

## A Citizen's Voice: The better side of Bush

For many Americans, this Thanksgiving was about more than turkey, home or even family. The typical Thanksgiving associations were overshadowed this year by something much more important: President George W. Bush's visit to Iraq.

On the afternoon of Thanksgiving, Americans were surprised, even shocked, to see the image of Bush filling the television screen from deep within Iraq. Six hundred soldiers from the First Armored Division and the 82nd Airborne Division were expecting a statement written by Bush to be read to them. A high ranking officer stepped up and announced that he had a message from the president, but that he had to give it to a higher ranking official to read. And then Bush walked out.

Bush went on to give a fairly predictable but nonetheless uplifting speech to the servicemen and women.

## Letter to the Editor: An unfair review

Dear Editor,

I am not an actor, nor do I attend theatrical productions often nor am I knowledgeable about the performing arts. Based on my own emotional reactions to a film or production, however, I know a good one when I see it. What I saw on the opening night of *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* was not only good acting, but a phenomenal portrayal of the characters.

In the Nov. 21 edition of *The Rider News* the cast was praised but also criticized in ways that I believe to be a little too nit-picky and very untrue. The first criticism was that Danny Lane's portrayal of the character Billy Babbit was a "dead ringer" to that of the character in the motion picture version by Brad Dourif. If Dourif was nominated for the "Best Supporting Actor" Oscar for that very same part in 1976, the fact that Danny almost mirrored the very difficult role should be praise for the freshman actor, not criticism.

Another actor who was critiqued a little unfairly by the Nov. 21 article was the star of the show, Ed Egan. Ed is a suitemate of mine in Lincoln Residence Hall. I have been forced to see that

He thanked them profusely for their work in Iraq and declared that "you are defeating the terrorists here in Iraq so we won't have to face them at home." He ate dinner with those brave men and women and left soon after.

All in all, Bush spent about two and a half hours on soil that contains a population that either hates or resents America, especially its president, and has killed nearly 300 of its soldiers.

Nobody knew about this visit. Bush's parents did not know and actually were invited to spend the holiday with him on his ranch. First Lady Laura Bush was not informed until one or two days before Thanksgiving. A handful of officials and reporters, sworn to secrecy, accompanied Bush on the trip.

Word was not released to the public until Bush was safely in the air for his protection. The plan called for the trip to be canceled if word leaked out about

freshman every day since the beginning of the semester. When I went to see Eddie in the play, I didn't. The only person I saw was R.P. McMurphy, not Ed playing the role. He was so convincing in his character that I did not even recognize him on stage. At the end, when his character was killed by a fellow committed patient, I honestly shed a tear. His acting blew me away in every scene, whether he was being funny, angry and violent or acting "soft," as last week's editor put it. His talent as an actor blew me away.

Everyone who was in the production knows how talented this group of actors is and knows that they did a great job on this play.

Everyone who did not see it missed out on a real treat. I would like to congratulate the cast on doing a great job, each and every actor. I am looking forward to seeing this group as many times as I possibly can while I am here at Rider.

Eric Emanuele  
Junior

the president's possible vulnerability. But Bush went, he spoke, he ate.

Although most have declared themselves impressed with Bush's action, they have also pointed out that the president probably has ulterior motives. Numerous columnists and reporters have bashed Bush for the so called publicity stunt he pulled. With the 2004 election rapidly approaching, such caution is understandable.

It is undeniable that the president was looking for increased approval ratings, a better shot at re-election and, possibly, more support for the situation in Iraq. But so what? It is equally undeniable that Bush took a great risk in order to give morale to troops on a day that they needed it the most, a day when the memories of their families and home haunted them, a day that is uniquely American.

I am not a Bush fan. I was infuri-

## Letter to the Editor: An alumni attack

Dear Editor,

Recently hall meetings were held to discuss and hand out literature about the new guest policy. When I read what was handed out it seemed to make sense. Its purpose is to keep track of what goes on around campus in order to better ensure the safety of Rider's students. After all, no one wants unsavory characters lurking about. However, I discovered a flaw.

My significant other is a Rider alumnus. Naturally, I assumed he would not be considered a guest, overnight or otherwise, but just to make sure I asked my resident advisor and was told that he had to sign up along with everyone else.

In point two the policy defines an overnight guest as, "Any faculty, staff, non student or anyone not affiliated with Rider University," that wishes to stay the night. Being a Rider alumnus clearly affiliates him with Rider, so it seems contradictory.

We both think it's rather insulting for him to be required to register. Ignoring that, in the student handbook *The Source '03-'04* edition it says, "The Rider degree is more than evidence of

ated on Sept. 11, the day that the country needed hope so desperately, when Bush was on Air Force One, flying around, hiding from the terror that was taking

place in the country he was supposed to lead. I know it was a safety matter, but this country should come first in its president's eyes. New Yorkers turned to Rudy Giuliani and the rest of the country floundered.

With this act, however, Bush has, if not redeemed himself, at least made up for it in part. Despite any selfish motives Bush might have had, he did an important thing: the right thing for this country.



Laura  
Sass

having compiled with the required academic requirements: it also evidences that the degree holder's social conduct is such that he or she deserves a degree from Rider. Therefore, the granting of a degree maybe withheld or postponed pursuant to the rules of the University disciplinary system." Since he was awarded a degree, is that not the equivalent of written approval of his character by University standards?

So he is both affiliated with the University and has shown to have a character deemed worthy of carrying on the Rider name. However, he must be treated as a potential hazard when visiting his alma mater. Why are his accomplishments and services to the University being ignored? The University is most certainly aware that he is an alumnus as they have already sent him letters asking for donations. Correct me if I'm wrong, but insulting someone is not the best way to go about winning his or her favor and funds.

Nicole Lantino  
Junior

## Living With Passion: Big business takes over Christmas

Thanksgiving has come and gone, and already I see Christmas lights adorning the neighborhood. Sunny 104.5 has been playing Christmas music since early November, LITE 106.7 has been throwing some carols into its rotation and Macy's has already had its "sale of the season" (but I'm sure more will follow).

A friend of mine recently sold an inflatable holiday lawn Mickey Mouse for \$100 on e-bay and malls across the state have already dragged out their wreaths and North Pole displays. It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas. The question is: Why all of this premature anticipation?

I am not so naive to assume that the answer is not money. Businesses ultimately are profit-driven and I can

pretty confidently say that holiday spirit has very little to do with the early start.

The holiday season has certainly gotten longer and reminders of that phenomenon are popping up all over. But I wonder why consumers allow it to happen. Are consumers not first humans?

The day before Thanksgiving is the biggest travel day of the year; everyone is traveling to be with some family member or friend. It is a day to be grateful for the blessings in life but, suddenly, materialism has encroached upon the holiday.

Thanksgiving has become the day before the start of the shopping season. So why don't you put your foot down and take back November? Why not enjoy pictures of their child in a

Halloween costume instead of sending them back out to the MotoFoto to be made into a Christmas card? Am I being too altruistic?

I know the answer: Above all else, what people need most is hope. The consumerism is a misplacement of the hope Christmas provides. The lyrics of year's worth of carols have stuck and we all think our dreams will come true at Christmas.

Materialism and consumerism are not always manifested with bad intent. A loved one's smile is plenty of a return and sometimes the desire to give, or even to receive, is useful to escape the doldrums of life.

The year's end is a time of reflection—naughty or nice—and the opportunity for a new beginning. Diets seem

to always start Monday and resolutions are always made on Jan. 1. People need something to cling to.

The thought of a new self, the realization of a dream or just a little down time to maybe ride in a one horse open sleigh is enough to endure hundreds of repetitions of "Grandma Got Run Over by a Reindeer" or lines long enough on Black Friday to grow a beard.



Alexandra  
Alazio