KRISTEN WEHLING/KNIGHT LIFE

Above: Food Dance opened on June 1, 2007 at its new location at 401 East Michigan Avenue, downtown Kalamazoo.

CHRISTINA PILLSBURY/KNIGHT LIFE

Left: Southwestern Omelet ($7.95) Right: Cook Andy Gadd cooking a steak over a wood-burning grill.

Food Dance

"Gives Tummies Goosebumps"

Kristen Wehling
News Editor

If someone approaches you and asks what the landscape of Michigan looks like, you would most likely respond with "There are lots of fields." It certainly is true. Michigan is a highly agricultural state, and with that comes a lot of fruits and vegetables. Unfortunately most restaurants most likely purchase their products from out of state, but not Food Dance.

Food Dance, located in downtown Kalamazoo, is known for supporting local businesses and farms around the state of Michigan. "Farmers are our secret ingredient," it says on the backs of their menus. Local food never tasted so good!

Food Dance relocated this summer to 401 East Michigan Avenue, two blocks away from its previous location, opening on June 1, 2007 for dinner. The new venue is quite charming and focuses on the vegetation that Michigan has to offer. It features paintings of blueberries and cabbage and giant cornstalk statues that line a walkway to the dining room. These statues extend from the floor to the ceiling. The cornstalks are adorned with small hidden pixies, an interesting site.

Location:
401 East Michigan Avenue
Downtown across from the YWCA
(269) 382-1888
Hours:
Monday-Thursday 7 a.m.-10 p.m.
Friday and Saturday 7 a.m.-Midnight
Sunday 8 a.m.-3 p.m. (Breakfast Only)
Dinner Prices:
$2.95 (Curry Dusted Popcorn Chickpeas)-$26.00 (Steak Frites)

Food Dance's new location has more than doubled its former capacity, now allowing up to 225 diners from the maximum of 98 that the old location could seat. The building, which has a loft apartment style atmosphere, utilizing many bricks and wooden planks, has several large windows looking out onto the street and other areas of the restaurant. This makes for a more homely feel and allows for the natural light of the sun to grace the building with its presence.

I came in for lunch with a guest and we were pleased that there was a large selection, though it was slightly disappointing they could not make pancakes after eleven in the morning. I ordered the grilled white albacore tuna salad sandwich ($9.95) and my guest ordered a ham and cheese omelet ($7.95). The prices for breakfast items were reasonable, ranging from $5.50-$8.95. Lunch prices were a tad bit on the expensive side, ranging from $3.95 for a cup of soup to $13.95 for a wild salmon salad.

The service was friendly and fast. Our food arrived in less than ten minutes. The sounds of music from the '60s and '80s played throughout the wait, making the short wait very relaxing and thoroughly entertaining. The food was absolutely delicious. The proportions were fairly large making it nearly impossible to finish my whole sandwich with French fries. The waitress packaged the remaining sandwich in a creative Chinese style take-out box for leftovers the next day.

In addition to the restaurant, Food Dance also houses a cafe' and small market. Food Dance sells salads and small food items that are ready to heat right there along with coffee beverages for a nice in-between meal snack. Food Dance also packages and sells their own products such as salad dressings, soups, and jams, as well as locally made ice creams and meat.

The bathrooms of Food Dance were exceptionally clean as well. On the wall there were painted pixies, again hiding in the corn, pointing to the bathrooms. The atmosphere of the restaurant as a whole was cozy and the service was excellent and speedy. Two could dine for $20 and the restaurant is located conveniently downtown near many of Kalamazoo's attractions.

Food Dance is a participant of the Slow Food Movement which strives to support eating locally, devoting its business to local farmers. Food Dance does this by using local products in their food, by advertising for the farmer's products and by selling these products in Food Dance's own market, located inside the restaurant. Enjoy excellent food, bask in the cozy farm-like atmosphere, and support local businesses by dining at Food Dance.

Archos 604 Stands Out in a Crowd

Renee Macdonald
Layout Editor

In this age of technology, new and exciting electronics come out almost on a daily basis. One of the latest gadgets today is the Archos 604 Multimedia Player. This shiny picture/movie/music player mix could revolutionize media players as we know it.

Customizing the Archos to your preferences is amazingly simple. You can change the menu to fit your wants, and even change your background. Much easier to change than its competitor the RCA Lyra X3030. However, getting to these cool functions would be easier with a more user-friendly navigation system. A simple five way directional pad would have sufficed, but the way the buttons are set up (on the right side of the Archos in a line), it's hard to control what you're doing without looking at the buttons while you're doing it.

Another plus is the amount of languages you can access. Not only does the Archos have an English function, but a French, Spanish, Russian, Chinese, Dutch, and Italian functions, along with others. This makes the Archos a world-wide media player, not just for the population that speaks English.

The frame rate, how smooth the movies appear on the screen, is adequate. This handheld media player is no five thousand dollar wide screen television, but it is not bad. The quality of picture you receive from this small screen is rather impressive, better than that of the RCA Lyra X3030. Of course, controlling what you're watching would be much easier if the remote were a little more responsive to the controls. You can press a button on the remote, but the the Archos may or may not respond to it.

The Archos 604's sound quality is muffled and weak. Though, chances are if you have a personal media player, you have headphones. The earbuds included are decent, but for optimal sound quality, you should get a different pair of headphones or a compact speaker set.

Viewing your pictures is quick and easy once you get through the confusing button set-up. You can download JPEG, BMP, and PNG pictures from your computer onto the Archos 604, or you can transfer them directly from your digital camera with the optional docking adapter. The Archos also reads PDF documents, but may not implement all PDF features.

A huge downfall of the Archos is its separate, optional accessory of the Personal Video Recorder (PVR) station. It costs $100 extra, and as the Archos itself costs $350, that comes to a pretty hefty sum, considering it only has 30 gigabytes of storage. The Archos also does not come with an AC/DC adapter, so for all of you who wish to charge it in a regular wall plug, you're out of luck. All charging must be done with the provided USB 2.0 cable, which is also used to upload and download all of your multimedia content.

On the plus side, the Archos itself is dazzling. The brushed aluminum finish gives it a chic, classic look, necessary for all of todays gizmos. The screen is a lovely 4.3 inches, larger than that of the 3.6 inch screen on the RCA Lyra X3030, making the Archos perfect for all the widescreen movies you could dream of in portable form.

It is not a perfect piece of equipment, but it comes close. A 4.5 out of 5 star rating sums up this pretty piece of player quite nicely.

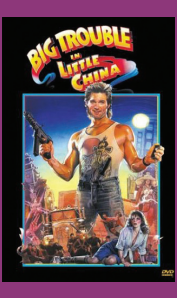
Quick Picks

Andrew Chapman
Comics Editor

MOVIE:

"Big Trouble in Little China"

All truck driver Jack Burton has to do is drive his friend Wang Chi to the airport to pick up his friend's wife. However, she winds up kidnapped by the ancient sorcerer Lo Pan who needs her and the other women he has kidnapped, to complete a ritual that will make him unstoppable to anyone that stands in his way. Now Jack and Wang must journey beneath Chinatown in San Francisco to stop Lo Pan and his army, made up of henchmen, demons, and spirits, to free the women, and save the day.



A major strength of the film is that it doesn't take itself too seriously. Case in point: the main character, Jack Burton. Jack is not the conventional hero, he's extremely cocky, which makes for some great scenes when he's confronted by the serious circumstances around him, he doesn't really know how to fire a gun, and he tries to complete tasks with minimal effort.

Combine the film's humor with its action scenes that feature magic, guns and martial arts, and you have a fun, enjoyable movie.

TELEVISION:

"Heroes"

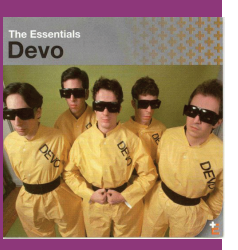
What would happen if one day out of nowhere, a small group of people worldwide began to exhibit superpowers? "Heroes" answers this through the actions and interactions of the many characters that makes up the ensemble cast. Each character reacts to their new found abilities in their own unique way. For example; one person tries to uses his ability to read minds to try and better his life, while another person sees his ability to teleport and manipulate time as gifts that he must now use to protect the world, these interactions form the plot of the show.

The advantage of the multiple plot lines and characters in "Heroes" is that there is guaranteed to be at least one character or plot line that you can follow and root for the entire season. "Heroes" also does a great job at paying attention to detail, giving you a good feel for the world the characters inhabit.

MUSIC:

"Devo: the Essentials"

Want to listen to something different? Devo's sound is something unique that combines the multiple genres of pop, rock, and techno. Even now after thirty years, their songs are still ahead of their time. When you listen to a Devo song; the beginning, middle, and end, can be totally different in beat and pace.



"The Essentials" collects some of the band's greatest hits throughout their career, including "Girl You Want" and "Whip It." Devo might not be for everybody, but if you are looking for something that you can't really find anywhere else, Devo is a sure fire bet.