

University to test sirens, alert system

By JON VANDERLAAN
News Editor

Texas Tech and the Tech Police Department will test two emergency notification services today at 10 a.m.

The TechAlert text message, phone call and e-mail alert system will be tested at the same time as the siren system, which is used for severe weather warnings.

The siren system is tested at least once a year per Tech operating procedures, said Col. Gordon Hoffman of the Tech Police Department.

"It's something we do routinely and something we need to keep up on," he said.

Several sites are located around campus, including the Robert H. Ewalt Student Recreation Center, the Chemistry building, Drane Hall and the Industrial Engineering building, but Hoffman said the department must make sure the sirens are heard around the entire campus.

While the sirens can be heard clearly in most places on campus, he said, some concern exists the sirens cannot be heard well enough in the northwest part of campus, near the Ranching Heritage Center.

The department has notified the administration of the possible problem, Hoffman said, and the administration is considering the purchase of an additional siren. The cost of the sirens ranges from \$15,000 to \$60,000.

Tech police will have officers strategically placed around campus to find out where the strength of the sirens is less than desirable.

Douglas Chowning, managing director of the physical plant, said he has not received money to purchase an extra siren, but has heard some discussion of that possibility.

Hoffman said the TechAlert system should make up for any students, faculty or staff who do not hear the sirens until the university purchases a new siren.

Ronald Phillips, university counsel and Tech emergency management coordinator, said the issue has been mentioned in discussions, but he does not believe it is a big problem because the majority of the campus is covered through the existing system.

With the size of the campus and the occasional strong gust of wind, he said, it is difficult to cover the entire campus with the existing siren system, which is one reason why the emer-

gency system consists of multiple mediums.

Phillips said the last time the TechAlert system was used, it notified students of class cancellations Jan. 27 and 28.

Although the university has not found any serious problems in the past during testing, he said, it always is looking to improve the service.

Hoffman said the only purpose for the sirens is for weather alerts, and the TechAlert system can be used for other emergencies. In the event of a true weather emergency, the department will send police vehicles around campus with their sirens also turned on to differentiate the tests from an actual emergency and to make sure people are seeking cover.

Sally Post, a spokeswoman with the university, said students, faculty and staff should be sure to have their cell phone numbers in the system so the alert will show more accurate results and so they can be aware of campus emergencies.

"It's kind of a reminder for people to update their information," she said.

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Ribbon cut on new engineering facility

By STEVEN SCHWARTZ
Staff Writer

Members of the Texas Tech administration and Edward E. Whitacre Jr. College of Engineering faculty cut the ribbon Monday on the recently finished Livermore Center.

The ceremony included speeches given by Tech President Guy Bailey, College of Engineering Dean Pamela Eibeck and Chancellor Kent Hance.

The Livermore Center is a facility used for primarily for research, classroom instruction and distance education equipment. It was designed by F&S Partners and built by Lee Lewis Construction.

The facility is a going to be an asset for the College of Engineering, Eibeck said. A need for space and resources in classrooms and research labs has existed in the college, and the center will help alleviate that need.

"Our college has grown so much that our classrooms are too small in the original buildings," Eibeck said. "We designed these classrooms to be large enough to handle our increased enrollments."

The new facilities will be a large contribution for the college financially as well, she said. With the new research assets, it will be easier to bring grants and other financial awards to the College of Engineering.

"Having high quality research facilities helps us attract quality



PHOTO BY RUBEN CASTILLO/The Daily Toreador

PRESIDENT GUY BAILEY, Michael Ellicott, the vice chancellor for Facilities Planning and Construction, and the Dean of Engineering, Pamela Eibeck, cut the ribbon at a ceremony hosted for the opening of the new engineering building, the Livermore Center.

faculty," Eibeck said. "I think that is going to be key in helping our departments that are so research-productive continue to be that way."

Bailey said the center is a big accomplishment not only for the College of Engineering, but also for the entire university.

"We took a facility that needed updating and really created a first class educational facility," he said. "It's great for our institution."

The budget for the project, which began construction June 2007, was

\$10 million.

The center was opened in time for the beginning of the semester, and included a lab and two new classrooms holding 100 and 55 students on the first floor. New elevators, stairs and restrooms also were added to the north and east sides. The second-floor balcony of the building was demolished to make room for research labs and offices, according to the Facilities Planning and Construction Web site.

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Sudan frees president's chief opponent

KHARTOUM, Sudan (AP) — Sudan freed a senior opposition leader Monday who was jailed after urging the president to face war crimes charges, an apparent attempt to show unity as the country defies an international order to bring its leader to trial over bloodshed in Darfur.

Hassan Turabi, an Islamist who helped bring President Omar al-Bashir to power but now is his top rival, is the only Sudanese politician who has dared say al-Bashir should surrender to an international court. Turabi was jailed for seven weeks, a move criticized both internationally and locally.

The government appears to be confident that freeing Turabi ensures his

Popular National Congress Party will ultimately stand behind the president, even if Turabi doesn't change his views.

At his home in Khartoum on Monday, Turabi criticized al-Bashir's defiance of the Netherlands-based International Criminal Court and condemned the government's expulsion of major foreign aid groups from Darfur in retaliation for the warrant.

He did not repeat his outright call for the president's surrender. But asked if he thought al-Bashir eventually would have to turn himself in, Turabi told The Associated Press: "It will take time, probably. ... All human beings under pressure, of course, ultimately respond."

The 76-year-old looked tired and slightly thinner, but flashed a wide smile as he greeted hundreds of well-wishers. His deteriorating health was a factor in his release, said his son, Siddique Turabi.

Al-Bashir has taken a tough stance in defiance of the ICC. The order expelling 13 aid groups has raised fears of a humanitarian crisis in Darfur, where millions rely on international help to survive. The president has threatened to throw out more aid groups, foreign diplomats and U.N. peacekeepers if they attempt to implement the warrant or work with the court. Al-Bashir has rejected any dealings with the tribunal.

Bills would make electric market changes

AUSTIN (AP) — Two Texas lawmakers are pushing proposals they contend will make electricity more affordable in the state's deregulated market.

Republican Rep. Jim Keffer and Democratic Sen. Wendy Davis said Monday their legislation would affect the wholesale and retail markets. Then a throng of electric industry lobbyists immediately disputed their contention that deregulation is not working in the best interest of Texas consumers.

One of the lawmakers' proposals would prevent a company from owning more than 20 percent of electric generation in a smaller market within the state. Currently, that 20-percent limit applies to the whole state market overseen by the Electric Reliability Council of Texas, known as ERCOT.

The lawmakers also want to let

local governments enter into low-rate electricity deals on behalf of their citizens who have not already entered into retail electric contracts. Dozens of cities large and small that support their idea.

Cities Aggregation Power Project, a nonprofit that pools cities' electric power needs and makes bulk purchases, joined with the legislators at a Capitol news conference and provided statistics showing residential electric prices have risen since deregulation.

Keffer, of Eastland, said more than half of the calls to his office are residential rate complaints. He said those complaints have been steady since Texas approved electric deregulation in 1999. Keffer and Davis said changes are needed to make deregulation work well and allow for competition and affordability.

"That way deregulation can actually be deregulation," said Keffer, chairman of the House energy resources committee.

Davis, a freshman senator from Fort Worth, said Texans are demanding changes.

"There's no doubt today that deregulation has failed our constituency," she said.

But the Texas Competitive Power Advocates, a trade association representing power generators, wholesale power marketers and retail electric providers, said competitive electric laws have allowed for investment in diverse energy sources such as wind energy. The organization and others representing the industry said Texas electric rates are down to below or near the levels of 2001. Deregulation took effect in early 2002.

Senators vote to preserve back-home pet projects

WASHINGTON (AP) — Members of both parties Monday voted to keep their cherished home-state projects as the Senate resumed debate on a spending bill covering foreign aid and domestic agency budgets.

By a 63-32 vote, lawmakers rejected a bid by Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., to effectively strip about 8,000 of those earmarks from the \$410 billion measure.

"If the president really wants to change Washington, as soon as this bill reaches his desk, he should veto it and send it back and say, 'Clean it up,'" McCain said.

Instead, the White House says President Barack Obama will sign the measure, despite all the projects. Dur-

ing last year's campaign, Obama he promised to cut the number of earmarks way back and institute other changes.

But lawmakers in both parties defend the practice, and 10 Republican joined most Democrats to defeat McCain's amendment.

"Yes, I fight for funds for my state. That's what I came here to do," said Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., a senior member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, which doles out the earmarks. "Candidly, why be an appropriator if you can't help your state?"

Democratic leaders had hoped to pass the measure last week but Republicans withheld the votes required to clear an important procedural

hurdle. They insisted on the right to offer additional amendments. Now, it's anticipated the measure will pass on Tuesday.

Democrats stand poised to defeat all amendments because they don't want the measure to return to the House for a further vote. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., has threatened to scrap the bill in that event.

The 1,132-page spending bill awards big increases to domestic programs and is stuffed with pet projects. The measure wraps together nine spending bills to pay for the annual operating budgets of every Cabinet department except for the departments of Defense, Homeland Security and Veterans Affairs.

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Students learn to shake it during popular fitness class

By **CAYLOR BALLINGER**
STAFF WRITER

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Some Texas Tech students add a little zest to their workout routines by shouting, clapping and booty shaking.

The Robert H. Ewalt Student Recreation Center at Tech offers a cardio workout class called Zumba — the most attended fitness class the center offers.

The class is inspired by Latin dance and music created in the 1990s. It combines a rhythm of cumbia, salsa and meringue.

Fitness instructor Alexander Mattey, who is from Venezuela, has taught Zumba classes at the recreation center since July 2008.

"It's the music and trying to teach people about my heritage that I like," he said. "I love thinking about burning all the calories."

Zumba is a global fitness program and offers classes to certify instructors to teach the class at a local gym, Mattey said. Six reg-

istered certified instructors teach Zumba classes in Lubbock and two of the six instructors teach classes at the recreation center.

"I have been teaching Zumba for about two years," Mattey said. "I was certified to teach Zumba and was fortunate enough to be able to teach a class at the Rec."

Mattey, who stood at the front of the class Thursday evening, encouraged the class to shout along and pulled a few participating women onto the platform to help lead during the class.

Dani Gomez, a sophomore majoring in chemical engineering, said she enjoys the class because her Hispanic heritage makes the class "feel like home."

"Zumba is really fun," said Gomez, who is from Venezuela. "I have been going to the class since it started this semester."

Lauren Cathcart, a third year law student from Plano, said she believes the Zumba class is one of

the most fun classes she has taken at the recreation center.

"We've been going to the class two or three times per week since

probably the second week of the semester," Cathcart said, glancing at her friend who attends the class with her. "The instructor is so enthusiastic."

Third year law student Natalie Madden, from Midland, who attends with Cathcart, said she and her friend go to a few classes offered by the recreational center, but the Zumba class became their favorite.

"The music is upbeat and not something you would hear on the radio," Madden said.

Cathcart and Madden said they sometimes practice the moves at home, and it combines moves they can use when they go out and dance.

Zumba classes last for one hour, and the recreation center allows the first 100 people to attend, according to the recreational center Web site. Classes are scheduled from 8:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. Monday, from 7:15 p.m. to 8:15 p.m. Friday, and from 10:15 p.m. to 11:15 p.m. Saturday. Those interested in attending do not need to sign up but do need to show up about 10 minutes before the class begins.

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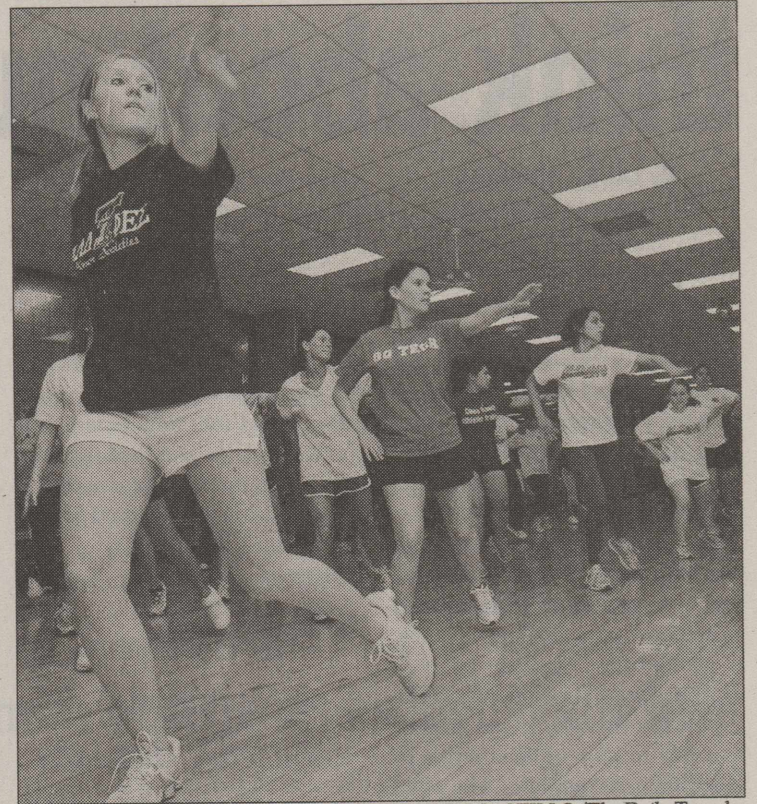


PHOTO BY RUBEN CASTILLO/The Daily Toreador

BETHANY CARLE, AN accounting major from Keller, participates in a Zumba exercise class Thursday in the Robert H. Ewalt Student Recreation Center.

Alternative spring-break lodging offers students cheaper travel

By **HANNAH BOEN**
STAFF WRITER

Students hoping to stretch their dollar during spring break travel can look to Leon Logothetis for inspiration.

Logothetis has traveled across continents and countries with \$5 a day on his television series "Amazing Adventures of a Nobody" and is now sharing his tight-budget tricks with students. Although traveling on \$5 a day isn't realistic for everyone, he said there are a lot of ways students can reduce travel costs.

"I basically came up with the idea for the show based on relying on the kindness of strangers," he said. "I traveled around England, Europe and the U.S. by relying entirely on people's generosity."

On his show, Logothetis is allowed to accept gifts from strangers and work for food or lodging, but he is not allowed to beg for money. By doing so, he has traveled from New York's Times Square to Los Angeles' Hollywood sign staying in each city one night and never spending more than \$5 per day.

His advice for students planning to travel during spring break is to seek out Web sites offering discounted or free lodging and transportation, such as Couchsurfing.com.

Creators of Couchsurfing.com have compiled more than 990,000 members into a free lodging network for travelers. Students can use the Web site to travel to more than 200 different countries and stay on a member's couch at no cost.

"You get to meet lots and lots of interesting people," Logothetis said. "You become more resourceful and learn many more lessons trying to travel cheap."

Tim Lara of Maui, Hawaii, said he experienced the advantages of traveling

on a tight budget when he went on a four-month long vacation around the globe.

Although some people prefer a bed in a hotel when they travel, Lara prefers a couch in the home of a stranger.

"The thing is," he said, "it's so much more than a place to stay. You're instantly dialed in, and you have the knowledge of a native."

Lara used the Web site to travel the world, staying on dozens of couches along the way. He said he stopped in several cities in Thailand, New Zealand, Australia and more, staying in a hotel only five nights during the four-month tour.

By using Couchsurfing.com, Lara said he had the opportunity to see and do things he would not have experienced had he not had the opportunity to stay with a native.

He joined the site in May 2008, he said, when a friend convinced him he would meet girls from all over the world if he became a couch surfer. Although he said he has yet to meet a love inter-

est, he has gained a lot from allowing people to stay with him.

"It has taught me not to judge people," he said, "and just to give them a chance."

Lara said there are several advantages to couch surfing, besides having a free place to stay.

"When somebody comes (to Maui)," he said, "they don't know where to go or what to do. So, they ask their concierge at their hotel. The things the concierge tells you to do are far less exciting than what a native knows to do."

From restaurants to hiking trails, Lara said he is ready and willing to show tourists attractions and activities off the beaten track and away from other tourists.

Students not interested in couch surfing but still looking for a way to save money may be interested in staying in a hostel.

Hostelling International provides hostels in more than 60 cities within

the United States, and Hostels.com gives users a directory of 26,997 hostels worldwide.

The co-owner and alternative spring-break groups coordinator of the Everglades Hostel in Florida City, Fla., who goes by the name Owynn, said hostels are a great option for college travelers.

"They're just going to meet people from all over the world in one location," she said, "and there is a huge ability and opportunity to interact with people from all over the world their same age."

Owynn said the biggest advantage to lodging in a hostel is cultural immersion, but students find the price and the amenities advantageous.

Some travelers do not spend any money for lodging in the Everglades, she said, because like most hostels, the Everglades Hostel has a volunteer program offering a free night of lodging in exchange for four hours of work.

The Everglades Hostel is specifically for students interested in participating in alternative services for spring break, such as habitat restoration and recycling efforts.

However, Owynn said with so many hostels all over the world all offering different experiences, students are bound to find one to fit their needs.

Owynn said by either couch surfing or lodging in a hostel, students are allowing themselves an opportunity to get a lot more out of their vacation.

Logothetis, Owynn and Lara agree traveling with a small amount of money can be more fun than staying in five-star hotels because of the opportunity it provides for meeting people and experiencing different cultures.

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Windows 7 rumored to allow users to remove Internet Explorer entirely

It doesn't take any sort of deep analysis to realize the death grip Microsoft has on operating systems and much more in the current world of technology.

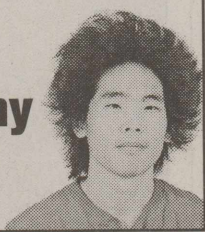
In fact, in 2002, more than 97 percent of computers in the world ran some form of Windows. However, that has thankfully and progressively declined during the years to an estimated 88.26 percent at the beginning of 2009.

This may not seem like a big deal, but having so many people default to Windows for their OS needs also means they default to a smorgasbord of other Microsoft products, increasing the company's technology monopoly.

This unfortunately includes the demon child they like to masquerade as a Web browser and bundle on their systems: Internet Explorer.

According to some investigative bloggers, a leaked build of Windows 7 will allow users to remove the browser completely from the machine, a first for Microsoft since they started including it with Windows in 1997.

Timothy Poon



This is insanely important to those who understand what is going on with Web browsers nowadays, which includes the European Commission of the European Union.

The European Commission recently was brought on by Opera, maker of the similarly named Web browser, to impose sanctions against Microsoft bundling IE with Windows. The move was backed by the Mozilla Foundation, developers of a great number of open source products and mostly known for its Firefox Web browser.

In the European Commission's findings released from the Opera complaint, it was stated Microsoft "harms competition between web browsers, undermines product innovation, and ultimately reduces con-

sumer choice" by tying the browser to its dominant OS.

Some may argue this was an unnecessary move, because IE has already been losing ground to alternative browsers with Microsoft's browser reaching an all time low in March at 67.44 percent and Firefox reaching an all-time high at 21.77 percent.

However, there are also those who have had the horrible displeasure of designing and coding a Web site that looks beautiful in every other browser in the world only to discover IE once again will cause hours and hours of tears, bloodshed and cursing at the Windows-hocking behemoth that is Microsoft.

In fact, if your primary browser is any sort of IE, I don't think we can be friends anymore.

Considering the leaked Windows 7 build is happening on the cusp of the eight-week time limit laid down by the European Commission with its investigations, Microsoft simply doesn't want another antitrust suit on their hands and have not finally realized the numerous errors in its ways.

The upcoming IE8 is said to be more standards compliant but absolutely not enough. Many speculate the eighth iteration of the Windows browser could ostensibly break the Internet, much like the way the Large Hadron Collider was on target to destroy the world. Except, you know, true.

What essentially will happen is all the Web sites with IE-specific hacks to cobble together a properly rendered design will no longer be displayed as expected, which includes Microsoft's own Web site.

This will force IE8 into a compatibility mode and render in IE7, hacks and all. IE8 will actually be the first Internet Explorer to pass the Acid2 test, the second in the Acid series to test Web compliance.

However, IE8 still fails horribly on Acid3, a test every other major Web browser has managed to score admirably on or, in Opera and Safari's cases, managed to score a 100/100.

And let's not even mention IE6, which a disturbing 18.85 percent of people still use despite the fact it

can't render alpha channels, has no tabs, and has just about zero security features.

IE also is hideously slow in JavaScript performance, often running scripts nearly 30 to 40 times slower than every other browser. Needless to say, IE will continue to be the bane of all Web developers' collective existence.

Regardless of whether IE8 will break the Internet, this unbundling of IE from Windows could lead to different but equally bad news for consumers.

It could be argued that IE's dominance has actually led to innovation and a greater defense for being standards compliant with the other browsers.

Would tabbed browsing or such aggressive JavaScript engine developments have been implemented if IE hadn't forced certain hands on the matter?

What about Firefox's add-on capabilities or its AwesomeBar? It seems to me the greatest advantages of Safari, Opera, Firefox and Chrome came from the fact IE forced them to

innovate, not stifled their developments.

Tabs in user interfaces, anti-phishing filters and security features have now become standard, and it seems the smart address bar is headed in the same direction.

These sorts of innovations seem to be the product of attempting to remain competitive with features rather than larger market shares—a thought that could mean uncomfortable notions of browsers contentedly sitting back on its current feature sets rather than attempting to advance their technologies on a daily basis.

With all that being said, I hope Internet Explorer is someday born in the form of some sort of hideous, godforsaken creature we can all witness burn in a pyre of malice and vengeful justice as wispy images of conditional statements, CSS hacks and bluish PNGs float begrudgingly on to the world beyond.

■ Poon is The DT's tech critic. E-mail him at timothy.poon@ttu.edu.

Belligerent chimp proves animals make plans

STOCKHOLM (AP) — A canny chimpanzee who calmly collected a stash of rocks and then hurled them at zoo visitors in fits of rage has confirmed that apes can plan ahead just like humans, a Swedish study said Monday.

Santino the chimpanzee's anti-social behavior stunned both visitors and keepers at the Furuvik Zoo but fascinated research-

ers because it was so carefully prepared.

According to a report in the journal *Current Biology*, the 31-year-old alpha male started building his weapons cache in the morning before the zoo opened, collecting rocks and knocking out disks from concrete boulders inside his enclosure. He waited until around midday before he unleashed a "hailstorm" of rocks against

visitors, the study said.

"These observations convincingly show that our fellow apes do consider the future in a very complex way," said the author of the report, Lund University Ph.D. student Mathias Osvath. "It implies that they have a highly developed consciousness, including lifelike mental simulations of potential events."

Anna Nicole Smith's estate seeks high court help

WASHINGTON (AP) — Lawyers for the late Playboy playmate Anna Nicole Smith asked the Supreme Court for help Monday in a big money dispute involving her dead husband and his dead son.

Smith, who also was a model, stripper and reality TV star, was

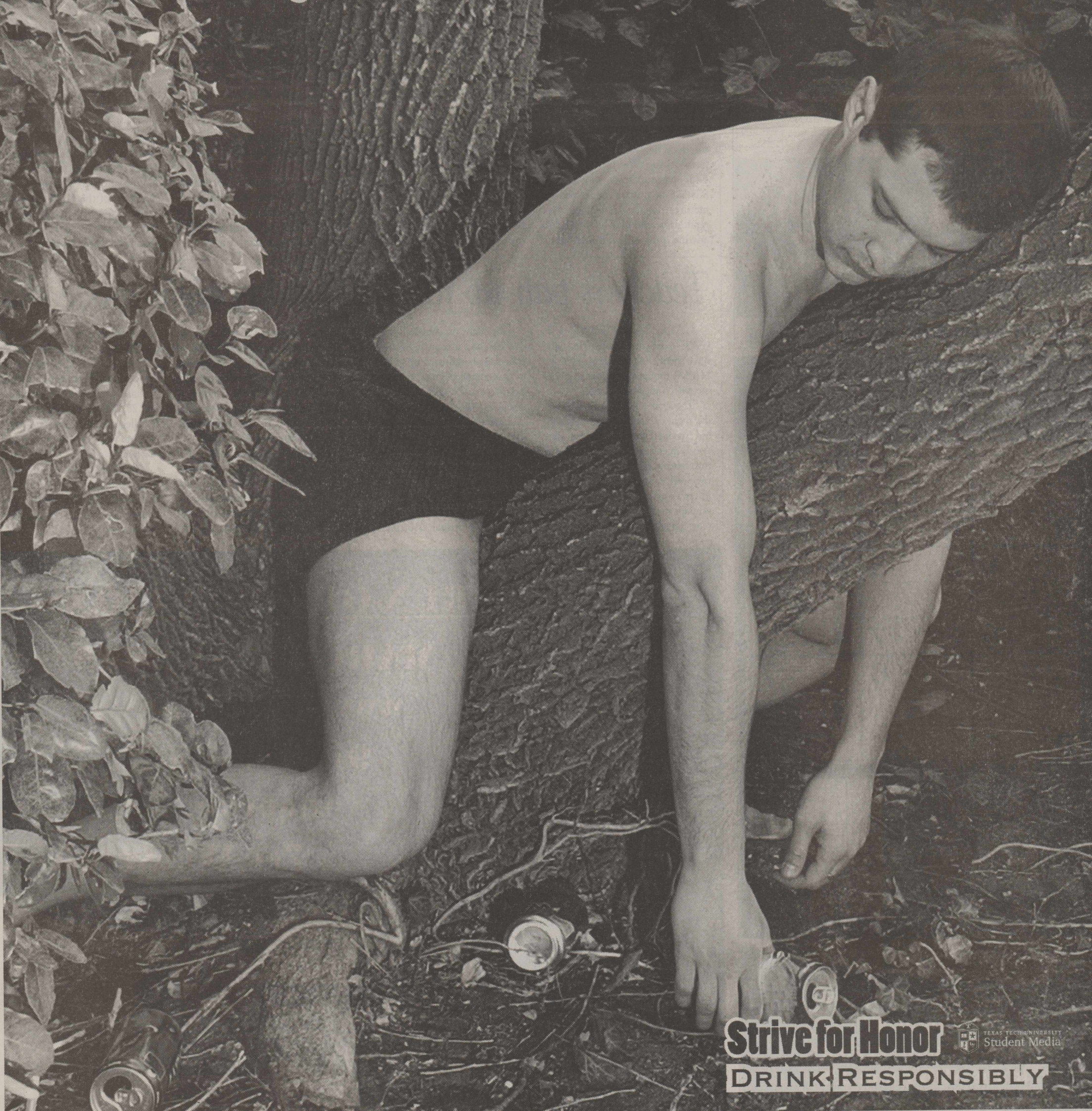
26 when she married 89-year-old oil tycoon J. Howard Marshall II in 1994. He died a year later, and a federal judge later awarded Smith \$88.5 million of Marshall's money despite complaints from his son, E. Pierce Marshall, who controlled the fortune.

Smith argued that her husband

had made an oral promise to give her half his estate. Pierce Marshall said various wills and trusts his father had prepared over the years named him sole heir.

The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals held up the \$88.5 million award while the case was being appealed.

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