

2006: THE YEAR IN ENTERTAINMENT

Looking back at the quirky and fun highlights of pop culture

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We've all learned a lot this year.

For example, we now know that a man does not ever use the word "cute" unless he is insulting another man for using the word "cute."

And when a high five is necessary, a man may never leave a fellow man hanging.

Thank you Man Laws. (And by extension, thank you Miller Lite, whose commercials in 2006 promoted unwritten codes like these for men to live by.)

We learned that politician Al Gore can be a movie star and that movie star Alec Baldwin can be everywhere at once, from roles in films like *The Good Shepherd* to NBC's *30 Rock* to the lighting of the Rockefeller Center Christmas tree in New York.

We learned that there are plenty of things to call our children other than Michael or Emily. (Thank you Tom Cruise and Katie Holmes.)

We learned, in short, that we shouldn't be surprised at anything. (Honestly, could you have predicted that a show about polygamy could be such good television? Thank you HBO.)



Alec Baldwin

It's been a fun, but quirky year. Thank you 2006. Can't wait to see what next year has in store.

— *Ryan E. Smith*

Five Best Celebrity Baby Names of 2006 That Aren't Suri. Or Shiloh. Or Moses.

1. Thijs, son of Matt Lauer
2. Makani, daughter of Woody Harrelson
3. Grier, daughter of Brooke Shields
4. nyson, son of Russell Crowe
5. Barron, son of Donald Trump

Best catch phrases of 2006

Man law!

I have had it with these #% !\$ snakes on this #% !\$ plane!

Deal or no deal?

Top Five Reasons You Should Stay Up Past Your Bed Time and See Live Music In Toledo:

1. Sharon Jones and the Dap Kings. Assuming this New York soul revue fronted by a female James Brown comes back to town (they've visited the last two years), go see them. Wear comfy shoes, be prepared to sweat, and feel the joyous funk.
2. The Toasters. Another band that comes around year after year, they'll restore your faith in the power of the groove. The ska scene is cool for another reason: it draws fans too young to drink who are there to dance and have a good time and prove that the kids really are all right.
3. Tim Oehlers. He plays here, he plays there, he plays everywhere. As one half of the funky acoustic blues duo Lucky Brother he's off to the International Blues Challenge in Memphis in February. In another incarnation with Tim Oehlers and Friends, he's comfortable in coffee houses around Toledo, playing originals and covers with a twist and it's always worth a listen.

4. Heavy metal. You hear it all the time when people talk about the local music scene: “no one ever comes to Toledo.” Not true. For the brave-hearted, this city’s a magnet for metal, bringing in bands like Hawthorne Heights, Breaking Benjamin, Trivium, and a passel of other noisy practitioners of the dark crafts of screamo, emo, hardcore, death, black, and your-adjective-here heavy metal.
5. Jazz. The folks at Murphy’s have a knack for attracting acts like Taylor Eigsti and other young up and comers, and the Toledo Jazz Festival holds up its end with established stars, making the city an off-the-beaten-path mecca for good jazz.

Top Three Musicians Who Put Toledo On the Map

1. Lyfe Jennings. On his sophomore disc “The Phoenix,” Jennings refines his mix of old-school soul and contemporary rhythm and blues. The disc contains a number of cautionary tales, most notably the song “S.E.X.,” which is a smart plea for girls to take their time growing up that any dad would approve of. He also recorded a duo with Lionel Richie and clearly is an artist who has staying power. “The Phoenix” reached number 40 in the album category on Billboard’s R&B/Hip-Hop chart.
2. The Soledad Brothers. The city’s favorite garage band named after ’60s revolutionaries, they’re 2006 release, “The Hardest Walk,” received a three-star review in Rolling Stone. The band’s CD release show at Mickey Finn’s in March was pure rock and roll: sloppy and urgent.
3. Five Horse Johnson. The city’s foremost boogie band is big in Europe, touring their constantly, and filling up concert halls. They released their fifth disc “The Mystery Spot,” this year, another in their line of ZZ Top-like blues-based rock.

Three Shows I Wanted to See But Was Too Lazy To Drive To in 2006 And/Or Gas Was So Pricey

1. Mary J. Blige
2. Pitchfork Music Festival
3. Built to Spill

My Four Favorite Books from 2006 in Which Someone Ate At Least One Square Meal a Day

1. *The Omnivore’s Dilemma* Michael Pollan
2. *The United States of Arugula* David Kamp
3. *Heat* Bill Buford
4. *World War Z: An Oral History of the Zombie War* Max Brooks

The Five Best Albums You Didn’t Buy in 2006 But Should

1. Clipse “Hell Hath No Fury”
2. Lupe Fiasco “Lupe Fiasco’s Food and Liquor”
3. Justin Timberlake “FutureSex/LoveSounds”
4. Destroyer “Destroyer’s Rubies”
5. Jenny Lewis with the Watson Twins “Rabbit Fur Coat”

Three Memorable Blurbs of 2006 about the TomKat Circus

1. “Yes, the baby will probably be named Kal-l.” — Gawker.com
2. “Tomkat Honeymoon Gets Prickly in the Heat” — Headline in the New Zealand Herald
3. “Katie Holmes’ Final Moments of Freedom: A Photo Essay” — Defamer.com

My Three Favorite Alec Baldwin Performances of 2006

1. *30 Rock* (NBC)
2. *The Departed*
3. *The Good Shepherd*

Five Five-Star Movies That Didn’t Open in Toledo in 2006 (And Never Will Open In Toledo)

1. *The Road To Guantanamo*
2. *Army of Shadows*
3. *Our Brand is Crisis*
4. *Iraq in Fragments*
5. *Devil and Daniel Johnston*

The Five Best Arguments in 2006 That Comic Books Are Art

1. “Masters of American Comics” at the Jewish Museum in New York and the Newark Museum in New Jersey (until Jan. 28)
2. *Fun Home* Alison Bechdel
3. *Lost Girls* Alan Moore
4. *Civil War* — Marvel Comics
5. *An Anthology of Graphic Fiction* Ivan Brunetti

The Three Best Singles of 2006 (To Come Out of So-So Albums)

1. “Ain’t No Other Man” Christina Aguilera
2. “Cheated Hearts” Yeah Yeah Yeahs

3. “Irreplaceable” Beyonce

Five Video Games From 2006 I Played Way More Than I Slept

1. Battlefield 2 — Xbox 360
2. Okami — PlayStation 2
3. Dead Rising — Xbox 360
4. Lumines — Xbox Live
5. Lego Star Wars II — Xbox

The Blade’s pop culture lists were compiled by Blade staff writers Christopher Borrelli, Rod Lockwood, and Ryan E. Smith.

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