

# Lifestyles

## 'Adventureland': Step right up for disillusionment

by **Andy Bockelman**  
Northern Colorado Daily Mirror  
U-Wire Content

### Review

Going through adolescence is a lot like visiting a carnival: it goes faster than it should; the hype you've heard from your friends is all a lie; and if you do everything right, you'll find yourself puking your guts out. Such is the life lesson that can be learned by watching the comedy "Adventureland."

After graduating college in 1987, James Brennan (Jesse Eisenberg), is looking forward to a summer abroad before he begins graduate school at Columbia University in the fall. But Europe will have to wait. James' parents (Wendie Malick, Jack Gilpin) inform him unceremoniously that his father has been downsized and the graduation present they promised him has been reneged. Besides having to spend the next three months at home in Pittsburgh, he will have to get a job to even continue his education. But not many businesses are interested in someone whose resume bright spots are lawn-mowing and writing for a college literary magazine. Reluctantly, James takes a job at the local theme park Adventureland, amid a nauseating sea of obnoxious tourists, lazy co-workers and a never-ending chorus of Falco's "Amadeus." But working on the midway is easy enough, and he finds a soul mate in arcade worker Em (Kristen Stewart), who seems to like him back.

Eisenberg is the epitome of every disaffected youth who finds life after school much harder than he thought. Add that to his embarrassment at being a virgin and you have yourself the perfect loser hero. Surprisingly, Stewart is even better as his decidedly fickle, angsty object of desire, who works at the park specifically to annoy her harpy step-mother (Mary Birdsong). We've all known the people who make up the staff of Adventureland -- from positively weird, pipe-smoking Russian literature devotee Joel (Martin Starr) to James' irritating frenemy Tommy Frigo (Matt Bush) to enigmatic handyman Connell (Ryan Reynolds). Factor in material girl Lisa P. (Margarita Levieva) -- whom every male worker lusts after -- and behold: the template of virtually every '80s teen comedy.

There is no shortage of laughs in this coming-of-age story, and even the most vulgar moments - Frigo likes to urinate on everything -- don't ruin what is a very sensitive and poignant romance between James and Em. If anything, though, it is too sensitive. What should be relatable in the plot is at times just overly exaggerated in its portrayal of bed-hopping young carnies who are a little too existential to believe. It's too smart to be "The O.C.," but not insightful enough to be "The Catcher in the Rye." To paraphrase Holden Caulfield, it really isn't. For that matter, there is little rebellion in these kids, especially James, who holds a grudge against his parents, yet never really fights them. The work scene is better with "Saturday Night Live" stars Bill Hader and Kristen Wiig as the clueless couple who manage the park without any inclination as to when their workers are under the influence on the job, which is pretty often.

"Adventureland" is a whirlwind of juvenile antics and young love



that may catch the eye of some viewers more than others. Just like any real-life theme park, don't expect too much, and your experience will be fine. And remember: Don't ever eat the corn dogs.

## Obamas fashionable in Europe

by **Nate Lyles**  
Staff Writer

Last week, while much of the country focused on the NCAA basketball tournament, some focused on the news that the Obamas were creating in Europe. President Barack Obama, alongside first lady Michelle Obama, made news not only in the political scene, but in the pop culture scene as well.

The G20 summit in London was a political conference dedicated to strengthening international financial architecture and fostering sustainable economic growth and development. While overseas, President Obama's main mission was to inform fellow world leaders of his passion for revitalizing not only America's economy, but contributing to the rebirth of the global economy.

First lady Michelle Obama was busy at work in London as well. While overseas, she met with the sick and needy, attended elegant dinners and

concerts, and met with the Queen of England. However, the newsmaker of the trip was not solely what she was doing, rather what she was wearing.

The essence of Michelle Obama has hit home right here on the Brevard College campus. Maggie Whitman, a sophomore history major, simply loves the message and mission that Michelle Obama has been able to flawlessly portray and execute.

When asked of her opinion of Michelle Obama as well as the power couple as a whole, she stated "The Obama's stand for everything that is American, exhibiting overall class, poise, beauty, and elegance."

She also declared her opinion of Michelle's place in the fashion world. When asked, she replied "I feel as though Michelle Obama obviously maintains an amazing presence as first lady. She may not be on the same level as former first lady Jacqueline Kennedy, yet, but she definitely is up there with her."