

FREE
LIKE SPEECH

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Issue 52, Vol. 2 • Thursday, Dec. 18, 2014

WEEKLY
EVERY THURSDAY

F5

*work like a farmer
party like a rock star*

>How to win at Secret Santa

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>Meet your maker

If you're picky about your coffee, then you can't ignore this one piece of essential equipment. p.6

F5

View: OTHER PERSPECTIVES

How to win at Secret Santa '14

by Don Winsor
dwinsor@f5paper.com

Each year, we like to offer you, the readers, ideas on how you can win your annual Secret Santa competition. F5 takes great pride in standing astride the forefront of Secret Santa technology and is fully committed to making sure that you and you alone are left standing when the Clausian masks are removed. Many, strangely, frustratingly, still do not see Secret Santa as a competition. This is fine. It is they that shall fall first.



DON WINSOR

This year, we've been working toward a new method of Secret Santa that will revolutionize the sport. Following our method will not only confound your victim/giftee, but will also skirt the edge of what might be legal not only in terms of Secret Santation but also in terms of local and federal law. Let's begin! It's almost X-mas! Snikt!

STEP ONE: OPT OUT

Every Secret Santa competition has a

day when people draw names from a hat. This, we now realize, is for amateurs. In order to fully preserve your anonymity, you must appear to decline involvement in the pool of names. You can instead legally document your intent to participate via a registered letter, mailed to yourself, before the name-drawing deadline.

STEP TWO: GET A NAME

The next step will be a little bit trickier. There will be one person who is responsible for distributing names. You must get a name from that hat without their realizing. If you're at least a level 12 pickpocket, you can simply find an opportune moment to casually bump into them when they're distributing names and slip a name from the hat while they remain foolishly oblivious. Alternatively, a strand of well-strung fishing line makes a good tripwire in order to make them fall and scatter names everywhere. Get a name as you helpfully assist them in cleaning up. Many recommend the use of tranquilizer

darts at this point in the game. This is an amateur mistake as it is very difficult to obtain effective tranquilizers without leaving a paper trail.

STEP THREE: RESEARCH

So now, you've got a name. You'll be AMAZED what you can do with a name on the internet. Learn all you can about your target. Find out everything you can via Facebook, MySpace, Instagram, Tinder, Grindr, Cookymonstr and Googlr. You'll want to be as well versed as possible when you reach step four.

STEP FOUR: INTRODUCTIONS

Based on the information achieved in step three, you'll be ready to mold yourself into the "perfect person" for step four. Build a wardrobe based on their likes and dislikes, then hang out at their favorite bar/coffeehouse/synagogue waiting for them to happen by.

The next step is what Roger Ebert called a "meet cute." You'll casually happen to bump into them — think Paul

see "Secret Santa" page 3

A surtax might solve some budget woes

by Bill Jenkins
bjenkins@f5paper.com

It is a great day when you go out, drive past a convenience store or gas station and see that the price of gasoline is nearly a buck lower than it was just a few months ago. Since I retired and the Iron Horse Concert Hall in El Dorado closed, I don't use nearly as much gasoline as I used to. In fact, a tank of gas will last me two weeks or more now.

I drive a big car — a Hyundai Genesis — not for the luxury but for the room. I am, as many of you know, not a small person. Or even an average-sized person. I am fat. Big. Obese. Porky. King-sized. No use denying it. So I need a very roomy car. I tried on a lot of cars when my old car got run into, and the Hyundai was the most comfortable I found for a reasonable price.

Big cars are roomy and tend to have luxurious options. (I LOVE the seat warmers and so does Miss Angela Basset.) But they take larger engines to haul fat-assed people around with anything like decent power and responsiveness. Mine has a six-cylinder engine. That means higher

gasoline consumption, though it does still allow me to use regular unleaded gasoline.

It also has a large fuel tank and routinely cost between 50 and 60 bucks to fill up before the big price drop. Now it hovers in the high \$30s. Bueno. Muy bueno.



BILL JENKINS

I am guessing that most people are feeling a similar emotion. We can afford to drive more if we see fit. The problem with that, however, is that the roads and bridges of Kansas are deteriorating at a more rapid pace because of that. The highway infrastructure is in a pretty dismal condition. And Governor Sam in his infinite wisdom wants to pull over \$40 million from the roads and highways fund to help pay for the deficit caused by the tax elimination for some individuals and small businesses.

That is just for this year. Since the projected budget deficit will be much larger next year, we can pretty well see what is going to happen to the highway fund. The infrastructure will just get worse and worse.

One of the major sources of money for highway and bridge construction and repair is the tax on gasoline. With

the continued increase in automotive gas mileage mandated by the feds, less gasoline will be sold and the income will decrease. More bad news for the highways and bridges. Bummer.

I realize that in today's political climate, politicians think that increasing taxes is political suicide. They may well be right. Still, we need more highway funds. So how to do it?

I propose a gasoline surtax. With the price of fuel dropping so rapidly, this would be almost unnoticeable. And it would provide an interim boost to the roads fund. Here's how I'd work it.

Let's look at the gasoline prices six months ago or so. Let's just arbitrarily say they hovered around \$3.50. What if we set that price as the benchmark. Then, any time the price of gas dropped a dime, we would add a temporary surtax of a penny. That's 10 cents on every dollar we gained when the price dropped.

To protect these new funds from budgetary slight of hand in Topeka, we would have to stipulate that these funds could go only to the highway fund. We have to watch those in power, don't you know.

(The same legislature that added

see "Surtax" page 5

STAFF

Editor
Mike Marlett • editor@f5paper.com
Assistant to the editor
Astrid Teschke Franz • astrid@f5paper.com
Copy editor
Kelsie Baab • kbaab@f5paper.com

CONTRIBUTORS

Torin Andersen	Vickie Kline
Chris Andersen	Elizabeth Jackel
Kelsie Baab	Bill Jenkins
Jedd Beaudoin	B.J. Love
Jeremy Biltz	Erik Mallory
Michael Carmody	Jorts McDude
Kate Clause	Mike Pivonka
Will Darrah	Jeremy Webster
Dan Kampling	Don Winsor

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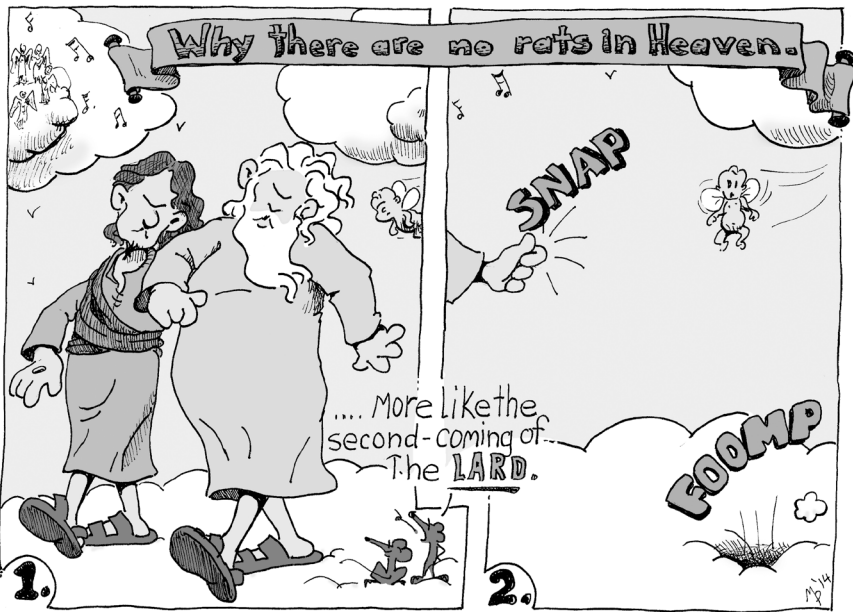
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ABOUT THE COVER



PHOTO BY THANE ROGERS

Illuminations at Botanica runs every day (except Dec. 24 and 25) until Dec. 31, 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. In total, a million lights combine with nature to create a stunning atmosphere and a lot of holiday fun. \$8 (\$7 members) for adults and \$6 for youth (3-12). @ Botanica, 701 Amidon.



BY MIKE PIVONKA

"Secret Santa" from page 2

Rudd meets John Cusack meets Tom Hanks meets young Meg Ryan meets young Meg Ryan meets young Meg Ryan. It helps if you can have some file folders to drop when you accidentally bump into them. You'll both kneel down as he/she helps you pick up the folders, your eyes will meet, and you'll make a crafted pop culture reference based on the personality you've gleaned from step three. Ka-ching. While you banter wittily use Bluetooth hacking technology to clone their phone. With some minor hacking and cryptography skills, you'll have all of their passwords, which will help you in step five.

STEP FIVE: WHIRLWIND ROMANCE

Using the information from step three and the charmingly awkward introduction from step four, your next step is simply to sit back and let the target fall in love with you. Monitor their social media feeds (using the passwords from step four!) to gauge where you stand in this process, altering your approach and personality based on what you see them post/email/text. If they've already got a significant other, make it clear that you are The One Who Really Understands Them and that you understand not who they are but who they *want to be*.

When planning outings with your target, simply ask yourself this question before proposing any activity: "How would this play in a montage?" If the answer is "heartwarmingly," you've got a winner.

STEP SIX: THE PAYOFF

Things are going great now. You're giving your target the December of their lives. Love is in the snowy air and the season abounds with the promise of a future they never thought they deserved. Here comes the payoff!

>GET HEARD

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Once the office Christmas party rolls around, no one will suspect what's going on when in the middle of the gift exchange you step forward. Bring everyone to a hush and give the following speech:

"I know it's only been a very short time, but in the past (insert length of game here) I've come to know something that I wasn't sure I'd ever know. (Name of target), could you please join me up here?"

Done well, this will elicit a hushed anticipation. As your target joins you, get down on one knee.

"(Name of target), while it hasn't actually been very long, in many ways it feels like I've waited forever to ask you this."

More anticipation. Stay on target, you're all clear, kid, it's time to win Secret Santa.

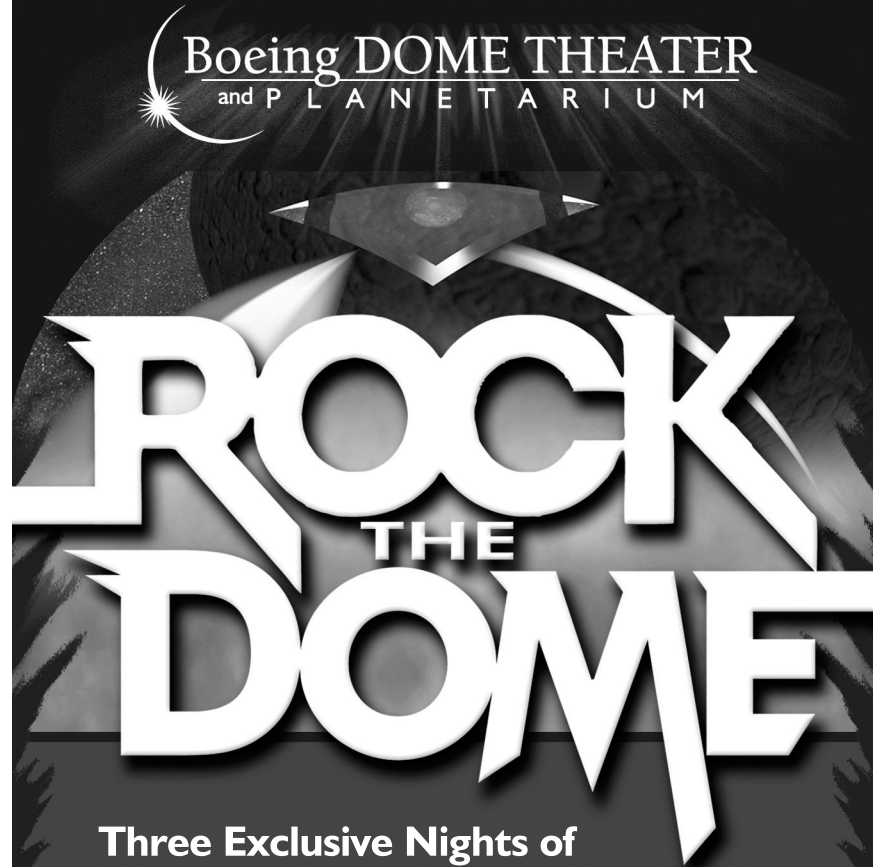
"Would you ... be surprised to learn that I am your Secret Santa?"

STEP SEVEN: PROFIT

Everyone will exclaim with surprise and joy, and your target will (perhaps emotionally) thank you for the best December of their life, plus the lifelong memory of what real love truly feels like.

The gift exchange will continue, but everyone else will be feeling pret-ty lame about their gift cards and handmade coffeecup sleeves. You'll have won Secret Santa, and you'll have done so selflessly.

One caveat: You can *lose* Secret Santa if someone does this to you first. Be immediately mistrustful of any kindling romance in December.

**Three Exclusive Nights of
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PHOTO BY MICHAEL CARMODY

DRIVING YOUR HEAD: The current design of the Ford Fusion, modeled closely after its posh Aston Martin stablemates, has sold well in America. The sedan, bigger than Ford's Focus but smaller than its Taurus, is available with a traditional gasoline engine, as a hybrid and as a plug-in vehicle.

In hybrid country, car drives you

by Michael Carmody
mcarmody@f5paper.com

I have been, since adolescence, a "car guy." Over the years I have owned something like 50 cars, trucks and motorcycles, the vast majority of which were manufactured in the 1960s and '70s. Most were purchased for less than \$1,000; the cheapest was the fully operational 1960 Ford Falcon that I bought for \$25. I have enjoyed, in equal measures, the simplicity of the '63 VW Beetle and the retrosophistication of the '86 BMW 735i; the good-ol'-boy brawn of the '65 Ford F100 pickup and the dainty precision of the '70 Toyota Corona; the ultra-decadent luxury of the '75 Cadillac Sedan deVille and the spartan scrappiness of the '78 Ford Courier mini-truck.

Common to all of them: My lead-footed driving style. No matter what I was driving at any given time, I was most likely driving it faster than the posted limit. I developed a hierarchy of slowness for other drivers, prioritizing which cars I should avoid in traffic, in real time, as I drove. Out-of-county license plate? Religious bumper stickers? Minivan? Let me just get around you real quick.

Among the worst were the hybrid drivers. I know perfectly well that a Prius is capable



PHOTO BY MICHAEL CARMODY

HATE THE GAME, NOT THE PLAYER: In light traffic, with few stops, the majority of a short trip to work or the store can be made under electric power, giving your gas mileage a serious boost.

see "Wichitarchaeology" page 5



MICHAEL CARMODY

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switched to "Efficiency Leaves" mode, which shows a pretty graphic representation of a vine, on which lovely green leaves "grow" as the driver continues driving efficiently. The whole screen fills up eventually with leaves — but a quick slam on the brake or a jackrabbit start will send the leaves floating away offscreen. Keep up the bad habits, and the vine grows barren.

Additionally, the car's central touchscreen (which controls the stereo, climate, etc.) can be switched to a display that shows which powerplant — the gasoline engine or the electric motor (or both) — is in operation at any moment. When the gas engine switches itself on, the screen displays the reason why, whether it be "acceleration," "climate control" or "normal operation."

There are many ways to configure which sorts of feedback you like, including the "brake coach" feature, which helps maximize the energy scavenged in braking to recharge the battery. I now leave mine set to display the MPG for the current tank of gas, data which changes constantly as you drive.

The net effect of all this is a hyper-awareness of exactly how much fuel is being burned at any given time and a burning psychological need to minimize that quantity. Essentially, every time the car is started, the driver is switched into video game headspace, whether he or she is aware of it or not.

And that's the funny thing about it — I am *totally aware* that I am being psychologically manipulated, and yet it is still effective. Typically, once a person is aware of external suggestion or direction, its power is instantly rendered null. Yet I find myself on every trip to the grocery store making sure not to accelerate up to the speed limit too quickly, lest the gasoline engine switch on, costing me a tenth of a mile per gallon on my cumulative mileage for the tank.

The last car I had (a 2006 Mercedes V6 station wagon) averaged 18.6 MPG over the time I had it; the tiny Ford Fiesta I had before that averaged 29.7 MPG. In the seven weeks I have owned the Fusion, I have filled up the 13-gallon tank four times; the worst mileage per tank was 35.0, the best (this week) was 38.6. My newfound efficiency behind the wheel has brought the Fusion's total MPG since new up to 34.1 in less than 1,500 miles of driving. I am starting to obsess over hitting the 40 MPG mark, digging into the submenus of the feedback displays to see if there are even more powerful carrots and/or sticks hidden within the forest of available readouts.

So, I now know why driveth the hybrid slowly. Its excellent fuel economy is not so much a triumph of mechanical engineering as it is one of psychological manipulation.

"Wichitarchaeology" from page 4

of pulling away from a red light at the same rate as any other small sedan. So what's with the crawl, Gramps? I started wondering if people who naturally drove extremely slowly and cautiously were drawn to hybrids, or if driving a hybrid actually modified the behavior of the driver.

And then, seven weeks ago, I bought a brand-new 2014 Ford Fusion Hybrid. And I stand before you today a reconditioned driver.

The car I bought had been on the lot for a year and had about 1,000 miles on the odometer. The lifetime history in the onboard computer said the MPG since the car was built was only 27.1, quite low compared to the EPA estimate (44 city/41 highway). I reset the trip odometer at the dealership and started driving the car.

Immediately, I noticed that the Fusion's interactive display system is designed ingeniously to provide constant carrot/stick feedback. In the upper-left panel of the dash is the "driving coach" readout, showing three status bars: acceleration, braking and cruising. If one does these things as smoothly and efficiently as possible, the bars reach the top end of the scale. Step on the gas or brake pedal hard, and the bars quickly diminish.

For those who require further visual aids, the upper-right panel can be

"Surtax" from page 2

substantial funds to the KPERS retirement fund last year is being asked to pull millions out this year to help balance the budget.)


The general idea behind this is that, in the euphoria of a ten cent drop in the cost of gasoline, the public may be able to swallow a penny a gallon more in taxes. Maybe they won't even notice. Or maybe they will accept that it is needed.

One good thing about a gasoline tax is that it is paid by the folks who use the roads. This includes long haul truckers, vacationers who are traveling through Kansas as well as people crossing one of our borders in search of cheaper gasoline. Another benefit is

that it will require less outlay from the general fund to supplement the gas tax revenues.

Let me reiterate that I don't like taxes very much. I realize that they are sometimes necessary and that they are most palatable when they are indirect. A sliding gas tax that would continue as long as gasoline is below \$3.50 could be put on a one year sunshine law causing the increase to last no longer than a year without legislative action.

Even if the surtax lasts longer than a year, it will not become permanent. After all, does anyone who reads this actually believe that the lower prices at the pump will last? If you do, you probably believe that the Koch brothers will soon have to pay income taxes again. Chump!

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photo by Erick Riedell

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ALL ARE WELCOME.



Coffeemakers to please (most) coffee drinkers

by Don Winsor
dwinsor@f5paper.com

When I got home last month, I had planned to reward myself in some small way with something for the house. Something that would've been impractical on the road but would be great to have at home. I decided on a modest purchase — a Baratza Encore grinder. It's a great grinder, well worth the sticker price, and it made as much of a difference in my daily caffeination as I'd imagined. My Hario mini grinder sits forlorn in the doppbag, hoping one day to be called upon again. After a few weeks with a normal grinder, I can say that manual grinding is, after many many months of having to rely on it, for suckers.

After a few days, I looked at the other coffee paraphernalia on my counter. My old drip maker, never the absolute best to begin with, had somehow apparently committed suicide in my absence. I casually looked online for an easy replacement coffeemaker. I hardly used the old Cuisinart anyway, but it was good for company. This casual browsing turned into a compulsion. Maybe I ought to go bigger. Better. Faster. Stronger.

See, after months of only making nearly every cup of coffee with the AeroPress, it seemed a bit labor intensive — even after the addition of the JavaJug I wrote about last summer. I still stand by my claim that the AeroPress is the best way to make coffee — you will never get a better result than you will with this foolproof device — there are other very valid ways.

Turns out, the Specialty Coffee Association of America — the organization which arguably sets the gold standard for quality coffee, roasting, preparation and so forth — has partnered with its European counterpart (The European Coffee Brewing Center) for rigorous testing and certification of home brewing systems. They've approved a small number of brewers as meeting their high standards.

Those brewers are:

- Bonavita BV1800
- Bonavita BV1900
- Brazen Plus
- Bunn Phase Brew 8

- KitchenAid Pour Over
- Technivorm Moccamaster

What these machines have in common is that they produce coffee more like a pourover than a conventional drip machine. The machines will properly bloom the coffee and evenly distribute the water in the way a barista does when making a pourover. They're also rated for their individual components, durability and overall quality. Really, you can't go wrong with any of these machines.

The worst thing about conventional coffee makers is the fact that a glass carafe is stored on a warmer. This keeps

heating the coffee, often burns it over time and certainly changes its flavor and texture as the coffee sits. Considering that, almost all of these models are offered with the option of a steel thermal carafe — necessary if you want to keep your coffee hot.

Armed with this information, I decided to limit myself to those on the list with a thermal carafe. I began to do research into all of them and at first settled onto the Bonavita 1800 because Amazon was having a sale.

Looking at some of the others, I



THE BEST DRIPS AROUND: The Specialty Coffee Association of America names these as the best coffeemakers around. The are, from top to bottom, left to right, the Technivorm Moccamaster, Brazen Plus, Bunn Phase Brew 8, Bonavita BV1800, Bonavita BV1900 and the KitchenAid Pour Over.



>DRINK IT

Who: Deep Valley Cellars

What: 2012 Fifty Shades of Grey White Silk

Where: Ukiah, CA

Why: Because it's much better than the movie or the book

How much: \$13

Fifty Shades wine is more complex than the books

by Vickie Kline
vkline@f5paper.com

A couple of times each year, a wine distributor in Wichita hosts a wonderful wine tasting in the Petroleum Club. The dates are usually in the spring and fall and introduce new wines as well as showcasing some recognizable favorites. When attending the tasting last November, I rolled my eyes and shook my head with the name of this wine: Fifty Shades of Grey White Silk.

Come to find out, author E.L. James is launching a collection of wines inspired by her racy novel series, *Fifty Shades of Grey*. If you're not familiar with the books (or at least pretending you've never heard of them), let me save you some time. The trilogy is an erotic romantic novel with very little happening other than sex 24 hours a day. (Guess it's a good thing the characters don't have to work for a living.) My only other comment is, "Why yes, I did read all three books." It was the least I could do to try and understand the connection between James' writing and love of wine.

Fifty Shades of Grey White Silk is good, so I ordered a case. The wine is a blend of primarily Gewürztraminer with

see "Coffee" page 12

see "Wine" page 12

LiveMusic::

>GET LISTED

To get on this page, submit your info to events@f5paper.com.

Thu., Dec. 18

Nikki Moddelmog; Carrie Cooley
8 p.m. \$5 suggested donation. @ Artichoke Sandwich Bar, 811 N. Broadway.

Slow Ya Roll
8 p.m. Must be 21. @ Mort's Cigar Bar, 923 E. First.

Agave Democracy; First to Leave; Radio Soul
10 p.m. Must be 21. @ Kirby's Beer Store, 3227 E. 17th.

Fri., Dec. 19

Grant Snider
4 p.m. Must be 21. Free. @ Mort's Cigar Bar, 923 E. First.

Erin and Alan Craddock
5 p.m. to 8 p.m.
All ages. Free. @ Heroes Sports Bar, 117 N. Mosley.

Whitnie Means
5:30 p.m. Free. @ Jerry's Bar and Grill, 630 N. Robin.

Cindy Summers and Kurt Aiken
7 p.m. @ Oscar's Lounge, 11611 E. 13th.

Celtic Woman
7:30 p.m. \$46-\$96. @ Kansas Star Casino, 777 Kansas Star Dr., Mulvane.

Josh Davis
7:30 p.m. @ Larkspur Bistro, 904 E. Douglas.

Rudy Love Jr.
8 p.m. @ Artichoke Sandwich Bar, 811 N. Broadway.

Lacey Cruse; Nikki Sample; Jordan Dee Minnis
8 p.m. Must be 21. \$5. @ Lizard Lounge, 300 S. Greenwich.

Scott Allan Knost
8 p.m. Must be 21. @ Mort's Cigar Bar, 923 E. First.

fox
8 p.m. @ The Donut Whole, 1720 E. Douglas.

Emily Strom and the Ladybyrds
8 p.m. Must be 21. @ Lakeside Club, 2121 N. Webb.

Hosty Duo
9 p.m. Must be 21. \$5. @ John Barleycorn's, 608 E. Douglas.

American-na; El Cuco; The Guzzlin Brotherhood
9 p.m. Must be 21. Free. @ Kirby's Beer Store, 3227 E. 17th.

Radio Soul; Common Folk; Twin Cities
9 p.m. Must be 21. \$5. @ Rock Island Live, 101 N. Rock Island.

Jenny Wood and the Watchers
9 p.m. Must be 21. \$5. @ Shamrock Lounge, 1724 W. Douglas.

Without Sacrifice; Friday's Waiting; Ohmz;

Ritualist
9 p.m. Must be 21. \$5. @ Crow's Nest, 4000 S. Broadway.

The 90 Proof Project
9 p.m. Must be 21. Free. @ Madrocks, 1821 E. Madison Ave. #100, Derby.

The Spencer Cummings Band
9:30 p.m. Must be 21. @ The Green Derby, 132 E. Sunnydell, Derby.

Sat., Dec. 20

Jeremiah Johnson
4 p.m. Must be 21. Free. @ Mort's Cigar Bar, 923 E. First.

Cindy Summers and Kurt Aiken
7 p.m. @ Oscar's Lounge, 11611 E. 13th.

Piper Leigh and the Smokin' Section
8 p.m. \$5. @ Artichoke Sandwich Bar, 811 N. Broadway.

Sunshine and the Bunny
8 p.m. Must be 21. @ Mort's Cigar Bar, 923 E. First.

Elliot Road
8 p.m. @ The Donut Whole, 1720 E. Douglas.

Blue Eyed Soul Christmas Party
8 p.m. \$10 to get in and bring whatever you want to drink. @ Dancing in Paradise, 2841 S. Hydraulic.

Lawless
9 p.m. Must be 21. @ Jerry's Bar and Grill, 630 N. Robin.

Full Grown Juveniles; The Loud American
9 p.m. Must be 21. \$5. @ John Barleycorn's, 608 E. Douglas.

Whiplash; Kingshifter; Sun and Stone; The

Trigger Effect;
9 p.m. Must be 21. \$5. @ Lizard Lounge, 300 S. Greenwich.

Ronnie Williams; Tony Ngo; Animal Parade; Ryan Stoldt
9 p.m. Ronnie Williams CD release party. Must be 21. \$5. @ Rock Island Live, 101 N. Rock Island.

Mumblin' Jones
9 p.m. Must be 21. \$5. @ Shamrock Lounge, 1724 W. Douglas.

Linnaberry Wine
9 p.m. Must be 21. @ The Stadium, 620 W. Maple.

The Macy Brothers
9 p.m. Must be 21. Free. @ The Rack Bar and Grill, 1602 S. Meridian.

Ophil
10 p.m. Must be 21. Free. @ Kirby's Beer Store, 3227 E. 17th.

Sun., Dec. 21

Luna Copii
7 p.m. Must be 21. Free. @ Kirby's Beer Store, 3227 E. 17th.

Bridegeist; The Midnight Ghost Train; Skychief; Cleme
9 p.m. Must be 21. \$5. @ Lizard Lounge, 300 S. Greenwich.

Mon., Dec. 22

Open Mic
9 p.m. Must be 21. @ John Barleycorn's, 608 E. Douglas.

Tue., Dec. 23

Jazz Night
8 p.m. @ The Donut Whole, 1720 E. Douglas.

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SUNDAY: NOON-6PM

The Travel Guide; Jeremy Spring; Jenny Wood; Aaron Lee Martin
9 p.m. Join us for our 2nd Annual "Christmas Eve Eve" Holiday Music Showcase! \$5. @ Public at Brickyard, 129 N. Rock Island.

Thu., Dec. 25

Dustin Arbuckle's Birthday Bash
6 p.m. Our good friend Dustin's birthday bash is always a big party, and we're glad he's having it with us! Doors open at 6 p.m., music starts around 9 p.m. Must be 21. \$5. @ Shamrock Lounge, 1724 W. Douglas.

Fri., Dec. 26

Grant Snider
4 p.m. Must be 21. Free. @ Mort's Cigar Bar, 923 E. First.

Whitnie Means
5:30 p.m. Free. @ Jerry's Bar and Grill, 630 N. Robin.

Erin and Allen
8 p.m. Must be 21. @ Mort's Cigar Bar, 923 E. First.

2 Picks and a Kick
8 p.m. @ The Donut Whole, 1720 E. Douglas.

Tony Ngo; Rudy Love Jr.; Jordan Dee Minnis
9 p.m. Must be 21. \$5. @ John Barleycorn's, 608 E. Douglas.

Erik Mallory; Gibber
10 p.m. Must be 21. Free. @ Kirby's Beer Store, 3227 E. 17th.

Divorce Corpse; Future Horse
10 p.m. Must be 21. \$5. @ Lucky's Everyday, 1217 E. Douglas.

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Movies::

Exodus is pretty but empty

by Jeremy Webster
jwebster@f5paper.com

Ridley Scott has, in his long career, directed some of the most memorable films ever made. The guy has *Alien*, *Blade Runner* and *Gladiator* on his resume. If there's something he's always been good at, it's visual storytelling.

When a Scott film trips up, it's usually something outside of the pure visual aesthetic that causes it. The most recent example of this would be the *Alien* prequel *Prometheus* which, again, while visually impressive, has a script that's dumber than a box of rocks.

So it's not surprising that his latest offering, the Biblical epic *Exodus: Gods and Kings* isn't exactly a well-rounded, satisfying film. Adding some insult to injury before the film opened was the issue that, yet again, this was another Biblical era film set in a region that would have had mainly brown and black people that has a principal cast that is all white people. But let's set that issue aside as it's a debate that should be held about — and by — the entertainment industry as a whole.

>SEE IT

Title: *Exodus: Gods and Kings*

Rating: F3

Short review: Beautiful visual storytelling that often falls apart on the character level.



The film is the latest cinematic adaptation of the Bible's book of Exodus, in which Moses, an unwary Hebrew child raised as Egyptian royalty, becomes the man to lead his enslaved people out of the bonds of Egyptian slavery toward freedom in the distant land of Canaan.

While I know some basics of the general story, I'm not particularly knowledgeable on it. I would, however, point out that I think the early Metallica song "Creeping Death" about the plagues God put on the Egyptians is really kick ass, so hopefully I've got that in my favor. I have

no plans to ever sit through the entirety of *The Ten Commandments*, because, well, because I don't want to. So nyah.

The story is pretty much what it seems to have been intended to be — Moses

see "Exodus" page 12

NO WHITEWASH HERE: Joel Edgerton, Sigourney Weaver, John Turturro and Christian Bale star as four white people in charge of an African country more than 3,000 years ago. Seems legit.

Murray is award worthy in *St. Vincent*

by Dan Kampling
dkampling@f5paper.com

>SEE IT

Title: *St. Vincent*

Rating: F5

Short review:

Bill Murray does what he does best in his latest dramedy, serving as a needed father figure for a kid looking for a modern-day saint.

It has been 30 years since Bill Murray garnered his first Golden Globe nomination for his role of Peter Venkman in *Ghostbusters*, and his most recent one for his role in *St. Vincent* was not handed to him by chance. Murray is a unique actor whose career has spanned over four decades, and his silver-tongued wit and charm have not only brought him acclaim but also made him a fixture of popular culture.

Although he's playing a character named *Vincent* in his latest Golden Globe nominated film, at times it feels like a reflection of Murray's own status as a saint in the view of audiences.

While his role isn't as dignified as his last nomination as FDR for *Hyde on Hudson Park*, Murray portrays the stubborn man we've seen at least once in our lives. Maybe he's our



SO GOOD, HE COULD DO IT LAYING DOWN: Bill Murray plays an unlikely mentor in *St. Vincent*.

neighbor or maybe we once had to stand behind him at the supermarket.

We just know them as acquaintances

or just pass by them on the street; there's rarely a chance to get to know people like that. That changes in this film when Vincent

is tasked with looking over a young boy whose parents have recently divorced and now lives with his overworked mother while attending Catholic school.

With no father figure around, Murray and the kid bond over winning big at the race track and learning how to punch the school bully. Their bond grows as Murray suffers a stroke and works to recover from it, all the while the kid is given the assignment to report on a modern-day saint. Guess who that may be?

Although it may sound a bit sappy, it's execution by first timer Theodore Melfi perfects the film's execution by balancing poignancy and selecting a fine cast to compliment Murray's ornery character. Although it's a given that this is far from Murray's final performance, and he is sure to have more fine roles in his future, *St. Vincent* is a worthy film that is a cut above the usual comedic performances of the past five years.

NowPlaying::

F5

MOVIE RATINGS GUIDE

- F5** • Awe-Inspiring
- F4** • Batten Down the Trailer!
- F3** • Blew Off A Few Shingles
- F2** • Slightly Sucks
- F1** • Just Blows

Showtimes are from Friday, Dec. 19 to Wednesday, Dec. 24*

*** All area theaters will start their last screenings on Christmas Eve at or before 5 p.m.**

>NEW

- **Annie**
- **The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies**
- **Night at the Museum: Secret of the Tomb**
- **P.K.**
- **Wild**

>RETRO

- **The Polar Express**

Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day (PG)
Starring Steve Carell, Jennifer Garner, Ed Oxenbould. Directed by Miguel Arteta.
Plot: Alexander begins to wonder if bad things only happen to him during a terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day.
Genre: Comedy, Family
Palace West: 1:10, 3:45, 6:15, 8:35 with 10:30 p.m. Fri-Sat

New this week

Annie (PG)
Starring Quvenzhané Wallis, Cameron Diaz, Jamie Foxx. Directed by Will Gluck.
Plot: A foster kid, who lives with her mean foster mom, sees her life change when business tycoon and New York mayoral candidate Will Stacks makes a thinly veiled campaign move and takes her in.
Genre: Comedy, Drama, Family, Musical
13th Ave Warren: 1, 4, 7, 10; **21st St Warren:** 1:05, 4:05, 7:05, 10:05; **Derby Plaza Theatres:** 1:25, 4:05, 7:10 with 9:45 Fri-Sat and Thu; **Movie Machine:** 1, 4:10, 6:50 with 9:30 Fri-Sat

The Best of Me (PG-13)
Starring James Marsden, Michelle Monaghan, Luke Bracey. Directed by Michael Hoffman.
Plot: A pair of former high school sweethearts reunite after many years when they return to visit their small hometown.
Genre: Drama, Romance
Palace West: 1, 3:35, 6:15, 8:55 with 11:25 p.m. Fri-Sat

Big Hero 6 (PG)
Starring Ryan Potter, Scott Adsit, Jamie Chung. Directed by Don Hall, Chris Williams.
Plot: A special bond develops between inflatable robot Baymax and prodigy Hiro Hamada, who team up with a group of friends to form a band of high-tech heroes.
Genre: Animation, Action, Comedy
Rating: F4
Short review: A superhero thrill ride ideal for kids still too young for the big Marvel/DC films proper.
13th Ave Warren: 12:50, 3:50, 6:45, 9:30; **21st St Warren:** 2:10, 4:50, 7:30, 10; **Derby Plaza Theatres:** 1:30, 3:55, 7 with 9:30 Fri-Sat

Birdman or (The Unexpected Virtue of Ignorance) (R)
Starring Michael Keaton, Zach Galifianakis, Edward Norton. Directed by Alejandro González Iñárritu.
Plot: A washed-up actor who once played an iconic superhero must overcome his ego and family trouble as he mounts a Broadway play in a bid to reclaim his past glory.
Genre: Comedy, Drama
Rating: F5
Short review: Michael Keaton shines through in a story reflective of his own career as he puts on a Broadway play amidst distractions from all directions.
13th Ave Warren: 2:30, 5:15, 7:50

The Book of Life (PG)
Starring Diego Luna, Zoe Saldana, Channing Tatum. Directed by Jorge R. Gutierrez.
Plot: A young man who is torn between fulfilling the expectations of his family and

following his heart embarks on an adventure that spans three fantastic worlds.
Genre: Animation, Adventure, Comedy
Rating: F3
Short review: A beautiful film hampered by a plot too complicated and random for its own good.
Palace West: 1:40, 3:55 with 6:10, 8:30 Sun-Tue

The Boxtrolls (PG)
Starring Ben Kingsley, Jared Harris, Nick Frost. Directed by Graham Annable, Anthony Stacchi.
Plot: An orphaned boy raised by underground cave-dwelling trash collectors tries to save his friends from an evil exterminator.
Genre: Animation, Adventure, Comedy, Family, Fantasy
Palace West: 1:50, 4:40, 7:20, 9:25 with 11:35 p.m. Fri-Sat

Dumb and Dumber To (PG-13)
Starring Jim Carrey, Jeff Daniels, Laurie Holden. Directed by Bobby Farrelly, Peter Farrelly.
Plot: 20 years after the dimwits set out on their first adventure, they head out in search of one of their long lost children in the hope of gaining a new kidney.
Genre: Comedy
Rating: F4
Short review: Harry and Lloyd are reunited to amuse audiences — not high-minded critics — with their schtick. And it mostly works.
21st St Warren: 3:45, 9:40

Exodus: Gods and Kings (PG-13)
Starring Christian Bale, Joel Edgerton, Ben Kingsley. Directed by Ridley Scott.
Plot: The defiant leader Moses rises up against the Egyptian Pharaoh Ramses, setting 600,000 slaves on a monumental journey of escape from Egypt and its terrifying cycle of deadly plagues.
Genre: Action, Adventure, Drama
Rating: F3
Short review: Beautiful visual storytelling that often falls apart on the character level.
13th Ave Warren: 11:30 a.m., 1:30, 3:10, 5, 6:45, 9, 10:15; **21st St Warren:** 11:45 a.m. (No Sat), 3:15, 6:45, 10:10, 12:45, 4:15, 7:45; **Derby Plaza Theatres:** 1, 4, 7:05; **Movie Machine:** 4, 12:30, 6:15 with 9:25 Fri-Sat; **Warren Oldtown:** 3 (3D), 6:30 (3D), 9:50 daily with 11:30 a.m. Sat-Tue

Guardians of the Galaxy (PG-13)
Starring Chris Pratt, Vin Diesel, Bradley Cooper. Directed by James Gunn.
Plot: In the far reaches of space, an American pilot finds himself the object of a manhunt after stealing a coveted orb.
Genre: Action, Adventure, Sci-Fi
Rating: F4
Short review: Generic space opera elevated by great character writing and an able mix of sweet and sour wit.
Palace West: 1:15, 4, 6:50, 9:35 with 11:05 p.m. Fri-Sat

New this week

The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies (PG-13)
Starring Ian McKellen, Martin Freeman, Richard Armitage. Directed by Peter Jackson.
Plot: Bilbo and Company are forced to engage in a war against an array of combatants and keep the terrifying Smaug from acquiring a kingdom

of treasure and obliterating all of Middle-Earth.
Genre: Adventure, Fantasy
13th Ave Warren: 11:45 a.m., 12:15 (HFR 3D), 12:45, 1:15, 3:15, 4 (HFR 3D), 4:30, 5:15, 6:50, 7:45 (HFR 3D), 8, 9, 10:15; **21st St Warren:** 11:30 a.m., 12:15 (IMAX, 3D), 1, 2, 2:50, 3:30 (IMAX, 3D), 4:30, 5:30 (3D), 6:15, 7 (IMAX, 3D), 8, 9, 9:40, 10:15 (3D); **Derby Plaza Theatres:** 1, 4, 7 with 10 Fri-Sat, 1:25 (3D), 4:25 (3D), 7:30 (3D); **Movie Machine:** 12:30, 3:40, 7 with 9:30 Fri-Sat; **Warren Oldtown:** 3, 3:30, 6:30, 7, 9:50 (3D), 10:20 daily with 11:30 a.m. (3D), Noon Sat-Tue

The Homesman (R)
Starring Tommy Lee Jones, Hilary Swank, Grace Gummer. Directed by Tommy Lee Jones.
Plot: Three women who have been driven mad by pioneer life are transported across the country by covered wagon by a pious woman and low-life drifter.
Genre: Drama, Western
13th Ave Warren: 1:15, 4:15, 7:15, 10:10

Horrible Bosses 2 (R)
Starring Jason Bateman, Charlie Day, Jason Sudeikis. Directed by Sean Anders.
Plot: Here comes another unnecessary sequel as a trio of would-be kidnappers bumble their way through a lot of dumb laughs.
Genre: Comedy
Rating: F2
Short review: The kids might love it, but Mom and Dad will end up with a headache.
13th Ave Warren: 12:45, 3:45, 7, 9:30; **21st St Warren:** 12:55, 3:55, 6:55, 9:55; **Warren Oldtown:** 4, 7:30, 10:20 daily with 12:30 Sat-Tue

The Hunger Games: Mockingjay - Part 1 (PG-13)
Starring Jennifer Lawrence, Josh Hutcherson, Liam Hemsworth. Directed by Francis Lawrence.
Plot: After Katniss Everdeen shattered the games forever, she must fight against all odds and save a nation moved by her courage.
Genre: Adventure, Sci-Fi
13th Ave Warren: 12:30, 3:40, 6:50, 10:10; **21st St Warren:** 1:15, 4:15, 7:15, 10:10; **Derby Plaza Theatres:** 1:30, 4:15, 7 with 9:45 Fri-Sat; **Warren Oldtown:** 3:45, 7, 10:10 daily with noon Sat-Tue

Interstellar (PG-13)
Starring Matthew McConaughey, Anne Hathaway, Jessica Chastain. Directed by Christopher Nolan.
Plot: A group of explorers make use of a newly discovered wormhole to surpass the limitations on human space travel and conquer the vast distances involved in an interstellar voyage.
Genre: Adventure, Mystery, Sci-Fi
Rating: F3
Short review: A fantastic space exploration narrative swallowed in its final hour by the Hollywood black hole of oversentimentality.
13th Ave Warren: 12:10, 4:10, 8; **21st St Warren:** Noon, 4, 8

John Wick (R)
Starring Keanu Reeves, Bridget Moynahan, Willem Dafoe. Directed by David Leitch, Chad Stahelski.
Plot: An ex-hitman comes out of retirement to track down the gangsters that took everything from him.
Genre: Action, Thriller
Palace West: 1:20, 3:55, 6:20, 8:50 with 11:05 p.m. Fri-Sat

The Judge (R)
Starring Robert Downey Jr., Robert Duvall, Vera Farmiga. Directed by David Dobkin.
Plot: A big city lawyer returns home where his father, the town's judge, is suspected of murder.
Genre: Drama
Palace West: 1:15, 4:50, 8:15

The Maze Runner (PG-13)
Starring Dylan O'Brien, Kaya Scodelario, Will Poulter. Directed by Wes Ball.
Plot: Thomas is deposited in a community of boys after his memory is erased, soon learning they're all trapped in a maze.
Genre: Action, Mystery, Sci-Fi, Thriller
Rating: F3
Short review: Familiar themes and a near-fatal story flub at the end don't stop The Maze Runner from being solid YA entertainment.
Palace West: 6:45, 9:05 with 1:40, 3:55 Sun-Tue and 11:30 p.m. Fri-Sat

New this week

Night at the Museum: Secret of the Tomb (PG)
Starring Ben Stiller, Robin Williams, Owen Wilson. Directed by Shawn Levy.
Plot: Larry spans the globe, uniting favorite and new characters while embarking on an epic quest to save the magic before it is gone forever.
Genre: Adventure, Comedy, Family, Fantasy
13th Ave Warren: 11:30 a.m., 12:15, 12:50, 2:30, 3:15, 3:45, 5:30, 6:15, 6:40, 8:30, 9:15, 9:45; **21st St Warren:** 12:50, 1:45, 2:30, 3:35, 4:30, 5:15, 6:15, 7:10, 8:15, 9:10, 9:50; **Derby Plaza Theatres:** 1:35, 3:55, 7:05 with 9:25 Fri-Sat; **Movie Machine:** 1:15, 4:15, 6:40 with 9:10 Fri-Sat; **Warren Oldtown:** 4:15, 6:45, 7:30, 9:40, 10:10 daily with 12:15, 12:30 Sat-Tue

Penguins of Madagascar (PG)
Starring Tom McGrath, Chris Miller, Christopher Knights. Directed by Eric Darnell, Simon J. Smith.
Plot: Super spy teams aren't born...they're hatched. Discover the secrets of the greatest and most hilarious covert birds in the global espionage biz.
Genre: Animation, Comedy, Family
Rating: F3
Short review: The kids might love it, but Mom and Dad will end up with a headache.
13th Ave Warren: Noon, 2:30, 5, 7:30, 9:50; **21st St Warren:** 2:15, 4:50, 7:30, 10:05; **Movie Machine:** 1:30, 3:40, 7

New this week

P.K. (Unrated)
Starring Aamir Khan, Sanjay Dutt, Anushka Sharma. Directed by Rajkumar Hirani.
Plot: A stranger in the city asks questions no one has asked before. Known only by his initials, P.K.'s innocent questions and childlike curiosity will take him on a journey of love, laughter and letting-go.
Genre: Comedy, Drama, Fantasy, Mystery, Romance
13th Ave Warren: 11:40 a.m., 3, 6:30, 10

Events::

>GET LISTED

Don't see your event? Send an email to events@F5paper.com

ARTS

Thu., Dec. 18

Holiday Open House

5 p.m. to 7 p.m.
Come join us for a fun time and wonderful display of art, hors d'oeuvres, cocktails, and music. @ Artist Central Gallery and Studios, 5014 E. Central.

Holiday Open House: "Christmas at the Gallery"

6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Enjoy special Christmas music by harpist Ashley Bergner, holiday refreshments and a selection of unique gifts for shoppers. @ Carriage Factory Art Gallery, 128 E. Sixth, Newton.

Sun., Dec. 21

Jesse B's Solo Art Show: Children's Book Illustrations and Storytime

2 p.m. Jess Bechtelheimer recently illustrated her first children's book. This show features the original paintings created for the book, "Gertrude's Tahoe Adventures in Time". Prints of the artwork and copies of the book will be available for signing. Jump into the pages with Gertrude and Lily, have your picture taken among the life-size, handmade trees and 20ft backdrop. @ Positive Directions, 414 S. Commerce.

Ongoing

Exhibition: Wichita's Mid-Century Modernist Galleries

Fri., March 28 to Sun., March 15
Wichita emerged as an American art center during the late 1920s as citizens organized to make visual art part of their everyday life. By the 1950s, Wichita's Avant Garde abstract artists set-up galleries of their own in downtown Wichita. @ Wichita - Sedgwick County Historical Museum, 204 S. Main.

Bridging Art and Science: Beauty and the Bugs

Fri., Nov. 7 to Sun., Feb. 22
This exhibit features work of Susie Cunningham, Susan de Wit and Rachel Stone. Visitors can encounter these creepy creatures in a whole new way with insects engineered using paper and various media. Free with regular museum admission. @ Exploration Place, 300 N. McLean Blvd.

The Kansas Watercolor Society National Exhibition 2014

Fri., Nov. 21 to Sun., Jan. 4
A wide range of styles from abstraction to realism with imagery including landscapes, still life, and more. These masterfully executed works spotlight the technique of water media. This year's juror was Thomas W. Schaller. @ Wichita Center for the Arts, 9112 E. Central.

Exhibition: "Hidden Treasures"

Fri., Nov. 28 to Fri., Dec. 19
Artwork from the Adorers of the Blood of Christ Wichita Center. The artwork includes textiles, metal works and oil, watercolor and acrylic paintings. @ C.A.F.E. Gallery at Inter-Faith Ministries, 829 N. Market.

Exhibition: Ninth Annual Small Works Show

Fri., Nov. 28 to Wed., Dec. 31

Original artwork in a variety of mediums, all by local and regional artists, judged by Steve Murillo. @ Mead Street Gallery and Gifts, 121 N. Mead, Ste. 107.

Exhibition: "Jataka Tales" curated by Cody Seekins

Fri., Nov. 28 to Fri., Dec. 19
Paintings inspired by Buddhist allegories. @ Steckline Gallery, Newman University, DeMattias Hall, 3100 McCormick.

Exhibition: "Journey Through Time" by Bob Regier

Tue., Dec. 9 to Sat., Jan. 31
This retrospective exhibition features works in printmaking, drawing, painting, photography and graphic design illustrating the artist's visual path between 1960 and the present. @ Carriage Factory Art Gallery, 128 E. Sixth, Newton.

Exhibition: "Clay for the Cause: Small Works Holiday Show"

Tue., Dec. 9 to Fri., Dec. 26
Clay Cartel artists featured in this exhibition: David Self, Dylan Seeney, Michelle Jeffries, Debi Cox, David Long, Andy Corcoran. @ Fiber Studio, 418 S. Commerce.

Exhibition: The Mundi Group Art Collection

Tue., Dec. 9 to Sun., Feb. 1
The group evolved from a gathering of artists that came together to create art once a week headed by former Wichita art teacher, Kandy Tate. When Kandy moved to Santa Fe, the artists continued painting in the studio at Tessera Gallery and became "The Mundi Group". The group has continued their love of painting under the instruction of Brian Hinkle. This exceptional exhibition showcases the artists' wide range in media. @ The Gallery at Larksfield Place, 7373 E. 29th St. N.

Exhibition: Kansas Academy of Oil Painters "Holiday Show"

Fri., Dec. 12 to Fri., Feb. 6
@ Bob Schwan Studios, 111 S. Ellis.

Exhibition: "Kansas Skies" by Nathan Swink

Tue., Dec. 16 to Fri., Jan. 9
Collection of photographs paying tribute to the beautiful Kansas skies. @ The Vagabond, 614 W. Douglas.

ARTS: CALL FOR ENTRIES

Ongoing

National Fiber Directions Exhibition 2015

Thu., Aug. 7 to Mon., Dec. 29
Juried show will be at the Wichita Center for the Arts, March 27 to May 10. \$7,500 in cash and purchase awards. Postmarked deadline: Dec. 29. Information and prospectus available at www.wcfta.com, (316) 634-2787, or email areep@wcfta.com. Entry fee is \$30 for three entries. @ Wichita Center for the Arts, 9112 E. Central.

Riverfest 2015 Poster and Button Artwork Contest

Wed., Nov. 5 to Wed., Dec. 31
the 2015 theme, "Button Up. Have a Blast!" The winning artist will receive a \$3,500 cash prize and bragging rights galore. Complete information, (including the contest rules and entry form) is available at WichitaRiverfest.com. Deadline for submissions is 5 p.m., Wed., Dec. 31. @ Wichita Festivals, Inc., 1820 E. Douglas.

"Porti-Ful Actions" WSU undergraduate exhibition

Tue., Dec. 9 to Tue., Jan. 20

Porti-ful Actions is a Call for Entry for duo collaborative interactive artwork that is created using two artistic talents to create a piece of art. It will be displayed at WSU ShiftSpace Jan. 21 through Feb. 14. @ WSU Shift Space Gallery, 416 S. Commerce.

13th annual Tallgrass Film Festival

Tue., Dec. 16 to Wed., July 8
Tallgrass Film Association announces the call for submissions for the 13th annual Tallgrass Film Festival, Oct. 14-18, 2015. Cash prizes awarded for \$500, \$100, and \$2500 for the Stubbornly Independent Gala Winner. Deadline for submissions is July 8, with early bird submissions due by April 15. Find out more about fees, program categories, and more at tallgrassfilmfest.com. @ Tallgrass Film Festival, 212 N. Market.

FILM

Thu., Dec. 18

White Christmas 2014 Classic Film Series

7 p.m. \$5 for adults, \$4 for seniors, military and students. @ The Orpheum Theatre, 200 N. Broadway.

SPECIAL

Ongoing

Celebrating the "Mystery S" and Walter Beech Air Race Trophies

Tue., Nov. 4 to Wed., Dec. 31
Featuring film footage taken at the Wichita Airport circa 1930 and 12 Walter Beech Air Race trophies. All ages. Free. @ Wichita - Sedgwick County Historical Museum, 204 S. Main.

Lights on St. Paul

Thu., Nov. 27 to Sun., Dec. 28
Drive through the largest neighborhood lights display in Kansas made up of 1.4 million lights with over 200 displays in a musical wonderland. Opens nightly at 5:30 p.m. and is open until 9 Mon-Thu and until 10 Fri-Sat and Dec. 22-25 and until 11:30 Dec. 24. Suggested donation of \$5 per vehicle. @ Douglas and St. Paul, .

Illuminations

Fri., Nov. 28 to Wed., Dec. 31
Illuminations showcases Botanica's gardens in a completely different light. It is seven days a week (excluding Dec. 24 and 25), 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. It has new themed displays, 5,000 LED luminaries and more than 120 wrapped trees and hundreds of structures aglow with twinkling white lights. In total, a million lights combine with nature to create a stunning atmosphere and a lot of holiday fun. \$8 (\$7 members) for adults and \$6 for youth (3-12). @ Botanica, 701 Amidon.

Fri., Dec. 19

Horse-drawn Carriage Rides

Fri., Dec. 19 to Sat., Dec. 20
6 p.m. to 10 p.m.
Rides originate at the fountain in Bradley Fair Plaza. Free. @ Bradley Fair Shopping Center, 2000 N. Rock.

Fri., Dec. 26

Rock the Dome

Fri., Dec. 26 to Sat., Dec. 27
7:30 p.m. Three Pink Floyd Cosmic Light Shows, including songs from *Dark Side of the Moon*, *The Wall* and *Wish You Were Here*. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. Age 17 and older. \$12. @ Exploration Place, 300 N. McLean Blvd.

THEATER & DANCE

Ongoing

A Crown Christmas: Our Holiday Spectacular

Sat., Nov. 22 to Sun., Dec. 21
Holiday themed musical revue: beautiful singing and dancing meet hilarious comedy sketches. Shows Wed-Sun evenings at 7:30 (dinner starts is 5-7:15, but only appetizers on Sundays). \$35-\$60. @ Crown Uptown Theatre, 3207 E. Douglas.

Bad Christmas Carol or Scrooge You and Mistletoe Mayhem Musical Comedy Revue

Tue., Dec. 9 to Tue., Dec. 30
A comedic take on the classic Charles Dickens story as only Mosley Street Melodrama can do. Shows start Monday through Friday at 6 p.m., Saturday at Noon and 6 p.m., and Sunday at 5 p.m. \$18-\$28. @ Mosley Street Melodrama, 234 N. Mosley.

Disney's Beauty and the Beast

Tue., Dec. 16 to Thu., Dec. 18
The Broadway musical. 7:30 p.m. daily. All ages. \$40-\$70 @ Century II, 225 W. Douglas.

Plaid Tidings

Wed., Dec. 17 to Sat., Dec. 20
This is a funny musical revue chock-full of classic barbershop quartet harmonies and pitch-perfect melodies. Dinner is served from 6:30 to 7:30; show starts at 8; appetizers and desert are served from 6:30 until 9:30; drinks served until the close of the show. *Plaid Tidings* shows Wednesdays through Saturdays, Nov. 28 through Dec. 20, with a performance on Tue., Dec. 23. \$22 show only; \$32 show and dinner. @ Roxy's Downtown, 412 1/2 E. Douglas.

Thu., Dec. 18

The Game's Afoot or Holmes for the Holidays

Thu., Dec. 18 to Sun., Dec. 21
8 p.m. *Thu-Sat*; 2 p.m. *Sun.* In the play Broadway star William Gillette, admired the world over for his portrayal of Sherlock Holmes, has invited his fellow cast members to his Connecticut castle for a weekend of revelry. When one of the guests is stabbed to death, festivities turn dangerous. Gillette tries to solve the murder. \$14 adults; \$12 for seniors, students and military. @ Wichita Community Theatre, 258 N. Fountain.

Fri., Dec. 19

The Year Santa Almost Forgot Christmas

Fri., Dec. 19 to Sat., Dec. 20
12:30 p.m. This show is a fun and interactive performance for middle school age and younger. Doors open at 11 a.m. Ticket price includes lunch and show. \$15. @ Crown Uptown Theatre, 3207 E. Douglas.

Sun., Dec. 21

The Santaland Diaries and Cindy Summers

7 p.m. David Stone performs David Sadaris' *The Santaland Diaries*. Summers opens the evening with Christmas songs in the styles of Karen Carpenter, Judy Garland and Patsy Cline. Appetizers and drinks only. Doors open at 5:30. \$22. @ Roxy's Downtown, 412 1/2 E. Douglas.

Tue., Dec. 23

Plaid Tidings

6:30 p.m. Dinner is served from 6:30 to 7:30; show starts at 8; appetizers and desert are served from 6:30 until 9:30; drinks served until the close of the show. \$22 show only; \$32 show and dinner. @ Roxy's Downtown, 412 1/2 E. Douglas.

"Movies" from page 9

Retro

The Polar Express (G)

Starring Tom Hanks, Chris Coppola, Michael Jeter. Directed by Robert Zemeckis.
Plot: On Christmas Eve, a doubting boy boards a magical train that's headed to the North Pole and Santa Claus' home.
Genre: Animation, Adventure, Family, Fantasy
Palace West: Fri-Sat only: 1:30, 4:15, 6:40, 9:10, 11:25 p.m.

St. Vincent (PG-13)

Starring Bill Murray, Melissa McCarthy, Naomi Watts. Directed by Theodore Melfi.
Plot: A young boy whose parents just divorced finds an unlikely friend and mentor in the misanthropic, bawdy, hedonistic, war veteran who lives next door.
Genre: Comedy
Rating: F5
Short review: Bill Murray does what he does best in his latest dramedy, serving as a needed father figure for a kid looking for a modern-day saint.
21st St Warren: 12:50, 6:50

The Theory of Everything (PG-13)

Starring Eddie Redmayne, Felicity Jones, Tom Prior. Directed by James Marsh.
Plot: A look at the relationship between the famous physicist Stephen Hawking and his wife.
Genre: Biography, Drama, Romance
21st St Warren: 12:20, 3:45, 6:55, 10

Top Five (R)

Starring Chris Rock, Rosario Dawson, Gabrielle Union. Directed by Chris Rock.
Plot: A comedian tries to make it as a serious actor when his reality-TV star fiancée talks him into broadcasting their wedding on her TV show.
Genre: Comedy

13th Ave Warren: 1, 3:50, 7:10, 9:45; **21st St Warren:** 1:50, 4:35, 7:15, 9:55

New this week

Wild (R)

Starring Reese Witherspoon, Laura Dern, Gaby Hoffmann. Directed by Jean-Marc Vallée.
Plot: A chronicle of one woman's 1,100-mile solo hike undertaken as a way to recover from a recent catastrophe.
Genre: Biography, Drama
13th Ave Warren: 12:40, 3:40, 6:40, 9:40

ASTROPOOP!

THE SKINNY ON YOUR WEEK
by Diviner Mme Zanzibird

Aries: (March 21 — April 19)
Week rating: F2

Due to poor gift planning on your part, your whole family is getting Chex Mix for Christmas. This week: Stock up on Worcestershire sauce.

Taurus: (April 20 — May 20)
Week rating: F5

An Aries will give you some of the tastiest Chex Mix in the world. This week: Let your love of overly decorated sweater vests shine.

Gemini: (May 21 — June 21)
Week rating: F3

If drinking beverages out of Mason jars is wrong, you will never be right. This week: Get some "science ice cream" with a Virgo at Churn & Burn.

Cancer: (June 22 — July 22)
Week rating: F3

You must let Santa know if you want a Wiffle Ball set for Christmas. This week: Perfect your recipe for split pea soup.

Leo: (July 23 — Aug. 22)
Week rating: F4

You'll vary your evening walk enough to see great holiday light displays each night. This week: Sign up to rent your home through Airbnb.

Virgo: (Aug. 23 — Sept. 22)
Week rating: F5

Your life will be sciencier after you share a Churn & Burn ice cream with a Gemini. This week: Run around yelling "Science!" like Bill Nye.

Libra: (Sept. 23 — Oct. 23)
Week rating: F4

You will meet an amazing harmonica player while riding the city bus. This week: Make a new friend; get rid of a dud friend.

Scorpio: (Oct. 24 — Nov. 21)
Week rating: F3

When you are dead and gone, you will be remembered for the snowball cookies you made each year. This week: Take up painting seascapes.

Sagittarius: (Nov. 22 — Dec. 21)
Week rating: F5

A wonderful, magnificent admirer will sign you up for a "Chocolate of the Month" club. This week: Share the sweets.

Capricorn: (Dec. 22 — Jan. 19)
Week rating: F4

You'll be the hero of neighborhood birds when you hang up the peanut butter you made. This week: Take a painting class with a new friend.

Aquarius: (Jan. 20 — Feb. 18)
Week rating: F3

You'd be amazed at how many people on your list want cozy slippers. This week: Slip a mall Santa a flask of Rumpel Minze.

Pisces: (Feb. 19 — March 20)
Week rating: F4

Your plan of saving money by eating only soup and fruit cocktail will pay off — for your wallet and your belt. This week: Soup tastes best when it's shared with friends. 🍲

¡Ask a Mexican! SPECIAL NAVIDAD GIFT GUIDE EDITION!

by Gustavo Arellano
themexican@f5paper.com

Gentle *cabrones*: Behold my annual Mexican Christmas guide, where I recommend the best Mexi-themed *libros* for you to give to your loved ones this *Navidad* instead of yet another tamale to unwrap. Buy them at your local bookstore or order online, but do buy!

Lowriting: Shots, Rides & Stories from the Chicano Soul: Stunning collection of lowrider photos by Los Angeles-based librarian/photographer Art Meza combined with essays and poems about Chicano car culture (yours truly has a piece about my 1974 Cadillac

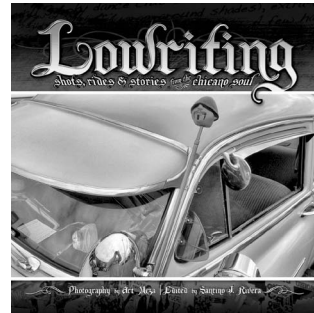


¡ASK A MEXICAN!

Eldorado convertible — *pinche* thing has more power than a B-17 Flying Fortress). Publisher Santino Rivera also has another awesome anthology — **¡Ban This! The BSP Anthology of Xican@ Literature**, published in response to the attack on ethnic studies in Arizona and beyond. Order them at broken-swordpublications.com, and Rivera just might throw in a sticker that pays homage to the Sex Pistols and reads

"Never Mind the Hispanics Here Come the Xicanos!" HELL YA!

A More Imperfect Union: A Contrarian History of the United States: The latest collaboration between essayist Ilan Stavans and legendary



cartoonista Lalo Alcaraz, this book is like a graphic-novel version of *A People's History of the United States* but far funnier. And don't forget to buy all of Lalo's books, as they remain evergreen gifts.

Speaking of Evergreens: Any of the works of Sam Quinones, Daniel Hernandez, Carey McWilliams, Jod Agius-Vallejo and William Nericcio — each, in their own way, magnificent storytellers of the Mexican experience.

Hispanic Folk Music of New Mexico and the Southwest: A Self-Portrait of a People and New Mexican Folk Music/Cancionero del Folklor Nuevomexicano: Treasures of a People/El Tesoro del Pueblo: Yes, these titles by the always impressive University of New Mexico Press are pricey. But anyone who's a student of New Mexico or a lover of Latino music must own these tomes, which examine the unique musical traditions of the Land of Enchantment, featuring corridos that date back centuries. The latter comes with a CD, as well — you remember those, right?

Latina/os and World War II Mobility, Agency, and Ideology: The other great university press for Chicano thought is the University of

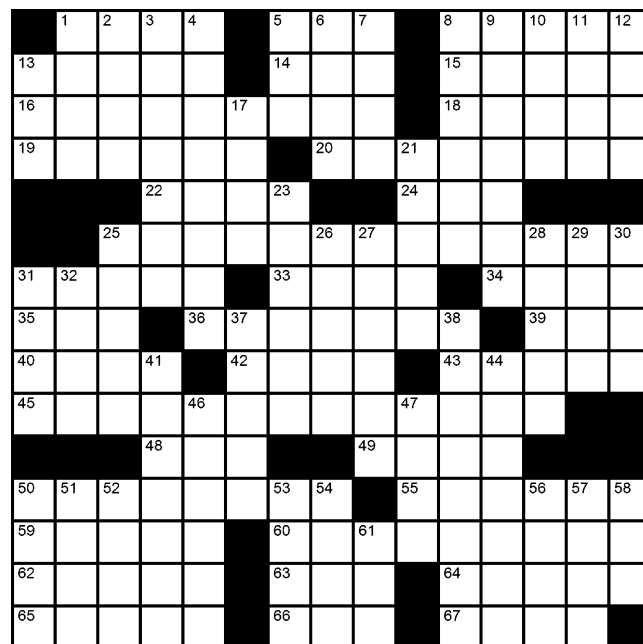
see "Mexican" page 12

Jonesin' Crosswords "Smooth Move" — about to be pulled on you.

by Matt Jones

ACROSS

- 1 Nicholas II of Russia, say
- 5 Close male friend
- 8 Curse word that's "dropped," for short
- 13 Yellowstone grazer
- 14 50 Cent piece?
- 15 Parts partner
- 16 Christmas present often regifted
- 18 Love to pieces
- 19 Drywall mineral
- 20 Google employee, often
- 22 Get your ducks in ____
- 24 Island, in French
- 25 James Joyce novel with its own unique vocabulary
- 31 Hard-to-find book character
- 33 Performing ____
- 34 Social-climbing type
- 35 Ex-"Saturday Night Live" player Gasteyer
- 36 Sports maneuver (and alternate title for this puzzle)
- 39 "All ____ day's work"
- 40 "So what if ____?"
- 42 "I ____ little silhouette of a man..."
- 43 Vox piece
- 45 It's gripping
- 48 Assist
- 49 Hatcher who played Lois Lane
- 50 Epitome of deadness
- 55 Comprehend
- 59 "I Can't Make You Love Me" singer Bonnie
- 60 Way to stop a bike
- 62 "Sesame Street" star
- 63 Title for a monk
- 64 Spitting nails
- 65 "No questions ____"



- 66 Despite everything
- 67 Dueling weapon

DOWN

- 1 Conservative in the House of Lords
- 2 Progresso product
- 3 "To reiterate..."
- 4 First two words in some movie sequel titles
- 5 Sports ____
- 6 It leaves no leaves
- 7 Sign on a store
- 8 Thrashes about
- 9 "You didn't get the job," for example
- 10 Clarinet's relative
- 11 "Encore!"
- 12 "Song of the South" title for Rabbit or Fox
- 13 Industrial activity, for short
- 17 "Let's go!"
- 21 Infomercial knife brand
- 23 Undermine

LAST WEEK'S ANSWER



- 25 Distinctive style
- 26 Avarice
- 27 "To the newlyweds!" opener
- 28 Ouzo ingredient
- 29 Hawaiian coffee region
- 30 StubHub's parent company
- 31 Dickensian child, often
- 32 One on the "nay" side
- 37 Carne ____
- 38 Like coupons and notebook paper
- 41 Wise guy
- 44 Vacation where you buy lift passes
- 46 Dropped clues
- 47 Weight
- 50 De Matteo of "Sons of Anarchy"
- 51 Rowboat accessories
- 52 "Old MacDonald" noise
- 53 Doubtful
- 54 Accumulated traditions
- 56 Eat, as a meal
- 57 "Grapes of Wrath" migrant
- 58 Pre-____ student
- 61 Grain in granola

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"Coffee" from page 6

hesitated. If you read the reviews of things like these, you'll find the pickiest people on Earth. These machines have all been extensively tested and approved by a body of very picky coffee snobs, but they've got nothing on some online reviewers whose persnickety issues with each machine make you wonder if a machine even EXISTS that would satisfy them all.

Some reviewers didn't like the plastic used in the 1800. Probably not valid concerns, but they got me looking toward the Brazen Plus. Also, the Brazen Plus is... well, it's just cool looking. I read various concerns about the Brazen, so I moved on before learning that Brazen has replaced its problematic first model with a newer one, correcting many of the issues picky coffee nerds had with the earlier machine.

Even though it didn't have a thermal jug, the KitchenAid got excellent reviews. I opted not to go in that direction after many reports that pouring from the glass carafe tends to be messy.

Nearly every review of each of these machines deferred to the Technivorm Mocomaster as the standard. I couldn't bring myself to spend that kind of money, but looking at the Moccamaster it was clear that it stood above the rest. Too expensive, though. It might be the acknowledged best, but the price is too damned high.

Fast forward to right now, and I've been drinking coffee almost exclusively from my Technivorm for weeks. It was expensive, but I found a store with a "30% off everything sale" and that took the price down into line with many of the other SCAA-approved machines. You'll read many reports of people who own the Technivorm using them for 20

years without any sort of problem — they've been around for 50 years, largely unchanged. They're handmade in the Netherlands, very simple to operate and make easily the best coffee I've ever had from any sort of machine. It makes a better pour-over than you'll find done manually in many coffeehouses. They don't offer a digital clock or automatic anything, just an on-off switch and reliable amazingness. I opted for the KBGT 741, which as a bonus looks a bit steam-punk/retro-futuristic.

I highly recommend that if you're looking for a new coffee machine, and you care about coffee, you save your pennies and think about investing in one of these machines. The price is high, but many longtime users say they've had this one machine in the time that friends have gone through four or five lesser models. Besides, with coffee this good, who needs to eat?

"Wine" from page 6

Sauvignon Blanc. Gewürztraminer is similar to sweet Moscato, but has higher alcohol content, lower acidity and it has more striking aromatics. When researching this wine, I learned about lychee fruit, which has an intense aroma described as a sweet rose — something I was unfamiliar with. Combining the lychee, flavors of pear, honey and crisp grapefruit with the Sauvignon Blanc creates a smoky aroma that is delightful.

It's been said that Gewürztraminer wines are slightly out of fashion, but

I believe Fifty Shades will change the minds of many by being one of the most recognizable tastes and varietals because of the heavy scent. It's interesting that the French achieved success with this grape, while it has a German name, and its history began in Italy. Wine texts translate "gewürz" as "spicy," but an alternate translation of more relevance is probably "perfumed."

Reviewers find Fifty Shades hard to define because it doesn't fit any standard white wine descriptors. The nose is heavy, but the taste is light. The flavor

isn't especially strong, but there is flavor all the same. It is semi-dry, while having a sweet rose aroma. All of these characteristics make Fifty Shades excellent with fresh fruit and cheeses, in addition to being complementary to fish and chicken dishes. It also does well with recipes that include hot peppers, oriental spices and curry.

Remember, this is about the wine and not the book. But should you decide to read the book *Fifty Shades of Grey* (with movie coming soon), be sure to stock up on Fifty Shades White Silk beforehand. You'll need it!

"Exodus" from page 8

(Christian Bale), a general of Egypt, learns he's a Hebrew, is exiled for political reasons, has a lovely journey of self-discovery and, at the behest of God, heads back to the land of the Pharaohs to end his people's slavery.

The film opens with combat and rip-roaring testosterone all over the place, then backs off for political intrigue and the story of Moses's origin. The film develops an early strong relationship between Moses and Rameses, who will end up being the pharaoh he and his God set in their sights throughout the second half of the film.

Bale is dead-on throughout the film in the role of Moses, but other important characters are performed or presented poorly. The obvious example being Rameses as performed by Joel Edgerton. Edgerton's physicality is all wrong.

For the first half of the film his mode of speech and gesture seems not like ancient royalty but an imitation of one of Ray Liotta's gangster characters. This lets up in the second half once the plagues get started, but by then it's difficult to reestablish the character's persona.

Rameses's mother, as played by Sigourney Weaver, is presented as the political opportunist who really wants Moses exiled and hires assassins to finish the job, but, despite being a heavy draw, she barely has any screen time whatsoever.

Weirdest perhaps of all, a turncoat viceroy played by John Turturro attempts to bribe Moses for a good field report via what seems to be a light suggestion of an offer of gay sex. A similar sort of suggestion comes later when the viceroy gets information from a couple of Hebrew spies, and the viewer has to wonder what decision process underlaid such scenes. One potentially gay

character in the film, and he's one of the biggest villains? Ooooookay.

The presentation of God may be just as weird (or weirder). God appears to Moses throughout the film as an intensely sarcastic, angry child. The effect, combined with Moses's continual sense of horror at the plagues God puts upon the Egyptians, doesn't exactly make the Big Guy come across in the best light.

And yet, for its flaws, when the film clicks; wow, does it click. As is to be expected, the visual setpieces are glorious, with the parting of the Red Sea in the finale going into full blown amazing territory.

Exodus: Gods and Kings continues Scott's tradition of films that make for great spectacle but fall apart in other ways. If he'd focus on the entirety of the film production process as much as he focused on the visual elements, he'd have another real home run on his hands.

"Mexican" from page 11

Texas Press, and their best effort this year was this anthology regarding the Mexican-American experience in the Good War. Yes, Ken Burns: Latinos fought in the conflict.

The Changs Next Door to the Dيازes: Remapping Race in Suburban California: Released late last year by the University of Minnesota Press, this fluid

ethnography reveals the Reconquista for all its nefariousness: Mexis are moving to the suburbs and joining the middle class. RUN!

Paradise Transplanted: Migration and the Making of California Gardens: University of Southern California sociology professor Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo did a pioneering study of Latina domestic workers in 2001, so it made sense that her followup in the genre

would focus on *jardineros*. Featuring her usual trenchant analysis and a Studs Terkel ear for letting subjects tell their life story on their own terms.

¡Ask a Mexican!, Orange County: A Personal History and Taco USA: How Mexican Food Conquered America: Because DUH!

Ask the Mexican at themexican@f5paper.com. be his fan on Facebook. follow him on Twitter @gustavoarellano.

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