What keeps the lights on at USFSP?

Though USF St. Petersburg is a green-leaning university, its power supplier hinders clean energy usage.

By Ryan Ballogg
Staff Reporter

Roughly 82 percent of the energy USF St. Petersburg purchases comes from non-renewable resources, according to a 2013 fuel mix report from Duke Energy. The other 18 percent is attributed to "purchase power," or energy that Duke purchases from other providers. Renewable energy and biomass fuel are included in this category, though the numbers are not specific.

Florida is a regulated energy state, which means it is divided into designated service areas. Within those service areas, customers must purchase energy from the designated provider — which for Pinellas County and USFSP is Duke Energy. Duke's fuel mix of non-renewables for the area includes natural gas, oil and coal power. Coal, which has the highest Carbon Dioxide emissions of the non-renewable energy sources, accounts for 25 percent of the fuel mix.

USF St. Petersburg purchased an average of 1,884,601 kilowatt hours of energy per month for July, August and September. This equates to an average of 471,150 kilowatt hours per month from coal-based energy for USFSP this fiscal year.

"They just don't want to do the right thing and move away from coal, because it's so cheap ... but they're not paying for the health costs, they're not paying for the pollution."

— Julia Hathaway, Sierra Club

USFSP's energy usage for August through October
Total balance of USFSP's energy bill for those three months
$519,822.43
5,653,802 kilowatt hours used
Energy Breakdown
56% natural gas
25% coal
18% purchase power, includes biomass and renewable energy
1% oil

Where Duke Energy gets its power for Pinellas, Pasco, Hernando and Citrus counties

Se SOLAR, p. 3

Alumnus fatally shot near campus

College of Business grad Eddy D. Vasquez was killed by a friend, police say

By Tyler Killette
Staff Reporter

Eddy D. Vasquez, 27, was shot in the torso near the Publix on Third Street S. around 4 a.m. on Saturday, Nov. 9. He died from his injuries about two hours later at Bayfront Medical Center.

Vasquez lived in Gainesville but graduated from USF St. Petersburg in 2010 with a degree in business administration. According to the Tampa Bay Times, he was back in town for a wedding and went bar hopping with friends afterward. One of these friends was Andres Rodriguez Torres (other news sources have referred to him as Andres J. Torres), 26, who had attended USFSP with Vasquez. According to police, he was also Vasquez's killer.

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See VASQUEZ, p. 2
**Planning a greener tomorrow**

The Student Green Energy Fund received a record number of project proposals this year

**The Crow's Nest is here to alleviate confusion.**

To reserve a seat at Muvico on Thursday, Nov. 21, for the premiere of “The Hunger Games: Catching Fire” at 8:15 p.m., students must bring a canned food item to an event approved by the Harborside Activities Board. Students who bring five or more cans are placed in a raffle for the Harborside Activities Board. On the way to the event, but only after all USF students have been seated, or if there are open seats students who donated have been seated, or if there are open seats students may not want to touch the food drive is sponsored by the Residence Hall Association and the SGEF. Seven projects passed for green projects on campus were received for the Oct. 28 deadline.

“This is the first time we’ve really had to pick and choose and decline based on budget, which is really cool,” said Daniel McGarigal, committee member for SGEF. “We’ve reached a point where enough people and enough groups know about us.”

The Student Green Energy Fund, known as SGEF, collects a dollar per credit hour of student tuition to make USF St. Petersburg “more environmentally sustainable.” Projects passed so far include water bottle filling stations, LED parking garage lighting, charging stations for electronic devices, a hybrid truck for the waterfront and recycling options on campus.

Each semester, the committee accepts proposals collected through PeteSync and the SGEF website from faculty, students and staff. A committee and chair of the campus organization help determine if a project is feasible for USFSP. Most projects pass after approval from administration. Other proposed projects include a thrift shop on campus, a carbon stock, a rainwater harvesting unit and more LED lighting in the parking garage. With funds collected from fall 2013, SGEF will be able to sponsor up to three projects, which may be implemented by the end of spring 2014. Those not funded this year may be saved for next year.

“We give as much helpful criticism as we can to ensure the students iron out all of the details we need to be successful,” McGarigal said. “We’re going to find out what we’re capable of and what we feel is giving the students the biggest ‘Oh that’s really cool!’ feeling.”

Proposals will be presented on Wednesday, Nov. 13 from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in Davis 130. Voting on the proposals will take place two weeks later.

**Free printing, not a free-for-all**

Printers in the Student Life Center may soon be managed by a swipe card to help keep printing costs and long waiting times down and usability up

According to other reports, Torres was uncooperative with authorities but raised in Ecuador. His family moved to St. Petersburg when he was about 14. He attended Lakewood High School’s Center for Advanced Technologies off 54th Avenue S.

**Vasquez shooter arrested, charged**

**Continued from front page**

Police arrested Torres at his apartment, 324 Fourth St. S., around 8:45 a.m. Saturday and charged him with second degree murder. The Times article says Torres was also charged with armed kidnapping for holding a witness hostage at his apartment. As of Monday afternoon, specifics of the kidnapping have not been released. According to other reports, Torres was uncooperative with authorities and police recovered a gun from his home.

Vasquez was born in Chicago but raised in Ecuador. His family moved to St. Petersburg when he was about 14. He attended Lakewood High School’s Center for Advanced Technologies off 54th Avenue S. He most recently served as the Director of International Sales for Grooveshark, a free music streaming website based in Gainesville, where he’d worked for about two-and-a-half years.

While attending USFSP, he appeared in an advertisement for transfer students. Testimonials from across the Web reverve Vasquez as smart, outgoing, hardworking and an all-around good person.

Funeral services for Eddy D. Vasquez will be at 3:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 12 at Anderson-McQueen funeral home, 2201 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. St. N.

**By Amanda Starling Staff Reporter**

Matthew Morrow, president of the Residence Hall One Council, noticed the popularity of the new water bottle filling stations on campus. He noted the growing sustainability movement on campus and unsatisfactory water fountains in RHO. The council decided to propose a fountain in the main hall for the Student Green Energy Fund’s Oct. 28 deadline.

“It’s a commonly traveled area. On the way to class, on the way to the gym, it’ll be easily accessed to use,” said Kimberly Hardin, Hall Director for RHO.

Sustainability and visibility are the most critical factors for all proposals to pass in the Student Green Energy Fund. Seven proposals for green projects on campus were received for the Oct. 28 deadline.

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The cans will be given to the St. Petersburg Free Clinic.

Remaining events students may donate at include: 8 p.m. Friday, Nov. 15 - Texas Hold ‘Em in the USC ballrooms 2 to 4 p.m. Monday, Nov. 18 - Table can collection on the first floor of the USC 12 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 19 - The Multicultural Affairs’ Real Talk in the USC ballrooms

Canned food will be collected from Nov. 4 to 22 in a barrel by the USC information desk. The food drive is sponsored by the Residence Hall Association and USC. Cans donated here will not count toward the “Catching Fire” premiere.
Sierra Club: ‘Solar power would be easy’
Continued from front page

Sterling Ivey, the spokesperson for the Tampa/St. Petersburg branch of Duke Energy said that the company "works very closely with the state department of environmental protection to ensure compliance with all environmental regulations."

"There has not been any notice to us from the state department that our emissions or groundwate in and around our complex in Crystal River is unsafe," Ivey said.

According to Department of Energy’s most recent survey, Florida uses more energy sourced from coal than the national aver- age. The zone comprised by the 33701 area code where USFSP is located uses slightly less, but coal usage has increased by 1.3 percent since 2009.

Duke currently has four coal-powered plants, all of them on Crystal River. Two of the plants are set to retire between 2016 and 2018 because they will not comply with a federal mercury law, the Mercury and Air Toxics Standards, which will come into effect at that time.

"The reason there's a two year time frame there is because we're running tests at both of those plants now and burning an alternate type coal that has lower emissions. And if we can successfully burn a lower sulfuric coal we will ask for our emissions or groundwa - ter in and around our complex in Crystal River is unsafe," Ivey said.

"We're one small part of that change process. There's state law, public service commission rules and regulations...we're looking at all of those options and working with our elected representatives to determine what kind of change is necessary." -- Sterling Ivey, Duke Energy

African journalists pay visit to USFSP

USF St. Petersburg welcomed 12 African journalists for a series of sessions on journalism practice from Oct. 31 through Nov. 6. The participants came from many African countries, including Kenya, South Africa and Sudan, to trade stories and ideas with USFSP’s students and professors.

Professor Tony Silvia spoke to the group on journalism ethics in the digital age.

Photo and video journalism professor Deb Wolfe demonstrated tech tools on the go — various cheap and homemade remedies to problems frequently encountered by journalists in the field.
Winter is upon us (kinda)

By Ryan Ballogg

On Wednesday of this week, a massive plunge of cold from the Arctic will bring the temperature here in St. Petersburg down by a chilling 20 degrees! (That’s degrees Fahrenheit, so don’t get too excited, Celsius nuts.) Sadly, the low of 53 will only last for a day before we soar back into the world of eternal, swampy yuckiness. So enjoy it while it’s here!

Here’s what to do with your one day of cold:

• Make cold dirt angels.

DISCLAIMER: You will get dirty, but the crust will keep you warm.

• Order a hot beverage — no, make that extra hot — and enjoy every non-sweat inducing sip.

• Listen to all of your favorite Christmas music while it actually feels appropriate out. Jingle bells, Florida smells…

• Wear your favorite warmth-retaining clothing. Make sure you check the pockets first for the host of closet creatures that have taken up residence there over the summer.

• Start a nice cheery blaze in your fire pit or fireplace. Don’t have one of those? Find an ugly city bench and set a spark to it. Arson is fun for everyone!

• Go to the beach and enjoy the sea breeze while it’s free of tan happy idiots.

• Take a daring dip in the swimming pool — nothing makes one feel alive quite like hypothermia and shrinkage (queue Seinfeld bass riff). You’re now a member of the polar bear club!

• Wear your prettiest mittens.

• If you are one of those beings who moved to Florida specifically to avoid the cold, run! You still have 24 hours to reach Miami. Hasta luego!

On The Road Again

A Playlist

Picture this: You’re trapped in the back of your parents’ car, sandwiched between your sister and a stack of suitcases. Where are you headed? Probably towards a headache. Road trips can be fun, even downright exciting, but often too much “family time” can make one a little loopy. Put on this playlist of epic road trip songs next time you take a drive. Here’s to hoping it draws out the sound of your dad’s bad puns.

By Erin Murphy

“Drive All Night” — Needtobreathe

This song embodies the “get in the car and drive” spirit flawlessly. Turn this one up full volume.

“On the Road Again” — Willie Nelson

This classic will ring in your ears after one too many pit-stops. But sometimes the journey can be just as much, if not more fun, than the destination.

“10,000 Weight in Gold” — The Head & the Heart

This track off of the Seattle-based band’s newest release is a catchy little tune about a lover’s life out on the road. It’s both bittersweet, and a fun listen. If you fancy folk, this song is for you.

“While My Guitar Gently Weeps” — The Beatles

It doesn’t matter where you are — driving through the mountains, across winding hills, or through a small beach town at night. This song will always hold up as epic background music for your adventures.

“Chasing Cars” — Snow Patrol

Every playlist needs a sleepy-sounding Scottish song.

This one’s ours.

“Highway 61” — Bob Dylan

If scratchy vocals and snappy harmonicas are your thing, then you are in for a treat. The old school grit of “Highway 61” weaves Biblical imagery and sass into one tune, all held together by Dylan’s signature prose.

“Passenger” — Daniel Ellsworth & the Great Lakes

This chillsong about the open road leading wherever a couple wants it to will put a free spirited feel to your drive, even if you have to be back in time for classes on Monday.

“Train Song” — Benjamin Gibbard and Feist

Death Cab for Cutie’s Ben Gibbard and singer-songwriter Feist team up for this delightfully depressing ditty about traveling to catch up with a long-lost lover. Even if the purpose of your trip is not to rekindle the flame with the potential love of your life, this song will keep you company.

A month (or three) in movies

The Crow’s Nest’s entertainment critic, Matt Thomas, watched a lot of movies this weekend. From Chris Hemsworth’s bulging biceps to uncomfortable torture scenes, here’s his take on Hollywood’s most recent offerings.

By Matt Thomas

Thor: The Dark World

Released Nov. 8

“Thor: The Dark World” is the second movie in Marvel’s Phase Two. This time around Thor (Chris Hemsworth) is more mature, putting the needs of Asgardians above his own while the woman he loves on earth Jane Foster (Natalie Portman) waits for him. While following some odd findings in London Jane is accidentally transported to another world and accidentally absorbs aether a substance desired by the movie’s villains, the Dark Elves.

The Dark Elves, a race of beings defeated by the Asgardians long ago, become aware of the aether’s existence and will do anything to get it back. So it is up to Thor to protect the woman he loves, his world, earth, and the other nine realms.

The plot is honestly a mess, but it makes enough sense. “Thor: The Dark World” is a summer movie released in November. Audiences want to see Thor drop the hammer so the plot will matter very little.

Thor beats up a lot of different beings plenty in a number of exciting action scenes, one scene in particular that is very reminiscent of “Star Wars.” The characters are likable and easy to root for. The comedy element of the movie is likely to divide audiences, particularly Kat Dennings’ character Jane Foster’s intern.

Another letdown is the movie’s villain. The Dark Elves are intimidating, but have no personality whatsoever. The movie has to fall back on Loki (Tom Hiddleston), who isn’t even playing a villainous role, for some mischief.

Overall, “Thor: The Dark World” is another solid movie from Marvel that should entertain most audiences.

We say: See it

12 Years a Slave

Released Oct. 18

Director Steve McQueen reminds audiences of the brutality of American slavery better than any other movie ever has. The whipping scenes are brutal, but the movie also focuses on it from a psychological level, which makes it as refreshing as it is uncomfortable to watch.

We say: See it

Wadjda

Released Sept. 13

One wouldn’t expect a movie about a little girl living in Saudi Arabia to be as lighthearted as this, but this movie transcends that stereotype in its telling of the story of a crafty little girl named Wadjda who simply wants to save up money for a bike. While it might sound simple in childlike in the background are themes of what its truly like to be a woman in Saudi Arabia and what’s waiting for Wadjda in adulthood.

We say: Rent it

Ender’s Game

Released Nov. 1

The movie is definitely pretty and fast-paced, but Ender’s Game plays out like the sparknotes version of the book. Side characters feel like walk-on extras while major plot elements are brought up and often finished quickly which makes the whole movie feel rushed.

We say: Rent it
Rebuilding Rosewood

An archaeologist discussed the violent destruction of a black community after 90 years

BY ERIN MURPHY
STAFF REPORTER

The decimated ghost town of Rosewood, Fla. is now only a click away.

Dr. Edward Gonzalez-Tennant, a historical archaeologist who leads tours with the Virtual Rosewood Museum, discussed the Rosewood race riot and the role of modern day media in a talk Thursday, Nov. 7.

Historic Rosewood, located about five miles from Cedar Key, was rocked by mob violence on Jan. 1, 1923.

The tragedy began when Fannie Taylor, a white woman who lived in Sumner, claimed she was assaulted by a black man. “This is possibly, probably, a fabricated [tale] to hide an extra-marital affair,” Gonzalez-Tennant said. What followed was a tragic race riot, headed by a mob systematically killing and destroying the neighboring town of Rosewood.

“They burned the entire town of Rosewood to the ground,” Gonzalez-Tennant said, calling the brutal premeditated murder spree that killed six people “a carnival of brutal premeditated murder.”

Gonzalez-Tennant said, calling the of Rosewood to the ground,”

Gonzalez-Tennant said, “Humans exist in the gray area.”

The three types of violence were defined this way:

- Structural violence: The violence that got your head, lives in your mind. It can be just as violent.
- Symbolic violence: The violence that doesn’t exist on its own, it’s always intertwined. For this reason, the brutal murders at Rosewood can hardly be traced to a single explanation.
- Intersubjective violence: “Humans exist in the gray area,” he said. His job is to find ways to explain the human interactions inside that gray area.

When researching the events leading up to the destruction of Rosewood, Gonzalez-Tennant categorized racial hatred violence into three types: structural, symbolic and intersubjective.

“The latter,” Gonzalez-Tennant said, isolated minority communities, ignoring them at best.

“This is the violence that gets inside of your head, lives in your mind. It can be just as violent.”

Why would a mob attack and burn an entire community when it’s likely Fannie Taylor’s story was a fabrication?

The answer, it seems, isn’t that simple.

Gonzalez-Tennant said our society is one that emphasizes dichotomies, the juxtaposition between good and evil, but something is rarely all good, or all bad.

“Humans exist in the gray area,” he said. His job is to find ways to explain the human interactions inside that gray area.

When researching the events leading up to the destruction of Rosewood, Gonzalez-Tennant categorized racial hatred violence into three types: structural, symbolic and intersubjective.

These three types of violence manifested themselves in many forms, including white-only "Sundown Towns," the Ku Klux Klan and eugenics. The latter, Gonzalez-Tennant said, isolated minority communities, ignoring them at best.

“This is the violence that gets inside of your head, lives in your mind. It can be just as violent.”

Why would a mob attack and burn an entire community when it’s likely Fannie Taylor’s story was a fabrication?

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The three types of violence, he said, “don’t exist on their own, they’re always intertwined.” For this reason, the brutal murders at Rosewood can hardly be traced to a single explanation.

“I think it’s this mix. African-Americans [were] not obeying their role in an increasingly [racist] society,” Gonzalez-Tennant said.

The people of Rosewood had cultivated their community for generations, and had access to benefits. The minority peoples there refused to conform.

“A classic [reason why this happened] is economics. Sometimes that’s the case, sometimes it’s not. I find that less than satisfying. There’s an intentionality,” he said.

Behind the history of this tragedy are actual people, who lived actual lives. Gonzalez-Tennant recalls the story of Robie Martin who, though now deceased, was a survivor of the Rosewood tragedy.

As a young child, Martin fled Rosewood for safety; separated from her father, who stayed behind. They were supposed to meet up later, but never did. She assumed he was dead.

She was shocked when decades later, she discovered him sitting on the front pew of her church. She had no idea he was still alive and had made it out of Rosewood safely.

“The emotional connection is how to engage people,” said Gonzalez-Tennant. “That’s why I like dark tourism. [It] lets people explore what was lost.”

What was lost was an entire community. Working with deeds and census records, Gonzalez-Tennant was able to reconstruct Rosewood’s racial landscape over a 50 year period.

He discovers “little fragments of evidence, tantalizing clues. We find evidence that there is, indeed, a structure here. We can create a map showing who owned what.”

Now, with the help of the Internet, Rosewood can be rediscovered.

“You can see how it actually [looked] in the 1920’s,” Gonzalez-Tennant said. “You can go in your own web browser and explore this vanished community.”

To explore historic Rosewood, visit Gonzalez-Tennant’s site, virtualrosewood.com.

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Petesync 101
A guide to USFSP’s online student life community

BY TYLER KILLETTE
STAFF REPORTER

Getting involved on campus is easy, but staying involved can be tough. Keeping track of weekly meeting times and special events can be tricky, especially for those who are active in student clubs and organizations -- or at least trying to be.

Most student organizations are on Facebook but not all pages are up to date, and bulletin boards are cluttered beyond legibility. Wouldn’t it be nice if you could find everything you needed to know about student clubs and organizations all in one place?

This is where Student Government brought Petesync to campus last year. Below is everything one needs to know about student clubs and organizations all in one place.

What is Petesync?
Petesync is USF St. Petersburg’s community on Orgsync.com, an online student life management system for colleges. It is essentially a streamlined, customizable source for student involvement in campus clubs, organizations and departments. Think Facebook for student organizations.

Why should I use it?
To connect with student clubs that interest you and stay up to date on everything organizations like Student Government, Harborside Activities Board and the Office of Multicultural Affairs are doing and planning. Ever wonder what’s being said behind SG’s big glass window? Go to their page and look up the typed minutes from every assembly and committee meeting. Need to connect with the president of the Gardening Club? You’ll find her information on the Gardening Club’s page.

How do you use it?
Go to Orgsync.com, click the login button on the upper right hand menu bar, select your university (University of South Florida St. Petersburg), and login with your USF NetID and password (You’ll be redirected to the USF login page).

Who is Pete?
We’re still not sure, but you should use Petesync anyway.

“Though the Crow’s Nest believes Petesync is a super cool way to get and stay connected, we still use Facebook and email as our main methods of communication. We encourage potential contributors to join us on Petesync, but suggest emailing uscrownest@gmail.com to receive a timely response.”

life@crowneststpete.com
Editorial

‘An orgy of interclass kissing’

Much of this year’s Student Government administration has been focused on developing student traditions. While some traditions are already in practice, such as posing for pics on top of the bronze bull, putting soap in the fountain (cause that’s original…), and playing poker to win condoms (wait, what?), might seem cheesy, at least USF St. Petersburg isn’t taking direction from Stanford University.

On the first full moon of the academic year, just after midnight, Stanford male seniors scour the campus quad for a willing female freshman companion to plant with a big wet kiss.

Officially called “Full Moon on the Quad,” a New York Times piece more accurately referred to the exchange as “an orgy of interclass kissing.”

As the Stanford band plays in the background, women (girls!) fresh out of high school are welcomed to the university with a tradition that dates back to the late 1800s. But, of course, the young ladies of Stanford’s past were a bit more conservative, accepting only ladies of Stanford’s past were a bit more conservative, accepting only roses from their gentlemen suitors, not smooches. In 1988, a few hundred students dug up the historical tradition and made it formal. Now, thousands of students show up, and instead of receiving flowers, some women are deflowered.

What’s perhaps most shocking is that Stanford officially sanctions the event. Administrators tried to outlaw it in 2002, but deemed it futile, figuring it would just be moved off campus, where it couldn’t be regulated. So, the solution was to impose an order.

Now, according to the Times, the quad is barricaded, campus police check student IDs and paramedics stand by (in case someone’s tongue gets bitten!). The band plays so nonkissers — those who must have gotten into Stanford on academic scholarships, not sports or their parents’ money — have something to do.

Since Stanford officials have decided there’s just no saying “no” to a campus-wide makeout sesh, they’ve decided offering instruction on safe kissing is a good way to make this whole thing less weird.

Outbreaks of the flu and meningococcal meningitis, commonly known as mono, reportedly rise after the event, though the student health center has never compiled data to support the correlation.

Regardless, peer health educators who live in each dorm promote prevention. They meet with students beforehand and tell them not to participate if they feel any symptoms of illness.

They tell students not to floss or brush their teeth beforehand because doing so may cause micro-abrasions that allow germs in one’s gums. (While this may be true, we do not recommend taking this advice before a first date or something of the like.) They also offer mints and cups of mouthwash at tables during the event. Condoms and other sexual health supplies, including dental dams, also dot these tables for those wishing to carry on the tradition more intimately.

Within the greater tradition of drunken — but allegedly consensual — kissing have spawned new contingents of participants. Some choose to wear nothing but wet body paint. Others have formed a same-sex kissing area (though the intentional separation sounds like reverse LGBT progress to this editor). Some even wear kissing bingo cards, which list the 25 types of people they seek to kiss. Yes, 25 kisses in one night. So basically, they’re asking for infection.

In the middle of everyone’s bingo card is the Tree, Stanford’s marching band’s mascot. Last year’s Tree kissed 566 people. A swig of Listerine every three kisses apparently kept him mono free but probably eroded his enamel and/or got him drunk.

We share this tradition with USF St. Petersburg mostly for entertainment purposes, in hopes that readers will laugh and say, “Hah, Stanford kids are weirdos. I’m glad I don’t go there.”

We’re all excited for the traditions Student Government plans to installment upon us this year, but when thinking up ideas, let’s keep this one guideline in mind: If it facilitates the spread of infection, cross it off the list. Please.

Cookie Tree

By Kati Lacker

Mission Statement: The Crow’s Nest is committed to providing its readers with news relevant to the University of South Florida St. Petersburg and its surrounding community. The Crow’s Nest abides by the highest ethical standards and focuses on stories that help readers make informed decisions on current issues. We take seriously the public’s trust in our news reporting and strive to uphold the highest ethical standards as defined by the Society of Professional Journalists.

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Throwback

Nov. 12, 1954 - Ellis Island closes its doors after processing more than 12 million people since its opening in 1892. In 1890, President Benjamin Harrison designated Ellis Island as the first federal immigration center, and the first person to pass through the island was a 15-year-old Irish girl in January of 1892.

First and second class immigrants only had to go through a brief inspection before entering the country through piers in New York and New Jersey. Third class passengers, however, were the ones who had to go through legal and medical inspections on Ellis Island. Only 2 percent of immigrants were denied access into the U.S. An estimated 40 percent of Americans can trace their ancestry back to the immigrants who came through Ellis Island.
Movies: better than real life

By Matt Thomas Staff Columnist

Maybe I just find my real life boring. There aren’t many explosions, my jokes fall flat and I don’t get the girl. I like my well life enough, but there isn’t much to write home about.

That’s why I enjoy movies as much as I do. I feel at home sitting in that dark theater, ready for Hollywood’s latest offerings. I’ll even venture into the art house section of the theater to see what independent and foreign filmmakers are making with their smaller budgets.

Regardless of budget, genre or the number of people in the theater, once the movie starts, it’s like I’m being transported to a different world. I had a blast in Asgard watching Thor try to save his family and friends this past weekend in “Thor: The Dark World.” However, spending time in the South during the 1800’s while watching “12 Years a Slave” was less fun. I realize that might make me sound crazy, but we’re all a little weird in our own way. This is a judgment free column. For those two hours, my own problems ceased to exist.

An average day for me entails waking up sometime before 7 a.m. to get ready for class. I drive to school hoping to find an open parking spot by the soccer field. I spend approximately five minutes trying to fit into that parking spot because no one ever taught me how to parallel park properly. I make my way to class, which I enjoy. I might not enjoy everyone in that class, but I like the class itself. Then it’s off to my job that is conveniently located on campus, and I like my job, but I could do without the awkward eye contact from people I don’t even know walking in and out of the SLC. Finally, it is 6 p.m. I go home telling myself that I’m going to do homework, but I always end up playing video games the rest of the night. I might send out a text message to a girl who goes unanswered, I cry and then I fall asleep.

I wouldn’t call that a bad day, but sometimes during these times I come across a trailer for a movie that blows me away. You’re telling me that there’s a movie about a guy who gets to pilot a giant robot, then he uses that giant robot to fight against giant monsters? Of course I’m going to want to see that. When am I ever going to do something that interesting? Am I ever going to pilot a giant robot? No! Am I going to fight a giant robot? No, but seeing “Pacific Rim” in IMAX 3D is the closest I’ll ever get to doing so, and that’s exactly what I did opening day. And I did it again two weeks later.

It’s not always about giant robots and monsters. Maybe I want to enjoy a quiet drama. Maybe I want to learn something about another country. Maybe I need something to scare me into never wanting to go into space. My favorite movie “The Social Network,” a fabricated account of Facebook’s creation, is about those who are the smartest people in the room and always have a comeback for everything. That’s about it.

Wish fulfillment aside, I find movies to be a great medium for entertainment. They can be fun, they can be exciting, they can be intense, they can be depressing and a whole lot of other things. One thing is for sure, they go by much faster than books.

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You know you’re in a small town when...

By Erin Murphy Staff Columnist

As I sit in my mother’s worn wicker rocker, resting on the front porch of our tiny country house, I hear trotting. Trotting! What the hey?! I look up to see, I kid you not, four Shetland ponies, each pulling a person in a cart behind them. They head down the trail parallel to the porch as if this is perfectly normal behavior.

And yet, it just might be. After spending numerous weekends in my parent’s tiny, 600-square-foot canary yellow cabin, I’m convinced that there are some experiences unique to small town life, that are not just as common in the city. Shetland pony not included.

You know you’re in a small town when...

Everyone prays over their food. Or, at least a lot of them do. Small Southern towns are notorious for their religious roots. Bonus tidbit: A small newspaper up in a northern county even includes a religious section in their paper.

In that same vein, small town communities are often outspoken about what they believe. Take for instance the barbeque joint I ate at a few weeks ago, owned by a Marine. His establishment was plastered with posters admonishing Obama and Florida State. But he still made one heck of a banana pudding!

It’s not entirely uncommon to have very up-close-and-personal encounters with wildlife in smaller towns. The less mega malls, the more trees and froggies. You just might almost trip over a tiny turtle on your morning run. Not that it’s happened to me.

Everyone’s friendly. People you don’t know will wave, say hello, or strike up a conversation with you. Be forewarned: a lot of them are “touchers.” Case in point: This weekend, I was standing in line at a cafe, waiting to be seated, when the hostess grabbed me by the shoulders and positioned me around in a semicircle. Also, if you can’t handle close talkers, small town communities may not be for you.

Some people’s always having a garage sale. Or a barn sale. No, sir. I do not want to purchase any plaid, camouflage, or lack the stars and the depth of the darkness will be initially very startling. 6:15 can seem like midnight.

If you’re a dude and don’t own any plaid, camouflage, or lack the facial hair, you’re going to stick out like a sore thumb.

Veteran’s Day is celebrated all out, complete with a mini-parade of jalopies tooting their horns and waving red, white and blue flags.

The morning begins not only with a chorus of crickets, but with the screeching of wild turkeys.

The highlight of the day is drinking peppermint hot chocolate in a sweater on the front porch. Decadence at its finest.

Karaoke is a common Friday night pastime. Small town communities take their singing seriously. If you can’t hash out the hits with the rest of them, you really should stay seated.

And THIS WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOUOOOUU

Erin is a sophomore majoring in mass communications and assistant arts and life editor. She can be reached at erinmurphy@mail.usf.edu or on Twitter @sassybear

Gay rights, racial prejudice and lady things

By Tyler Killette Staff Columnist

Three topics in the news right now are making want me to quit. Quit working, quit trying, quit being a human being.

This week has reminded me how far this country still has to go in terms of equality. The battles to end discrimination on race, sexual orientation and gender are all still being fought, locally and nationally. The Senate voting in favor of the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, which makes it illegal for employers to discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity, is being revered as a victory for the LGBT community. However, that the House of Representatives might not even bother to vote on the matter is disgusting. To me, the fact that we even have to think about whether it’s OK to discriminate against gay people in the workplace is absolutely abhorrent. How can discrimination of any kind still exist at this point in societal development?

It is already illegal for employers to discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, nationality, religion, age or disability. But they can choose to not hire or fire someone because they’re gay? How does that make any sense at all?

Many companies have adopted non-discrimination policies that include sexual orientation on their own, including about 88 percent of Fortune 500 companies, according to the Human Rights Campaign. Still 29 states are without laws protecting LGBT individuals in the workplace.

It’s been said that the struggle for LGBT rights is sort of the final frontier for social and political equality. But, despite how it may appear, the fight is ongoing for African-Americans and other ethnic minorities.

An article in the Nov. 11th* tells a story of a nurse named Syrenthia Dysart, who was not allowed to attend to an elderly woman at Palms of Pasadena Hospital because of her race. The woman had been mugged by a black man, so her family didn’t want any black hospital staff to associate with her, feeling it may make her “uneasy.”

While hospitals are not required to comply with such requests, many do to minimize controversy. One excuse cited in the* article is that hospitals do not exist to teach social justice and that caring for the patient is top priority.

I agree that hospitals should not be burdened with the task of teaching right from wrong, but in 2013, racial discrimination no longer has anything to do with social justice -- it’s a matter of human decency.

As far as I’m concerned, if you’re lying in a hospital bed with a potentially fatal condition, you take the help you’re given, no matter who it’s coming from, and you damn well better say thank you when you’re still alive the next day. If the black nurse makes you uneasy, you don’t deserve her help in the first place.

Now that sexual orientation and race issues are addressed, I’ll move on to women’s rights.

Under the Affordable Care Act (Note, I didn’t call it Obamacare because that’s NOT WHAT IT’S CALLED), maternity care is written into coverage costs for both women and men. Republican conservatives think this is funny because, LOL, men don’t have babies! That’s a lady thing!

I’m not even going to waste the space on explaining how wrong that is. But I will say, that although these stories make me feel like quitting life and continuing my days in a remote cabin full of cats who don’t care about such issues, they’ll really just inspire me to try harder to make a change.

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**Football**

**A win against Memphis could turn things around for the Bulls**

**By Mike Hopey**

**Staff Reporter**

Having already played Louisville and Houston, and with Central Florida still to come, the Bulls can get a sense of relief when a team like Memphis appears on the schedule.

The Bulls aren’t markedly better than the Tigers. Statistically, Memphis outgains USF in punt- ing yards a game, rushing yards a game, points for and points against. The Tigers 24:1 points allowed a game is in the top 30 in the nation at 47.

Where these two teams differ is in the place it matters the most: wins. The Bulls have won two games in the American Athletic Conference; two more than the Tigers who are 0-4 in conference play and are in eighth place.

Memphis’ two non-conference wins in 2013 have come against Arkansas St. and Tennessee Martin. The Tigers beat UT Martin last week 21-6.

Under center for the Tigers is Paxton Lynch. Lynch has thrown for 1333 yards with five touchdowns and six interceptions. His numbers aren’t the best in the conference, but Lynch has proven to be a more stable quarterback than what USF has had this season.

The Bulls’ well-documented quarterback troubles seem to have been replaced by cautious optimism. In the Halloween matchup against Houston, true-freshman Mike White nearly became the team’s leading passer in just one game. Forgiving his redshirt, which gives him an extra year of eligibility if he sits out the entire season, White threw for 316 yards. He also threw two touchdowns ending a three game stretch where the Bulls’ offense scored zero touchdowns.

Despite a late push led by White, the Bulls could not upset the Cougars losing 35-23.

A win against Memphis would get USF off to a good start on its desperate attempt to reach a 6-6 record and qualify for a bowl game. A loss for the Tigers would mean their seventh straight losing season. Memphis’ last winning season came in 2007 when the Tigers finished the season with a 7-6 record.

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**Good Bulls’ football**

**By Mike Hopey**

**Staff Reporter**

South Florida’s football team had the week off, but the men’s soccer team was busy with its American Athletic Conference quarterfinal match against Temple.

Cougars’ Steven Galinas scored a goal with seconds remaining in the first half in Philadelphia. The Bulls held on in the second half, keeping the Owls to zero shots on target in the second half.

Goalkeeper Brenton Muhammad stopped all three shots he faced to earn his third straight shutout.

The Bulls’ win moved them onto Friday’s semifinal match against Rutgers in Dallas.

Central Florida stayed perfect in conference play with a 19-14 win over Houston. The Knights handed the Cougars their first conference loss.

Shawn Moffitt, UCF’s place-kicker, kicked two field goals from more than 40 yards out to start the scoring. Houston made a push in the second half, scoring their two touchdowns, but both teams ended up trading scores.

UCF’s Blake Bortles struggled throwing for only 210 yards and an interception. The Knights offense was carried by running back Wayne Stanback who rushed for two scores. Houston quarterback John O’Korn threw a touchdown but also threw two costly interceptions.

Southern Methodist scored 15 unanswered points in the second half but could not complete the comeback, losing to Cincinnati 28-25.

Garrett Gilbert threw two touchdowns and rushed for another in the loss. Both of Gilbert’s touchdown went to Darius Joseph, one of three Mustang players with more than 100 yards receiving.

Bearcats quarterback Brendon Kay had two passing touchdowns and two interceptions.

Memphis earned their second win of the season by defeating Tennessee Martin 21-6. The Tigers scored 21 points after falling behind 6-0 in the first quarter.