Blake Mathews – Back on the Block

Dec. 4

“Inspiration is fleeting, but effluence is a constant friend.” I think I read that in Proverbs once, but here in the throes of writer’s block it’s easy to see the timelessness of that wisdom. There’s no denying that this week has been a slow one, as students in every department pull their crumpled syllabi out from the depths of their binders and discover that there really is a term paper for that course, and it’s due next Monday. Writing a column with the student body locked in emergency mode is more difficult than usual.

If this sounds familiar, it’s because I’ve already written a column about how hard it is to write a column. Dear readers, I’ve got too much respect for you to pull the same trick twice, at least in the same semester. So even if campus is dead this week, I will find something to write about. Somewhere.

Tiger Woods: The world’s favorite golfer has been making headlines a lot lately, but since I don’t usually read past the headlines for golf, I barely understand what’s going on. Apparently people are really disappointed in him … something about him messing up his car while backing out of his driveway. This one time, I was backing out of my friend’s driveway, and I knocked over his trash can. It was embarrassing, but it didn’t shoot to the top of every major news organization’s “most read” list. I guess that’s price of fame. Poor Tiger.

The Google Droid: Called “the iPhone killer” by some, Google’s foray into the smartphone market is very impressive. The iPhone impressed me as well, but I’m not a tough audience. I have a Samsung Propel, which seems to be the most common phone in the history of interpersonal communications. Staff photographer Noah Darnell was listing off the cool features of his new Droid, one of which was a built-in metal detector. That’s nice, but not all that useful. I’d much rather have a built-in magnet. Worried about losing your fancy new phone? Stick it to the fridge! Trying to fish some loose change out of your couch? Send in the Droid! The only potential problem I can think of would only affect people with metal plates in their heads.

The Grammy Awards: R&B icon Beyonce leads the pack of musical superstars with 10 nominations, but teen country queen Taylor Swift is close behind her with eight. Both women are in the running for Album of the Year. In case you were wondering, rapper Kanye West will be in attendance, as he’s nominated for six awards. He will also be tied to his chair.

Christmas: Regardless of our personal preferences, Christmas is the king of the holiday jungle. It’s the only celebration big enough to honor the two major gods in our lives, one being the actual Son of God and the other material-based hedonism. But even if you’ve found a hip and trendy reason to dislike Christmas, it cannot have always been so. At one point your imagination was roused sleigh bells and magic top hats and scrawny little Christmas trees. Maybe your imagination led you, or still leads you, to embody the spirit of the holiday in a story of your own. Basically, just like the last time I had writer’s block, I’m asking the audience to take part in this wonderful experiment called The Bison. Last time it was haikus, but this time I’m looking for stories. They must be original, they can be fiction and they MUST involve Christmas. E-mail your submissions to either myself or Sarah at skyle@harding.edu. You’ve got until Dec. 9, so get jolly and get writing!

And for those playing along at home, “effluence” means “garbage.”