

The Charger *Slant*

News from a different angle

February, 2010

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Student Voice

How was Valentine's Day?

Rebecca C., senior, says: Valentine's Day? Miserable. It flat-out *sucked*. I mean, well, it didn't, if you get my meaning here. I mean, it jumped out the window when it heard his mom coming up the stairs, if you get my meaning here. And then it broke its ankle.

David L., junior, says: Honest, I didn't have a date until the morning of, isn't that crazy? So, I bought her some chocolates and roses, like, you know, girl kind of stuff. And then I took her to dinner and then we saw a movie, and we even fooled around in the dark a little and then our mother drove us home.

Cindy I., sophomore, says: Oh, I adored it. My boyfriend took me to a pre-season Cubs game. I was so excited when I caught a foul ball – but the best part was when he showed me what a “home run” really looks like.

Salvatore T., junior, says: Dude, it was awesome. Like, I didn't really have a date, but I was totally getting down with a bunch of girls while their boyfriends weren't around. Seriously, I got about as much play as a Game Boy Color. I mean, a Game Boy Color that you still play a lot. Like, I still play mine a lot, you know?

Artists' Corner

For Felix
By Dane M.

My cat, his name was Felix,
His DNA was a double-helix.
He could jump like a ballerina,
My sister is one, you should have seen her!
When she jumped,
Over a tree stump.

Felix liked to take a nap,
When he wasn't taking a crap.
Once he even caught a mouse!
It had left droppings all over our house.
When I took a photo of its corpse
I told it to say “cheese.”

One day Felix ran,
Even faster than Usain Bolt can.
Felix really loved to jump.
I just wish the semi-truck would have jumped.
I guess you could say Felix was floored by the experience.

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Dodge spent a full ten minutes attempting to eliminate the blemish - a sign of his devotion to his craft. “Tried everything. Sponged it, toweled it, even whipped out the ole Formula 409 Glass and Surface Cleaner. But that smudge just wouldn’t disappear. And I swear, the damn thing stuck out like a sore thumb. I mean it was only a few inches across, but I had the rest of that building so clean you could pick it out from a mile away on a foggy day. It was all crystal clear... with one exception.”

Perplexed, Dodge called for assistance. Las Vegas Fire and Rescue promptly dispatched a cherry picker; Fire Chief Billy DeSoto rose to Dodge’s level and unleashed a focused blast of high-pressure water from a fire hose in the hopes of dissipating the troublesome grime. Yet this had no effect. “I hosed the thing, but it didn’t look any different afterward,” reported DeSoto. “There was still that little dirty spot on the window. We couldn’t for the life of us polish it out!”

Dodge, at this point, was becoming increasingly concerned. A smudge left on a window becomes a smudge upon a window washer’s professional reputation. “There’s a blacklist,” he explains. “Leave a single window dirty, and your name goes down on this list. And then you can’t find any more work. All you’ll get is the rookie jobs, like, you know, cleaning drive-in motels and high school gymnasiums and stuff. But I’m a professional - I do my work right. And that dirty spot on that window, I was going to lick it, even if that meant me licking it!” (Dodge subsequently attempted just that, again to no avail.)

Now Dodge was at wit’s end. In all his years of window washing, he had never seen such a thing as this invincible smudge. In sheer desperation, he began to weep, spreading his tears – perhaps the only viable cleaning solution he had left – over the outside of the window with his trusty squeegee.

Then a hotel maid entered the room, and wiped the smudge from the inside of the window with her shirttail.

Interested to see a window washer at work? Stop by the Strip and look up; with some luck, you will see one of the daring men and women who risk their lives to keep Las Vegas shiny.

Paint the town red If the town is your locker

By J. Bouti, February 12, 2010

Clark High School’s brand-new lockers were painted in the second-loveliest shade of gold that was available from the 1967 Las Vegas Locker Painting Co.’s color catalogue: Gold No. 3.

The first-loveliest shade, Gold No. 6, was rather too expensive to be used on all of the school’s many lockers. A small batch of the paint was instead reserved for particularly important hall-deco operations by STUCO. (Rumor has it that some of this exquisitely lovely paint will make an appearance at the 2010 Prom.)

But as lovely as Gold No. 3 shone in 1967 when it was first applied, and continued to for many years onward, time took its tarnishing toll. The once-pristine banks of lockers adorning the school’s incomparably-decorated hallways faded from their original glory. The loveliness of Gold No. 3 has long passed. Donny Markiewicz, class of 2008, is on the record as having remarked, “The lockers at this school are about as pretty as the girls at this school.” (*Charger Slant*, March 2008) His sentiment is one that today’s Charger family shares.

And with the prettiness of Clark’s lockers having dulled for decades, leaving the school’s current students only a glimmer of their past glory, it was only a matter of time until a student grabbed a bucket and a brush and took action.

That student is Pat Russo, senior. “I remember it like it was four years ago. My freshman year – I was walking down the freshman hall, trying to find my locker. And as I kneeled in front of it, fiddling with the lock, and as I figured out the combination, it struck me. Literally, in the face, because I opened it really hard. But it also struck me that the color of the locker – it was bland. The paint, it looked so drab. For all the fascinating, colorful people I met at this school, well, the lockers didn’t hold a candle to them.”

At the time, Russo accepted this, like so many other students. He learned to ignore the unsightly, sepia tone of the lockers' old paint job, and began to think nothing of it.

It took a nosebleed to change his mind.

"It struck me. Literally, in the face – again! I guess I have a habit of opening my locker really hard. Anyway this time the door smacked me in my nose, and I was bleeding, and all of a sudden before I knew it the front of my locker was covered with my blood, in this lovely shade of red. Gone was the ugly, moldy unripe banana color! I bled for a little while longer and grabbed some Kleenex, and by the time I was finished "decorating" – well gee, I figure I may as well have been the Student Body President."

Russo promptly realized that his nosebleed-paint job would not be sufficient to color his locker, however, as it began to dry and peel. He then went to the art room, returned to his locker with a bucket of Red No. 5 (the first-loveliest shade) and a paint roller, and set to work.

And there it was. Locker F431, its door aglow with a bright, vivid coat of Red No. 5, looking like a brand new fire engine, except without a Dalmatian dog.

Russo regarded it with pride. Dean West regarded it with a prompt expulsion.

"Vandalism! Defacing of school property!" exclaimed the outraged dean. "Did Patrick Russo have any idea how much trouble he was causing as he covered his perfectly fine-looking locker with this unsightly red paint? The area wasn't properly ventilated. He hadn't even laid down a drop cloth. The lawsuits! The public uproar! I could have lost my job! What if someone mistook the locker for a fire extinguisher? By God, they're the same color! People could have died! Do you know that there are color-blind people who could have walked right into that red-painted locker and hurt themselves? Good heavens!"

Want to paint your own locker? Doing so would not be advisable, as you too would risk being expelled. However, if you insist on a fresh paint job, you might want to try a nice, thick coat of Gold No. 3.

All washed up A window into a world of Windex

By J. Bouti, staff writer, January 25, 2010

Few occupations are nearly as dangerous as that of the window washer.

Some come close. English teachers are constantly at risk of acute sudden-onset dyslexia, directly caused by having to grade an excess of poorly written papers. Ice cream men often fall victim to deadly hypothermia - if they are not first felled by acute hyperglycemia. Janitors must brave the dangers of hard, slippery floors.

Yet such perils pale in comparison to those faced by the intrepid window washer, as he dangles hundreds of feet in the air, wielding little more than a safety harness and squeegee. Falls - terrifying as they may be - are the least of his worries; errant birdstrikes and hailstorms often catch the altitudinous workmen off-guard, leaving them savagely bitten or pelted by ice fragments. Far too many instances have been reported of window washers being killed by terminal entanglement in kite string – with the bow of the kite serving appropriately as neck attire in the casket.

Greasy Dodge is one such daring individual. A seasoned window washer at thirty-five, Dodge has earned the right to say he's "seen it all" - for what sight could a man possibly miss with a bank of open hotel room windows on one side of him, and half the city of Las Vegas, two hundred feet below, at the other? - yet a recent experience left him, and a host of other professionals called to the scene of the incident, utterly befuddled.

"I was polishing windows at the Monte Islandcoast. Tenth story, east face of the building - mid morning so the sun was at my back. It was a routine job. Clean, polish, pack up. Here I am, windexing along – and there's this dirty spot on this window. And it just won't go away."