



Mount Observer



A voice for the students of Mount Wachusett Community College

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A recent life flight on campus.
photo by Christopher Kyprianos

SGA Sponsors Volleyball Tournament for Second Year in a Row

by Jeffrey Langlois

MWCC will hold its second annual Volleyball Tournament on March 26, according to SGA (Student Government Association) President Brian Klink.

According to Klink, even though a trophy will be awarded to the winner, the Tournament is more about networking than competition. The main reason for having the Tournament is to bring some of the other community colleges in the area together to share ideas on ways to improve as a college, said Klink.

The Tournament will be held in the MWCC gymnasium and will be a double elimination tournament. Even with the Tournament being more about networking than competition, "there will still be a trophy awarded to the winner and bragging rights for a year," said Klink.

Participants in the tournament will be mostly made up of student leaders and individuals involved with improving student life. However, if someone really wants to play, "there's no reason an exception can't be made," said Klink.

Klink could not comment at the

time on exactly what schools will participate in the event, but he said he is looking forward to a good turnout. According to Klink, schools from last year's tournament included Fitchburg State College and Middlesex Community College.



The MWCC team from last year's Volley Ball Tournament
photo by Sandy Arsenault

On Campus Smoking is still an Issue

by Meg Gugarty

Smoking remained a hot-button issue at March 8's Student Government Association (SGA) meeting.

According to Ann McDonald, Executive Vice-President of MWCC, a recent survey showed students are split almost evenly over the issue of smoking on campus, with roughly 47 percent bothered by it and 53 percent in favor of allowing it.

The main issue is the location of smokers. While Parking Lot B is a smoke-free area, students have complained about smokers in the MART bus kiosk.

"People are waiting for the bus in the rain because they're sick of the cloud of cancer in the bus stop," said Kris Ambrozewicz, SGA member.

Another worry is the approach of smokers towards sheltered areas closer to the building. McDonald cited the childcare center as a special area of concern. Pushing smokers away from the childcare center and towards the Fitness Center would be an ideal goal, she said.

One of the main points raised was the issue of how to enforce smoking rules. "People are going to smoke, no matter what," pointed out SGA member Julian Fox.

Another SGA member, Kyle Carlson, noted, "People who do smoke [in non-smoking areas] see no threat."

However, there is no feasible way to confront all violators. "We just can't afford to discipline every student who

smokes," McDonald said.

The idea of a student-held position working with campus police to curb smoking offenses was discussed, but no plans were laid down.

The idea of a shelter for smokers remains a possibility as well, but a permanent structure would require special permission from the state of Massachusetts. It would also take up valuable space in the parking lot, which is often filled to its capacity.

Another obstacle is the matter of the structure itself. Suggestions of possible solutions to the creation of such a structure included requesting a donation from Montachusett Regional Vocational High School or having it built by SGA representative Scott Brown.

The issue was tabled until the next SGA meeting due to time constraints.



A smoking urn and 'Smoking in parking lot only' sign in the smoking area in parking lot C.
photo by Ashley Arsenault

Editorial: We have no Reason to Trust Fellow Students on Campus

by *Ashley Arseneau*

As some of you may already know, Jamie Hayes, MWCC student, recently had her jacket stolen while on campus leaving the area and jacket for a minute. Also taken was money she had earned working. Hayes is not the only person to suffer what the Campus police refer to as a "crime of opportunity". According to www.collegestudentsafety.com 80% of crimes reported on college campuses are property crimes. Property crime includes theft, arson, and vandalism. According to Karen Kolimaga, MWCC Chief of Police, there were 16 reported on campus larcenies in 2009 and there are 6 on campus larcenies to date for 2010 alone.

To be honest Hayes should not have left her jacket unattended on campus. However, that still does not justify the loss of her jacket and money. No one, no matter how badly in need should be able to just steal something from someone else. Hayes filed a report with the campus police but her jacket and money still have not been found

Students at MWCC should not have to feel the need to take all of their belongings to the bathroom with them. We should be able to trust our fellow students not to take our belongings for a few minutes of time. But sadly the reality is that we have no real per-

son to blame besides the thief themselves and us for allowing our property to be stolen.

Being a college student is not as easy as it looks from the outside, one must worry about everything from keeping up with assignments and studying to working and having enough money to stay in school. Also, being in community college and commuting to school, we do not have dorm rooms to leave our things in for parts of the day so we carry a lot. Laptops, wallets full of what little money we have, and jackets in the winter months. While not in class it can be a hassle to carry around everything people have to everywhere they go. When just getting up to get a drink or go to the bathroom no one wants to pack up and carry all of their stuff. It is too much of a hassle just to go right back to that same spot a few minutes later. The only real way to avoid on campus theft is to leave your belongings with a friend or bring as little as possible to school each day and bring it with you everywhere, as annoying as it may be.

Editorial Correction

In the March 1 issue, the editorial stated that 4 year colleges and universities are on a 4 credit system; this is not true of all colleges. There are plenty of schools on the three credit system.

Goodbye Paper, Hello Keyboard: Students of all Ages are switching to Laptops



Jessica Race and Scott Maxwell are two of many students bringing laptops to class.
photo by *Ellie Armstrong*

by *Joseph Benavidez*

As technology advances, more and more college students are using laptops instead of pencils and notebooks. According to the Donald Kitzmiller, Technical Services Manager, roughly 200-250 MWCC students log into their student services account daily.

At 25, MWCC student Tara Powell said she brings her laptop because it helps her to be better organized and because she is a faster typist than a writer. Jessica Race, 34 year old Liberal Arts major, agreed saying, "I type wicked fast." Race also said that she preferred taking notes with a computer because it allowed her to share her notes with fellow classmates easier.

The use of laptop is not just for the younger generations, 42 year old Scott Maxwell said, "[it's] way better than a notebook." Maxwell also said that his notes are more efficient with the ability to insert and correct any mistakes.

When asked about the idea that America is entering a digital age, "It's more than that," Race said. "The internet has given the US freedoms that other people don't have, and we should cherish that."

Powell's only complaint about using a laptop was the lack of a wireless printer on campus. Race agreed and said, "Maybe MWCC could have one set up in the library."

When asked about how using a laptop has affected their personal life, Powell said, "It's made everything easier." Race said, "With the technology at your fingertips, Googling is so much easier."

Despite bringing their laptops to campus every day, Maxwell, Powell, and Race also bring a pencil and notebook with them for various classes and for quizzes and tests.

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Get To Know...



photo courtesy of Taryn Holly

by Paige Girard

Name: Taryn Holly

Age: 19

Hometown: Winchendon

Major: Liberal Arts & Sciences

Taryn is a sophomore representative on the Student Government Association, and also a part of the Theatre Club at

MWCC. Her future plans are to become a physical therapist. When asked about her time spent at MWCC, Taryn said, "The Mount has helped me come out of my shell. I've met amazing friends here."

Taryn's secret: She has been a swim instructor and a lifeguard since 2005.

Professor and Students Double Number of Valentines for Veterans

by Travis Champagne

Sheila Murphy, Honors Program Coordinator and Professor of Human Services and Psychology at Mount Wachusett Community College, has been bringing valentines made by students to Veterans at the Edith Norse Veterans Hospital in Bedford, MA for the past two years. Twelve years ago, World War II veteran John Michalski started this project by bringing valentine cards to some of his friends at the hospital just to do something nice for them. His motto has always been "Bring Joy, Spread Happiness," said Murphy.

Michalski had the help of Murphy's sister Donna since he started the project. Donna is an Art teacher at the Elm Street School in Gardner and with the help of her students, she produced many valentines that Michalski would bring to the veterans himself.

Four years ago Michalski became a resident of the hospital and he could no longer bring the valentines up. Donna Murphy brought them for the last four years, and Sheila Murphy has joined for the last two.

Finding a reason to do this for Sheila Murphy is easy. Michalski has been a friend of her family for years. When he became

a resident of the hospital, she wanted to do something for him and carrying on his project was one thing that came to mind.

The veterans appreciate the gesture as well. "One veteran was so happy to get a card we gave him a whole stack," said Professor Murphy. "It was good to bring joy to other people."

Michalski even had the card given to him last year still displayed in his room.

Professor Murphy had the help of her students in the Human Services Club as well as the students in Alpha Beta Gamma the past two years. The students produced over 300 cards this year, more than twice the amount of last year, which was 130. This growth is a good sign to Sheila Murphy, who would like to involve more schools next year and perhaps start the project earlier to grow the event.

Professor Murphy said the veterans were not only appreciative, they were interesting as well. "One man was a triplet who actually served with his two brothers in World War II," she said. She even met a veteran who was the chauffeur for a former Mayor of Boston.

Library holds Celebration of Woman's History Month and National Read Across America Day

by Sean Ryder

Children from the Montachusett Opportunity Council (MOC) Child Care Head Start program, as well as students and faculty, celebrated Women's History Month and National Read Across America Day in the LaChance Library on March 2.

Students from the Mount read books written by female authors to the children. The children also created bookmarks with thin pieces of foam, colored yarn, and stickers. Books such as *The House of the Night*, written by Susan Marie Swanson and illustrated by Beth Kromes, and *The Odd Egg*, written by Emily Gravett, were read to the children.

The event was sponsored by the LaChance Library, the Student Life offices, the Early Childhood Education Department, and the Early Childhood Education club. Heidi McCann, Reference and Instructional Services Librarian, said that the event was "a great collaborative effort."

The event was also held to promote reading. "A love of reading is really important for success in life," McCann said. The bookmarks were a way to reinforce that lesson. One child, upon completing the bookmark, said "My mom is going to be so proud of me."

Students from the Children's Literature class were in attendance to read to the children. Ashlee Bresnahan, 19, said "It was a good experience overall, I enjoyed it. Jeffrey Boudreau, 26, "Making bookmarks was fun."

Both Bresnahan and Boudreau both went into the event nervous. "It was a really quick event," said Bresnahan, "but it was intense." Boudreau said, "I thought it was going to be chaotic, but the children were all pretty well behaved." Boudreau said that the student turn-out was low, and said he would not have known about it if he had not been in Children's Literature.

International Club Profile: Jake Goldstein



Goldstein in front of John Lennon's apartment in the summer of 2009

by Dana Laha

Jake Goldstein, the Vice President of the International Club, is a Liberal Arts & Science major at MWCC and plans to major in Music Technology at Franklin Pierce University in the fall. Goldstein, 19, has only two months left to earn his degree. He has lived in the Gardner area all his life and plans to stay in the Massachusetts area.

Goldstein came to MWCC to "test the waters before jumping into the ocean." MWCC was the place where he could find out what he wanted to do with his life. During orientation he joined the International Club. Goldstein was drawn to the club after finding out about the many trips they take. He also liked that the club consisted of people from different ethnic backgrounds.

He said, "The International Club makes me feel more connected to the campus." Goldstein and the International Club recently visited Boston in December, where they ate at an Ethiopian restaurant and saw an improv-comedy show. They are

also planning a trip to Martha's Vineyard in May. As Vice President of the club, Goldstein is working to get comedian Jeff Dunham to perform at MWCC.

Goldstein's favorite moments with the club include sight seeing on the different trips they taken. Especially New York City, where he said he walked around Central Park, Times Square, and visited Strawberry Fields (a John Lennon memorial site), and was able to go see John Lennon's apartment building.

Goldstein is also a member of the Student Government Association and is currently a Sophomore Representative.

In his free-time, he enjoys playing Sitar in a New England based Beatles Tribute Band called "Beatles for Sale," hanging out with friends, and watching movies.

His meaning of multicultural is people who express different ethnicities, cultures, and backgrounds all around the world.

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Movie Review: Valentine's Day

By Guthrie Roy Hartford

The premise of *Valentine's Day* is thoroughly enjoyable, seeing how the overall plot constantly elaborates on how pointless this Hallmark holiday really is. The one thing that really baffles me about *Valentine's Day* is the abundance of star power that it brings to the table. There are nineteen different actors and/or actresses in this flick that can potentially call themselves stars. My question simply is: How did other flicks manage successful casting while *Valentine's Day* was filming? Hollywood must have gone on a thirty or some odd day vacation just so this movie could be made. You have well known names such as Anne Hathaway, Jamie Foxx, Ashton Kutcher, Kathy Bates, Jessica Alba, Jennifer Garner, George Lopez, Bradley Cooper, Jessica Biel, Taylor Lautner and Julia Roberts among many others that are gridlocked into this hectic date flick that focuses on bad lunches and infidelity.

One element that this movie fails to accomplish is character dimensionality. As the flick opens and progresses the audience quickly learns that all these characters strive to be three-dimensional, but sadly enough never make it that far. They are all very two-dimensional and ultimately lack depth. But I was oddly okay with this be-

cause that wasn't what the film was trying to accomplish. It was unnecessary and irrelevant to get to know these people and couples on a personal level. What was *Valentine's Day's* dramatic need? When you're watching this flick, think about what they are really trying to tell us. They are simply just showing us that Valentine's Day is one day out of the year where countless couples try and make it a flawless or perfect and/or romantic day, nothing more and nothing less. Everyone wants to be in love and wants someone to love on this day and of course someone to love them back equally. But what usually happens when people coerce certain aspects in specific situations? Things start to fall apart, go in the opposite direction, and ultimately whatever you planned for in the beginning is not what you're going to get in the end.

I'm not even going to attempt to tell you where or how they went about the storyline to this flick. Let's just say it involved about six different couples who are all undoubtedly intertwined with one another. You obviously have your main couple who just got engaged, and one of them is best friends with this girl who is dating this older guy, who is shockingly enough already married with kids who happens to be a fan of this famous football player who evidently goes publicly gay, and just happens to have a gay lover who we think is straight that meets this attractive girl on a plane and flirts with throughout the entire movie, when in fact this attractive girl from the plane has

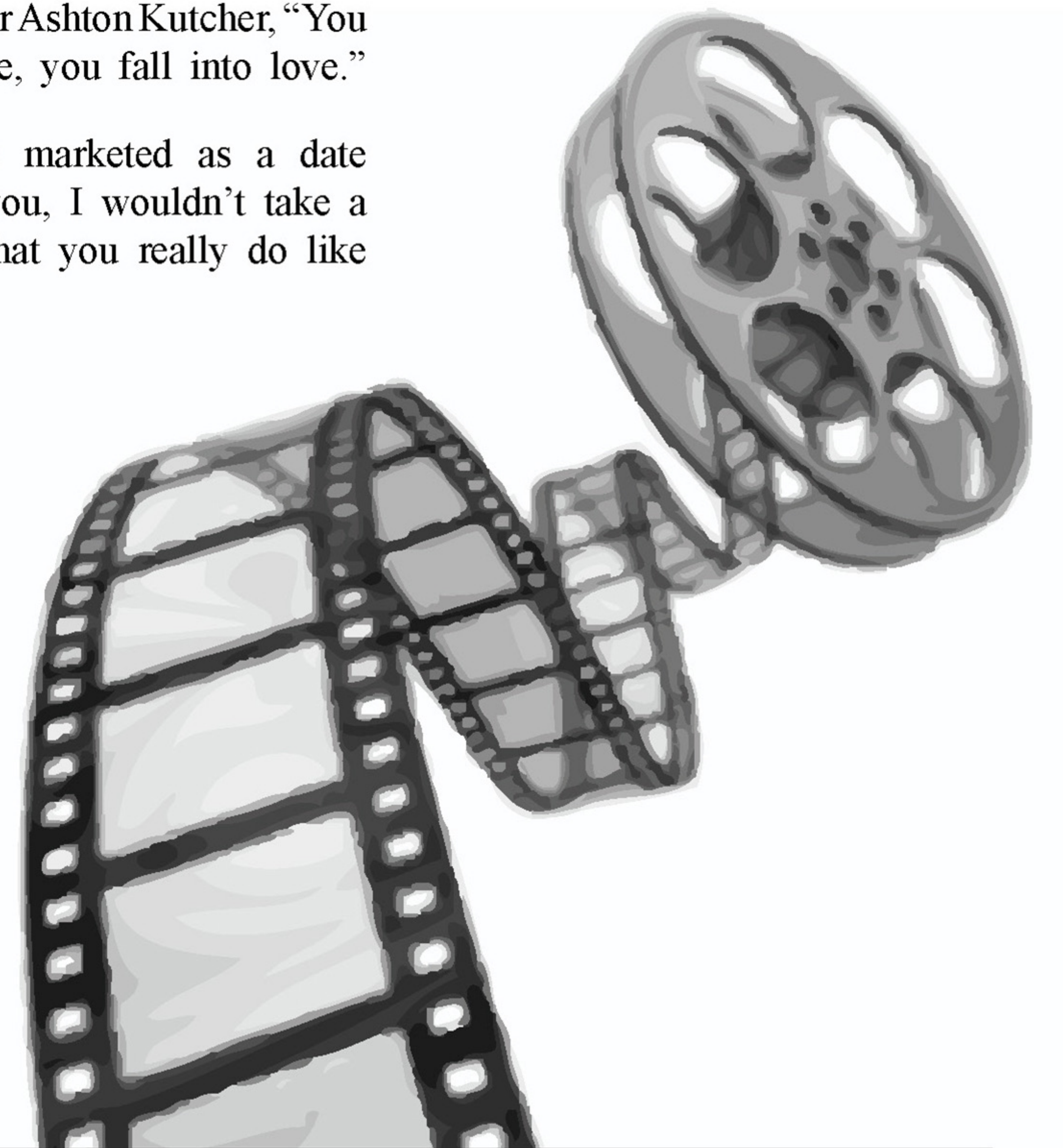
a son who's in the fifth grade and has his first crush on his teacher when his teacher just happens to be the best friend of the engaged couple, that I initially mentioned.

Reiterating from before, this flick is simply trying to tell us not to have obligations for certain days out of the year. Go with the flow, let the good times roll, and most importantly do things of your own volition and don't just do it to impress other people or to try and get a rise out of them. Do as it will benefit you in the long-run and hopefully someone that you truly do love. As George Lopez wisely puts it while trying to give advice to his co-worker Ashton Kutcher, "You don't step into love, you fall into love."

Valentine's Day is marketed as a date movie. If I were you, I wouldn't take a date or someone that you really do like

to a film like this, because they probably won't want anything to do with you after the fact. Don't get me wrong, this was an enjoyable flick, only if you go see it with your mother, your sibling, or maybe even your best friend because then you can both laugh together at all the horrible experiences you've ever had with an ex-boyfriend, girlfriend or significant other.

Valentine's Day has received 3.5 stars out of 5.



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