The Incredible Statler & Waldorf

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**Fortnightly Foto**

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**Staff Photo:**

**Mike Dame**

**Last Exit Before Toll:**

**Mike Dame**

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**Statler & Waldorf**

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MEMO FROM THE EDITOR
by Mike Dame

Wow, what a year! We’ve been up to some really great things here at S&W, and we’re excited to bring them to you in this action-packed blockbuster knockout of an issue. We began the school year by deceiving a few unwitting freshmen into joining our ranks during NRB and we’re proud to say they have mostly survived our extensive hazing! We’ve also had several upperclassmen submit for this issue and, while they were tougher to get through Hell Week, they certainly made it. Good job, guys!

But what else has been newsworthy? What’s the current haps, as they say? I only have a few paragraphs to cover it all, so I’ll try to get through it here. I just want to assure you, the ever-loyal reader, of a few things first.

During the making of this issue, our office was not broken into or left unlocked. Our budget is nowhere near $7 million, nor will it ever be. There is not one inch of snow located within these sacred pages, and classes will not be cancelled to celebrate the release of our issue. The paper we print on is fully inflated to NFL regulations but will not fly very far so you should really just run it.

We’re just here so we don’t get fined, but luckily this issue has the full approval of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (we hope). So enjoy it and spread it like Ebola on anti-vaccine day at Disneyland, or else ISIS will win.

Well darn, looks like I’m all out of time. If cheap pop culture meme-density openers don’t get you people to read this magazine, then I honestly don’t know what will. I pray this issue lives up to each and every one of your hopes and dreams, because mine were abandoned long ago.

We need your feedback!
Visit us online at sw.union.rpi.edu or facebook.com/swrpi to take our survey for this issue!
An Interview with Charles Carletta Sr.

Ever wanted to hear more about RPI and Troy from the viewpoint of an RPI President’s Cabinet member who has been involved with both for a long time? Look no further! Unfortunately, we couldn’t fit the entire interview; check out sw.union.rpi.edu for the rest!

Statler & Waldorf: Your position at RPI is Secretary of the Institute and General Counsel. Could you explain a little bit more about what that position entails?

Charles Carletta, Sr.: The combined position of Secretary of the Institute and General Counsel covers different areas. One, it helps the President, at her direction, work with the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees has a specific role that is laid out in the corporate charter and the bylaws of the Institute. The General Counsel’s role is that of a resident lawyer in a corporate atmosphere. If you took out the students and the faculty, RPI would be like any other corporation. The General Counsel is responsible for reviewing the contracts that Rensselaer has, for reviewing and helping to design and implement all of the policies that govern the personnel and students at RPI, and for managing the insurance portfolio at RPI. What’s been added at Rensselaer is the export control portfolio, which is a compliance program that requires the community at RPI to be in compliance with United States regulations concerning the export of technology, which can be very complicated stuff. I am charged also with generally assisting all of the other portfolios accomplish their goals within our planning structure as defined in the Rensselaer Plan. Our strategies and outcomes are looked at annually in Performance Plans. The General Counsel supports all of that.

S&W: Tells us a little bit about what you did before you came to RPI.

Carletta: Before I came to RPI, I worked in and then helped manage a law firm in Troy that specialized in higher education law. It didn’t start out that way, but one of the early lawyers was RPI’S first Counsel and then became Russell Sage College’s first Counsel. And then when I came in, I expanded the list of clients to about a dozen different colleges and universities across the country. I developed policies for colleges with all of the new laws that came out, like FERPA, the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act; Title IX, ensuring opportunities for women in higher education. Before I came into private practice in Troy, I was in the Air Force. I was a lawyer—it’s called a JAG, for Judge Advocate General. I prosecuted, and sometimes defended, criminal cases. I was also responsible for affirmative action on some bases in the Southeastern United States, and I was responsible for claims against Air Force hospitals at different points in my career. It was a great career for a young lawyer in the military.

S&W: I understand that you’ve lived in the Troy area all your life. What changes have you seen?

Carletta: I was born and raised in the Troy area. I went to grade school three blocks from my house and my high school a block away from that at La Salle Institute. It was a wonderful city in which to grow up; it was very vibrant. Walking the streets of Troy on a Friday night or Saturday was like being at a major mall today. It was that exciting. Everybody knew everybody—you never saw people you didn’t know. Troy was a small community of about fifty thousand. I grew up in the center of the city. There were elegant neighborhoods that we could ride our bicycles through. It was nothing for me at age ten to get on a bicycle and ride several miles for half a day. My parents didn’t think twice about it. It was a wonderful town.

Then I went away to go to college. I went to New York City and then came back to go to law school, and then went off into the Air Force. I came back to help my sister take care of my parents and she did a great job with that; I was just a bump on the log. I looked into this law firm that was a really good commercial firm and another that was a really good trial firm. I picked the commercial firm. That led to me eventually meeting Dr. Jackson and that’s how I became the in-house counsel. I actually became the first in-house general counsel that RPI ever had, which is interesting because my senior partner in my old law firm was the first outside Counsel they ever had.

Troy has been in an evolutionary period. Before my time, in the 1900’s, it was one of the wealthiest cities in America. I think it was the fourth wealthiest city in America. That was because of the canal that opened up the West from Troy. Then the railroads came up through Troy to go west. There was a lot of heavy industry, a lot of heavy iron industry; and then the fabric industry, which centered around shirts and collars. There were things invented in Troy that made it famous for its time. During the Industrial Revolution, Troy was a big deal. After the Second World War, the country began to expand, and industrial communities like Troy couldn’t keep up. Troy went into a decline. I didn’t see it, because I was born and raised just at the end of the Second World War, when Troy was still doing well. In the sixties and the seventies, the same thing happened in all industrial towns in the East.
Troy is on its way back dramatically. I saw it start to come back in the 80’s and then it reached a plateau, but now it’s accelerating again. The downtown area is coming back with a bang: lots of restaurants, things that young people want to own, operate, and live near. Lots of young professionals living in downtown Troy now, and developers are seizing on that and renovating buildings that had previously been lying fallow. That’s fun to watch for me because I remember when those buildings were pretty special.

RPI has also played a big role in all of that, and it’s fun for me to see the downtown become vibrant again. The problem is, as fast as the downtown becomes vibrant again, we’re losing the viability of some of the neighborhoods. We have the phenomenon where natives of Troy whose families lived in the buildings and raised their children have died off and their children have become successful and moved to suburbs. The buildings have been allowed to become rental properties where tenants don’t care about them. There’s a lot of that in Troy right now that is difficult to deal with. It puts a strain on the police department, on the fire department, and it’s hard to deal with.

The growth of the RPI community has been the most serious event that has benefited Troy: students living and working and playing in downtown is at a higher level than it has ever been. The students of RPI and Russell Sage bring a lot of vitality and economic strength to Troy. In fact, many of them stay.

S&W: You’ve been at RPI for quite a while, and I understand from others that you take great pride in RPI. What are you proudest of?

Carletta: The attitude of the students. Students at RPI care about each other, care about the place, and Dr. Jackson is largely responsible for that change. The students are fun to be with; they’re fun to listen to—and that’s what I’m proudest of. I know that’s what Dr. Jackson is proudest of, also. We’ve also put up new buildings, and we’ve instituted new programs, and we’ve made the RPI degree more valuable because we’ve made the reputation of RPI more visible. Since its founding, the reputation of RPI has always been stunning. It was known in the right circles, and in the old days, the right circles for RPI was civil engineering. Everybody knew what RPI was. They didn’t know a lot of other schools, but they knew what RPI was, because that’s where the best civil engineers in the country, possibly the world, came out of. RPI is known for much more than that now, and the students today knock your socks off. They are not only the brightest, with the highest scores, the highest number of valedictorians and salutatorians, the highest percentage of top ten in their class—but they’re leaders. They were team captains in high school, and there are a high percentage of political leaders and musicians and thespians coming out of high school and directly into RPI. If you look at what we’re really all about, we’re really all about offering opportunities to students, and the students that are here today are sensational.

That’s not an accident; we all worked very hard at that, so it’s very easy to be proud of that.

S&W: What advice would you give the average RPI student?

Carletta: I say it to everybody I meet—don’t rush this end of your life. Modern medicine and modern pharmacology have extended the life of your generation to a hundred years, easy. You all will be working until you’re eighty years old. You just will; you’ll be healthy, you’ll want to work, and you’re still going to have twenty years of retirement after that. When I was a child, you didn’t know anybody over 65. They didn’t make it. They worked at hard jobs; there were fatal accidents, there was nothing to protect you from heart disease, we didn’t understand cancer, and people just died. Now, with drugs and treatments, today you learn how to avoid heart disease. We took people off cigarettes. There is almost no tuberculosis and no polio. If you contracted pneumonia in the 1940’s and you couldn’t get penicillin, you died. The point—that I used too many words for—is enjoy your youth. Take your time. Find a career while you’re young that you really want to do. Do that before you get married—or, maybe not before you get married, but before you decide to raise a family. Get your career all set or at least lined up, so that you and your spouse, or significant other, are on a common path that you both agreed on. Then, you’ve got to work on keeping variety in your professional and family life because we’re all living longer.

If you look at the Ancient Greeks—the men lived to be about 30, 35—you didn’t reach 50. So they got married when they were 13, 14. You didn’t have to worry about variety, since you didn’t live that long. What you had to worry about was surviving, and starting a family and hoping they survived. That’s not the way it is any more. It’s about keeping yourself and your partner intellectually challenged, because we’re going to be around a long time. That’s the advice: get your professional life squared away, and then you and your partner can get a personal life squared away.

S&W: What is your favorite way to spend your free time?

Carletta: My free time...I hate to say this, because I’m an RPI junkie, but I love to learn. My free time—if I get a chance to learn anything, I’m in my glory. It doesn’t matter what it is. How do you learn to blow glass? How do they make that glass? I want to know. How does a steam locomotive work? I want to know. I’m insatiable. So that’s how I love to spend my free time. Sometimes it’s reading. Sometimes it’s watching—the family joke is that they’ve got to put me on a leash. When we go somewhere, you’ve got to put Dad on a leash because I get distracted by seeing somebody do something I don’t know how to do. I want to learn how to do it.
Walking into the RPI playhouse, without a clue of what exactly to expect of Bram Stoker’s gothic work of genius, I instantly got a dark, bloody, and friendly taste of what would be a delightful evening. Frantic tech crew members were sprawled on the floor, trying to bring a makeshift blood transfusion machine to life like the most dedicated EMTs. Actors bustled about in costume, their eyes dark and moody but their smiles warm and eager. I bumped into Dracula himself, who gave me a friendly bow, and even better, resisted his urge to drink the life out of me. I knew this would be a gory, haunting treat—and the show exceeded expectations.

Adapted from Steven Dietz’ script of Stoker’s Dracula, this show cuts any semblance of the campy off-humor treatment that the Nosferatu usually find themselves burdened with. The humor is dark, the blood flows with an air of thick sexual tension, and the dialogue is consistently on-point. Dietz’ adaptation, as Eric Shovah, the director, points out, partitions each character’s dialogue into multiple scenes, using a multitude of flashbacks to keep viewers’ eyes moving with intrigue and never bogged down by any gratuitous diatribes. Moreover, as all of the exhausted tech crew and set builders proudly reminded me, Dracula is a tech-heavy experience and was chosen as a challenge for (and definitely a testament to) the Players’ technical aptitude. The lighting precisely focuses the viewer’s attention and contributes immensely to the brief joys, lingering dread, and shock factor present in the play. The sound, while infrequently used to let the actors and actresses demonstrate their strength, is sharp, and meticulously played to capture some pivotal moments in their adaptation.

Finally, we have the cast, from the playful Lucy, played by Jocelyn Griser to the shady, looming Count Dracula, played by Garrison Johnston, that execute their varied roles with convincing duress and conviction. I spoke at length with Mr. Dracula himself, to better understand how he modeled the character so well. He told me, “I wanted Dracula to be a cobra, in that he slithers and strikes with creeping movements.” Johnston’s deep voice booms and intimidates throughout his performance, as definitive proof that he was an excellent choice for the role. His secret? “I’m a freshman; this is my first performance, and I actually auditioned on a complete whim. I love acting and just happened on an audition poster when walking with my friends. So I went, and read for most of the characters, but went all or nothing on Dracula’s role. I then got the call a week later, and here I am.”

His portrayal makes the show a must-see for any gothic horror fans, Stoker followers, and play purveyors of all kinds. That said, all of the characters deserve your adoration. They love their work, they love the screaming cries and the garlic-hurling fury and the seductive bloodlust and every ounce of their passion bleeds into the play. As your squeamish writer, I can say that while the gore is far from excessive, I did my fair share of cringing and squirming at the grittier scenes. The faint of heart were not cut-out for a night of the undead.
But to look at just the play itself would be to ignore so much of what keeps the RPI Players so dear to the community. I was fortunate to take a full tour of the grand, quirky playhouse and see some of its treasured vampire-filled secrets. Secrets, you ask? No musical achievement has ever reached the heights of the quirky sound booth’s rendition of Eric Carmen’s ‘All By Myself’, which was tastefully re-mastered to feature Dracula’s booming, lonely voice. Undead tears were shed. Even better was the pluck with which Van Helsing himself retrieved his fallen, twisted and fake nose from the floor...or at least what was thought to be his nose. To quote the unfortunate actor, “Oh bother, that’s a piece of chewing gum.” Let it be known that the proper, rubbery mint-free nose was indeed found afterwards. And while their levity matches their passion for pinpoint characterization, the Players’ best qualities come from their immense drive, from the somewhat-dehydrated freshmen working the lighting booth for hours at a time to the set builders that won’t stop climbing on the damn scaffolding. (They paint and carve like no others.) I can only imagine what lies ahead for the ever-expanding crew, and I know that with hearts like theirs, the Count will feast for weeks without complaint.
Ask the Experts
Satan, M.D. & Grandma, Ph.D.

A little-known function of Statler & Waldorf as a club is that we are dutifully bound to process and respond to all fanmail and inquiries to The Devil via his official campus email address, satan@union.rpi.edu (it’s true; check our club constitution!) Just as we were ready to publish this issue, Satan received this email from a concerned student which we felt was just too hot of a topic not to respond to publicly:

Are you the cause of all this everlasting snow, Satan? Because I’m not amused.
Sincerely,
Cold And Lonely

Well, CAL, as the official publications office of Satan we regret to announce that he cannot take credit for our current weather situation here in Troy. While the lord of all that is evil would like to claim responsibility for the snow, that force of pure sadism lies in the hands of a power far darker than his own: Shirley’s Weather Machine.

Yes, it’s true, for the prince of all suffering and anguish pails to the awesome might of Dr. Jackson and her Weather Machine. Not even Lucifer’s army of demons can overpower the mighty head of Rensselaer, for her chaotic evil outranks even that of the antichrist. The angel of darkness would like to express that he is flattered you would consider him to be this powerful, CAL, and can’t wait to see you soon.

Love,
S&W Office of Satanic Relations

What if the girl that thinks I’m the dad isn’t the mom? I slept with a girl and now she’s pregnant. There’s two possible fathers though and neither of us think it’s us anyways. What if she’s really not the mom to begin with? Will it be another guy’s child?

Great question! It is important to trust your heart. If neither you nor the other potential father think the baby is yours, then chances are it’s not.

It’s very possible that she is not mom. In many cases, it turns out that the other possible dad is mom. Did you at any point have sex with the other man? If so, then it is much more likely that he is more mom than the woman is mom.

If it ends up that the girl is in fact mom, there are many ways to proceed. If you would like, you can become mom! Many dads have become moms – Ricky Martin being the perfect example. He wanted to be mom, but didn’t want a woman mom, so he took TWO babies from the original mom! Lenny Kravitz didn’t like his original pick of mom, so he took the baby and became mom. Heartthrob Colin Farrell, who played “Click” in the 1997 film Drinking Crude, said becoming mom “saved [his] life.”

Whichever you choose, know that becoming mom is YOUR choice. Do not consult the original mom – without you she would be nothing. Good luck!

Love,
Grandma

GOT A QUESTION FOR GRANDMA OR SATAN?
SEND THEM AN EMAIL AT
SATAN@UNION.RPI.EDU
OR
GRANDMA@UNION.RPI.EDU
Bad Milo is a movie. The movie is about a man with a murderous creature in his ass. When this aforementioned man is stressed, the creature forces its way out of his ass and kills whoever is stressing him out. Bad Milo is a movie. It has a plot, characters, conflict, resolution, and everything else a movie needs to be a movie and nothing more. In essence, Bad Milo is a Ford Taurus. The Ford Taurus is a car.

What else is the Ford Taurus? Nothing. (If this doesn’t make sense, give yourself time to think about Jeans from the GAP.) Fact: any given Ford Taurus will get you from one place to another and have no other significant impact on your life. Another fact: any given Ford Taurus also has a CD player that doesn’t work but kind of works if you can put the CD in the right way or hit the dashboard a certain way. It’s kind of annoying and so is life. For this reason you can measure all life events on what I will call “The Taurus Scale”.

All milestones ranging from your 13th birthday to your first hand job (if applicable) can be more easily understood when put up against the quality of, let’s say, a silver 1998 Ford Taurus. You’ve seen one of these before but here’s a picture to keep in mind:

How do you feel about this Ford Taurus? Does this Ford Taurus move you to be a better person? Have you finally come to terms with the fact that you’re slightly racist? You feel nothing; you’re still a shitty person and even though you don’t want to admit it, you’re definitely racist.

All those deep-seeded prejudices aside, your entire life and all of the insignificant things that happen in it can be measured against the picture you are looking at right now. Truly amazing. I know you’ve already brought back into your mind some really shitty stories that you thought were funny because people that feel bad for you laugh at them. You can put these right to the test. Follow my lead.

When I was in high school I asked a girl out on a date to see the new Harry Potter movie. She said yes but instead saw the movie with another guy and started dating him the next day. The flurry of emotions and incessant playbacks of Bright Eyes songs that followed can be easily summed up by this: a dark green 1996 Ford Taurus with a dent in the front bumper. See? I know this is a lot to take in all at once but in time you’ll come to terms with what I’m saying. If nothing good or bad ever happens to you, your life just so happens to be any model of the Ford Taurus. Crazy right? So the next time you see a Ford Taurus just think: “Hey! Life could always get better than that Ford Taurus.”

Beer Review:
Steel Reserve – $1/can
Sold in most gas stations
by Henry Hague

In this issue of S&W we’re reviewing one of the more “economical” brews available: Steel Reserve.

This classy little can of nectar will run you around $1 per can, available at most gas stations and Stewart’s shops. It’s a pretty good deal at 8.1% alcohol by volume in 16-ounce servings. The silver can, embodying the “steel” symbolism, boasts the lager’s “high gravity” content. This claim is verifiably true, as three or four of these bad boys will put you on the ground (the same place your vomit will land). The design also features a large red “211” which the can claims to be the medieval symbol for “steel”, but more accurately reflects the number of seconds you have between opening the can and blacking out.

It’s hard to tell whether it gets harder or easier to drink the more you drink, but it does get easier to throw up. Don’t worry about having a bad time, though, because you won’t remember any of it. However, you will remember waking up two days later with the worst hangover of your life. I’ve sworn this drink off more times than I can count, but somehow it always finds its way back into my stomach and nightmares. The bouquet it offers is reminiscent of some of the best beers that have been left out for a couple days, so for the experienced drinker who prefers to put quantity over quality looking to get royally fucked up, Steel Reserve is an excellent choice.
There’s a persistent myth on campus that we have a library. I don’t understand how someone could possibly believe such a crazy thing, but I don’t want anyone to think I won’t give everything a fair shake.

There are a number of rumored locations for this library, but the most common one is that it’s inside of the Folsom building.

For those of you who haven’t heard the myth yet – Folsom is an office building/study center that Wikipedia thinks that we once put books in. I’ve been here for a year and a half and have never seen a hold shelf in there, nor have I ever heard of anyone ever checking out a book. I’ve checked their online database of books many times, but they have never once had a copy of a book that I looked for. I’m of the opinion that our “library.rpi.edu” subdomain is a relic of the halcyon days when people read things written on paper and rode dinosaurs to work at the carrier pigeon factory, not intended to be used in a digital age with the latest technology like smartphones and fax machines.

Regardless: I pressed on. Determined to discover the true purpose of the concrete monolith on the edge of campus, I put in a request for a book. They had to have it shipped in from Skidmore. Time passed.

I then got an email saying that my “item” was now available from the Folsom “library”. I’d like to note that the email did not in anyway imply that I was receiving a book. As a matter of fact, the email was entitled “Mail from library”. It seemed just as plausible some other library had decided to send mail addressed to me (a love letter, perhaps?), and that I was just going to pick it up like it was General Delivery.

I walked up to the front desk and said something along the lines of, “Hey, do you guys have a hold shelf somewhere? I’ve got a book that says it’s ready to be checked out.”

The two girls working the desk seemed fazed by my unusual request. Pausing for a minute, they replied, “Yeah, but I’ll need your ID.”

Me: “Uh, sure.”

One of them reached under the desk and grabbed my book. I was shocked. It seemed like a library on the scale I’d heard of would have a much more sophisticated organization system than a pile of books under a desk. I wondered aloud, “Do you guys really have so few people checking out books that you can keep them all under your desk?”

The reply came by: “No, we’ve got a whole bunch of books on the third and fourth floors.”

Maybe they misunderstood. “I know there are books here. I mean that you guys just have so few people checking out books that you don’t need shelves just for holds?”

Them: “Well, we’ve got textbooks but we don’t really check them out since the bookstore sells them.”

What that had to do with anything, I don’t know. I recognized that I wasn’t going to get any useful information from them, and I took my leave.

Me: “Uh, thanks.”

Given that someone had to handwrite my name on the book, I think my suspicions are right – no one has ever checked out a book from Folsom before. That said, I did, in fact, check out a book, so I’m forced to conclude that the conspiracy theorists were right: we do have a library, however hidden it may be.
Crossword Puzzle: Sex & Gangs
By Madison Wyatt

ACROSS
1. Child’s deceit
5. Joey, to Friends
12. Texas and Alaska, in Haiti
18. Classic frat party
19. What remains
20. Eating a candle
21. Heard from a Chicago periferal?
24. An RPI Freshman
25. Common New York deli name
26. With (51 Across) Cooking question
31. Gives the best Valentine’s Day gifts?
32. Word smash, cloning gene
39. _____ acid
42. Louisville Slugger
43. Prepare for the night?
44. Mah
45. Tech. connections
47. Development of the covered coach
48. Brother’s endearing term
49. (With 51 Across) Killer introduction?
51. (With 26 Across) Cooking answer
52. See 49 Across
59. Showing pleasure
64. Water lover, to Gustav
65. 1045, to a drunk, or stupid (or both) Caesar
67. With (Down) Heretic’s cry
68. Best place to take the battle?
69. Penn State boy’s best friend
70. NFL big boy
71. Drinking soda after a salty meal, slang
72. Send that my way?
75. Made of tears
76. Obligatory white girl app
84. Ballet supports
88. Crip creed?

DOWN
1. Tea time in Rome
2. Conic section heart
3. Yesterday, to Swede
4. Heard in the night?
5. The longer route
6. _____ the price; punishment
7. Union words
8. AZ. Univ.
9. End, to the USAF
10. Batman’s favorite animal
11. RPI’s church
12. Jay-Z protigy
13. BMW compact model
14. Game show help, _____ friend
15. Devastate
16. Bill Wither’s song about sunshine, properly
17. 11 Down staple
18. RPI class to avoid
19. “da” opener
20. Crawling with rats
21. Bid winning sound
22. A place to be linked
23. Sorry, not a real word, good luck
24. Beach Sch.
25. Treadmill stars
26. Jazz master Baker
27. “yo what do you suggest?”
28. Peace, with sa
29. Compliment comeback
30. AZ market
31. Me, to Pierre
32. _____ and outs
33. Divorce reminder
34. Can’t do this homework minutes before class
35. Parental sound of disappointment
36. Greatest actor of all time, in the cage
37. E-goodbye
38. Take the stairs
39. Admit it, we all watched it
40. New USSR
41. A lifesaver
42. “I Love You, Man” Paul
43. Freud’s brainchildren
44. For most RPI students, _____ out of my league
45. Accelerometer leader
46. “I Love You, Man” Paul
47. Parental sound of disappointment
48. Show up, to Gustav
49. Chaste woman (but not Chastity from last night)
50. Turf war without weapons?
51. Girls hav2hav
52. My middle school insta chat
53. By who?
54. Hardcore fail
55. Low Cal, Option
56. Bambi
57. Barak’s BFF
58. Degree for Newton
59. Announce displeasure
60. Beatles’ throw down advice?
61. Made of tears
62. Obligatory white girl app
63. My middle school insta chat
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86. Bambi
87. Parental sound of disappointment
88. Show up, to Gustav
89. Chaste woman (but not Chastity from last night)
90. Beatles’ throw down advice?
91. Made of tears
92. Obligatory white girl app
93. My middle school insta chat
94. By who?
95. Girls hav2hav
96. Bambi
97. Parental sound of disappointment
98. Show up, to Gustav
99. Chaste woman (but not Chastity from last night)
Ah, Earth: the glorious giant melting pot of a planet most of us call home. But with all that diversity comes a price. For every Beethoven, there is a Kanye. For every Einstein, there is a 43rd president. It’s one of the basic laws of nature: where there are geniuses, there must also be dum-dums. Today we examine just some of the many morons present in one of the world’s newest subcultures: hipsters. Let’s just hope I don’t have to turn in my 30-day AA chip after this.

Almost Amish—OK, so I’m not so much of a jerk that I’m going to list these failed abortions by name, but I am so much of a jerk that you’ll be able to recognize these people a mile away just by the names I give them. This particular argument for why daddy left gets away with more than any other of his ilk solely because he’s totally bogarding the look of a societal group that actually garners respect. He may say that he does what he does in the spirit of irony, but I still feel a need to strangle him by his own suspenders everytime he tries to convince me that he thinks the 21st century is too mainstream. It’s like, dude, you’re surrounded by technology here. You want me to believe you’ve never heard a digitally produced song, used a shower, nor glanced at a computer screen? Why are you playing dress-up? Oh, I get it, you did all of that ironically, too. Huh? What’s that? No, I don’t smell chloroform, but try not to break the floor on your way down.

PBR Fanatic—The most perplexing thing about this wannabe homeless man with an iPhone is not why he insists on only drinking this terrible excuse for beer, nor even how he keeps his neckbeard so unspeakably filthy in such a pristine setting, but how he seems to never run out of places to be seen drinking the stuff. It would seem that he lives to be seen drinking Pabst Blue Ribbon, and nothing else. I’m talking breakfast, lunch, dinner, in the rec room, on the john, in the trash receptacles; you name it, he drinks there. It’s boggling how he does this. I’d call it art, but art doesn’t usually make me want to judo-chop its creator in the neck. Seriously, it’s almost like PBR grants him some kind of superpower - albeit the most annoying superpower in the world.

Public Typewriter—The doctor who C-sectioned the baby that grew up into this monster would have done the world a favor if he had cut a bit deeper. Her self-esteem is so low that she feels the need to drag her horribly antiquated typing device (that she must have stolen from a very old and defenseless person, because she’s that evil) into the common area every afternoon to complete her “totally ironic novel on why paper is the best medium for non-ironic communication titled ‘How to Not Be a Person.’” I really hope her Zorg-inspired haircut isn’t as plastic and fake as it looks; it needs to burn.

Music Hater—The head honcho. He’s the hipster other hipsters can only dream of being: the only one incapable of ever being out-hipstered. Sure, most hipsters will listen to bands that you’re pretty sure don’t even exist (because who the heck would name their group “Skinny and the Estrogen Tanks”? How would that sell tickets?) just so that they can say they listen to music no one has ever heard of, or maybe they’ll buy vinyl records of modern bands before they even called themselves bands (honestly, why does the Glitch Mob put out vinyl records? Their music is electronic but their discs are analog? Pick a side!) just to piss everyone else off, but the Music Hater is the only being in the universe that truly despises all forms of music. Everything, every sound in existence is annoying mainstream garbage that isn’t fit to grace his way-too-stretched-out earlobes.

On a side note, I’ve recently found out that explaining the concept of a “sock” does not, as previously believed, cause a hipster’s velocipede to blow up.

And also, exclaiming that “hipsters made me do it!” doesn’t get you your chip back.
Recently, for some masochistic reason, I've been finding myself surrounded by more and more aspiring entrepreneurs. I've even tried it myself. Everybody in computer science has some idea for an app that they've convinced themselves is going to explode in popularity and put them at the top of a billion-dollar company. They are also dead-set that someone, anyone, and everyone will steal their idea at the first chance. These people are idiots.

Every CS student that's seen The Social Network knows that by sharing their idea in even vague concepts, some punk kid is going to take those concepts and Zuck them. So we see Reddit and Facebook flooded with posts seeking developers and investors for a project that they just “can’t really say much more about.” They want to see that you’re committed to their shitty app before they even tell you about it. As if I’m really going to abandon my day job, drop out of college, and work for you at the promise of being “co-founder” for an idea I know nothing about.

Then, there’s the likelihood that their app is probably going to be a massive failure. This is because of two things: statistics (something like 9 out of 10 startups fail etc, etc) and the fact that they have done zero customer research because they refuse to disclose their idea to anyone. We all want to believe that our ideas are perfect snowflakes, but they are not. Without interviewing people, a lot of people, your app is missing out on features that these people could really want and could actually make your app less shitty. Then there’s the possibility that your app will never be popular and that no one wants it, a revelation that would save you a lot of time and money that you’re currently more than prepared to waste on a stupid idea.

Telling people your idea is the best thing you can do to fine-tune your business model. Of course you need some discretion to protect your intellectual property, but short of printing out your source code and dropping it from a plane flying over Silicon Valley, you’re not going to be giving away anything vital. You have the biggest advantage because you’re the one who’s already invested resources into developing the idea. Anyone else has to start at square one to even get to the point you’re currently at.

As the old saying goes: “There are two secrets to success: 1) Never tell someone everything you know.” This is a great way to describe the amount of information you should be giving out about your idea; it’s an enticing phrase that interests and provokes the desire to know the second rule. Note that Rule 1 is not just “Never tell,” because that is barely a sentence. There is still a decent amount of information being given without giving away the entirety of the saying. But the extreme to which many people seem to take the secrecy of their project is much stricter, revealing barely a vague generalization of what they’d like you to work on or invest in. If the above saying was written by modern entrepreneurs it would probably go something like, “There are two secrets to success, but first I need you to sign this NDA.” I already don’t give a shit about either of your secrets.

So the next time you have a groundbreaking business idea, run it by a couple (see: a lot of) people first. Specifically, the people who you really think will use it and the people you would want working with you on it (not your parents). If these are really the people you trust to want to use and work on your project, you’re going to need to trust them enough to give them a full idea of what the project is. You could save a lot of time and energy avoiding terrible ideas, and you may even get a better idea out of the discussions you have.
Excerpt from “The Legends We Make Ourselves”
(Act II, Scenes 12-13) By Simon Ellis

WILLIAMS is working at the console. DANIEL and RO enter.

RO
What have you got?

WILLIAMS
I couldn’t find a match for the Captain’s star charts, based on our knowledge of the Andromeda galaxy. Now, our knowledge is fairly sketchy but fortunately the Captain’s isn’t... and that’s the problem. There’s no match.

DANIEL reacts, struck. For a moment, he is in shock, stunned into betraying himself, then he takes command again.

RO
Can you widen the search parameters?

WILLIAMS
I... I need to inform my crew.

RO
Of course. Lieutenant, thank you.

DANIEL and RO leave.

13 EXT DEEP SPACE

Two ships flying side by side. CLOSE ON DAYSTAR... all the ports are dark; the ship seems to be in mourning. Only the Command Deck is lit, and even there the lights are low.

The McKinney Contest is RPI’s annual writing contest sponsored by the Department of Language, Literature, and Communication. The competition gives an opportunity to Rensselaer students to showcase their artistic side in poetry, essay, fiction or drama, and electronic media. Winners are given the opportunity to display their work in Statler & Waldorf’s fall issue. Other McKinney winners from 2013, as well as the rest of the entries excerpted here, can be found online at sw.union.rpi.edu.
I’m sitting on Nick Logan’s bed, like I always do when I’m in his room. He likes to smoke weed and watch Family Guy and South Park and I join him because I think he’s sweet and I want to get laid. This time we’re watching the latest episodes of Archer because it’s both mine and his favorite show and he isn’t caught up. Before the episode starts however, he surprises me. “I kinda wanna get drunk, Jony” he tells me. He never gets drunk; he’s like one of those stoners that thinks alcohol is super bad for you. I respond, “You know, there’s a beer store like 2 blocks from here.” He’s surprised and already putting on his coat to walk over there. “What made you wanna get beer?” I ask, trying to make conversation so that he thinks that I’m easy to talk to. It’s always been easy to talk to Nick though, I’m being stupid. “I don’t know, I was just in the mood for it,” he smiles. He smiles at the end of everything he says, it makes me think he wants me but then I tell myself he does that to everyone. But, you know, maybe he wants everyone. I can share. At the beer store I offer to pay for his Stellas because there’s a minimum for debit cards and what he’s getting doesn’t match it. He happily agrees and we start walking back. It’s incredibly cold outside and I’m outstandingly underdressed, he sees me shaking. “Here, let me hold the beers,” he takes the bag from my hand. I blush for looking weak, like I can’t handle the cold. We get back to the house and run straight up to his room. His roommate Connor interrupts us on our way up, “Oh you guys went to get alcohol? Why didn’t you tell me?” My shoulders drop. I want it to be just Nick and me drinking together, not Nick, Connor and me. Nick quickly answers, “I’m sorry man we totally forgot, you can have one of my beers if you want.” Connor refuses the offer, making some excuse about being sick. Connor’s pessimistic, he feels like as soon as he takes a beer from Nick he’ll have to pay him back in some way or another. We go upstairs, close the door and he starts the Archer episode. Soon after, he looks over at me “Do you wanna order Chinese Food?” I hesitantly say yes, worried about the amount of money in my account. He continues, “And of course, I’ll pay for it since you paid for the beers” As quickly as Nick accepts kind offers he also offers things to others. It makes me feel like he has this incredible hope about the world, like he’s one of the few people who still think it’s a wonderful place. I thank him for the gesture and I tell him I want sweet and sour chicken. When he’s done ordering he sits next to me on the bed. He’s never done that before. I think he always kept his distance because he has a boyfriend and doesn’t want to give me the wrong idea. But now he doesn’t mind giving me the wrong idea, and he’s drinking alone with me. And he paid for my Chinese food and it’s the day before Valentine’s day. Doesn’t that make it worse? His leg is pressed against mine, and my 40 is almost empty. Maybe that’s why I kiss him. Maybe that’s why he kisses me back and before we know it we’re making out on his bed with our shirts off. I wake up in the morning to a phone ringing; it’s his boyfriend calling him. I nudge him and I tell him it’s John on the phone, how ironic his name is John. He answers the phone and says “Hey baby, happy Valentine’s day,” and I realize maybe he isn’t that sweet. And maybe I don’t want to share.