Joker holds a real card

Ann Chung
Cartoonist
Obama seeks to increase job force

Will Zech
Asst. News Editor

President Obama revealed, recently, that 651,000 jobs were lost in February according to research. This brings the total loss in jobs to over 4,400,000. The unemployment rate has passed 8%, the highest in 25 years.

Nevertheless, the President says that with the right stimulus package, the United States could survive this crisis and emerge a stronger more prosperous nation. He reiterated that, when he took office, he knew the crisis could not be solved quickly or easily.

The President outlined his Consumer and Business Lending Initiative, which will generate as much as $1 trillion in new lending, while unfreezing the credit market and stabilizing the financial markets. However, the president went on to say that it is equally important that the Departments of Treasury and Housing release guidelines so that lenders will lower mortgage payments.

President Obama stressed that it is essential we do not just concentrate on corrective measures. He said a great society needs to move forward and reform healthcare. The President’s initiative to reform the U.S. healthcare system would provide health care to 48 million people who are presently without insurance. As the president explained, “our ideas and opinions about how to achieve this reform will vary, but our goal must be the same: quality, and affordable healthcare for every American.”

Republicans have complained that the proposed federal budget is much too high. They argue that the Congress has enough to do to solve the existing problems without taking on new projects. They argue that incentives for the creation of jobs and the stimulation of credit should be our first priorities until those problems are under control.

Many in Congress take heart in the fact that the road building initiative will create or save 150,000 jobs by the end of next year. Explaining his plans for employees of the Transportation Department, President Obama disclosed that 200 highway construction jobs will begin within the next few weeks. The President’s stimulus package provides some $48 billion toward infrastructure projects. The cities with shovel ready projects will begin work immediately.

California Congresswoman Hilda Solis, who was appointed head of the Labor Department, vowed to launch a national “Green Jobs” initiative. She is in favor of energy efficient retrofitting and solar panel installation to stimulate jobs and conserve energy. Solis estimated that the Green Jobs Act could create 3 million jobs over the next decade.

Sources:
cnn.com
nytimes.com
forclosuredeals.com

Don’t forget!
Prom is on May 16
U2 finishes *No Line on the Horizon*

*Peter Kuppler  
Asst. Entertainment Editor*

U2’s twelfth studio album, *No Line on the Horizon*, is their latest release since *How to Dismantle an Atomic Bomb* in 2004. *No Line on the Horizon* was released in the United States on March 3, and featured three different producers. U2 began working on the album in 2006 with producer Rick Rubin, but the material from those sessions is not on *No Line on the Horizon*.

The album cover is in honor of Rob Partridge, who died of cancer in 2008. The cover of the album is a picture of the sea meeting the sky by Hiroshi Sugimoto. Partridge signed U2’s first record deal in 1979. U2 made *No Line on the Horizon* with Interscope Records, who also released Dr. Dre and Snoop Dogg’s debut albums.

Multiple parts of U2 recording *No Line on the Horizon* were filmed and uploaded on to U2.com. On February 15, *The Guardian* interviewed Bono who talked about U2 releasing another album in 2009. During the interview Bono stated, “It will be a more meditative album on the theme of pilgrimage.”

U2 has been busy promoting their new album by performing “Get on Your Boots” at the 2009 ECHO awards, the 51st Grammy Awards, and the 2009 BRIT Awards. “GetonYourBoots”is U2’s first single and was released on February 15. The music video for “Get on Your Boots” has a lot going on and uses special effects throughout its shots.

A worldwide tour for *No Line on the Horizon* will begin June 30 and will include North America and Europe this year. The tour is entitled “U2360 Tour” because at the shows the fans will surround U2 from all sides. If you are interested in seeing U2 live they will perform at Soldier field in Chicago, Illinois on September 12, 2009.

*No Line on the Horizon* has big shoes to fill with U2’s last album, *How to Dismantle an Atomic Bomb*, which made $398 million from concert ticket sales. *No Line on the Horizon* has already begun to live up to U2’s success by going platinum in Australia, Brazil, Netherlands, New Zealand, United Kingdom, Portugal, and double platinum in Poland. I recommend *No Line on the Horizon* to anyone who has enjoyed U2’s past work.
Maxi-dresses: will they be a hit?

As spring clothes fill the stores, many of the trends are very predictable. Bright colors and patterns still reign supreme, and flip flops are the footwear of choice once again.

But one trend that has come out of nowhere are maxi-dresses. Everywhere you turn in the mall, store windows have one or more of the flowing, floor length dresses on display.

In the span of one season, they have moved from runways into mainstream stores like American Eagle and Express. These striking dresses can be found in other trendy stores, such as Forever 21 and Charlotte Russe.

Maxi-dresses first began to gain popularity in 1967, when they became a must have for the fashion-forward in London. It wasn’t until the early 1970’s that the trend began to sweep across the U.S. They remained popular throughout the 1970’s.

When maxi-dresses first came out, they were usually lacy and ended just above the ankle. Today’s versions are often made of cotton jersey and dip all the way to the floor.

There are both pros and cons to this trend. In many ways, the glamorous maxi-dress is the perfect summer look. They come in many different styles, and a rainbow of colors and patterns.

They’re also versatile enough to go from a casual day dress to a more dressy evening look. Finally, these dresses make a very bold statement. The last thing they are is boring.

However, a fashion risk, like the maxi dress has the potential to go very, very wrong. It wouldn’t be hard to be overwhelmed by that huge quantity of fabric. The length also needs to be fairly exact.

If it’s too short, it’s not really a maxi dress; if it’s too long, you end up swimming in a pool of fabric. It all depends on how willing you are to take the risk.

This extreme trend immediately piqued my curiosity. It would take some courage to step out in a dress like that. The question is, will anyone be willing to try it? To find out, I asked several Central students what they thought. When asked if they would ever try this trend, here’s how they responded:

“Probably not. I’m not big into dresses. In the summertime, I go with a t-shirt and some shorts.” - Jessica May, sophomore

“No, because I don’t usually wear dresses.” - Kathleen Rowland, junior

“I don’t think so, I’m pretty short, and in general, maxi-dresses tend to make short people look kind of awkward.” - Shannon Barkley, sophomore

“Yes, because it’s very pretty. It would be something different... not everyone will have it either.” - Jordan Hill, sophomore

“I don’t have anywhere to wear it.” - Sarah Maloney, junior

Many of the people I interviewed thought that maxi-dresses would make them look short. They were also put off by their formal, dressy look. Finally, most everyone I asked thought that they would have no occasion or place to wear a floor length dress.

It seems like, with a few exceptions, the maxi-dress won’t be making much of a splash in the halls of Central this spring.
Get ready for the warm weather

Ellen Moe  
Asst. Features Editor

After all these cold months, everyone is ready for a change in the weather. It’s almost time for that warm weather to be here. Here are some things you can do to get ready for it.

You don’t want to be caught wearing old clothes that are too small for you. So go through all of your summer clothes and see what still fits and what you need to buy. Then go get the things that you need, so when it gets hot, you are ready and look cute no matter what.

Make sure you have a super cute swimsuit. When the pools open you don’t want to be the only one not prepared. Find one before summer and you won’t have to look through what has been picked over by other people. This way you will be guaranteed a great selection. Remember, a cute swimsuit is the key to turning heads as you walk by.

Take a ride in a convertible. Even if you don’t like them, nothing makes it feel like summer more than having the wind blowing through your hair and the sun shining on your face while you drive down the street. A few Central students have convertibles, and you could try to catch a ride with them on a warm day. It would be fun to have a convertible for a car on a nice day.

Go to the grocery store and stock up on all of those delicious foods that come with warm weather. Buy popsicles and lemonade and you could throw a party on very short notice. If you have kool-aid on hand when you come in from outside, it will cool you off in a minute. Another good thing to have for the summer is ice cream. There is nothing better to have for dessert on a warm night than a big bowl of vanilla ice cream with chocolate sauce.

Plan out your vacations! You have three months with no school; there has to be at least one place you would like to go. Make the plans now, and you won’t be stressed out when it is closer to the time you are vacationing. This will maximize the amount of fun and minimize the amount of stress. With this plan, you are bound to have a great break!

Do all of these things, and when the warm weather rolls around, you will be ready for it and able to kick off the summer in the right way!

Economic crisis closes pools this summer

Bethany Anderson  
Asst. Entertainment Editor

Summer is coming upon us fast, and we all know what that means: spending time outside with your friends, running around barefoot, and spending all day at the pool in the sun! However, this summer could be a little different due to the economic crisis. Indian Acres, Windsor Swim Club, and some of the public pools are closing or reducing their hours.

One of the local pools that has been horribly affected by the economy is the Windsor Swim Club in Urbana. It has closed for good. Lopeman, the owner said that membership had already declined, and they already had to face two government mandates: replacing drain gates and changing its chlorine system. Hurting the pool and many others is the fact that the government would not allow gas chlorine suppliers to chlorinate pools. It would cost a lot of money to change it; therefore, the owners have decided to give it up.

Another affected is Indian Acres. Indian Acres is not going to close, but their hours and season will be reduced. Don Arnold, the manager and one of four owners, said that the pool will open Memorial Day and close on Labor Day. Memorial Day is normal for pools to open, but Indian Acres usually opens a week earlier and close, a week later. The pool will also close one hour earlier than it has done for many years.

One pool that has hardly been affected by this recession is the well loved Sholem Aquatic Center. It will be open on May 23 to Labor Day, and it will have the same hours as last year. We are glad they are planning on carrying on as usual.

Some of the local area pools are also experiencing the crisis. Since all the prices on water, chemicals, and salaries are going up, they are experiencing serious money issues. Danville pool is built the same way as the Windsor Swim Club, still using gas chlorine, and again it would be terribly costly to make the switch to fit the government’s rules. However, the good news is the Danville City Council has chosen to keep the pool open.

Even though this summer will be different from the past, we still have good pools that have chosen to stay open or that have not been affected. Our pool hours will be cut back, and some of the long lived pools are closing, but this summer will surely still be amazing!
LZR revolutionizes swimming

Scot Chapman
Photoshop Extrordiniare
Adam Baker
Sports Editor

This year the IHSA state swimming meet was the fastest it has ever been, with seven broken state records in the Medley Relay, 200-yard Freestyle, 100-yard Butterfly, 100-yard Freestyle, 500-yard freestyle, 200-yard Freestyle relay, and the 400-yard freestyle relay. This also includes a national record set in the 200-year freestyle relay. New Trier. With all these new records in one year, we have to ask, “Why so fast?”

Of course, records are meant to be broken, but why is swimming getting so much faster so quickly? On average, one State record will be broken every couple of years. This number has exploded for various reasons.

Technology in swimming has taken off in the past couple of years. With the popularity of the US team in the Olympics and Michael Phelps, revenue has been increasing, and with this new money comes new technology. The new Laser swim suit, made by Speedo, has broken state, national, and world records ever since it was introduced into the swimming community. New suits and caps are very helpful in swimming fast, but is it enough to help shatter long-standing records?

The broken records speak for themselves, but there is more to fast swimming than fancy equipment. Training is a major part of any sport, including swimming. “Swimming is evolving from the pool to the weight room,” says Colin McGill, a State qualifier for Champaign Central’s swim team. “It used to be that we only trained in the pool, but the benefits of weight training have really paid off.”

Swimmers traditionally did not train with weights or do any training out of the pool. Tyler McGill, McGill’s older brother and State champion, never used weights in high school. That was just four years ago. Today, weight training is a major part of the Central swimming program. The benefit of cross-training is so evident that it is almost required to be a State qualifier.

Take Tyler for an example. It is truly amazing that Tyler McGill was a State champion but if we compare his times to the state meets of today, they would come in sixth place or lower. With weight training and the new technology, he has dropped time rapidly. Now he is the premier butterfly sprinter in college swimming.

State qualifying times have gone down substantially to try to counter-balance these new advances. Even with the lower times the State meet is still overcrowded with swimmers from all over the state. The lowered times seem to only motivate these swimmers to swim faster and train harder to be able to compete in the biggest meet of the year. Swimmers will always strive to be the fastest they can be. It is exciting to see what we can do with the right mindset.
Who deserves the MVP?

Clarence Lee
Asst. Sports Editor

In the 2008-2009 NBA season, there are many teams who have the potential to make it to the playoffs. Countless stars took their teams to a whole new level with their dynamic plays and great stats. However, out of those talented players, only one will win the MVP award.

The MVP award has unofficial criteria. The most important element is the player’s stats. The award winner must put up stats that stand out. A player, who is not in the top 10 for most of the stats categories, won’t be considered for the MVP.

He also has to help his team to be a contender for the championship. This year, the five players who I think have the best chances of winning the award are:

5. Paul Pierce (Boston Celtics) - Even though Paul Pierce is surrounded by skilled players such as Kevin Garnett and Ray Allen, Pierce has to be considered for the MVP.

When Garnett and Allen fail to play effectively, he steps up and takes the game over. Pierce is currently averaging 20.4 points and 5.60 rebounds. The Celtics would not be one of the best teams in the league without him.

4. Chris Paul (New Orleans) - Chris Paul is one of the best point guards in the league and he plays with great consistency. Paul is one of the few superstars who dives for loose balls and does the “dirty work.” He is averaging 21.4 points and 11.1 assists per game. Paul has the best stats out of the point guards in the league.

3. LeBron James (Cleveland Cavaliers) - Many have witnessed LeBron James’ greatness. His passion, defense, and scoring have all amazed the fans. With the help of Mo Williams (18 points per game), James has made the Cavaliers one of the elite teams.

He is averaging 28.1 points, 7.4 rebounds, and 7 assists. James joins Oscar Robertson, John Havlicek, Larry Bird, and Michael Jordan as one of the only players to average 25+ points, 7+ rebounds, and 7+ assists in a season.

2. Kobe Bryant (L.A. Lakers) - Kobe Bryant is probably the most pivotal player in the NBA. He has many game winners in his career and makes it look easy.

Bryant is averaging 28 points, 5.5 rebounds, and 4.9 assists per game. He has helped the Lakers to be most likely the best team in the entire league. Without Bryant, the Lakers would not have the best record in the NBA.

1. Dwayne Wade (Miami Heat) - Many people believe that either James or Bryant deserve the award. Most say that James doesn’t have anyone to help him, but he is surrounded by good players like Mo Williams. Some say that Bryant is playing the best basketball compared to everybody else in the league. However, I disagree.

Last year, the Heat was the worst team in the NBA. They had the worst record with 15 wins and 67 losses. This year, they made a big turnaround thanks to Dwayne Wade and they are now one of the top eight teams in the East.

Wade is leading the league in scoring with 29.4 points. He is also averaging 5.1 rebounds and 7.6 assists. Although having Michael Beasley and Jermaine O’Neal doesn’t hurt, the Heat would not have made any progress without Wade.

The snub of the MVP race is Dwight Howard. Howard is putting up great numbers with 20.9 points and 14 rebounds. However, Howard has to prove his team is legit and can go far in the playoffs.

Sources:

sports.espn.go.com

Dwyane Wade is one of the favorites for the MVP award this season.
Crack open a fresh can of activity!

Kurt Eizinger
Asst. Opinions Editor

After a lazy Saturday, I was ready to do all my accumulated homework on Sunday afternoon. Right when I was about to crack open my algebra book, I realized I needed to look up some mixtures rules on the internet. I was surprised when my trusty computer died right in front of my eyes. After I realized that all the electricity in my house blew out, I decided to go downstairs and watch TV—wait, that involves electricity. After my thought of TV, I decided to listen to my iPod. It turns out my iPod was dead and needed to be plugged into the wall—wait, that involves the magic of electricity as well.

I had a quick thought about doing something that required no electricity: soccer. It turns out that the reason my power died was because of the crazy 35 mph winds that were outside. I knew playing soccer in 35 mph wind would be anything but fun. After the thought of soccer left my mind, I thought about something that requires zero electricity: reading. The lazy side of my brain convinced me that it was hard to read unless I had a lamp to put my book under.

When I ran out of things to do, I realized that technology runs my life. After having a life-changing epiphany on a windy day, I started to reflect on how technology has affected human life.

I found out that the number of text messages that were sent in June of 2008 in the U.S. was around 75 billion. In 2007, the U.S. Census Bureau revealed that teens spent 3,518 hours watching television in one year. No wonder teens are obese, they are texting and watching TV all the time.

Most kids do not realize how much of their everyday life relies on electricity. What if all the electrical power in the U.S. died one day? No wall-socket to plug your 700-inch plasma television into and no useless cell phone charger to use after your cell phone is drained from texting all day.

I think I should start giving the teenagers of America some tips on how to be active without the trusty convience of electricity. Teens need to be active with sports or the performing arts. Scientists conclude that students that play a musical instrument are more likely to succeed in their school work. Along with succeeding in school work, playing an instrument also teaches kids discipline. Maybe if we gave all the kids in the detention hall a saxophone they would stop causing so much mischief.

I also am a firm believer that being active in a sport is healthy for the teenage body and spirit. I have been involved in a sport ever since I could walk. I think that no matter what athletic skill level you possess, you should still play a sport and have fun. Teenagers need to forget about competition. I agree some competition is healthy, but most of all kids need to have fun. As long as you stay away from the synthesizer and laser tag, sports and the performing arts do not require electricity.

I have to admit, you learn a lot more from a good book than watching the American Idol marathon on TV. Books are a far better learning tool than the television. The last time I checked, reading books do not require electricity.

Most of all, get off the couch and do something. Put down your cell phones and remote controls and go make a difference in the community. GET ACTIVE, YOU LAZY BUMS!