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Scan from your hand: Student launches new app

By Ryan Callihan
ryancallihan@mail.usf.edu

For Deshanie Govender, the diagnosis of endometriosis wasn’t a deterrent, but a motivator.

On Thursday, April 6, Govender, a senior psychology student, celebrated the launch of her new app, ScanRite, in the Ocean Room of the USC.

Endometriosis is a chronic illness which causes tissue that typically lines the uterus to grow elsewhere in the body. The result is excruciating lower abdominal pain. The illness affects one in 10 women.

Diagnostics at 17, Govender says she struggled with her daily activities. She missed 50 days of school during her senior year of high school. At the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, Govender worked as a note taker for the office of academic services, but her pain got in the way of her ability to do the job.

“At UNC Charlotte, my job was to scan and upload documents along with my notes for other students to access,” said Govender. “It was really poor quality because I didn’t always have the giant scanner in front of me to create those scans, so I wanted to create something that’s user-friendly and affordable.”

She was inspired to find a way to make the job easier and figured that an app could solve her problem.

“During my time of illness, I wanted something that could make my time of studying efficient, especially during times of extreme pain,” said Govender. But she lacked the coding skills to bring her idea to life.

Govender spent months researching optical character recognition technology and began to compile ideas for a document scanning application into a PowerPoint presentation. Using Skype calls and emails, she pitched her idea to various outfits that were considering building the app for her.

She settled on ImagiNET Ventures, a development company based in India. She kept the entire process a secret from her family for more than two and a half years. The result is ScanRite, which is free to download and available on iOS and Android devices.

ScanRite functions similarly to many other document scanning applications that are available for mobile devices. Upon opening the app, users are able to use the camera on their devices to scan any paper document and turn it into an editable document.

The highlight feature of ScanRite is its optical character recognition functionality, which users must pay a one-time fee of $1.99 to unlock. Govender says that she chose a price that was competitive with more popular document scanning applications like CamScanner, which charges a monthly $5 fee for similar features.

Some of ScanRite’s other features include an interactive home screen, the ability to save images as PDFs and uploading documents straight to cloud services like Google Drive or Dropbox.

If a user chooses to pay the $1.99 fee for optical character recognition, the app will automatically convert typed, printed or handwritten text into an electronic document and allow users to edit the text from their phones. The upgrade also removes ads from the app.

Govender says that ScanRite is one of the only apps that allows users to save images they have scanned as Microsoft Word documents. ScanRite also acts as a vehicle for charity. 5 percent of the sales will go toward the Endometriosis Foundation of America.

During the app launch celebration, Dr. Tiffany Chenneville, one of Govender’s psychology professors, spoke about discrimination that women in the technology field face.

“I consider Deshane to be an individual contribution working to close the gap,” said Chenneville. Chenneville said that she’s proud of Govender and her accomplishments. Bob Churuti, a USF St. Petersburg board member said that Govender’s achievement will inspire the next generation of female app developers.

“There’s tens, if not hundreds, who will be inspired by Deshanie and what she did,” said Churuti. Govender doesn’t have any plans to create more apps, but she says that she’ll be involved with ScanRite’s development. Her goal is to become a doctor who can help others with endometriosis.


CEO: Deshanie Govender
App: ScanRite
Major: Senior psychology major
@scanrite @scanrite scanriteapp.com

Final budget calls for $78,344 in Student Government salaries

By Tim Fanning
tfanning@mail.usf.edu

Eighteen students who hold positions in Student Government stand to receive a total of $78,344 in salaries in 2017-2018 under a final budget approved April 3 by the student senate.

Thirteen of the 18 are in the executive branch, including incoming SG President David Thompson, who isbudgeted to receive $10,687, and incoming Vice President Samuel Goetz, $8,100.

The other four positions do not receive salaries.

Altogether, SG will receive $190,145 in 2017-2018. The salaries are unchanged from this year — with one exception. At Thompson’s request, the senate approved one additional position, a community outreach coordinator, for $3,240.

The new coordinator “will be responsible for creating flyers and marketing materials for SG, clubs and organizations” and corresponding weekly with The Crow’s Nest and university officials, Thompson said.

Under the final SG budget, The Crow’s Nest will get $3,000 more than it was slated to receive under senators’ initial plan. But it will still receive $4,507.

See “Budget” P2

THE CROW’S NEST

Since 1969

ARTS, page 5

“S-TOWN” DOESN’T STINK

The latest podcast from the creators of “Serial” is already a hit. Read Michael Moore Jr.’s review of the audio series exploring the mysterious lives of a small town in Alabama.
TedxUSFSP: Sparking change in a new generation

By Whitney Elfstrom
wellstrom@mail.usf.edu

T he energy in the USC ballroom was one of excitement and enthusiasm Tuesday, April 4. Students, faculty and community members came together to talk change. With a drink in one hand and a plate of hors d’oeuvres in the other, students burst out of their shells and strived to tout more about their fellow classmates.

Daniel Le, a senior criminology major, ended up at the TEDx event by accident. He jumped into a friend on campus who suggested he come check the talk out. “TEDx talks are interesting topics,” Le said. “They want to spread their ideas to the masses.”

Of the seven speakers slated to spread their ideas of how to spark change, three stood out. Achim Nowak, a bestselling author, was the first speaker up to bat. His talk centered around how to be enough in a “never enough” world.

Nowak’s mother helped instill the never enough attitude in him from a young age. Every time he brought home a good grade he was greeted with a congratulation that was quickly followed by the question, “how did you do it?”

Nowak said people tend to bombard themselves with constant busy work to prove that they are enough, but he had one message that he hoped they would take to heart. “Know that if you do absolutely nothing [in life], you are enough,” Nowak said as his speech came to a close. “I mean really, enough already.”

The second story, based off of a poem, was about three young men who walked past an old man building a bridge. One of the men heckled the old man and another two did nothing to stop it. Ten years later, the three friends found the old man still building the bridge he would never see if they looked okay.

Robinson and his nephew. One day they were looking for future generations to come. Despite all of the light brought on by the sun, the nephew was still unable to find the tool. Robinson then told the crowd that it doesn’t matter what anyone else has because it doesn’t negate that each individual is special.

Walter Balser spoke to the crowd in the USC ballroom about the importance of teachers in society.

Balser, director of Lifelong Learning, who spoke of sparking change in the next generation of teachers.

“All right, busywork. I’m Mr. Balser, your teacher tonight, and the topic of our lesson is ‘There’s Never A Better Time To Be A Teacher,’” Balser said as he strolled onto the stage, while the sound of a school bell rang behind him.

Balser explained how he didn’t understand why someone wouldn’t want to be a teacher. He explained that once someone learns how to be a master teacher or he can apply his or her skills to school design, athletics, business and thousands of other jobs.

In the 2017-2018 budget, the editor-in-chief (now Devin Rodriguez) will receive $28,378. In the 2017-2018 budget, the editor-in-chief (now Devin Rodriguez) will receive $28,378. In the 2017-2018 budget, the editor-in-chief (now Devin Rodriguez) will receive $28,378.

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**Women proudly showcase solidarity at feminist art show**

By Lis Casanova

nasty women are “grabbing back.”

That’s how St. Pete Women’s Collective President Ashley Sweet describes the lease that the organization recently signed to house female art.

The new headquarters at 2800 2nd Ave N. is home to two of the Collective’s members.

These “Boss Ladies of the Burg” belong, in part, to the displaced artists left behind by the closure of Bloom Collective, a 7000 square-foot venue that the Collective’s members. The home, which functions as SPWC workspace and gallery, is defined as an “intentional space for creativity and development,” explained the importance of the walk.

“This disease has been around for over 100 years – it’s horrific what these folks have to go through – and our hope is to find a cure,” said Niehoff.

“But the only way that’s going to happen is by helping us spread awareness and getting awareness and money needed to hopefully solve this issue. She suggested that the upcoming generations will help lead the charge against ALS.

“There’s still advances in medicine that need to be made,” Harvey said. “We’re hoping that this next generation of students is kind of looking toward that to help us open up some new horizons and opportunities to help people.”

**Fight against ALS continues after Ice Bucket Challenge**

By Grace Cunningham

gcunningham2@mail.usf.edu

You might recall a few years ago when social media feeds were flooded with images of people dumping buckets of ice cold water over their heads.

These participants were working to raise awareness and money for amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, a fatal neurological condition affecting nerves and muscles commonly known as ALS or Lou Gehrig’s Disease.

According to the ALS Association, the viral trend raised $115 million for the organization.

These participants were the organization’s primary fundraiser.

About 500 people attended the walk and more than $161,000 was raised for the ALS Association.

In addition to advocacy and helping fund research, the organization also offers free services to patients and families across the state. Julie Niehoff, the ALS Association Florida Chapter’s director of communications and marketing, explained the importance of the walk.

“That’s how St. Pete’s pride. That’s how St. Pete’s development in the community was made,” Harvey said. “We’re hoping that this next generation of students is kind of looking toward that to help us open up some new horizons and opportunities to help people.”

**Al****S Clinic: Brittany Harvey (right) and Nichole Jones attend the Walk to Defeat ALS to spread the word about USF’s ALS clinic and its services.**

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**THE CROW’S NEST**

APRIL 10, 2017 | NEWS 3

**Queen Beatrice**

Tiffany Sankey-Elliot, a member of the St. Pete Women’s Collective, said that art is “my therapy for empowerment.” The bust standing next to her, she said, is her spirit animal, Queen Beatrice.
Catherine Whigham, 81, fears very little at her age. She would parsal in a foreign country, skate on a frozen lake, rescue drowning wasps by hand and even drive her daughter’s all-terrain vehicle. She will not, however, enter this small window-clad, cafe-esque shop downtown, in Colorado Springs, the city she’s lived in her entire life.

“I’ll stay in the car,” Whigham said to her daughter, Sharlyn Jordan.

“No, you are going inside,” Jordan said. Whigham continued to refuse as her daughter led her toward a sign that read “Maggie’s Farm, Premium Sun-Grown MJ.” The initials stand for marijuana and Whigham is about to enter a recreational dispensary for the first time.

Whigham had never been exposed to marijuana, legally or otherwise. Her father promised that if she waited to drink until she was 21, he would give her $500, a sizable sum in 1957. She was married for five years before she even had her first sip of alcohol.

Today, there are 996 stores in Colorado that sell marijuana and countless other facilities in charge of cultivation, manufacturing and testing. There are more marijuana dispensaries in Colorado than there are McDonald’s.

The National Survey on Drug Use and Health reported that in 2012 and 2013, about 30,000 people in Colorado used marijuana at least once a month.

Whigham has suffered from arthritis for 15 years and found little relief in the dozens of over-the-counter and prescription medications she’s tried. She was unable to move the thumb on her right hand for three years before trying a marijuana-infused hand cream from a dispensary. She agreed to try it after her family convinced her.

“I’ve never smoked anything,” Whigham said after Jordan initially proposed the idea. Jordan explained that the oil found in marijuana can be infused into food.

Whigham tried the hand cream on the car ride back from their first trip to the dispensary and was once again moving her thumb, mere seconds after applying the cream. Both Whigham and Jordan were in disbelief at how quickly her pain disappeared.

Whigham kissed her thumb zealously and danced in the kitchen of her townhouse upon arrival. Despite having had such astounding success, Whigham did not use the hand cream again.

“I think Mom was worried about what people would think,” Jordan said. “She hid the hand cream in her pantry.”

A few months later, Whigham agreed to enter a dispensary in an attempt to become more comfortable with the idea of using medical marijuana. Jordan drove her to Maggie’s Farm.

Inside the dispensary a man at the adjacent counter showcased a dozen brands of edibles. Jordan told an employee, who fondly referred to himself as a “bud tender,” about Whigham’s arthritis.

Whigham started to warm up to the interaction until an employee startled her with a yell at the adjacent counter.

“Sixty seven! Sixty eight! Come on guys, let’s buy some weed!” the man yelled, ushering in the next customers.

“She’ll take the caramels,” Jordan said with haste. The man handed Jordan a receipt. She and Whigham walked down a rustic hallway into another room to check out.

Whigham said to her daughter, “It’s not an addictive drug, Mom,” Jordan said. “You can’t build a chemical dependence on it.”

“Would my doctor turn us in?” Whigham asked.

“No, it’s perfectly legal,” Jordan said. “It’s helped a lot of people with chronic conditions like Parkinson’s and epilepsy. A lot of families move here and other places where it’s legal. They call them ‘medical marijuana refugees.’”

Jordan said she also supports adults in the use of marijuana for pain relief over the use of prescription drugs. Whigham didn’t like the caramels. She said she “slept too well” and has not entered a dispensary since. Jordan credits this to a mixture of remaining stigmas and stereotypes that accompany the drug. Despite this, she hopes her mom will continue to use the hand cream.

There are more marijuana dispensaries in Colorado than there are McDonald’s.

“My initial thoughts were ‘my goodness, look at the traffic in this place,’” Whigham said. “Makes you wonder what all these people are doing with it, if they’re addicted.”

“It’s not an addictive drug, Mom,” Jordan said. “You can’t build a chemical dependence on it.”

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Americans over 65 make up 14 percent of the population while accounting for more than 30 percent of all prescription drug use. The National Survey on Drug Use and Health reported that from 2002 to 2014, marijuana use in people between the ages of 55 and 64 increased by 455 percent, while increasing by 333 percent in those over the age of 65.

“I think that it’s unfortunate that there’s such a stigma for marijuana,” Jordan said. “And that there’s not a stigma around opioids, although they’re now considered a national epidemic. Because of this stigma, and because the federal government has yet to legalize it, people won’t use it, and it’s a more natural and a more affordable form of relief for a lot of medical conditions.”
Review: The future of podcasting is here, and it’s “S-Town”

By Michael Moore Jr.
michaelmoor@mail.usf.edu

I f you haven’t listened to an entire podcast series in a single sitting, you haven’t lived.

That is the conclusion I’ve come to after binging “S-Town,” the critically acclaimed narrative podcast brought to you by the creators of “This American Life” and “Serial.” Unlike its predecessors, all seven episodes were released simultaneously on Tuesday, April 4, for a first for a podcast of this magnitude.

The Netflix-style release was prompted by the fact that producers consider the story to be “more of a novel” and “the kind of thing you want to approach at your own pace.” For many viewers, that pace has been funny how amounting to all at once.

According to the New York Times, episodes of the hit podcast have been downloaded 16 million times in its first week. That is a staggering amount — by comparison, as the Times notes, it took the first season of “Serial” eight weeks to hit that same number. But is “S-Town” really worth five hours, five minutes and 15 seconds of your life?

The short answer: yes. “S-Town” stands as nothing short of a Mastodon in audio journalism and is unlike anything I’ve ever heard.

If you haven’t figured it out by now, “S-Town” is short for “Shit Town.” That’s how John B. McLemore, a lifelong resident of Woodstock, Alabama, refers to his hometown. According to him, it’s one of the child molester capitals of the state, a center of police corruption and home to an overwhelming amount of racism.

McLemore is the kind of guy that loves to talk — he’s also the kind of guy that can talk circles around anyone. At any moment you might hear him rant about “astrologers, sundials, projective geometry, new age music or climate change” in his distinct southern drawl.

Ten minutes in and you’re left wondering whether he’s delusional or brilliant. An eccentric genius, perhaps?

Our story starts with McLemore contacting Brian Reed, a senior producer for “This American Life,” about a potential murder that he thinks may have gotten swept under the rug. Kabram Burt, the son of a wealthy family that has been a major player in the town for generations, is rumored to have beaten a man to death and gotten away with it.

The initial narrow frames itself as a classic whodunit story that falls cleanly within the true-crime genre. What it morphs into, however, is dramatically more powerful.

Over the course of seven chapters, “S-Town” treats its viewers to an evolving character study of those that inhabit a rural town in a forgotten part of the nation.

The story is complex and richly layered with details — it involves treasure hunts, fierce rivalries and mystery after mystery.

The story arch is anything but predictable, anything but expert.

Several notable journalists have already declared it as being better than “Serial.” Some are hailing it as the best narrative podcast of all-time.

Still, others say that it is changing the industry.

For me, all of this is true and more.

“A Rose For Emily” by the Zadie Smith play it is the story of every episode. The song takes its title from the southern gothic short story by William Faulkner of the same name. Both the song and the story are hauntingly beautiful.

Every time I heard it play I would say to myself, “No, don’t stop there.” I thought, “There has to be more!” Hearing it for the final time was an emotional rollercoaster. The story is the kind that can make you laugh and cry just minutes apart.

I never wanted it to end. No one will this will be a second season or if any spin-offs will follow. All we know is that we have seven episodes to explore the lives and secrets of Woodstock, Alabama.

Seven magical episodes that will take you on a journey that you are not likely to forget anytime soon.

Next time, in between binge-watching “Orange is the New Black,” consider binge-listening to a podcast.

You won’t regret it.

The Crow’s Nest rates podcasts between one and five stars, with five stars being the highest possible score.

Review: Mastodon’s “Emperor of Sand” lacks a unified sound

By Luke Cross
lukecross@mail.usf.edu

C reating their position as the vanguards of contemporary metal, Mastodon’s seventh studio album “Emperor of Sand” evades the trappings of any single genre.

Over the course of nearly two decades, Mastodon has honed their blend of hardcore, progressive, doom and metal into an instantly recognizable sound. Following the immensely technical and lofty “Once More ‘Round the Sun,” “Emperor of Sand” is a further departure from “Leviathan” era 14-minute druggy epics — for better or worse.

While the album’s tracks are more compact than past releases, Mastodon’s narrative abilities are stronger than ever.

Drummer-vocalist Brann Dailor described the story behind “Emperor of Sand” as “A Solitan in the desert hands down a death sentence to this guy. He’s running from that. He gets lost, and the sun is zapping all of his energy skin to radiation.”

The concept developed naturally over time, but the album’s inspiration was born in tragedy.

Dailor’s mother endured chemotherapy battling cancer for the last 40 years, bassist-vocalist Troy Sanders’ mother had recently died of breast cancer for the last 40 years, and his impact is clear.

“Clandestiny” slams low registers that hit the listener like a truck, “Andromeda” incorporates stoner metal and doom metal into an electroacoustic guitar peal, and a vocal cameo from Neurosis’ Scott Kelly drives “Zombie Blood” to new extremes of brutality.

“Emperor of Sand” concludes with the most sonically extreme piece of the group, “Jaguar God.” Bluesy vocals are supported by an acoustic ballad before morphing into a bangin’ gushing with shows of technical skill.

While Mastodon successfully balances its new polished tones with more traditional ear melting walls of sound, their most recent album doesn’t actually integrate the two.

Instead, “Emperor of Sand” feels more of a heavy handed compromise than a blending of approaches.

Producer Brendan O’Brien, known for his work with ‘90s grunge icons Pearl Jam and Stone Temple Pilots, is instrumental in the creation of Mastodon’s highly experimental fourth album “Crack the Skye.” O’Brien returned to produce “Emperor of Sand,” and his impact is clear.

Much like “Crack The Skye,” much of the vocal work has been smoothed out and imbued with a breadth of emotion. A number of instruments have had their edges sanded down in favor of a more palatable end product.

These traits fit well with previous conceptual albums, but “Emperor of Sand” attempts to include the band’s original hardcore sound alongside their new innovation. Both Mastodon and O’Brien attempt to appease both traditional and new fans, resulting in a very confused album.

This isn’t to say “Emperor of Sand” is lacking for skillful execution or memorable riffs. Their detail oriented approach of recent Mastodon has been toned down without sacrificing beauty, and the band successfully tackles new genres in just about every other song.

Unfortunately, change is never an easy thing. Though Mastodon may have gracefully handled its transitioning style, it is hard to find a two decade old band feel left behind.

Whether Mastodon should be beholden to their listeners is debatable, but its melding of sounds, old and new, is undeniably clumsy.

“Emperor of Sand” may be beautifully composed to showcase Mastodon’s experience and skill, but is symptomatic of a larger problem.

By trying to place the doom-fueled chaos which encapsulated old time fans along side more progressive influences, neither half of the band’s divided fan base received something they can fully enjoy.

Mastodon’s “Emperor of Sand” is a compilation of impressive, yet disjointed songs.

The Crow’s Nest rates albums between one and five stars, with five stars being the highest possible score.
No, I’m not adopted; Yes, she’s my “real” mom

By Dinorah Prevost
Sophomore Journalism and Media Studies major
dprevost1@mail.usf.edu

I can’t count the number of times my mom and I have gotten double takes everywhere we go, from the supermarket to every school I’ve attended. In an increasingly diverse America where biracial couples are becoming less taboo and more visible, why should the sight of a Hispanic mother and her biracial, black daughter seem so many curious looks still baffles me. I recently read a New York Times article that highlighted cringe-inducing racial terms that their readers dislike. One reader wrote about her dislike for the word “mixed,” which stemmed from an incident where her daughter was asked if she was “mixed” by her fourth-grade classmates. It reminded me of my own experiences growing up biracial. I too have been asked that question many times. When I lived in the Caribbean for a few years, there were instances where I was stared at incessantly by passers-by and classmates when accompanied by my mom. One time at school, someone loudly hurled the word “shabine,” a term for a light-skinned woman of biracial heritage, at me from afar. Since then, I’ve accepted that I will always be different and I’ve become proud of my biracial heritage.

But there is another lingering downside to it. Over the years, the questions about whether I was adopted, both well-meaning and not so well-meaning, have trumped all the double takes I’ve taken. The adoption question has been asked of me on my mom on numerous occasions, at the daycare, at the park and even at the airport… by an immigration agent. In most cases, if my dad was with us at the time, it wouldn’t have been asked. It amuses me that small-minded people might believe my mom is “the nanjy,” just because her color and features don’t match mine. An employee at a daycare I went to once flat out asked my mom if I was adopted. Fast forward to when I was 12, I was asked if my mom’s native country was Nicaragua. On our way back home, we had a stop-over in Miami, and we were sent through immigration because of our international flight. The agent first took our passports and examined them. He looked up at us and skeptically asked my mom if I was her daughter. She said yes, but unsatisfied with that answer, he took an even harder look at us. One more look at our passports and he let us go. To us, the question felt irrelevant.

Now, when I get questioned, I think to myself “If you met my dad, you probably wouldn’t be asking me that.” According to the last U.S. census in 2010, the percentage of the population that identifies as biracial or multiracial increased by 32 percent, from 6.8 million in 2000 to 9 million in 2010. It’s worth noting that the 2000 census was the first census that people could identify as two or more races rather than one. By comparison, the number of the population that identifies as one race only increased by 9.2 percent, from 275 million in 2000 to 300 million in 2010. It’s been hypothesized that since the last census and I’m sure that 32 percent has soared since then. Yes, we mixed millennials are on the rise.

So please don’t automatically assume that biracial and multiracial kids might be adopted because one parent doesn’t “look like them.” Even more importantly, we don’t appreciate it when you trivialize (or blatant-ly) ask such a dated question.

S
ince Yellowstone first opened in 1916, national parks have attracted millions of people from all over the world to marvel at their beauty. There is nothing quite like watching the sunrise over the Grand Canyon or taking a float trip down the Snake River in the Tetons as the sun sets. We are privileged to have access to these magnificent lands, thanks to Teddy Roosevelt and the National Parks Service (NPS). In fact, it was Roosevelt who once said, “We have fallen heirs to the most glorious heritage a people ever received, and each one must do his part if we wish to show that the nation is worthy of its good fortune.” Over the last eight years, we were doing our part to preserve these natural wonders. The protection and upkeep of our national parks were a priority. New monuments were created, laws were passed to help protect the lands from destruction and the 2015 Paris deal marked the U.S. as a major leader in preventing the worsening of climate change and keeping our planet safe and clean. Unfortunately, these protections and protections are under threat from the Trump administration. One of the main goals of this new administration is to slash the budget to the Park Service and to cut out the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) altogether. It’s no secret that President Donald Trump believes climate change is a hoax, and it seems only fitting that he would appoint people to his cabinet that felt the same way. Scott Pruitt, who was appointed the head of the EPA, is active and outspoken climate change denier and has long advocated for the destruction of the EPA.

The attacks on our national parks and the environment didn’t stop with the confirmation of Pruitt. Trump recently signed an executive order that rolled back EPA regulations set up to fight climate change in order to revive the coal industry. He has also approved the construction of the Keystone XL pipeline, something which has been proven to be toxic to the environment. My love for our national parks runs deep. I fell in love with the Grand Canyon the first time I saw it. When I close my eyes and go to my happy place, I see myself in the Tetons. I conquered one of the most difficult and rewarding hikes in Zion National Park. I have visited 13 of our national parks, and I plan on visiting the rest of them at some point. I can’t do that, however, if they are destroyed by pipelines or developments, or if the EPA can no longer protect them.

These fears might not seem rational, and last year I would have agreed that I am overreacting. But Trump hasn’t even been in office for 100 days and he’s already begun dismantling the EPA and climate change regulations.

I am genuinely afraid of what the next four years will do to not only our national parks but the environment as a whole. We live in such a beautiful world. Our children, our children’s children and all other future generations deserve the same chance we have to bask in all its unspoiled and unmarred glory. We owe it to them to fight against anyone who wants to harm our planet and keep moving forward to the progress we’ve made in the fight against climate change. I highly encourage you to visit our national parks and soak up all of the beauty. Whether you travel the country or stay close to home, your experience will change your views on the world.

Take the time to see the gifts nature gave us, and remember, crying is always an acceptable reaction to the glorious view of the Grand Canyon.

America’s national parks deserve protection
We’d Love to Hear from You

The Crow’s Nest accepts letters to the editor. All submissions should be no more than 250 words. Writers must include their full name. In addition, USF faculty should include their title, department and extension. All letters are subject to editing for clarity and length. Letters can be sent to drodriguez7@mail.usf.edu with subject title “letter to the editor.”

Corrections: The statue of Duke was provided by Southeastern Guide Dogs.

We’d Love to Hear from You
The Reef aquarium struggles to stay afloat

By Alyssa Coburn

The Reef aquarium usually gets its water changed every 3-4 months. A tank of its size should be changed once a month. Something’s Fishy:

The tank has recently become overcrowded with too many fish. During the nitrogen cycle, ammonia and nitrite are broken down by beneficial bacteria into nitrate, which is less toxic to fish. However, without a proper nitrogen cycle, toxins can build up and become deadly.

In order to keep water chemistry levels safe, fish tanks require regular partial water changes. This is when a percentage of the tank’s current water is replaced with new water in order to remove toxins like nitrate. Without water changes, nutrients and toxins can build up and may cause things like excessive algae growth and water toxicity.

“The water can be kind of poisons,” said Greene.

The tank has recently become the financial responsibility of the USC and now requires a portion of the USC’s budget. Currently, The Reef aquarium has a $5,000 service fee for supplies and maintenance duties like feeding, cleaning and water testing. The Reef aquarium shares its biweekly cleaning and water testing.

The tank is usually cleaned by a small group of post-graduate students gathered together at a Starbucks. The Caravan’s message of “earth first” is eager with good intentions but lacks cohesive structure.

Set designers and animators, one particular set of costumes whose effort and skill made this play more worldly is difficult to discern. Possibly this was because if we allow the planet to be ruined, it will have a global effect. However, this took my attention away from the amazing acrobatics on stage, and I quickly lost interest in what the playwright was trying to say. In the rare moments that I did try to follow the narrative, I caught rid- uly wordy language like “We must escape these fossil hungry demigods obsessed with the ingenuity to curb carbon emissions, sounding more like comic book villains who want to be evil for the sake of being evil.”

What the play lacked in plot and character, it made up for in the talent of the performers and brilliance of the set designers and animators, whose effort and skill made the show worth seeing. A company of its size and reach has the ingenuity to wow audiences no matter where it goes. In its tiny boat with its shoestring budget, it can create one of the most unique and rich experiences its audiences will ever see.

For all of the flaws of the “nomadic Tempest,” what I will remember the most were the aerialists and the brilliant collection of the sets and costumes. One particular set of costumes came around the third act, where the aerialist butterflies were shown in front of a black backdrop with their wings illuminated in bright ember and emerald green. The scene stayed like that for a long time and I began to wonder if the intention was to show just how beautiful and precious living organisms are on Earth.

Despite my problems with the performance, “Nomadic Tempest” is still on the forefront of my mind and the experience I had will remember the most were the aerialists and the brilliant collection of the sets and costumes.