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RHA hosts Wednesday carol for first time

By JON VANDERLAAN
NEWS EDITOR

For the first time in its 51-year history, the Texas Tech Carol of Lights will be hosted on a Wednesday instead of a Tuesday or Friday.

Tech administrators moved the date because of a possible conflict with the Tech football team, who did well enough last season to almost make it to the Big 12 Conference Championship.

Alice Scott, a faculty adviser for the carol, said she started receiving e-mails from people around the university wondering what would happen if Tech made the championship game.

"Last year the possibility was mentioned to us because of the way the Tech football team was playing last year and it came really close to us possibly being in the Big 12 Championship," she said. "Of course it didn't happen, but it was very iffy."

The president also has not been able to come to the carol because of meetings with other Big 12 presidents during the championship game weekend, Scott said. Consideration for Tech President Guy

Bailey also was made during the decision process. For the most part, the Carol of Lights has been hosted on a Friday, she said.

"I've been the adviser for the Carol of Lights for 23 years," Scott said. "Twice in those 23 years, we've had the Carol of Lights on a Tuesday."

The two times it was hosted on a Tuesday were because of schedule conflicts, she said.

Although the tradition has been around for a long time, Scott said, the decision was not too difficult to make, because students on the committee made sure other students did not have a problem with the change of date. The committee also sent an e-mail to all the departments on campus, none of which replied with a complaint.

Craig Kuehnert, a faculty adviser for the carol, said some possible conflicts for those scheduled to perform at the carol also were reasons for the date change. If the football team was to make the Big 12 Championship, the Saddle Tramps, High Riders, Masked Rider, Raider Red and other performers most likely would travel with the team.



FILE PHOTO/The Daily Toreador

THE TEXAS TECH Carol of Lights, which turns on more than 25,000 lights in the beginning of December every year, will be hosted on a Wednesday this year for the first time in the history of the event.

CAROL continued on page 2 >>

Installing a future

Student owns, operates car audio installation business

By MEREDITH HILLGARTNER
STAFF WRITER

Ronnie Sherwood lifts his head from under the hood of the 1989 white and maroon Cadillac sitting in his driveway. He smiles and brushes his hands on his red and black flannel shirt and disappears inside the house. Momentarily he returns and starts to give the tour of his latest project.

Strolling around the car, he points out the Cadillac's body work before turning his attention toward the interior. Opening the driver's door, Ronnie reveals six TVs installed in the vehicle. He opens compartments to reveal numerous speakers and subs also installed. Crawling out of the small space, he rounds around back to the trunk where he is installing another TV, which almost covers the entire area. While spitting out sunflower seeds, he begins to explain his work.

Sherwood, a junior mechanical engineering major, is the owner, operator and main mechanic for Wholesale Car Audio. Sherwood, a 22-year-old Houston native, got his start seven years ago, learning from his dad how to install car accessories when fixing up his first car — a 1957 blue Volvo.

"I was in high school when I put my first system in my first car, but I always wanted more, always wanted it louder," Sherwood said. "Then I thought, 'Hey, people will pay me money for this.'"

After dabbling with his skill in high school, Sherwood took some classes at the Acoustic Engine Institute in Houston where he earned his associates degree and became a mobile electronic certified professional.

With his certification, Sherwood moved to Lubbock to attend school and officially start his business. Being a full-time student and working more than 40 hours a week, he said he had to create a schedule that would allow him to do both.

Attending classes Monday through Thursday, his weekends are dedicated to his business. Sherwood said he spends Saturday and Sundays at a Lubbock flea market where he rents out a booth to display the variety of stereos he sells and installs. Sherwood usually dedicates Fridays to installation work.

Sherwood said his schedule is more of an outline because his business keeps him



PHOTO BY BRAD TOLLEFSON/The Daily Toreador

RONNIE SHERWOOD, RIGHT, a junior mechanical engineering major from Houston, helps a customer out with a GPS in his shop, Wholesale Car Audio, Saturday at Traders Market Flea Market.

working throughout the week and during his spare time.

"Well I do some business on Craigslist, so I'm constantly putting product on the Internet," Sherwood said. "I am always dropping off and picking up equipment, and if I can't find someone to do the installation, I'll do it myself. But I enjoy it, I do it all the time because I love it."

Customers also seem to be happy with his work. Carlos Diaz Jr., a frequent customer and the owner of the white and maroon Cadillac, pulled up to the house, ready to inspect Sherwood's progress. Together the men circle the car, talking about the last four months and how the car is almost finished.

AUDIO continued on page 3 >>

Obama plans for 35,000 more troops in Afghanistan

By JENNIFER LOVEN
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON (AP) — After months of debate, President Barack Obama will spell out a costly Afghanistan war expansion to a skeptical public Tuesday night, coupling an infusion of as many as 35,000 more troops with a vow that there will be no endless U.S. commitment. His first orders have already been made: at least one group of Marines who will be in place by Christmas.

Obama has said that he prefers "not to hand off anything to the next president" and that his strategy will "put us on a path toward ending the war." But he doesn't plan to give any more exact timetable than that Tuesday night.

The president will end his 92-day review of the war with a nationally broadcast address in which he will lay out his revamped strategy from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, N.Y. He spent part of Monday briefing

foreign allies in a series of private meetings and phone calls. Before Obama's call to Britain's Gordon Brown, the prime minister announced that 500 more U.K. troops would arrive in southern Afghanistan next month — making a British total of about 10,000 in the country. And French President Nicolas Sarkozy, whose nation has more than 3,000 in Afghanistan, said French troops would stay "as long as necessary" to stabilize the country.

Obama's war escalation includes sending 30,000 to 35,000 more American forces into Afghanistan in a graduated deployment over the next year, on top of the 71,000 already there. There also will be a fresh focus

on training Afghan forces to take over the fight and allow the Americans to leave.

He also will deliver a deeper explanation of why he believes the U.S. must continue to fight more than eight years after the war was started following the Sept. 11 attacks by al-Qaida terrorists based in Afghanistan. He will emphasize that Afghan security forces need more time, more schooling and more U.S. combat backup to be up to the job on their own, and he will make tougher demands on the governments of Pakistan as well as Afghanistan.

"This is not an open-ended commitment," White House press secretary Robert Gibbs said. "We are there to partner with the Afghans, to train the Afghan national security forces, the army and the police so that they can provide security for their country and wage a battle against an unpopular insurgency."

On a few of the bigger questions most on the minds of increasingly restive members of

Congress and the public, such as how much the additional \$30 billion to \$35 billion cost will balloon the already skyrocketed federal deficit, how long the U.S. commitment will continue and how it will wind down, Obama was expected to make references without offering specifics.

Gibbs said detailed discussions on costs would be held later with lawmakers.

Even before explaining his decision, Obama told the military to begin executing the force increases. The commander in chief gave the deployment orders Sunday night, during an Oval Office meeting in which he told key military and White House advisers of his final decision.

"We are there to partner with the Afghans, to train the Afghan national security forces, and the police..."

ROBERT GIBBS
WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY

INDEX

- Classifieds.....7
- Crossword.....4
- La Vida.....3
- Opinions.....4
- Sports.....8
- Sudoku.....2

WEATHER

Today	Rain/Snow Late	Wednesday	Rain/Snow
	54/33		38/33

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IN BRIEF

STATE

Texas inmate pulls gun on guards, takes off

HOUSTON (AP) — A convicted sex offender sentenced to life in prison pulled a gun on two guards during a prison transfer Monday and held them hostage temporarily before fleeing on foot in one of the guard's uniforms, authorities said.

At the time of the escape, the inmate was in a wheelchair, which he claimed he needed to help move him around, officials said.

The guards were transferring Arcade Joseph Comeaux Jr. from a prison in Huntsville, north of Houston, to one

in Beaumont, in southeast Texas, when he pulled out a gun and told the guards to stop the vehicle, said Michelle Lyons, a spokeswoman for the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.

Comeaux took control of the transport van at 6:30 a.m., nearly two hours into the trip, as the vehicle was going through Conroe, just north of Houston. He told the guards to continue driving until they reached Baytown, a refinery town east of Houston, officials said.

NATION

Man charged with capital murder in 3 Kan. deaths

LYNDON, Kan. (AP) — A former Missouri city official previously accused of assaulting his wife was charged Monday with capital murder in the shootings of her and their two teenage daughters in eastern Kansas.

James Kraig Kahler, 46, also was charged with one count of attempted first-degree murder in the shooting of his estranged wife's 89-year-old grandmother and one count of aggravated burglary. Authorities suspect he broke into the grandmother's home near Topeka, where the shootings occurred.

During Kahler's first appearance in Osage County District Court, Judge Phillip Fromme set bail at \$10 million and scheduled another hearing for Dec. 10.

Kahler, who often went by his middle name Kraig, declined to comment as sheriff's deputies escorted him in handcuffs from jail to the courthouse. He had been scheduled to appear in court in Columbia, Mo., on Wednesday on a domestic assault charge stemming from an altercation with his wife in March that led to the loss of his job as director of Columbia's Water & Light Department.

A divorce trial for Kahler and his 44-year-old wife, Karen, was scheduled to start Dec. 21, but a settlement hearing was planned for Friday. Court records showed that he complained of financial pressures and the couple had been sparring over their children.

WORLD

Somali pirates hijack \$20M of oil going to US

NAIROBI, Kenya — Crews on oil tankers aren't allowed to smoke above deck, much less carry guns, for fear of igniting the ship's payload. That's one of the main reasons Somali pirates met little resistance when they hijacked a U.S.-bound supertanker carrying \$20 million in crude.

The Greek-flagged tanker — traveling from Saudi Arabia to New Orleans — had no escort when it was hijacked Sunday because naval warships are stretched too thin. The problem has been further exacerbated because pirates have expanded their operations to hundreds of miles out at sea.

The hijacking, one year after seizure of a Saudi supertanker led to heightened international efforts to fight piracy off the Horn of Africa,

has highlighted the difficulty of keeping ships safe in the region — particularly oil tankers.

The Maran Centaurus was about 800 miles off the coast of Somalia when it was hijacked with 28 crew, said Cmdr. John Harbour, a spokesman for the EU Naval Force. On Monday, it was headed toward Somalia's lawless coast, a location where pirates most likely will hold the vessel as they attempt to negotiate a multimillion-dollar ransom.

While some ships traveling in the region have been outfitted with high pressure water guns and piercing noisemakers to repel pirates, even this is shunned on oil tankers for fear of triggering a response from pirates armed with guns and rocket-propelled grenades.

Carol

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

A number of students and alumni also likely would miss the event, he said.

Although the Residence Hall Association has received plenty of feedback from those not able to attend the carol, he said he anticipated the positive and negative feedback because of the change.

"We get feedback both ways," Kuehnert said. "We got some feedback from people who in the past were not able to attend because it was on a Friday and now they're able to attend."

Because it is not on a weekend anymore, he said, fewer alumni would be able to travel in the middle of the week to the event.

The committee also changed the date from Friday to Wednesday for the 2010 and 2011 carols. Kuehnert said it was necessary for the committee to plan ahead so other departments and events could be scheduled around the carol.

For example, the Lady Raiders' basketball game was moved from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. Wednesday so attendees could go from the Carol of Lights to the game without conflict.

Sean Duggan, the director of University Student Housing, said the department gathered information about the event and sought to give a recommendation of a possible win-win scenario.

While it may make it difficult for some alumni to come to the event, he said, the department also had to make decisions for the current students and current

test schedules.

"Primarily this is a tradition geared at the campus," Duggan said, "so we had to make decisions that were best for the campus, for the students."

Bill Dean, the executive vice president and CEO of the Tech Alumni Association, said he does not understand why another solution could not be found.

"It seems to me like you could work around that. I don't know, maybe not," he said. "I think it's going to impact the crowd in a negative way to have it on a Wednesday night."

Dean said not only will alumni attendance be affected, but also attendance from neighboring communities that may not commute on a school night.

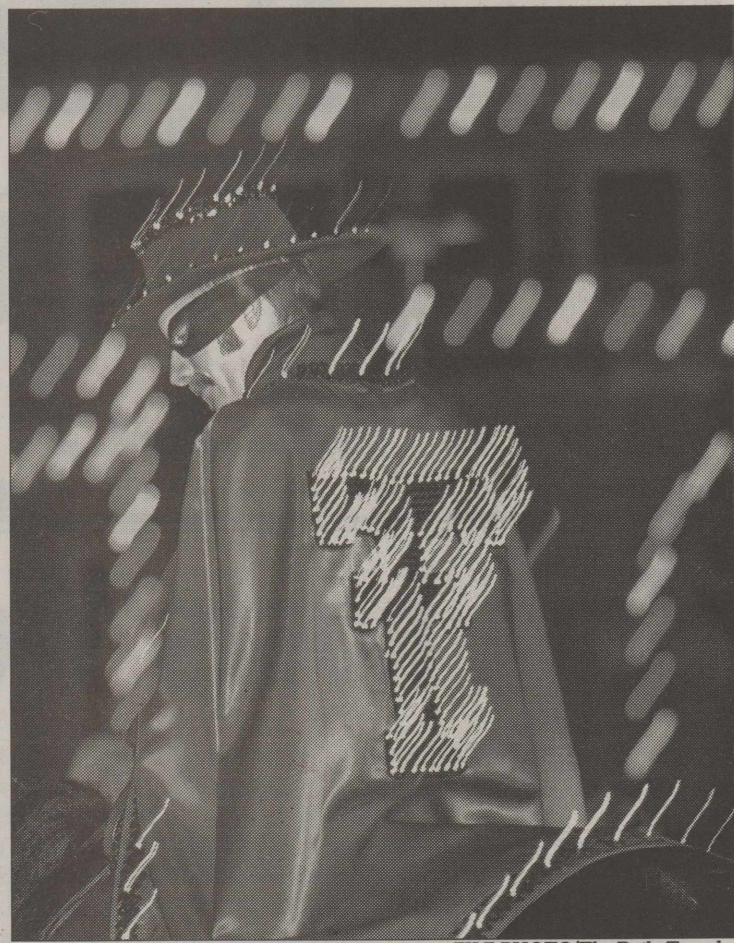
Jesse Saldivar, the president of the Resident Halls Association, said the organization has tried to do its part in advertising the change of date to all the possible attendees.

"I believe the attendance will be less than last year," he said. "I just think that a lot of people have found it more difficult to attend considering it's in the middle of the week rather than the end of the week."

However, because this is not the first time the carol has been hosted on a different day than Friday, Saldivar said, the organization knows to put the day of the week in the advertisements.

The carol will begin at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday at Memorial Circle with a carillon performance. The lighting ceremony will begin at 7 p.m. with the Tech Combined Choir and the Trombone Choir performing holiday songs.

—jon.vanderlaan@ttu.edu



FILE PHOTO/The Daily Toreador



FILE PHOTO/The Daily Toreador

THE 2009 CAROL of Lights was moved to Wednesday in the event that the Texas Tech football team made it to the Big 12 Championship game, which may have resulted in the absence of the Masked Rider, above, and Raider Red, who perform at the ceremony.

Suspect in officer killings eludes law in Seattle

SEATTLE (AP) — Using search dogs and going door to door, hundreds of police intensified the hunt Monday for the man wanted in the coffeehouse killings of four officers after a SWAT team came up empty-handed in a raid on a house where he was thought to be holed up.

The realization that the suspect had not been cornered after all further rattled people in the Seattle area, many of them unnerved by the thought of a mentally unstable killer in their midst.

Police canvassed the neighborhood around the Seattle house and fanned out across the city, looking for any sign of Maurice Clemmons, 37. Authorities posted a \$125,000 reward for information leading to his arrest in the Sunday morning shooting rampage.

The manhunt came as authorities in two states took heat for the fact that Clemmons was allowed to walk the streets despite a teenage crime spree in Arkansas that landed him a 95-year prison sentence. He was released in 2000 after then-Gov. Mike Huckabee commuted his sentence.

"This guy should have never been on the street," said Brian D. Wurts, president of the police union in Lakewood, where all four slain officers worked. "Our elected officials need to find out why these people are out."

Police said they are not sure what prompted Clemmons to assassinate the officers as they worked on their laptop computers at the beginning of their shifts. He was described as increasingly erratic in the past few months and had been arrested recently on charges of

assaulting a police officer.

Sheriff's spokesman Ed Troyer told the Tacoma News-Tribune that Clemmons "made comments the night before to people that he was going to shoot police and watch the news."

Authorities said the gunman singled out the officers and spared employees and other customers at the coffee shop in a suburb about 35 miles south of Seattle. He then fled, but not before he was apparently shot in the torso by one of the dying officers.

Police later learned he may have been holed up at the house in Seattle. After an all-night siege in which they tried to get him out using loudspeakers, explosions and a robot sent into the house, a SWAT team stormed the place and discovered he was not there. Police would not say who lived at the

house or whether it was someone Clemmons knew.

It was not clear whether he slipped past police, left before they arrived, or was never in the house at all, but Seattle police spokesman Jeff Kappel said there was evidence Clemmons at one point was on the property. He would not elaborate.

University of Washington officials alerted students by e-mail and text messages to an unconfirmed report that Clemmons might have gotten off a bus on or near the campus about three miles from the home.

Police spent the day frantically chasing leads, at one point cordoning off a park where people thought they saw Clemmons. They also alerted hospitals to be on the lookout for a man seeking treatment for gunshot wounds.

Corrections

The Daily Toreador's reporters and editors strive for accuracy in the news-gathering process. However, mistakes are inevitable.

It is The DT's policy to correct mis-

takes in this spot as soon as possible.

If you feel there is an error in a story, please call Editor-in-Chief Kevin Cullen at 806-742-3395 or e-mail kevin.m.cullen@ttu.edu.

Today's su | do | ku

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

Puzzles by PageFiller

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

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

Solution to yesterday's puzzle

Ombuds Office

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— Dr. Tony Alessandra

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Emotions high, Senate opens partisan health debate

WASHINGTON (AP) — Riven by partisanship, the Senate plunged into a widely anticipated debate Monday over sweeping health care legislation that President Barack Obama and congressional Democrats have vowed to approve and Republicans have sworn to block.

Debate is expected to last for weeks over the legislation, which includes a first-time requirement for most Americans to carry insurance and a mandate for insurers to cover any paying customer regardless of

medical history or condition.

"We must avoid the temptation to drown in distractions and distortions," Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid said in the first moments of the first speech, a jab at Republicans that was reciprocated minutes later.

"Well, I don't know what's more preposterous: saying that this plan 'saves Medicare' or thinking that people will actually believe you," Sen. Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, said of Reid's oft-made statement.

At a cost of nearly \$1 trillion, the legislation is designed to extend

health care to millions of American who lack it, abolish insurance industry practices such as denying coverage based on pre-existing conditions and cut back on the rise of health care spending overall.

Despite its huge price tag, the Congressional Budget Office has estimated the 2,074-page bill would reduce federal deficits by \$130 billion over the next decade. In all, CBO said 31 million uninsured individuals would receive insurance if the bill were enacted, many of them assisted by federal subsidies. As much

as 94 percent of the eligible population would wind up covered. The legislation would be paid for through a combination of cuts in projected Medicare payments to hospitals and other providers, a payroll tax on the wealthy and taxes on drug makers, medical device manufacturers, owners of high-cost insurance and others.

It has taken months to advance the legislation to the floor, Democrats struggling with their own internal divisions as well as Republican opposition.

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CDC: Swine flu less widespread

ATLANTA (AP) — Swine flu infections seem to be dropping, but the number of children who died with the illness rose by about 30, according to a government report released Monday.

Widespread infections of swine flu were reported in 32 states as of Nov. 21, down from 43 states the week before, U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention officials said.

The CDC also said there were 27 new lab-confirmed swine flu deaths in children under 18, bringing the total to about 200 children. That's the largest one-week tally for children since the pandemic started.

Since it was first identified in April, swine flu has sickened an estimated 22 million Americans, hospitalized about 98,000 and killed 4,000. It has proved to be similar to seasonal flu but a bigger threat to children and young adults.

The swine flu pandemic has so far hit in two waves in the United States: First in the spring, then a larger wave that started in the late summer.

Animation film lives up to title

Heading an all-star cast in Wes Anderson's sixth full-length film is George Clooney voicing the role of Mr. Fox, a "wild animal" whose rule-breaking antics may cause the destruction of his woodland creature friends and family.

The plot simply revolves around Mr. Fox's chicken-stealing ways that have three mean farmers named Boggs, Bunce and Bean out for blood. When their homes become threatened, the animals rally against their enemies for the ultimate spaghetti-western-esque showdown.

"Fantastic Mr. Fox" holds a special place in modern filmmaking for its use of classic stop-motion animation, the special effects technique which made the original "King Kong" a timeless masterpiece. This dying art form is rarely seen in mainstream cinema anymore with the exception of Tim Burton's "Corpse Bride." Puppet animation has become a thing of the past, but Ray Harryhausen films such

Aaron Nichols



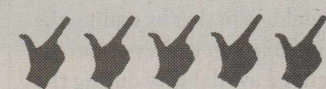
as the "Sinbad" trilogy have since developed a strong cult following. "Mr. Fox" follows in the footsteps of the Harryhausen showmanship.

This film may be the best stop-motion movie since 1981's "Clash of the Titans" (also a Ray Harryhausen film). The addition of a children's story involving three ruthless farmers and a pesky yet clever fox add up to sheer entertainment. The humor is dry but effective, subtle yet outlandish and above all else, clever. All the elements from camerawork to dialogue to music blend almost flawlessly.

The voice performances drive the film due to the star power of Clooney,

Meryl Streep and Bill Murray. The best casting decision has to be Willem Dafoe as a villainous rat. All the parts were well-cast and well-acted, so to single out one for praise would be unfair. The entire cast makes this film worthwhile.

In my previous review I predicted "A Christmas Carol" would win the Academy Award for Best Animated Film, which I still believe will be the case only because this style of animation has never been a favorite of Oscar voters. Harryhausen films never received such awards recognition and stop-motion pioneer Willis O'Brien (King Kong) was greatly ignored throughout most of his career. My vote would still go to this film.



■ Nichols is a DT movie critic.
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Online retailers rev up deals, momentum

NEW YORK (AP) — Retail Web sites kept amping up the deals Monday, the first day after Thanksgiving weekend's strong online sales, to try to maintain the momentum.

Meanwhile, a research firm that tracks business at stores reported tepid sales and customer traffic for Friday and Saturday that confirmed a so-so start to the season for the bricks-and-mortar world.

Though the Web is only about 10 percent of the holiday shopping pie, it's seen most of the growth so far this year — an encouraging sign after last year's first online sales decline.

Coremetrics, a Web analytics company in San Mateo, Calif., said that as of 1 p.m. Monday, sales for the day that the industry still pitches as "Cyber Monday" were up 19.6 percent over a year ago.

The bright spot offers hope after traditional retail sales came in just above flat for Black Friday, with shoppers packing stores but sticking to their lists, going for deep discounts and practical items.

Investors voted with their dollars, rewarding online sellers. Amazon.com shares rose \$4.17, or 3.2 percent, to \$135.91 on a day when stocks of most traditional retailers fell as Wall Street analyzed the sea of data and anecdotal reports from the weekend.

ShopperTrak, which is based in Chicago and tracks sales and traffic at more than 50,000 outlets, said late Monday that retail sales for Friday

and Saturday edged up 0.9 percent to \$16.77 billion, while customer traffic fell 2.7 percent compared with last year. According to ShopperTrak, U.S. traffic slipped 2.5 percent on Friday, compared with an 18 percent drop in the year-ago period. Traffic fell 3.2 percent Saturday, compared with a 17 percent drop a year ago.

ShopperTrak derives its estimates from crowd-counting sensors in stores, combined with data from the retailers themselves on spending and how it relates to customer traffic.

The ShopperTrak results contrast with a report Sunday from the National Retail Federation on its poll indicating that more shoppers flocked to stores but each spent less than last year.

The dueling assessments show the difficulty of gathering and interpreting holiday weekend results. A fuller picture won't be known until Thursday, when major retailers report November sales figures.

Deeply discounted electronics such as flat-screen TVs, game systems and netbooks were popular, but more practical items such as appliances and home decor were also big sellers, as consumers took advantage of sales to buy things for themselves. Many shoppers started looking for online deals ahead of what the industry still pitches as "Cyber Monday," as retailers stretched their online deals over several days.

Target, Walmart, Amazon.com and other retailers started offering

the online equivalent of Black Friday specials on Thanksgiving or even earlier.

They stepped it up Monday. Amazon.com was discounting the Apple iPod Touch 8GB for \$158, \$20 less than Sunday and \$40 off the retail price of about \$200. Target.com offered a deal Monday for a Garmin GPS system for \$186.99, down from \$249.99. Free shipping was also prevalent.

Marshal Cohen, chief industry analyst at market research firm NPD Group, said this year saw the "graying of Black Friday," because deals that typically occurred only on the Friday after Thanksgiving have been spread out over two weeks.

"The holiday spread itself out," he said. "On Thanksgiving Day, there's a new tradition, shopping online before you stuff the turkey, putting the turkey in oven and going out shopping."

The Monday after Thanksgiving is usually far from the busiest online shopping day of the year, but it is typically one of the 10 busiest. It was dubbed "Cyber Monday" by the National Retail Federation trade group in 2005 to describe the Monday after the Thanksgiving holiday.

The thinking was that shoppers who lacked broadband Internet access at home would wait until returning to work to look online. Now that most homes have broadband, that rationale has faded.

Analysts expect Dec. 14, the last day consumers can order goods and have them arrive before Christmas, will be the busiest online shopping day.

Keith Harris, 36, an IT consultant for Hewlett-Packard, went out Friday for in-store sales, but he waited until Monday to buy a Playstation 3 because Walmart.com offered it at the best price on Monday — in a bundle with two games and a movie, for \$369.

"Man that's awesome." After college, Sherwood said he will continue installations and one day plans to get out of the flea market booth and open a real store, maybe even a chain. For now though, Sherwood is content with his weekend business.

"I'm good at installations, so it's easy to like," Sherwood said. "Every day brings another big project and something new to work on, but all I have time for now is running my business on the weekend."
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WATCH YOUR BACK



PHOTO BY RIANNON ROWLEY/The Daily Toreador

ALEX MYATT, A junior early childhood education major from Levelland, and Linsey Verver, a junior early childhood education major from Plano, re-enact former President Abraham Lincoln's assassination for their education instructional tech class Monday outside of the English building.

Movement under way in California to ban divorce

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — Til death do us part? The vow would really hold true in California if a Sacramento Web designer gets his way.

In a movement that seems ripped from the pages of Comedy Channel writers, John Marcotte wants to put a measure on the ballot next year to ban divorce in California.

The effort is meant to be a satirical statement after California voters outlawed gay marriage in 2008, largely on the argument that a ban is needed to protect the sanctity of traditional marriage. If that's the case, then Marcotte reasons voters should have no problem banning divorce.

"Since California has decided to protect traditional marriage, I think it would be hypocritical of us not to sacrifice some of our own rights to protect traditional marriage even more," the 38-year-old married father of two said.

Marcotte said he has collected dozens of signatures, including one from his wife of seven years. The initiative's Facebook fans have swelled to more than 11,000. Volunteers that include gay activists and members of a local comedy troupe have signed on to help.

Marcotte is looking into whether he can gather signatures online, as proponents are doing for another proposed 2010 initiative to repeal the gay marriage ban. But the odds are stacked against a

campaign funded primarily by the sale of \$12 T-shirts featuring bride and groom stick figures chained at the wrists.

Marcotte needs 694,354 valid signatures by March 22, a high hurdle in a state where the typical petition drive costs millions of dollars. Even if his proposed constitutional amendment made next year's ballot, it's not clear how voters would react.

Nationwide, about half of all marriages end in divorce.

Not surprisingly, Marcotte's campaign to make divorce in California illegal has divided those involved in last year's campaign for and against Proposition 8.

As much as everyone would like to see fewer divorces, making it illegal would be "impractical," said Ron Prentice, the executive director of the California Family Council who led a coalition of religious and conservative groups to qualify Proposition 8.

No other state bans divorce, and only a few countries, including the Philippines and Malta, do. The Roman Catholic Church also prohibits divorce but allows annulments. The California proposal would amend the state constitution to eliminate the ability of married couples to get divorced while allowing married couples to seek an annulment.

Prentice said proponents of traditional marriage only seek to strengthen the one man-one

woman union. "That's where our intention begins and ends," he said.

Jeffrey Taylor, a spokesman for Restore Equality 2010, a coalition of same-sex marriage activists seeking to repeal Proposition 8, said the coalition supports Marcotte's message but has no plans to join forces with him.

"We find it quite hilarious," Taylor said of the initiative.

Marcotte, who runs the comedy site BadMouth.net in his spare time, said he has received support from across the political spectrum. In addition to encouragement from gay marriage advocates, he has been interviewed by American Family Association, a Mississippi-based organization that contributed to last year's Yes on 8 campaign.

AUDIO

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Diaz said the first time he met Sherwood, he was searching for some speakers and their relationship has turned into several business deals.

"I have a few cars," Diaz said while laughing. "Ronnie's done a couple of them, four I think, like my black Monte Carlo. Customizing my cars is addicting, like getting tattoos. That's why I keep coming back."

Many customers have specific ideas about what they want done to their cars Sherwood said, requiring him to be only semi-creative. Like Diaz, many customers come up with ideas about radios with TVs, stereos, lights and other things they want installed in their cars. Sherwood said many customers call him after midnight with ideas.

"Customers come up with an idea and I will just give it a go," Sherwood said. "Sometimes you end up with some pretty cool stuff. It's like starting with nothing done, and when you put it all together and turn it on, you and the customer can sit back in awe and say,

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Current academic breaks inefficient, could be better

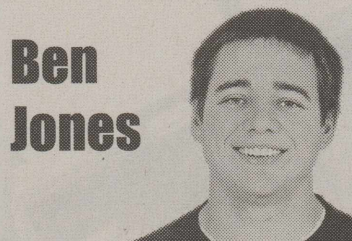
Last week, most of us went home for almost an entire week of family, food and rest. The short, five-day break served as a time for relaxation as students prepare for the week-long stretch of finals ending the fall semester.

For the most part however, this short break only creates a struggle between students and professors, both trying to establish their dominance in the classroom. But as it is, the current academic schedule isn't an ideal solution.

Under the academic schedule, students mostly go home for the week, eager to see their friends and families, sometimes for the first time since the semester began. Often though, these students skip their Monday and Tuesday classes, seeing no need to attend class for just two days.

In many cases, they're correct. Professors sometimes make class optional or cancel altogether. But other times professors schedule tests or make papers due on these days, forcing students to remain on campus. As a result, scheduling becomes horribly inconsistent, with some

Ben Jones



students able to go home for an entire week while others are forced to stay in Lubbock for the break.

Not that this schedule is unique to Tech, it is a general schedule that most schools in Texas and across the country follow.

Perhaps most inconvenient about the schedule is that students must return to campus for just two weeks, only to go back home for the month long winter break. With travel costs rising at these two times, it often becomes a financial burden for students to make the trip home and back two times in a month long stretch.

As it is, the Thanksgiving and Christmas holiday season are traditional periods students return home. For students who spend months at a time at a university away from home, these trips back

bring both comfort and relief.

Unfortunately, breaking shortly before finals does little to "refresh" students. Rather, it only serves as a distraction before the critical finals period.

There isn't exactly an ideal solution to this scheduling dilemma. The spring semester is actually longer than the fall semester, leaving little room to move these breaks around. In fact, some schools even wait until after the winter break to administer final exams, often claiming the break period gives students time to "relax and study" before the exams. But in reality, these long breaks only provide more stress to the already anxious student.

But instead of moving these breaks around, why not extend the Thanksgiving break to include the winter break, shifting this month long break until just after Christmas? Although this would leave a significant imbalance in the amount of days in each semester, the university could start the fall semester earlier and finish the spring semester sometime in April.

Not only would this simplify the traveling students take during the holidays, but it would ease final exam periods, letting students relax throughout the holiday season.

Even if Tech doesn't change its academic schedule, the extremely competitive academic world makes it difficult for students to earn important internships and jobs under the standard schedule. Whether by ending the spring semester earlier or having extended availability during the holiday season, employers would be able to hire students before most others become available, giving Tech students a competitive advantage in the hiring process.

Now, I know these changes aren't likely to happen, but as I see friends and fellow students come back for just a short period of time, I can't help but wonder if there aren't better options available.

■ Jones is a sophomore economics major from Lubbock.
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Do not be so quick to become offended

A couple of weeks ago, I wrote a column for this newspaper on protest. I basically said I believe loud protests are not as effective as demonstrations involving logical arguments and literature.

Two weeks and 26 comments later, I realize readers are angry at the column, regardless of what I had stated, simply because the initial thought involved a demonstration by a group supporting an alternative lifestyle.

The column was not intended as a criticism of the group, merely an observation on the effectiveness of their methods. However, I was accused of being a bigot and a hate monger. I realized from this experience we are a society

anxious to be offended. We want to be offended because we do not have to process arguments that oppose our own. It blurs the content of the message with our own feelings, allowing us to dismiss it immediately. Do we

keep objectivity? It is important to be able to separate feelings, especially anger, from issues. Pride and personal connection to the issue can cause this to be difficult, but if we allow emotions to filter our view of an argument, we do not allow the ideas of others to change us.

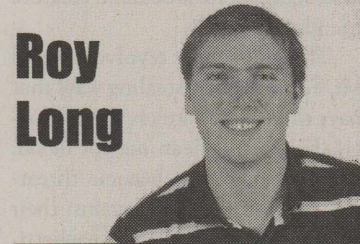
A large and easily identifiable example of this is the state of politics in the United States. Both parties are based in good and true principles, but each party allows these principles to become dominant in discussion and refuses to build on common ground.

For example, the health care debate involves the principles of social democracy and innovation in free enterprise. Both principles are important to our society and have merit. Everyone agrees reform is needed, but due to ideological differences and mental filtering the discussion has gone nowhere. It became so polarized earlier this year Sen. Harry Reid accused those who disagree with him of starting an "Astroturf" movement — an artificial, interest-group funded opposition.

It is important to separate ourselves when we feel this mental block coming. Important questions to ask are, "What is the purpose of this discussion?" or, "What is the author really saying?"

Other filters that commonly block true communication and discussion stem from the source of the argument. I know I have sometimes refused to truly listen to people because of their political ideology or past experience with that person. This is clearly wrong. A person can have good ideas

Roy Long



even if we do not agree with that person.

Democratic progress is founded on the idea of discussion. Through discussion and argumentation, we can identify the problems within our argument and the strengths thereof. This allows for ideas to become truly developed and make them more effective. If we believe one person has all the right answers (namely, ourselves), then

why are we not elected "dictator of the world for life"?

Besides missing the point of arguments, why else should we avoid being offended easily? The simple and obvious answer is that being offended easily creates a miserable life. I hate

"We want to be offended because it means we do not have to process arguments that oppose our own."

the feeling of being offended and I assume others do too. Why would we choose to feel this often?

Yet, we do choose this. Many people do not understand this last and very important truth: We are in control of our emotions. Society teaches we are animals, unable to control urges of hunger, thirst, anger, offense, lust or envy. This is entirely untrue. We can always choose our reactions to stimuli and we are always in control, unless we voluntarily give up this right.

For some reason, we do not expect of ourselves what we expect of others. We think we have the right to be upset, rude and generally mean when we ourselves are being disagreeable to the lady at the store or the man at the repair shop. What gives us this right? Nothing. We have believed the lie we can lose control in society while others cannot.

The point to this column is merely to state we are in a position of power in our own lives. We cannot, nor should we, filter messages with our emotions or preconceived notions of those who deliver those messages, even when we disagree. We also should not allow ourselves to lose control of ourselves when we encounter new information which opposes our beliefs and values. Let us engage in logical discussion to process opposing viewpoints and understand how they can improve our own ideas and perspectives of the world.

■ Long is a junior Russian and area studies major from Lubbock.
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FBI paid controversial New Jersey blogger for help

TRENTON, N.J. (AP) — A New Jersey blogger about to stand trial on charges he made death threats against federal judges apparently was paid by the FBI in its battle against domestic terrorism, according to a published report.

The Record of Bergen County reported Sunday that Hal Turner received thousands of dollars from the FBI to report on neo-Nazis and white supremacist groups and was sent undercover to Brazil.

Turner also claims the FBI coached him to make racist, anti-Semitic and other threatening statements on his radio show, but the newspaper also found many federal officials were concerned that his audience might follow up on his violence rhetoric.

The newspaper reviewed numerous government documents,

e-mails, court records and almost 20 hours of jailhouse interviews with Turner.

He goes on trial Tuesday in New York, accused of making death threats against three Chicago-based federal appeals judges after saying in Internet postings in June the judges "deserve to be killed" because they had refused to overturn handgun bans in Chicago and suburban Oak Park.

The postings included the photos and work addresses of the judges — Richard Posner, Frank Easterbrook, and William Bauer — along with a picture of the Dirksen Federal Courthouse in downtown Chicago and notations indicating the placement of "anti-truck bomb barriers."

Turner's FBI connections began in 2003 with the Newark-based

Joint Terrorism Task Force and continued on and off until this year, according to the newspaper. He claims his postings and other inflammatory statements were part of an undercover operation to ferret out violent left-wing radicals.

His lawyer, Michael Orozco, has subpoenaed Chris Christie, the former U.S. Attorney for New Jersey and the state's governor-elect, to testify on Turner's behalf.

In an affidavit filed with the subpoena, Orozco says Christie knew of Turner's activities between 2002 and 2008 while Christie held his federal post. Orozco says Christie issued a letter saying he would not prosecute Turner for his statements.

It was not known whether Christie would be called to testify.

He said last week that he had not yet seen the subpoena, but said "any advice I gave as U.S. attorney regarding prosecutions

is something I am not going to talk about publicly."

Federal prosecutors and FBI officials declined comment on Turner's claims.

"We do not comment on matters before the courts, and will not address Mr. Turner's allegations in the press," said Weysan Dun, who runs the FBI's Newark field office.

Turner said he feels double-crossed by the bureau after his June arrest.

But other documents show federal agents growing more anxious about his extremist views while valuing his ties to right-wing hate groups, the newspaper said. It noted one memo that stated Turner "has proven highly reliable and is in a unique position to provide vital information on multiple subversive domestic organizations."

In a separate case, Turner was charged with "inciting injury to persons" for urging blog readers to "take up arms" against Connecticut lawmakers who proposed legislation to give Roman Catholic lay members more control over parish finances.

Los Angeles Times Daily Crossword Puzzle

Edited by Rich Norris and Joyce Lewis

ACROSS

- Attacks
- Mandolin ridge
- Resign
- BP merger partner
- Not often seen, to Caesar
- Spreadsheet reversal command
- Defeats soundly
- Like many Keats poems
- Chilled, as coffee
- Dickens hero with "papers," as he is formally known
- Clothed
- The "A" in A.D.
- More certain than not
- Chewing gum substances
- Office furnishing
- Nut in a mixed nuts can
- Airport building
- Indian spiced tea
- Milton's "Paradise Lost," for one
- Overflow (with)
- Hitting serves past
- Potato holder
- Old Norse poetic work
- Pinkish wines

DOWN

- Hurt
- Latin love
- Chowder or bisque
- In "Macbeth," it opens with thunder and lightning
- How many models are built
- Displeased
- Paul Harvey's medium
- Guitarist Clapton
- One bringing down the ball carrier
- Surprise football plays
- Title for Remus
- Epitome
- Hot alcoholic drink
- Had the answer
- Belief suffix
- Initials on an old tube
- Derisive laughs
- "My word"
- Girls-night-out film
- Tierra Fuego
- "the season..."
- Carpentry fastener
- Suit to
- Lady's man
- Columbus Day mo.
- Parkinsonism treatment
- Greek architectural style
- Like colleges with the lowest tuition, for residents
- 1840s president beyond the need
- Annual period beyond the current fiscal one
- Washington city
- Credits as a reference
- 52 Clarinetist's need
- 1920s-'40s art style
- Spring bloomer
- French film
- Frat party containers

Monday's Puzzle Solved

By Dave Hanson 12/1/09

4 in "Macbeth," it opens with thunder and lightning

5 How many models are built

6 Displeased

7 Paul Harvey's medium

8 Guitarist Clapton

9 One bringing down the ball carrier

10 Surprise football plays

11 Title for Remus

12 Epitome

13 Hot alcoholic drink

21 Had the answer

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29 Girls-night-out film

30 Tierra Fuego

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33 Carpentry fastener

34 Suit to

35 Lady's man

37 Columbus Day mo.

40 Playboy Mansion resident, familiarly

41 Like colleges with the lowest tuition, for residents

42 1840s president beyond the need

43 Annual period beyond the current fiscal one

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48 Greek architectural style

49 Fathered

52 Clarinetist's need

53 1920s-'40s art style

54 Spring bloomer

55 French film

56 Frat party containers

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CAPTURING CLASSMATES



PHOTO BY RIANNON ROWLEY/The Daily Toreador

JACLYN DICKERSON, A junior early childhood education major from Lubbock, films classmates, from right, Caitlin Lewis, a junior Spanish major from Dallas, and junior early childhood education majors Shannan Elis, from Aledo, and Traci Sharp, from Amarillo. The students were filming a video about stereotypes Monday outside the Foreign Language building.

Muslim women search for a space at hajj

MECCA, Saudi Arabia (AP) — One of the main rites at Islam's annual hajj centers on the bravery and determination of a woman.

According to Muslim tradition, Hagar, the consort of the patriarch Abraham, ran between two hills searching for water for her dying young son after they were abandoned in the desert here. Then God brought forth a spring that still runs to this day. Every year, pilgrims at hajj re-enact her desperate search, jogging seven times between two spots in Mecca marking the hills.

It's a story that thrills Shahidah Sharif, an American Muslim on this year's pilgrimage. But something about the rite galls her: While male pilgrims are urged to rush between the two places, women are told by many clerics to do it slowly, because they are "weaker" and will tire or because jogging is considered immodest.

"We are commemorating the act of a woman, someone who made a sacrifice not just for her child but to the building of an entire city," Sharif

said, referring to the fact that the Kaaba, Islam's holiest shrine — and later Mecca itself — were built near the site of Hagar's suffering.

"And she was going through these extremes to provide for her child, without thinking about gender, and here it is now (they're) making it forbidden for women to run," said the 32-year-old from Atlanta, Georgia.

At the most ancient and sacred rituals of Islam, modern-minded women are trying to work out their place in their faith, even as they draw inspiration from it. They say the hajj gives them the strength to push for a greater voice for women in their religion.

The hajj is also an education in the broad range of attitudes toward women in Islam.

This year's pilgrimage drew some 2.4 million people from around the world, who on Monday were starting to head home after the rites ended a day earlier. They brought an extraordinary mix of cultures and backgrounds together in a small space over less than a week. Every stripe of Islam can be found — from die-hard ultra-conservatives who insist on complete separation of men and women, to Westerners accustomed to rights women have won in their countries, to Southeast Asian women pressing for the right to divorce.

Women, as well as men, say the overwhelming feeling from hajj is the spiritual experience — closeness to God, the cleansing of sins, the sense of unity and equality among Muslims. But there are occasional incidents that for some women smack of a second-class status — like lower quality facilities, less access to some sites, or the occasional scolding of a woman for laughing or talking too loudly at the holy sites.

For Kameelah Wilkerson, it was an incident at a public bathroom at one of the holy sites that struck her. As the lines of people waiting grew, men barged into the women's toilets and drove out the women. What surprised Wilkerson, born and raised in Los Angeles, was that the women said nothing.

"I was saying, 'Ladies, why y'all sitting there, move over and take your space!'"

"I was saying, 'Ladies, why y'all sitting there, move over and take your space!'"

KAMEELAH WILKERSON

LOS ANGELES NATIVE

Chelsea Clinton engaged to be married to Mezvinsky

NEW YORK (AP) — Turns out those discredited rumors of a possible Chelsea Clinton wedding last summer were mostly just premature: The 29-year old daughter of former President Bill Clinton and Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton has become engaged to her longtime boyfriend, 31-year old investment banker Marc Mezvinsky.

The couple sent an e-mail to friends Friday announcing the news, saying they were looking at a possible wedding next summer. Matt McKenna, a spokesman for the former president, confirmed the engagement Monday.

Mezvinsky is a son of former Pennsylvania Rep. Marjorie Margolies-Mezvinsky and former Iowa Rep. Ed Mezvinsky, longtime friends of the Clintons. Ed Mezvinsky was released from federal prison last

year after serving a nearly five-year sentence for wire and bank fraud.

Margolies-Mezvinsky served just one term in Congress before losing her seat in 1994 after voting in favor of President Clinton's 1993 budget, which was controversial at the time.

At the State Department Monday, Hillary Clinton had one brief encounter with reporters but took no questions. Later, her spokesman, Ian C. Kelly, was asked about the reported engagement but said it would be inappropriate for him to comment.

"I have a daughter who's around, she's 22 years old. And the last thing I would want would be for the State Department spokesman to talk about the personal plans of my daughter, so I am going to decline any comment on that,"

Kelly said.

The former first daughter and her fiance became friends as teenagers in Washington and both attended Stanford University. They now live in New York, where Mezvinsky works at G3 Capital, a Manhattan hedge fund, and Clinton is pursuing a graduate degree at Columbia University's School of Public Health.

Before returning to graduate school, Clinton worked at Avenue Capital, a hedge fund run by prominent Democratic donor Marc Lasry. She also worked at McKinsey and Company, a management consulting firm.

Since her debut on the public stage as a curly haired 12-year-old during her father's 1992 presidential campaign, Clinton has maintained a fairly low public profile. That changed in 2008, when the

press-shy Clinton stepped out on the campaign trail to help her mother's bid for the Democratic presidential nomination.

Before beginning a relationship with Mezvinsky, Clinton dated Ian Klaus, a Rhodes Scholar she met while studying international relations at Oxford in 2002. Klaus dedicated his first book, "Elvis is Titanic," about his experience teaching in the Kurdistan province of Iraq, to Clinton.

Earlier this year, Hillary Clinton was forced to tamp down speculation that her daughter and Mezvinsky were already engaged and would marry in August on Martha's Vineyard. President Barack Obama, who was vacationing on the island at the time, was rumored to be on the guest list.

Plan to breed lab monkeys splits town

GUAYAMA, Puerto Rico (AP) — Puerto Rico has such a bad history with research monkeys running amok that some residents are stunned that its government has tentatively approved a plan to import and breed thousands of primates for sale to U.S. researchers.

Bioculture Ltd., with facilities at 19 sites around the world, has secured construction permits and hopes to begin operating next summer in Guayama, a small, depressed mountain district in southeastern Puerto Rico.

They want to turn the Caribbean territory into a major supplier of primates, much to the dismay of islanders already dealing with a plague of patas monkeys — descendants of lab escapees that run through backyards, stop traffic and destroy crops.

The company, based in the African island nation of Mauritius, says the operation will employ at least 50 people and buy fruit from local farmers, an important consideration on an island where unemployment

is nearly 16 percent.

"This will help many people in the community," said Olga Colon, a local school principal who has collected 300 signatures in support of the facility. She said Bioculture has pledged to buy supplies for her school.

But the project is opposed by many — from Guayama Mayor Glorimari Jaime to Puerto Rican actor Benicio del Toro, who says it's unethical to breed monkeys for research, and renowned primatologist Jane Goodall.

"We know now that monkeys have minds, personalities, and, above all, they have feelings," Goodall said during a recent visit to Puerto Rico. "What we do for monkeys in medical research — if you were a monkey, it would be torture."

Local residents have filed a lawsuit supported by People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals that says Bioculture failed to submit a full environmental impact statement or hold public hearings.

BIZ WEEKLY

Actor-comedian Tom Arnold weds for 4th time

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Tom Arnold is married again.

Arnold's spokeswoman, Staci Wolfe, said the "True Lies" and "Happy Endings" actor-comedian wed Ashley Grossman on Saturday in Maui.

It is Arnold's fourth marriage. He was first married to actress-

comedian Roseanne Barr from 1990 to 1994. He was married to second wife Julie Lynne Champnella from 1995 to 1999 and third wife Shelby Roos from 2002 to 2008.

Arnold currently hosts the weekly "Laughing With The Stars" comedy show at The Laugh Factory in Los Angeles.

Hasselhoff ex-wife arrested in LA on DUI charge

LOS ANGELES (AP) — David Hasselhoff's ex-wife has been arrested on suspicion of drunken driving in Los Angeles.

The California Highway Patrol said Sunday that Pamela Bach was pulled over Saturday night just south of U.S. 101 on Laurel Canyon Boulevard. She was booked at the LAPD's Van Nuys jail and released.

The patrol says Bach showed blood alcohol levels of .14 and .13 on a breathalyzer test. California's legal limit is .08.

Bach was charged with misdemeanor hit-and-run in 2007, but the charges were dropped when she agreed to pay minor damages to the woman whose car

she hit. She pleaded no contest to a drunken driving charge in August and was placed on three years of informal probation, court records show.

She was also ordered to go to a treatment program and not drive with any measurable amount of alcohol in her blood.

A phone message left for Bach's attorney, Ronald D. Hedding, was not immediately returned Monday. She is scheduled to appear in court on Dec. 24.

Bach was married to Hasselhoff for 16 years until he filed for divorce in 2006. She appeared as a cafe owner in several episodes of Hasselhoff's series, "Baywatch."

Walken comes to Broadway in new play

NEW YORK (AP) — How's this for an intriguing role?

Christopher Walken will play a man searching for his missing hand in "A Behanding in Spokane," Martin McDonagh's black comedy opening March 4 on Broadway.

Producer Robert Fox says Walken will be joined by Anthony Mackie, Sam Rockwell and Zoe Kazan in the play, which begins previews Feb. 15 at the Gerald Schoenfeld Theatre. John

Crowley directs.

Walken won an Oscar for his role in "The Deer Hunter." The 66-year-old actor has also appeared in the films "Annie Hall," "Pennies From Heaven," "Wedding Crashers" and the musical version of "Hairspray."

McDonagh is the author of the Tony-nominated plays "The Beauty Queen of Leenane (leen-AN)," "The Lonesome West" and "The Pillowman."

Kelsey Grammer is set for Broadway's 'La Cage'

NEW YORK (AP) — From television's favorite psychiatrist to the owner of a French Riviera nightclub: Kelsey Grammer is set to star on Broadway in "La Cage aux Folles" (lah-KAJ'-oh-fahl) next spring.

Producer Sonia Friedman says a revival of the 1983 Jerry Herman-Harvey Fierstein (fire-STEEN') musical will open April 18 at the Longacre Theatre. It's based on

the current hit London production and will feature that show's British star, Douglas Hodge. The director is Terry Johnson.

"La Cage" concerns the relationship between the club owner, portrayed by Grammer, and its drag star, the role played by Hodge.

Grammer, 54, played Dr. Frasier Crane on the NBC comedy series "Frasier" for 11 seasons.

Jackson's 'This Is It' out on DVD in January

NEW YORK (AP) — "Michael Jackson's This Is It," a film about the King of Pop's final rehearsals before his death, will be released on DVD on Jan. 26, 2010.

The DVD release was announced Monday by Sony Pictures Home Entertainment.

"This Is It" captures Jackson's final performances as he rehearsed for his concerts in London. He

died June 25, just weeks before his marathon of 50 concerts was to begin.

The DVD includes two documentaries, "Staging the Return: Beyond the Show" and "Staging the Return: The Adventure Begins," which highlight Jackson as he prepared for the concerts.

The film has grossed more than \$70 million in the United States.

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Sharpe nabs second Big 12 honor this season

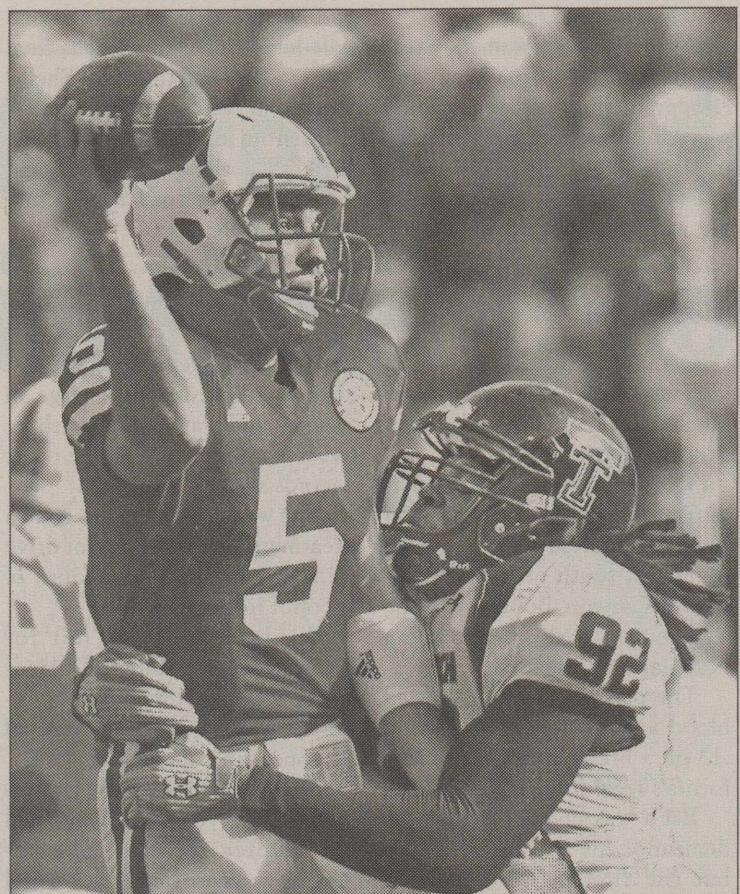


PHOTO BY KARL ANDERSON/The Daily Toreador

NEBRASKA QUARTERBACK ZAC Lee grounds the ball before he is tackled by Texas Tech defensive end Brandon Sharpe during the Red Raiders' 31-10 victory against Nebraska on Oct. 17 in Lincoln, Neb.

By ADAM COLEMAN
SPORTS EDITOR

Gaining more notoriety as the 2009 season continued, Texas Tech defensive end Brandon Sharpe keeps piling up the honors.

The senior was named the Big 12 Conference Co-Defensive Player of the Week for the second time this season, nabbing the honor in his final regular-season game as a Red Raider.

In the Red Raiders' 20-13 win against Baylor on Saturday in Arlington in Cowboys Stadium, Sharpe had five solo tackles, two sacks and a forced fumble.

The sacks pushed Sharpe past Adell Duckett for most by a Red Raider in a single season with 15. Duckett set the record with 14 in 2003.

While the record and honors are nice, Tech coach Mike Leach said Sharpe should thank his teammates for allowing him to have the opportunities for sacks.

"As far as how ever many sacks he had, just think if the first four games were like that really," he said after Saturday's game. "I think it's also really complimented by

Daniel Howard.

"What really helps his job and makes it easier is the fact that there's a lot of heat on that other side with Daniel Howard. We had a situation like that a couple years back when we had (Aaron) Hunt and Duckett. When we had Aaron Hunt and Adell Duckett on either side, well it's a lot different than just having one."

Sharpe did all this while only getting one sack through the first four games of the season, one of which — Sept. 19 at Texas — he did not play in.

The first time Sharpe was named Big 12 Co-Defensive Player of the Week was on Oct. 19 following

the Nebraska game where he had a season-high four sacks.

This time he earns the honor along with Colorado cornerback Cha'pelle Brown. It's also the fifth time a Red Raider earned a Big 12 Player of the Week honor this season. The other three belong to Taylor Potts, Steven Sheffield and Baron Batch.

Sharpe has a chance to put his record a little more out of reach with Tech's bowl game approaching.

He also turned a few more heads in the middle of the season, considering he was added to the Ted Hendricks Award Watch List on Nov. 17. The award recognizes the top defensive end in the nation.

What probably makes Sharpe's season remarkable is the fact he did not play much in 2008.

He played behind Brandon Williams — who opted to the NFL as a junior — and McKinner Dixon.

Sharpe played in 10 games in 2008, but only came away with three solo tackles and a sack. He had four solo tackles in his career entering the 2009 season.

Sharpe and other players were unavailable Monday, with it usually being an off day and Tech waiting to see which bowl it will be in.

Tech coach Ruffin McNeill said he was not surprised at Sharpe's emergence and he refrained from commenting on his possible future in the NFL, wanting to keep focus on what the senior is doing now.

"The thing that people need to realize about these kind of records is without the other guys, none of it would be possible," McNeill said. "Defensive line getting inside pressure, the secondary, linebackers having great coverage. Then great coverage means great pass rush. I think the record that Brandon has set is a great compliment to his teammates."

»adam.coleman@ttu.edu

Kansas near unanimous No. 1 in AP poll

(AP) — Only once before has The Associated Press college basketball poll changed as much as it did Monday.

Only once before has Portland been in the Top 25.

The Pilots were among a receding seven teams to move into the rankings Monday, their first appearance in the poll since February 1959.

"I heard that team was quite a squad," Portland coach Eric Reveno said with a laugh, "it's been a while."

Kansas, which had two easy wins last week, was No. 1 for the fourth straight poll, this time falling just two votes of being unanimous, while Texas and Villanova both moved up one spot to second and third.

The Jayhawks (5-0) had 63 first-place votes from the national media panel, while Texas (5-0), which matched the highest ranking in school history, and No. 8 Syracuse (6-0) both were No. 1 on one ballot.

Texas has been ranked No. 2 for a total of six weeks, the last time early in 2005-06.

This the first time the Big 12, which started in 1996-97, has had the top two ranked teams. The last time it happened to the Big Eight was March 6, 1990, when Oklahoma was No. 1 and Kansas was No. 2.

It happened twice last season — the Big East had Pittsburgh and

Connecticut and the Atlantic Coast Conference had Wake Forest and Duke.

Purdue moved from sixth to fourth and was followed by Kentucky, Duke, West Virginia, Syracuse, Michigan State and North Carolina.

Michigan State (5-1), which had been No. 2 in the previous polls, dropped to ninth after losing 77-74 to Florida. At No. 13, the Gators were the highest ranked of the seven newcomers.

The only team seven new teams entered the poll was Dec. 13, 1955, when it was still a Top 20.

Florida, No. 17 Gonzaga and No. 21 Florida State were all ranked last season, while No. 19 Texas A&M was last rated in 2007-08, No. 24 UNLV in 2006-07 and No. 22 Cincinnati in 2005-06. Then there was Portland's long absence.

The Pilots (5-1) burst onto the

national scene with a 74-47 dismantling of UCLA in the first round of the 76 Classic that was followed by a 61-56 semifinal win over then-No. 22 Minnesota and an 84-66 loss to West Virginia in the title game.

"I felt like we could compete. I know and still know our team is very solid and can compete with a lot of talented teams and this weekend was no different," Reveno said. "I also knew we could have competed and not win games, so to really play well against UCLA and get them out of sorts was a great start."

Having a number in front of their name isn't going to change the Pilots much, according to their coach.

"It definitely is something that can be distracting but we have a veteran team and they know what it took to

get here and it won't take much to remind them what it takes to stay successful," Reveno said.

"This basically just confirms the progress we're making. It's not an accomplishment in and of itself," he said. "This is definitely a milestone if you want to be a team that can compete in the West Coast Conference and be an NCAA tournament team. This is a marker you should see along the journey."

Tennessee was 11th followed by Washington, Florida, Connecticut, Ohio State, Georgetown, Gonzaga, Clemson, Texas A&M and Louisville. The last five ranked teams were Florida State, Cincinnati, Butler, UNLV and Portland.

Michigan, which fell from 15th after losing to Marquette and Alabama in the Old Spice Classic, was the highest ranked team to drop out of the poll. The others were ranked from 20th through 25th: Illinois, Maryland, Minnesota, Notre Dame, Vanderbilt and Oklahoma. All the teams that fell out lost two games last week except Notre Dame and Vanderbilt, which lost one each.

Gonzaga and Portland give the WCC two ranked teams just as it for one week last season when Gonzaga and Saint Mary's were in the poll together.

"I know and still know our team is very solid and can compete with a lot of talented teams and this weekend was no different."

ERIC REVENO
PORTLAND HEAD COACH

Pelini: Huskers in Big 12 title game a year late

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — Nebraska coach Bo Pelini has led the No. 21 Cornhuskers to a second straight nine-win season and into Saturday's Big 12 championship game against No. 3 Texas.

An upset of the Longhorns at Cowboys Stadium in Arlington, Texas, would put Nebraska in a BCS bowl just two years after the Huskers hit bottom in Bill Callahan's final year. Some might say reaching the Big 12 title game puts Pelini's rebuilding job right on schedule.

"Well," Pelini said Monday, "it's behind schedule as far as I'm concerned because I was hoping to get there last year and it just didn't happen."

The Huskers tied Missouri for first place in the North Division in 2008 but lost the head-to-head meeting. This year, Nebraska (9-3, 6-2) won the North

by two games.

Since a two-week stretch in which the Huskers suffered shocking losses at home to Texas Tech and Iowa State, they've rolled off five straight wins. One of the nation's best defenses and strong special teams have covered for a scuffling offense that ranks 92nd in the nation.

"Our best football is still out there to be played," Pelini said. "At times we're playing really well, other times we're not as consistent. On any given day you have to be ready to do what's necessary to win a football game, depending on the circumstances. We've been able to rise up and get that done, and we need to continue to do that Saturday night."

The Huskers are two-touchdown underdogs. Regardless of the outcome, the 41-year-old Pelini has done what athletic

director Tom Osborne asked of him.

Osborne wanted a coach with strong defensive credentials, one who could motivate and inspire confidence in the players and one who understands the tradition of the program and its importance to the state.

Pelini, the defensive coordinator at Nebraska in 2003 and later at Oklahoma and LSU, has overseen the transformation of the moribund 2007 defense into a unit that this year ranked in the top 10 most of the season and was led by Outland Trophy and Lombardi Award finalist Ndamukong Suh.

Practices are much more rigorous than they were under Callahan, who gave starters most of the work and emphasized repetition over teaching.

Pelini also has a grasp of the Nebraska tradition, which includes an NCAA-record 304 consecutive sellouts, an emphasis on winning without shortcuts and a reverence for the walk-on program developed by Bob Devaney and fostered by Osborne.

Texas coach Mack Brown said Nebraska's glorious past made it difficult for him to believe the Huskers would remain irrelevant for long on the national scene. And the coach said no one should forget that the Huskers went 9-5 in 2006 and played in the Big 12 championship game.

"Nebraska is one of those programs that's never going to be out of sight and mind long," Brown said. "It's one of those helmets — when you see the 'N' or the Longhorn on it, everybody knows who they are. You don't have to ask who is playing this weekend."

Pelini said his job has been made easier by the quality of Nebraska's facilities and the administration's support. But he still had to repair the psychological damage from a steady diet of beatdowns in 2007 — 41-6 to Missouri, 45-14 to Oklahoma State, 76-39 to Kansas.

The players began understanding and executing Pelini's defensive system by the middle of last season, and the Huskers won six of their last seven games, including an impressive win over Clemson in the Gator Bowl.

"I believe in culture and how you go about things — not necessarily what you do but how you do it," Pelini said. "You have to build trust between players and coaches, build rapport and, beyond that, teach them well. We've been able to do that."

Now the Huskers are in position to win their first conference title since 1999.

SPORT SHORTS

Giants place LB Antonio Pierce on injured reserve

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. (AP) — The slumping New York Giants placed linebacker Antonio Pierce on injured reserve Monday with a bulging disk in his neck, ending the season for one of their defensive leaders.

Pierce has missed two games since being ruled out indefinitely after an MRI exam Nov. 20 revealed the bulging disk. The Giants (6-5) decided to put Pierce on IR after he received a second opinion from Dr. Robert Watkins, an orthopedic surgeon based in Los Angeles.

The 31-year-old Pierce, in his ninth NFL season and fifth with the

Giants, has 55 tackles, one sack and one forced fumble in nine games this season.

New York, which has lost five of six since opening the season 5-0, hosts rival Dallas on Sunday is also dealing with an injury to quarterback Eli Manning, who has a stress reaction in his right foot.

Pierce played 15 games last season after appearing in all 16 games in each of the previous two seasons. He has led the Giants in tackles for the past three seasons and missed only four regular-season games since leaving the Washington Redskins to join the Giants.

Stoops brothers would rather not meet in bowl

TUCSON, Ariz. (AP) — Memo to the Sun Bowl: the Stoops brothers would prefer not to face each other in El Paso.

With speculation swirling about Arizona's bowl destination, Mike Stoops said he hopes the Wildcats won't have to play brother Bob Stoops' Oklahoma Sooners in the Sun Bowl, one of two bowls pitting the Pac-10 and Big 12.

Mike Stoops said a bowl matchup between Arizona (7-4, 5-3 Pac-10) and Oklahoma (7-5, 5-3 Big 12) would be "something we would try to avoid at all costs."

"I don't think it would be fun for either one of us," Mike Stoops said at his weekly campus news

conference on Monday. "I think it would be very uncomfortable for probably everyone."

"That wouldn't be ideal for us, but obviously you've got to look beyond that for the possibilities," he said. "So we'll cross that bridge Sunday."

Pac-10 bowl pairings are expected to be announced on Sunday.

Speaking in Norman, Okla., Bob Stoops echoed his brother's comments.

"We would both prefer not to," Bob Stoops said. "That's it. It isn't a big deal. If we have to, we have to. It's not a big deal. That's not a factor in the bowl process."

Broyles Award finalists named

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (AP) — Florida defensive coordinator Charlie Strong is one of five finalists for the Broyles Award, which goes to the nation's top assistant coach.

None of the finalists has lost a game this season. The others are: Alabama defensive coordinator Kirby Smart, Boise State offensive coordinator Bryan Harsin, Cincinnati offensive coordinator Jeff Quinn and Texas Christian defen-

sive coordinator Dick Bumpas.

The winner will be announced Dec. 8 in Little Rock. The Broyles Award is named for former Arkansas coach Frank Broyles. More than 25 of his assistants became head coaches. They include Joe Gibbs, Jimmy Johnson and Johnny Majors.

Strong and Bumpas were finalists a year ago, when Oklahoma offensive coordinator Kevin Wilson won the award.

Dayton flies into Top 25, UConn still No. 1

(AP) — Dayton jumped into the AP women's basketball Top 25 for the first time in school history, while Connecticut remained a unanimous No. 1 for the 19th consecutive poll.

The 25th-ranked Flyers (5-1) will get their first test as a Top 25 team Monday night at Illinois-Chicago. Coach Jim Jabir was thrilled his team made the poll.

"That's awesome," Jabir said. "Seven years ago we won three games. Any coach pours their heart and soul into their program and to gain that kind of recognition for our school is special. My 12-year-old son Jackson would check every day where

we were in the rankings. Now he'll see us there."

The Huskies received all 40 first-place votes Monday from the national media panel. They have been the AP's top team the past 28 polls.

The first nine teams remained the same for a third straight week after going a combined 23-0 with a 29-point average margin of victory last week. Connecticut eased through another week, winning the WBCA Classic.

The Huskies routed Hofstra, Richmond, and Clemson by an average of 44 points.

Cowboys sign 2, drop 1 from practice squad

IRVING (AP) — The Dallas Cowboys have signed defensive back Marquis Floyd and linebacker Donovan Woods to their practice squad.

Dallas also Monday cut cornerback Jamar Love from its practice squad only three weeks

after signing him.

Woods, who is from Oklahoma State, played one game this season for the Pittsburgh Steelers before he was cut last week. Floyd was on Cleveland's practice squad earlier this season.

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Notre Dame fires Weis after another dismal season

SOUTH BEND, Ind. (AP) — Charlie Weis arrived at Notre Dame flashing Super Bowl rings and talking about outsmarting opponents. He leaves one of college football's most prestigious programs without even matching the record of the two men who were fired before him.

Athletic director Jack Swarbrick announced the decision to fire Weis on Monday.

"For many of you who may have thought that was a foregone conclusion, I would say to you that the decision was harder than you might have thought, principally because of the man it involved," Swarbrick said during a news conference on campus.

Swarbrick said there was a huge gulf between the coach's brash image and personal style. But he still recommended to the Rev. John Jenkins, Notre Dame's president, on Sunday night that Weis be let go with six years left on his contract. Weis finishes with a 35-27 record in five

seasons, among the worst of any Fighting Irish coach.

"He will go on to have great success. He'll add some Super Bowl rings to the ones he already has as a successful coordinator in the NFL and we will miss him," Swarbrick said. "But for us it's time to move forward. It's time to move forward because it is critical to this program and to its place in the university and college football that we compete at the highest level. That we compete for national championships."

Assistant head coach Rob Ianello will step in for Weis until a new coach is hired.

The Fighting Irish (6-6) are eligible to play in a bowl game, but Swarbrick has said he wants to hear from the players before deciding if Notre Dame will go to a minor postseason game.

Following a 6-2 start this season, Notre Dame began a winless November with the second upset by Navy in three years. Then came losses to Pitts-

burgh and to Connecticut in double overtime on senior day in South Bend.

By the time the Irish lost their season-finale to Stanford on Saturday, it seemed inevitable Weis would be gone.

Speculation about possible replacements for Weis has been rampant for weeks. Among the top names mentioned, Florida's Urban Meyer and Oklahoma's Bob Stoops already have said they plan to stay where they are. Speaking on a conference call

Monday, Stoops said: "I'm going to be at Oklahoma next year, so I can't be at two places at once."

Cincinnati's Brian Kelly has also been mentioned, along with Stanford's Jim Harbaugh and TCU's Gary Patterson.

A self-confident offensive coordinator with the NFL champion New England Patriots when he was hired, Weis raised Irish expectations with back-to-back appearances in BCS bowl games in his first two seasons. Since then, though, Notre Dame

has gone 16-21 — the most losses by the Irish in a three-year span.

Weis' record is worse than his two predecessors, Tyrone Willingham and Bob Davie, who also were fired. Notre Dame is now looking to hire its fifth coach this decade.

Weis received a new 10-year contract midway through his first season, shortly after a thriller against top-ranked USC that ended in a 34-31 Notre Dame loss.

Even though the Irish fell short, playing nearly even with Matt Leinar, Reggie Bush and the mighty Trojans had the Notre Dame faithful hopeful they had found a coach capable of returning the program to its past glories. The Fighting Irish have won eight AP national titles, more than any other school, but none since 1988.

Yet the USC loss turned out to be the highlight of Weis' tenure. Because it began so promisingly, Weis' final three seasons in South Bend were especially

painful for the legion of Fighting Irish supporters nationwide.

"There were a lot of expectations he didn't live up to. He admitted to that," said former Notre Dame wide receiver David Grimes, who played four seasons for Weis and was on campus working out Monday. "But it's sad to see."

With Brady Quinn, Jeff Samardzija and other key players gone in 2007, the Irish started 0-5 for the first time in school history. They finished 3-9, leaving Weis one loss shy of matching Davie's school record of 16 losses in his first three seasons.

Most shocking, though, was the fact the Irish finished last in the NCAA in total offense just three years after Weis said at his introductory news conference that when it comes to X's and O's "we have the greatest advantage."

The past two seasons the Irish have collapsed in November. They got off to a 5-2 start before going 1-4 down the stretch a year ago, before ending this

Williams fined record \$82,500 for US Open tirade

Serena Williams was fined a record \$82,500 for her tirade at a U.S. Open line judge and could be suspended from that tournament if she has another "major offense" at any Grand Slam in the next two years.

Grand Slam administrator Bill Babcock's ruling was released Monday, and he said Williams faces a "probationary period" at tennis' four major championships in 2010 and 2011. If she has another "major offense" at a Grand Slam tournament in that time, the fine would increase to \$175,000 and she would be barred from the following U.S. Open.

"But if she does not have another offense in the next two years, the suspension is lifted," Babcock said in a telephone interview from London.

He said Williams is handing over \$82,500 right now to the Grand Slam committee, already far more than the previous highest fine for a Grand Slam offense. In 1995, Jeff Tarango stormed off the court at

Wimbledon and accused the chair umpire of showing favoritism to certain players in exchange for their friendship. Tarango was fined a total of \$43,756, which was reduced to \$28,256 on appeal, and barred from Wimbledon the next year.

Williams lashed out at a lineswoman after a foot-fault call at the end of her semifinal loss to eventual champion Kim Clijsters at the U.S. Open in September. It was a profanity-laced, finger-pointing, racket-brandishing display in which Williams approached the official with what U.S. Open tournament director Jim Curley called at the time "a threatening manner."

"I am thankful that we now have closure on the incident and we can all move forward," Williams said in a statement released Monday by her publicist. "I am back in training in preparation for next season and I continue to be grateful for all of the support from my fans and the tennis community."

She earned \$350,000 by reaching the U.S. Open singles semifinals, part of her more than \$6.5 million in prize money in 2009, a single-season record for women's tennis. Her career prize money tops \$28 million.

The American is an 11-time Grand Slam singles champion and ended the 2009 season at No. 1 in the WTA rankings.

Williams' outburst drew a \$10,000 fine from the U.S. Tennis Association in September — the maximum onsite penalty a tennis player can face. But because it happened at a Grand Slam tournament, Babcock was charged with investigating whether further punishment was merited.

He concluded that Williams violated the "major offense" rule for "aggravated behavior." The Grand Slam committee — with one representative from each of the sport's four major championships, including USTA president Lucy Garvin — approved his decision Saturday.

Woods withdraws from tourney

THOUSAND OAKS, Calif. (AP) — Tiger Woods still isn't talking. Now he's not playing, either.

Woods withdrew Monday from his own golf tournament, citing injuries from a car crash near his Florida home. His decision comes as questions continue to mount regarding what exactly happened in the wee hours of the morning last Friday — questions that most certainly would have been asked of him had he played.

The world's No. 1 golfer posted a statement on his Web site saying that unspecified injuries prevented him from playing in the Chevron World Challenge. He had been scheduled to hold a press conference Tuesday for the tournament, which he hosts annually for a small, invited, field.

"I am extremely disappointed that I will not be at my tournament this week," Woods said. "I am certain it will be an outstanding event and I'm very sorry that I can't be there."

Tournament officials said fans who

bought advance tickets with the hope of seeing Woods could get refunds beginning next week. Those who keep their tickets will get a 20 percent discount when they buy them next year.

Woods sustained cuts and bruises when he crashed his SUV into a fire hydrant and a tree at 2:25 a.m., outside his home in an exclusive, gated community near Orlando. He was treated and released from a hospital, and has not been seen in public since.

By skipping the tournament, Woods will escape having to face TV cameras and a horde of media seeking more details about the smashup. The tournament was to be the last of the year for Woods anyway, and he did not say when or where he would make his return next year.

The first tournament of the 2010 PGA Tour is the SBS Championship in Hawaii, an event for winners from the previous year, beginning Jan. 7, but Woods wasn't expected to be there. He's more likely to play at Torrey Pines in La

Jolla, Calif., the week of Jan. 25.

Woods released a statement Sunday saying the accident was his fault and asked that it remain "a private matter." But with the Florida Highway Patrol still investigating and the media in full pursuit, Woods may not get his way.

Woods even faced questions from fans who left comments on his Web site. Most voiced support for him, but some said he should address the questions about his own actions and those of his wife, Elin Nordegren, before and after the accident.

Woods hasn't answered questions from Florida troopers, either, turning them down three days in a row when they came to his house.

Four cars were parked in Woods' driveway Monday, but no lights appeared to be on inside. A new fire hydrant had already replaced the one that Woods plowed into. A dirt hole and an orange barricade remained in the old hydrant's place.

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FEMALE SUBLEASER: Gateway Apartments, \$480/month. January-May, all bills/last month's rent paid! Lease can be adjusted, contact for details. Sign before December 10th, I'll give you \$100 cash. Call/text 469-323-9002.

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SPORTS

PAGE 8
TUESDAY, DEC. 1, 2009

Bowl scenarios shaping up for Red Raiders

By ALEX YBARRA
MANAGING EDITOR

Mike Leach is like Tiger Woods when it comes to discussing injuries: private. However, the Texas Tech coach is a bit more creative.

After his team beat Baylor 20-13 Saturday, he came up with a fantasy-filled world that lies deep below the Tech campus, where there is a lair that keeps his injury secrets from the media.

"You have to camp along the way, it's like something out of the 'Lord of the Rings,'" he said. "The elves have got the key and unless you can kill a whole bunch of dwarves to get there, you'll never get to it. And you have to have the invisible ring anyway to get through the circle of fire where even Harry Potter can't get it."

"The chances of that ever being revealed to anybody in this room is highly unlikely."

Since injuries can't be debated, there are always bowl games. And although it's not necessarily a deciding factor, Leach is a hot commodity come bowl season. He's quirky. He's a quote machine. And as Joe Linson, a board member for the Valero Alamo Bowl summed it up, "he goes beyond football," and "he sells tickets."

Where those tickets end up leading remains up in the air.

Despite dropping must-wins against Houston and Texas A&M, the Red Raiders held on for an 8-4 overall and 5-3 record in Big 12 Conference play. And now that means they'll be awaiting a bowl announcement for the 10th time in as many seasons under Leach.

While the scenarios are a little clearer after this past weekend's slate of games, there remains a bit of wait-and-see time.

With Oklahoma knocking off No. 12 Oklahoma State in a 27-0 loss, the Cowboys' chances at an at-large bid to the Fiesta Bowl were shattered.

That has a domino effect on the rest of the conference now that Oklahoma State most likely slides down to the Cotton Bowl.

In Tech's case, the most likely location for postseason football is at the Alamo Bowl in San Antonio. But depending on the outcome of the Big 12 Championship game between Texas and Nebraska, there remains a slight possibility for Tech to end up in the Pacific Life Holiday Bowl in San Diego.

Rick Hill, vice president of marketing for the Alamo Bowl, said Tech and Oklahoma share the best chance of being available and chosen for the game. The Sooners are 7-5 overall after beating OSU, but they lost to Tech 41-13 in Lubbock two weeks ago.

As for the Big Ten Conference opponent in the Alamo Bowl, Hill said the two being considered are Michigan State or Minnesota. The reasoning behind that assumption is Ohio State playing in the Rose Bowl and either Iowa or Penn State earning an at-large bid. Hill said should Nebraska beat Texas, then that leaves an opening for Wisconsin or Northwestern to be selected in the

Alamo Bowl.

The committee discussed a possible rematch between Tech and Minnesota, along with other pairings, considering the two teams delivered an epic battle in the 2006 Insight Bowl, Hill said. The Red Raiders erased a 35-point deficit, forcing overtime on a game-tying 52-yard field goal as time expired and sealing one of the greatest bowl comebacks in history with a touchdown in overtime.

"That's one thing that's come up," he said. "That was obviously an unbelievable comeback for the Red Raiders. For Minnesota, that was a different regime. But they also have some ties with

"Most teams that have played three quarterbacks have lost miserably, and we still typically move the ball pretty well."

MIKE LEACH
HEAD COACH
TEXAS TECH

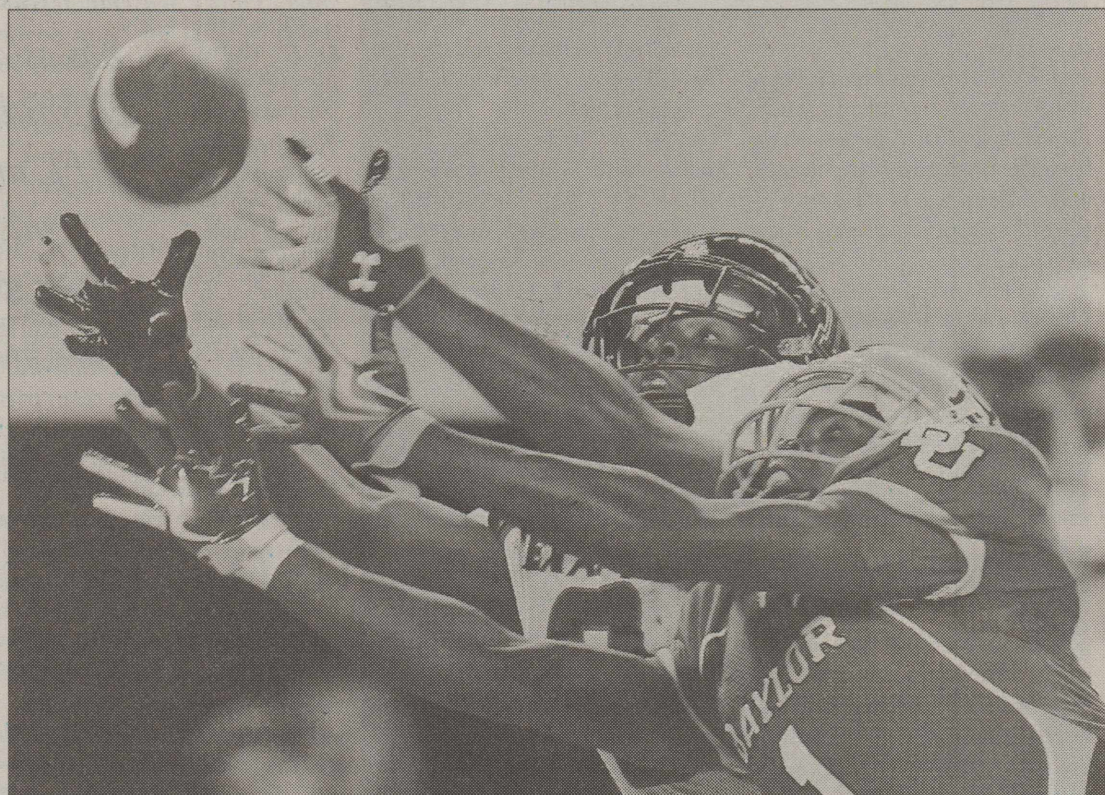


PHOTO BY KARL ANDERSON/The Daily Toreador
TEXAS TECH DEFENSIVE back Jamar Wall nearly intercepts a pass intended for Baylor wide receiver Kendall Wright during Texas Tech's 20-13 victory against Baylor on Saturday at Cowboys Stadium in Arlington.

record and a 4-4 record in conference play.

Neville said the three primary selection factors are overall, conference and head-to-head records. And based on the fact Tech has a better record than Missouri and Oklahoma, as well as a win against the Sooners, the Red Raiders would have a good chance of going to San Diego.

"Texas Tech having a very exciting brand of football, that goes a long way," Neville said. "If we matched them up against another team with a lot of offensive firepower, that would be a lot of fun."

The last time Tech was in the Holiday Bowl, the Red Raiders upset No. 4 California, who was left out of a BCS bowl. And travel wasn't an

issue then, a sellout crowd of 63,711 was on hand to watch.

Possible Pac-10 Conference opponents for whatever Big 12 team reaches the Holiday Bowl range anywhere from Oregon State, Oregon, USC, Arizona, Stanford and Cal. If the Beavers beat the Ducks on Thursday, Oregon State — by way of finishing second in the conference — is locked in at the Holiday Bowl.

But if Oregon wins and advances to the Rose Bowl, the selection committee can choose from that aforementioned list of teams so long as each wins its respective games.

Now if everything goes according as planned in the Big 12 title game — the Longhorns are double-digit

favorites — Neville said, "We would be looking at taking Nebraska," considering it would be champion of the north with a 9-4 record.

Wherever Tech ends up, it's clear the Red Raiders finished stronger than last season after starting slower. But considering Leach has shuffled quarterbacks more than he wanders off an mystical tangents, it's been a "good" season from his standpoint.

"Most teams that have played three quarterbacks have lost miserably, and we still typically move the ball pretty well," he said. "Shoot, we're four games better than some of (the media) had us and four is quite a bit because you only play 12."

>>> daniel.ybarra@ttu.edu

Texans trying to stay in playoff hunt

HOUSTON (AP) — For any chance at that elusive first playoff berth, the Houston Texans will probably need to win each of their five remaining games.

First up is a trip to Jacksonville, where the Texans (5-6) will have to shake off their third straight tough loss to get back on track. A win there would be key with the Jaguars one game ahead of Houston in the AFC South standings.

Three of Houston's five remaining games are against teams with losing records, but the Texans close the regular season against New England.

"I think regardless of who we're playing we've got to find another level of focus ... because obviously the one we've had the last few weeks hasn't gotten us a W," coach Gary Kubiak said. "We've got to find a way to win our sixth game."

Houston has returned to its usual place in the AFC South cellar after Tennessee won its fifth straight on Sunday following an 0-6 start. The Titans have the same record as Houston but lead in the standings because of a better division record.

Defensive end Antonio Smith said he still believes the team

can make the playoffs and the Texans have to band together to get it done.

"There is no tomorrow," he said. "You can't lose any more games, so what else can you do but hope and believe that you can win?"

Another key to turning things around will be looking ahead instead of dwelling on the losing streak.

"We just have to focus on the future," Mario Williams said. "We're all going to have to have a short memory of this."

While the players seem focused on staying in the playoff hunt, Kubiak isn't looking past Jacksonville, which beat Houston 31-24 in Week 3.

"We've got to stay focused on who we're playing and not look at the big picture, not look at the last five, just stay focused on the next game and try to find a way to fix our issues," he said.

Houston's issues are many this week. The Texans are working to put together a complete game after leading the Colts by 17 in the first half before falling apart after halftime in the 35-27 defeat on Sunday.

The Texans had three second-half turnovers against Indianapo-

lis and the defense allowed 28 points in the last two quarters. Houston was trailing by one point in the fourth quarter when Matt Schaub threw an interception for a touchdown. On the following drive, he was sacked and lost a fumble that set up another Indianapolis touchdown that put the game out of reach.

The most recent loss followed a pair of close defeats that came after Kris Brown missed field goals that would have forced overtime.

"What happened in the second half I'm very, very concerned about because I see this game a little bit different than I see the last two," Kubiak said. "I just don't like the way we played in the second half, our attention to detail, the little things that we did right in the first half we didn't do right in the second half. The mistakes that we made, that hasn't been us."

Kubiak said he will look to his leaders to take charge and get things going in the right direction.

"When you have adversity, people either get strong or weak and we need a lot of strong people around here right now," he said. "We need some guys to step up as we move forward."

UT defense limping into Big 12 title game

AUSTIN (AP) — The Texas swagger has been staggered — at least on defense.

For 11 games, the Texas defense walked and played like a dominant unit, and ranked among the best in the country. Opponents couldn't run, few could pass.

Then Texas A&M pushed them all over the field on Thanksgiving night, right up to the breaking point before the Longhorns pulled out a 49-39 victory to keep their unbeaten season intact.

Now No. 2 Texas (12-0) have to hope its defense isn't facing a crisis in confidence heading into Saturday's Big 12 championship game against Nebraska (9-3).

Coach Mack Brown predicts just the opposite.

"They will play their tails off," Brown said Monday. "They were mad. They are prideful kids. They were happy we won but they knew it was not good."

The Longhorns could hardly do anything right against A&M quarterback Jerrod Johnson, who picked them apart for 342 yards passing and four touchdowns and 97 yards rushing.

Only Texas Tech's Taylor Potts passed for more yards

against Texas this season. Johnson's rushing total was the most by any player against the Longhorns this season and more than nine teams had against Texas.

Johnson put Texas on its heels with a 70-yard touchdown pass to Jeff Fuller on the third play of the game.

"It was the worst thing we could do. It gave them some belief early in the game," defensive coordinator Will Muschamp said.

Muschamp ticked off a list of reasons why the Longhorns were bad against the Aggies.

"We had some missed communication, assignments, alignments, 13 missed tackles ... critical errors on third down," Muschamp said. "It makes for a long night. It falls on my shoulders."

Muschamp said he changed some coverage calls before the game that led to the broken coverage on the long touchdown pass at the start of the game.

But Texas also looked befuddled on how to stop a mobile quarterback who could throw and run.

Nebraska may not have a similar player, but if Texas beats the Cornhuskers to reach the national championship game, the Longhorns may face Florida quarterback Tim Tebow, who has 140 passing and rushing touchdowns, an SEC record.

The defense did come up with a couple of critical big plays against the Aggies.

A fumble recovery set up a third-quarter touchdown and Earl Thomas school record eighth interception of the season killed a potential A&M touchdown drive in Texas territory.

Brown said the Longhorns are taking the approach that the defense had to rescue Texas in a 16-13 win over Oklahoma, so this time it was the offense's turn to provide the big plays.

"This one, the offense saved the defense," Brown said.

Cowboys relying on defense down stretch

IRVING (AP) — Two games into the season, the Dallas Cowboys defense had allowed nearly 900 yards and 54 points while creating plenty of concern. They were the only team in the league without a sack or a forced turnover.

Cowboys linebacker Bradie James was already talking about an "adverse situation" and what a shame it would be to "just fall apart."

Well, take a look at them now. The NFC East-leading Cowboys (8-3) have become one of the NFL's top defenses, and their play will be important heading into the crucial December stretch that begins Sunday in New York against a Giants team that was one of the two that torched them in September.

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