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# THE NORTH LAWNDALE COMMUNITY NEWS

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Serving North Lawndale, East & West Garfield, Austin, Pilsen, Humboldt Park, Near Westside & South Lawndale

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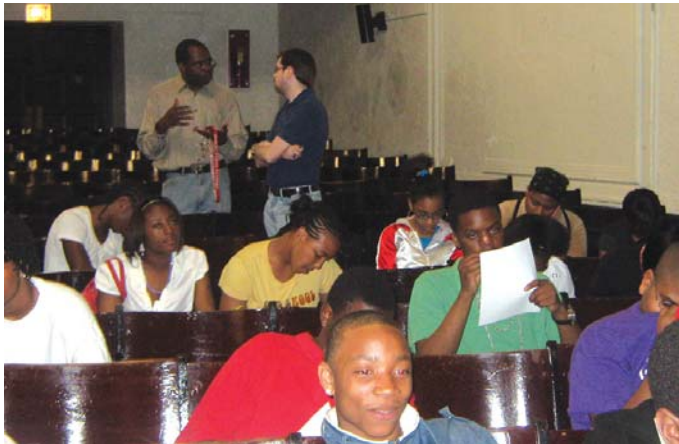
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May 21 - May 27, 2009

PROVIDING INFORMATION ON RESOURCES AND EVENTS THAT IMPROVE THE LIFESTYLE OF INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES IN OUR COMMUNITY

## Let's Talk About Sex

Calvin C. Crayton



Students of Manley Career Academy attending the Seminar



(From l-r) Dr. Freda McKissis-Bush (Guest Speaker), Dr. Carolyn L. Vessel (CEO/President of I AM ABLE) and Tefiney Ferguson (Manley Counselor)

I. A.M. A.B.L.E. Center for Family Development Inc. Dr. Carolyn L. Vessel CEO/President presented the seminar "How Casual Sex Is Affecting Our Children." The event was Co-sponsored by Manley Career Academy Principal, Mr. Sean Stalling on Friday May 15<sup>th</sup> at Manley 2939 W. Polk. The special guest speaker was Freda McKissis Bush, M.D. who co-authored the book *Hooked: New Science on How Casual Sex is Affecting Our Children*.

Dr. Bush began by asking the students about their dreams and goals, such as graduating or going to college and how the

consequences of casual sex not only kills those dreams but in some cases severely negatively affects lives. According to Dr. Bush, when we have sex we engage our mind, body, and spirit. She explained that because of this, people should ask themselves "Is the person they are considering worth bonding with?" "Are they someone they really want to be a part of them?"

This bonding is why regardless of one's feelings toward their sex partner it can still create jealousy to see that partner with someone else. This is also why people tend to confuse sex with love. Dr. Bush explained to the children that they should consider the person they are having sex with as well as the people that their sex partner is involved with. Past partners make up a sexual

network. In laymen's terms: when you have sex with someone you are also becoming involved with everyone they are having sex with.

Dr. Bush pointed out that 50% of all sexually transmitted diseases affect individuals between the ages of 14-25. Another important fact pointed out by Dr. Bush was that the brain produces neurochemicals. The one called dopamine is released when we seek gratification as sex, drugs, sports or anything which satisfies a particular desire, be it positive or negative. Dr. Bush left the children with the knowledge that the only 100% way to prevent STDs and pregnancy is abstinence, even though the media promotes casual sex.

The wrong sexual choices can be devastating. It was brought to my attention by Ms. Sterline Burns (one of maybe two parents in the audience) how few parents attend these events concerning their children's welfare. Anyone interested in Dr. Bush's book can contact Juanita Williams at 773-826-2929 ext 215.

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## DANIEL GRANT: DIRECTOR OF THE ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS



Newly appointed Newly Appointed Director of the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs, Daniel Grant with NLCN journalist and SHS veteran case mgr, Calvin Crayton.

On May 5<sup>th</sup> Daniel Grant and his most capable assistant Kimberly Parker met with Virgil Mathis, Isaac Lewis and Calvin Crayton for an interview. It turned out to be a down to earth discussion with a young man with a wife, a twenty month old, and "one in the hopper." What we discovered was a soldier who is committed to helping make life better for Illinois veterans and their families. There are forty-three veteran services offices located statewide in which Mr. Grant's department assists veterans in receiving their benefits.

When asked about why there are so many non-veteran over veteran programs - for instance the homeless program on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor of Westside V. A. - Mr. Grant was open to ideas about the problems. Mr. Grant was also open to ideas, shared by Virgil Mathis, about

veterans not only creating their own jobs but also jobs for other veterans through entrepreneurial programs. Mr. Grant's main focus is to improve vet housing as well as to help veterans reentering the workforce in these difficult times. The best thing about Daniel Grant is that he is a veteran who is willing to listen to the private as well as the general as long as he surrounds himself with competent staff.

Strategic Human Services offer assistance to veterans through programs such as job skills training and placement and Veterans resources via our veterans multipurpose employment center. We would also like to announce our veteran's column entitled "General Fu (Freedom Up)." If you are a veteran with something to say, you have an open invitation to let us know and General Fu will address your concern. E-mail him at [general.fu@yahoo.com](mailto:general.fu@yahoo.com).

## Toddler's Death Ruled a Homicide

Ferman Mentrell Beckless - [beckless@yahoo.com](mailto:beckless@yahoo.com)

The Cook County medical examiner's office ruled the shooting death of a 3-year-old boy at a residence on the city's West Side a homicide. As of late Monday, no one was in custody in connection with the shooting as Area 5 Homicide investigators continue their investigation into what is believed to be an accidental shooting.

The medical examiner's office identified the dead boy as Jaquan Reed of the 500 block of North Plum Grove in northwest suburban Roselle. Police say the toddler was a guest at a residence located in the 4700 block of West Van Buren.

The shooting occurred just after midnight Sunday. The toddler was rushed via Chicago Fire Department ambulance to Mt. Sinai Hospital and Medical Center where he was pronounced dead just after 1:30 a.m. Sunday.

Police reports indicate investigators believe a weapon was discharged accidentally. They also said two juveniles were present in the room where the shooting occurred.

The Illinois Department of Children and Family Services initiated an investigation late Sunday.

**Man shot to death**

A 32-year-old man was shot to death near his home in the 4800 block of West Polk Street early Saturday. The victim was identified by the Cook County Medical Examiner's office as Terry Johnson. Area 4 Homicide investigators are continuing work on what they believe to be a drug-related shooting, according to police.

In an unrelated shooting, a 19-year-old Maywood man was gunned down as he sat in a vehicle parked in the 3200 block of West Ogden Avenue early Saturday morning.

The victim was identified as Raymond Parker. Paramedics rushed him to Mt. Sinai Hospital and Medical Center where doctors treated him for multiple gunshot wounds to his neck and left arm. He was pronounced dead just after 1:00 a.m.

Area 4 Homicide investigators are seeking the unknown occupants of a four-door gray automobile. Last Wednesday, a 38-year-old man was pronounced dead after sustaining a single gunshot wound to the head.

The unidentified victim was discovered unresponsive on the 5500 block of West Congress Parkway just before 8:00 a.m. that morning. Area 5 Homicide investigators were without an arrest or motive in the shooting.

Visit us on our website at [www.nlc.org](http://www.nlc.org) for more articles, photos, information and more.



North Lawndale Community News  
Winner of the  
2005 SBC Beyond the Call Award

~~~~~  
North Lawndale Community News  
Winner of the  
7<sup>th</sup> Congressional District 2004  
Education Champion Award

Presented By Congressman Danny K. Davis &  
Residents of the 7th Congressional District

# NLCN

## 2009 FOCUS

### HEALTH & THE ECONOMY

One of the major issues of the recent presidential campaign was health care. Health care costs have become an escalating burden for employers and consumers alike. Research has shown that total health spending is reduced when consumers bear more responsibility for their health and the expenses related to it. One of the best ways to increase life expectancy while reducing disability is to encourage a culture of self-care practices.

Self care is personal health maintenance. It is the care taken by individuals towards their own health and well being. Self care includes the actions individuals take in their role as care givers for their children, their families, and others to stay fit and to maintain good physical, mental, and spiritual health.

Extreme self care means making choices and decisions that honor our soul in everyday living. It means feeding ourselves whole foods, moving our bodies every day, balancing silence with activity, and surrounding ourselves with supportive, like-minded people who are committed to improving or restoring health and uplifting the quality of their lives as well.

More than 75% of people surveyed in the United Kingdom said if they had guidance or support from a professional or peer they would feel far more confident about taking care of their own health. Research shows that supporting self care can improve health outcomes and increase patient satisfaction. Our intention is to support individuals, families, institutions, and communities in their efforts to practice extreme self care. During 2009, the North Lawndale Community News focuses on cost-effective ways you can improve your health by practicing self care.

The Economy has made itself the number one issue with gas prices reaching almost \$5.00 per gallon and having a domino effect on everything else sold, except housing stock which experienced a terrible decline with the high rate of foreclosures. The Chicago metropolitan area reported 5,821 new foreclosure filings in December, a foreclosure rate of one new foreclosure filing for every 499 households — more than twice the national average. That brought the area's fourth quarter foreclosure total to 16,949 and its 2006 foreclosure total to 57,706, according to Realty Trac.

Even transportation on the CTA went on the rise with one day passes increasing by seventy-five cents and monthly passes increased by \$10.00 from \$75.00 to \$85.00. Those are just a few of the increases.

The North Lawndale Community News this year is expanding on last years financial focus to give attention to its broader parent the economy. Saving and making smarter shopping decisions will help stop us losing through wasteful choices. Finding new ways to increase our income is a necessity for many in an area where gentrification is not going to stop.

One of the hardest things to change is behavior. Modifying behavior seems to be easy when it comes to pain. Social pain lack of money has to be extreme for many to change. 2009 should be different for many and of course many will continue toward economic mistakes and financial ruin.

But in today's information society there is no excuse for not making smart choices. Financial literacy alone is not enough. Look what happened to Lehman Brothers and what's happening to many other financial institutions let alone individuals, families, and small businesses.

Solutions come to the internet, books, economic experts, financial counselors and experts, the media and your economical neighbors.

The North Lawndale Community News will tap into resources and share them with you, our reader. So to help you improve your health and your economy keep reading The North Lawndale News. We say yours because some may not modify their behavior, except when the pain comes and still some won't change. Your input is also welcome. If you have some information that is beneficial please submit it. Let's make smarter health and economic moves for life in 2009.

## THE NORTH LAWDALE COMMUNITY NEWS

The North Lawndale Community News is now published weekly by Strategic Human Services. Our purpose is to help inform our community on resources, events, and issues relevant to them and our neighboring communities. Our community includes those who live, work, worship in, and/or care about North Lawndale. Our focus is on positive, productive solutions, that will improve the lifestyle of our community members.

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**Weekly Mail Subscription Rates:** \$15.00 for 3 months.  
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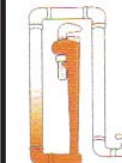
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## Writers' Meetings!! THE NORTH LAWDALE COMMUNITY NEWS

Where: 1211 S. Western, Suite 203

Time: 6:00 p.m.

Date: May 21, 2008

Free Training in Community Journalism!

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## Open Letter: Chicago 2016: A Legacy of Disrespect

The Lawndale Alliance hosted Community Awareness Meeting I: 2016 Olympics: Pros and Cons, at Dvorak School on May 12, 2009. The purpose of the meeting was to provide an overview of research of the Olympics conducted by DePaul University Egan Urban Center and to discuss the pros and cons of Chicago hosting the Olympics in 2016. Confirmed panelists included representatives from Chicago 2016, No Games Chicago, community organizations, and North Lawndale residents. Alderman Sharon Dixon was invited to share her views, but did not attend the meeting. There were about 80 people in attendance, including members of the press.

The representative from Chicago 2016 confirmed his participation weeks ago, only to cancel the day before the meeting. As a result of this last minute withdrawal, area residents were unable to hear the most significant arguments promoting the Olympics, namely from Chicago 2016. Chicago 2016 indicated that they cancelled because of their recent decision to only participate in meetings sponsored by the Chicago Park District in concert with the Douglas Park Advisory Council.

This seems quite disingenuous, as Chicago 2016 did not invite this group to be a part of the Chicago 2016 Outreach Advisory Council—in spite of the fact that an Olympic venue is planned for Douglas Park. Equally disturbing is the fact that no one from the community seems to know who any of the Douglas Park Advisory Council members are. To the best of our knowledge, no Douglas Park Advisory Council members identified themselves at recent planning sessions held at Douglas Park.

Chicago 2016's decision not to participate cost North Lawndale residents an excellent opportunity to hear both the positive and negative aspects of bringing the Olympics to Chicago. Consequently, it is very difficult for us to make informed decisions. Most importantly, we missed an opportunity to hear how Chicago 2016 plans to address serious areas of concern, namely:

- Plans to demolish the existing Collins High School Campus gym for construction of the Olympic velodrome; the potential closure of the Collins building as a high school and the resultant displacement of North Lawndale College Prep and Collins Academy students. Collins High School is the only building in the community that was actually constructed for use as a high school, and is of significant social value to the community.
- Lack of community engagement in the planning and decision-making process.
- Use of TIF dollars to finance Olympics projects
- The need for an implementation plan that provides real economic opportunity for local residents and business owners
- Lack of transparency surrounding site plans, logistics and financial projections stemming from the Olympics
- Potential displacement of low-moderate income homeowners
- The role and membership of the Douglas Park Advisory Council.

If we cannot trust Chicago 2016 to keep commitments concerning a neighborhood meeting, then we cannot realistically expect them to keep their commitments to not use taxpayer funds for the Olympics, provide the Community Benefits outlined in the Chicago 2016 Ordinance and MOU, or to uphold their end of any other agreement. North Lawndale residents have been substantially excluded from discussions regarding the Olympics and the potential impact to our community. We deserve to have our issues addressed.

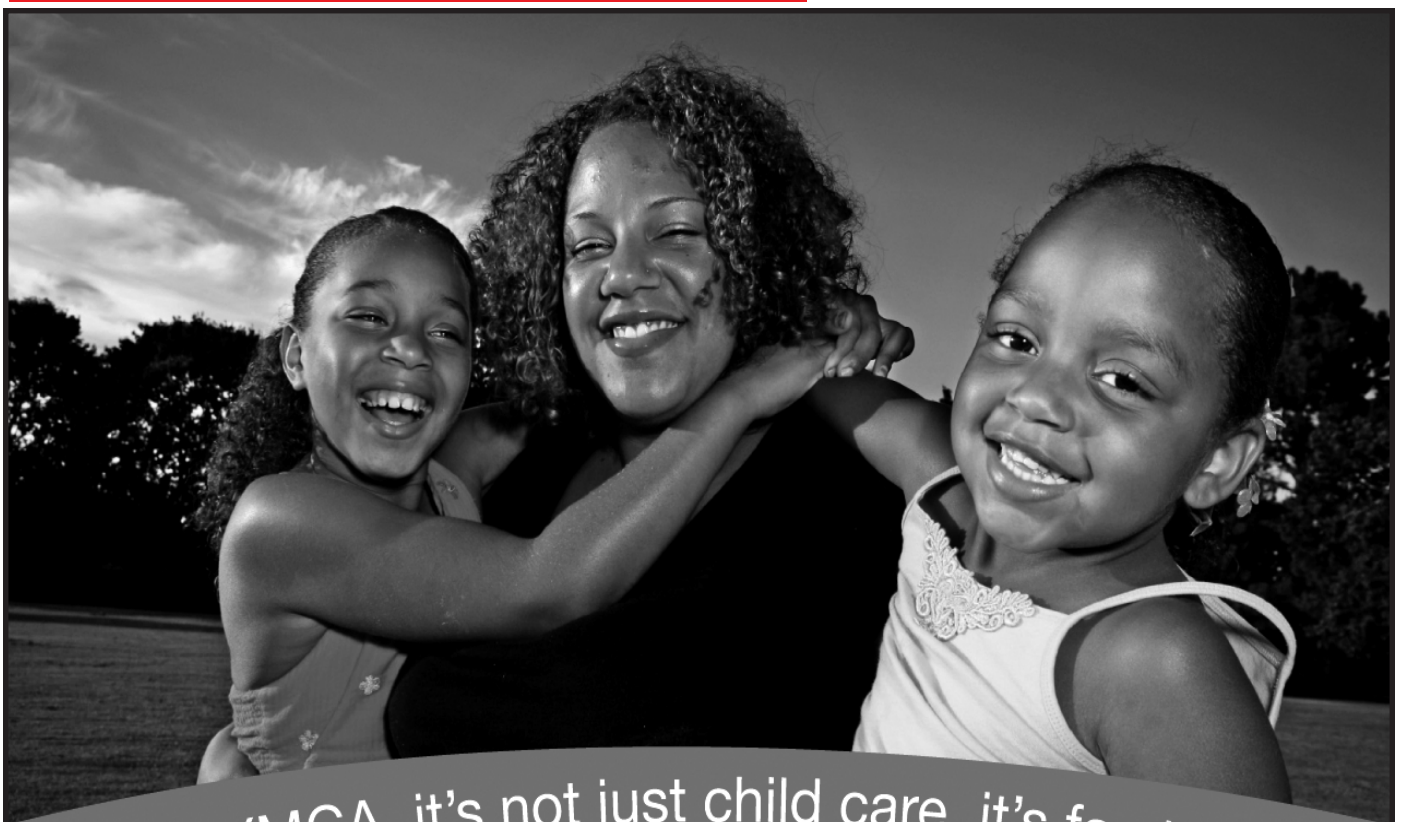
The Lawndale Alliance, 4111 West 21<sup>st</sup> Place, Chicago, IL 60623, Phone: 773-521-3137, Fax: 773-522-1832



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Presents*

## A Shout Out to President Barack Obama The Community Awareness Series

The third of three town hall meetings to inform residents of very important events, decisions and developments that impact living, learning, working, owning property and doing business in North Lawndale. **The meeting input and outcomes will be shared with President Obama.**

### Meeting III: TIF Town Hall

Informative overview of every Tax Increment Financing (TIF) initiative in North Lawndale, their performance against objectives, financial results, jobs reports, contractors and benefactors. Hear from area aldermen, and business owners. Are TIF's delivering what they promised?

Tuesday, May 26 2009  
6:00pm - 8:00pm  
Dvorak School  
3615 W. 16<sup>th</sup> Street

### Policy on the Ground

- Provide input into a set of recommendations for ways the President may advocate for policies that make TIF funds and Stimulus/Neighborhood Stabilization Program funds more accessible to the people that need the most help.
- Hear strategies to advocate for more transparency and citizen participation in the TIF program
- Get copies of Power Point presentations on the Olympics, Neighborhood Stabilization Program and the 7 TIFs that impact North Lawndale
- Get contact information regarding the Olympics Community Benefits Agreement, TIF Sunshine Ordinance and Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP)

For more information on Lawndale Alliance or this series of meetings, contact Valerie Leonard at (773) 521-3137.

Event Sponsors: DePaul University, Jeanifer Kimbrough and Valerie F. Leonard

# AT THE FLICKS

David H. Schultz



*Christian Bale and Sam Worthington in 'Terminator Salvation'*

### TERMINATOR SALVATION (\*\*\*)

This is the fourth installment of a dormant franchise, following two sequels that lose their way from the initial 1984 film that was co-written and directed by James Cameron. Director McG proves to be more of a visionary director. This is unexpected given his two "Charlie's Angels" films. His visceral and virtuous approach here embodies an apocalyptic canvas that is down and dirty yet spectacular.

Set in the not-too-distant future of the year 2018, the film opens fourteen years earlier at the Lakeview Correctional facility. A convicted cop killer sits on death row, Marcus Wright (Sam Worthington) and is offered a "second chance" by donating his entire body to science. Dr. Serena Kogan (Helena Bonham Carter) has an experiment that literally turns him into a cyborg that she claims will help mankind.

Meanwhile, Skynet has all but completed its mission to destroy humans with its skyscraper Go-bots. Biker Terminators and other forms of demonic

appliances help to reset the future.

However, a list of important names has been intercepted by the resistance during the ongoing war against the machines that is now more urgent and intense. The resistance is led by its prophetic leader, John Connor (Christian Bale) who learns his name is

only No. 2 on the list. After this revelation he sets out to find No. 1.

While opposing the command officers battle mantra Connor has the faith and controls the resistance forces over his superiors who want Connor to follow their orders. He ignores human life and responds like machines.

Elsewhere, Wright wanders through battles, thinking he's human in his search to find Connor, when he's befriended by Kyle Reese (Anton Yelchin) and a mute, cute black child, Star (Jadagrace) who are guarding another section of L.A.

McG is a filmmaker who loves movies enough to incorporate his favorite things in his films. Christian Bale's rugged appearance that is reminiscent of Mel Gibson in "The Road Warrior" and the symbolism with the pot of the human resistance trying to overcome the oppression of the machines is not unlike Steve Mc Queen and the other U.S. POWs plotting their freedom from the Nazis in a concentration camp in "The Great Escape".

"Terminator Salvation" is an awesome spectacle and a kick-ass movie. With a dark

See Flicks page 6

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The North Lawndale Community News is seeking volunteers for the 9<sup>th</sup>  
Annual Taste of North Lawndale. At this time, we are looking for:

- \*adults to help coordinate fundraising
- \*students ages 14-18 for activity planning (t-shirt making, talent search, etc.)
- \*on-site volunteers for the August 1<sup>st</sup> festival

If you're interested please call us at (312) 492-9090 or e-mail [taste@nlcn.org](mailto:taste@nlcn.org).  
See you in Douglas Park this summer!



## **SAINT AGATHA CATHOLIC ACADEMY**

[www.st-agatha-academy.catholicweb.com](http://www.st-agatha-academy.catholicweb.com)

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## Flicks from page 4

and grimy war torn environment, McG never strays from a singular vision and moral tone that suggests mankind can win the battles, but not the war over the evolution of machines.

PG-13; 116min. A Warner Bros. Pictures Release – Presented at selected theaters

**ANGELS AND DEMONS (\*\*1/2)** There is this assumption in “Angels and Demons” that - like “The Da Vinci Code” - author Dan Brown is trying to say something about the conflicts between religion and reason. But this time around, there isn’t much of a conspiracy theory to invoke such notions. There’s just a lot of stepping on sacred and historic grounds that ignites outrage from the Catholic Church.

Whatever the reason, there were clearly some lessons learned by the filmmakers of “Angels and Demons.” This sequel is more briskly entertaining than “The Da Vinci Code”. This is not to suggest that “The Da Vinci Code” wasn’t a worthwhile screen adaptation; it’s just structured at a slower, more talkative pace that strives for that “higher intellect” with its audience.

But as many movies are generally interested in faith they are also just as fascinated by evil doers and their motives. This means like its predecessor, “Angels and Demons” is designed to be elaborate entertainment, nothing more.

The film makes many brief dialogue references to Tom Hanks’ cryptographic, treasure hunting Harvard professor character, Robert Langdon and his “relationship” with the Catholic Church. The church has been uncooperative with access to their archives to complete the second half of his research book

It’s an interesting parallel to reality: Even though the entire film was shot on location in Rome, the Church refused to allow any filming inside The Vatican. The filmmakers had to reproduce the Vatican on massive sound stages and other locales doubling as

lavish interiors.

In this film’s opening sequences, a ring of the fisherman is being destroyed over the sudden death of the Pope in the Vatican, who might have been murdered. Meanwhile, in Geneva, Switzerland, an Italian physicist, Vittoria Vetra (Ayelet Zurer) has produces massive quantity of energies that are meant for worldly good, but are instead used to blow up St. Peter’s where thousands have gathered awaiting the announcement of a new Pope.

Individually, Prof. Langdon and scientist Vetra are summoned to The Vatican even though Langdon knows he’s not held in high regard by the Church. They also dislike Langdon’s search of long buried secrets that would lead revelations that would alter the world as we know it.

While being led and misled by those within the Church including the pope’s most trusted aide, Camerlengo (Ewan McGregor), the veteran and most disciplined Cardinal Strauss (well played by Amin Mueller Stahl), and the head of the Swiss guard, Commander Richter (Stellan Skarsgard).

Unfortunately, it’s not hard to figure out who’s behind it all. More damaging than this is the lack of suspense. Director Ron Howard fails to capture the danger and drama, which is needed to keep the movie in motion. However, “Angels and Demons” is entertaining enough because of the energy that was lacking in “The Da Vinci Code.”

**PG-13; 138min. A Columbia Pictures Release**

## ON VIDEO

Compiled and reviewed by David Schultz

**PAUL BLART MALL COP (\*\*)** Kevin James plays an overzealous rent-a-cop who doesn’t like a legit detective (Ray Liotta) venturing onto his turf when the mall becomes plagued by after-hour robberies and a parking lot streaker. The film makes a descent comedic run at filling the void left by John Candy and Chris Farley; this serviceable and silly comedy farce is a mixture of “Armed and Dangerous” with a twist of “Die Hard” in a shopping mall.

PG; 88min. Sony Pictures Home Video

**UNDERWORLD: RISE OF THE LYCANS (\*\*1/2)** This slightly better than anticipated pre-quel to the Underworld series is a violent and bloodied tale that takes place before the war. It’s a story of forbidden love from an interspecies relationship. Vampire king, Viktor (Bill Nighy) spares an infant that later grows up to rebel against him as the half-human/werewolf warrior, Lucian (Michael Sheen) who leads the enslaved humans and werewolves in a revolt to oppose the despotic ruler. Viktor becomes more enraged by Lucian’s relationship with his vampire warrior-daughter, Sonja (Rhona Mitra) who is pregnant.

R; 93min. Sony Pictures Home Video

**PASSENGERS (\*\*)** An interesting social drama though stale at times. The film observes a group of plane crash survivors (which include Anne Hathaway, Andre Braugher, Patrick Wilson and David Morse among in pedestrian conflicts) who are trying to come to terms with their near death experiences.

The interwoven stories revolve around the characters’ group therapy sessions. Patrick Wilson’s role feels less traumatized and more appreciative compared to a psychiatrist (Anne Hathaway) trying help cope with her superior (Andre Braugher).

It’s an interest human exercise full of the usual psycho dribble and personal paranoia we’ve seen before and executed better than the therapeutic offering of this psycho drama. It seems too conceived to create a dialogue from the logic and actions of each character.

PG-13; 93min. Sony Pictures Home Video

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## ST. GREGORY A HIDDEN GEM IN A ROUGH NEIGHBORHOOD

Travles R. Lane

Long before “No Child Left Behind” became the mantra of education in America and the law of the land, one small gem of a Christian private school in North Lawndale has been striving for decades on the front lines of that effort where the need is greatest.

Fighting for the academic achievement of the most vulnerable segment of potential scholars, St. Gregory Episcopal School offers more than 70 African American and Hispanic South Side and West Side boys a chance to succeed. The school was founded in 1962 by Reverend R. L. Whitehouse as an outreach ministry of the Episcopal Church of the Epiphany and is currently located at 2130 S. Central Park Avenue. Catering exclusively to at risk boys, the school offers a Kindergarten-8<sup>th</sup> grade elementary curriculum that focuses heavily on the basics of reading and math as well as faith-based character building. More than 2,000 low income kids have matriculated from the school—which is predicated on small class sizes and Christian spiritual growth—since its inception.

Today St. Gregory, which continues open enrollment for the 2009-10 school year this week, is led by the vision of Father Ken Erickson. This is his first year at the helm. Father Erickson builds upon the school’s sterling reputation for academic excellence. A parish priest for eight years prior to taking the job, the motivated 43-year-old Chicago native brings a focus on faith to his duties and a mission to make St. Gregory a bedrock of academic and Christian service in the North Lawndale community.

“We are working to expand beyond education and provide a range of services to families in this community,” Father Erickson said during a recent interview at his office. “We look forward to adding adult literacy and G.E.D. training as well as tutoring and cultural diversity efforts among what we do in the near future.”

In addition to academics and graduate scholarship and placement services, St. Gregory provides its students with daily physical education, including basketball and flag football teams that compete in a church league. They also offer a Cub Scouts program for students in first through fifth grade. The revival of the school’s boys choir, a chess club, mentoring and other extracurricular opportunities are also anticipated.

Graduating students can earn scholarships of \$10,000 toward tuition at some of the finest high schools in the city or use it toward their

college education later. St. Gregory alumni have gone on to qualify for and attend such local academic powerhouses as St. Ignatius, Holy Trinity, and Christ the King high schools as well as Gordon Tech, North Lawndale College Prep and the Lab School. Class of 1999 graduate, Jason Moore teaches P.E. and tutors in math at St. Gregory.

“We are very pleased with what we have to offer here at St. Gregory, and we look forward to expanding our capabilities,” said Father Erickson, who added the school will continue to cater only to boys. “We will go as the Lord leads, and we’re on our way to some exciting things.

“This is our first year, so we’re just getting our programs in place, but by next year, we feel what we’ll have to offer will compete with any school of our size in the area.”

Chief among the principal’s plans for the future are to continue the progress St. Gregory has made in aligning its core curriculum with State of Illinois accreditation standards, increasing enrollment and initiating pre-school and after school programs next year.

Seventy-three students are now taught in classrooms averaging eight students per class this year, with 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade and 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade pupils learning receiving combined instruction.

Seven fulltime and three part time teachers with more than fifty years of combined teaching experience make up the core of the school’s training staff, which is complemented by a cadre of thirty volunteers including parents and board members. A parent/teacher association also lends input to the effort that adds to the “family affair” atmosphere at St. Gregory. The school also enjoys crucial support from the West Lawn Youth Center led by Pastor Derek Rollerson and North Lawndale Community Church headed by Pastor Phil Jackson.

For help in making the adjustment, Father Erickson relies heavily on advice and guidance from retired public school principal and teacher Dr. Bob Meehan, who serves as the school’s education consultant. Meehan’s advice and counseling on the school’s behalf springs from than 35 years of experience in education. They are assisted by the talents and experience of Office manager

Rosia Carter, who also wears many hats as the staff jack-of-all-trades. The school also enjoys the support of tutors and a reading and computer specialist, an in-school library, and a large computer lab.

Ms. Carter, who is also a longtime Christian minister with an abiding interest in assisting at-risk males, said Father Erickson’s first year has added a critical missing element to the endeavors of St. Gregory, which begin each day with prayer service in the school’s chapel.

“He has brought spiritual leadership and provides a great male role model for the boys,” she said. “[The students] have been transformed by his leadership.”

Open enrollment continues through Saturday. For more information call (773) 277-4447.

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