DICK'S PICKS

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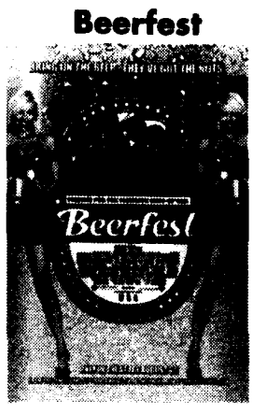
Hello fellow Penn Staters, my name is Andrew Scott, my friends call me "Dickie." I'm a senior Mechanical Engineering student, which means I'm good with numbers, so if my grammar isn't perfect or I use run-on sentences, GET OFF MY BACK!

I would like to offer greetings to all new and returning students of Penn State Harrisburg and a resounding squeal of joy because this will be my final two semesters before graduating. With this new semester comes new responsibilities and challenges including: waking up, staying awake [in class], and trying to remember what was said in class when tested on it. I have opted to also write for the Capital Times; my column, movie, DVD, and TV reviews. Yes, I know it's a burden that no one wants to take on but I've pledged myself to viewing the latest theatrical releases and spending countless hours watching TV and new-to-DVD films. So breathe a sigh of relief that you won't suffer as I.

Anyway, let's get to my first review. I thought about giving a short review of every film I saw this summer, instead I chose to write a review of a single movie.

Beerfest



The Broken Lizard team has once again created an iconic movie for degenerates and college students to flock to (me being one of the latter). The premise of the film is that two American brothers, Todd and Jan Wolfhouse, travel to Germany during Octoberfest, the world-renowned festival of beer. They go there to spread their grandfather's ashes, according to family tradition and accidentally stumble upon an even more elaborate and decadent celebration of this alcoholic beverage; BEERFEST!

Beerfest is a comedic commentary on the perception that most alcoholics have; drinking booze can be considered a legitimate sport, gauged on a level equivalent to an "alcoholic Olympics." Through a series of events including; 'Volume Chug,' 'Quarters,' and 'Monkey Chug,' Beerfest challenges international teams to drink for the pride of their country.

Todd and Jan feel more than confident they can beat the reigning German champions but are swiftly defeated and humiliated on an international scale. Upon their return to the States, they put a team together and begin 'training' for next year's competition to take down the German team. Their team consists of both Jan and Todd, Fink, the team brainiac, Barry, the best drinking game player turned male prostitute, and Landfill/Gil, the unquenchable big man of the team (known as Farve from Super Troopers).

The film is consistent with the humor of Super Troopers, poking fun at cultural and social conceptions of drinking, while never sacrificing the smallest opportunity for subtle fart jokes in place of a more sophisticated plot. This movie has everything a drinking person needs; lots of beer (duh), sufficient nudity (thank you European women), and the preconception that people can drink as much beer and alcohol as they want without concern for their health and wellbeing. I was laughing throughout the entire film; from shooting quarters with the priest to Fink getting the "eye of the Jew," giving him incredible drinking ability. I wish this film was a blanket that I could wrap myself in all winter and then in the spring turn it into clothes for a picnic (see the film and you'll get that one).

To be completely fair, the film has a weak plot, poor character development, and no real morality or lesson. Not to mention how inaccurate it is that Germans could outdrink the Irish. The film also had one of the most ridiculous plot twists ever conceived by man. Clearly the script was written during production, or the writers were drunk, or both. However, it all accumulates to form an entertaining, albeit mind-numbing, work of cinema.

See this movie if you want to laugh your ass off. If you are looking for a touching depiction of the human soul that will ultimately bring you to a life altering epiphany, this might not be the film for you.

I give this film 3 out of 5 nuts

Smallville

For my first installment of new to DVD releases I have chosen not to do full length feature film but the TV series *Smallville*: Season 5.

I'm kind of a comic nerd and have been following the series religiously. For those who have not seen or even heard of *Smallville*, the show is a look into the life of Clark Kent before he becomes Superman. Smallville is a small country town in Kansas that was struck by a freak meteor shower nearly two decades ago.

From the chaos and destruction Jonathan and Martha Kent found a small boy whom they took in and raised as their own son. As side effects of the meteors (kryptonite) normal humans in the town have developed abnormal abilities, some have chosen to use them for good and others for their own satisfaction. Now a fully-grown young man, Clark chooses to use his natural abilities to stop these wrong doers.

The fifth season is probably the only season that doesn't depend on viewing all the previous seasons to understand what is happening.

True, without seeing the past four seasons, viewers will be at a loss for some details but nothing significant enough to take away from the story. Writer and director Alfred Gough describes this season as, "The Superman in training season" as plot begins to fall further in line with the mythology of Superman; i.e. the Fortress of Solitude, the Daily Planet, and the ever-increasing void between him and Lex Luthor.

Clark is faced with important decisions and life lessons that may hurt him but will ultimately help him to become one of the greatest heroes in the world.

He is beginning to realize that it is his destiny to fight the evils of the world and starts to embrace his Kryptonian history.

Special episodes introduce guest stars as characters that one would assume to become Aquaman and Cyborg and Clark also sees he is not the only person with superhuman abilities willing to fight for good.

There are dozens of plot twists making for a very dramatic and exciting season that begs the viewer to watch episode upon episode and almost quirky nods towards the original Richard Donner films, referencing scenes and quotes in the form of rhetorical statements.

Bonus features for the series include cut scenes from particular episodes, commentary from the directors and actors, and a lot of behind the scenes footage.

The cut scenes are interesting but don't add much to the original story. The commentaries were both informative and entertaining, while the directors and actors narrating over scenes and explaining the intricacies of how it was shot, set conditions, the complexity of the special effects make it very educational from a lay person's perspective.

However, it was not only dry film jargon; there was also a great deal of casual banter between all the commentators.

Sometimes, it was about an uncomfortable harness they were strapped into for hours to film a single sequence that was eventually cut and other times it was busting each others chops for messing up a simple bit during filming.

The disc package also includes an extra disc solely for behind the scenes footage and interviews for the 100th episode of the series. It is interesting to hear how the cast and crew feel the story has grown and where it is heading from that landmark episode.

Season 5 of *Smallville* is by far the most exciting and 'traditional' thus far. A great deal of character growth occurs as well as a few surprises that no one saw coming. So, for anyone who is mystified by the legend of Superman or anyone who just wants to watch an interesting story and has quite a bit of time on their hands, this DVD box set is an excellent addition.

I give it 5 out of 5 nuts.

MEGAMAN: Capcom's golden boy

By **OLIVER EISLER**
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These words should echo familiarly in the memories of every game-loving Nintendo-kid of the late 80s. MegaMan, or Rockman as the title character is originally known in Japan, has endured as one of video-gaming's most recognizable icons since his debut on the NES (Nintendo Entertainment System) in 1987.

The immense popularity of the original"bluebomber"—asMegaMan has been dubbed— led to the creation of a sequel series: MegaMan X.

Set a century after its predecessor, the X series introduced gamers to an entirely new MegaMan. In sharp contrast to his predecessor, MegaMan X,who is commonly referred to as simply X, is a conflicted warrior in a world ravaged by the deadly Sigma Virus. The MegaMan Zero series picks up where the X series culminates. Starring X's partner, Zero, the Zero series introduced many new characters but made constant reference to old favorites. After four successful games, the Zero series ended when Zero died in outer space in order to save the world that had persecuted him.

Much to the delight of fans, a new MegaMan series has been released for the Nintendo DS system. The first game in this new series, MegaMan ZX, was released on Sept. 12th, but some retailers may not have it in stock until a week or two after its release.

The game surprises fans that are familiar with older MegaMan games at the moment the intro sequence ends. Instead of the usual select-screen in which the player could normally choose from various different levels (traditionally eight), there is only one giant level that encompasses the entire world of MegaMan ZX. The objective of the game is to succeed in various missions, the more important of which have the player encounter an enemy-boss character near the objective.

The gameplay is fairly standard at first. As in previous titles, the player shoots his way through enemies and dashes or jumps past obstacles. However, as the game progresses, as opposed to stealing powers from defeated foes, in this game the main character acquires different live metals.

Using live metals, the main character can transform into different elemental forms, each with their own set of abilities and techniques. Some missions can only be cleared while in a certain form.

The player does not need to clear all the missions in order to beat the game. Apart from boss-battle missions, there are various smaller missions that allow the player to access hidden features or secret abilities. There are also some hidden features that can only be unlocked by inserting MegaMan Zero 3 or MegaMan Zero 4 into the Nintendo DS. Both games unlock different hidden features.

By defeating bosses and clearing missions, the player receives different key cards which enable him to unlock new areas. Once unlocked, these areas become permanently accessible. In all, there are over thirty areas in the game, all of which contain their own secrets to discover, data to collect, and enemies to destroy.

This is where the game comes up short. With all those areas to play through, would it really hurt to make proper use of the Nintendo DS's second screen and give the player an easily accessible map? Although most players will soon familiarize themselves with the game's world, having to pause and use the console's shoulder keys to scroll the map is sure to throw even the most experienced gamers off-rhythm.

MegaMan ZX allows the player to choose from two characters, both of which have their own overlapping story. Being cautious not to spoil too much, in addition to the various new characters, several old faces will appear throughout the game in a very surprising way. The abundance of side-missions, hidden surprises, and the fact that there are essentially two stories in the game depending on which character the player chooses, give MegaMan ZX a fairly high replay value.

The Blue Warrior returns in the latest Capcom release for Nintendo DS.

As far as in-game graphics are concerned, MegaMan ZX is average. However, the game makes up for this with beautifully animated cut-scenes spread throughout the story.

The game's story, although self-encompassed, builds upon themes established in previous games; so while the main plot is easy to follow, understanding some themes requires a familiarity with earlier titles.

Overall, MegaMan ZX is a solid game that provides many hours of entertainment and can be enjoyed by long-time fans and newcomers alike.

c g s t t p f t k l c i a u e i
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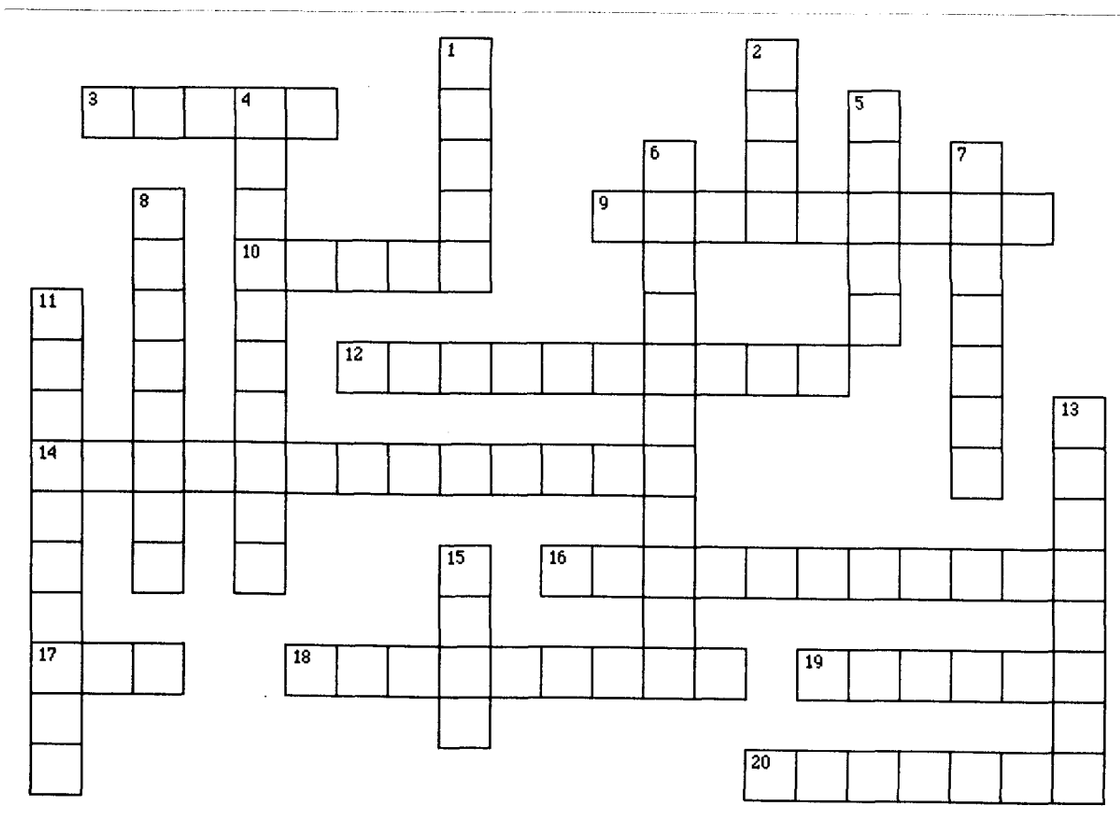

ACROSS
3. Frequent Adventurer's Guild (term)
9. Tainted form of Greek sporting event
10. Inter-Penn State sports competition abbr.
12. Dauphin County's oldest town
14. International event in PSH's town square
16. Baseball coach's nickname
17. Airport security abbr.
18. PSH library circulation supervisor
19. Assistant director of campus life
20. Free multimedia rentals location

DOWN
1. Helping Middletown become a more economically progressive community
2 Looming PSU opponent
4 Smallville Star Achilles' heel
5 SGA senator of engineering
6 Nancy Hartman goes here for fun
7 Walk for diabetes sponsor
8 College attended by train-loving professor
11 Football occurrence for the 5th time in 1994
13 Champs college night
15 Number of Grammy's won by Houston native singer

For the correct answers, please visit us in the Capital Times office, E-121 Olmsted.