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THE DAILY TOREADOR

Black & Red

Friday, August 3, 2007
Volume 81 • Issue 160

DRUM ROLL, PLEASE

PERCUSSION STUDENTS FROM ACROSS
COUNTRY COMPETE IN HUB CITY

SEE PAGE 2

Drum roll, please: Percussionists hit Hub City

By **GLENYS BOLLS**
STAFF WRITER

The regional level of the Drum Corps International Division I competition visited the Jones AT&T Stadium Wednesday evening for the DCI West Texas contest.

Drummers, brass players and spirit squads from across the country converged at Texas Tech to perform for the judges.

"It's both high school and college students," said Jacob Hale, a senior music major from Waco, "but it's mostly college (students) because you have to be at a certain level."

Josh Ray, a member of Pacific Crest and senior at Diamond Bar High School in Diamond Bar, Calif., said he is not intimidated although some of his competitors are four years older than he is.

"I'm not scared," Ray said. "It just means I get to go out there and beat some 22-year-olds. I don't care who you are, we're going to show you up. We're here to have a good time and throw down."

When the groups get in front of the judges, they aim to have a fun and entertaining show that the audience can appreciate, Hale said.

"The group performs," Hale said, "and they have a certain amount of time to cram in as much awesomeness as possible."

The short amount of time available



PHOTO BY WALTER ROSADO/The Daily Toreador
PIONEER DRUM AND Bugle Corps member Nina Franco, from Chicago, Illinois; practices before her performance at the Drum Corps International concert at the Jones AT&T Stadium Wednesday evening.

to perform means that the groups have to be nearly perfect in everything they do in order to get the top scores. To be nearly perfect, they must practice.

"We auditioned in December and then we had monthly practices until summer," Ray said. "Now it's daily practices, 12 hours a day."

The musicians aren't the only ones who practice long hours, said Rochelle Hooper, a member of Spirit from Jacksonville State University.

"We've been practicing eight to 10 hours a day," said Hooper, a junior dance major at Jacksonville State from Dallas. "We started at the end of May and we've

been on the road ever since."

The groups have been traveling most of the summer, crisscrossing the country to attend various competitions, each of which prepares them a little more for the finals.

"This is every day, back-to-back," Hooper said. "Tomorrow we'll be in Albuquerque, (N.M.). I think we'll have a

good show. We always do well."

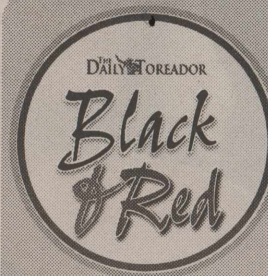
The corps are ranked throughout the competition, but only for the entertainment value, according to the Drum Corps International Web site, www.dci.org. Seeing their own scores throughout the competition seems to have helped the corps, however. Since June 20, Pacific Crest has improved its score from 63.600 to 78.700, and Spirit from JSU has improved its score from 60.900 to 81.450 since June 16.

Ray said one of the most important things in a competition like this is confidence.

"We know we'll do well," Ray said. "We don't doubt ourselves ever."

After leaving Lubbock, the groups competed in Albuquerque, N.M., Thursday evening, but no scores were available by press time. They will compete in Tempe, Ariz., Saturday; and San Diego, Calif., Sunday. The final rounds will begin Thursday in Pasadena, Calif., and continue through Aug. 11 when the winner will be announced.

► glenys.bolls@ttu.edu



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THE FRONT PAGE: The DCI Tour at Jones AT&T Stadium Wednesday evening. Photo by Walter Rosado.

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Circulation: (806) 742-3388
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WEEKLY WEATHER

Today
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High 86/Low 65



Saturday
Clouds
High 90/Low 67



Sunday
Sunny
High 91/Low 67



Monday
Sunny
High 92/Low 67



View next week's forecast
in Tuesday's paper.

RUNDOWN

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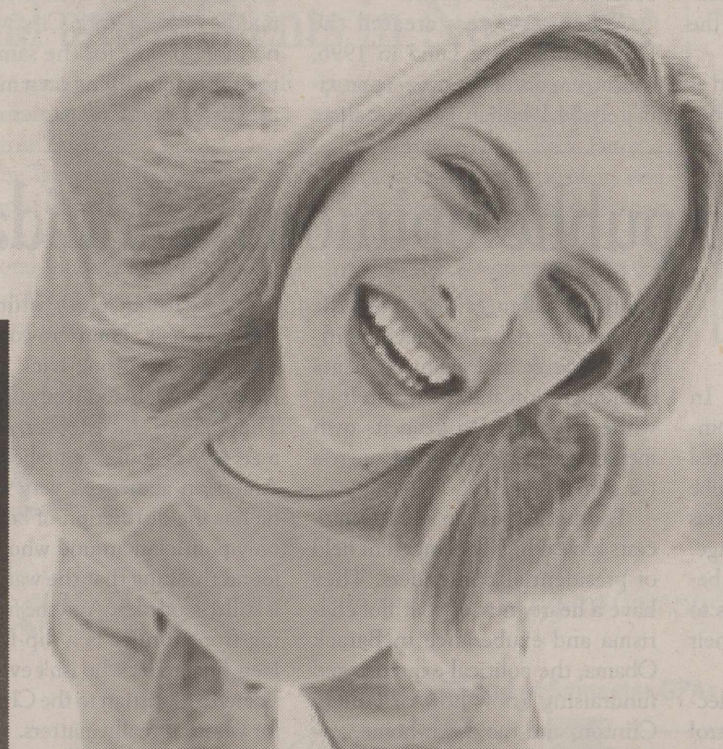
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Cell phone tax money feeds corporate greed, cycle continues

By **DOUG HITE**

DAILY KENT STATER (KENT STATE U.)

(U-WIRE) KENT, Ohio — What if you paid a tax every month that, instead of going to legitimate government programs, went directly into the pockets of multi-billion dollar businesses? Businesses, keep in mind, whose CEOs make more money while sleeping than you will make in your entire life.

If you own a cell phone, you have been doing just that.

Every month, in every cell phone bill, every customer is making a blind donation directly to cell phone companies, largely unbeknownst to the average customer.

The Universal Service Fund is a tax requiring only a few dollars a

month from each cell phone subscriber. In its 10-year life-span, this small fee has become a leviathan, raking in more than \$44 billion dollars, according to The Associated Press.

The tax was meant to encourage competition in rural areas, aid schools and libraries in connecting to the Internet and provide telephone service to poor and rural health care facilities, but only about one fourth of its proceeds go to these programs. Instead, the majority of the tax goes to cell phone companies for whatever expansions they need in order to make more profit.

When Congress created the Universal Service Fund in 1996, the larger part of the tax -- approximately \$4.1 billion last year alone

— was meant to spur competition among phone companies, keeping rates low for rural America. This concept has all but failed in recent years, as every major phone company is receiving funds to become more competitive.

So if every company is receiving about the same amount of subsidies, then hasn't this governmental assistance meant to aid disadvantaged phone companies become more of a handout to all phone companies?

Nearly every cell phone company provides flat national rates. This means that a cell phone user in the middle of New York City will pay no more or less for the same plan than someone living on a molehill in Mississippi. Companies can do

this because it costs relatively the same amount to provide cell phone coverage to rural locations, as opposed to those that are more urban.

The problem with this is the subsidies being paid to cell companies are not proportional to their expenditures, but are instead directly proportional to the number of people they're serving. So if a company is providing service to customers for less cost and still receiving the same amount of cash from subsidies, they're making a profit as large as it is ridiculous.

Cell phone companies are serving more people now than ever. Therefore, they're collecting more subsidies from the Universal Service Fund than ever. These same subsidies have little or no governmental over-

sight once they are in the hands of the companies they are granted to. At the same time, phone companies have less expenditures. Basically, cell phone companies are spending less while getting more money from users via customers' monthly blind donation.

Simply put, the Universal Service Fund has become a "screw-you-over-fund" that will likely be around for quite some time, as political action committees sponsored by massive phone companies such as Alltel and AT&T are donating more than ever to members of Congress, all in hopes of securing their unfair share of government subsidies.

The Universal Service Fund is here. It's not going anywhere, and you're gonna have to pay for it.

With mixed public opinions, candidates must focus on economy

By **ANDREW VICKERS**

DAILY TEXAN (U. TEXAS)

(U-WIRE) AUSTIN — In today's diverse mix of public opinion and political belief, represented most fittingly by the recent YouTube debate, one thing is fairly obvious — America is ready for change. Democrats, bless their hearts, believe all of the evidence points to this change falling heavily in their favor.

During last year's midterm election, Democrats regained control of Congress for the first time since 1994, despite fighting heavily gerrymandered districts and their own political missteps.

The current Republican administration almost historically has had low approval ratings. It is

fighting challenges from both the left and the right over such politically decisive and definitive issues as immigration and the war in Iraq, while struggling to keep its own members from testifying to Congress (or going to jail).

For the first time in years, Democrats have a highly competent field of presidential contenders. They have a hearty mix of youthful charisma and exuberance in Barack Obama, the political expertise and fundraising know-how of Hillary Clinton, and the down-home, aw-shucks Southern appeal of John Edwards.

The Republicans, on the other hand, have a lineup that looks like it could be featured on an episode of Benny Goodman's "Making the Band," with not a single one under

fifty or without pasty white skin and gray hair. Their crowded field consists of two one-trick ponies, Newt Gingrich and Rudy Giuliani. They have John McCain, an old man who is going senile before the American audience's very eyes, as he has the distinction of being the only politician around who can be found thinking that the war in Iraq is still a good idea. And the fundraising front-runner is a flip-flopping New Englander who isn't even considered a Christian to the Christians for whom it really matters.

Needless to say, Democrats are licking their chops at the glimmering prospect of regaining the White House. If ever there were a year for a political blowout and a progressive mandate, 2008 is going to be that year.

One hates to be the bearer of bad news, but someone should tell the Democrats all those social issues that they are so painstakingly crafting their image for aren't going to mean a thing. Even increasingly visible and important issues like the war on terror, immigration and national security are, in the end, not the final decider of how Americans will cast their ballots next year.

If one carefully analyzes the election results of every campaign since the Great Depression, it is startling to note that one predictor of success is present in every race. Except for a slight hiccup in 2000 when George W. Bush "defeated" Al Gore — a case where the results of that popular vote may show that the exception proves the rule — a simple look at the GDP and unem-

ployment trends has been all that is needed to foretell the political future. When the economy is on the uptick, a sitting party will control the White House, and while it is in decline, the challenging party will almost certainly win the day.

News released last month by Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke indicates that the U.S. economy is about to experience a period of "sluggish growth." The results of a dramatic slowdown in the housing market and inflation fears stemming from record prices of oil and other commodities are likely to drag on the U.S. economy for the next few years. Coupled with record budget and trade deficits, our economy is undoubtedly slowing, and the prospect for a Democratic victory is here to stay.

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Publishing information

The Daily Toreador, publication number 766480, is a student newspaper published Monday

through Friday, September through May, and Tuesdays and Fridays in the months of June through August (except during university examination and vacation periods). Published by the Department of Student Media at Texas Tech University, *The DT* is funded primarily through advertising revenues generated by the student sales staff, with free campus distribution resulting from student service fees. Periodical postage

paid by *The Daily Toreador*, Student Media, Texas Tech University, Lubbock, TX 79409.

Subscriptions

Call: (806)742-3388

Subscription Rates: \$120 annually; single issues: 25 cents.

Postmaster: send address changes to *The Daily Toreador*, Box 43081 Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas 79409.

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GUEST COLUMNS: *The Daily Toreador* accepts submissions of unsolicited guest columns. While we cannot acknowledge receipt of all columns, the authors of those selected for publication will be notified. Guest columns should be no longer than 650 words in length and on a topic of relevance to the university community. Guest columns are also edited and follow the same guidelines for letters as far as identification and submittal.

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Bush to claim executive privilege to prevent Rove testimony

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Bush is expected to claim executive privilege to prevent two more White House aides from testifying before Congress about the firings of federal prosecutors.

Thursday is the deadline for Karl Rove, Bush's top political adviser, to provide testimony and documents related to the firings, under a subpoena from the Senate Judiciary Committee. Also subpoenaed was White House political aide J. Scott Jennings. The Justice Department

included both men on e-mails about the firings and the administration's response to the congressional investigation.

White House Counsel Fred Fielding has consistently said that top presidential aides — present and past — are immune from subpoenas and has declared the documents sought off-limits under executive privilege.

The House Judiciary Committee already has approved a contempt citation against two other Bush

confidants, chief of staff Josh Bolten and former White House counsel Harriet Miers. The full House is expected to vote on the citation in the fall, but the Justice Department has said it won't prosecute the two.

Sara Taylor, the former White House political director, appeared before the Senate Judiciary Committee last month and sought to answer some lawmakers' questions and remain mum on others, citing Bush's claim of privilege.

The controversy over the fir-

ings has grown into a larger dispute between Congress and the White House over the credibility of Attorney General Alberto Gonzales. Lawmakers have questioned whether Gonzales testified truthfully over the government's secret surveillance program.

Bush met with congressional leaders Wednesday to press for action on a proposal to expand the surveillance program and get it done before Congress goes on recess at week's end.

Official death toll at 4 in bridge collapse

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Divers searched the Mississippi River on Thursday for more bodies entombed in cars trapped beneath the twisted steel and concrete slabs of a collapsed bridge. As many as 30 people were missing as the rescue effort shifted to recovery.

The official death count stood at four Thursday morning, but Police Chief Tim Dolan said more victims were still in the water.

"We have a number of vehicles that are underneath big pieces of concrete, and we do know we have some people in those vehicles," Dolan said Thursday.

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Texas voters to decide constitutional amendments in November

AUSTIN (AP) — Texas voters will decide whether to approve up to \$3 billion in bonds for cancer research when they go to the polls in November to have their say on 16 proposed state constitutional amendments.

The cancer research proposal will be 15th on the ballot, as determined

Wednesday in a random drawing by Secretary of State Phil Wilson. He urged participation in the Nov. 6 election and said not enough Texans vote.

"This is something we must change," he said. "Constitutional amendment elections play an important role in shaping the future

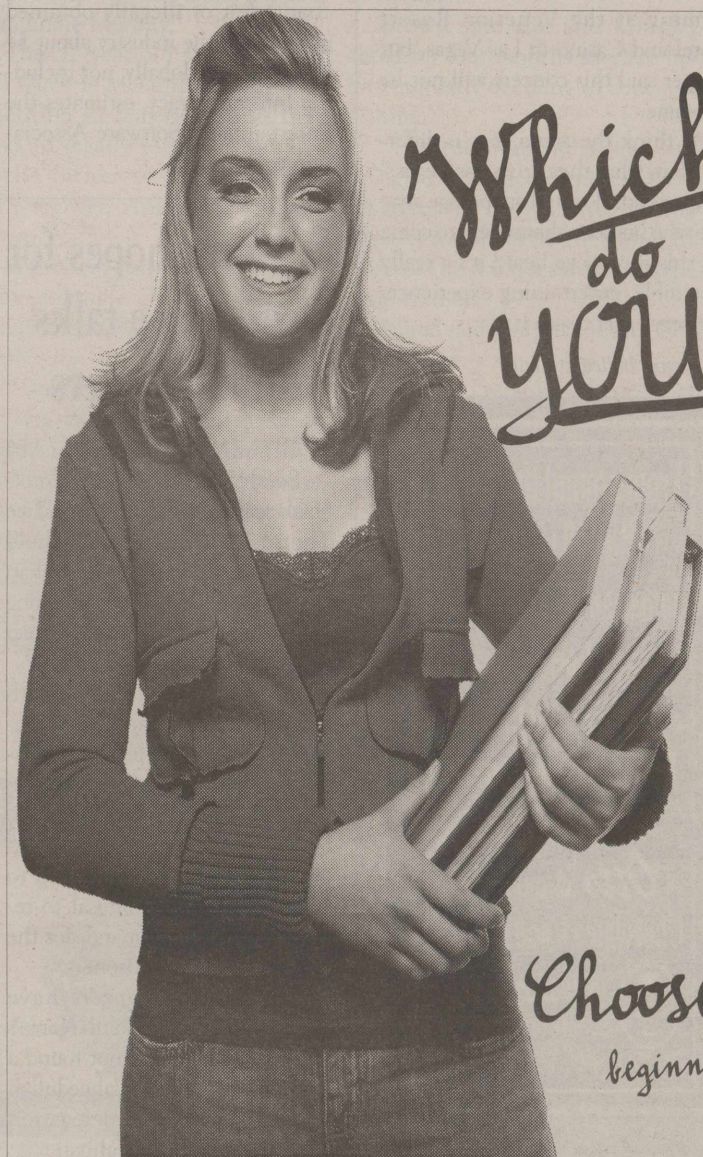
of our state and I am committed to spreading that message to every region of Texas."

The Texas Constitution has been amended more than 400 times since it was enacted in 1876.

Bond funding for the proposed Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas is perhaps the highest-

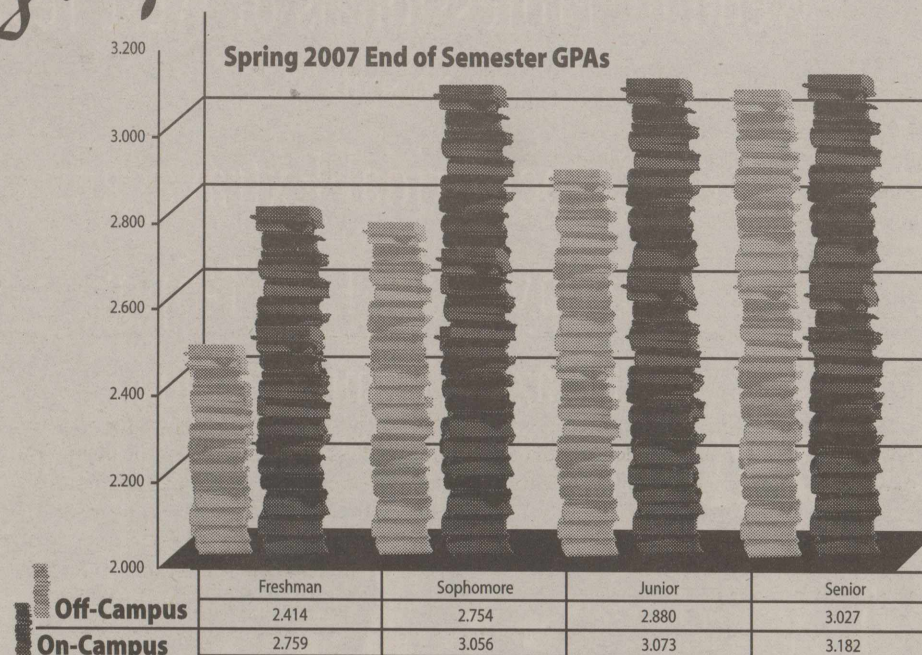
profile amendment before the state's voters in the coming election.

Republican Gov. Rick Perry, a bipartisan group of lawmakers and cancer survivor and Tour de France champion Lance Armstrong backed the plan, which won approval in the final days of this year's legislative session.



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Blue Man Group to paint town red

By GLENYS BOLLS
STAFF WRITER

KTXT-TV will feature the Blue Man Group in a special performance and offer viewers some of the first tickets available for the group's Dec. 6 concert at the United Spirit Arena.

"Blue Man Group: Inside the Tube" will air at 8:30 p.m. Aug. 20.

"This is a special show they did just for PBS," said Kelley Pitts, development officer for KTXT-TV. "When they were at a crossroads in their careers, they were watching a PBS special and they said, 'Here's what we're doing to do,' and they came up with their act."

In addition to being an entertaining performance for the viewers, the show will serve as a fundraiser for KTXT-TV Pitts said.

"Instead of having five nights of regular programming, we're doing it all in one big show," Pitts said. "We're hoping that people really watch and take advantage of what we're offering."

A minimum pledge of \$200 to KTXT-TV during the broadcast will give viewers a pair of tickets to the group's first concert in Lubbock, a

part of the "How To Be A Megastar Tour 2.1" tour. According to the spirit arena's Web site, tickets are planned to go on sale to the general public Oct. 13 at Select-a-Seat outlets. Ticket prices are pending.

"They will get the best seats," Pitts said of people who get their tickets through KTXT-TV. "They're supposed to get floor seats. Since the tickets don't go on sale to the public until after this, we get to give out all the best seats first."

The broadcast marks the start of the Blue Mania Auction on the KTXT-TV Web site, www.ktxt.org, which will continue through Oct. 4. A person wanting to bid on an item can call KTXT-TV for a bidder number. Businesses can receive publicity through KTXT for donating blue-themed items to be auctioned off.

"It could be something that color, blues CDs, 'don't get the blues' vacation packages," Pitts said. "Anything you can stretch to fit under the blue theme, we'll take."

The concert, scheduled for 7:30 p.m. Dec. 6, is part of the unprecedented third U.S. leg of an international tour that has been going since fall 2006, according to the spirit



PHOTO COURTESY OF BLUE MAN GROUP PRESS

arena's Web site. It features an eight-piece band in addition to the recognizable blue-painted musicians.

"The show is about how to put on a concert," said Cindy Harper, associate director of the United Spirit Arena. "So the whole time, they're working through that. There's no conversation to it, it's all music and animation. This is certainly unique. It's a different animal than our rock and country shows."

The concert is appropriate for

people of all ages, Pitts said.

"It's really a family-oriented show," Pitts said. "There's no comedians cussing or songs with bad words or political statements. It's just a family-oriented, fun show."

Blue Man Group has been performing at the Venetian Resort Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas, but Harper said this concert will not be the same.

"I think the arena tour is different than what they do in Las Vegas," Harper said. "I would encourage anyone who has seen them there to come see this show. I've heard it's a really incredible, entertaining experience. I'm very eager to see it."

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Customs raids businesses for piracy chips

WASHINGTON (AP) — Federal customs agents Wednesday raided more than 30 businesses and homes, looking for devices that let pirated video games play on Sony's PlayStation 2, Microsoft's Xbox and Xbox 360, and Nintendo's Wii.

The alleged sale and distribution of illegal modification chips and copyright circumvention devices for the popular consoles and others included 32 search warrants in 16 states, said the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

ICE declined to release the names of those targeted or any other details.

The illegal chips and other devices used on gaming consoles violate the Digital Millennium Copyright Act of 1998. Sales of counterfeit or illegally obtained games costs the industry about \$3 billion a year globally, not including Internet piracy, estimates the Entertainment Software Association trade group.

S. Korea hopes for face-to-face talks with kidnappers

GHAZNI, Afghanistan (AP) — South Korean and Afghan officials searched for a meeting place Thursday after agreeing to hold face-to-face talks with the Taliban to seek the release of the remaining 21 South Korean captives, a chief negotiator said.

A delegation of eight South Korean lawmakers, meanwhile, departed for Washington on Thursday to urge the United States to help negotiate the release of the hostages. Earlier South Korean diplomatic efforts have failed to bend Afghanistan's refusal to respond to Taliban demands for the release of militant prisoners.

The Taliban captors have agreed to meet with South Korea's ambassador but have not found a suitable place, said Waheedullah Mujadidi, head of a delegation negotiating with the Taliban.

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Former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev is the new face of luxury label Louis Vuitton

PARIS (AP) — Move over Scarlett Johansson! Mikhail Gorbachev is the new face of Louis Vuitton.

The former Soviet leader is to appear in an ad campaign for the French luxury label, along with Steffi Graf and her husband, Andre Agassi, and Catherine Deneuve, said a statement Thursday from Vuitton, a division of the LVMH group, Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton SA.

Shot by photographer An-

nie Leibovitz, the ads focus on travel — a “core value” for the company that started in 1854 as a trunk-maker, the statement said.

Gorbachev is featured in a car, a Vuitton bag at his side and the Berlin Wall in the background. Graf and Agassi are shown snuggling in a hotel room bed. A vampy Deneuve sits perched on a Vuitton suitcase in a foggy train station — or is it a movie set?

Vuitton said it was making do-

nations to former Vice President Al Gore's The Climate Project to fight global warming and Green Cross International, founded by Gorbachev to promote sustained development. The company didn't disclose the amount of the donations.

The campaign — which is to run alongside more traditional fashion ads that in past seasons have featured Johansson — will appear in magazines in September, the statement said.

Scary Spice files petition to establish Eddie Murphy as father of her 4-month-old daughter

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Scary Spice went to court Wednesday to try to scare up some child support from Eddie Murphy.

The 32-year-old singer, whose real name is Melanie Brown, filed a petition in Superior Court that seeks to legally establish Murphy as the father of her 4-month-old daughter, Angel Iris Murphy Brown.

Brown will also seek sole custody and reasonable child support, attorney Gloria Allred said at a press conference.

“I am here today for one reason and one reason only; her name is Angel,” Brown said. “Angel is my baby and Eddie's. She will always know that she was planned and wanted by both of us.”

Arnold Robinson, a spokesman for the 46-year-old actor, declined to comment.

Brown said she and Murphy dated for four months in 2006 before mutually deciding to conceive a child.

“The relationship was in full swing right at the beginning of my pregnancy,” Brown said, adding that she was shocked when Murphy later said he was not sure he was the baby's father.

Allred said Murphy took a DNA test in June.

The test “established paternity but paternity has not been legally acknowledged,” she said in a statement.

Brown, who dated Murphy last year, gave birth to her daughter

April 3. She listed Murphy as the father on the birth certificate.

Murphy has five children from his marriage to Nicole Mitchell Murphy, who filed for divorce in 2005.

He got engaged last week to film producer Tracey Edmonds, according to Adris Debarge, Edmonds' executive assistant.

Brown also has an 8-year-old daughter.

The Spice Girls recently reunited for a tour that is scheduled to begin later this year.

DIVE BOMB

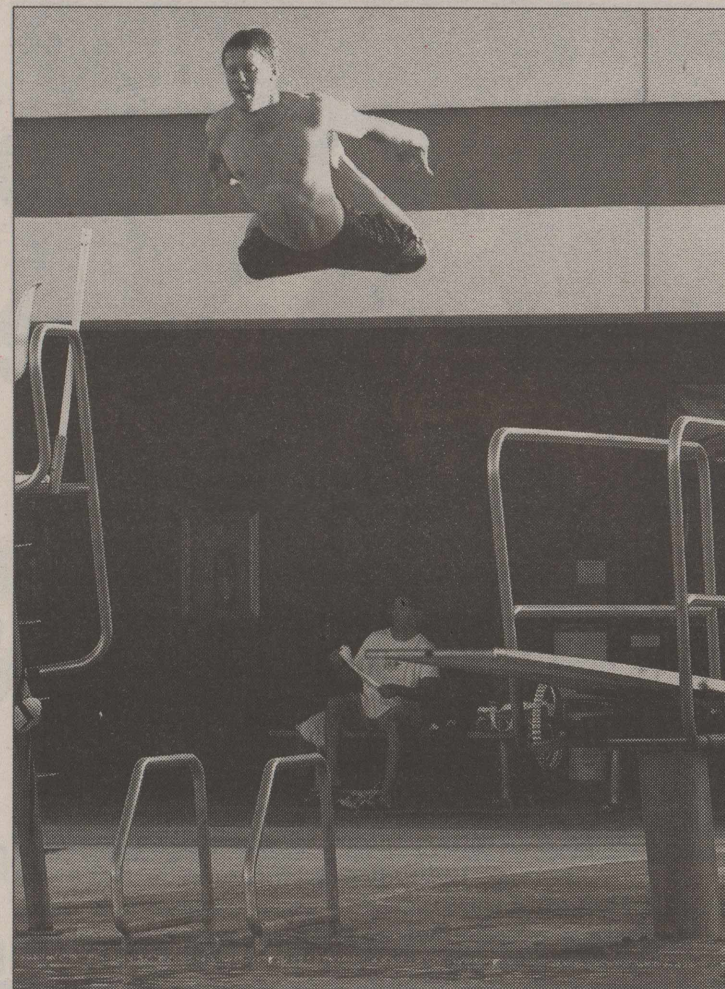
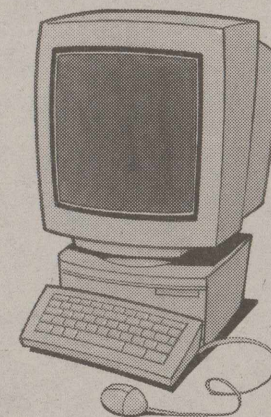


PHOTO BY WALTER ROSADO/*The Daily Toreador*
MATT WRIGHT, A sophomore from Lubbock, dives at the Robert H. Ewalt Student Recreation Center pool Wednesday afternoon.

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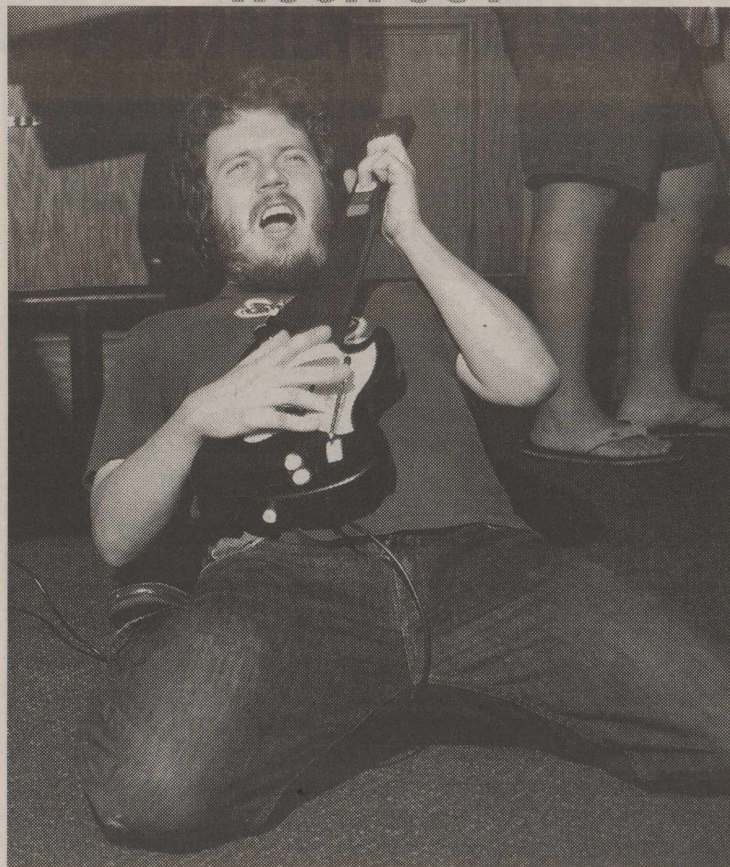


PHOTO BY WALTER ROSADO/The Daily Toreador

MAD GUITARIST CHRIS Nardoff, a graduate student from Austin studying medicine, competes in the Guitar Hero Tournament at the Copper Caboose Tuesday evening.

THE TOP 5 LISTS IN TV, FILM & MUSIC

(AP) — TELEVISION

1. "America's Got Talent," NBC.
2. "Singing Bee," NBC.
3. "CSI: Crime Scene Investigation," CBS.
4. "So You Think You Can Dance" (Thursday), Fox.
5. "Hell's Kitchen," Fox.

(From Nielsen Media Research)

FILM

1. "The Simpsons Movie," Fox.
2. "I Now Pronounce You Chuck and Larry," Universal.
3. "Harry Potter & the Order of the Phoenix," Warner Bros.
4. "Hairspray," New Line.
5. "No Reservations," Warner Bros.

(From Media By Numbers LLC)

MUSIC

1. "Beautiful Girls," Sean Kingston. Beluga Heights/Epic/Koch.
2. "Hey There Delilah," Plain White T's. Hollywood.
3. "Big Girls Don't Cry," Fergie. will.i.am/A&M/Interscope.
4. "Umbrella," Rihanna feat. Jay-Z. SRP/Def Jam/IDJMG.
- 5: "The Way I Are," Timbaland feat. Keri Hilson. Mosley/Blackground/Interscope.

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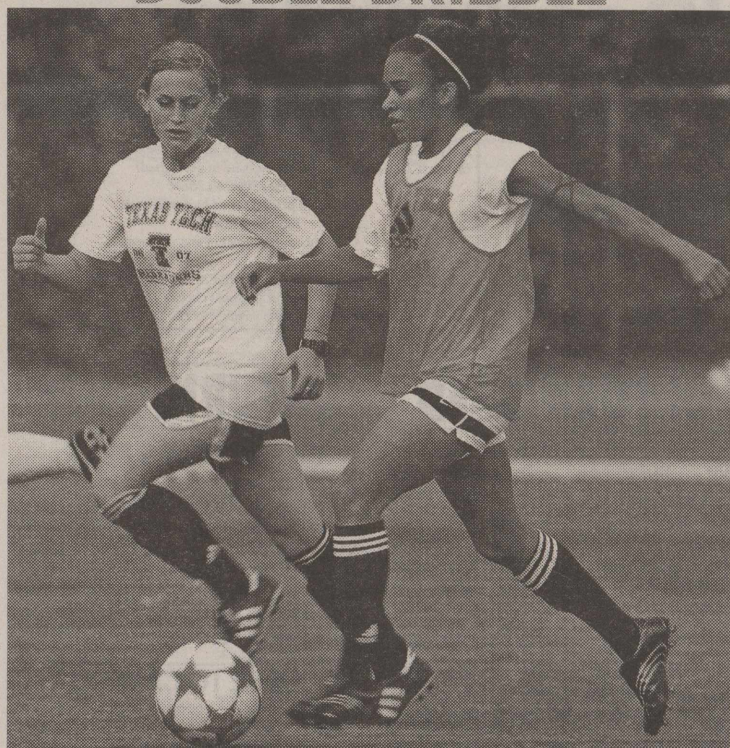


PHOTO BY WALTER ROSADO/The Daily Toreador
SENIOR FORWARD KIM Cypert (L) of the Texas Tech Soccer Team acts as a mentor for girls, and trains with them, at the Elite Soccer Prep Camp Wednesday evening.

Student loan probe expands to athletics

ALBANY, N.Y. (AP) — Division I athletic departments have mixed reactions to a national student loan investigation announced this week, some saying arrangements with lenders are harmless, like a local grocery store using a team logo on a poster. Others have opened internal reviews and suspended deals.

New York Attorney General Andrew Cuomo said Wednesday he's investigating whether top college athletic departments steered athletes and other students to loan companies in exchange for kickbacks.

He served 39 universities with subpoenas and requests for documents about deals between their athletic departments and Student Financial Services Inc., which operates as University Financial Services. He said he's looking at how team names, mascots and colors

were used to suggest the company was the college's preferred lender.

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Former Red Raider wins off football field, in cage

By ALEX YBARRA
STAFF WRITER

Former Red Raider offensive guard Rex Richards should have been with the San Jose Sabercats when they won Arena Bowl XXI Sunday, but the brown belt in Brazilian jiu-jitsu quit his football career to become a professional fighter.

Richards holds a record of 5-0 with all of the wins coming under seven minutes combined.

He said he has no regrets on whether he should be on the football field or in the cage.

"I'd rather be in a cage fighting for a championship than a Super Bowl," he said. "Most people think I'm crazy, but that's the way I've always been."

He said the comparison between playing football and fighting is hard to put into words.

"Just the adrenaline that you get from these fights hooked me," he said. "Being able to control and coming out on top to get a victory in front of an audience in a fight, it's a very addictive sport."

He said being a professional athlete for the last few years has helped him realize losing is a part of growing.

"I'm prepared to lose," he said. "I know that if I'm fighting all the right fights, there will eventually be a day when I'm at my best and the other guy is at his best, and I could lose. But I also know I can bounce back to fight a month or two later and probably win."

Richards' background as a lineman presents more advantages than disadvantages; he said as a lineman, he kept his chin up a lot but acknowledged that keeping his chin up during a fight can end up with him on the ground.

"I think football helps me because I am a natural athlete, and I am an explosive athlete," he said. "I can thank a lot of football to do with that. Years of playing football and knocking big guys down really translates into the cage."

Richards compared football schedules to fighting schedules and concluded that football is easier to prepare for.

"I have a problem with guys declining the fights," he said. "They do a little research and they want to keep their record up. They're not trying to risk a loss so they dump me."

Richards said he would fight in the Ultimate Fighting Championship without hesitation, but the league does not include a super-heavyweight division. Heavyweight fighters in the Ultimate Fighting Championships must be around 265 pounds.

"I haven't been 265 (pounds) since I was 17 years old," the 6-foot-5, 300-pound brown belt said. "I don't know if I can allow it. I'm sure I would be completely shredded at that weight. I did that body-fat thing one time, and my lean mass was right at (265) so it would be very difficult to do."

Klay Pittman, founder of Pittman's Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, is Richards' instructor. He said he remembers when Richards began training at his academy.

"We trained together; I don't think anyone has ever done what me and my upper belts did to him in his life," he said. "I think he was amazed that people that were a lot smaller than him were able to control him and dominate him at will. It sparked a flame in Rex, a real curiosity like, 'How is this possible?'"

Richards said he and Pittman have had their battles.

"We've rolled many times," he said laughing. "He's beaten me and I've beaten him."

Pittman said Richards' choice to leave a made career in football and enter professional fighting was a life-altering decision.

"I thought that's a pretty big move for him," he said. "I know he was pretty much set up with football. If he would have stayed on the football path he would have had a real career and it would have been legit. To transition over to an unknown is pretty bold. He didn't seem to have a whole lot of doubt."

Richards will compete in the Brazilian jiu-jitsu world championship tournament in August. His next fight is scheduled to be in September.

► daniel.ybarra@ttu.edu



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