The Write Way

"Master the Word and You Shall Master Your World"

A Northwest Vista College Publication from the Staff at the Centers for Academic Reading and English Support (CARES) in Juniper Hall

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Vol. II Issue II

The Semester Marches On!

Have a Happy and Successful February

Congratulations on getting through your first few weeks of classes at Northwest Vista College. Whether you are a new or returning student, getting back into a routine after a holiday break can be difficult at times, but you did it, and you did it well. Now that you have a couple of weeks under your belt, it's a good idea to take some time and reflect on your first few weeks here at NVC.

If you are having trouble keeping up with some of your classes, think about what you can do to make sure you succeed. You might consider talking to your instructor and getting some feedback or setting up some group study sessions with classmates. We hope that you take advantage of the services at CARES and that you will come visit us again soon.

Read and Comprehend

Reasons to Read Make for a Better Understanding

Even if you are not the kind of person who jumps for joy at the thought of reading, there are things you can do to encourage yourself to read more. And even if you are a struggling reader right now, rest assured that the more you read, the easier it gets. So pick through these ideas and find the ones you like. They will help you begin a new stage in your life as a reader and a scholar.

Think about your hobbies and what you would love to spend your time doing. Then find a book or newspaper articles that relate to the same topic and learn as many new things as you can about that hobby. For example:

If you like to cook, find a good cookbook.
 Skim through it, with some sticky notes in hand, until you find a couple of new recipes you would like to try, and then make them.
 This will help you learn how to record and memorize some information (like the

ingredients list) and then also read to comprehend so that you can follow the steps correctly to make the new dish.

• Enjoy skateboarding? Pick up a copy of *Thrasher* or *Transworld* to find out about the latest Battle at the Berricks.

Do you enjoy spending time with your children? Try reading to them. Not only is this great because your kids get to see you read, but starting with children's books can be a good way for students who speak English as a second language to learn simple sentence structures.

If you only like looking at pictures in books, try a comic book or graphic novel instead.

Always wanted to learn how to do something? Try learning about it through reading first. Read about playing a musical instrument, practicing karate, or

(See Reading, Pg. 4)



Inside This Issue:

Pg. 2 — Valentine's Day traditions, The Advocacy Center is open again

Pg. 3 — Health & Wellness, Tutoring Lab Reminders, Grammar LOL

Pg. 4 — February Movie Reviews, Sweets for the Sweetheart, "Student Lament"

The CARES Labs

The College English Center

JH216 Mon -Thurs: 8AM-9PM Fri-Sat: 9AM -2PM

Developmental English Lab JH229 Mon -Thurs: 9AM-9PM

Fri - Sat: 9AM -2PM

Developmental Reading Lab

JH110 Mon -Thurs: 9AM-5PM Advocacy Center

JH308 Mon - Thurs 8AM - 7PM Fri-Sat 9am-12pm

Visit us at: http://www.alamo.edu/nvc/tut



Valentine's Day: Love and Tradition Still Matter

Across the United States and in many other places around the world, Valentine's Day is celebrated on February 14. It is a day where all people express their love for each other by sending Valentine cards, exchanging gifts, giving flowers, and buying chocolates, all in the name of Saint Valentine. But, who was this mysterious saint and how did he become associated with this celebration?

There are different theories about Saint Valentine, but the most popular goes back to the Roman Empire during the rule of Claudius II. Claudius did not want single men to marry during wartime because he believed that single men without families were better soldiers. Saint Valentine, a bishop, did not like Claudius' law for single men, so he performed marriages of the young couples in secret.

Of course, Claudius found out what St. Valentine was doing, sentenced him to jail, and ordered the bishop to be put to death on February 14. It is suggested that while St. Valentine was in prison waiting for his death, he sent the first "Valentine" greeting after he fell in love with his jailer's daughter. Before his death, he supposedly wrote her a letter and signed it "From Your Valentine." Does this ring a bell? Due to this legend, Valentine's Day is celebrated on February 14 because St. Valentine died a martyr for supporting and believing in love and marriage.

Due to the history of Valentine's Day, Saint Valentine's Day, February 14, the United States and other countries have celebrated this day and given today's world some Valentine customs. Here are a few still popular today:

- One of today's most popular custom of Valentine's Day is to go on a date with a sweetheart.
- Another custom is wishing "Happy Valentine's Day" to all we love with Valentine cards
- It is also popular to organize Valentine parties in school.
- A beautiful and popular contemporary custom is giving the Valentine's Day flower, the red rose, which is the symbol for love and passion.

We hope you have enjoyed a little history and some popular customs of Valentine's Day. Have a very happy Valentine's Day with lots and lots of lasting love and friendship.



The CARES Newsletter Staff for January 2013 was comprised of English Composition, Developmental Reading, and Writing instructors and tutors.

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Free Workshops Hosted by the Advocacy Center

Scheduled Workshops:

Every Wednesdays at 1:30 PM and again at 4:30 PM in RLC 205 (WAC LAB)

February:

Feb 4-Feb 8: Study Skills

Feb 11– Feb 15: Fragments, Run-Ons, and Commas

Feb 18-Feb 22: Essay Basics

Feb 25-March 1: **Introductory Paragraphs**

March:

March 4-8: **Prompts & Thesis**

Statements

March 11-15: **Spring Break-No Classes**

March 18-22: Next Step

March 25-29: Next Step

April:

April 1-5: Reading Tips #1

April 8-12: Body Paragraphs

April 15-19: Concluding Para-

graphs

April 22-26: **Reading Tips #2**April 29-May 3 **Test Anxiety**

The Advocacy Center Reopens its Doors to Help

The Advocacy Center is up and running! We are offering free workshops for students enrolled in developmental English and Reading. Workshops will take place every Wednesday afternoon at 1:30 and 4:30 in the WAC lab (RLC 205).

Our workshops not only provide students with an opportunity to develop their understanding of fundamental writing constructs, such as grammar and essay basics, but they will also help students to create a plan for success—focusing on topics such as time management and test anxiety.

In addition to these workshops, students enrolled in English 0300, 0301, or 1301 can come in to the advocacy center to discuss degree plans and career paths. We are happy (and excited!) to help out with these and any other academic concerns you may have.

For a list and schedule of workshops, or to schedule an appointment to see us, please contact Dawna Upshaw at 486-4251. If you have any further questions please visit our *CARES* website at http://www.alamo.edu/nvc/tutoring/cares/

Page 2

Reminders for a Successful Tutoring Lab Experience

With week three of the semester already upon us, it is not too early to begin asking for help with your English studies when you're feeling a bit confused over your lab and writing assignments. No worries! The tutors at Northwest Vista College's Centers for Academic Reading and English Support (*CARES*) stand ready to assist all of our students navigate through their assignments.

However, before you seek help from one our tutoring labs, please choose the right lab for your class. Students in developmental English and reading classes get lab hours in the Cooperative Learning Lab in JH 229 and tutoring help in the Advocacy Center, JH 308. Students in English composition and literature classes use the Writing Center in JH 216. Students who need help with an assignment in any class besides English need to visit the WAC (Writing Across the Curriculum) Lab located RLC 205 (second floor of the library).

Students working on developmental labs in JH 229 are asked to:

- Always sign in and sign out at the front desk. This process will ensure you are getting credit for your mandatory hours.
- Read the notes in the lab assignment before beginning the quiz.

- Complete the paragraph at the end of the quiz. Write at least 4-5 sentences stating what the lab taught you, it counts as 10 points toward your quiz grade.
- Plan to come in and do your labs at least 45 minutes before your class begins. Students in regular English classes using JH 216 are asked to:
- Please bring your assignment with you and ask for clarification on what is being required of you
- Please tell the tutor working with you of any special assignment instructions that your professor is requiring such as variations in MLA.
- Always ask a tutor for help if you do not comprehend or understand the assignment or if you have questions during the assignment.

Remember the tutors are here to help you, but you must be willing, ready, and able to follow their instructions and suggestions concerning your assignments. If all the tutors are busy, please have a seat and wait until a tutor is available, or return later.

Health and Wellness Tips For Students

With upcoming exams, papers and assignments it's normal for many students to begin to neglect their health and well-being as they feel there is no time for themselves. Take precautions early and don't let this happen. Follow some of the tips below, and you can keep your sanity and health during this busy semester.

- Eat breakfast: Start your day off right with a nutritious breakfast. If you're short on time, make a healthful fruit smoothie, have a cup of Greek yogurt with fresh berries, or have a couple of hard-boiled eggs and a slice of whole-wheat toast to keep you going.
- Take a quick walk: Walking is the easiest way to incorporate some exercise into your hectic lifestyle. Not only will walking help you lose weight if needed, but will also allow you to relax before and after classes. We have a beautiful campus, so take advantage of the walking trails.
- Use the gym on campus: If you have long breaks between classes, or at school early trying to beat the parking rush, consider joining our excellent gym on campus.
- Ask for help: If you are having trouble in a class, visit the many tutoring centers on campus for extra help.

Grammar LOL

Some of the sentences below are examples of homonym errors, while others are just a play on the definition of the word. Let us know what your favorites are. If you have any you would like to share come by JH229 or JH216 and share them with us.

I'm reading a book about gravity. I can't put it down.

Action movies have a big line-up this month with Bullet to the Head I changed my iPod's name to Titanic. It's syncing now.

I stayed up all night to see where the sun went. Then it dawned on me.

Class trip to the Coca-Cola factory. I hope there's no pop quiz.

Broken pencils are pointless.

What do you call a dinosaur with an extensive vocabulary? A thesaurus.

I got a job at the bakery because I kneaded dough.

The Student's Lament

The little, bitty comma
One funny, little mark
Causes such consternation
Help! We're in the dark!

On our way to English class
Hoping for an A.... or B?
We know that Miss Gates will tell us
She always listens to our plea.

Oh, Miss Gates, can you help us?

Explain these commas, please, just a few?

Can't we please just ignore them?

NO! Then this will happen to you:

Resume: My interests include cooking dogs and entertaining people.

February Means Valentines and a Great Selection of Movies for Your Loved Ones

February's upcoming movie selection is pretty much all over the place, really. Of course, there is the annual need for the predictable romance movie to appease Valentine's Day daters. However, this month there are a number of pretty entertaining substitutes. If viewers want the typical romance, the not-so-typical romance, horror, or especially action, they will not be disappointed.

The token romance film this month is *Safe Haven* featuring Josh Duhamel and Julianne Hough and set to open on Valentine's Day. Though easy to dismiss, trailers do leave a bit to be desired. The story is of a mysterious young woman (Hough) who lands in North Carolina, meets the gorgeous widower and father of two (Duhamel), and forms a bond that makes her reconnect with and face her haunted past. Girlfriends worldwide will likely enjoy it and possibly cry.

What is great about this month is that moving past the typical romance, there is a great list

of other movies worth viewing. *Warm Bodies* stars Nicholas Hoult, who some may remember from *X-Men: First Class*, and Teresa Palmer. Hoult stars as a zombie who suffers from an existential break and begins to become more human, much to the surprise of Palmer and her "Let's kill zombies all day" father, played by John Malkovich. This new additio to movie genres, Zom-Rom-Com, should be worth watching and will likely be pretty funny, even if viewers aren't quite sure how to respond just yet.

Action movies have a big lineup this month with *Bullet to the Head* starring Sylvester Stallone, *A Good Day to Die Hard* (Feb. 14) starring Bruce Willis, and *Snitch* (Feb. 22) starring Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson. Stallone's vendetta-driven action flick will surely have some memorable fight scenes and be riddled with some glorious but forced one-liners. Willis reprises the role of John McClane, saving his CIA agent son from a villain's clutches. *Snitch*

is another father saving son scenario; however, this film deals more with domestic problems than international ones, by way of drug dealers. Jon Bernthal (*The Walking Dead*, Harold Perrineau (*Oz*), and Kenneth Williams (*The Wire*) are all in the supporting cast, so at least everyone will be, at least, semi-recognizable.

The most anticipated film so far would have to be *Identity Theft*, starring Jason Bateman and Melissa McCarthy and set to premiere on the 8th of February. After *Bridesmaids*, the world seemed to fall in love with McCarthy, and there hasn't really been a movie or show with Bateman in it that has failed to crack an audience up, save for maybe *The Switch*. McCarthy steals Bateman's identity who, because it's incredibly hard to actually find identity thieves, attempts to track down the felon himself. Thoroughly out of his league, McCarthy bests him in most scenes of the trailer. Happy viewing!

Sweets for the Sweetheart

Times being what they are these days, it may be hard for some guys to actually purchase some expensive candy for their sweetheart. However, if you'd really like to impress your loved one or significant other on Valentine's Day this year, bake her a special red apple treat that she will not soon forget, and that will take hardly any time to prepare. Here's what you'll need to make one for both of you:

- 2ea. Really big, red, juicy apples
- 1cup Red hot cinnamon candies
- 4 ea. Large marshmallows
- 2 ea. 5" x 5" pieces of aluminum foil

After washing and coring each apple, stuff one end with a marshmallow and then pour in a half cup of the cinnamon candy. Plug the top of the apple with another marshmallow, and then wrap it up with a piece of foil just like you would a baked potato. In a 350° preheated oven, place the apples in a shallow, ovenproof dish and bake for an hour.

When the time is up, remove the apples from the oven and let cool for about ten minutes before unwrapping and serving.

Reading

(Continued from Pg.1)

play games that are reading related like word or trivia games or Scrabble.

Pick a favorite, quiet place you like to visit (like a coffee house, a park, a garden, or a restaurant), and only go there when you intend to sit and read

If you find something you like to read about, get more books or articles on the same topic.

Read stuff other than books. Try magazines, poetry books, cookbooks, travel guides, even cereal boxes or other product labels.

Reward yourself when you finish reading a book. Allow yourself to do something fun or buy a small item every time you finish reading a book. No matter which motivational idea you choose, the goal is to read, and to read often.

The following link allows you to complete online practice questions that will evaluate your answers and immediately tell you what areas you need to work on.

http://www.readingcomprehensionconnect tion.com/ or read more at: http://www.public.coe.edu/~wcenter/