actually listening to her wisdom over the years—his efforts at having a very present and meaningful relationship with his teenage daughter, forgiving and loving his own father for what he has and has not been in his life, and his journey to love.

Individual chapters of the book are carved out to give intimate details of celebrity love interests including his deep rooted love for neo-soul singer Eryka Badu and the simple ways he shows his love for professional tennis player Serena Williams.

The memoir does not escape readers without sharing thoughts on Common’s controversial White House visit. He speaks candidly about his feelings on the controversy and what it has meant to him to see Barack Obama as president.

Common is authentic in his passion for hip-hop, his love for Chicago, his pursuit of wholeness and the journey to achieving everything God has destined for him. The spirit of art, love, compassion, laughter, and personal growth are felt at every page, keeping you curled up with this book for hours on end.

It’ll All Make Sense One Day was a refreshing reminder of what hip-hop was and can be—intelligent, soulful, artistic, spiritual, powerful, and enlightening. Readers will find that Common embodies this and more. I am eager to hear more from this profound artist, in film, print, and most definitely on the mic.
Comics

PHD: I've Looked At It

"I'VE LOOKED AT IT."

"PHD" ("Piled Higher & Deeper"), a comic about being a graduate student, is by Jorge Cham. Updates occur about twice per week. To read more comics, head to www.PHDcomics.com

XKCD: MTV Generation

"XKCD" is a webcomic "of romance, sarcasm, math, and language" run by Randall Munroe. To read the latest, head to www.xkcd.com

GSU Happenings

International Education Week
Global Entrepreneurship Week
Global Plate at the Cafeteria

Wednesday, Nov. 16: Mexican
Thursday, Nov. 17: European

GSU Forensic Debate Team
"Should Governors State University Become a Four Year Institution?"
Wednesday, November 16th
Hall of Governors
6:00 p.m.

The Balkans Region:
Opportunities and Challenges
panel discussion
November 17
4:30 – 6 p.m.
Cafeteria Annex

Thanksgiving Holiday
GSU Closed
November 24 & 25

PTSA Bowling Fundraiser
December 3
1 – 3 p.m.
Orland Bowl,
Orland Park