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LUBBOCK, TEXAS 79409

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Tech HSC alumnus arrested in alleged murder-for-hire plot

By PAIGE SKINNER
STAFF WRITER

Texas Tech Human Sciences Center alumnus Dr. Thomas Dixon was arrested Monday for allegedly hiring David Neal Shepard to kill Dr. Joseph Sonnier.

Shepard and Dixon were arrested at about 1 a.m. on Monday in Amarillo at their respective homes.

Sonnier, chief pathologist of Lubbock's Covenant Health System, was found dead in his Lubbock home July 11 just before 2 p.m.

In a news conference Monday, Lubbock Police Department Cpt. Jon Caspell said the initial investigation led police to believe Dixon hired Shepard to kill Sonnier.

"We believe the following: No. 1, we believe Dr. Dixon hired Mr. Shepard to murder Dr. Sonnier," Caspell said. "No. 2, Dr. Dixon paid Mr. Shepard in silver bars to commit the

murder as well as provide the murder weapon."

Sgt. Jonathan Stewart with LPD said Dixon paid Shepard for the murder of Sonnier in three silver bars, which values for approximately \$9,000 total.

Caspell said investigators think the origin of the dispute between the men has to do with Sonnier's current girlfriend, who was Dixon's previous girlfriend.

However, Caspell said, it is still an open and active investigation and more arrests could be made in the future.

As far as the claims that Shepard sent text messages to Dixon from Sonnier's backyard concerning Sonnier's whereabouts, Stewart said that is not anything he can comment on.

"Apparently, (Shepard) had spent some time watching Dr. Sonnier and had been in his backyard and such," Stewart said. "As far as the texts, that's not anything I can comment on."
piskinner@dailytoreador.com

Western Ways



PHOTOS BY SCOTT MACWATTERS/The Daily Toreador

TOP: CAROL FOWLER, an instructor, lays out buttons and thread for a youth sewing class at the National Ranching Heritage Center on Thursday. ABOVE: Tynan Shadle films as children jump off of the back of a train car at the National Ranching Heritage Center on Thursday. The children are participating in a youth film making class.

Slain Texas doctor's family knew about problems

LUBBOCK (AP) — The family of Dr. Joseph Sonnier III had gathered in Louisiana for his funeral when they heard the news: Police had accused another doctor of paying to have him killed.

The doctor, Thomas Michael Dixon, was arrested this week and is accused of paying a business associate in bars of silver to kill Sonnier, who was dating Dixon's ex-girlfriend.

Family members who spoke with Sonnier in recent weeks say they knew an ex-boyfriend of Sonnier's girlfriend was causing the couple problems. The family's focus now, according to Sonnier's sons, is to pursue justice.

"Although there were many tears shed, there was also a sense of hope that our father's murder has been solved," Sonnier's two sons, Joseph IV and James, said in an email.

Dixon and the business associate, David Neal Shepard, are jailed on \$10 million bail each.

Sonnier, 57, the chief pathologist for Covenant Health System in Lubbock, was found shot and stabbed July 11 inside his home in the West Texas city.

Five days later, police released an arrest warrant affidavit that accused Dixon — a well-known

plastic surgeon in Amarillo, about 120 miles north of Lubbock — of paying Shepard three silver bars worth a total of \$9,000. Shepard's roommate told police that Shepard had confessed to the crime after a suicide attempt.

Dixon has been described as having some sort of business relationship with Shepard, though Lubbock Police Captain Jon Caspell said he didn't think Shepard was working in Dixon's medical practice. Police believe Sonnier and Dixon may have known each other separate from the woman, though family members believe the two doctors did not.

Joseph Sonnier IV, one of Sonnier's sons, said in an email that none of his family knew either Dixon or Shepard specifically.

Shepard told his roommate that he broke into Sonnier's home through a window and shot him several times with a gun Dixon had given him, the affidavit said.

An attorney for Dixon, Dan Hurley, has said the doctor will fight the "untrue" accusations. Police said Wednesday that Shepard did not yet have an attorney.

DOCTOR continued on Pg. 2 >>>

By KATELIN KELLY
STAFF WRITER

NRHC hosts western living classes for students K-5

The National Ranching Heritage Center at Texas Tech hosted its 13th annual summer youth classes July 16-20 for students kindergarten through fifth grade to experience western living.

Students kindergarten through second grade have the opportunity to choose from six different classes: Pioneer Living; Plants; Seeds and Me; In Stitches; Day on the Trail; Painting History and The Amazing Aquifer. Students in grades 3 through 5 have five classes to choose from: Let's Ro-

deo!; Quilted History; Plains Indian and Bison on the Llano Estacado; Cowboys Around the World; and Western Movie Making.

"One thing that we do that's different from a lot of people, especially in town, is that they do get to choose which classes they take," said Emily Arellano, education director at the NRHC. "So, we really give them something, hopefully they're picking something they want to do so it's really something they're interested in."

This year about 80 students signed up for the summer youth classes,

which is getting to be the average, Arellano said. There are 12 teachers at the camp with Arellano acting as the principal, overseeing all of the classes. There are also about 40 middle school students who act as teaching assistants, she said.

"I've always loved kids," said summer intern Jeanne Wehde, "and I really like history so I like being able to teach them something that I'm really interested in."

Wehde teaches A Day on the Trail, which is a class that hires students for the week to be cowboys and cowgirls

at the NRHC. The students get paid and learn how life would be on a cattle drive, Wehde said.

"We made stick horses and they got to race them around barrels like in a rodeo competition and they really, really enjoyed that," Wehde said. "They also like the love stories. We have some cowboy stories that they get to hear, just like cowboys used to tell stories when they were around the campfire at night. They love hearing stories."

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Nick Bell (The Daily Cougar):
D33D's Co. hackers
hit wrong target
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Classes

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Some of the activities students at camp get to participate in include washday with washboards, studying plants and art, fiber art crafts, a stick horse rodeo and the everyday life of a cowboy.

"Well we're going to have a gun fight here in a little bit and the group that I have is six little boys, so they've been wanting to kill each other all week," said summer intern Tynan Shadle, "and they're going to get the chance to do it today, so I think

that's probably what they're going to enjoy the most."

Shadle has grown up on and around a ranch his whole life but even with a decent background in cowboy living, he said, but he still had to learn some of the history from the NRHC.

"I would say that there aren't a whole lot of camps that have to do with western traditions and western history and stuff," Shalde said. "This is kind of, I feel like a vital part to these kids, especially kids in this area, their heritage and their background and everything."

This year, the students of the NRHC summer youth classes had

the opportunity to interact with live animals. West Texas A&M brought their mascot, a buffalo, to camp for the students to pet and get inspiration for their Native American art, Arellano said. The Masked Rider also made an appearance, which is always fun for the students, Arellano said.

"This (camp) is unique because it is most definitely educational but also really fun," Wehde said. "I've had parents come up to me and say, 'My kids are so enjoying this, I wish we would have done this in the past,' and sometimes that balance is really hard to find and this one has it



PHOTO BY SCOTT MACWATTERS/The Daily Toreador
JASON SABINAS, 7, rides an imaginary bull during a mock rodeo on Thursday at the National Ranching Heritage Center as other children watch his performance.

American Airlines lauds NY worker's 70-year career

NEW YORK (AP) — American Airlines is celebrating the seven-decade service of a New York mechanic who turns 87 next month and has no plans to retire.

Azriel "Al" Blackman was 16 when he started as an apprentice mechanic in July of 1942, long before bag fees, airport security or even the introduction of the jet engine. He was paid 50 cents an hour.

Seventy years later, he still reports to work every day at American's aircraft maintenance hangar at John F. Kennedy International Airport.

"I don't consider it work, really," Blackman said Wednesday. "If you like what you do, it's not work."

The Fort Worth, Texas-based airline invited Blackman to ride on a vintage DC-3 to mark his anniversary with the company.

The aircraft, the Flagship Detroit, is owned by a nonprofit foundation that has restored it to a historically accurate approximation of what it looked like when it was in passenger service for American from 1937 to 1947.

Its 21 seats are smaller than 21st-century airline seats, and there are no overhead bins. Blackman sat in the cockpit as the plane swung around to lower Manhattan, up the Hudson River to the George Washington Bridge and back.

Back on the ground, he said modern jet engines are more reliable than vintage engines like the DC-3's.

"These leak oil all over the

place," Blackman said. "When they're not leaking oil, it's not good. They're not running well."

Mustachioed and dapper in his lime-green reflective vest with "crew chief" on the back, Blackman said the industry has changed over the years.

"Today it's all money, banking, CPAs, computers," he said. "But I've yet to see a computer go out and fix anything that we broke."

He shook his head when asked what advice he'd give to someone starting out in his line of work.

"Most of the big carriers have folded because they couldn't compete," Blackman said. "And those that are still in business outsource a good part of their work. It's tough to make a living in the business today."

Blackman started working for American Export Airlines, which later merged into American. He was drafted into the Army and served two years in Korea, then returned to his mechanic's job in New York.

He and his wife, Delores, had two children; she died last year.

"My dear wife, when she was alive, she used to tell me, 'Go to work, bum,'" he said. "Go play with your friends."

Texas executes its 1st inmate using single drug, not three

HUNTSVILLE (AP) — A Texas man convicted of carjacking and fatally shooting a stockbroker was put to death Wednesday, becoming the first prisoner in the nation's most active capital punishment state to be executed under a procedure using one lethal drug instead of three.

Texas Department of Criminal Justice officials announced last week they were modifying the three-drug injection method used since 1982 because the state's supply of one of the drugs — the muscle relaxant pancuronium bromide — has expired. Yokam Hearn, 33, was executed using a single dose of the sedative pentobarbital, which had been part of the three-drug mixture since last year.

Ohio, Arizona, Idaho and Washington have already adopted a single-drug procedure, and this week Georgia said it would do so, too.

Hearn showed no apparent unusual reaction to the drug as his execution began. He was pronounced dead about 25 minutes after the lethal dose began flowing.

Asked by the warden if he wanted to make a statement, he said: "I'd like

to tell my family that I love y'all and I wish y'all well. I'm ready."

Hearn was condemned for the March 1998 slaying of 23-year-old suburban Dallas stockbroker Frank Meziere. About 3½ hours before Hearn was put to death, the U.S. Supreme Court rejected his appeals to halt the execution. None of the appeals addressed the change in the state's execution drug policy.

Evidence showed Meziere, of Plano, was cleaning his black convertible Mustang at a self-service car wash in Dallas when Hearn, then 19, and his friends approached. They forced Meziere at gunpoint into his own car and drove him to an industrial area in a south Dallas neighborhood, where he was shot 10 times in the head.

Meziere's father, brother and uncle were among those who witnessed Hearn's lethal injection.

"We did not come today to view this execution for revenge or to even the score," the family said afterward in a statement. "What this does is give our family and friends the knowledge that Mr. Hearn will not have the opportunity to hurt anyone else."

Hearn, known to his friends as

"Yogi," already had a lengthy record that included burglary, robbery, assault, sexual assault and weapons possession.

In one appeal, Hearn's lawyers argued that his mother drank alcohol when she was pregnant, stunting his neurological development and leaving him with mental impairments that disqualify him from execution under earlier Supreme Court rulings. Testing shows Hearn's IQ is too high for him to be considered mentally impaired.

In another, his appeals lawyers claimed the trial attorneys who handled his initial appeals failed to investigate his background and uncover evidence of his alleged mental impairment and troubled childhood.

Before the Supreme Court issued brief one-paragraph rulings rejecting his two appeals, Richard Burr, one of Hearn's lawyers, had acknowledged "a degree of hope, but still, it'll be tough."

State attorneys contested the appeals, arguing that information about Hearn's background and upbringing had been "thoroughly investigated and addressed at trial" and that the evidence "does not substantiate any scenario other than that of Hearn's guilt."

Doctor

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

A former business partner of Dixon, Dr. Rouzbeh Kordestani, told the Amarillo Globe-News that Dixon could at times have trouble controlling his temper. But, Kordestani said, he didn't believe Dixon was violent.

"(Dixon has) had anger issues in the past where he's yelled at people, this and that, and takes

a couple of days and comes back, he's OK," the chief of surgery at Northwest Texas Healthcare System said of Dixon who also had been a friend. "But, not like this."

The two met while completing residency programs at the University of Oklahoma in the early 2000s. In 2004 they set up a practice in Amarillo, though by two years later their friendship and partnership had "soured," and the business relationship ended.

"I haven't spoken to Mike since 2006, even though I'm the chief of surgery and he's in my department," he told the newspaper. "It's ridiculous. We would pass each other in the hallway and we would just look away. The split was that harsh."

Kordestani didn't return messages left by The Associated Press on Wednesday.

Meanwhile, Sonnier's family remembered him at his Monday funeral as a caring doctor, loving son and avid dancer who traveled to events across the country. Joseph Sonnier IV said his father's dance instructors attended the funeral and, at his request, performed a waltz as a tribute.

Joseph and James Sonnier's mother, Becky Gallegos, died two years ago in a suspected marital dispute with her then-husband, Juan Gallegos. Juan Gallegos turned the gun on himself and later died in a hospital. Joseph and James Sonnier, in their email, said both of their parents died "under equally tragic, yet totally unrelated circumstances."

"We have supreme confidence in the Lubbock law enforcement system and know that justice will be served," they said in their email.

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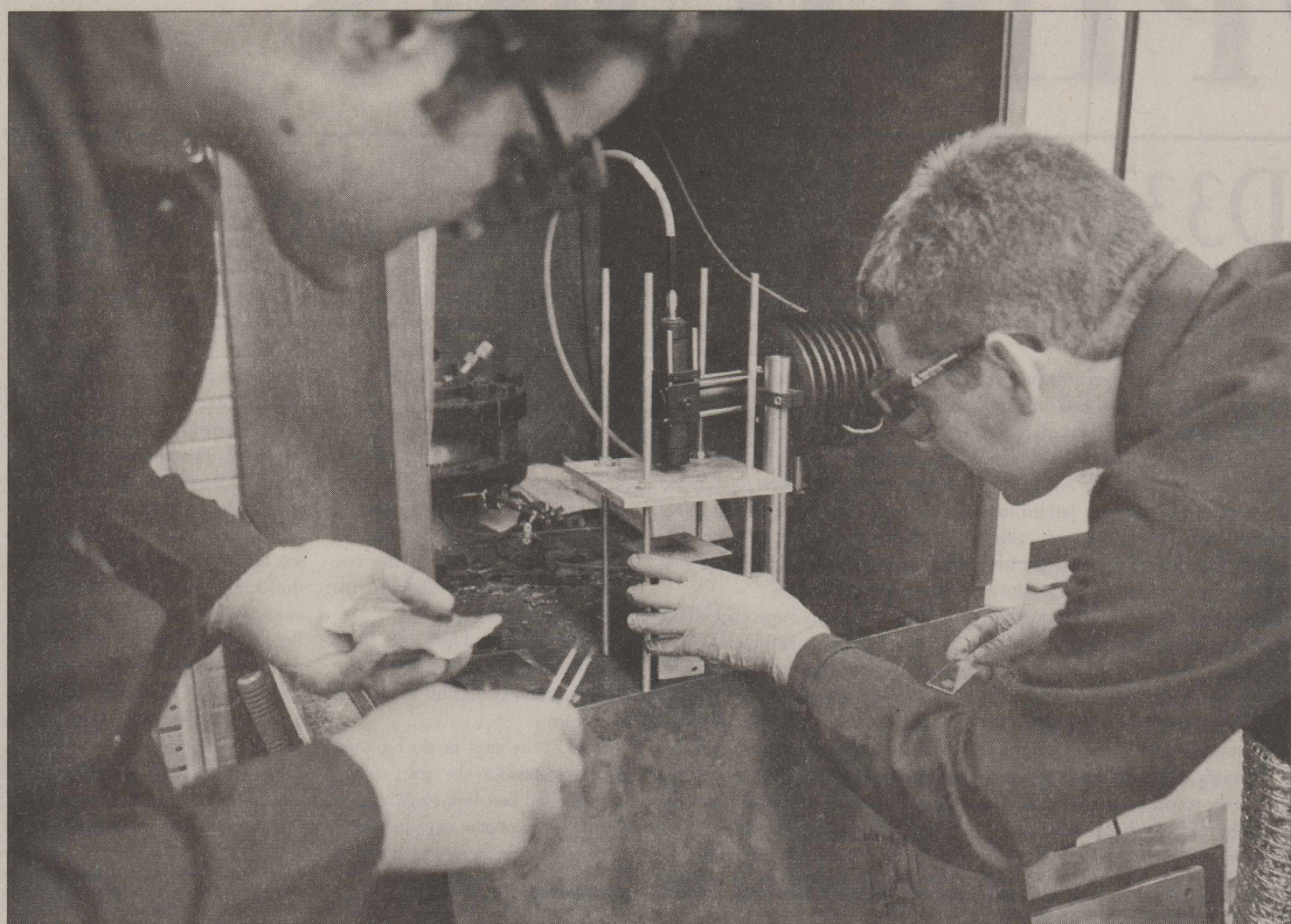


PHOTO BY SCOTT MACWATTERS/The Daily Toreador

RAYMOND MASSAD, A senior mechanical engineering major from Plano, watches as Shawn Stacy, a doctoral student from Belton studying mechanical engineering, places some aluminum tungsten oxide, an energetic material, beneath a laser during an experiment inside of the Mechanical Engineering building on Wednesday. Stacy and Massad used the experiment to record the amount of energy needed to ignite the material.

Southwest's 2Q profit rises on revenue increase

DALLAS (AP) — Rising fares are helping Southwest Airlines Co. more than offset the high cost of jet fuel.

The airline said Thursday that second-quarter profit soared 42 percent on record revenue.

Southwest's average one-way fare topped \$150, up 5 percent from last summer. Plenty of passengers were willing to pay the higher prices as the peak vacation season began — traffic measured in miles traveled also rose 5 percent.

At the same time Southwest, as well as other airlines, caught a break on fuel costs in the quarter, thanks to a more than 20 percent drop in oil prices. Southwest spent less per gallon of jet fuel than a year earlier.

Southwest, which also runs AirTran Airways, earned \$228 million, or 30 cents per share. Excluding fuel-hedging losses and costs related to absorbing AirTran, the company said it would have earned 36 cents per share, while analysts expected 33 cents per share, according to FactSet.

Revenue rose 11.6 percent to \$4.62 billion, above analysts' forecast of \$4.59 billion.

Southwest added flights com-

pared with last year, which resulted in a few more empty seats. The average flight was 81.9 percent full, compared with 82.3 percent in early summer 2011.

Southwest has scaled back more-ambitious growth plans until the economy and Southwest's profit margins improve. Earlier this year, the company decided to delay delivery of 30 new Boeing 737s due in 2013 and 2014 by four years. It also will lease smaller planes used by AirTran to Delta Air Lines Inc. starting next year.

"For now, our goal is to keep our fleet relatively flat," CEO Gary Kelly said Thursday.

Thanks to a dip in fuel prices that began in April, Southwest paid 6 cents less per gallon in the second quarter than it did a year ago. Still, fuel prices are high by historical standards, and with more flights, the airline's fuel spending rose 3 percent to \$1.58 billion. Labor costs rose faster — nearly 9 percent — to \$1.22 billion.

Standard & Poor's analyst Jim Corridore said higher labor costs were to be expected as Southwest absorbs AirTran, whose employees had been paid less than Southwest counterparts.

Space shuttle Enterprise opens to public in NY

NEW YORK (AP) — The last time some New Yorkers saw the space shuttle Enterprise, it was zipping around the city, riding piggyback on top of a modified jumbo jet past the Statue of Liberty and other local landmarks.

Others got to lay eyes on it as it sailed up the Hudson River on a barge.

Today, following its April and June sojourns, the piece of NASA history is on the move no more.

The Enterprise, a 150,000-pound mammoth of a flying machine, goes on public display Thursday at the Intrepid

Sea, Air & Space Museum's new Space Shuttle Pavilion. Encased in the center of an accommodating inflatable dome, the shuttle will be available for visitors to admire up close from just feet away.

At 57 feet wide and 137 feet long — with a 78 foot wingspan to boot — the Enterprise is an imposing figure with quite a presence in its new home.

The space shuttle, which was completed in 1976, was NASA's first. Though it never actually flew a mission into outer space, it performed critical tests around the Earth's atmosphere and is widely credited with paving the

way for five future shuttles.

Of the six shuttles NASA built, only four remain. The other two experienced disasters during their missions, killing their crews: The Challenger exploded in 1986 and the Columbia disintegrated in 2003.

President Richard Nixon first announced NASA's intention to construct the Enterprise in 1972 amid heightened tensions during the Cold War. With U.S. officials fearing the Soviet Union would dominate the novel realm of space travel, the Enterprise was designed to be a reusable spacecraft that could land safely — allowing NASA to con-

duct launches more frequently and with greater efficiency.

Previous space crafts could neither land nor be reused for future missions.

When tests including the Enterprise began in 1977, the shuttle would sit atop a 747 carrier aircraft that helped get it off the ground. Once it reached an altitude hundreds of thousands of feet in the sky, the Enterprise would separate from the flight and two pilots would glide the shuttle for several minutes before making a smooth landing. This was thanks in part to an aerodynamically designed tail cone.

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			8	9		2	
1						9	
	7	9		2	4		
5	8		4				
6		2		1			3
			5		6	9	
		1	5			7	6
		7					2
4		6	1				

Puzzles by PageFiller

In Sudoku, all the numbers 1 to 9 must be in every row, column and 3 x 3 box. Use logic to define the answers.

2	4	1	5	8	7	3	9	6
8	5	6	3	4	9	7	1	2
7	3	9	6	1	2	8	4	5
3	7	2	1	9	6	4	5	8
6	9	5	4	3	8	1	2	7
1	8	4	7	2	5	9	6	3
4	1	7	2	6	3	5	8	9
9	6	3	8	5	4	2	7	1
5	2	8	9	7	1	6	3	4

Solution to yesterday's puzzle

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OPINIONS

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@dailytoreador

D33D's Co. hackers hit wrong target

By NICK BELL
THE DAILY COUGAR (U. HOUSTON)

Yahoo confirmed a security breach Thursday that led to a leak of over 450,000 usernames and passwords.

The information was obtained from Yahoo Voices, previously Associated Content, a site used for publishing articles online. A hacker group called D33D's Co. claimed responsibility not only for the publication of the sensitive information on Yahoo accounts but many non-Yahoo IDs, such as Gmail and Hotmail, as well.

The group retrieved file listings of user IDs that were dated before May 2010 when it was under Associated Content.

Though Yahoo said less than 5 percent of the accounts were still valid, the company's lack of web security is drawing

criticism from across the Internet. The usernames and passwords were reportedly in plain text and unencrypted, which is fairly unheard of in the cyber-security profession nowadays.

The morality of "hacktivism" — using computers to try to achieve political change — is a questionable topic in and of itself, but it's pretty clear that D33D Co. didn't react to an infringement on civil liberties of some sort; they exploited a latent vulnerability.

Despite Yahoo's lamentable flaws in their web application, D33D Co. is tiptoeing the line between vigilance and misguided aggression.

When "cyber warfare" is aimed toward government agencies, at least there's a convoluted argument that it's ensuring transparency in institutions that serve the interest of the people. The problem is that

the same argument does not apply when innocent people's privacy is attacked at the expense of corporate protest.

The group responsible for the attack was quoted as saying "We hope that the parties responsible for managing the security of this sub-domain will take this as a wake-up call."

Though the "parties responsible for managing security" might have caught some heat for their negligence, they were not the parties that were really hurt by the "wake-up call."

There will undoubtedly be a ripple effect resulting from the breach, and it will be extremely difficult to measure the impact.

Amidst the most recent big-name hacking scandals in the news, notably LinkedIn and Best Buy, everyday users with no socioeconomic or political affli-

ations are the ones ultimately bearing the brunt of these attacks.

Yahoo Voices is a community of writers that provides the very same type of information that many hackers and internet activists claim to fight for. Using presumably innocent people's private information as a means to justify an unclear end just seems opportunistic.

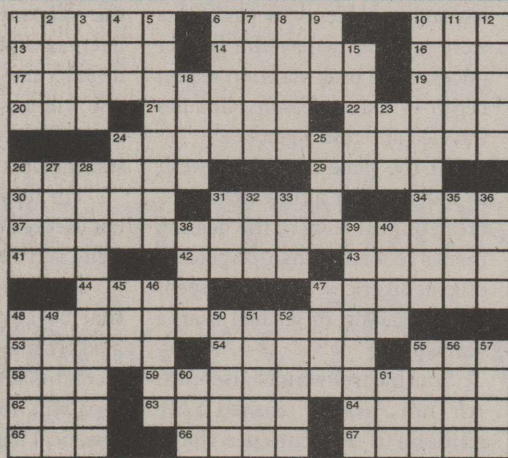
Granted, Yahoo should take a lesson from this hacking, and ultimately, they can be held responsible for not ensuring more stringent safety measures. But D33D should by no means receive praise. The notion that these hackers are cowboys of the information age is growing in popularity, but in reality, this is an embellishment.

Basically, it's making an exhibition of citizen's lack of online security and acting as if you're protesting corporate inefficacy.

Los Angeles Times Daily Crossword Puzzle

Edited by Rich Norris and Joyce Lewis

- ACROSS**
- Throw
 - Capt's inferiors
 - Homer's outburst?
 - Honolulu hangout
 - Toiletry product endorsed by pitcher Mariano Rivera
 - Great
 - Calm and kind
 - Era units: Abbr.
 - Bygone AT&T rival
 - Headly quaffs
 - Utah landscape features
 - Earn a living
 - Algebra subject
 - Posting often seen in a window
 - Goddinger, 007 enemy
 - Suva is its capital
 - Code letters
 - Completely different situation
 - Farm enclosure
 - Marcus mogul
 - Insight provider?
 - Schoolyard comeback
 - Like some Latin nouns
 - Suddenly stopping
 - "I'm all ears!"
 - Sister of Terpsichore
 - NASDAQ or NYSE
 - Thumb in folklore
 - Ones responsible for what's missing from certain puzzle answers?
 - Santa
 - Florida wader
 - TV spot seller
 - Bug-eyed TV dog
 - Unpleasant, as details
 - Graph lines
- DOWN**
- Hail, with "down"
 - Far from the front
 - 1953 Pulitzer-winning playwright
 - Highland denial
 - Newt with a large vocabulary
 - Dryer place
 - Shorthand pioneer
 - Give one star, say
 - Family nickname
 - Non-dorm resident
 - Queen of Talk
 - State bordering Thuringia
 - "Kickboxer" actor Jean-Claude Van Damme
 - Rabbit's food?
 - Bard's time of day
 - Broly carrier
 - Forget to mention
 - Barryard bleats
 - Family gathering
 - Super Bowl XXVII MVP
 - Do that's picked, briefly
 - Much-liked prez
 - Yeshiva student
 - Botanical knot
 - Way in the distance
 - Morlock prey
 - movie promoted by IHOP
 - Clamorous
 - "Rhode" production co.
 - Forbes, for one
 - chance!
 - Country once known for pearl diving
 - East Coast rte.
 - Part of UNCF
 - star Garson
 - Like some gossip
 - "Those are my principles. If you don't like them I have others" speaker
 - Joint with a cap
 - Baker's arms.
 - It's legal to poach one
 - Pocahontas's st.



By David Steinberg

7/20/12

Tuesday's Puzzle Solved

STUPID SPIN INK
MENACE LANE MOI
ANDREA GASSI ODD
TROUST OTTOMAN
TREE ANSELADAMS
CAGE ENDRUN
DEW KEBAB SOSO
AIMA ADAMANT LTR
NASSA DORAG LYE
ZIP LOG BRIG
ALVIMALLEY OCTO
ETERNALE PROOF
ZEN DOUBLEAGENT
AGO ALSO BRONTE
POM YSER BENSON

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