

Irish Soda Bread

by Kelsey Fleming
World Editor

Looking for a scrumptious appetizer this St. Patrick's Day? Try some delectable Irish soda bread. Festive and delicious, soda bread will surely be a delight at your St. Patrick's Day celebration.

- Total Time:
1 hour and 25 minutes
- Ingredients:
½ cup of white sugar
4 cups of all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons of baking powder
1 teaspoon of baking soda
¾ teaspoon of salt
3 cups of raisins
1 tablespoon of caraway seeds
2 lightly beaten eggs
1 and ¼ cups of buttermilk
1 cup of sour cream

Directions:

First, preheat the oven to 350 degrees and grease a 9-inch round baking or cake pan. Then, using a mixing bowl, combine the flour, baking powder, sugar, baking soda, salt, caraway seeds, and raisins. Add the eggs, buttermilk, and sour cream together with the dry ingredients and blend the mixture until it becomes a dough.

Then, knead the dough and place it in the baking or cake pan. Before placing the pan in the oven, cut a 4 by ¾ slit in the top of the dough and sprinkle it with a thin layer of flour. Finally, bake the dough in the oven for 65 to 75 minutes. Upon completion, cool the bread on a wire rack, cut it into several pieces, and serve.



THE WINTER OLYMPICS ARE STUNNING

Natalie Domengeaux
News Editor

The 22nd Winter Olympics in Sochi quite literally began with a bang.

The opening ceremony on Feb. 7 marked the beginning of the Games, in which 88 nations competed for 98 gold medals in various categories. No expense was spared when it came to the incredible display. Fireworks filled the skies, and people cuddled to keep warm amidst the blistering Black Sea winds. The ceremony lasted three hours, and beautifully illustrated Russia's rich history and culture. Maria Sharapova, a professional tennis player originally from Sochi, had the honor of carrying the torch into the arena. Russian President Vladimir Putin himself announced the Games' beginning from a box high above the crowd. It was an incredible success with the exception of one minor error: only 4 of the snowflakes in one visual display expanded to transform into Olympic rings, leaving one lone snowflake.

This year, the Parade of Nations took on a new form. Each time a country was announced, an image of its location on the map was

projected. With their announcement, the designated country entered. Countries attending the Winter Games for the very first time included Dominica, Malta, Paraguay, East Timor (Timor-Leste), Togo, Tonga and Zimbabwe. Some aspects of the Parade remained consistent, though. Greece, as usual, entered first. Russia, the host country, was the final country to enter.

It was difficult to deny that the wonder of the opening ceremony was mixed with feelings of uneasiness over earlier protests. The beginning of this year's games was largely marked by resistance to Russia's anti-gay mentality and an overwhelming fear of terrorism. Just last year, Russia's law banning gay "propaganda," even in the name of equality, rocked the nation. Despite claims that the legislation is in the best interest of the youth, activists insist that the law is extremely homophobic in nature. Putin, who equates homosexuality

with pedophilia, has been confronted by numerous world leaders and reporters about his policies. Despite evident controversy, the Olympics are a time of unity and happiness, and the games were a great success.

Sources: LA Times, Boston Globe, Washington Post



LATE NIGHT TV GETS NEW HOSTS: FALLON AND MEYERS

by Anna Esslinger
Culture Editor

As a person obsessed with stand-up comedy, witty banter, and funny celebrity interviews, late-night talk shows are my cup of tea with a side of lemon. The recent changes to the late-night lineup are giving viewers a fresher and newer take on the classic American staple with younger hosts Jimmy Fallon and Seth Meyers.

On Feb. 17, Jimmy Fallon took over Jay Leno's spot on The Tonight Show on NBC, arguably the most coveted spot for late-night talk show hosts. Fallon, who is no stranger to late-night television, is continuing the format he established on his previous show Late Night with Jimmy Fallon. Fallon and NBC heavily promoted that Fallon's new show is bringing The Tonight Show back to New York City and Rockefeller Center.

The new best segment of Fallon's show is where celebrities lip-synch famous songs. I am not embarrassed to admit that I watched Paul Rudd lip-synch to Queen's Don't Stop Me Now at least eight times within the span of one day. Fallon's signature in-house band The Roots, led by the soulful and talented Questlove, followed Fallon to his more prominent television spot. Fallon transitioned smoothly from his old show into his new show, and although only a few episodes have aired, it is already apparent that Fallon will join the late-night legends, including Johnny Carson, David Letterman, and Conan O' Brien.

In other late-night news, when I heard that my favorite SNL cast member Seth Meyers was leaving the show after thirteen years I was sad to see him go. However, news that he was hosting Late Night spread quickly and Meyers fans rejoiced. Meyers' opening monologue was very similar to his jokes on SNL's Weekend Update, minus the funny graphics. The first few episodes felt a bit tense; however, after only a few episodes Meyers is already building comfortability on his new show.

Besides Meyers himself, the best addition to the show is leader of the in-house band, the 8G band, and former fellow SNL cast member Fred Armisen. Meyers and Armisen effortlessly crack jokes at one another, sending the viewers in stitches. Although it still might take a while for Meyers to get the hang of Late Night, his naturally funny demeanor and relevant jokes will continue to please the audience until he finds his niche.



FLAPPY BIRD IS ADDICTIVE TO GAMERS

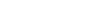
By Hyuntae Byun
News Editor

I'm almost there. In the distance is a hazy, cloudy city. The sky is a clear, vivid blue. In the foreground is a hazardous obstacle course of green pipes. My character is a duck-faced entity composed of a few pixels arranged in what constitutes a poorly designed bird. As my fingers tap down on the surface of the phone, the bird gives a slight jump before plummeting towards the green-striped ground. The next part is tricky. I attempt to maneuver the bird so that it stays in a perfect balance point between the open pipes, but I tap too early. The bird smashes into the upper pipe and falls to the ground, a lifeless pile of digital feathers. My new score pops up on the screen, but it's still a couple points away from my all-time score of 17.

The amount of frustration I then feel is unexpectedly intense. I feel an acute irritation directed towards my phone, and I am severely tempted to hurl it at something. But I don't, because then I'd be unable to try again. This is the world of Flappy Bird, a severely skewed world of suffering and torture. I feel loathing towards the game, but I'm unable to put it down because I irrationally want to prove that I am in control. I want to demonstrate that the time I've invested in playing this game isn't wasted. I want to show that I have the ability to progress to a higher score.

And that's part of the problem. Flappy Bird topped both the iPhone and Android app stores, and was generating an estimated fifty-thousand dollars daily off of advertising revenue before it was taken down. The creator of Flappy Bird, Dong Nguyen, himself took down the game, as he believed it was too addictive, and because he didn't like the attention that he was receiving as a result of the game. He told CNN that "it has become an addictive product. I think it has become a problem..."

The game itself isn't that complicated. In an engineer-



ing sense, it's basically just churning out randomly positioned pipes that serve as obstacles. It's unique in that it doesn't even attempt to emulate the typical gaming style of levelling up, or granting power ups. Instead, the game always remains random and uncontrollable. It's impossible to get significantly better at Flappy Bird, because no matter how much time you spend playing it, the outcome will always be determined randomly.

What's probably the worst part about the game is that Flappy Bird doesn't even attempt to hide the fact that it's unbeatable. It blatantly displays the fact that it's impossible to win, and yet we continue to play anyway. And that sheds an interesting light on the evolution of gaming and society.

Gaming is becoming more and more popular, especially among youth. For example, according to an article by The Economist, a reported 99% of boys under the age of 18 and 84% of girls under the age of 18 play games regularly. In a TED talk, bestselling author and gaming expert Jane McGonigal reported that the average youth spends about 10,000 hours by the time they are the age of 21 playing games, which is roughly the same amount of time they've spent in school, assuming that they've had perfect attendance. Yet, this time is effectively wasted, as modern games offer no real-life rewards. The entire function of a game is to "engage" the gamer by offering arbitrary digital challenges. Solving such challenges, however, offers no reward.

In a world like ours, where there's so much to discover, explore, and create, it seems quite irresponsible of us as a human race to sit inside our homes and play these games, which return little to no value. Sure, maybe a game once in a while doesn't hurt. But as gaming becomes more prevalent, it's important to remember that there are many more productive and useful ways to utilize your time and energy. Try to tear yourself away from a digital screen once in a while and read a book, volunteer at a nearby homeless shelter, or maybe even turn to the person next to you and engage in actual conversation.

(Sources: The Economist, CNN, and TED)