

MR. OBAMA GOES TO WASHINGTON



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TWO-OF-A-KIND TEAM UP ON SOFTBALL FIELD



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THURSDAY, FEB. 8, 2007
VOLUME 81 ■ ISSUE 90

(INSIDE)



TENNIS STAR PLAYING FAR FROM HOME
SEE PAGE 12

(INBRIEF)

STATE

SMU faculty group rejects Bush think tank

DALLAS (AP) — Southern Methodist University's Faculty Senate on Wednesday rejected holding a faculty-wide vote on whether the campus should host a think tank as part of George W. Bush's presidential library.

The group overwhelmingly defeated a measure calling for a vote or survey on the matter, some professors said after the meeting only open to SMU faculty.

Faculty Senate President Rhonda Blair said it was defeated because the measure would have been too narrow, asking professors if they approved or disapproved of the partisan institute that would report to the Bush Foundation and not to SMU.

NATION

Future Supreme Court will have more women

CHARLOTTESVILLE, Va. (AP) — The U.S. Supreme Court will eventually have at least as many female justices as it does male, Justice Samuel Alito told a university class Wednesday.

Alito, who replaced Justice Sandra Day O'Connor when he was confirmed last year, was answering a student's question on why the court has just one woman — Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

WORLD

Rival Palestinian leaders meet in Mecca for talks

MECCA, Saudi Arabia (AP) — Rival Palestinian leaders began crucial talks Wednesday in Islam's holy city, vowing to reach an agreement and avert civil war, a key step toward resuming the peace process with Israel.

Many Palestinians fear factional fighting will intensify if the Mecca talks fail. Gunbattles have killed more than 30 people in the days before a truce began Sunday, and there were new treats of revenge attacks in Gaza on Wednesday.

DEATH TOLL

3110

U.S. Military deaths in Iraq since fighting began
SOURCE: Associated Press, confirmed by the Department of Defense

WEATHER

Today



SUNNY
HIGH 57/
LOW 36

Friday



PARTLY CLOUDY
HIGH 58/
LOW 36

INSIDE

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5 indicted in Iraq bid-rigging scam

By LARA JAKES JORDAN
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON (AP) — Three U.S. Army Reserve officers were indicted Wednesday, accused of taking part in a bid-rigging scam that steered millions of dollars for Iraq reconstruction projects to a contractor in exchange for cash, luxury cars and jewelry.

An American businessman in Romania was charged as the go-between for the military officers

and the contractor. The husband of one of the reservists was accused of helping smuggle tens of thousands of dollars into the United States that the couple used to pay for a deck and a hot tub at their New Jersey house.

Together, the five used the \$26 billion Iraqi rebuilding fund "as their own personal ATM machines," Deputy Attorney General Paul McNulty said in announcing the charges.

"These defendants actually took bricks of stolen cash ... and smuggled them out of Iraq and back to the

United States for their own personal use," McNulty said.

The 25-count indictment, filed in U.S. District Court in New Jersey, marks the latest development in an investigation of \$8.6 million in Iraq contracts awarded to construction mogul Philip H. Bloom.

Bloom, an American citizen who ran construction and services companies under Global Business Group, has admitted to laundering at least \$2 million that was stolen from reconstruction funds managed by the U.S.

led Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq. He awaits sentencing.

McNulty said the five people indicted Wednesday stole or otherwise misused \$3.6 million from the CPA fund.

The three reservists — Col. Curtis G. Whiteford of Utah, Lt. Col. Debra M. Harrison of New Jersey and Lt. Col. Michael B. Wheeler of Wisconsin — were responsible for helping supervise the funding and progress of the CPA contracts in al-Hillah, Iraq, southwest of Baghdad.

In return for steering contracts

to Bloom between 2003 and 2005, prosecutors said, the military reservists and their accomplices shared an estimated \$1 million in cash, and were showered with Porsche and Nissan sports cars, a Cadillac SUV, real estate, a Breitling watch, business-class plane tickets, computers and other items.

Harrison's husband, William Driver, was charged with helping smuggle over \$300,000 into the U.S., part of which was used for home improvements, prosecutors said.

'PLAYER' OF THE GAME



BAYLOR'S JHASMIN PLAYER, who had a career-high 22 points, strips the ball from Texas Tech's Brooke Baughman in Wednesday night's 80-67 victory over the Lady Raiders. See Page 11 for full coverage.

COLEMAN MOREFIELD/The Daily Toreador

2 Lubbock men face criminal charges for separate offenses in last two weeks

By PAUL ROBERTS
STAFF WRITER

Two Lubbock men faced indictments Tuesday for separate incidents that resulted in felony charges for both men.

Michael Cunningham was indicted on felony charges of theft and assault of a public servant. Cunningham's bail stands at \$500,000, according to court documents.

Billy Wilson Jr. was indicted on felony charges of three robberies in one night in December, according to court documents.

Cunningham's charges include an incident in which he allegedly dragged a sheriff deputy alongside his vehicle.

Captain Don Carter of the Lubbock Sheriff's Office said on Jan. 25, Dep. Mark Lunsford of the Lubbock Sheriff's Office was attempting to serve Cunningham a warrant during a traffic stop when Cunningham fled in a stolen vehicle. Lunsford was caught on the side of the vehicle and was dragged for a short period of time.

The Sheriff's office said Lunsford was not seriously hurt,

but he is still on leave because of injuries from the incident.

The failed arrest resulted into a 24-hour manhunt until Cunningham was arrested on the afternoon of Jan. 26. Carter said a tip from a U.S. Postal Service employee led to the suspect's arrest.

"We received some decent information giving us a part of town that Cunningham was spotted," Carter said. "We sent several patrol cars there and asked a mail carrier if he had seen anyone matching the suspect's description." Carter said the Postal employee reported seeing the man just minutes earlier walking along the street.

"Sure enough, two of our investigators spotted him a couple blocks away and made the arrest," Carter said.

Cunningham was found a few blocks from his home at

INDICTMENTS continued on page 2

Student regent starts work with legislature

BY BEN MAKI
STAFF WRITER

Although Ebtesam Attaya Islam has not yet been sworn into her official capacity, she is already involved with the Texas State Legislature.

Newly appointed student regent Attaya Islam attended Gov. Rick Perry's State of the State Address Monday with eight other new student regents.

Ben Lock, executive assistant to the chancellor and secretary for the board of regents, said the new regents were present to be welcomed by the governor and to hear his education plans for the upcoming year, which includes more funds from the state directed at higher education.

Ashley Burton, spokeswoman for the Texas secretary of state's office, said her office will send the oath of office form to Attaya Islam today. When the secretary of state's office receives and processes the form, Attaya Islam will officially be sworn in as the new student regent for the Texas Tech system.

The second year medical student at the Health Sciences Center is the second student regent at Tech.

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Texas Tech police blotter

By PAUL ROBERTS
STAFF WRITER

Feb. 5

Texas Tech received a report of a burglary at the Larry Combest Wellness Center located in the 300 block of 40th Street. According to reports, unknown suspects entered the building and attempted to steal a laptop but failed. Police said a double-plated glass window was broken and a laptop was damaged but not stolen. According to reports, the suspects fled without stealing any items.

A Tech student was detained by police for possession of drug paraphernalia and possession of marijuana in a residence room of Wall Residence Hall. Police said the arrest was made after an odor of marijuana was reported. The student was issued a Lubbock County citation for possession of drug paraphernalia and released pending the filing of charges of possession of marijuana.

Tech police investigated criminal mischief in the Petroleum Engineering Building. According to reports, a card reader and locking mechanism for a door was damaged preventing the lock on the door to work.

Tech police received a report of

a student with possible suicidal ideations in Weymouth Residence Hall.

Feb. 6

A Tech student reported a bicycle was stolen from the north bike racks of Wall Residence Hall. Police said a blue and silver Trek 4300 bicycle was stolen sometime between Feb. 1 and Feb. 6.

Tech police investigated a theft at the east bike racks of the Mathematics and Statistics Building. According to reports, a student's secured yellow and charcoal Trek 4300 bicycle was stolen sometime between Feb. 1 and Feb. 6.

A Tech student was detained by police for possession of marijuana and possession of drug paraphernalia in a residence room of Walls Residence Hall. Police said they were called to the residence hall after the smell of burning marijuana in the hallway was reported. The student was released pending the filing of charges for possession of marijuana.

Tech police investigated a fire alarm in the 11th floor of Chitwood Residence Hall. Police said a faulty smoke detector was the cause of

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President approves proposal for fall break in 2007

By ANNA SCHUMANN
STAFF WRITER

Texas Tech students are one step closer to having a fall break.

Members of the fall-break committee, including members of the administration, the faculty senate and the Student Government Association received word Tech President Jon Whitmore approved the committee's proposal.

Matt Fowler, internal vice president of the SGA, said Whitmore sent a memo to the SGA and to Chancellor Kent Hance January 31 stating he had approved the proposal for a fall break. If the chancellor approves the measure, the Board of Regents will discuss placing a fall break on the 2007-2008 academic calendar at its meeting in March. The proposed fall break will not affect the Health Sciences Center or Tech's School of Law, which are on their own schedules.

The fall break, tentatively scheduled for Oct. 12, will be introduced as a pilot program, Fowler said, and if students, faculty and the administration believe

the fall break meets the committee's goals, it should become a permanent addition to the calendar. October 12 is the Friday before the home football game against Texas A&M University.

Fowler said the research conducted by the fall-break committee showed the highest football game attendance at Tech was the game against Southern Methodist University, which was over Labor Day weekend.

"We found there was no correlation between football game attendance and school on Friday," he said.

Students overwhelmingly supported the idea of a fall break, Fowler said.

"It was something like 75 percent of students wanted a fall break," he said. "My job is to ensure their needs are discussed, taken into account and things are changed if necessary."

Ronald Phillips, chief of staff for Whitmore, said he believes the committee was able to recognize everyone's concerns and accomplish their goal.

He said it is difficult to come up with a way to accommodate the needs of students, faculty and ad-

ministration because of the number of activities, both athletic and academic, that take place at Tech.

"Students were very interested in it, and the university administration certainly wanted to accommodate," Phillips said.

Ryan Worley, president of the SGA, said he has been working on getting a fall break since discussions began in 2003. He said it has taken time to come to a compromise because of the number of people affected by a fall break. Labs for science classes, he said, were a large factor in terms of accreditation.

If approved, the final examination schedule will be compressed into four days, beginning Saturday and extending to Wednesday. Worley said examinations may begin as early as 7 a.m., but the committee was unwilling to compromise on the length of passing periods and the existence of "dead day," which will now be on Friday.

Worley said the motivation for the fall break was to give the students a chance to regroup.

"It's a mechanism to give students a break around mid-terms," he said. "For some, it'll mean they stay in town and go to the A&M game; for others, it'll be a chance

to go home."

In his memo to the SGA and Hance, Whitmore said he believes the break will serve as a retention tool. Worley said fall break will be evaluated through student input and input from the SGA, faculty and administration. If it serves as the retention tool it is expected to be, it should be permanent.

Worley said other alternatives were sought, such as having a week-long break for thanksgiving, a two-day fall break on a Thursday and Friday and a two-day fall break on a Monday and Tuesday.

"There was just no way to make it happen," he said. "This was the only solution. We came to a compromise that benefits students and faculty without compromising the standards of our university and our academic integrity."

Fowler, who was one of the authors of the 2005 amendment to the SGA senate fall break resolution, said he and other SGA members are excited to hear Whitmore had approved the committee's proposal.

"It was really kind of rewarding to see an outcome to it," he said. "Now it's in the hands of the chancellor and the Board of Regents."

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Indictments

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

the district attorney's office to work together to prevent any lag in the judicial system.

"That's how our judicial system works," Carter said. "Our job is to enforce the laws and make sure the system works." Carter said the district attorney's office's job is to make sure the arrested suspects received the appropriate punishment.

He said the teamwork of both departments results in a healthy local judicial system.

"We certainly want justice to be swift," He said. "But we

also want to be 100 percent accurate."

Billy Wilson Jr. was indicted Tuesday for allegedly robbing three convenience stores Dec. 28.

According to reports, Wilson was arrested at the 7-Eleven store in the 2300 block of 19th Street. Police said Wilson walked into the store and showed the cashier the silver handle of a gun. Wilson stole \$5 worth of quarters and an unknown number of \$1 bills, according to reports.

Wilson allegedly robbed two other stores that night: the 7-Eleven at 26th Street and Avenue Q and a Diamond Shamrock at 15th Street and University Avenue.

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NASA to review psychological screening of astronaut

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — NASA said Wednesday it would review its psychological screening process in light of an astronaut's arrest on charges she tried to murder a woman she believed was her rival for a space shuttle pilot's affections.

Deputy NASA Administrator Shana Dale said the space agency would evaluate the process "to determine if any modifications are advisable."

The review will look at how astronauts are screened for psychological problems and whether Lisa Nowak showed any problems in her dealings with other astronauts. Some recommendations could be issued as early as June.

Nowak returned to Texas and headed to Johnson Space Center for a medical assessment Wednesday, a day after being charged in Florida.

Before her arrest, she had shown no signs of instability, Dale said.

"As you know it's a very tight-knit community that cared about each other," Dale told reporters at a news conference in Houston.

Nowak's commercial flight was met on the tarmac by a police car, and the astronaut, her head covered by a jacket, was escorted down the stairs and into the waiting squad-car, then driven away.

"She looked thin, looked tired," said John Gruttadauro, a passenger who was aboard Nowak's flight from Orlando, Fla.

NASA spokeswoman Nicole Cloutier-Lemasters would not say if the medical assessment included a psychological evaluation.

Less than 24 hours earlier, Nowak had been in a Florida courtroom on charges of attempted murder, attempted kidnapping and three other crimes stemming from what police described as a love triangle involving a fellow astronaut. She was released on bail and ordered to stay away from the other woman and to wear a monitoring device.

Nowak became an astronaut after winning a series of Navy service awards, and she flew on Discovery in July, where she and crewmate Stephanie Wilson were known as "the Robochicks" because they operated the shuttle's robotic arm.

Dale said Nowak's arrest would not have a long-term impact on the space program.

"This is a tragic event that impacted many lives, but this is a unique situation that we're facing," Dale said.

NASA officials declined to comment when asked if Nowak's arrest meant the end of her NASA career.

"That's speculation," said Bob Cabana, deputy director of the Johnson Space Center.

Nowak's children were with her husband, Richard, who works for a contractor at the Johnson Space Center, Cabana said.

Nowak was being replaced as a ground communicator for the next space shuttle mission, a job in which she would talk to the astronauts from Houston during their flight.



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New sense of optimism for N. Korea talks

BEIJING (AP) — International talks on North Korea's nuclear program convene Thursday with a new sense of optimism about the possibility of the first tangible progress on the communist nation's disarmament since negotiations began more than three years ago.

The main U.S. envoy said Wednesday that the first steps on dismantling Pyongyang's nuclear weapons could be agreed upon at this round of meetings in Beijing, though he expected "hard bargaining."

Ahead of the six-nation negotiations, the North has also signaled it's satisfied with changes in the United States' attitude, following an apparent greater willingness by all sides to compromise.

The latest nuclear standoff with the North started in late 2002 after Washington accused Pyongyang of having a secret uranium enrichment program in violation of a 1994 deal between the two countries. North Korea kicked out nuclear inspectors and restarted its main reactor, moves that culminated in the country's first atomic test detonation in October.

Although the U.S. and key North Korean allies China and Russia backed U.N. sanctions after the nuclear test, Washington has since engaged in a series of diplomatic overtures that have drawn praise from Pyongyang.

U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Christopher Hill went to Germany last month to meet North Korean nuclear envoy Kim Kye Gwan, and the North later said the sides had reached an unspecified agreement. The specifics of what they discussed haven't been made public.

Washington has also held separate talks on financial restrictions it has placed on a Macau-based bank where the North held accounts, accusing it of complicity in the regime's alleged counterfeiting and money laundering. Blacklisting that bank has scared off other financial institutions from dealings with the North for fear of losing access to the U.S. market.

why live on campus?

...to make the grade...

Living on campus has given me a chance to really get to know my fellow classmates and make new friends. Living in Gordon Hall has given me opportunities to find help from others in my major, and even from others in more advanced courses, for the problems I'm facing in adapting to college life during my first year here at Tech. In fact, I would attribute my above 3.5 GPA to the fact that I live on campus in a residence hall.

Matt Aaron
Sophomore
Pre-nursing

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Law school opens free divorce court services to qualifying citizens

BY NAOMI KASKELA
STAFF WRITER

The Texas Tech School of Law has partnered with Associate Judge Judy Parker to offer free legal services one night a month to qualifying individuals seeking a divorce.

The first clinic was held Jan. 18 with four cases, and the Feb. 15 clinic is already booked with 10 cases, said Nancy Mojica, the equal-justice volunteer program coordinator at Legal Aid of Northwest Texas.

"Right now we're trying to limit ourselves to 10 a month," she said. "We're wanting to take more, but we want to see how it works out."

Individuals wishing to get legal aid at the clinics must first contact Mojica to be screened through Legal Aid of Northwest Texas.

"We are starting with no children and little-to-no property," Parker said. "We would like to

expand it, but you have to start somewhere."

Mojica said those who are interested should contact her at Legal Aid of Northwest Texas immediately to start the screening process.

According to the Legal Aid of Northwest Texas Web site, "the largest part of Legal Aid's work is providing legal services to individual low income people to solve individual problems such as public assistance denials, divorce and child support..."

Mojica said the night court will be able to help those who need assistance but are not a priority or do not qualify for help at Legal Aid of Northwest Texas.

The clinics are being held at the courtroom at the Tech School of Law, and 16 law students are involved with the program. The responsibilities of the students include helping individuals file

paperwork for a divorce.

A major reason for the formation of the night court is to target individuals who would have difficulty filing for divorce on their own and cannot afford an attorney, Parker said.

"I've known for years that there are some people who can't make it to the courts during working hours," she said. "Basically, we're taking the courtroom to the people."

The program also helps qualified individuals fill out paperwork, rather than having them attempt it on their own, which often leads to mistakes and more problems, Mojica said.

Parker will be volunteering at the night court, something she said can be considered as part of the ethical obligation or moral duty attorneys, judges and other individuals have.

"It's not a big sacrifice as far as my time, it's just meeting the needs of other folks in the community," she

said. "I believe lawyers and judges need to take the leadership role in making sure that the citizens' needs are met."

“
Basically, we're
taking the court-
room to the
people.”

— JUDY PARKER
Associate Judge

Parker said she wants to make it clear applicants who are qualified to receive the free services are not getting a free ride, but state law does not

require them to pay the fee.

"If your income is such where you can file a pauper's affidavit, then by state law you are not required to pay that filing fee," she said. "It's not like we're making an exception."

The idea of the program developed during talks between Parker, Wendy Tolson Ross, associate professor of law, and Larry Spain, professor of law.

Ross said her former employer, St. Mary's University in San Antonio, had a program similar to the one started in Lubbock, and when she told Parker about it, a plan started to form.

"We saw there was a need, we wanted to provide an opportunity for the students and ... community," she said.

Spain agreed and said he believes the night court will be an important — and needed — service for the community.

"The court really saw this as an opportunity to allow access to people who could not afford an attorney," he said.

While the Tech courtroom will be the location for all of the proceedings of the night court, Tech students are not being specifically targeted.

"We haven't excluded them," Ross said, "but we haven't targeted them either."

Of the individuals who have contacted Legal Aid of Northwest Texas about the night court, the responses have been positive, Mojica said.

On Tuesday, almost 30 phone calls were placed concerning the night court, she said.

"I'm just hoping everyone shows up and is sincere about it so that way we will know how it works," she said.

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Americans dislike Castro, want diplomacy in Cuba

WASHINGTON (AP) — In nearly equal measure, Americans say they do not like Cuban President Fidel Castro but want the United States to re-establish regular diplomatic relations with the communist island nation after 46 years of estrangement.

Less than half of those polled think Cuba will become a democracy after the 80-year-old revolutionary leader dies or permanently steps aside. However, 89 percent in The Associated Press-Ipsos poll say they think Cubans will be better off or about the same when Castro is gone.

"It's probably not very likely in the short term," Kelly Shanley, 29, of North Haven, Conn., said of prospects for a democratic shift. "I just hope for the citizens of Cuba that it's something that's realized in the next few decades."

Castro has appeared to be in failing health for six months and has temporarily shifted power to his younger brother Raul. Rumors have been rampant about his ailments and how long he can survive.

The poll suggests the Cold War animosity that has defined U.S.-Cuba relations for nearly a half-century may be fading.

Cuba's government had no immediate reaction to the poll.

Although U.S. administrations from left to right have called Castro a dictator and a tyrant and have spent millions trying to undermine him, 27 percent of poll respondents said they hadn't heard enough about Castro to form an opinion.

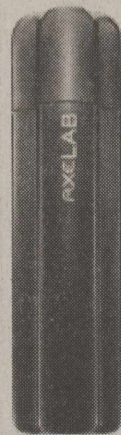
The poll showed 64 percent of respondents had a very or somewhat unfavorable opinion of Castro, the revolutionary leader who has said he will be a Marxist-Leninist until the day he dies.

"He hasn't done much for his country. The country has not progressed," said Shiraz Damji, 61, of Woodland Hills, Calif. "It's still in the '40s or something like that. Leadership must grow the country and he's not done that."

Castro got slightly better reviews from younger people — 60 percent of those under 35 had an unfavorable view of Castro while 66 percent of older people felt that way — and younger people were more likely to reserve judgment about him.



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Boston officials will read, close city

I want you to pay very close attention to what you're about to read: somebody is trying to kill you. Now, please don't be scared and don't run. You should continue to carry on routinely with your daily activities. And please, for the love of God, buy something. Actually, buy two things. No, you know what, you should actually go to the mall, fill out a form for a credit card and destroy your future for the sake of our capitalist economy.

You probably didn't think too much of what was just written. As far as I know (or at least what FOX News tells me), somebody is trying to kill me everyday. I don't know where they are or what methods they're going to use, but I walk on campus constantly on alert for anthrax, homemade explosive devices, global warming — whatever. The point is somebody out there is trying to thwart me from my chances of using my debit card, and it just isn't right.

Homemade hysteria caught us off-guard Jan. 31 when two men hired by Interference Inc., a marketing firm the Cartoon Network employed, were performing a grassroots marketing campaign to promote one of its cartoons, "The Aqua Teen Hunger Force." Boston went slightly short of senseless as little blinking devices picturing a square-like figure (a Mooninite) showing the "bird" (the middle finger) were placed in various high-traffic areas.

Boston's mayor quickly came to the podium and pounded his fist and made a series of grunts and grumbles. The police commissioner followed. Trying really hard not to be left out, Assistant Attorney General John Grossman said it was evident "the intent was to get attention by causing fear and unrest that there was a bomb in the location," according to the Web site CNN.com.

After the head and assistant-to-the-head monkeys stepped down, Attorney General Martha Coakley said, via written statement, the most significant aspect of the incident was it cost "Boston and surrounding communities thousands of dollars."

Really? That was the significant part? How about scaring the beezus out of everyone by making them think there were multiple bombs placed around the city? No, I'm sure your action was fully justified: "Had we taken any other steps, we would have been endangering the public," Police Commissioner Edward Davis said.

Wrong. If there were a real threat, then reacting any other way would've endangered the public. But, you

Justin Dove



can't justify a reaction by playing a big game of "what if?"

The point is this is all becoming annoying. Every day there are reports of some perceived threat of terrorist activity — a box left here, a backpack left there. Traffic is bad enough as it is — no need to add to it by closing roads because somebody can't take a joke.

"Well, if some terrorist comes and blows you to smithereens, then you wouldn't think it was so annoying" is what the ignorant alter ego in my head is telling me.

Correct, I would not be annoyed — I'd be pissed. If my arms and legs are dismantled from my torso by way of terrorist activity, then the government loses. All of the tax money I don't pay is supposed to fund the police departments and federal agencies that are in place to prevent that sort of thing from happening. If reports keep getting released about suspicious activity the agencies didn't prevent, then I want a new government.

I don't want to know about all the perceived bombs and terrorist activity that may threaten my daily life. I have enough to worry about as is. I have a French test on Monday, and I'm quite worried it may delay my graduation. This should worry you because if I don't pass French, guess who's writing more columns next semester.

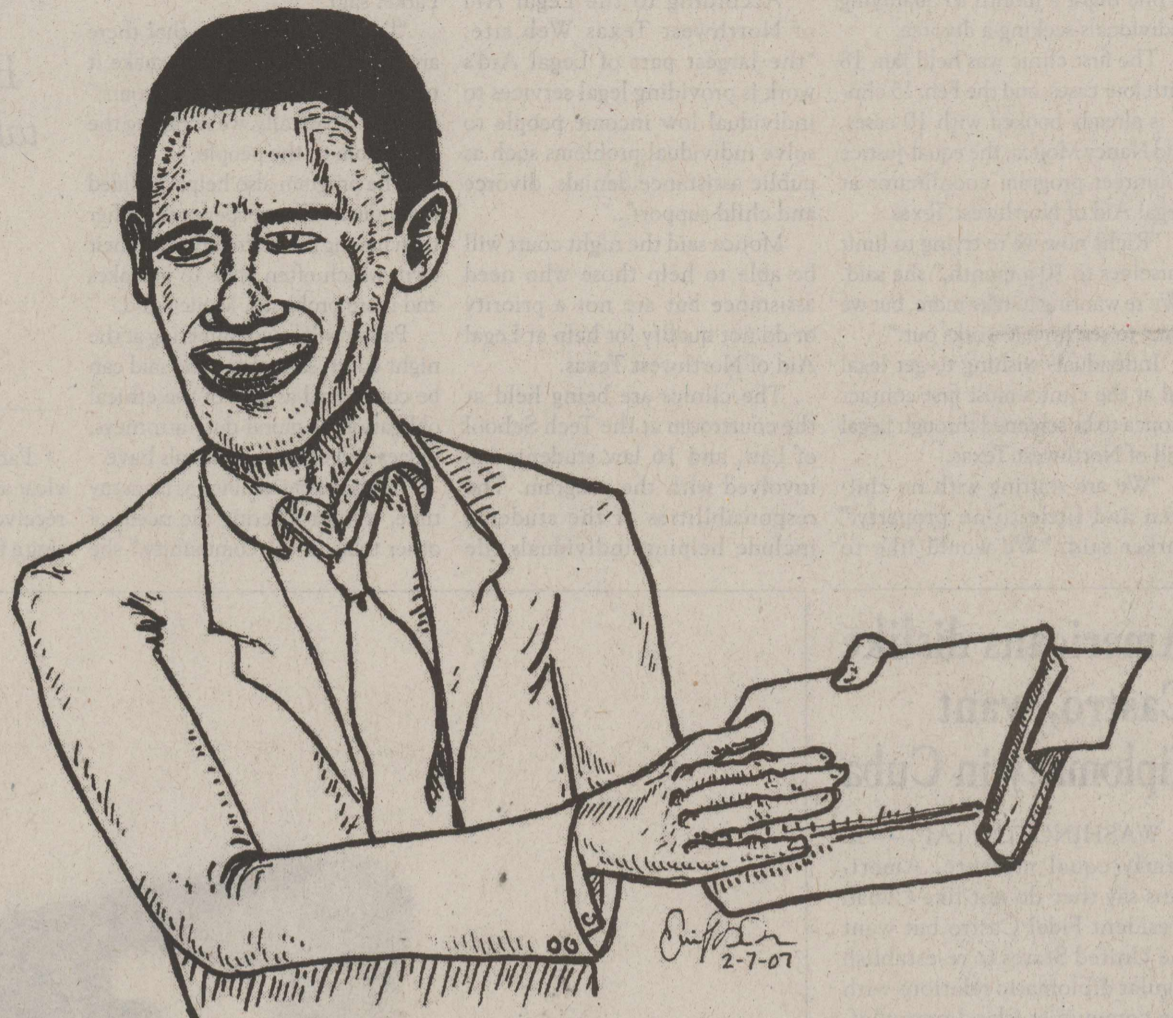
"What you lernin' that wussy language French fer?" I think I'll name my alter ego George.

I'm sure there is a lesson to be learned here, and when I figure out what it is, I'll let you know. I'm sure it will have something to do with blindly following your government and purchase, purchase, purchase.

It's just a shame I got on this topic too late. I totally had a sweet slogan that would've made millions — "Free the Aqua Teen Two." Start the T-shirt printing instantly.

Oh, and since Cartoon Network needs advertising sans terrorist-like activity, I'll pick that up. The Cartoon Network airs the "Aqua Teen Hunger Force" at various times and is releasing a movie sometime this year. That didn't really help, did it?

Dove is the opinions editor for The DT. E-mail him at justin.dove@ttu.edu.



MR. OBAMA GOES TO WASHINGTON

A honky's philosophy on stereotypes

I was looking over my "Opinion Article Writer" checklist (while polishing my protractor collection) and noticed I had come to the lofty issues of racism and stereotypes. I wanted to express my disappointment that so many people still harbor such ignorant ideas toward their fellow man. So, for this one, I recruited my good friend Fratboy D. Is that irony? Hold on, I'll check. Yeah. That would be it.

Why do we judge people? I think part of it has to do with a desire to know as much as we can about our surroundings. With this organization, we feel more comfortable and can proceed with confidence. It's understandable people would want to be comfortable and confident, especially considering how scared they really are.

The problem is that many take the easy road of using others in a negative way to try to help themselves. This, of course, does not help them. It does provide them with the high-fives they need to get through the night. But that's about as rewarding as doing drugs or being friends with an Irishman. Huh, there it is again.

Alan Brown



So, some of us put people into groups to help us deal with our shortcomings. Shortcomings such as the lack of desire to overcome a social laziness that keeps us from getting to know people as individuals. Is it all starting to sound like a simple, stupid cycle? Well, that's good. I didn't think you would catch that, being blonde and all. The irony is really sticking around today.

I asked my buddy Frat D. how people could ever think they were better than anyone else "just because." He replied, "Rock out with your cock out, bro." Wow. Drawing upon the deep insights within his response, I inquired as to what these people based their argument on. Was it color? Or nationality? Are you serious? We still do that?

By this point, there should be someone around — always — to slap the sklit out of anyone who claims to be a better human based on such things. If you have to talk yourself up, at least declare your elevated status to be a result of your hard work and personal efforts. No one baby is better than another — even if he or she is Jewish.

Obviously, stereotypes only widen the gap between individuals. This isolates us into groups and deprives us all of a more enriching experience on this earth. That's so ghetto. How are these things still around? Perhaps by the grace of a little spider monkey of an emotion — the sense of humor.

Though a large part of racism, stereotypes alone are considered by many to be funny at times. I asked Frat D. why this is: "The road goes on forever —" This is where he fell down the stairs. He was crying as he asked me not to tell anyone. When I tried to help him up, he said I smelled good. We meet on Thursdays.

So the reason stereotypes are funny at times is because they're completely ridiculous. They're also — at least in part — based on some truth. You know, maybe if Paula Poundstone hit the mark a little more often, we wouldn't have to resort to such levels — but we do.

Believe it or not, I have Middle Eastern friends who don't own convenience stores. I have African-American friends who don't rob those convenience stores. I have Italian friends who don't intimidate the Asians who actually own those convenience stores into paying them "dues."

I have Caucasian friends who don't go into those convenience stores and buy Starbucks Frappuccinos

after carefully covering the toilet seat with two layers of paper before dismissing what they had tried to ignore until home.

I also know people who live up to their stereotypes. This gives me fuel for the fire of funny. It's all right, too, as long as respect is maintained. I once brought an Arby's No. 5 combo (I hate that word — combo) into my friend's house and midway through the sandwich — in the middle of conversation — he asked me if there was bacon on it. I told him there was. He then stood up and seriously asked me if I could go outside.

He said I couldn't have bacon in the house. I found myself confused, first assuming extreme food allergies. I then found myself standing on my friend's porch, holding a half-eaten bacon and swiss, watching him finally break form. I've never seen a Muslim laugh so hard.

Again, we laugh about these things together, for two reasons: No. 1: it is absurd to label an entire group

of people, or to assume that a person behaves a certain way because of nationality or a physical characteristic such as skin or hair color. No. 2: sometimes people do live up to their respective stereotypes and you can really make fun of them.

Our society's troubles lay in those who laugh too loudly. They get drunk on their anger and somehow convince themselves that it makes more sense to just say that "all dem are dat way." And, obviously, since "dat way" is different than their own, it must be wrong.

How about we recognize the fact we are all just trying to kick it and enjoy our time here. If someone bothers you, pay them no attention. Laugh with your fellow man/woman about what is funny, and treat them how you want to be treated — unless they bring bacon into your house.

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"Dr. Leopold is trying to cut back on the high cost of laughing gas."

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Publication Information
Periodical Postage paid by The Daily Treador, Student Media building, Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas, 79409. Publication number: 766480. The DT is a student newspaper published Monday through Friday, September through May; Tuesdays and Fridays June through August, except during university examination and vacation periods. The DT is funded primarily through advertising revenues generated by the student sales staff with free campus distribution resulting from student service fees.

Subscriptions
Call: (806) 742-3388
Subscription Rates: \$120 annually; single issues: 25 cents.
Postmaster: send address changes to The Daily

Treador, Box 43081 Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas 79409.

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SGA supervisor balances work, home life

By **MAGGIE KIELY**
STAFF WRITER

Student Government Association supervisor Kerri Pike balances her time between managing the SGA office and managing her marriage.

Pike grew up in Lubbock and graduated from Coronado High School in 1999. After attending Lubbock Christian University,

Pike transferred to Texas Tech for her sophomore year.

"Tech intimidated me when I graduated high school," Pike said. "At LCU you know everybody and it was very comfortable for me."

Pike said her experience at LCU prepared her for Tech, and she never really considered attending a university outside of the Hub City. Pike said she lived at home with her parents during college until she got married.

"It was great because I had a good relationship with my parents," Pike said.

Pike married her high school

sweet heart in June 2002. While still in school, the married couple worked two jobs each to support themselves and to pay for school. Pike said married life was hard in the beginning because they were always studying or working.

"We didn't see a lot of each other," Pike said. "Our parents helped us when we asked, but we were paying our way through (school) anyway."

Pike said she and her husband have a four-year-old nephew

Grant, whom they spend a lot of time with; the pair bought a house in March and hope to have children of their own after graduate school.

Pam Gardner, Pike's mother, said she was not worried about her daughter's decision to get married because Pike and her husband both had goals in mind and knew what they wanted.

"I will be real excited when they have a little one," Gardner said.

As for now, Pike said the only little one in her life is her dog Molly.

"Molly is adorable," Pike said. "She is pretty much my child. My mom calls her her grand-dog."

When they are not working or in school, Pike said she and her

husband enjoy attending young-married classes at their church and camping.

Pike graduated with a bachelor's degree in personal financial planning and is currently working on her master's degree in education, curriculum and instruction; she plans to get her teaching certificate. She said her dream job would be working for a company that writes financial education curriculum for classrooms.

After graduating in December 2003, Pike became SGA supervisor in February 2004. She said her duties include managing the SGA office, which accounts for the SGA, the transportation fee and student organization funding. She said while her job is stressful, she still has fun.

"It is exciting working with and watching students grow in themselves and knowledge and experience," Pike said. "They are such dynamic people with great ideas." Jimmie Bradley, the SGA sec-

retary, said Pike is dedicated to the students and is someone they can rely on.

"Kerri is by far one of the most talented women I have met in a long time," Bradley said. "Her door is always opened to help with whatever — she's there for them."

Mason Moses, the SGA legislative liaison, said Pike keeps the office going, and the SGA could not survive without her. He said Bradley serves as the mother of the office and Kerri plays the role of the big sister.

"Ms. Jimmie (Bradley) is nice and motivating while Kerri kicks you and tells you to keep going," Moses said.

Matt Fowler, the SGA internal vice president, said Pike is one of the hardest working people in the SGA office.

"She is, without a doubt, one of the best things to happen to this office," Fowler said.

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KEN MUIR/The Daily Treador

LEE LIMOGES, A sophomore music education major from Elmo, plays his saxophone in the Music building Wednesday afternoon.

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Lebanese troops fire on Israeli bulldozer that crossed border, Lebanese officials say

BEIRUT, Lebanon (AP) — Lebanese troops deployed along the border with Israel opened fire late Wednesday as Israeli troops searched for Hezbollah bombs, drawing retaliatory fire, officials from both sides said.

It was the first time that shooting erupted across the border since shortly after an Aug. 14 cease-fire that ended a 34-day war between Israeli forces and the Lebanese Hezbollah militants.

Lebanese troops opened fire on a bulldozer after it crossed the so-called Blue Line — the U.N.-demarcated boundary — and entered about 20 yards into Lebanon, Lebanese officials said.

Israeli troops responded with tanks and light weapons, Israeli security officials said on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak to the media.

The exchange occurred near the Lebanese village of Maroun el-Rass, which was the scene of heavy fighting in the summer war, in the central

sector of the border.

The Lebanese military officials, speaking on condition of anonymity pending the release of a formal statement from the army command, said the Lebanese army fired volleys of machine guns toward the bulldozer.

Israeli forces responded with five anti-tank grenades that targeted an army armored vehicle and a transport jeep, the Lebanese officials said. Lebanese troops did not suffer any injuries. There was no immediate word of any Israeli casualties.

In Jerusalem, the Israeli army said shooting erupted on the Israel-Lebanon border during an Israeli operation to search for bombs planted by Hezbollah guerrillas.

The army said troops operating in Israeli territory along the frontier came under fire, and that the source of the shooting was apparently Lebanese troops nearby. When the attackers refused to quit firing, the Israeli troops opened fire at them, the army said.

The Israeli army said the Is-

raeli force was clearing land and searching for bombs near the spot where Israeli troops discovered four explosive devices planted by Hezbollah on Monday.

The bulldozers crossed the heavily guarded border fence but remained inside Israeli territory, which extends north of the fence in that area, the army said.

The U.N. Interim Force in Lebanon, or UNIFIL, is a 12,000-strong peacekeeping force deployed to assist the Lebanese army patrol southern Lebanon to enforce the cease-fire.

"We're aware of an ongoing incident," said Liam McDowell, a UNIFIL spokesman, but added they don't have further information.

About 15,000 troops deployed to south Lebanon under the U.N. resolution that included the cease-fire which ended the fighting. More than 1,000 people have died in Lebanon and about 150 in Israel in the 34-day war.

John F. Kennedy Jr.'s final flight conversations released

WASHINGTON (AP) — A long-awaited transcript of John F. Kennedy Jr.'s last conversation with air traffic control was released Wednesday but revealed little about the flight in which he was killed in July 1999.

Records show a mere 34 words were exchanged between Kennedy and an air traffic controller as he requested and received permission to taxi to a runway for takeoff from a small airport in New Jersey headed to Martha's Vineyard.

Kennedy, who was flying under visual flight rules, was not in contact with anyone on the ground when his Piper Saratoga plunged into the Atlantic about seven miles from Martha's Vineyard, which is southeast of Boston.

"Caldwell Ground, Saratoga nine two five three November, ready to taxi with mike at airbound right turnout northeastbound," Kennedy said. He was requesting permission to taxi to

the runway from the control tower in Caldwell, N.J., which handled traffic at the Essex County Airport.

The controller directed him to runway 22. "Five three November two two, thanks," Kennedy said, repeating the last few digits of his tail number.

That was the end of radio contact as Kennedy took off in his single-engine airplane at 8:38 p.m. Friday, July 16, 1999. The night was dark and hazy enough that another, more experienced pilot changed his mind about making the same trip to Martha's Vineyard from the same airport.

Flying with Kennedy were his wife, Carolyn Bessette Kennedy, and sister-in-law, Lauren Bessette. He planned to drop Bessette off at Martha's Vineyard and then fly on to Hyannis, Mass., for a family wedding the next day.

Additional transcripts reveal a flight service specialist in Bridgeport, Conn., and Boston air traffic control-

ers discussing "a lady" who called looking for a "possible overdue aircraft."

As they checked around for information about the missing airplane, they seemed completely unaware that the son of President John F. Kennedy was at the controls, that the call came from the Kennedy family circle, or that a massive recovery effort would soon be under way.

"I guess the guy's a pretty new pilot," one Boston air traffic controller said to the supervisor at the Federal Aviation Administration's Automated Flight Service Station in Bridgeport. "So if he didn't file a flight plan, we're pretty much out of luck then, huh?"

With the supervisor's agreement, the controller said he'd just tell her "just have her call the, uh, the police, and have them go out and look for the plane."

Dell begins selling TVs from rival Sony Corp. on its Web site

DALLAS (AP) — Dell Inc. began selling flat-panel televisions from rival electronics manufacturer Sony Corp. on Wednesday and said it would soon offer products from a variety of companies as it tweaks its consumer business strategy.

A visit to Dell's Web site showed two Sony Bravia LCD televisions — a 40- and a 46-inch model — on sale alongside TVs made by the Round Rock, Texas, company.

In a statement, Dell said it would continue to offer Dell-branded televisions from 37 inches and below, but would soon offer "a wide assortment of televisions from leading manufacturers that feature the latest technology and meet Dell's high standards for performance." It was not clear what other TV brands Dell might start selling, or exactly when.

Dell said the decision was part of an ongoing effort to focus investments in its consumer business where it could provide the highest return

to shareholders.

It echoes an announcement in August when Dell pulled the plug on its DJ Ditty digital music player and instead offered a range of music players from Creative Technology Ltd., iRiver, SanDisk Corp. and Samsung.

Analyst Rob Enderle of the Enderle Group said Dell's lack of a nationwide retail presence goes against the tendency of shoppers who prefer to see TVs in person before making a purchase online. Enderle said the move to offer Sony products at least drives traffic to Dell's Web site.

It's the first product-related announcement since Michael Dell returned to replaced Kevin Rollins as chief executive officer last week.

"It's the emergence of a new strategy," Enderle said. "I think we're going to see a lot more changes out of the company now that Michael Dell is back."

Dell has been mired in a string

of disappointing earnings, an unresolved federal accounting probe and has slipped behind rival Hewlett-Packard Co. in worldwide computer shipments.

Dell also faces a class-action lawsuit claiming the company inflated profits with secret payments of about \$1 billion a year from chip maker Intel Corp. of Santa Clara, Calif. Dell has refused comment on the lawsuit, filed last week in Austin.

In an e-mail distributed to employees on Friday, Michael Dell said he would quash bonuses for 2006 and reduce managers to help cut costs and steer the company back toward dominance. He also wrote that the company he founded in 1984 would push faster product development, improve customer service and expand into new businesses to drive revenue growth.

Dell shares closed up 17 cents, or less than 1 percent, to \$23.83 on the Nasdaq Stock Market. Shares fell 2 cents in early after-hours trading.

Despite bust, Internet experts say child porn rings can remain difficult to track

(AP) — The numbers behind an international child pornography bust Wednesday were themselves disturbing: Nearly 2,400 suspects from 77 countries allegedly paid to view videos depicting sexual abuse online. But the nature of Internet traffic makes it sadly unsurprising that people would figure they could hide so much hideous material.

Finding and stamping out such content "is needle-in-a-haystack work," said Carole Theriault, a security consultant with Sophos PLC in London.

Austrian authorities said an employee of a Vienna-based Internet file-hosting service approached his national Interior Ministry last July with word that he had noticed the pornographic material during a routine scan.

The videos showed "the worst kind of child sexual abuse," said Austrian Interior Minister Guenther Platter, citing the rape and sexual abuse of girls and boys younger than 14. At times the children could be heard screaming.

Lead investigator Harald Gremel said

the videos were online for at most a day before they were discovered. The Austrian Internet service employee blocked access to the videos while recording the computer addresses of people who tried to download the material, and gave the details to authorities.

Within 24 hours, investigators recorded more than 8,000 hits from 2,361 computer addresses in 77 countries around the world, including the United States, according to Gremel.

In another sign of the ring's international tentacles, Gremel said investigators believe the videos were shot in Eastern Europe and uploaded to the Web from Britain. A link to the videos was posted on a Russian Web site, which is no longer in operation, and hosted on a server in Austria. Some of the material was free, but the Russian site charged \$89 for access for a "members only" section, Gremel said.

Why did finding this take what would seem a lucky break by network administrator? Because everything traversing the borderless Internet looks the same while

in transit. Whether it's a mundane e-mail or videos as insidious as this, all traffic gets splintered into packets of data that don't identify what they contain.

Consequently, unless a nefarious Web site advertises itself with spam e-mails or shuttles an inordinate amount of traffic, several factors can conspire to keep it in the shadows.

For example, Theriault noted that the perpetrators could send footage over peer-to-peer networks or computers that had been surreptitiously co-opted by Internet worms.

"You could have this stuff on innocent machines and the owner wouldn't even know it," Theriault said. "It can get ugly and complicated, absolutely."

Search engines and other analytical programs regularly "crawl" the Web to capture what lurks out there, but generally they are in search of text. One cloaking mechanism — often seen in spam — is for a site to put salacious keywords inside images, out of the reach of text-based scans.



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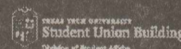
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Wal-Mart and unions unite to unveil universal health care goal

WASHINGTON (AP) — Executives from Wal-Mart and three other large U.S. employers on Wednesday joined union leaders in calling for "quality, affordable" health care for every American by 2012.

However, they did not propose any specific policies to achieve this goal, or commit to spending any extra money in the near-term to provide health coverage to more workers.

Joining Wal-Mart Stores Inc. CEO Lee Scott and Service Employees International Union leader Andrew Stern at a Washington press conference were top executives from Intel Corp., AT&T Inc. and Kelly Services Inc., a temporary staffing agency. Yet some critics of Wal-Mart's health care policy remained unsatisfied.

"2012 is a still long way away. What about now?" said Dana

Rezaie, a widow with three children who works nights stocking shelves at a Wal-Mart store in Fridley, Minn.

The partnership of business and union leaders laid out four main goals, including universal health-care coverage for all Americans and boosting the value of every U.S. dollar spent on health care. The business and union leaders' coalition, dubbed "Better Health Care Together," pledged to convene a national summit by the end of May to recruit others from the private sector, labor, government and non-profits.

"Government alone won't and can't solve this crisis," Scott said. "By following this campaign's common sense principles, we believe America can have high quality, affordable and accessible health care by 2012."

But Scott and others did not provide a detailed plan. In response to a reporter's question, Scott said Wal-Mart is not committed to spending more on health care or making any immediate promises to provide health coverage to more workers.

The business executives did say that any universal coverage in the U.S. must be flexible enough to give consumers choices about their coverage, unlike plans in some foreign nations.

Stern said the SEIU would continue to fund its Wal-Mart Watch campaign, which as recently as last month said Wal-Mart's health plans were a raw deal for employees. Stern said he expects to be criticized for teaming up with Wal-Mart, but that he felt it was in the best interest of workers who lack coverage, and their families.

Stern said he and Scott first met face-to-face to discuss the partnership "around the holidays."

Joseph T. Hansen, president of the United Food and Commercial Workers union, was critical of other union leaders for teaming up with Wal-Mart.

"It's not appropriate to take the stage with a company that refuses to remedy its mistreatment of workers," Hansen said in a prepared statement. The union he represents funds the WakeUpWalMart campaign, which challenged the company to immediately provide health care to all of its uninsured employees and their families.

The Bentonville, Ark.-based company, which employs more than 1.3 million U.S. workers, has made several changes to its health care policy since 2005, including lowering premiums and shortening

eligibility periods.

Yet Scott said Wednesday he would not withhold financial support from lawmakers and candidates who oppose universal health care. WakeUpWalMart spokesman Chris Kofinis called that stance "hypocritical," pointing out that Scott blamed politics as the main reason the nation lacked universal health care.

"Anybody can say they support something. They need to show they really do," said Rezaie, a six-year Wal-Mart employee who says she cannot afford the company's existing health plan and instead relies on state-funded care. WakeUpWalMart supplied Rezaie's name to The Associated Press.

Democratic presidential candidate Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton, a longtime universal health care advocate, said the coalition's announcement was further evidence of

broad agreement on the issue.

Drew Altman, president of the Kaiser Family Foundation, which studies health policy, was more sanguine. "This is a historic collection of strange bedfellows that have united behind a set of principles, not a concrete plan," Altman said.

John Podesta, president of the Center for American Progress, a member of the coalition, said business and union leaders already plan to meet with officials at the White House, on Capitol Hill and with state governors to transform its principles into action.

Shares of Wal-Mart closed unchanged at \$48.58, while AT&T slid 35 cents to end at \$37.16, both on the New York Stock Exchange. On the Nasdaq Stock Market, shares of Intel gained 20 cents to finish at \$21.51, while those of Kelly Services rose 24 cents to \$31.24.

U.S. helicopter crashes in flames northwest of Baghdad, killing all 7 on board

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP) — A U.S. Marine transport helicopter crashed in flames Wednesday in a field northwest of Baghdad, killing all seven people aboard, the U.S. military said. It was the fifth U.S. aircraft lost in less than three weeks and the latest sign of growing problems with aviation in Iraq.

A U.S. military statement gave no reason for the crash of the CH-46 Sea Knight, which went down near Fallujah in Anbar province, about 20 miles from Baghdad. However, at the Pentagon, three Marine Corps officials said the troop-transport helicopter was in flames when it went down, with the pilot appearing to attempt a hasty landing but losing control as the aircraft descended.

They said witnesses in nearby Marine aircraft saw the flames but saw no sign that it involved hostile fire.

An Iraqi air force officer, however, said the helicopter was downed by an anti-aircraft missile. He spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to release information.

An Iraqi farmer who lives about a half mile from the crash site said he heard a missile fired moments before the crash, which took place in an insurgent-infested region.

"The helicopter was flying and passing over us, then we heard the firing of a missile," the farmer, Mohammed al-Janabi, said. "The helicopter then turned into a ball of fire. It flew in a circle twice and then

went down."

Associated Press Television video showed the flaming wreckage lying in a field in front of a cluster of mud homes. A dense plume of black smoke rose over the remains. The Marine officials suspected the fire was caused by a mechanical problem, the officials said. They spoke on condition of anonymity because the investigation was ongoing.

Names of the victims were not released, but military officials said they included five Marines and two from the Navy.

In a statement posted on an extremist Web site, an al-Qaida-linked group, the Islamic State in Iraq, claimed it shot down the helicopter, which it described as a Chinook — an

Army helicopter which resembles a Sea Knight.

Critics have long urged the military to replace the CH-46, which was introduced in 1964 at the start of the Vietnam War. In 2001, retired Col. Frank Jensen wrote in Defense News that the Marines should replace the CH-46 but cannot because of budget limitations.

Regardless of the cause, the latest crash adds urgency to a U.S. military review of flight operations in Iraq, including whether insurgents have perfected skills in attacking U.S. planes.

The latest crash occurred five days after a U.S. Army Apache helicopter went down in a hail of gunfire north of Baghdad. Three other helicopters

— two from the Army and one operated by an American security firm — also have crashed since Jan. 20. A total of 27 people — 23 U.S. service members and four American civilian contractors — were killed in the five crashes.

The first four helicopters were all believed to have been shot down, the military has said, raising new questions about whether Iraqi extremists are using more sophisticated weapons or whether U.S. tactics need changing.

Any fresh threat to aviation would present serious problems for U.S. commanders as they launch the new security crackdown in Baghdad.

The U.S. military relies heavily

on helicopters in Iraq, not only for supporting ground forces in combat but also to move troops and equipment by air to avoid roadside bombs and insurgent ambushes.

At night, U.S. attack helicopters prowling the darkened skies over Baghdad and other cities, using night-vision equipment to hunt for insurgents and militiamen planting roadside bombs or setting up firing positions.

Gen. Peter Pace, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, has acknowledged that insurgent ground fire in Iraq has been increasingly effective.

"I do not know whether or not it is the law of averages that caught up with us or if there's been a change in tactics, techniques and procedures

Explosions rock industrial area of Kansas City; no immediate injuries reported

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — Several explosions engulfed a chemical plant in flames Wednesday in an industrial section of Kansas City, forcing a broad evacuation as a towering cloud of black smoke rose over the skyline.

There were no immediate reports of injuries at the Chemcentral Corp. plant, but the cloud appeared to be dropping a sticky substance as it moved southwest across the metropolitan area.

Fire Chief Richard Dyer said officials were evacuating a one-square-mile area around the plant and were going door-to-door through several blocks to get people out.

The Kansas City school district sent students from six elementary schools in the area to

a high school to keep them as far from the explosions as possible, a district spokeswoman said.

The fire began after several 55-gallon drums containing chemicals exploded, touching off more explosions and fires, including blasts from three 30,000-gallon tankers, Fire Marshal Floyd Peoples said.

Dan Brennan, an attorney for Bedford Park, Ill.-based Chemcentral, said it was not immediately clear what caused the explosions at the plant, which has 15 to 20 workers.

"To the best of my knowledge

there have been no injuries. Everyone was evacuated safely," Brennan said in a telephone interview. He said Chemcentral distributes various chemicals and solvents.

Emergency responders from the Environmental Protection Agency were at the scene, in the city's East Bottoms section.

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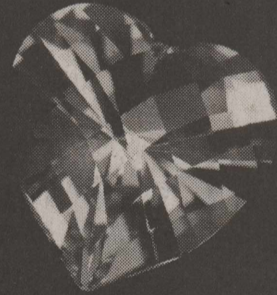
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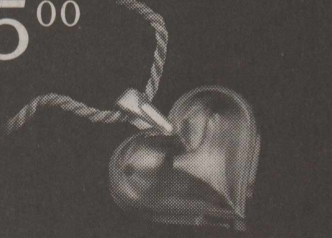
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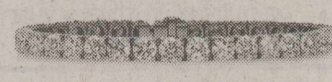
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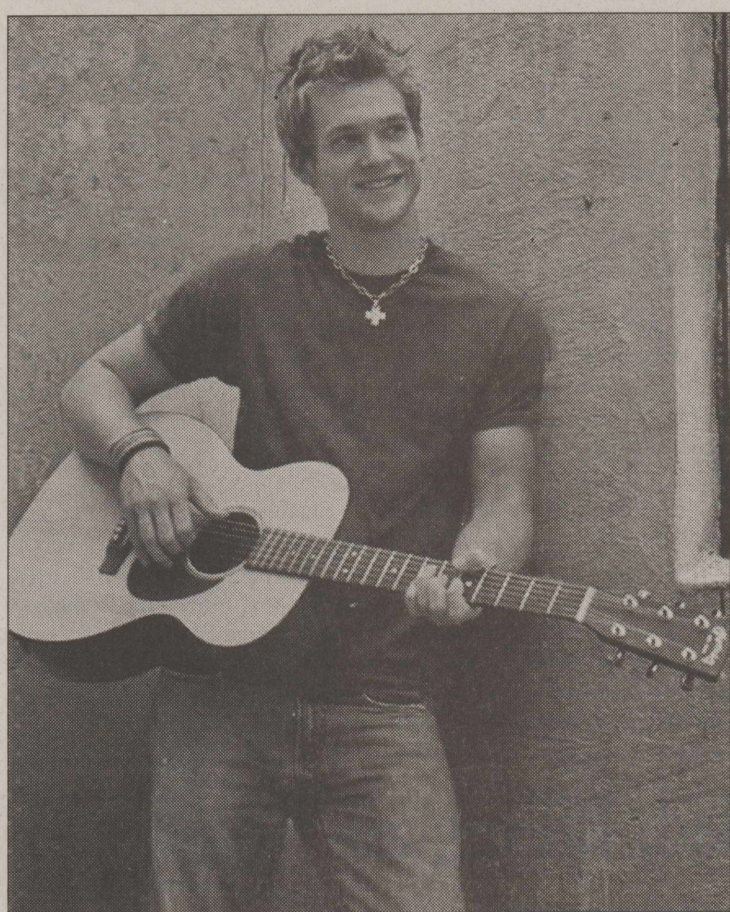
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COURTESY PHOTO

JONATHAN CLAY POSES with his guitar. He will be performing at noon today at the Student Union Building.

Houston acoustic artist to perform at the SUB today

By JESSICA ALEXANDER
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

A new voice will be added to the bustling lunchtime noises at noon today in the Student Union Building. Houston singer/songwriter Jonathan Clay will perform titles from his unsigned EP "Whole New Me" as well as new songs that will come out on his first full-length album in late February.

In a telephone interview, Clay, 21, said he prefers playing at coffeehouses and campuses to clubs and bars because he feels the audience is actually listening.

"It's a more intimate setting," Clay said. "It's quiet, like a living room."

Clay compares his style to that of John Mayer and Jason Mraz, citing Amos Lee as a huge influence.

"My style is a mix between acoustic and pop," Clay said.

Diana Trieu, a freshman psychology major from Carrollton,

said she found Clay's music on the Web site MySpace.com and liked it.

"I was just looking for new music," Trieu said. "I thought it was interesting because he's not one of those really famous people, but he's really talented."

Trieu said Clay's sound is relaxing and happy, and anyone interested in new music should see him perform.

Kasey Dowden, a junior biochemistry major from Magnolia, said she was best friends with Clay's younger sister and always enjoyed listening to him playing guitar in his room.

"I'm not the type of person that listens to the lyrics," Dowden said. "I just love the sound of his guitar."

She said Clay once won a high school talent show.

"I like [his music] because I know him," Dowden said. "I like the way he sings."

Music from Clay's EP and upcoming album can be found on MySpace and iTunes, as well as his Web site, www.jonathanclay.com. Some of Clay's lyrics, such as those found in the song "A Little Time" deal with heartache and moving on after a breakup.

Texas Tech graduate Brandon Stokes, the former Daytime Programs coordinator for the Tech Activities Board, booked Clay through OnCampus Booking last fall. He said TAB chooses artists based on what students would want.

"We feel like we have a wide variety of students in the group, so we feel like we can accurately represent the student body," Stokes said. "We're always open to suggestions."

Kelly Berger, a junior public relations major from San Antonio, took over Stokes's role in TAB after he graduated and still works closely with him to find talent to keep

students entertained.

"I like having music in the SUB because it adds to everyone's day," Berger said. "The response we've had from students and faculty has been good so far."

Berger said TAB tries to book performers who will fit Daytime Program's budget. She said the budget does not allow them to book big names like the band OAR, but past performers such as singer Ryan Holley and the group Joe & Lefty Spray Can Art have been well-received.

TAB has the spray-painting duo scheduled to return April 19. They will be performing their art live and handing out prints to students at the SUB. TAB is also trying to book singer Josh Kelley for a performance, Berger said.

Copies of Clay's seven-track EP will be for sale during his show for \$7 each. He will be performing at 10 p.m. tonight at Bash Riprock's. jessica.alexander@ttu.edu

WEEKLY REVIEW

Authentic Mexican food at a low price

Taqueria Jalisco's was fairly empty when I arrived there on a weeknight, but the lack of people allowed me to take in the scene: colors of orange and green give the dining room a cheerful aspect, and Mexican landscapes painted on the walls offer customers something to look at while they dine.

Walking to my table, I looked down at the floor and cringed — apparently they had not gotten a chance to sweep yet that day.

I sat down and eagerly looked at the menu. My waitress, I must note, did not seem quite as eager when she approached my table without a smile or a greeting to take my order, but I bore no ill will later when I tasted the food.

Looking at the menu, I found

Anne M. Shepherd



Taqueria Jalisco's offers a wide selection of Mexican dishes, and the most expensive item I saw was around \$7. After some deliberation, I decided to try the No. 12 enchilada plate. While I was waiting, I asked for an appetizer of chicken quesadillas and also ordered horchata, a Mexican drink made from rice and milk.

Unfortunately, I had never tasted horchata before, so I don't know if Jalisco's necessarily served me a good

one or a bad one. All I can say is it was a new experience, and it tasted good.

The chicken quesadilla appetizer was good enough to be my meal all by itself — in fact, I think it was the best part of the dinner. Served with fresh guacamole, pico de gallo and sour cream, these quesadillas might just be some of the best I've ever had. Students who are sick of cold quesadillas might want to find \$5 and taste these.

I also enjoyed the enchilada plate — it was fresh, hot and good. I have never been overly impressed with the enchiladas I find at Tex-Mex restaurants, so it was a refreshing change to taste these.

Last, I picked out a dessert — I wanted to test Taqueria Jalisco's on something I have eaten often, so I



COLEMAN MOREFIELD/The Daily Toreador

TAQUERIA JALISCO'S, LOCATED at 23rd Street and Avenue Q, serves authentic Tex-Mex cuisine.

choose the sopapillas. They were hot, chewy and covered in cinnamon and sugar. I hear sopapillas are, by definition, under-cooked if they are chewy, but to be honest, I enjoyed these — chewy or not.

There was a little mix-up at the end of the meal; I realized after leaving I had not received a receipt. If you eat here and need one, make sure you

ask for it.

Students looking for authentic Mexican food at a cheaper price than most other Mexican restaurants should look no further than Taqueria Jalisco's, located on 2211 Avenue Q. The quesadilla appetizer and the enchilada plate were each \$5.50, and the sopapillas were \$2.25. I'll admit there was nothing special about the atmosphere or

the service, but there was nothing really wrong with it either. In the end, the excellent taste of this affordable Mexican food earns Taqueria Jalisco's a thumbs up.

■ Shepherd is a freshman creative writing major from Killeen. E-mail her at anne.m.shepherd@ttu.edu

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Two months after release of Wii, Nintendo No. 1 in next-gen consoles

BY KELI GOODSON
THE CRIMSON WHITE (U. ALABAMA)

(U-WIRE) TUSCALOOSA, Ala. — Two months have passed since the release of the Nintendo Wii and Sony's PlayStation 3, and a look back on how both consoles have been doing around the globe is in order.
First up is Sony. Despite its system being superior to the Wii and arguably to Microsoft's Xbox 360, Sony reported an estimated 5.3 percent drop in profits Tuesday, widely blamed on the PS3's price points.
The system is so expensive to make at the moment that Sony is losing money every time it sells

one, and that trend will continue for a while longer until the system components become cheaper to make.
On the other hand, Nintendo, according to The Associated Press, had a 40 percent increase in sales during the same time, likely due to the still highly in-demand Nintendo DS handheld system, as well as the new Nintendo Wii. Unlike Sony, it only costs Nintendo about \$150 dollars to make a single Wii, so every console sold is money in Nintendo's hands.
Rumors have been running wild online, pointing to stores with no Wiis and so many PS3s left unwanted on shelves.
Brian Rhodes, the manager of

GameStop in Tuscaloosa, Ala., said they had PS3s in stock, but no Wiis.
The Wiis have been selling as soon as they're in the store, he said, but the PS3s have been sticking around for a few days before they head out the door, and some have even come back.
"A couple have been traded in," he said, "but we can't sell them used because of the hard drives, so we have to send them back to corporate, and they'll hopefully get sent back as refurbished."
He said Xbox 360s with hard drives have to go through the same process to be resold.
Target was in the same situation as GameStop. When I checked the

shelves Tuesday, a few PS3s were available for sale, but on the next aisle, the Wii cabinet sat devoid of consoles.
De'Marcus Peyton, a Target employee, said they'd been selling the Wiis as soon as they came in.
He said the shipments they'd been getting were small and infrequent so far, with the last shipment being only about six consoles, which was delivered two weeks ago.
"I sold four of them in 15 minutes," he said.
PS3 sales were lacking, he said, as the eight in the cabinet were from more than one shipment of PS3s. People have also been returning a few of the PS3s as well, Peyton said.

Rebecca Westrope, a sophomore majoring in media production, said she's played both systems so far, but doesn't have either.
She said she prefers the PS3 to the Wii due to the kinds of games she prefers to play.
"I prefer shooting zombies and stuff like that," she said. "The Wii is too kiddie for me."
Westrope said she thinks the excess PS3s around Tuscaloosa are the result of more people being interested in the Wii due to its cheapness and all-around playability.
Because the Wii has been marketed toward more than the hardcore gamer audience, more people want to get their hands on one, she said.

"People are drawn to those controllers," Westrope said.
Marc Melendez, a sophomore majoring in English, said he can't find enough reasons right now to plunk down \$600 for the PS3 and said he will be getting a Wii first.
"I've decided to get a Wii first because it's cheaper and more fun," he said. "The Wii has 'Zelda,' which is inherently a killer app."
He said he wouldn't even be investing in the Wii until "Super Smash Bros. Brawl" is out, and he's waiting to purchase a PS3 until "Metal Gear Solid 4," or "Final Fantasy XIII" comes out.
"I don't really want to say there's going to be a top dog this console generation, yet," Melendez said.

Transgendered man shares stories

By TYLER HERBERT
UNIVERSITY DAILY KANSAN (U. KANSAS)

(U-WIRE) LAWRENCE, Kan. — Dylan Scholinski came into the world as Daphne Scholinski.
However, he came to a packed Alderson Auditorium on the University of Kansas campus Monday to talk about his experiences growing up in a mental hospital after being diagnosed at 15 as an "inappropriate female."
The artist and author of "The Last Time I Wore a Dress: A Memoir," spoke about playing baseball instead of with dolls, read excerpts from his book and shared slides of the artwork he was inspired to create after being harassed about not being lady-like.
"My goal in life is to create a more passionate society," Scholinski said. "No two people are alike and we spend an enormous amount of energy to fit into two categories; There's a much wider spectrum."
He said he was lucky to be speaking about his life because

he said the same trials he faced occur to thousands of people in this country.
He talked about spending his entire high school life locked in a hospital and how he felt ashamed when people around him would talk about their high school experiences.
"I made up a story to hide what happened to me during that time," Scholinski said. "I need to find a way to express myself or I was going to die."
Scholinski said he was released from the mental hospital at 18 because his insurance dried up.
Now 40 years old, he recalled the instance growing up when he left his dad in a grocery store to use the restroom. As he attempted to enter the women's room, a clerk reprimanded him and told Scholinski to let him speak with his dad.
"The clerk said, 'We found your son in the women's bathroom,'" he said.
He said he hasn't used a women's restroom in eight or nine years, since one in Memphis was closed and he was

forced to use the men's room. He said most people don't realize how privileged they are to not have to consider those kinds of simple details in their daily lives.
He also spoke out against violence towards transgendered people.
"I've never been found out in a bathroom," he said. "There's a good chance I'd get the shit kicked out of me or raped but ... so far so good."
Slides of his artwork ranged from pictures from inside the mental hospital to drawings he made of crime scenes while in college, all of which he considers a self-portrait.
Catherine Cowan of Topeka, Kan., was joined by her girlfriend Ana Maldonado at the lecture. The couple said they drove to the lecture after hearing about it from a friend who attends the university.
"I've read about things like this but it was interesting to hear it from a person firsthand," Cowan said.
The lecture was part of the 2007 February Sisters Forum.

MTV reality show engages viewers

By GLENN FORBES
THE LANTERN (OHIO STATE U.)

(U-WIRE) COLUMBUS, Ohio — It is easy to forget that MTV pioneered reality television with "The Real World."
The innovators of reality TV, however, still employ a few fresh ideas.
"Engaged and Underage" has a title that is self-explanatory. The show follows a different engaged couple every week, chronicling wedding plans to life after the ceremony. Whoever made the decision to put Lauren and fiance David on the premiere episode should have been promoted by now.
Lauren and David are about to enter marriage with more baggage and issues than Liza Minnelli and David Gest. Lauren and David are 21-year-old devout Christians and virgins. David is also still attached to an umbilical cord.
Without the hilarious interactions between David, Lauren and David's mother, Bonnie, the show is almost nothing. The jaw-dropping commentary in the premiere is a direct result of the relationship between David and his mom. Adding to the debacle, David and Lauren will live in a small cottage in the

back of his parents' house after they marry. This is certainly the product of logical foresight and shrewd planning.
Poor Lauren moved from New York to Florida to live in David's sister's room, so she could be with him and his parents. The wonderful foreshadowing of MTV programming gives the audience an indication a train wreck will ensue when David said, "I can tell my Mom pretty much anything." He does not disappoint.
Bonnie expresses jealousy and resentment because Lauren is taking her spot next to David in pictures. She misses when David's arm was around her, and not Lauren. In a brilliant transition to their cottage life, Lauren explains, "It will be different after we're married, when we move to our own house," to which every audience member should have cringed or laughed uproariously.
David quickly gives Lauren an indication of what married life will be like when he calls his mother from the cottage and insists they wave to each other. Lauren can only mutter that they will have to keep their blinds closed.
The engaged couple also wants to visit the bed and breakfast they reserved for their magical

night, just to make sure everything is perfect. This results in the best line of the show, courtesy of David's mother: "Would it be weird if I saw pictures of where you guys would spend your wedding night?" Classic.
Later, Bonnie jokes that she has to crawl into bed with David tonight, because she only has a few nights left that she can do that. Lauren does not laugh. Bonnie insists they are just a close family, and there is nothing weird about that.
The remainder of the show features horrid clips from David's bachelor party. He is in women's underwear while buying condoms from a gas station.
Sadly, on the big day, their first kiss as husband and wife is less intimate than most of the moments between husband and mom. The couple still lives in Bonnie's backyard, three months after the wedding, and are called over for dinner and more quality time together.
"Engaged and Underage" promises to deliver moments inspiring laughter, pity and disbelief. These elements combine for a successful formula. Watching naive people getting blindsided and predicting unrealistic changes in their future will always have appeal.

FDA approves first nonprescription sale of diet pill

WASHINGTON (AP) — The government on Wednesday approved over-the-counter sales of the fat-blocking diet pill orlistat, allowing direct sales for the first time of a version of a diet drug that had been available only by prescription.
Currently available as Xenical, the capsules will be sold in a lower, nonprescription dose under the name "alli."
The drug is intended for people 18 and older to use along with a reduced-calorie, low-fat diet and exercise.
When taken with meals, orlistat blocks the absorption of about one-quarter of any fat consumed. That fat — about 150 to 200 calories worth — is passed out of the body in stools, which can be loose as a result. About

half of patients in trials experienced gastrointestinal side effects.
The new drug would contain half the dose of Xenical prescription capsules and would cost consumers \$12 to \$25 a week, GlaxoSmithKline has said. The company estimated 5 million to 6 million Americans a year would buy the drug over the counter. Those numbers could mean at least \$1.5 billion a year in retail sales.
The Food and Drug Administration said the most common side effect of the product is a change in bowel habits. Eating a low fat diet will reduce the likelihood of this side effect.
Also, FDA said people who have had organ transplants should not take OTC orlistat because of possible drug interactions. In addition,

anyone taking blood thinning medicines or being treated for diabetes or thyroid disease should consult a physician before using orlistat, the agency said.
GSK Consumer Healthcare, which will market the pill, said it chose the name alli to indicate a partnership with consumers in their weight-loss efforts.
"We know that being overweight has many adverse consequences, including an increase in the risk of heart disease and type 2 diabetes," said Dr. Douglas Throckmorton, deputy director for the FDA's Center for Drug Evaluation and Research.
"OTC orlistat, along with diet and exercise, may aid overweight adults who seek to lose excess weight to improve their health," he said.

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Potgieter's career is worlds apart

By ADAM COLEMAN
STAFF WRITER

Coming from another country to West Texas to play collegiate tennis certainly can have its challenges.

Texas Tech freshman Kerryn Potgieter is one of the three freshmen on the women's tennis team this season. After playing numerous times in the fall, Potgieter earned her way to various spots in both singles and doubles competition.

Through her first five matches to start the season, Potgieter has seen action in each spot and has lost just one singles match since the season began.

Overall, she has compiled a 3-1 record in singles competition and a 3-2 record in doubles competition. Potgieter has also had the attention on her. In Tech's last match against New Mexico, Potgieter's match up against junior Lucy Scott, she was one of the headliners. Potgieter was down 5-2 in a set that would give Scott the win, but Potgieter fought all the way back, winning the match to add to her record.

Potgieter said she has had a smooth transition into the Tech tennis program.

"I think I've adjusted pretty well, and things are going good this semester," Potgieter said. "The first three matches, I didn't know what to expect in the beginning, but now that I've played a couple, I know how to adapt and what to expect."

There are other accomplishments the freshman can account for; Potgieter was a 2005 graduate of Epworth High School in South Africa and captain of her high school tennis team. She was a school champion on that team from 2003-05. Potgieter was also named to the South African team in the South African Games, and she was a member of various tennis clubs. Still, one of the most notable things about Potgieter has nothing to do with tennis. She was a part of the Adopt-a-Spot program in South Africa, which helped the environment by cleaning polluted areas in the city. Potgieter is also staying close to the sports field as she is majoring in exercise and sports sciences with an emphasis in physical therapy.

Potgieter said playing at Tech is



STEVE LEWIS/The Daily Treador

TEXAS TECH TENNIS player Kerryn Potgieter is 3-1 in singles matches and 3-2 in doubles matches this year.

different in many ways than playing in South Africa.

"It was really different from here; the level of intensity isn't as high as it is here," she said. "Competition-wise, because we're in school, we would only play tournaments in the holidays. We only had two or three academies, and you would play in the afternoon, and it wouldn't even be every afternoon."

Tech coach Cari Groce said Potgieter is making the transition that most freshmen make to get to the next level.

"She is very hard-working," Groce said. "She wants to do well on the tennis court, and I think that she is starting to turn the corner as a freshman. It was evident this weekend (against New Mexico) when she competed hard and fought hard, and it's good to see that we've got great kind of characters that are willing to fight back no matter how far they are down because that speaks well for the future."

Assistant coach Irina Tereschenko said even as a freshman, Potgieter is becoming a leader.

"She has been successful in helping new freshmen that have come in and helped them get adjusted to the situation," Tereschenko said.

Potgieter may be great on the court, but her assistant coach said she is able to adapt to the team in different ways.

"I think she is pretty funny," the third-year coach said. "She can be serious, she can fill the moment and cheer on her team when she needs to."

Potgieter said she looks forward to her future at Tech.

"I want to obviously play for the next four years, and I want to go to (physical therapy) school once I finish my undergrad," the native from Pietermaritzburg said. "I'm hoping to stay in America once I'm done, and I'll carry on playing tennis."

► adam.coleman@ttu.edu

Florida exits signing day with top recruits

(AP) — Florida won the recruiting crown in nearly as dominating fashion as the national championship.

The Gators capitalized on last month's national title win over Ohio State and down years from Sunshine State rivals Florida State and Miami to bring in the top recruiting class in the country Wednesday.

"No one is even that close to them," said recruiting analyst Tom Lemming of CSTV. "They got help everywhere. In the past 10 years, this has to rank right at the top in recruiting classes. Every position is absolutely loaded."

The Gators also were picked as the top class by SuperPrep, Rivals.com and National Blue Chips, beating out Southern California, SEC rivals Tennessee and LSU, and Texas.

The Trojans closed strong, adding top running backs Joe McKnight from Louisiana and Broderick Green from Arkansas on Wednesday to a class that already included another top back in Marc Tyler; defensive end Everson Griffen, SuperPrep's No. 1 overall player; the nation's No. 1 receiver, Ronald Johnson from Michigan; and blue chip linebacker Chris Galippo from Anaheim, Calif.

"USC continues to be the place that a lot of skill-position players look to first," said analyst Bobby Burton of Rivals.com. "That doesn't mean the guys they get on defense aren't special. It just means they have the pick of the litter when it comes to offensive skill players."

But the Gators' class was best of all, signing eight of the top 16 players in talent-rich Florida and the No. 1 players from South Carolina, Indiana, Maryland and New England, according to Rivals.com.

A coaching change at Miami and another down year for Florida State played a key part in the Gators' success.

"They play an exciting brand of ball on offense and defense and a lot of kids want to be in that situation," said Allen Wallace, the national recruiting editor for Scout.com and publisher of SuperPrep magazine. "There's no question they've moved into the catbird seat in Florida. They have taken advantage of tough times for both the Hurricanes and Seminoles."

Florida's class includes Rivals'

third-best pro-style quarterback in John Brantley, the nation's top guard in James Wilson, top weakside defensive end in Carlos Dunlap, second-best defensive tackle in Torrey Davis, and top two safeties in Jermy Finch and Major Wright.

Coach Urban Meyer will count on some of those freshmen to step in right away on defense, after the Gators lost defensive ends Jarvis Moss and Ryan Smith, linebacker Brandon Siler and safety Reggie Nelson early to the NFL after beating Ohio State 41-14 in the BCS title game.

Florida's haul was part of a banner recruiting year for the SEC, where Tennessee, LSU, South Carolina, Auburn, Georgia and Alabama all received at least one top-10 ranking.

"The SEC is loaded," Burton said. "They are year in and year out the most talented conference. But even this is unusual."

Jimmy Clausen, the top-ranked player by Rivals and CSTV, headlines a top-10 class at Notre Dame and could be ready to step in next season as Brady Quinn's replacement at quarterback. Clausen is one of many players who already have started college, giving him a leg up because he can take part in spring practice.

Clausen made a high-profile commitment to the Irish last April, arriving at his news conference in a limo and predicting four national titles for Notre Dame.

"He heaped pressure on himself with the way he announced he was going to Notre Dame," Wallace said. "He's demonstrated that the added pressure has not affected him at all. If you play quarterback, especially at Notre Dame, you have to be able to handle that pressure. He could be perfectly suited for the situation."

Notre Dame's overall ranking was hurt by some late defections. Athlete Greg Little switched at the last minute to North Carolina and offensive lineman Chris Little de-

committed and signed with Georgia. The Irish earlier lost a commitment from defensive end Justin Trattou from New Jersey, who decided to go to Florida.

The biggest surprise was at South Carolina, where Steve Spurrier brought in a top-10 class to a school that normally struggles to attract blue chip players. Receiver Chris Culliver of North Carolina headlines a class that also includes quarterback Stephen Garcia of Tampa, Fla.

"Of all the teams, they may have helped themselves the most because

they didn't have the depth of the teams ahead of them," Lemming said. "South Carolina could show marked improvement because of this class. They not only had quality, they had quantity."

Other schools that did surprisingly well included North Carolina, Rutgers, Pittsburgh, Georgia Tech, Oregon and Illinois.

New Tar Heels coach Butch Davis got a commitment Wednesday from CSTV's defensive player of the year Marvin Austin, a defensive lineman from Washington, D.C.

Illinois coach Ron Zook, who recruited many of the players that led Florida to the national title, signed one of the nation's best receivers, Arrelious Benn out of Washington, D.C., and beat out Notre Dame for one of the top defensive linemen, Martez Wilson of Chicago.

He put together a class that rivals Ohio State and Michigan for the best in the Big Ten, despite winning only two conference games the past two seasons.

"That just shows the cachet of having someone perceived as a great head coach in the minds of these recruits," Wallace said. "The head coach is more important than ever before, not just in guiding the program but in the ability to attract the best players."

Homeowner, city settle land dispute

ARLINGTON (AP) — The city of Arlington and a homeowner's attorneys settled what could have been the first Dallas Cowboys stadium eminent domain case to go to trial.

The city agreed to pay Johnny Johnson \$100,000 for his home, said Denise Wilkerson, an Arlington assistant city attorney. The settlement still needs the City Council's approval.

Johnson's attorneys had argued the home was worth \$106,000, which they said was the market value set by an appraiser Johnson hired.

The city had offered Johnson \$75,000 for his house and land. The Tarrant Appraisal District had valued the property at \$24,000 for taxing purposes.

Johnson lived in the house for 16 years before the city took possession in late 2005 along with other property needed for the new Cowboys stadium, scheduled to be finished in 2009.

Several landowners whose property has been acquired for the stadium rebuffed the city's offer and went to court. The city withdrew 10 eminent domain cases, and five lawsuits have been settled since the fall. One is pending in state district court, and 75 are pending in Tarrant County Court.

Johnson, who has not spoken publicly about his case, already had access to the \$75,000 the city had offered him. But it is not clear whether Johnson had drawn any of that money before the settlement, reached after a Monday pretrial hearing in which the judge denied the city's request to stop Johnson's appraiser from testifying.

Construction started last year for the 75,000-seat, retractable-roof stadium, two years after Arlington voters approved paying for half of the original \$650 million

Aggies win fifth-straight

COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) — Tackia Starks scored 21 points and 16th-ranked Texas A&M weathered a Missouri rally for its fifth straight win, a 69-63 victory over the Tigers on Wednesday night.

Starks scored 16 points in the first half to help the Aggies (18-4, 8-2 Big 12) build a lead that reached 24 points. Reserve Danielle Gant added 18 points and A'Quonesia Franklin had 16.

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Cowboys interview Caldwell

IRVING, Texas (AP) — Forget Disneyland. Since the Colts won the Super Bowl, assistant head coach Jim Caldwell has gone from rainy Miami to frigid Indianapolis for a victory celebration and now to sunny Dallas to interview for the Cowboys' head coaching vacancy.

Caldwell on Wednesday became the 10th and likely last candidate to interview with Dallas owner and general manager Jerry Jones in the search to replace Bill Parcells, who retired Jan. 22.

"It's been a whirlwind. The last 72 hours have been interesting, obviously culminating with a great win and then all the travel in between," Caldwell said after spending about six hours at Valley Ranch. "But it's certainly been well worth it."

While Jones hasn't said when he will name a new coach, Caldwell said he expected the decision to come "in short order. It won't be long."

The search appeared to be winding down last week until Jones, after formally interviewing eight candidates, said he would wait until after the Super Bowl. Then he added two

more in the mix to be the Cowboys' seventh coach — the sixth since Jones bought the team in 1989.

San Francisco assistant coach Norv Turner, a two-time head coach and the Cowboys' offensive coordinator for two Super Bowl titles in the 1990s, is still viewed by many as the front-runner for the job.

Jones also interviewed defensive coordinators Wade Phillips of San Diego and Gary Gibbs of New Orleans, and Hall of Fame linebacker Mike Singletary, a 49ers assistant.

Jason Garrett was hired for an unspecified role on the staff, likely as offensive coordinator, but is still considered a candidate for the top job. Three of Parcells' assistants also talked to Jones.

Caldwell was the second Super Bowl assistant coach interviewed. His visit came a day after Chicago Bears defensive coordinator Ron Rivera talked to Jones and other Cowboys officials for about six hours.

"We had a great time. The interview was very thorough," Caldwell said. "We spent a lot of time together and I certainly learned a lot about

the organization and I assume that they learned quite a bit about me as well."

The 52-year-old Caldwell has been quarterbacks coach at Indianapolis for five seasons, working directly with Pro Bowl and now Super Bowl MVP quarterback Peyton Manning.

"It's tough for me to take credit for something that's God-given, particularly with Peyton," Caldwell said. "He's a very talented guy and certainly he has a great sort of a foundation from his dad playing the game, and he's a studious individual. I can say this, we certainly were good for one another, but he did most of the legwork."

The Cowboys' next head coach will have a big role in the continued development of Tony Romo, who took over as starting quarterback midway through the season and made the Pro Bowl.

Romo won five of his first six starts before losing four of the last five, including 21-20 to Seattle in the NFC wild-card game. As the holder, Romo bobbled a snap that

kept Martin Gramatica from attempting a short field goal that would have put Dallas ahead with a minute remaining.

"He's a guy who has talent, certainly has ability," Caldwell said. "I haven't had an opportunity to study him closely but the organization has and they feel good about him and we would be in position to help him progress."

"My experience over the last few years with a dynamic quarterback in Peyton Manning and also working with Brad Johnson down in Tampa would help me relate to him and give me a decent foundation and a direction that's needed."

Before the Colts, Caldwell spent one year with Tampa Bay after eight seasons as Wake Forest's head coach.

Caldwell interviewed for head coaching jobs in Arizona this year and Buffalo last year.

"I'm certainly appreciative of this opportunity. I don't take anything for granted," Caldwell said. "I think it will happen in due time. I'm not certain when that time is."

Romo holds confidence in Jones' decision on coach

KAPOLEI, Hawaii (AP) — Though the Pro Bowl is usually short on drama, there's a good reason to watch until the end this year: Tony Romo will be holding for the NFC's kicks.

The Dallas Cowboys quarterback gets his first chance Saturday to play after his infamous playoff flub on a short field goal late in the Cowboys' loss at Seattle. From that moment, Romo couldn't wait to get back on the field — and he's been all smiles at practice this week, soaking up the sunshine and his new teammates.

"It's always good to get that taste out of your mouth," he said. "You've got to move on. Eventually you've got to get on and get ready for the next season, and that's what I'm doing."

And while the Cowboys anxiously wait to hear who will replace coach Bill Parcells, their Pro Bowl players feel confident with whomever owner Jerry Jones hires.

Indianapolis quarterbacks coach Jim Caldwell became the 10th and likely last candidate to interview for the job vacated when Parcells announced his retirement last month after 19 years in the NFL. Chicago Bears defensive coordinator Ron Rivera was interviewed by Jones on Tuesday.

San Francisco 49ers offensive coordinator Norv Turner, who called plays for Dallas' Super Bowl teams in 1992 and 1993, is considered the front-runner to become the seventh coach in Cowboys history.

"I'm not sure who it's going to be. I'll be ready with whoever," Romo said. "Jerry will pick a good guy."

Romo said he doesn't favor one coach over another. He wouldn't even say if he preferred Turner over Rivera, saying, "I'm good either way."

Punter Mat McBriar, one of seven Cowboys selected to Saturday's Pro Bowl after the last-minute addition of center Andre Gurode, said he's certain the person hired will do a good job with all the talent on the team.

"We've just about got all the pieces," McBriar said. "We made the playoffs, but we didn't do anything

and that was disappointing, so I know all the guys are hungry. It's a big decision whoever they choose, but they'll make a good run."

McBriar said many players were "sort of shocked" that Parcells decided to retire.

"I really thought he'd come back and help us along, because we really have quite a team," he said. "We just sort of underachieved a little."

The Cowboys were 8-4 with a two-game lead in the NFC East before losing four of their last five, including the final three, culminating with a playoff loss in Seattle when Romo couldn't place the snap. Romo was devastated, sitting near the goal line of Qwest Field, chin buried in his chest and his hands covering his facemask.

But Romo is making his first Pro Bowl appearance after taking over for Drew Bledsoe in late October and passing for 2,903 yards, 19 touchdowns and 13 interceptions.

"It's just fun. It's good to meet the guys, hang out and have your peers tell you that you're a pretty decent player," he said.

McBriar, who led the NFL in punting with a 48.2-yard average, is also making his Pro Bowl debut — and a homecoming of sorts. The former University of Hawaii standout is probably the only punter in Pro Bowl history to be interviewed by a pack of reporters.

He said he feels "blessed," with how his career has turned out considering he never played football until he got to Hawaii. The only exposure to football he had as a child in Australia was when his parents brought a football home from the United States.

"I'm just so blessed," he said. "I don't know what I've done right. It's so cool." McBriar said he plans to golf, bodyboard, see friends and hit the old college hangouts he used to frequent, such as a musty pizza joint along University Avenue.

He also has tour guide duty this week for his teammates, including Romo, offensive tackle Flozell Adams, tight end Jason Witten, linebacker DeMarcus Ware and safety Roy Williams.

"Bring it on. I'll definitely take the guys and show them around," he said.

USC kicker was drunk at time of death

By ZAIN SHAIK
DAILY TROJAN (USC)

(U-WIRE) LOS ANGELES — USC kicker Mario Danelo had a blood-alcohol level of 0.23 percent — almost three times the legal California driving limit — when he fell off a San Pedro, Calif., cliff

and died, the county coroner said in a report released Monday.

Danelo's death had previously been considered either an accident or a suicide and is now stated as undetermined, the report said.


Danelo, 21, was found at the bottom of a cliff below Point Fernin

Park in San Pedro on Jan. 6, just five days after the kicker had made two field goals in USC's Rose Bowl victory over Michigan.

He had been out partying with friends on the night of Jan. 5 and left his home at about 2 a.m. that night without his wallet, cell phone and car keys, the report said.

He wasn't heard from again.

"It is our opinion that there are unanswered questions as to why (Danelo) was out walking the cliffs in the early hours of the morning in the dark," Jeffrey Gutstadt, deputy medical examiner of the Los Angeles County Coroner's Office, wrote in the report.

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