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Students travel to Japan to study damage of natural disasters

BY KIMBERLY DELANDE
News Reporter

Last month, a group of University of Rhode Island students and faculty traveled to Iwate Prefecture, Japan to study the 2011 earthquake and tsunami damage that devastated the area.

During the trip, URI and Japanese students from the University of Tokyo collaborated in groups on proposals to aid affected communities with the recovery process. The students spent their mornings attending lectures and their evenings going out into the area to conduct fieldwork, interview community members or do research of their own. Once their projects were presented at the end of the course, Japanese professors took the ideas back to their communities to see how they can be used to help rebuild and restructure the damaged areas.

The course was co-taught by professors from URI and the University of Tokyo through a memorandum of understanding signed between the two universities. This partnership was meant to foster more summer courses on coastal and ocean management, and to encourage more student exchange research projects. While the class took place in Japan this year, next year it is slated to be held at URI, and will alternate each year onward.

Rob Thompson, URI marine affairs professor, said he was glad to see a mix of students from different majors sign up for the course. Not only did marine affairs majors participate in the class, but also history, political science and business majors. The URI professors who taught the course were also of different majors.

Assistant professor of natural resource economics Hirotsugu Uchihida and history professor Tim George were able to add their own expertise to the course as well.

"Many coastal and ocean problems are international," Thompson said. "I would argue that all of them would require an interdisciplinary approach. For that reason, this type of course would be valuable to these students."

Travis Roberts, a graduate student from URI, focused his group's recovery proposal on how collective, memory can help aid disaster prevention. His group discovered tsunami stones, which are slabs of rocks with warnings engraved on them dating back 100 to 1,000 years ago. The markers stood at areas where the tsunami flood water reached, telling people to seek shelter elsewhere.

"Some people relied on the sea walls and built their houses close to the shore, and others didn't pick up on the stories written on the stones," Roberts said. "We started thinking about how to organize this information."

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New constructions cause changes on campus

BY SHAWN SAIYA
Managing Editor

A few noticeable changes have been made to the infrastructure of the campus of the University of Rhode Island. For the new academic year, one of the most notable changes in addition of the Hillside residence hall that is due to open this semester.

The new 120,000-square-foot residence hall is a welcome sight for URI, which has the largest student body in the school's history this year. Of the nearly 16,500 students enrolled at the start of this semester, about 6,200 will live in on-campus residence halls, according to the university.

Once opened in October, the $42 million Hillside residence hall will provide housing for up to 429 additional students.

Also set to open in concurrence with the new residence hall is the Quarry Road connector between Campus Avenue and Fraternity Circle. Quarry Road replaces the defunct Baird Hill Road, which was removed when the Hillside Terrace Apartments were torn down in the spring of 2011.

Another new construction project, which was dedicated last week, is the new pharmacy building located on the north side of campus near Plagg Road. The pharmacy building project is part of the more than $300 million in construction and renovation contracts underway or completed in this calendar year.

The new building will house the College of Pharmacy, which has moved from its previous location in Fogarty Hall.

Walkways between the Fine Arts parking lot and the new pharmacy building have been renovated to better accommodate the expected increase in usage.

Commuter students that frequent the Plains Road Lot may have also noticed a big change in usage.

Continued on page 3
As fall season approaches, so do new films

BY CONOR FAGAN
Contributing Entertainment Writer

With the summer pretty much over and the fall coming in, it’s time for a new season’s crop of movies to filter in until the end of the year. Usually the fall and early winter yields a mixture of blockbuster fare that couldn’t fit into the summer and films that typically pull in end-of-the-year awards (and sometimes both of those types in one).

“The Master” is a period piece set in the late 1940s and stands as Paul Thomas Anderson’s anticipated follow-up to his 2007 Academy Award nomini “There Will Be Blood.” The film stars Philip Seymour Hoffman as a well-dressed and well-spoken leader of a burgeoning cult and features Joaquin Phoenix in the actor’s long-awaited return to mainstream filmmaking after his faux fallout a few years back.

In 2008, renowned Irish chameleon actor Liam Neeson used his very particular set of skills to turn “Taken,” a predictable action/thriller about a kidnapped daughter, into a quotable cult favorite. Let’s hope lightning strikes twice for Bryan Mills and the family that constantly needs saving as they embark on their second adventure in “Taken 2.”

From the looks of its trail- er, “Cloud Atlas” is an epic sci- ence-fiction film based on the acclaimed David Mitchell novel that weaves together six separate realities starring Tom Hanks and Halle Berry. In a rare positive turn of Hollywood-related events, the director seats of the movie are rightfully occupied by the only people who have the credentials to undertake such an ambitious project and actually pull it off: the Wachowskis (formerly the Wachowski Brothers), the co-directors and creators of “The Matrix” trilo-

By the massive hype surrounding Daniel Craig’s reinterpretation of the James Bond character in 2006’s “Casino Royale” was promptly deflated by the momentar- ily disappointing “Quantum of Solace,” the Sam Mendes (“American Beauty”) directed “Skyfall” has the chance to be the film that will cement Craig’s status as one of the best James Bonds in the minds of fans and critics.

Armed with an all-star cast fronted by Daniel Day-Lewis and Tom Hardy, “Lincoln” is Steven Spielberg’s in-depth biopic of Civil War-era “Honest Abe” that is sure to be one of his most ambitious ventures of the legendary director’s career. The fact that Day-Lewis looks uncannily like Lincoln in makeup certainly adds to the wait and anticipa-

“The Life of Pi,” the 2011 novel by Yann Martel, tells story of a young boy stranded aboard a small escape vessel with only a 450-pound tiger for company. The upcoming film adaptation of the book is headed by Oscar-winning “Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon” director Ang Lee. The mystifying first trailer didn’t reveal much, but it has drummed up interest in a proj- ect that doesn’t appear to fit the usual Bollywood fare.

The first installment of the “The Hobbit” cinematic trilogy looks to be yet another awe-inspiring adventure into the magical realm of Middle-Earth. Let’s just hope the last minute decision to split the adaptation into three movies as opposed to the originally planned two isn’t just a fla-grant cash grab. On the other hand, this could allow Jackson to implement more of the “Hobbit” mythology not pre-sented in the main story, allowing for a more complete realization of Middle-Earth and its denizens.

In other news, Pixar has begun the slow, painful process of running its beloved intellectual properties into the ground by pandering to the beloved animation company’s core fan base: college-age young adults who grew up on “Toy Story.” “Finding Nemo” and now “Monsters Inc.” Following on the heels of those 3D re-releases and the upcoming sequel, “Monsters University,” “Monsters Inc.” gets the 3D treatment on Dec. 19.

Written and directed in the outrageous and idiocentric style of mad genius Quentin Tarantino, “Django Unchained” is the tale of a freed slave (Jaime Foxx) who embarks on a violent quest to rescue his wife from a nefar- ious plantation owner played by none other than Leonardo DiCaprio. To top it all off, the film is scheduled for a Christmas day release, as if the American media needed another controversy to publi-

With Peter Jackson at helm and Sir Ian McKellen on board to play Gandalf the Grey, the

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‘Premium Rush’ a fun alternative to more complicated blockbusters

BY AUGIE KING
Entertainment Editor

Not every movie has to be complex or thought-provoking to work. Some of the best pleas- ures of cinema are the movies that have a simple premise, with maybe a few extra details thrown in to flesh out the concept. Action movies such as “Crank” accomplish this perfectly well, and hor-
or movies like “Halloween” can get away with sticking to their focused guns. “Premium Rush” is another movie in the same line as those; set up a plot with multi-
ple characters and motives, and then unleash the broad-and-butter bike chases that audiences paid to see.

“Premium Rush” also side-steps one of the issues with many “simple” movies with its creative story structure. Right from the start, we’re thrown into the action with our hero, Wiley, speeding down the New York City streets on his brakeless bike to deliver a package. Once he returns to the bike messenger office, his boss hands him an envelope that soon has him being hunted down by a crooked cop. The movie throws you directly into the action, and then assured-
ly slides in flashes every now and then to finish out the charac-
ters and plot beyond its decep-
tively straightforward basis.

This back-and-forth arrange-
ment means there is never a dull moment as we are entertained by the action while waiting for the next piece of the plot to fall into place at anytime. To make this work, a film such as this needs a charismatic cast to carry it through the nonstop movement, and everybody ably fills their positions. As our snarky lead, Joseph Gordon-Levitt brings charm and determination to a character that we should proba-
bly hate in real life (seriously, cyclists are irritating, dangerous people, especially in a place like NYC).

While I’m sure many people would see this movie for his pres-
ence, the clear standout here is Michael Shannon, as the corrupt cop, Bobby Monday. Shannon is typically known for his reserved acting style in very serious dramas, but “Premium Rush” gives him the chance to take off the reins and have fun. Monday is a character that cons-
tantly digs himself into a deeper hole and is full of awkward ties, and Shannon’s willingness to go all-out yields unexpectedly riotous results. He harms it up in the best kind of way, relentlessly barreling through the film like the coyote chasing Gordon-Levitt’s Road Runner.

And when it brings itself back to the bike chases, “Premium Rush” doesn’t pause for a minute. Even when charac-
ters are learning new information and talking to each other, they remain planted in their seats rid-
ing down the crowded streets. The stant work (even when it’s an obvious stuntman doing it) is clever and lively, and director David Koeppe finds creative places to throw the camera into the flow without relying on cheap visual effects and flashi-
ness. The extent of his tricks is a digital map that shows Wiley’s path and a “Sherlock Holmes” style effect where time slows down so Wiley can figure out how to dodge traffic.

Koeppe’s approach is straightforward and streamlined, which is a perfect compliment for how the movie goes about its business. Whether “Premium Rush” sticks with you once you leave the theater or its energetic thrills fizzle from your mind moments later, it’s ultimately not the point. It’s an adrenaline shot of a movie that achieves what most of the “Fast and the Furious” movies miss out on: a sense of good, clean fun bracketed by likable actors and a mischie-
vous sense of humor.
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**Japan**
From page 1

Torricelli and how could be
taken into account in the future, for community planning.

As a graduate student of history, Roberts said that while he knew valuable lessons could be learned from past events, it was a surreal experience.

According to Thompson, climate models show that extreme weather events will be more frequent in the upcoming years. In Japan alone, because a lot of its land is steep, there is pressure to rely on fortifications and build near the ocean, despite how vulnerable that would leave the area. Studying tsunami damage has become vital to learning how to lessen the damage taken and how help an area recover after the event.

"As a world population, we are unfortunately going to suffer more coastal disasters," Thompson said. "If you can see the problems that manifest from one disaster, then you can successfully work to make an area less vulnerable in the future."

**Changes**
From page 1

change with the construction of a new bus shelter in the north-west corner of the parking lot. The lot was previously served by the RIPTA shuttle service with a shelter on Plains Road.

The new shelter in the parking lot was constructed to better accommodate pedestrian safety, while also better serving the new 300-spot addition to the Plains Road Lot set to open in the 2013-14 academic year.

Both RIPTA shuttles — the Blue Line Route 211, and the Hillclimber — will run normal service. The only change to both routes is that the buses will now travel through the parking lot instead of adjacent to it.

More parking changes were made with the 30-space parking lot adjacent to White Hall. The lot was previously used by upperclassmen residents, but now has been reassigned as a staff parking lot.

New signage has also been installed at the entrances to all campus parking lots to clearly mark the parking lot's designation.

**Senate**
From page 1

In other news:
— The Department of Recreational Services made a presentation to the senate on the new Anna Fasciellitti Fitness and Wellness Center. The presenters said the new facility, located in the building previously occupied by the Rodger Williams Dining Center, is scheduled to open in fall 2013.

**Campus Police Reports**

**Arrests**
-Drew Madoff, 18, of 389 Benefit St., Providence, RI was arrested last Saturday for possession of marijuana, police said. Campus police officers on foot patrol say they saw six people near Ellery Pond, smelled what they believed to be marijuana and made contact. Madoff admitted to being the owner of a backpack on the ground located by the officers. After consenting to a search of the bag, officers said a little over seven ounces of marijuana was found in four different bags. Madoff was processed at 44 Lower College Road.

-Patrick Hoehn, 19, of 49 Homestead Ave, East Hanover, NJ was arrested last Sunday for obstructing a police officer, campus police said. After responding to a call about a fight outside of the Sigma Pi house, police said no fight was seen, but they heard loud noises coming from the house. Police said they made contact with Hoehn outside of the house and asked him to locate the president for them. Hoehn told them he wasn't available. Officers asked Hoehn to let them in and he said he could not. After multiple requests to be allowed inside, police say Hoehn eventually produced the keys to the house. He was arrested for obstructing the police officers.

It's OK to be a bit nosy sometimes...

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**Rhody SPORTS**

**Women's tennis team works hard to prepare for upcoming season**

**BY TIM LIMA**
Staff Sports Reporter

The University of Rhode Island women's tennis team will set their sights on this season with lofty expectations despite lacking age and experience.

The Rams will compete this year without many of their experienced players from last year. Both Kirsten and Tristan Leikem have graduated, along with Pam Emery and Michelle Dassol. While they have players returning from last year, such as former Atlantic-10 Rookie of the Year, Dayana Asokaraj, this year’s team will certainly have great pressure thrust upon them from the get-go.

"It is definitely a challenge for all of us because we still feel we may not be as experienced as in the past," said coach Andy Bettman. "We are tennis, but we still are extremely excited to mentor the freshmen," Asokaraj said. "We’ve set high standards for ways we can support each other on and off the court as well as establishing great sportsmanship and competing at the division one level."

Because tennis is such an individual sport, with the sum of personal victories dictating the outcome of the match, experience plays a strong role. In following this team as they prepare for upcoming season, it is clear that the Rams have talent in their returning bunch – but what will we see from the newcomers? Gali na Cherniykh and Elizaveta Schovkova, both from Russia, are new to the team this year. They certainly are farther from their hometown than their teammates, who need not require their baggage checked in order to make the trip to Rhody – the farthest of the bunch coming from New York.

"I’m very thankful to have such a positive, supportive team," Bettman said. "They have been so positive and so eager to learn which makes me all the more excited to grow as a team. As I can and have our team continue to grow and develop.

As a team of eight, we are small, Bettman said. Since the league we are at is the fastest, with the smallest of players, they will all have, at most, one year under their belt. This will provide the Rams the chance to grow together, looking next to them for guidance, rather than forward.

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