

The Charger *Slant*

News from a different angle

April, 2010

Fourth anniversary

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Student Voice

What's your stance on animal rights?

Jake D., sophomore, says: I'm all for it. I mean, really, I'm an animal kind of guy. I have like six pets at home, and I really love them all, so I don't think it's fair to treat animals unfairly. It's sort of like racism, you know? I mean if, like, African-American people can go to our schools, then animals should too.

Chelsea I., junior, says: I think animals should have rights. They're like people, right? Just don't let them drive, like, cars and stuff. I mean just 'cause they probably can't hold the steering wheel. Except snakes, because they could, like, grab it with their teeth. That's why you shouldn't let them on planes.

Billy C., sophomore, says: Animal rights? Hell yeah! Animals should have the right to be shot, by me, with the most humane twelve-gauge buck. They should have the right to be cooked and served up hot. With fucking oregano and other plants, just like their natural habitat. Call me an activist!

Brenda K., senior, says: Quite frankly, I think cruelty against animals is simply inhumane. We share our planet with them, and depend on them to sustain our ecosystems, so why not show them some respect? Anyway, the only person I know that likes being put on a leash is my boyfriend.

Artists' Corner

For June, My Guitar
By Tyler D.

My guitar, she sweetly sings
So beautifully, when I strum her.
And when girls see me holding June,
They give me their phone numbers.

I bought her on a rainy day,
It was cold just like my heart.
Back then I was sad and alone,
But now, with June, I make art.

Lead Zeppelin, and Pink Floyd –
I listen to all the best bands.
When I sing Airosmith and the Beatles,
I get so many adoring fans.

I always play the right rhythms,
Because I keep my guitar in tune.
The only thing I play better is girls!
And it's all thanks to June.

Be sure to stop by at **Philosophy Club**,
Wednesdays in Mr. Bean's room.

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The wake found Friedrich's body clad in clean, white, freshly-laundered garments.

Now, Friedrich's legacy lives, though he does not. This weekend brought dozens of female students to Clark High School, diligently doing laundry to perpetuate Friedrich's purpose and raise global awareness of women's rights.

Held in the school's cafeteria, the event was a tremendous success. More than eight hundred items of clothing were washed to a state of soft, touchable delight over the course of the three-hour Laundry-Thon, thanks to fourteen industrial-grade washing machines.

The participating girls sorted and folded the clothes and operated the machines with glee. Sophomore Julie Espinoza exclaimed, "This is wonderful! Being female has never felt so good," loading armfuls of clean socks into a basket as I interviewed her. "I feel as though this event has given me direction in life!"

Senior Amy Chan, who organized the event, reveals her motives: she sought not only to wash clothes, but to send a message. "All throughout the past of history, women have been oppressed by people of a different gender. But thanks to people like Johnson Friedrich, we are progressing forward. The washing machines that we used, they represent a symbol – not only did they have great meaning for Johnson Friedrich, who was inspired by them, but they show that we women have strength. And that's what this Laundry-Thon proves. We can do our own work; we can wash our clothes, and others' too. We can operate complex machinery."

Want to show your solidarity for the women of the world? A Women's Food Festival and Dish-Wash-O-Rama is scheduled to be held at Clark High School next month. Bring your own silverware!

Need some testosterone?
Join **Man Club**, at the Man Cave.

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Charger Theatre performs Pajama-Lame Had whole audience "Sleeping-Tite"

By Cy Nickel, staff writer, April 10, 2010

After witnessing the disaster that was *The Pajama Game*, I found myself wishing I had merely just had a bad dream.

Unfortunately, it was all painfully real. Charger Theatre's most recent production was a snore at best, a nightmare at worst. The cast fit the script about as well as a pair of drawstring bottoms fits a one-legged man, endowing each and every line with utterly ham-handed delivery, and carrying the show-tunes no better than the US Women's Relay team carried their baton at the 2008 Olympics. The awkwardly-executed technical aspects of the production did not help at all; often, the lighting was handled too poorly for me to even see the awful costuming and makeup, the sound system balanced so badly I was spared the cacophonous singing.

The train-wreck began with the overture, performed by the school's music department. The amateurish pit orchestra careened through tempi and key signatures without discretion, giving the audience ample warning of the abomination that was to come on stage. Perhaps the only redeeming aspect of the ensemble was the trombone section, bravely belting out bass notes with just enough bravado to cover up the awkward, arrhythmic squeals of the reeds.

In spite of the dreary and vapid dialogue, I was able to piece together the plot of the play. The workers at the Sleep-Tite pajama factory, united under Prez, the leader of their workers' union, find themselves dissatisfied with their pay and itching to strike against Myra Hasler, their boss at the factory, for a 7½ cent raise (in my opinion, this was all admission for the night should have been worth). Being that Hasler was the villain of the story, I felt that, perhaps, hers was the only part played well, as by the end of the play I had acquired the recurring urge to regurgitate my dinner every time she spoke. On the other hand, I think every member of the cast eventually had this effect on me.

As Vernon Hines, in charge of maximizing the factory's productivity, drove Sleep-Tite's workers toward the impending strike, I found myself increasingly driven toward the auditorium's exit door. Meanwhile, the new factory superintendent, a handsome Sid Sorokin, adds intrigue to the plot. A contrived Romeo-and-Juliet romance blossoms between him and Babe Williams, leader of the union's grievance committee, who struggles to keep her feelings for him contained (and her notes on-pitch). Though awkward attempts at passion dominated the script, I felt a curious lack of sexual energy from two of the male leads, Sid and Prez, toward any of their characters' female companions throughout the play. On the other hand, Hines and the minor character Pop were brimming with such energy, to the point that it was utterly off-putting.

The pedestrian plot progresses, with the characters engaging in all manner of silly antics. At one point, a clumsily-characterized Hinesy gives a poorly-staged exhibition of his knife-throwing skills, which had me hoping his aim would be bad enough to put a blade in me, just to end the misery of watching this play. (I had no such luck.) Sid and Babe finally reveal their (horribly off-key) love for one another, but when Babe angrily breaks the factory equipment in the heat of the labor dispute, their relationship is broken as well. I am surprised that the same fate did not befall my eardrums at that moment.

After the brief reprieve of the too-short intermission, the second act was kicked off by what was supposed to be a jazzy musical number, featuring the flirtatious secretary Gladys Hotchkiss. This ditzzy, half-baked, no-brained floozy tended to be *particularly* friendly with Sleep-Tite's male employees and, I'm afraid to say, may have been cast a bit too well. The labor battle drags on, a backdrop for the continued blundering relationship between Sid and Babe. A night club interlude that had the characters boozing left me yearning for some hard liquor of my own, to dull the pain that watching this performance induced.

At last, *The Pajama Game* ended. I left the auditorium in a cold sweat, shocked by the profound ineptitude of the cast. What I had just witnessed was not drama; it was not art. It was failure, miserable failure. That night I slept – fitfully – without my pajamas.

Were you disappointed by The Pajama Game as well? Be sure to show Charger Theatre your displeasure by joining Cy's boycott of their future performances.

Coming clean

Charger girls hold Laundry-Thon for Women's Rights

By J. Bouti, editor-in-chief, April 15, 2010

It is said that necessity is the mother of invention.

For what we now know as women's rights, however, this statement could not be farther from the truth – the concept of women's rights was invented by a man.

Johnson Friedrich was his name. Born in 1949 to a world of deception and intrigue, Friedrich's steely personality and iron will flourished under the hand of oppression that was South African apartheid. His youth as a colored boy scraping by on the mean streets of Cape Town exposed him in his innocence to the darkest depths of human nature, his early years bound by the suffocating grasp of prejudice and fear that he would later fight.

It was only in the local Laundromat that Friedrich found comfort. "In the evenings, I would retreat here, and watch the washing machines go.

"It took on a special symbolism for me," his memoirs continue; "the clothes would enter dirty and corrupt, yet they would leave pristine and pure. I saw it as a metaphor for my purpose in life. You could say that it was just the detergent. Me, I called it destiny."

Friedrich's journey at last freed him from the racism and cruelty in which he had grown up. At the age of seventeen he stowed away aboard a cargo ship (one carrying a shipment of Clorox, ironically) bound for the United States, where he went on to dedicate his life to the fair treatment of women. One of his greatest achievements for gender-equality – the enactment of public unisex restrooms in 1981 – came shortly before his untimely death, which occurred when he accidentally splashed bleach in his eyes while doing laundry, blindly stumbling head-first into a top-loading dryer that had been turned on.

His funeral's guest list read like a "who's-who" of the civil rights movement. Dignitaries from around the world came to pay their respects to his memory.