

FEATURE

Helping others

There are plenty of ways for students to volunteer. Page 8



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Check out the picks for the women's Final Four Tournament. Page 10



OPINION

Point/Counterpoint presents both sides of the affirmative action debate. Page 3

TCU DAILY SKIFF

100 years of service to Texas Christian University

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Thursday, April 3, 2003

Mittie plans to stay put as head coach

Some say A&M interview isn't sign of disloyalty

BY LAUREN HANVEY
Staff Reporter

Women's basketball head coach Jeff Mittie said Wednesday he plans to stay at TCU next year. This comes after he was contacted last week by Texas A&M University about its head coaching position.

Gary Blair, head coach at Arkansas, was hired for the position Monday instead.

Athletic Director Eric Hyman said Mittie still has a long-term contract

with TCU. Hyman refused to comment on the exact length of Mittie's contract.

"He's our coach and he's been our coach all along," Hyman said.

Mittie, who has never had a losing season in his four years at TCU, said he is looking forward to another year here.

"I've got a great situation at TCU; we've got a great team coming back," he said. "I'm excited to be at a school that cares about its women's basketball team and we've been very fortunate to be one of the 64 teams (in the NCAA tournament) three

years in a row." The talk with A&M was very preliminary, Mittie said, and there was never any contract offer.



MITTIE

"A&M asked for permission to speak and we spoke about it, and that was as far as it went," Mittie said.

Mittie refused to comment on what he would do if contacted by other schools and whether he would attempt to re-negotiate his contract at TCU.

If another school offered Mittie a contract, Hyman said, the circumstances would determine whether or not TCU would re-negotiate his contract.

Even though Mittie's name circulated in the world of college athletics as someone who would possibly take the position at A&M, Hyman said he does not think Mittie's current players

feel like his heart is not in their program. "Just because you talk to somebody, I don't think that's disloyal,"

Hyman said.

A TCU women's basketball player, who spoke on terms of confidentiality, said she agrees the team will not be negatively impacted by Mittie's talk with A&M.

"I think no, it doesn't (affect us)," she said. When asked whether any other schools were interested in Mittie

since A&M brought him into the spotlight, Hyman said he does not keep up with all the rumors in the athletics community.

"We're in a very highly speculative business," he said.

Hyman said in Mittie's four years at TCU, he has had no other official contacts or offers from other schools.

Mittie was Coach of the Year in Conference USA in 2001 and for the Western Athletic Conference in 2000.

— Jeff Mittie

women's basketball coach

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WAR STORY CONTINUES TO BE TOLD

Jensen says media, Bush isn't telling whole truth

BY BILL MORRISON
Staff Reporter

Speaking to a crowd of more than 60 people Wednesday night, Robert Jensen explained how the American media is misrepresenting the war.

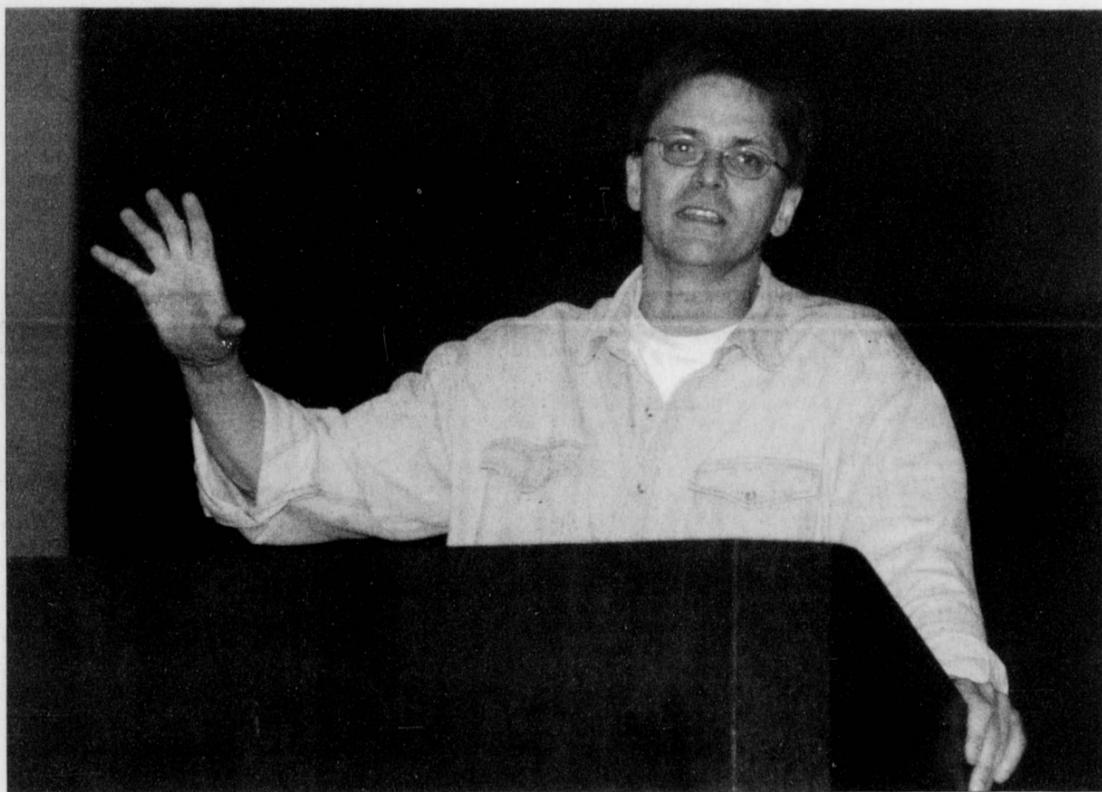
Jensen, a journalism professor at the University of Texas at Austin, said Americans have misconceptions about their own history that are blurring the true meaning of the war in Iraq.

Jensen said Americans have a natural distrust for the government but, once a war starts, the public trusts everything the government tells them. He argued the American people have been lied to about the actual reason we have gone to war.

"What I was trying to do was to explain why some of the claims made about this war by the Bush administration are distortions," Jensen said. "The real name shouldn't be operation Iraqi Freedom ... the name should be an operation for trying to get long-term de facto control of the oil flow out of the Middle East."

Jensen said he was trying to teach people how to get through the rhetoric and see what is really happening. He said the media's coverage was like watching the local station cover sports when the reporters are not neutral and obviously rooting for the home team.

(More on JENSEN, page 4)



Robert Jensen, associate professor from the School of Journalism at the University of Texas at Austin, speaks about his views on the war in Iraq Wednesday.

Stephen Spillman/Photographer

Forces move within sight of Baghdad

BY DAVID ESPO
Associated Press

American forces fought their way to within sight of Baghdad's skyline Wednesday and claimed the destruction of a pair of menacing Republican Guard divisions. An Army helicopter was shot down, killing seven of its 11 crew members.

Bombs shook the capital as Army and Marine armored columns took separate, converging paths toward the city from the south. "The dagger is clearly pointed" at the heart of Saddam Hussein's regime, said Brig. Gen. Vincent Brooks.

The rapid advances brought thousands of troops within the so-called red zone — an imaginary line on the map near the capital where Iraqi use of weapons of mass destruction is most feared. Troops in some lead Army units donned chemical protection suits, and Marine helicopter pilots were ordered to be prepared to do so.

The Army Black Hawk helicopter was downed by small-arms fire near Karbala, site of

(More on IRAQ, page 4)

Fight for à la Cart still on

BY BILL MORRISON
Staff Reporter

Sitting in storage, gathering dust, lies the Café à la Cart waiting to be put into use, says Residential Services Director Roger Fisher.

Fisher said when the kiosk was purchased they intended to move it to the Moudy Building South green room for full-time operation once Sub Connection opened in the Steve and Sarah Smith Entrepreneurs Hall. He said everything was in place, but got put on hold because of complaints from the radio-TV-film department.

Richard Flores, general manager of Sodexo, said the kiosk was originally removed because there was some concern over noise in the adjoining classroom. Now,

Flores said, they are looking into installing a second door or a sound-proof door to limit noise problems.

"The faculty's main concern is to make sure you have an environment you can concentrate in and do your studies, and we respect that," Flores said. "We're not going to look into the actual cost until we're sure everyone is on board."

The kiosk was moved into the green room in mid-February and, Flores said, William Slater, College of Communications dean, told him he was in favor of the move.

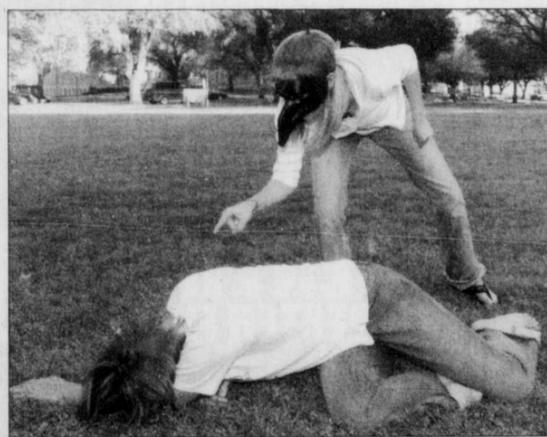
"We talked to dean Slater and he was 100 percent for it, he thought it was the greatest thing that ever happened," Fisher said. "One particular per-

(More on CART, page 2)

"We're not going to go to all of the trouble and think we've covered all our bases and turn around and get slapped in the face again as it's shoved out into the hallway."

— Roger Fisher
residential services director

Play fighting



Senior theater majors Erin Beaton and Molly Mitchell practice a scene for theater class outside of Ed Landreth Hall Wednesday afternoon.

Ty Halasz/Photo editor

Students torn over affirmative action

BY NYSHICKA JORDAN
Staff Reporter

It is a difficult reality not knowing whether merit or race was the reason she was denied acceptance and placed on the wait list into the University of Michigan's law school, senior English and political science major Jenny Specht said Wednesday.

The Supreme Court heard opening arguments Tuesday regarding whether Michigan's affirmative action policies are unconstitutional. Their decision is expected in July.

Specht is white and said because of the controversy over the universities' policy that rewards minority applicants with extra points in admissions she is skeptical about why she was not accepted.

"I wish that I knew that they turned me down solely on my merits," Specht said.

Specht said this was a difficult time to apply to Michigan because its affirmative action policies are

(More on AFFIRMATIVE, page 2)

The Weather

THURSDAY

High: 77; Low: 58; Partly Cloudy

FRIDAY

High: 77; Low: 52; Isolated Thunder Storms

SATURDAY

High: 82; Low: 61; Mostly Sunny

Looking Back

1882 — Jesse James was shot to death by a fellow gang member. For 16 years the criminal had committed robberies and murders across the Midwest.

1990 — Jazz singer and pianist Sarah Vaughan died at age 66.

Watch For

Want to know the latest fashions? Check out Wednesday's Features page for the latest summer styles.

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THE PULSE

www.skiff.tcu.edu

CampusLines

Your bulletin board for campus events

■ Amnesty International will meet at 6 p.m. today in the Student Center Lounge to have a Letter Writing Party to protect political prisoners from torture. For more information, contact Lauren at (l.a.kelley@tcu.edu).

■ Radio-TV-Film Department presents "How to Marry a Millionaire" (1953) at 7 p.m. today in Moudy Building South, Room 164. For more information, call (817) 257-7630.

■ Improv Comedy Troupe will be performing at 9:30 p.m. today in Moudy Building South, Room 320.

■ Trombone Ensemble Recital, with Scott Stratton directing, will be at 7:30 p.m. Friday in PepsiCo Recital Hall. For more information, call (817) 257-7602.

■ Spring Dance Concert will be at 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday in Ed Landreth Hall Auditorium. For more information and reservations, call (817) 257-7626.

Announcements of campus events, public meetings and other general campus information should be brought to the TCU Daily Skiff office at Moudy Building South, Room 291, mailed to TCU Box 298050 or e-mailed to skiffletters@tcu.edu. Deadline for receiving announcements is 2 p.m. the day before they are to run. The Skiff reserves the right to edit submissions for style, taste and space available.

TCU DAILY SKIFF

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CART

From page 1

person (in the radio-TV-film department), who took it upon himself to remove the equipment and basically shoved it out into the hallway and said get it out of this room."

Flores said that while the kiosk sits in storage they are missing out on the \$12,000 to \$16,000 in sales a day the café had while it was in Dan Rogers Hall.

Fisher said the kiosk cost \$25,000. In addition to the initial investment, he said they spent \$300 to \$400 more installing equipment needed to operate the café.

Fisher said they still want to put the café into the Moudy Building and that he would be willing to make changes to reduce noise.

"We're not going to go to all of the trouble and think we've covered all our bases and turn around and get slapped in the face again as it's shoved out into the hallway,"

Fisher said. "That just really is not treating the food service correctly."

Derek Kompare, a radio-TV-film professor, said he is opposed to having the kiosk in the green room. Even if additional measures were taken to reduce noise, he said, it would still be a problem.

"I teach classes there, and between people coming in and out the building and the stairs there is already a lot of noise," Kompare said.

Moudy Building South was chosen as a location for the kiosk because there were no other eateries on the north side of campus and there was a high traffic count in that area, Flores said. In addition to the high traffic, he said, there was a lot of student demand for an eatery.

"Our research has shown that students won't go four minutes out of their way to get something to eat," Flores said. "Aside from Moudy, there are no other traffic areas that would suit the Café à la Cart."

Slater said he is still in favor of having the kiosk, but that he must discuss it with his different de-

partments. Because of registration, his travel schedule and preparation for a presentation to the Board of Trustees, Slater said, he has not had an opportunity to discuss the issue.

"The reason given for (radio-TV-film professors') opposition was because it would create too much commotion where there is a class," Slater said. "There are other issues too, but we have not really talked about it. Everyone else around here really wants it, except for those folks downstairs."

David Johnson, a sophomore studio art major with an emphasis in photography, said he would really like to see an eatery in the Moudy area. He said they are so far from the rest of campus that they really have to go out of their way to get something to eat.

"Most of my classes are three hours long and we are only given 10 minutes for a break, and that just isn't long enough to get some food," Johnson said.

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NewsBriefs

Project looks to bring public art to city streets

Placing public art throughout Fort Worth will help build the community and bring culture to people who may not visit museums, the director of Seattle's public art program said Wednesday in Moudy Building North.

Barbara Goldstein, also an art consultant for the Fort Worth Public Art Program, said the City of Fort Worth is coordinating a public art program to fund the creation and maintenance of artwork, such as murals and sculptures for public places.

Fort Worth could choose a structure like Seattle's art program with four venues consisting of commissioned art works, a city collection of portable works by local artists, a design team for architecture and engineering projects and a miscellaneous section, Goldstein said.

"(Seattle's) public art ordinance and program really grows out of the

place that we are, and I think in Fort Worth it should grow out of the place that you are," Goldstein said. "There is no cookie cutter approach to public art."

Religion professor Brent Plate, who teaches Religion, Art and Visual Culture, attended the event, sponsored by the art and art history department and said he hopes students will be able to participate in public art because it will show how art can be incorporated into real life.

"Nobody teaches you what the real world is like," Plate said. "I went to art school and when I got out I was like, 'Now what do I do?'"

"I think (student participation) would be ideal," he said. "The struggle is you go to art class but how do you incorporate that into the real world?"

Artists will likely be commissioned both from Fort Worth and other areas but, like Seattle, Fort Worth may want to implement a program to encourage inexperienced studio artists to participate, Goldstein said.

— Jessica Sanders

AFFIRMATIVE

From page 1

getting so much attention. She said Michigan has a compelling argument on why it uses affirmative action, but that the policy should be different.

"Once you have a college degree everyone does have a level playing field," Specht said.

According to an *Associated Press* article, the Bush administration's top lawyer argued Tuesday in the Supreme Court that Michigan's policy "is a thinly disguised quota."

However, Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, considered to be a swing voter, questioned why race could not also be included among the many choices that law schools decide on when admitting students.

Specht said she now plans to attend law school at Cornell University, which claims to not have a racial point system. According to the "Complete Book of Law Schools," Cornell has 25 percent minority enrollment compared to Michigan's 23 percent.

Specht said these statistics make her wonder why Michigan is so much more aggressive in its policy.

Other TCU students who plan to attend graduate and professional schools are split when it comes to the use of affirmative action in schools.

Jenna Spain, a senior political science major, said affirmative action is still needed, but not forever.

"I am all about diversity, and all things being equal," Spain said. "I don't think that you can necessarily make a diverse community without some kind of intent to do it."

Spain said things are not yet equal for all groups, but this is the first generation where there is more opportunity for all. She said the next generation will then have more opportunity for such things such as equal education because of this generation's advantages.

Rodney Thomas, a sophomore religion major, agrees that affirmative action is still needed, but that it should end at some point. He said it is good the policy is not solely reliant on race and that it is necessary to make up for disadvantages such as educational inconsistencies.

"It's fair not because of race, but because people get points for things such as being related to an alumni too," Thomas said. "It's a complicated point system. It's not just if you're black or white, it's a lot more to it."

However, Nick James, a sophomore political science major, disagrees with the policy.

"I agree with affirmative action if you use it appropriately," James said. "But if you use it in the way it has been used in our society then I think that it is unconstitutional."

James said if the Supreme Court rules against the current policy students would then get into schools based on their achievements instead of the color of their skin.

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Nussbaum to discuss world issues

Philosopher to speak at Convocation on importance of liberal arts education

BY LAUREN HANVEY
 Staff Reporter

Philosopher, legal ethicist, professor, writer and editor — these are only a few of the experiences Martha Nussbaum will be drawing from as she speaks at the 41st Annual Honors Convocation 11 a.m. today in Ed Landreth Hall Auditorium.

Each year the Honors Program selects a notable scholar to give an address at the convocation ceremony, said Kathryn McDorman, director of the Honors Program.

"She's probably one of the best known, what we call, public intellectuals," McDorman said.

Nussbaum said she will begin her speech with the Greek story of Troy to illustrate that she thinks America, like ancient Greece, is now at risk of being not only a victim of devastation, as with Sept. 11; but also of causing devastation in other countries.

"In this talk I will first confront a problem about the imagination, the one that is mentioned in my example from Greek tragedy," she said. "Then I shall talk about the role of the idea of liberal arts education ... in producing the sort of citizen who is well placed to solve this problem as well as it may be solved."

The Honors Program has had Nussbaum scheduled long before our country's current situation, McDor-

man said. This is a good time for Nussbaum to speak at TCU because she is known for having compelling thoughts on major world events, she said. However, Nussbaum was first asked to speak because her beliefs are closely related to TCU's mission, she said.

"We're delighted to have her," McDorman said. "When you consider our mission statement, she has written on just about everything in it."

According to her curriculum resume, Nussbaum has written 19 books and has had more than 200 articles published. The resume lists 22 honorary degrees from universities around the world, as well as teaching credentials at Harvard University, Brown University and Oxford University.

Linda Hughes, Addie Levy Professor of Literature, said she had nominated Nussbaum to speak at Honors Convocation two or three times. Hughes said she was introduced to Nussbaum through a radio interview at least a decade ago and that she has admired her since then.

"She advocates practices connecting academic inquiry and social activism," she said.

Hughes said Nussbaum cannot be fully encapsulated by any title or description because her work is so far-reaching, but she agrees that Nussbaum is a good representation of TCU's mission statement.

"Martha Nussbaum ... exemplifies excellence in scholarship, a passionate life of the mind and searching inquiry into what it means to be an ethical leader and global citizen," Hughes said.

Students, faculty and community members are welcome at the convocation ceremony.

— Linda Hughes
 professor of literature

Lauren Hanvey
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OPINION

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The Skiff View RECORDS

Released proceedings foster discussion

This week the Supreme Court began hearing arguments on affirmative action involving the University of Michigan and its policies for undergraduate and law school admission.

There has been massive public interest in the case because the issue of affirmative action hasn't been taken up by the Supreme Court since the late 1970s. When the Supreme Court makes its decision, expected by late June, there are potential ramifications not only for admissions policies, but also job hiring policies as well.

Because of the attention the case has attracted, the Supreme Court is releasing audio tapes of the proceedings on the same day. This is only the second time in the history of the Supreme Court that tapes have been released with such immediacy. The first time was during the election fiasco of 2000.

Tape recordings are usually made of proceedings, but are not available for months. Now, the tapes are being distributed to networks on the same day so they can be disseminated to the public.

This incredible openness to the public is not the norm. Cameras are never permitted in federal courtrooms, but audio recordings are the closest thing we have to being part of the action. In an age where we can watch war battles unfold on the ground in real time, the proceedings of the Supreme Court are almost more of a mystery.

It's important that this type of information is available to the public. The decision that will be made about this often-controversial topic affects everyone. When the information is held back from the public for weeks and months, it does nothing to foster discussion and increase knowledge about important issues such as affirmative action.



TCU DAILY SKIFF

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WriteUs

Letters to the editor: The Skiff welcomes letters to the editor for publication. Letters must be signed and limited to 250 words. Only letters delivered via e-mail or floppy disk will be considered. Letters must include the author's classification, major and phone number. The Skiff reserves the right to edit or reject letters for style, taste and size restrictions.

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HELP WANTED

The Skiff opinion page is now hiring columnists. Students must have excellent writings skills and be self-motivated, reliable and open to criticism. Previous journalism or Skiff experience is preferred, but not required. Students of any political persuasion or background will be considered. To apply, contact Opinion Editor Brandon Ortiz at (b.p.ortiz@tcu.edu).

Regulations can stifle flow of ideas

Protests should be peaceful, but need to be heard

Recent events have led to a flurry of ideas and a flood of opinions, but how are those words channeled at TCU? What few students realize is that a strict set of guidelines govern how free speech is dealt with at this school, and that these guidelines are part of a growing trend at universities across the country.

Among these are very some acceptable and needed regulations — demonstrators must not incite violence and demonstrations must not violate the rights of others. But, several areas are vague and even unwarranted.

One policy, which is not even cited in the Demonstration Guidelines section of the Student Handbook, is that all protests and demonstrations are to be held at Frog Fountain. While it can be argued that this is a high traffic

area, the constraints on this space are significant. For example, should a group of students become disgruntled by something published in the Skiff and wish to voice their discontent they would not be allowed to hold that demonstration in front of Moudy, where the Skiff offices are located, but would be censured off to the other side of campus.

Suzy Adams, associate vice chancellor for student affairs and dean of Campus Life, said she agrees with many students that a current guideline requiring all demonstrations to be approved seven days prior to the event must be suspended, pointing to sudden developments around the world that usually call for quick action.

However, she said, the location for demonstrations needs to stay the same, saying that respect for all students is the determining factor in the administration's policies.

Respect for all students and their opinion is certainly a praiseworthy goal, but there are those who find such limitations damag-

ing to their message. Some demonstrations are meant to provoke or even offend the observer in order to spark discussion or thought. Many protests depend on a good location where those who pass by are forced to see them, and while many students do walk around Frog Fountain, it is much too easy to look away and ignore anything happening there.

In fact, many people are offended at the very thought of regulating free speech, even at a private school such as this. It can be seen as an intrusion on our civil rights. Yet, such regulations have spread to public and private universities all over the nation. The University of California Berkeley, a champion of free speech among universities, has a designated free speech area of its own. Other schools censor their students when they post leaflets advertising the administration's payrolls as a way of protesting rising tuition payments.

Despite these alarming encroachments on free speech, more and more people find such liber-

ties as an increasingly unimportant aspect to our modern culture. A survey done in late 2002 revealed that almost 50 percent of Americans saw the First Amendment as an obstacle in America's war on terrorism and 25 percent saw free speech as nonessential.

Regardless of our opinion, how we approach free speech here at TCU will have a direct effect on how we regard it in the wider world. We must hold fast to our constitutional rights and never take them for granted.

A most astounding and uncommon image of free speech was seen earlier this week when Frogs for Freedom, a pro-American group and TCU Peace Action, an anti-war organization, met in the same place, voiced different opinions and actually discussed the issues. More than anything, scenes like this one, despite all the regulations and guidelines, will help produce ethical and responsible leaders.

Jeff Brubaker is a junior history major from Weslaco. He can be reached at (j.d.brubaker@tcu.edu).

Point/Counterpoint

The Issue: Does affirmative action lead to more diverse college and university campuses?

Race should not be a factor for admissions

Sometimes I wonder if I will ever live in a world where race is not an issue. It seems no matter whom I am with, at some time the discussion will turn to race. Although in most of these conversations the talk is educational rather than negative and derogatory, I wonder still if there ever will be a day when I do not think about what color the person is sitting next to me.

Students on campuses around the country may soon be considering the issue of race more after the Supreme Court hands down a decision in a controversial case this summer. The court heard arguments this week about whether the University of Michigan's consideration of race in admissions is constitutional. Specifically, the court is considering the case of a student who was not admitted, in her opinion, because she is white.

The University of Michigan swears it does not use racial quotas, but instead considers race as one of the many factors in deciding admission, along with other factors such as a student's GPA and extracurricular activities.

Critics of this method and the staunchest supporters of a Supreme Court decision against it say colleges should not use race as a factor and schools should only use race-neutral techniques. This case is gearing up to be one of the most important cases in affirmative action in a while, and many of the country's leaders are speaking up.

The White House issued a statement saying it opposed factoring race in university admission policies and labeled Michigan's policies as an almost-but-not-quite quota system. Secretary of State Colin Powell issued his own statements saying racial considerations had to be made because the country was not "race neutral" yet, according to CNN.

Powell has a point. The country is not yet race neutral, and there are many students who deserve to be afforded every chance as everyone else is. Because this country is not race neutral yet, we must actively seek out and make diversified environments. According to

Louisiana State University's campus newspaper archive, LSU's admissions policies are different from Michigan's. LSU insists it considers applicants based on the usual factors of grades and personal accomplishments.

Although I agree with Powell that to achieve diversity, race should be considered, the best way to achieve this diversity is not through screening applicants on the basis of race, even if it is only one of the factors.

Instead of considering the races of applicants in the applicant pool, LSU works at actively recruiting more minority students. If you want a more diverse school (or workplace, or whatever), you just make the pool of people you want bigger. That way you don't have to consider their race at all, you simply pick the most qualified people.

Along with specifically targeting recruitment efforts toward minorities, aiming incentives such as scholarships at minority groups automatically will bring in more diverse students. Having programs that encourage diversity, but also cultural education, will make the university more attractive to diverse students.

According to a Reveille article, LSU's office of Undergraduate Admissions now has a "Cultural Connection" program that will give minority groups special attention. These sorts of ideas will bring more quality minority students to apply, and then race won't have to be considered.

So, although I agree with leaders such as Powell that we are not race neutral and because of this we have to purposely work to encourage diversity, I do not agree considering race in admissions is the best way. Let's try other ways first.

That way, when someone does get accepted to college, there will be no doubt in his or her mind they got in because they are the kind of student the university wants to have — not because they happen to be a minority and the university needs more of them.

Adrienne Breaux is a columnist for The Reveille at Louisiana State University. This column was distributed by U-Wire.

Affirmative action needed to ensure diversity

"We must not pretend that racial discrimination against minorities is no longer an issue in the United States. Although one's race does not dictate one's view — and this is part of what diversity on (a university) campus teaches — race, ethnicity and national origin do contribute to one's experiences and opportunities in life, adding relevant perspectives."

This statement, which is in support of affirmative action, comes from the amicus curiae brief filed on behalf of the University of Michigan by Stanford, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, E.I. DuPont de Nemours and Company, International Business Machines Corp., the National Academy of Sciences, the National Academy of Engineering and the National Action Council for Minorities in Engineering.

The brief is one of more than 100 that the U.S. Supreme Court received regarding the two affirmative action cases that the Court has agreed to review. Arguments for the cases were heard this week, as an estimated crowd of 5,000 to 7,000 people gathered outside.

The cases have received a lot of media attention because of the subject — it is the first time in 25 years that the Court has agreed to review a case dealing with the use of affirmative action in university admissions decisions — and because of the significant impact that the decisions will have on admissions policies at both public and private universities.

Stanford has made clear its commitment to diversity, both in its words and through its actions. In a presentation to the Faculty Senate in January, university President John Hennessy said that affirmative action is an appropriate and necessary measure to achieve diversity.

A racially and ethnically diverse student body is essential to a student's academic experience because learning is not confined to the classroom. Much of what students learn comes from the interaction that

they have with one another, and that kind of learning is greatly enriched by the varying perspectives that students from different cultures can offer one another.

In making the argument for affirmative action, Stanford and MIT assert that diversity, including racial and ethnic diversity, is essential to the advancement of science and engineering and that minority students are more underrepresented in science and engineering fields than in others.

Amicus curiae briefs, which literally means "friend of the court," can be filed by people and by groups who do not represent a party in litigation but who believe that the court's decision may affect their interests. While these briefs have no legal power in court, they are not unnoticed by members of the court.

DuPont and IBM, in joining Stanford and MIT in filing the brief, emphasized that a racially and ethnically diverse workforce is essential to their strength and success. Such corporations rely on colleges and universities in recruiting and hiring employees. Should university student bodies become less diverse, there will be a similar effect on America's workforce.

Again, the leaders of today and tomorrow need to be trained to deal with global issues and need an understanding of the diverse cultures that exist in our world.

It would be an understatement to say that the decisions made by the Supreme Court would only affect the face of university campuses. If the consideration of race and ethnicity is banned from university admissions policies, it will greatly transform the society we live in. We benefit from learning and living in a racially and ethnically diverse campus. We are better students and will be able to better contribute to society because of it.

This is a staff editorial from The Stanford Daily at Stanford University. This column was distributed by U-Wire.

NEWS

Your place for the news and world events | Compiled from wire reports | www.skiff.tcu.edu

JENSEN

From page 1

"TV, which is the main source of information for the people, is simply not doing the job of a journalist, which is to be independent of the government and provide both a reliable source of information and critique," Jensen said.

He said people must unmask the terms the Bush administration uses to obscure the truth.

"You have to radicalize the mes-

sage," Jensen said. "It is the radicalist of the past that has taken the rhetoric of freedom to the reality of freedom."

Jeff Brubaker, president of the TCU Student Peace Action Network that helped sponsor the event, said the notion that people need to be more radical was in itself a radical idea.

"At TCU, we've been trying to be more moderate to get people on the other side to come around to our cause," Brubaker, a junior history major, said. "I was surprised and filled with hope that he encouraged us to be more radical."

Jensen said he is not for peace nor is he anti-war. However, he said, he is anti-empire. He said right now, the United States is the most powerful and affluent nation, but that does not give the United States the right to impose imperialistic needs onto other nations.

"No empire has ever existed forever and if we don't take down our empire from the inside, we could be dismantled from the outside," Jensen said.

Bill Morrison
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IRAQ

From page 1

fierce fighting between the Army's 3rd Infantry Division and Iraqi troops, including Republican Guard forces. Seven soldiers were killed and four were wounded and rescued, officials said.

The military campaign unfolded as Pfc. Jessica Lynch, a 19-year-old prisoner of war freed in a daring nighttime rescue, was flown to Germany for medical treatment.

But the joy over her freedom was tempered by word that the special forces who rescued her also found 11 bodies. "We have reason to believe some of them were Americans," said Navy Capt. Frank Thorp.

Increasingly, there were signs that Iraqi civilians were eager for the arrival of invading forces. Some smiled and waved as Marines rolled through Nasiriyah in tanks and other military vehicles.

There were moments of humanity, as well, in the 2-week-old war. In Nasiriyah, American snipers summoned help for an Iraqi woman in labor in a pickup truck. Navy Hospitalman 1st Class Kyle Morris delivered a healthy baby and named her "America."

"It was a pretty cool way to start the day," he said.

But there was bad news, too. The

U.S. Central Command, which is overseeing the war, said it was investigating reports that warplanes had bombed a Red Crescent maternity hospital in Baghdad.

Despite the gains on the battlefield, Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld and others cautioned that some of the toughest fighting of the military campaign may lie ahead, seeking to dampen speculation that the war might end quickly.

Iraq insisted the battlefield was tilting its way, and Al-Jazeera, an Arab satellite TV station, said about 30 Yemenis

arrived in the capital carrying AK-47s and shouting pro-Saddam slogans.

"Victory is ours," Saddam said in a statement issued in his name.

But that was increasingly at odds with the accounts offered by American military commanders as well as reporters covering front-line Army and Marine forces swiftly advancing on Saddam's capital.

"Our guys are able to see the skyline. That's how close we've gotten," said one military official, speaking on condition of anonymity.



Marines from the 1st Marines Division take Iraqi prisoners Tuesday, as the troops advance north through Kut Al Hayy, Iraq.

Pablo Alcala/Lexington Herald-Leader

ISS sets up counseling

Some Muslim students say they still feel comfortable at TCU

BY SARAH KREBS
Staff Reporter

Middle Eastern students can find comfort and counseling during war with Iraq with the International Student Services or University Ministries, John Singleton, the director of ISS, said Wednesday.

Singleton said 37 percent of the Middle Eastern students at TCU have taken advantage of the counseling services provided since March 21, after the war began.

The Rev. John Butler, minister to the university, said students can come to a number of offices when they need help, and they have been told where they can go for help.

"My concern was that they have an awareness that there are people in the campus who are concerned about their well being and that care about them," Butler said. "They are as much a part of the community as any of us, and should something happen, they know where to turn."

Singleton said it is not easy to make someone feel comfortable when there is so much negativity on television and in the news.

"We have focused on making sure they know the resources available to them and letting them know that TCU is very happy and supportive that they are here," Singleton said. "To a strong extent, international students do feel at home at TCU. But an event like a war simply puts them in the spotlight."

Singleton said the main concerns for the Middle Eastern students are that they be allowed to focus on their academics, that TCU remain a place where they are free to be themselves without fear of ridicule, isolation or interrogation and that TCU continues to grow as a global university.

"I think TCU's sensitivity and attention to these students should not be seen as a competition or questioning of our troops in the Middle East,"

Singleton said. "The worst thing that could happen would be for someone to say, 'Who cares about them. What about our boys in the Middle East?'"

Singleton said he does not want students to shut their ears to the voices of the world.

Diana Awde, a junior computer science major, said though she has not yet taken advantage of the counseling provided, she thinks it is a good idea.

"They've had a meeting to promote (Middle) Eastern students and said it was an outreach, but most of the people who are Muslim want to stay in a low profile," Awde said. "After 9/11, with all the homeland security, I think they're afraid of being spied on."

Awde said she is one of a few Muslim students who still covers her head and that she has not been uncomfortable doing so at TCU.

Butler said he was opening his office to those in need because the events happening in Iraq are not a war against Muslims.

"It is a war against a particular country and a particular leader and I think it is important for us to recognize that it isn't

against Muslims," Butler said. "Christians and Muslims are both affected by this, and how we relate to each other in a world crisis is important."

Butler said in an e-mail to all students that the war in Iraq touches the lives of people all across our campus

community.

"Two locations have been set aside for prayers for those deployed and for the innocent people of Iraq, as well as to honor those who may lose their lives in the battles that lie ahead," Butler said in the e-mail.

The Student Center Reading Room and the Library Periodical Reading Room each have a book to write the names of friends and loved ones caught in the conflict and identify those who died in the war, Butler said.

Butler also proposed the idea of a Reflection Wall where students could share pictures, remembrances and reflections about the war.

"Christians and Muslims are both affected by this, and how we relate to each other in a world crisis is important."

— Rev. John Butler
minister to the university

Sarah Krebs
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NAMI Awareness Week

Monday, April 7

What: Pick up your free Smoothie King smoothies and some information on mental illnesses.

When and where:

10 a.m.-12 p.m., the mall in front of the library
12 p.m.-2 p.m., in the student center

Tuesday, April 8

What: NAMI's 3-on-3 basketball tournament. Men's and Women's champions receive prizes.

Come to support your favorite team!

Cost: \$5 per team

When and where:

5 p.m.-midnight, the Rec Center Courts

Wednesday, April 9

What: Free pizza, popcorn and the movie, "A Beautiful Mind." Also register to win prizes.

When and Where:

7:30 p.m., Frog Fountain

Why: 1 in 5 people will require care for a mental illness. Pick up a blue and gold NAMI ribbon at any of these events and wear it to show your support for those affected by mental illnesses.



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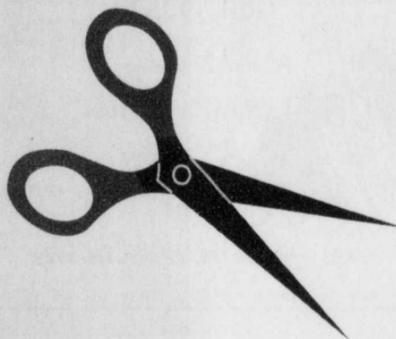


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THE HUMANE SOCIETY

BY DANIELA MUNGUIA
Skiff Staff

Audrey Jones was only 10 years old when her cat, Lace, had to be put to sleep.

"It was a painful experience for me," Jones, a sophomore biology major, said. "I knew then that I wanted to help animals and become a vet."

She has been volunteering to help animals in need since then.

"Animals need good homes and people should help out so they (the animals) don't have to be put to sleep," Jones said.

Jones works as an adoption counselor at the Humane Society of North Texas, a nonprofit organization for the prevention of cruelty to animals. Jones said she began volunteering at the Humane Society nine months ago and developed a close relationship with many animals at the shelter.

"We don't get to have pets in the dorms, so by working here I don't miss my dogs so much," Jones said. "We like to give them nicknames depending to their personalities."

As Jones enters the dog adoption area, she is greeted by nonstop barking. "The dogs get really excited when people come in," she said. "They almost seem to be yelling. 'Pick me! Pick me!'"

Each one of the many cages holds a dog in need of a loving owner. "Maizzee just got adopted, she's one of my favorite," Jones said. "We call her 'shaky butt' because all she does is shake her hips."

Gusto, a young, playful blue-eyed Dalmatian, is a good example of why people shouldn't buy pets on impulse, she said.

"Gusto has been here since October," Jones said. "When the movie ('102 Dalmatians')

came out, many parents bought Dalmatians and then had to get rid of them after they realized they weren't good with kids."

Jones said it's sometimes hard to let go of the animals, but she feels safe knowing the adoption process has many requirements that make sure the animal will be fine.

"We actually go to visit the animals at their new home once they are adopted to make sure they are treated well," Jones said.

Jamey Cantrell, the operations director, said the Humane Society never turns its back on an animal in need.

"I enjoy working with animals because I feel I am making a difference," Cantrell said. "Many people think that we are a charity but we exist entirely on donations, from salaries to pet food."

Volunteers are needed seven days a week, Cantrell said. The Humane Society has many volunteer opportunities including taking care of animals and helping with facility maintenance.

"I never have the same day twice and I've been doing this for seven years — whether it is figuring out where to put four tigers that police found in a raid at a drug dealer's house or rescuing an animal that is being abused," Cantrell said.

Danielle Graham, a volunteer, said walking dogs at the Humane Society is a rewarding experience.

"Dogs need someone to play with just like kids do, and it makes me happy to get them out of their cages," Graham said.

The Humane Society's Web Site states it is one of the largest animal shelters in Texas — housing 400 to 500 animals each day. During the past two years, the Humane Society has cared for more than 60,000 animals that have been abandoned, injured or mistreated.

"We've had dogs, cats, rabbits, pigs, goats, bobcats, lions, bears, horses and even a camel," Cantrell said.

Jones said there are 75 to 100 dogs and 25 to 50 cats available for adoption at the Humane Society most of the time. The adoption cost is \$80 and includes spay/neuter surgery, flea treatment and the first set of shots.

"It is important that people realize that animals need as much help as humans," Cantrell said.

Each year the Humane Society places more than 6,000 animals into adoptive homes.

"We have a 40-to-60 adoption ratio at our facility," Cantrell said. "Unfortunately, 60 percent of the animals we receive have to be put to sleep."

The Humane Society was founded more than 100 years ago and is at 1840 East Lancaster. The new Southwest Adoption Center is at 6708 South Hulen.

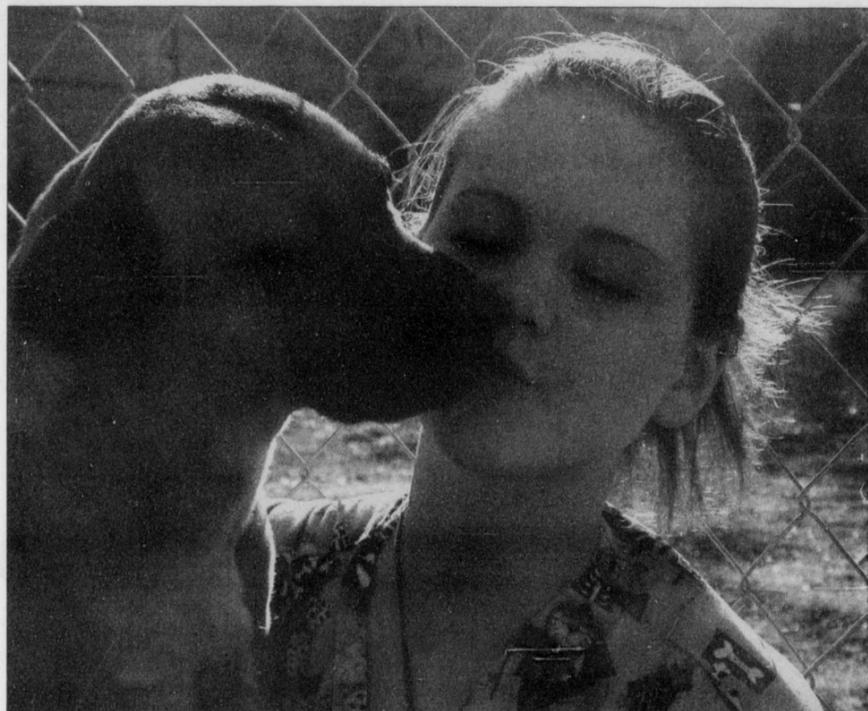
Orientation sessions for new volunteers are conducted twice a month at the East Lancaster location. Volunteers must be at least 18 years old, work at least four hours a month in the shelter and pay a \$20 enrollment donation to pay for their orientation materials.

For more information on ways to help the Humane Society, visit their Web site at (www.hsnt.net) or contact Gena Taylor, volunteer coordinator, at (genahsnt@yahoo.com).



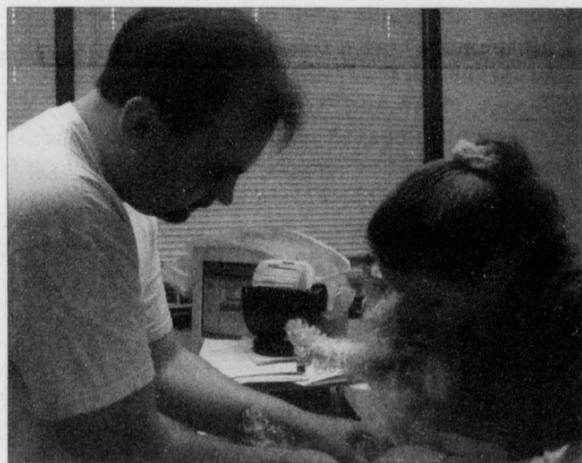
Daniela Munguia/Skiff staff

Audrey Jones gives Gusto, a Dalmatian, a bath.



Daniela Munguia/Skiff staff

Audrey Jones plays with one her favorite dogs, Maizzee. Jones has been volunteering at the Humane Society for the last nine months.



Daniela Munguia/Skiff staff

Jamey Cantrell examines a dog recently brought to the Humane Society for possible tumors.

'Parents' Night Out'

COOKS CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

BY VAUNE WILSON
Skiff Staff

"Parents' Night Out" at Cook Children's Medical Center is a gratifying volunteer opportunity for TCU students, said Jude Dainton, the program's sitter coordinator.

About once a month, local restaurants cater a meal for 40 people, and activities are held for the parents of patients at Cook Children's, she said.

"It is an opportunity for the parents to have an evening just for adults where they can get out of the room and visit with other parents," Dainton said.

While the parents are downstairs, volunteer sitters entertain the patients, she said.

"These parents are landlocked with a lot of responsibilities and are so grateful just to have that hour out of the room," she said.

Ashley Vaughn, a senior nursing student who has volunteered as a server, agrees.

"The parents come in looking worn and leave rejuvenated," she said.

Macaroni Grill, Harrigan's and

Central Market have all catered for the program, which has continued for almost 10 years, Dainton said. Activities typically include bingo, movies, entertainers (such as a singer) or a holiday-related activity like pumpkin carving, she said. Often a local florist will donate centerpieces and door prizes are frequently awarded, she said.

"Parents' Night Out" is so popular that they have a waiting list each month for those who don't get their reservations in on time, Dainton said. Volunteering as a sitter only takes about an hour and a half each month, she said.

To apply to be a volunteer at Cook Children's you have to fill out an application, submit two letters of recommendation and be interviewed, she said. After acceptance, you must go through a training course and be tested for tuberculosis, she said.

Cook Children's also needs volunteers for other department services such as the information desk, gift shop, community clinics and summer camp counselors.

For more information about volunteering at Cook Children's Medical Center, call the Volunteer Services Department at 817-885-4208 or visit the Web site at (www.cookchildrens.com/CC/Cook/volunteer.asp).

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Students help by building homes

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

BY LAURA WALTER
Skiff Staff

Life is often hectic for TCU students, and the last thing they may have time for is volunteering.

But a student who volunteers with Habitat for Humanity will probably find that the rewards are

well worth their time and effort.

Habitat for Humanity has been building homes for the less fortunate since 1976, according to its Web site, (www.habitat.org). The nonprofit, nondenominational Christian organization has built more than 125,000 houses in more than 80 countries, with the nails being driven by volunteers.

TCU began its own campus chapter of the organization more than 10 years ago, said Andy Walker, a junior engineering major and TCU's on-campus coordinator.

Those students who have worked with Habitat say it was about more than just giving.

"It's an experience that helps you realize how blessed you are and how much you have," said Tyler Hernandez, a junior criminal justice major who has volunteered with Habitat several times.

One of the unique things about Habitat For Humanity, Hernandez said, is that you get to meet the people who will live in the house you are building.

"They are very proud of their home," he said. "It's something they've never had before. Now they will have a place to come home to that is theirs forever."

Volunteers are called on to work for one day at a specific site.

A typical day for a volunteer starts between 7:30 and 8 a.m., Walker said. Volunteers meet at the Student Center and car pool to the work site, he said. Once there, a site coordinator assigns jobs. The volunteers usually work a shift from four to six hours and a second group will work the next shift, completing the work day, Walker said. Lunch is provided by Habitat For Humanity.

The people who volunteer to help build Habitat homes make the suc-

cess of this organization possible. According to the Web site, the volunteer labor and the donated funds and material keep the cost of the homes down, making them affordable for the low income families who receive them.

Unfortunately, only 200 of the 8,200 graduate and undergraduate students at TCU are on the volunteer list, Walker said. Whenever volunteers are requested of TCU, those students are contacted about their availability to join the team to work for a day.

"We just need people to come and work for a day when they ask us to," Walker said.

Putting your name on the volunteer list is not a commitment to work, Walker said. It simply allows you to join in on a project, for a day, when you are able.

Anyone with an interest in future volunteer opportunities with Habitat For Humanity should contact Andy Walker at (a.s.walker@tcu.edu) or visit (www.habitat.org).

Laura Walter
L.walter@tcu.edu



Photo courtesy of Habitat for Humanity

Habitat for Humanity volunteers working together to build new homes.

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Today's Funnies

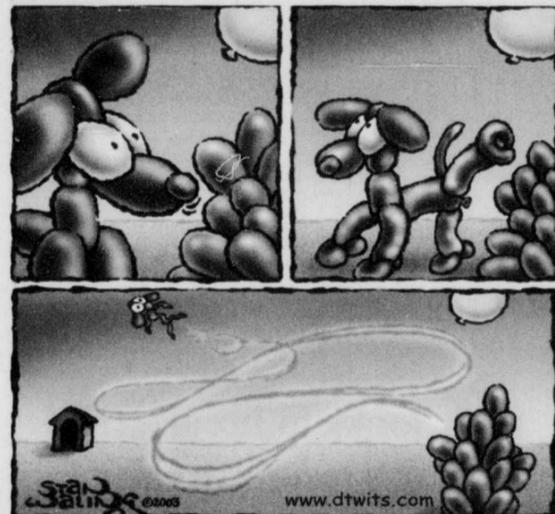
PAUL

by Billy O'Keefe



Dithered Twits

by Stan Waling



Quigmans

by Hickerson



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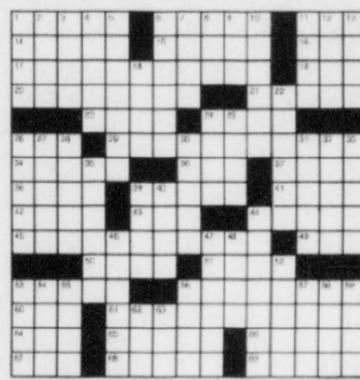
Q: Are you going to the Honors Convocation?

A: YES 17 NO 83

Data collected from an informal poll conducted in TCU's Main Cafeteria. This poll is not a scientific sampling and should not be regarded as representative of campus public opinion.

Today's Crossword

- ACROSS
- Dance under a pole
 - Preliminary work
 - ... Loves You
 - Boilwicks
 - Sri ...
 - Blue
 - After-dinner drinker
 - Pub choice
 - Completely
 - Cut off
 - Oscar-night wheels
 - H.S. course
 - Lawyer's org
 - Self-satisfaction
 - Gate lastener
 - Ump's cohort
 - Roast beef order
 - Bronze
 - governess
 - Bonneted
 - Wildbeests
 - Spring shape
 - Call for help
 - Rib
 - Malaysia's capital
 - Ave. crossers
 - Designer
 - Cassini
 - Asian sea
 - Floorboard support
 - Enrolled
 - Plus
 - New York
 - Curving surface
 - Travel course
 - Eyes flirtatiously
 - Poetic pasture
 - Fully full
 - Damp



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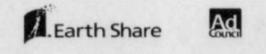
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The Sideline

Finley a game-time decision against Lakers

DALLAS (AP) — Dallas Mavericks swingman Michael Finley tried to test his strained left hamstring Wednesday but left practice after just 10 minutes because it wasn't feeling good.

The Mavericks are still listing Finley as a game-time decision for Thursday night's game against the Los Angeles Lakers. He has missed seven straight games since getting hurt March 18 in a game against Cleveland.

Finley tried returning too soon from a similar injury last season and wound up on the injured list for the first time in his career, missing 13 games.

Finley is the second-leading scorer (19.7 ppg) for the Mavericks, who have the NBA's best record at 56-18, but are just two games ahead of San Antonio in the Midwest Division. Dallas has eight games left in the regular season, the last at the Spurs on April 16.

A-Rod became youngest to hit 300 home runs

ANAHEIM, Calif. (AP) — Alex Rodriguez became the youngest player to hit 300 home runs, connecting for a three-run drive Wednesday in the Texas Rangers' game against the Anaheim Angels.

Rodriguez, 27 years, 249 days old, drove a 2-1 pitch from Ramon Ortiz to center field in the fifth inning for his second homer in three days. Previously, the fastest to 300 was Hall of Famer Jimmie Foxx at 27 years, 328 days. Foxx finished his career with 534 homers.

Rodriguez led the majors last season with 57 home runs and 142 RBIs, both career highs for the six-time All-Star.

Ward named C-USA's Co-Golfer for March

TCU's D' Rae Ward has been named Conference USA's March Co-Golfer of the Month. During an outstanding month in which she also won Golf Digest's Golfer of the Week honors, Ward became the first TCU women's golfer since 1983 to win two straight individual crowns.

At the Waterlefe/USF Invitational, she carded a three-round 217 to secure the one-over par individual win, thereby helping TCU to the team's first victory of the year. Ward followed that performance up by capturing top honors at the Baylor-Tapatio Springs Shootout with a 221 total, which included her first career sub-70 round of 68 on the opening 18 holes. As a squad, TCU finished fourth with a three-day total of 308.

— courtesy of (www.gofrogs.com)

Tennis team falls to No. 3 Baylor at home

Frogs grab two singles matches, one doubles

BY MONIQUE BHIMANI
Copy Desk Chief

The 36th-ranked men's tennis team fell to the 3rd-ranked Baylor Bears 5-2 Wednesday afternoon at

the Bayard H. Friedman Tennis Center.

"This was a good learning experience," assistant coach Cory Hubbard said. "It was very close and it could have gone either way. We have played five top 10 teams, and I think our team has a lot of confidence now."

The Frogs lost two of three doubles matches. Freshman Rafael Abreu and sophomore Jacob Martin

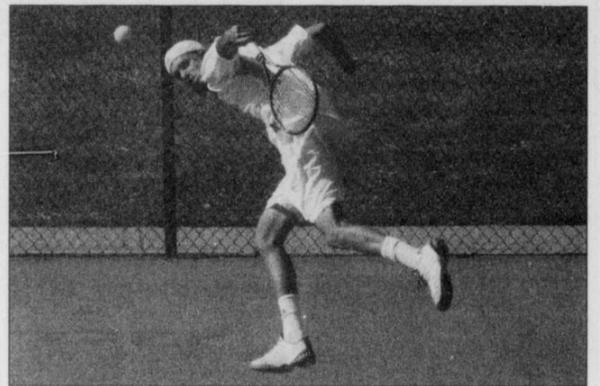
grabbed TCU's only doubles win as they defeated the No. 26 doubles team of Matias Marin and Ivor Lovrak 8-6.

"Doubles are our weakness, but we have worked a lot on it," Hubbard said. "But singles are definitely our strong point."

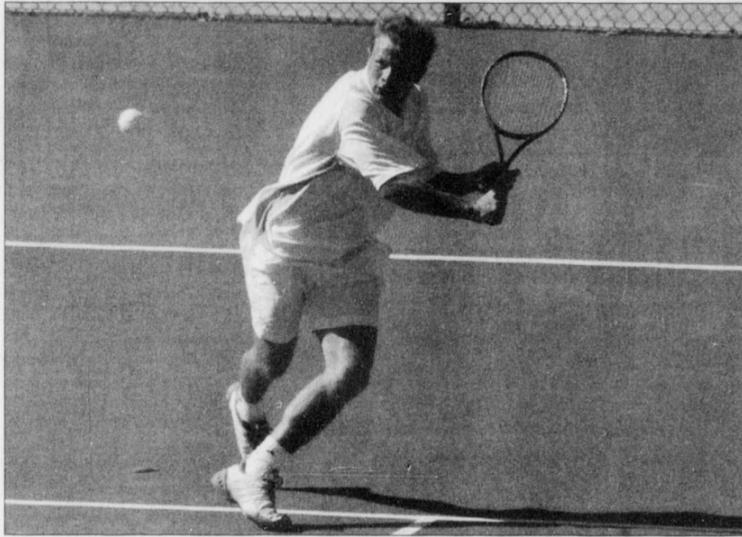
In the singles matches, junior Alex Menichini defeated No. 31 Matias Marin 4-6; 7-6; 10-5 (Super Tiebreaker). This was Menichini's fifth consecutive win and second consecutive win over a ranked opponent.

Freshman Jacopo Tezza defeated Baylor's Reiner Neurohr in a three-set match, 6-7; 6-1; 10-5 (Super Tiebreaker).

Baylor took victories in the other four singles matches, with sophomore Fabrizio Sestini dropping to No. 1 Benedikt Dorsch 6-7 (7-3); 6-1.



Sophomore Fabrizio Sestini pops a backhand on the run against Baylor.



Freshman Jacopo Tezza returns a serve against No. 3 Baylor Wednesday afternoon at the Bayard H. Friedman Tennis Center. TCU lost the match 2-5.

The Frogs, who currently have a 3-0 record in Conference USA, will be on the road against No. 9 Texas A&M Sunday at 1:00 p.m.

Head coach Joey Rivé said the team will have to deal with more than A&M's players on the court Sunday.

"I don't think (A&M) is as good as Baylor," Rivé said. "However, they're usually about 600 to 1,000 fans that show up. It becomes a real circus there."

Last season, the Frogs fell to the Aggies at home, 4-3. Hubbard said the match will be an important one to the team.

"(The Texas A&M game) will be like a revenge match for our team since the last time they played here,"

Hubbard said. "Toni (Gordon), our senior player, said he would like no better than to go the A&M and beat them on their own court before he graduates."

TCU has three more matches on its regular season schedule. The team will return home for its last home match against Southern Methodist noon April 12. The C-USA Conference Tournament begins April 17.

"We are a very new team, and they're still learning quite a bit," Rivé said. "We're very close to being one of the best teams in the country."

Monique Bhimani
m.s.bhimani@tcu.edu

Women's basketball down to Final Four

BY CHUCK SCHOFFNER
Associated Press

Diana Taurasi and Alana Beard will be there. So will "Rocky Top" and "Hook 'em, horns!" The women's Final Four will feature two of the game's top stars, a ton of tradition and plenty of orange.

Taurasi will lead defending champion Connecticut against Texas in one semifinal at the Georgia Dome in Atlanta on Sunday. Duke, which looked to Beard for leadership at both ends of the floor, faces six-time champion Tennessee.

Texas coach Jody Conradt has 817 victories, second only to Tennessee's Pat Summitt, who has 820.

Connecticut (35-1) made it to the national semifinals for the fourth straight year despite losing four starters from last season's unbeaten team. Coach Geno Auriemma has no seniors and his new starters include two freshmen. A third freshman plays major minutes.

Tennessee's orange-clad faithful will follow the Lady Vols (32-4) to their 14th Final Four and clap with gusto every time the band strikes up "Rocky Top."

Duke (35-1), which has lost only to Connecticut, is in the Final Four for the third time in five years. The Blue Devils are the only team in the field without a national championship, but they've won 15 straight games and have been playing outstanding defense.

Texas (29-5), winner its last 17

games, was the No. 2 seed in the West Regional. The other semifinalists were seeded No. 1.

Duke-Tennessee
Duke's 76-55 victory over Tennessee on Nov. 24 was so long ago that it's hard to draw any conclusions from it. But Summitt hasn't forgotten it. Nor has she forgotten her team's 63-62 overtime loss at Connecticut on Jan. 4.

Tennessee is deeper than Duke and has the athletes and size to stay with Beard and 6-foot-4 Iciss Tillis, who plays on the perimeter and inside.

The Lady Vols have the consummate leader in Lawson, who has played

every game as if it were her last. So far, Beard has been carrying Duke in the NCAA tournament. To beat Tennessee, she'll need more help.

Connecticut-Texas

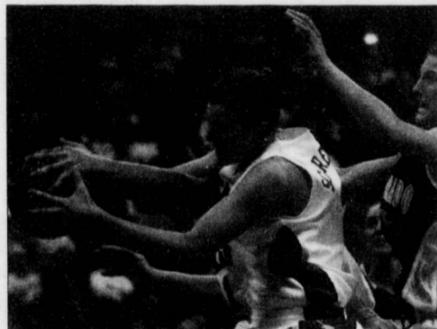
Connecticut's young players have rallied around Taurasi, the only returning starter. She's averaging 25.8 points in the tournament, prompting Auriemma to compare what she has done to when

Larry Bird led Indiana State to the 1979 Final Four.

Freshmen Barbara Turner, Ann Strother and Willnett Crockett all have had big moments — and some sour ones, too. But Taurasi usually has been there to bail them out.

Texas could give the Huskies trouble with its inside duo of Heather Schreiber and Stacy Stephens. The Longhorns also have a heady point guard in Jamie Carey, a good shooter who left Stanford after a series of concussions and was cleared to play at Texas.

The victory that sent Texas to the Final Four, 78-60 over top-seeded LSU, came on Stanford's floor.



Sharon M. Steinman/Fort Worth Star-Telegram
Texas' Heather Schreiber grabs a rebound away from Colorado's Randie Wirt in the second half of their Women's Big 12 Championship semifinals game at Reunion Arena in Dallas, Texas, on Thursday March 13, 2003.

Blair looks to break streak women's losing streak

Associated Press

COLLEGE STATION — Texas A&M's new women's basketball coach says he's ready to leave the Aggies' losing streak behind.

"It's basically a sleeping giant," Gary Blair said at a news conference Wednesday at A&M. "It was underachieving. It has all the resources. It has the stadium and the recruiting base. All it needed was for someone to come in and restart the engines."

A&M announced Monday it had plucked Blair, a native Texan, from a successful 10-year stretch at Arkansas to head the women's team. Blair, among the top 25 winningest active Division I basketball coaches, has never had a losing season — and the Aggies haven't had a winning season since 1996.

"It's good to be back home," Blair said after being introduced by Bill Byrne, A&M's director of athletics. "I'm very passionate about my job and I'm very passionate about the job that is in front of us. Sometimes in life you have to be ready for change. I plan on being here and this will be my last stop."

Byrne wanted a coach with Texas ties who could attract state talent.

"I wanted someone who had appreciation for the state of Texas and with a great reputation among Texas high school coaches — and who would recruit the state of Texas," Byrne said. "I want the best and brightest in Texas to stay in our borders and come to Texas A&M."

Blair, a 1963 graduate of Bryan Adams High School in Dallas, earned bachelor's and master's degrees from Texas Tech after serving in the U.S. Marines. He has a 408-163 career record during 18 years at Arkansas and Stephen F. Austin. His teams have made 11 NCAA tournament appearances, including a trip to the Final Four.

At Arkansas, Blair had a 198-120 record. His team finished 24th nationally this season and made it to the second round of the NCAA tournament. He replaced Peggie Gillom, who had been at A&M five years. Gillom was fired after A&M lost to Baylor in the opening round of the Big 12 tournament. The Aggies finished 10-18 and 3-13 in league play.



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