



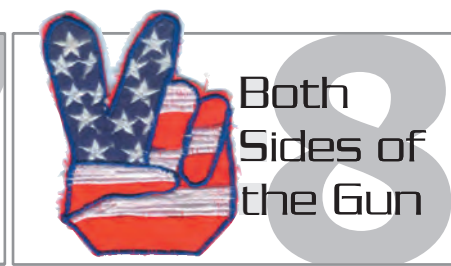
Top 10 Employers



What is "Bumvertising?"



Local Music



Both Sides of the Gun

Dateline: Downtown

Oct. 3 - Oct. 16, 2006

NEWSPAPER FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON-DOWNTOWN

Fall Volume 37 Issue 4

S T U D E N T - R U N S I N C E V O L U M E

By Monica Maza
Assistant Editor

GatorCard set to Attack!



ALLIGATOR

Beginning Spring 2007, UHD will have a new look for our student ID cards and the card will also enable a new system for retrieving our financial aid faster. UHD has partnered with Higher One, Inc., a financial services company, to bring the new Gator Card to students, which will have two functions: it will be UHD's official student ID card and it will offer a new method of financial aid disbursement. We all know how tiresome it is to get our refund money and this card has the potential to make that process easier. According to Mr. Ed Apodaca, Vice President for Student Services and Enrollment Management, this card will give students the option for one of three refund delivery methods: (1) Easy Refund (direct deposit to a new free checking account), (2) electronic transfer to an existing

bank account, or (3) a paper check.

Once students choose the Easy Refund option, the Gator Card will function as a normal Debit MasterCard®. This feature will give students the option to open a new OneAccount, a free FDIC-insured checking account which offers students many banking tools, such as free checking with no minimum balance requirement, access to online statements, and no fee cash withdrawals at Higher One ATMs on campus. If students decide to open an OneAccount, they will also be able to write checks as well as monitor the details of



their account and transfer money electronically online. In addition, students will be able to use the new Gator Card at any place that accepts Debit MasterCards® worldwide.

If any student opens a new OneAccount, then it is important

for them to remember to treat this Gator Card as a real, legitimate debit card. As with any bank card, make sure to report the card lost if you lose it so that Higher One, Inc. can cancel it and prevent any fraud or theft from occurring. Also, any use of this card will be the students' responsibility so be sure to utilize all of the free online banking tools in order to keep track of your account's transactions. The Gator Card will offer these free features

but it is up to the students to put them to good use. Online banking is a great way to keep track of your spending habits and will help you learn valuable budgeting skills that you will need for the rest of your life.

In preparation for this new system, UHD needs students to verify their mailing addresses online via E-services. The new Gator Cards will be mailed directly to all students, so it is very important that the address on file for each student is correct. All students should go to the "My Personal Data" link on e-services and, if necessary, update their mailing address by Friday, October 13th. Also, if any student does not have a current ID card then they must go to the Office of Student Activities and Events in S204, in order for their photo to be taken immediately.

For information on the Gator Card and to access the FAQs, visit www.uhdgatorcard.com. ■

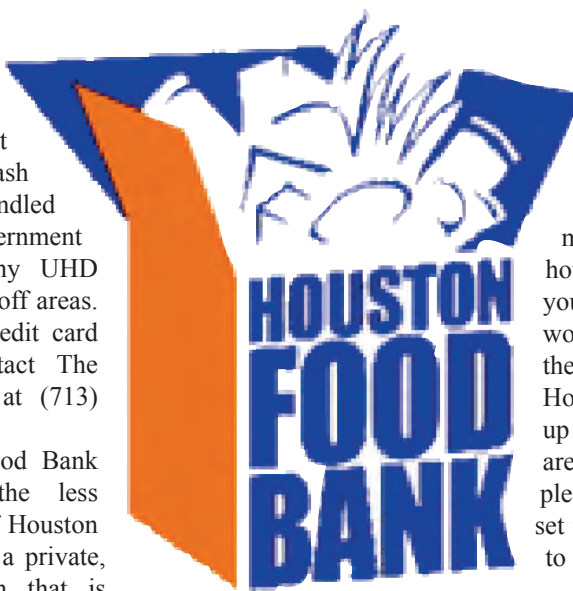
By Steven M. Steiner
Vice President, SGA

The University of Houston-Downtown Student Government Association is teaming up with The Houston Food Bank to collect and distribute food for the Thanksgiving holiday this year. Non-perishable food items can be dropped off at the SGA office located at S244, the Information Center at N355, or the Office of Student Activities and Events in room S204. Collection boxes will be situated at each of the above listed locations for the entire month of October. Once the collection boxes are removed in the beginning of November, SGA will drop off all donated items with the food bank on November 4th. Monetary donations will also be accepted and forwarded

directly to the food bank. Checks and money orders should be made payable to "The Houston Food Bank" and can be dropped off at the SGA office located at S244. Sorry, no cash donations will be handled by the Student Government Association or by any UHD employees in the drop off areas. To make a cash or credit card donation, please contact The Houston Food Bank at (713) 223-3700.

The Houston Food Bank has been helping the less fortunate population of Houston since 1982. They are a private, non-profit organization that is leading the fight against hunger.

SGA Teams up with Houston Food Bank



HoustonFoodBank.org

Did you know that the food bank distributes approximately 30 million pounds of food annually?

With all of that food being handed out, volunteers are always needed and appreciated. The Houston Food Bank logs more than 100,000 volunteer hours each year. So, if you or your organization on campus would like to give back to the community, contact The Houston Food Bank today to set up a time to help. Reservations are required for volunteering, so please contact the food bank to set up a time before showing up to lend assistance.

SGA is always looking for a way to give back to the

community. After all, our motto is: "Serving as an example for other organizations through strong leadership and active participation within the university and community-wide." With a new Community Outreach Coordinator this year, Chundra Smith, the organization looks to the future with its eyes set on giving back to the community that already gives all of us so much. Her plans for upcoming outreach events include a blanket and coat drive in November and a toy drive for needy children from mid-November to mid-December. Please be sure to check your GatorMail and the CIB for all the details or contact Chundra at (713) 221-8511.

Non-perishable foods include: canned foods, dehydrated boxed food, and bottle drinks (in

See SGA page 10

S T U D E N T - R U N S I N C E V O L U M E O N E

Letter to the Editor

Dateline: *Downtown* staff writer Sean Augabright does a fine service of informing students about the current concerns about the rising costs of textbooks in the September 19th-October 2nd edition. Many professors are also concerned about the constantly increasing costs, as well. State Representative Scott Hochberg's intentions to investigate the price of textbooks certainly has merit, and UHD students should certainly use some of the techniques Augabright suggests to reduce costs; however, there are some statements in both articles that need attention.

First, I'm curious how much of Augabright's article, "Textbook Mayhem," is reporting and how much is commentary. From the unclear sentence, "While it may make sound business sense to publish a new edition every time the leaves change, it seems like the only thing 'new' about the edition is the price," to the statement that extra material is a waste of money unless the teachers use them, seems to be personal opinion. Personal statements are wonderful, but if they come from the article writer instead of a source, they are best left to the opinion page.

Second, many professors try to select textbooks with student costs in mind. It might surprise students to know that textbook costs have been a concern since professors were undergraduate students themselves. In fact, the concerns have come to the

attention of the UHD Faculty Senate, which plans to address the issue in upcoming sessions. Some professors have taken steps to assist students by placing material on reserve in the library, selecting material that students can download without additional cost, and some have even turned from assigning textbooks to alternatively providing their own material to keep student expenses reasonable.

Third, students who follow the tips in Augabright's article, "Textbook Tips," should be cautious of some information. The 10-digit International Standard Book Number (ISBN) that anyone can use to buy almost any book published is a good tool; however, in January ISBNs are converting to a 13-digit number. Hopefully this will not hinder searches for older books, but it will affect newly published books. The article also neglects to mention that Barnes and Noble online (www.barnesandnoble.com) also has a special "Textbooks" tab that allows you to browse for new and used texts. Alibris (www.alibris.com) and American Book Exchange (www.abebooks.com) are also quite useful in providing discounted second-hand books. I would follow Augabright's suggestion to use the British Amazon website to purchase books with some caution. First, are the prices listed in British pounds or US dollars? (£15 for a book seems more reasonable than \$27, until you realize that with the exchange rate you're paying almost \$30 for the book. Don't forget to add shipping!). Second,

ISBNs often change from one edition to the next. So the 3rd edition of a textbook may have a completely different ISBN than the 2nd edition. Also, different versions of the same book will have a different ISBN, so pay attention to the title too. You also need to be aware that often the textbooks change editions about every three years, not the one year Augabright suggests. Professors, however, aren't always apprised about these changes. A little common sense investigation will help students, though. First, find the book publishing company and look at their website. Often, you can tell if books are in revision or if a new edition is due soon. Sometimes, students will find that they can get an additional discount from ordering directly from the publisher and avoiding the bookstore middleman.

You should also try used bookstores like Half-Price Books. These stores are popular dumping sites for used books. Two warnings, however, first they are great places to buy books, but you will be disappointed if you are selling books. University bookstores have access to national lists of re-sellable books, and usually give students a much better price on buy-backs.

Fourth, be forewarned that some of Augabright's statements are misinformed. Professors don't include extra material because they want you to pay more. Most times publishers offer the additional material as a benefit to the students at no additional cost. They offer these materials in hopes that the professor will

assign a book with more additions as a benefit to the students. Requesting less "extras" will not discount the price. For example, in my history courses, the publisher bundles other readers together with the text at the same price as the book itself, or for only a few dollars more, but for less than the individual books cost alone. Another consideration is that professors may test on information that comes from the text. If a student uses an old edition, they may not be aware of the new information, and by seeking to save some money may do them a disservice.

Finally, Augabright's comment that history books don't need to change because "It's history. Are we even supposed to update it?" reveals a poor understanding of history as a subject, the meaning of a university education, and the history of textbooks. Textbooks are aids to students. Publishers include workbooks, practice tests, pretty pictures and maps to help students learn. University education in Europe during the Middle Ages and well into the twentieth century often involved students traveling from one university to another to attend lectures by the outstanding scholars in their particular field of interest. Since most students were wealthy, they had the means to accomplish this. American education, however, discouraged this model and opted for the use of textbooks prepared by outstanding scholars in the field. This allows students to have access to the information without the additional travel and

enrollment expenses.

Neither do professors today have all the time they would like to cover the material a student should learn. There is realistically no way for me to cover all the information a student should know about American history from the late-fifteenth to the mid-nineteenth century in fourteen weeks of class time. Lectures are only a part of the university process. It is incumbent upon students to read and utilize the textbooks to get a better understanding of the material. Like the proverbial stubborn horse at the water tank, professors can only lead students to knowledge. Students should seek out the additional material on their own if they want to overcome ignorance and be truly educated.

Gene B. Preuss, PhD

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Editor's Note

The third issue of this Fall's *Dateline: Downtown* (Vol. 37 issue 3, Sept. 19th-Oct. 2nd) featured an article entitled "Scandal: MBA Program." The article ultimately conflated two separate issues- the issue of the University of Houston System's proposed course offerings at the northwest corridor site and that of the future of UHD's proposed

MBA program.

In regard to the subject of the northwest corridor, *Dateline* plans to follow up on this issue at a future date. As far as the future of the MBA program here at UHD, the statement given to *Dateline* by Dr. Molly Woods, VP of Academic Affairs and Provost of the University of Houston-Downtown, is the current official position of the administration.

The date referenced in the article is incorrect- it should

read September 4th, rather than September 9th and the use of the word "Scandal" as an attention-grabbing headline is regrettable given the subsequent confusion over the original letter's details. *Dateline* would also like to retract the statement, "The letter written by Ms. Maranville is not correct, and is misinformed." This should have been attributed to a source or excluded, as it is erroneous. Drawing such a conclusion is beyond the scope of a news item

and *Dateline: Downtown* regrets the errors. ■

Writer's Note

I am sorry if my interpretation of the facts in my article on the MBA Program (Vol. 37 Issue 3, Sept. 19th-Oct. 2nd) was confusing or misleading. The letter and statement referred to in the story were two separate issues. No offense was meant. ■

- Timika Simmons

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The Challenged

Simple Awareness is Outmoded

By Peter Lovie II
Guest Writer

The disabled face many obstacles in different facets of life. The handicapped are made to endure stereotyping and stigmas every day. Discrimination is often encountered in every imaginable form in the job market, in social situations, and in schooling. The state of being disabled also affects subcategories of these aforementioned facets; these may include developing a *particular* kind of social life such as in the area of romance. As much as there are many areas of life where disabled folks face absurd hardships, there are as many varied attitudes and responses to the handicapped given by the kaleidoscope that is the human race. Indeed, it is often amusing to observe people who regard themselves as being "in the know" about the physically challenged make complete fools of themselves while showing off their "expertise."

The most visible way the handicapped are treated differently is when trying to socialize. People often look down on crippled folks without even realizing that they are doing so. This will often take the form of small courtesies being expected to mean much more than they do. Often the request for a phone number is granted, or small talk is made and this is supposed to qualify a body as a friend of the disabled. Many consider such little effort to be proof of true friendship. However, any self-respecting invalid intends for these small gestures to be a simple new beginning; certainly not enough to constitute a friendship. It should be pointed out that reverse discrimination is also possible. There may be truly compassionate people who receive discrimination themselves. This is because many in the special needs elite have become so sick of being patronized that one often deliberately provokes anger in people rationalizing that it is better to experience normal "real" anger

than manufactured kindness.

In a social atmosphere the disabled receive various kinds of treatment from various kinds of people. However, no matter how many laws are passed, no matter how many new trends of etiquette are developed or new forms of political correctness take hold, the nature of man remains the same. No group is more painfully aware of this than the disabled. A case in point would be the previously mentioned romantic arena. Let one of the challenged entreat the opposite gender in the ways of intimacy and they will usually be turned down. Now of course, the reason for this rejection is *never* due to the handicap. It's just the person whom one may desire "just doesn't see them that way." The truth is, of course, that the human animal has remained the same throughout time. Everyone is well aware that the physical is often involved in selecting a partner, and many cannot tolerate the concept of intimacy with one whom they regard in their minds as deformed. It should be pointed out that such rejection is often handled with sincere compassion. Indeed, where a bid for romance might be turned down, an offer for friendship is often cheerfully accepted. This drives many of the handicapped nuts. For myself though, I have rarely minded. It can be annoying, yes, but I personally enjoy having many female friends and thusly, high standards: few women are ever really considered for romance.

The area with the widest range of treatment and experience for the challenged is the public school system. At the school level in special education classrooms, knowledge is often diluted. Socially in schools, the handicapped are often treated as mascots or pets. People who give the challenged the least regard see themselves as doing their part for charity. It would never be suggested that we be treated with the same consideration as people in the social mainstream; to do the kinds of things "normal" kids get to do, like go to keg parties, get called to go hang out, or even just to sit with a group at lunch. We, the "underbelly" of the student body,

In order to be in compliance with the Texas Business & Commerce Code § 35.58, UH-Downtown will no longer use social security numbers (SSN) as the primary student identifier. During the Fall 2006 semester, UHD students who currently use their SSN as their ID number will be assigned a 9-digit "UHD ID" number *that begins with a 9*. There are no social security numbers assigned that begin with a 9, therefore no student will have a UHD-ID that will, by coincidence be someone else's social security number.

Students who already have identification numbers that begin with a 9 will keep that number as their UHD-ID. Students with identification numbers which begin with anything other than a 9 will be assigned a new UHD-ID.

must get by on stale, moldy slices of attention, and are expected to feel included. Middle school is worse still; not only is the "special education" received oftentimes pitiful but the handicapped are likely to face extreme segregation from their peers. To my personal surprise, it seems things are most thoroughly integrated at the elementary school level. Academic subjects are at the same level for special education as they are for the mainstream. Interaction between peers is sincere and well integrated, yet as children get older they tend to lose awareness of the crippled among them in the school system. Eventually, by the time they reach high school, academic standards and personal awareness are so diluted that often at the high school level a subclass of society is prepared only to accept what for most will be existence, not living.

Since humanity generally cannot accept the ugly truth about itself, "special programs" to help the disabled are set up. Unfortunately, these programs and the groups that exist to run them are often the biggest hindrance to the "special populace" leading truly fulfilling and meaningful lives. Groups that are supposedly in existence to help the disabled be fully functional in society through things like employment, almost never offer assistance with creating

Message to UHD

Student, Alumni, Faculty and Staff

Alumni and former students for whom UHD maintains records in the student information system and whose identification number does not begin with a 9, will also be assigned a new UHD-ID.

UHD will continue to collect social security numbers since the Department of Education requires the use of social security numbers in order to process financial aid and to monitor other federal support programs. Only offices that require social security numbers to perform their

functions will request the social security number from students. These offices will continue to adopt appropriate security precautions and any online transaction requiring the use of social security numbers will be encrypted.

Once the conversion takes place, the University will mail enrolled students their

UHD-ID number to the address on record. All students should verify or update their mailing address through "My Personal Data" in Student e-services. Students will be able to securely retrieve their UHD-ID number online via Student e-services using the Look Up UHD-ID service. For more information on the UHD-ID Conversion, please contact the Registrar's Office at 713-221-8999 or send an email to uhdrecords@uhd.edu. ■

a better life. State-run employment agencies will often tell straight-A students they are not bright enough for higher education. Such groups across the country always try to dissuade people from the simplest of dreams, such as learning to be a chef. Entitlement programs do little more than prevent death. There is money for the handicapped to live on, but it can easily be lost should a challenged person try (and fail) to pull his or her own weight and do well in life through work. There is housing, but most of it is substandard. Yet it is necessary if we hope to survive. Many times the disabled who try to rise above their situation are discriminated against by companies who could offer them a better life through employment. This is done very subtly so as to avoid offending the law. There are ways for the handicapped to rise above their circumstances: money for school and tax breaks for companies who hire the disabled. However, to achieve success in life, the handicapped must find the strength to fight and the courage to persist. Only then will the challenged find victory amidst a system that would have us be second class.

The handicapped simply want to live as equal members of society in every regard. Humanity has seen us in a poor light for so long it will take time to affect

change in our social environment. For far too long we have been shut away and cut off. The challenged are tired of being victims of compassionate discrimination. We want to contribute; we want to work, live, and love alongside you. We want to make a difference, not be different. Recently, the handicapped have been afforded assured housing, albeit often in slums and nursing homes. We can be financially secure, but often only through dependence on the government. In conclusion, new legislation orders society to pay lip service to the idea of equality and a lucky few of us will get to lead normal lives: "Things have never been better for the handicapped." What a sad statement. ■

GAIN EXPERIENCE

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Top 10 Employers for Recent Grads

By Timika Simmons
Staff Writer

Recently a guide to the top 50 employers who offer the “Best Places to Launch a Career” was published in the September 18th issue of *BusinessWeek* magazine. This list identifies top employers for new college graduates.

How They Did It

BusinessWeek surveyed directors of undergraduate career services to find out which employers had the best reputation on campuses. Then they asked those companies to complete a questionnaire about pay, benefits, retention, and training programs, which was then compared to other employers in the same industry. Finally, they asked Universum Communications to provide information from its survey of more than 37,000 U.S. undergraduates about the companies at the top of their list of most desirable employers.

Before we dive into this, let’s take a look at what *BusinessWeek* discovered about us. What makes this important is that employers depend on the following information from survey companies to determine how to cater to new grads. Investments have already been made to meet the following demands, so be careful about your personal requirements when looking for a job. I personally find the discoveries about recent graduates to be fairly accurate. Even if I did not think of myself as the following before I read the article, I’m glad to know all of my strengths and what would be considered a reasonable request on my interviews.

Our Profile

We are defined as being more open to trying different careers than previous generations. Our desire for

feedback shows us to be achievement-oriented wanting to make an impact on our new organizations and on society at large. Being tech-savvy we come equipped with many of the skills required by big employers. Social networking skills and market awareness makes us discerning of the jobs we want and valuable enough to change industry’s traditional recruiting tactics. We believe strongly in getting things done and doing them right which has been proven to be a big plus for our generation.

Now of course, no one is perfect. They say that because of our “actively involved parents and a strong support network in place,” people think some of us have a false sense of entitlement and are depended on others to lead us and are unable to “think on our feet, solve problems on our own, and take on leadership roles.”

What We Want

To sum up the findings, our generation wants more variety and challenges, senior-level mentoring, and even want to be given the opportunity to work for causes we believe in. Faster career advancement is at the top of our list along with more responsibility. We appear to be more impressed with corporate cultures that stress social responsibility, diversity, and the environment.

Drum Roll, Please

Again, I went through all of that just to let you know the type of people these companies are trying to cater to. If you do not fit or exceed the above profile, you may not be entitled to some of the benefits in this chart. You may log on to www.businessweek.com for a complete list of the top 50 and retrieve more information on what makes these companies stand out from the rest. The top 10 in an abbreviated table is provided ■.

BW RANK	EMPLOYER (LINKED TO PROFILE)	TOP DEGREE FOR ENTRY LEVEL HIRES	MOST DESIRABLE TRAIT	AVERAGE PAY	MANAGEMENT TRAINING PROGRAM	FIRST PROMOTION ELIGIBILITY
1	WALT DISNEY (4)	N/A	COMMUNICATION SKILLS	N/A	NO	DEPENDS ON PERFORMANCE TWO YEARS OR MORE
2	LOCKHEED MARTIN	ENGINEERING	COLLEGE MAJOR	50,000 TO 54,999	YES	LESS THAN TWO YEARS OR MORE
3	DELOITTE TOUCHE USA LLP (5)	BUSINESS	COMMUNICATION SKILLS	50,000 TO 54,999	YES	MORE THAN ONE-YEAR
4	GOLDMAN, SACHS CO.	BUSINESS	COLLEGE GPA	55,000 AND ABOVE	YES	ANNIVERSARY WITHIN ONE YEAR
5	ENTERPRISE RENT-A-CAR	BUSINESS	WORK EXPERIENCE	35,000 TO 45,000-	YES	ONE-YEAR
6	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE	OTHER	JUDGMENT (11)	49,999 TO 55,000	YES	ANNIVERSARY ONE-YEAR
7	RAYTHEON	ENGINEERING	COLLEGE MAJOR	50,000 TO 54,999	YES	ANNIVERSARY TWO YEARS OR MORE
8	GENERAL ELECTRIC	ENGINEERING	COLLEGE MAJOR	54,999 TO 55,000	YES	MORE THAN TWO YEARS OR MORE
9	JPMORGAN INVESTMENT BANK (6)	LIBERAL ARTS	N/A	50,000 TO 54,999	YES	MORE THAN ONE-YEAR
10	ABBOTT LABORATORIES	OTHER	LEADERSHIP SKILLS	54,999	YES	ANNIVERSARY

BusinessWeek.com

Dr. K Sees the World!

By Dr. Yvonne Kendall
Guest Writer

Series II, Part 1: Coming to Australia

A few years ago I took a trip to Japan and wrote about it in *Dateline*. You might recall the episode of the bug-eyed dried fish in my snack mix on the bullet train to Kyoto. Well that was only the first two weeks of a six-week trip. The remainder of the trip included Australia and New Zealand. This year, I’ll finish the tale of DR. KENDALL SEES THE WORLD!

I went to Japan because I teach World Music and have always been intrigued by the music from around the globe. Plus, I have a high school classmate who lives there. The music of the Australian Aborigines is also part of the course, so that, combined with a conference presentation I was doing in Melbourne, and

a friend who lives in Sydney, came together to make a trip to Australia possible. I figured that since Japan was far away and Australia was far away- why not go to both?

Those of you who are not geographically challenged are probably seeing the problem. The world famous axiom about American lack of geographic knowledge came alive. Yes, they’re both far away from here, but they’re also far away from each other! In fact, while Japan was in the middle of summer (hot and humid like Houston), Australia was in the middle of winter (very much like a Houston winter). I was so hyped up about Japan that most of my packing was Houston summer style. As a result, I had to buy a few extra things in order to stay warmer.

I arrived in Sydney where I had plans to visit with a conference buddy who would be presenting at the same conference as I was.

Many of the faculty will know about the “conference buddy.” These are colleagues in the same discipline who become friends through years of meeting at conferences, giving papers on the same sessions, and enjoying similar things outside of academics. This particular conference buddy, Jenny, was someone I had met in London, Glasgow, Toronto, and Eugene, Oregon. We’d stay in the same charming Bed & Breakfasts and sometimes travel when we were in places neither of us had been before.

Jenny is a musicologist, who specializes in dance history. We have those things in common. In addition, she was a flutist and also performed as a historical dancer. We have those things in common as well. She graduated from the University of New South Wales, one of the major universities of Australia. One of the things I really like about being consistently involved in my discipline on a national and international level is meeting people from all over the world

See Dr. K page 10

Beggin' to Stay in Houston?

By Sean Augabright
Staff Writer

Petitions, signed by several inner-loop neighborhood associations, have been put before the Houston City Council, asking them to enforce the city's ordinances banning loitering, vagrancy, and panhandling in the Hyde Park, Avondale, and Old Sixth Ward areas. Mayor Bill White summed it up well, in reference to the petitions, saying this is about an "activity, not a condition." He makes the distinction that criminal actions (activities) made this a public safety issue — not the homeless (a condition) people themselves.

The ordinance was brought to the attention of residents and business owners by area Houston Police Department patrol officers after seeing how useful it was in dealing with similar situations downtown and in Midtown.

In a related effort to crack down on the panhandlers, Mayor Bill White has launched a campaign to convince you to stop giving. Public service announcements, put together by the mayor, began airing on radio stations across Houston in late August. The drive-time spots basically ask Houstonians not to give beggars money. "Help them with real change, not just spare change. Say 'No to dangerous street solicitation, and yes to the Coalition to the Homeless,'" said the mayor.

Residents say the clean-up in Midtown has pushed the vagrancy levels higher in their Montrose-Westheimer area neighborhoods. The problem was shifted, but not solved. While the new plans are a big hit with most,

detractors say that it will just cause those elements to gravitate out of the city limits, where police coverage is less concentrated.

If moving the vagrants out is problematic and treating the condition is overwhelming, then maybe it should be considered as an economic growth opportunity for the community as evidenced by the tactics employed by a clever entrepreneur from the state of Washington.

Benjamin Rogovy, president

exposure, Mr. Rogovy recognized the potential value that was being wasted.

Bumvertising™, or the use of sign-holding vagrants to advertise, is a development of PokerFaceBook.com's most recent advertising campaign. According to the website, vagrants are now able to provide a valuable and tangible service, while receiving an additional revenue stream in conjunction with their normal income from panhandling.

Specially designed Bumvertisements™ easily attach to the beggar's sign, which they proudly display along with their own. Money, sandwiches, chips, apples, water, and other beverages are given as compensation for the efforts of the homeless in the Seattle Bumvertising™ campaign.

It is also Mr. Rogovy's belief that bums will incur greater self-worth after showing the initiative to seek out semi-legitimate employment. Robert, one of the campaign's most loyal employees remarks, "People are actually reading my signs. I thought they just handed me a dollar but never read what I was saying." Rogovy admits, however, that Bumvertising™ might make it easier for a person to remain a vagabond. "They are of course getting food, money, and water that they alternatively would not have received."

Handouts in any form make it easier for a homeless individual to continue his or her lifestyle and receiving free food and water certainly fall in this category. But consider this- as their times get less desperate, will the bums feel less inclined to seek legitimate



The Future of Panhandling?

Bumvertising.com/Artist's Conception

WANTED: MANAGING EDITOR FOR STUDENT NEWSPAPER

UHD's student newspaper, *Dateline: Downtown*, "Student-Run Since Volume One," seeks a literate, energetic and mature (full- or part-time) UHD student -- with excellent writing skills, ability to manage an eclectic and idiosyncratic staff of student writers, and broad knowledge of UHD student activities and interests -- for the position of managing editor. Will join a committed and enthusiastic current staff. Must be able to write and edit grammatically correct stories on short notice and tight deadlines, following Associated Press guidelines. Pay is based on a 20-hour workweek, but production schedules require the editor's commitment to on-time delivery to the printer, which often requires sustained teamwork and late hours "to put the paper to bed" on deadline. The job is open for the school year 2006-07, but successful candidate may be able to start in Spring 2006, depending on qualifications. Successful candidate

should have a vision for the paper, a nose for news, and a feel for human-interest stories featuring UHD students, staff, faculty, and administrators that would capture the curiosity of student readers. Ideal candidate would be a creative thinker who has (or could develop) a network of contacts on campus and in the No-Do neighborhood that would keep her or him well informed on topics of interest for readers in the broader UHD community; investigative reporting a distinct option, based on ability. Managing Editor works closely with the Business Manager, Assistant Editor, and Layout Designer, to produce a quality, twice-monthly publication with an editorial vision that includes high editorial quality and standards on tight deadlines. For application, contact the faculty advisor, Professor Anthony Chiaviello, at 713-221-8520 (leave message), or by email at ChiavielloA@uhd.edu.

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Stages Repertory Theatre

Scene from *The Great American Trailer Park Musical* (extended through October 29th)

aRT hAPPENINGS

By Noella Montoute
Staff Writer

The Harry W. O'Kane Gallery is one of UHD's hidden treasures. It sits silently on the third floor of One Main Street, and many an unsuspecting student passes by daily, rushing to class or elsewhere, never guessing that The O'Kane's doors open to a world of diverse cultural expression, reality-suspended, and incredibly creative manifestations of human consciousness.

Founded in 1970, the O'Kane Gallery hosts five to six exhibitions annually which seek to appeal to UHD's vibrant, multiethnic population. The O'Kane's current exhibition, *Reconstruction* by Young-Min Kang, is a close-up, strikingly pixilated view of everyday city life- think: pedestrians, highways, city streets and building like you've never seen them. A native of Korea, Kang holds an MFA in painting from Seoul National University, and a second MFA from the University of Texas.

Art around Houston

The Menil Collection is to Houston what The O'Kane is to UHD: one of the city's best kept secrets. (You'd never guess that the nondescript gray building in the heart of the Montrose Area houses one of the most important, and valuable, art collections in the world.) www.menil.org

The Houston Museum of Fine Arts is like most of its museum district counterparts, the MFAH is free on Thursdays. If you've never been, seeing a Picasso close-up for the first time will give you chills (in a good way) - www.mfah.org.

The Things I See, Floyd Newsum: "In my works of art I use bright and contrasting colors as well as symbolism to create a feeling of hope and achievement," says UHD artist-in-residence Floyd Newsum. "I believe the human spirit can overcome great odds when given the opportunity to achieve." Newsum's solo exhibit, *The Things I See*, can be viewed at the Joan Wich & Co. Gallery through October 14th. Visit www.joanwich.com. ■

Stages Repertory Theatre Unveils Latest Productions

By Sean Augabright
Staff Writer

Stages Repertory Theatre enters its 29th year with six new productions. Stages is coming off a hugely successful summer run which featured the regional premiere of *The Great American Trailer Park Musical*. This smash hit has been playing to sold out crowds all summer and is extended through October 29th.

For those unfamiliar with Stages, it entered into the Houston theatre scene in 1978 to present audiences with the newest, most audacious and daring works written for the stage. Housed in the former Star Engraving building on Allen Parkway, the non-profit professional theatre produces new work, interprets established work in new ways, and nurtures talent for the performing arts field. Stages Repertory Theatre is funded, in part, by grants from the Texas Commission on the Arts and the City of Houston through the Cultural

Arts Council of Houston/Harris County. The venue is a friendly, intimate setting that gives the audience a unique, first-hand theatre experience. Characterized by courage, generosity, ingenuity and intimacy, Stages is an integral part of the Houston arts community.

Stages Repertory Theatre has three groups of productions. The MainStage season includes a diverse repertoire of national and regional premieres, inventive portrayals of dramatic and literary classics, and dynamic, risk-taking productions that are unique to the Houston area. The performances are brought to life by a talented troupe of artists and craftspeople primarily from the Houston area, but also with guest artists from around the world.

The company's EarlyStages series introduces young audiences to the power and magic of live theatre. Each year thousands of area children experience dramatic interpretations of classic folktales, stories from diverse world cultures, and plays and musicals commissioned especially for the series. In the 2006 - 2007 season, Stages continues its collaboration

with the Hobby Center for the Performing Arts, performing EarlyStages plays in the Hobby Center's Zilkha Hall and creating a children's theatre experience unlike any other in Houston.

In addition to its MainStage and EarlyStages plays, Stages offers a range of additional programs that encourage discourse on important ideas and issues and provide insight into other cultures and viewpoints. The 2006 - 2007 season will focus on *An American Brat* and *Naga Mandala*. These productions will feature a variety of events that add depth to the audience's experience and create a larger context for the plays.

Stages opens the '06 - '07 season with *The Cook*, by Eduardo Machado (October 13th - 29th): "As Cuba's aristocracy flees the country in the face of Castro's coup, a young cook swears to protect her mistress's home until the family returns. For the next 40 years, Gladys attempts to keep her promise as the dream of the revolution settles into a troubled reality. [The production is] spiced with unexpected laughter and the tantalizing flavors of a Cuban kitchen." *The Cook* will include select Spanish-language performances.

Five Course Love, by Gregg Coffin, will run from December

8th to January 14th, 2007. This performance is described as "five dates, five restaurants and one fateful night." This Off-Broadway hit adds a delicious twist to the tried-and-true dinner date theme. Three actors portray a host of over-the-top characters whose hearts are hungry for love. *Five Course Love* serves up a fast-paced feast of clever lyrics, catchy tunes and lots of laughs.

Stages rounds out the rest of 2007 with four diverse productions: *Amy's View*, written by esteemed British playwright David Hare (January 19th - February 4th); *An American Brat*, penned by Bapsi Sidhwa (March 9th-25th) and ends with two one-man performances presented on alternating days, *I Am My Own Wife* by Doug Wright (April 13th- May 10th) and *Zero Hour* by Jim Brochu (April 20th - May 13th).

Stages Repertory Theatre is located at 3201 Allan Parkway. Theatre entrance is located on Rosine Street. Tickets in the MainStage series run from \$25 - \$35 for each performance. Student, group and senior discounts are available. Contact the box office for details at (713) 527-0123. ■

Wu-Tang Resurfaces

By **Damian Garde**
Daily Lobo
(U. New Mexico) U-WIRE

It's hard to explain the Wu-Tang Clan.

Nine African-Americans obsessed with Chinese culture, Italian mafia lore and the blaxploitation films of the '70s don't exactly scream mainstream acceptance.

The original members, RZA, GZA, Ol' Dirty Bastard, Method Man, Ghostface Killah, Raekwon, U-God, Inspectah Deck and Masta Killa, made their debut in 1993 with Enter the Wu-Tang (36 Chambers). At a time when hip-hop was stilted with Dr. Dre's increasingly bland G-funk sound, the Wu brought a gritty, soul-inflected production style to the genre's ailing landscape.

Surely, nine MCs are considerably above the memorization skills of the average radio listener. However, the Wu had no trouble sticking in the minds of fans, as each MC possesses a distinct style. Whether it's Method Man's half-sung wordplay, GZA's deft metaphors or Ghostface's rapid-fire delivery, recurrence has never been an issue for the Clan.

While the '90s saw the Wu rise to unprecedented heights for a hip-hop group -- it even had a video game -- the Clan witnessed a drop in popularity in the new millennium. With the rise of crunk and other euphemisms for Southerners groaning over Devo-on-downers synths, the Wu's brand of street poetry and grimy production became increasingly alien to the mainstream.

Unfazed, the Clan retreated to the underground, with GZA releasing steady product under Babygrande Records and Masta Killa signing to indie-heavyweight Nature Sounds. The Clan seemed to have resigned to the role of exiled elder statesmen of hip-hop. Mainstream acts like Ludacris and Kanye West

cited the Wu as an influence to their styles, but the platinum sales of the past continued to elude the Clan.

However, the past two years have seen the Wu poised for resurgence. Beginning with RZA's high-profile role in scoring Quentin Tarantino's "Kill Bill: Vol. 1" and leading up to the surprise commercial success of Ghostface's 2006 release, "Fishscale," public interest in the Wu is at its highest since 1997. Masta Killa's "No Said Date" received rave reviews, while GZA's collaboration with DJ Muggs topped many year-end lists in 2005. Method Man's latest debuted at No. 8 on the Billboard chart, despite little promotion from Def Jam Recordings. Raekwon is set to release the sequel to his 1995 mafioso-rap masterpiece, "Only Built 4 Cuban Linx," spawning incessant chatter from basement-dwelling bloggers and rap nerds worldwide.

Seemingly encouraged by the renewed public interest, RZA recently reported that the entire Clan is slated to regroup for its fifth release.

There could hardly be a better time as, in its current state, hip-hop is nearing self-parody. Rick Ross achieved gold status with his single, "Hustlin," a song whose standout lyric is, "Whip it real hard. Whip it. Whip it real hard." D4L gained national attention with the song "Laffy Taffy," which sounds like a four-year-old's concoction on a Playskool keyboard. Even Lupe Fiasco, championed by Jay-Z as the greatest MC since, well, Jay-Z, turned out to be less than stunning. Fiasco tendered only "Kick, Push," a banal song that invents "skate-rap," perhaps the only genre less interesting than "emo-hop."

In light of mainstream hip-hop's latest follies, you can put off that shiny new Paul Wall disc for next month. Lil' Wayne will be just fine if you don't buy his latest yawn-inducing escapade. Instead, buy Wu-Tang. ■

Local Music



Bojones at last receiving attention and critical acclaim.

Houston band creating national buzz

By **Woodie Stephenson**
Staff Writer

The first time I saw local band Bojones play, I misread their name on a scribbled handwritten flyer and thought they were called the Bolognas. For some reason the name seemed to fit, and I've never quite gotten over having to accept them as Bojones. This was all a couple of years ago at one of the Westheimer Art Festival revival attempts and the young three-piece group stuck out to me as the most impressive unknown band of the day, even though they played to a modest crowd of twenty people under the hot sun. Now, two years later, Bojones is at last receiving some long overdue attention, critical acclaim, and impressive national spots at the Bonnaroo Festival in Manchester, Tennessee and at the fifth annual Austin City Limits Festival held earlier this month.

Determined not to write the bio on themselves quite yet,

the three-piece ensemble that is Bojones is still cloaked in a bit of mystery. One subject of speculation so far is that twin brothers Louis (drums) and Chris (guitar) are the sons of the famous concert promoter Louis Messina of the Messina Group/ AEG Live. This may be a problem for some critics, who can point out the obvious advantages a band may acquire from such an elite pedigree; however, it has become very apparent that Bojones can handle their own on stage. The recent high school graduates have already opened up for a slew of popular international acts and are headlining their own show in Houston in mid-October.

The sound of Bojones is a merger of the past and the future. Citing such heavy-hitting influences such as Led Zeppelin, the Doors, and Aerosmith, Bojones yearn for a sound that is full enough to fill an arena, yet retains an edgy and modern sensibility. The group also cites many contemporary influences from the likes of Radiohead to Bright Eyes. Keyboardist and

lead vocalist Nicholas Greer has a gifted voice that can range from powerful to fragile in the course of one phrase, as he bangs furiously on a vintage keyboard. The muscle of Louis Messina behind the drums is reminiscent of a later Bono; banging furiously to bring the drums in front of the guitar at times. Such impressive and energetic playing earned the young drummer a nomination at this year's Houston Press Music Awards.

Supporting a strong early effort with 2005's self-titled album, Bojones have been adding more and more diverse new songs to their live catalog to win over new audiences. The range of energy in the band's songs can at times sway from the melodic whisper of Greer's vocals and soft keyboard to the full forced polyphonic clamor of a marching band. At times, the experience of a live Bojones song can give you the impression that their chaotic rhythm hangs on by a string as the compositions wind out of control, threatening to fall apart.

Catch Bojones headlining an October 13th show at Houston's Warehouse Live. Satin Hooks and Million Year Dance will also be featured on the bill. To listen

student info.

Republican Speaker presents case at UConn

By Slava Zenchenko
The Daily Campus
(U. Connecticut)
U-WIRE

The war in Iraq has managed to rattle every level of society to some extent, obliging everyone from the president to everyday pedestrians to ponder its existence and the many aspects of the war on terror which will inevitably have resounding global effects in the future. On Wednesday September 28th, at an event hosted by the University of Connecticut College Republicans, Dinesh D'Souza plunged right into those aspects, discussing the roots, progress, and future of the war. Though a relatively small crowd served as his audience in the Student Union Ballroom, D'Souza took the stage and offered his personal insight on the conflict that has spanned some five years.

D'Souza began by defining the war on terror, making the point that it was not as much a war on terror as it is a war against radical Islam groups. He likened it to World War II, where America was not fighting "kamakazeism," but the Japanese

empire. Also, D'Souza addressed one of the most widely disputed and controversial topic matters concerning the war, the motives for invading Iraq, by expressing that hindsight was illegitimate grounds for blame. We can not judge the initial decision with the current knowledge. Again, he likened it to World War II, where Albert Einstein was warned of German atom bomb research and reported it to Franklin Roosevelt, which ultimately ended with America dropping two atom bombs on Japan, devastating entire cities. Once Germany was reached, however, it was found out that they had not even come close to constructing atomic bombs. Roosevelt did not deceive to make the atom bomb. He simply made a tough decision in a time of war.

As the speech progressed, D'Souza shifted to Iraq in its present state-where it is now and how it affects the world.

"To this day, a democracy, similar to America, has never existed in the Middle East," he said. "The purpose of the war is not to impose democracy everywhere, but somewhere."

He continued by expressing that the entire Middle East is short

on government choices. There is "Islamic tyranny," like Iran, or "Secular Tyranny," like Jordan. A democratic Iraq would offer a sole alternative in the heart of the Middle East.

In response to the argument that America had ulterior motives, mainly oil, D'Souza agreed, stating that "the purpose of a leader of a democracy is to watch out for the interests of his country and his people."

So, even with other motives, America's invasion was vital to its economy. Without a friendly Iraq, oil would become a rare commodity, plunging the American economy into turmoil. D'Souza justified this "hidden" motive by stating that when running a democratic government, a leader can not always admit the interests of the country. This is a quality "inherent in democracy," D'Souza said.

Concerning the future, D'Souza made his point clear: American victory is almost inevitable. Out of an Iraqi population of 25 million, only 20 percent are aggressive toward America, while an even smaller percent are actively resisting, leaving 80 percent of the population open to democracy. D'Souza reasoned that a pro-American majority backed by American resources would hold out longer than anti-American efforts. D'Souza said that a loss

in Iraq would only come from a loss in "the American mind," claiming that "force is determined by will."

However, he did mention that the fate of the war would be revealed relatively soon. In 2008, a new president will take office, meaning President Bush has two years to wrap up in Iraq.

When asked if the upcoming Congressional elections will have a significant effect, D'Souza claimed that "though the Republicans will slip, they should still have control of Congress."

With two years to go, the war in Iraq has the potential for a breakthrough success or a fall-through disaster.

D'Souza is sure that victory is near. Others, however, want to see a cutback on the fighting.

"Some people want the troops out of Iraq right away," Greta Gaspar, a first-semester pre-pharmacy major said. "That's irrational. I think that a slower, more planned out withdrawal will decrease the fighting on our part, yet will give us enough time to make necessary adjustments."

Others, meanwhile, focus



Google Images / Denison.edu

Author Dinesh D'Souza

on a more sentimental aspect of war.

"I see a lot of strong anti-war feeling everywhere," said Vik Pahdy, a third-semester actuarial sciences major. "What we should be focusing on is the fact that our troops are there, risking their lives every minute of every day. President Bush has made it clear that he will stay in Iraq as long as he can. No amount of protest or anti-war feelings will change that. If we do not support our troops in their own homeland, then who will?"

"We live in a new time, a strange moment on the world stage," D'Souza said. ■



War Protest Oct. 5th

By Cody Roberts
Managing Editor

On Thursday, October 5th, people will walk out of school, take off work, gather in town squares, and march in cities across the country declaring their intention to bring the Bush program to a halt. Here in Houston, the event will take place at 5pm on the steps of City Hall at Herman Square, on Smith St.

between McKinney and Walker.

According to the official press release, in recent weeks the number of cities planning protests jumped from 50 to over 105. Meanwhile, the Bush administration is bolting into place an unprecedented new law which legalizes torture in the guise of coercion and severely restricts habeas corpus, the basic right to legal redress first established in England with the Magna Carta in 1215.

Organized by World Can't Wait.org, the group's official statement is as follows: "Face it. The Bush regime is remaking the world, very quickly, in a fascist way and for generations to come. Denial won't help. And the Democrats aren't stopping them. But WE must. And we can. There are millions of us..." This message calling people out on October 5th is being heard nationally on Air America radio spots and on listener supported Pacifica radio stations (here in Houston that is KPFT 90.1 FM). Thousands also contributed to

publish a full-page ad in USA Today on September 20th, reading in part: "Endless wars. Torture. Katrina. Theocracy... This regime does not represent us and we will drive it out."

Thursday's protests occur as Bush threatens a new war on Iran and the "Military Commissions Act of 2006" is approved in the Senate with bi-partisan support. Presented as a compromise, this "torture bill" legally enshrines the President's category of "enemy combatant," allows evidence obtained by torture to be admitted to trial by military tribunals, gives the President the right to interpret the Geneva Conventions, and eliminates the right of habeas corpus for those held by military commissions.

Debra Sweet, national coordinator of World Can't Wait said recently, "We are at a defining moment for this country

and its people. There are millions who don't want to live in a theocratic new Rome - but we don't have unlimited time to stop this regime. Whether we act - or fail to act - right now will impact the lives of millions all over the world for generations. We are putting this to everyone: When all other avenues of change are blocked, what do people do? Hit the streets. This is the chance we have on October 5th."

"They that can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety." -Benjamin Franklin, *Historical Review of Pennsylvania, 1759*

"He that would make his own liberty secure, must guard even his enemy from oppression; for if he violates this duty, he establishes a precedent that will reach to himself." -Thomas Paine ■

Lady Luck's LSAT Prep Travelogue

By **Monica Maza**
Assistant Editor

As an ambitiously independent student, I have done my own research to find out how and when to apply to law school and let me tell you; it's a tedious and expensive process. Imagine the joy I felt when I found out that I had to play \$600 for a multi-week LSAT (Law School Admissions Test) prep class in order to have a chance at scoring higher on the actual test. This is only one of the things I had to do before I started applying to schools. I'm not trying to scare anyone away from trying to get into law school, but I am giving you all a reality check so that you can start planning early. So with the class registration done and paid for, I was feeling pretty good but then things got interesting. The weekend of September 9th and 10th was especially crazy and I'm sure I won't forget it for a long time- but let me go back to when all the fun really started.

The day my luck changed

The phone rang on August 25th and even though I didn't recognize the number on the caller ID, I answered it. A male voice said, "May I speak to Ms. Monica Maza?" Oh great, I thought, some nut wanting to sell me the latest satellite dish service, but I politely replied, "This is she," and then he said, "This is Bob from Get Prepped." (Get Prepped is the company I had registered with for my LSAT prep class) I knew that whatever he was about to tell me was not going to be good and sure enough he said, "The Houston LSAT class that you signed up for has been cancelled." I think my brain flat lined a second after that because I don't really remember the specifics of the conversation. Why was this such a big deal? If you want to make a decent score on the LSAT, you need to take a prep class. You can study all of the old LSAT tests you want but you are not going to learn the

strategies on how to break down the reasoning of the questions in order to choose the correct answer. These are the strategies that you learn in a prep class. Basically, not taking a prep class for the LSAT was not an option because it would be a waste of time to take the test without learning those strategies. Before we hung up, Bob said he was going to e-mail me some options that I could choose from in order to get some kind of LSAT prep before my test day. Feeling an anxiety attack approaching, I waited a few minutes before checking my e-mail and soon an e-mail with the subject line "LSAT class cancellation" appeared.

The fun continues

My options were to sign up for (a) 15 hours of individual tutoring for \$899, which meant I would have to pay more for less class time (Does that make any sense?), (b) a weekend intensive review class for \$359, which meant taking a two-day class (Would I really learn anything by cramming? No), or (c) take the same multi-week class at the nearest location to mine, which happened to be Southern Methodist University's Dedman School of Law in Dallas. Based on what I said earlier about the disadvantages of not taking a prep class, I choose option (c) and the only reason I did was because they were refunding me half of the \$600 class cost. I figured that I could use that \$300 to pay for the transportation and housing costs of going to and staying in Dallas for two weekends. Now I had to figure out how I was going to get to Dallas and where I was going to stay (I have no family there so it was going to be a hotel). The obstacle is that the class is on Saturday and Sunday from 10am to 5pm, which meant that I would have to stay in a hotel on Saturday night and arrive in Dallas early Saturday morning. Then I would have to return to Houston by Sunday night in order to be in class Monday morning (When will the fun stop?).

First, I decided that driving an SUV to Dallas was going to be expensive because of gas prices so I searched for reasonable airline prices online. As luck would have it, I found roundtrip airfare from Hobby Airport to Love Field for \$100 through Southwest.com and bought this deal for two weekends in September. With that out of the way, I preceded to figure out where I would stay so I took the address of SMU's law school and searched for the closest hotel to the campus because, as we all know, hotels near airports tend to be pricier. I was in a nervous rush during my quest to find a hotel because I was worried that

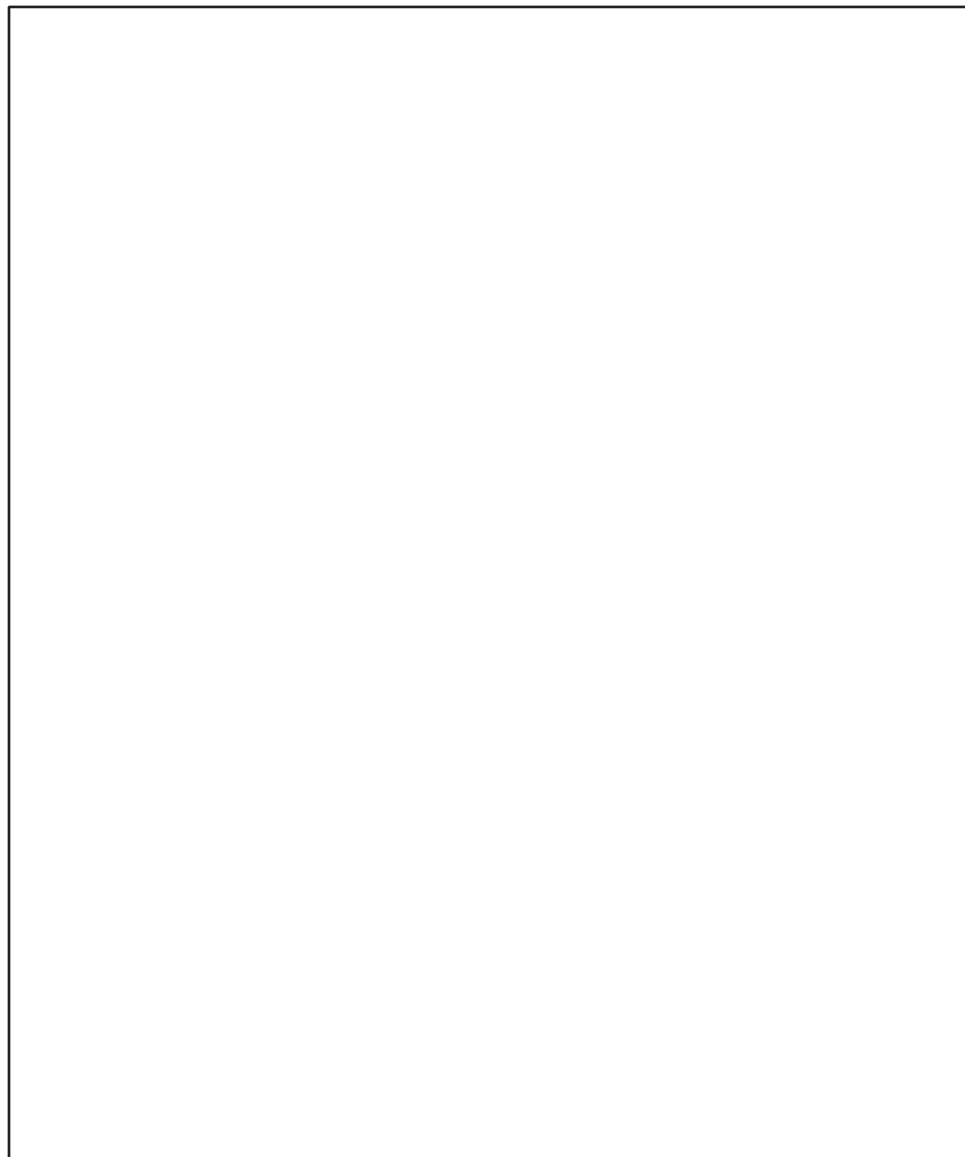
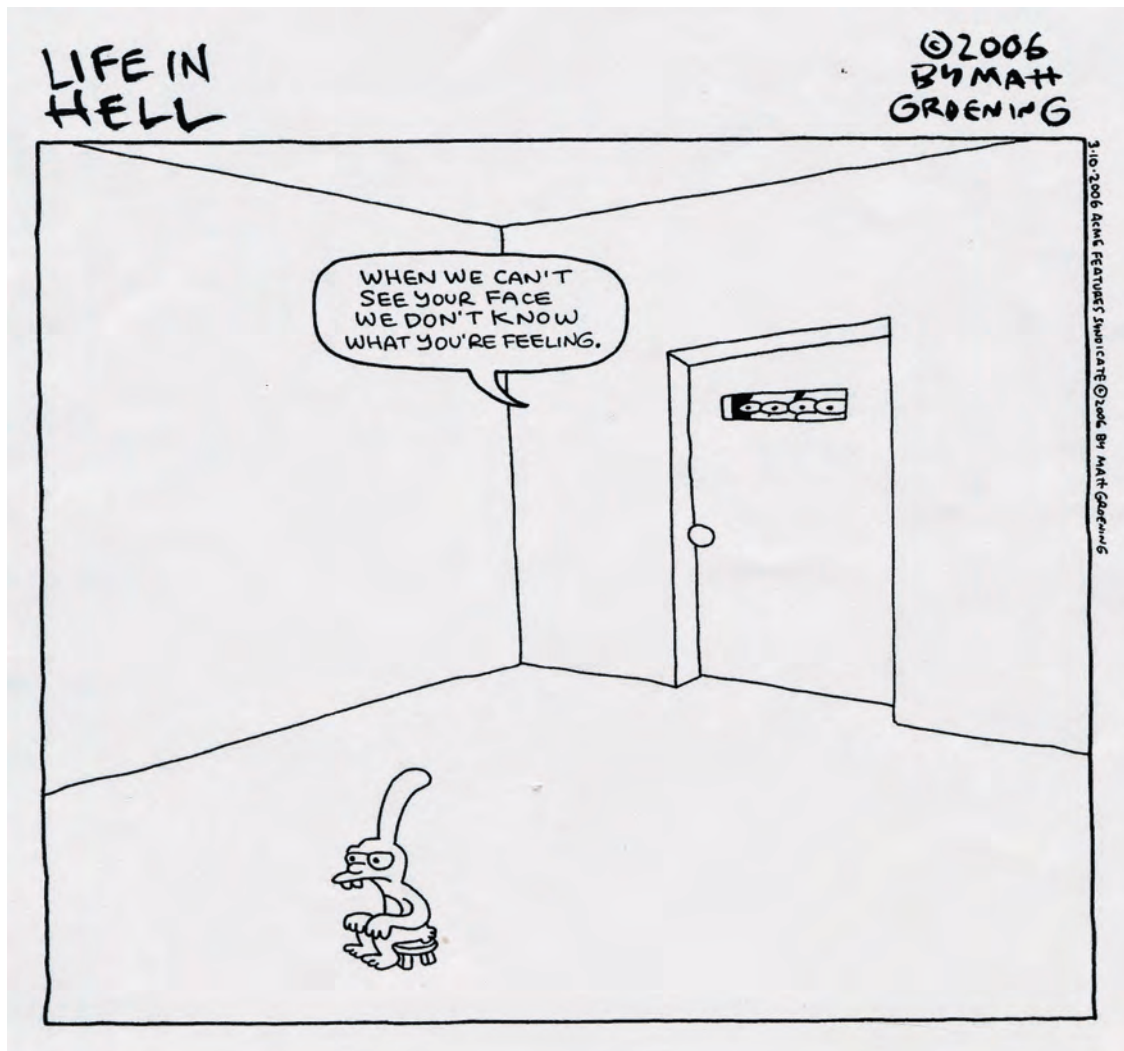
many hotels might be booked by fanatical Dallas Cowboy fans visiting for a game (it's possible). My luck continued and I found the La Quinta Cityplace, which had an online Weekend Impulse rate of \$59 per night. I chose that hotel because it also included free breakfast and that is a must for me. With transportation and lodging off my list, all I had to do was wait for the first prep class weekend to come.

Day 1: Revelations

Airport security was still very strict when I arrived to Hobby on September 9th. How

strict was it? Well, for one thing, all shoes had to be placed in a tray and sent through the x-ray machine. Also, the prohibition of gel and liquids in carry-on bags was still being enforced. There were even announcements on the intercom telling passengers to "consume all drinks and ice cream before boarding the aircraft." Remember the old days when we would walk through the metal detector and if something we had on made it beep all we had to do was step back, take it off, and walk through again? Well, it's different now. A woman in front of me had forgotten to take her belt off and it made the metal

See **LUCK** page 10



SGA

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plastic containers). No homemade foods, opened container, or expired foods will be accepted. Additionally, the food bank requests that individuals that are giving food be conscious of fat content and salt levels in the donated items. Please be aware of the foods that you select. Be sure that they are nutritious and healthy. Let's band together and show the force that UHD has to offer through this and other charitable events coming up throughout the semester.

While SGA is no longer accepting applications for the Fall 2006 semester, students are encouraged to apply for the Spring 2007 semester after grades are posted in December of this year. As always, SGA welcomes any comments, suggestions, or complaints from students, faculty, staff, and administration. To contact your Student Government Association, please email them at sga@uhd.edu or feel free to stop by their weekly Senate meetings on Fridays at 2 pm in Room S290.

DR. K

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who share interests with me.

Jenny and her husband, Tim, had invited me to go to the mountains with them and then we could come back to visit Sydney before Jenny and I left for Melbourne. After returning from Melbourne I would go to Alice Springs alone, and then meet some relatives in Sydney on the way to a trip to Christchurch and Auckland in New Zealand.

The adventure began when I arrived in Sydney's international airport.

Next Time: Wine and 'Roos in the Blues! ■

BUM

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work or will this make it easier to advance out of their station? The Seattle beggars that are able to sell their Bumvertising™ space are described as coherent and generally responsible, and are often quite shrewd in their own business world. They usually

have a savvy eye for a good corner location and understand the fundamentals of high contact, low cost advertising.

Mass-market advertising can cost hundreds of thousands of dollars. Panhandlers will 'work for food'. A perfect match? Sandwich - \$2.39. Bag of chips - \$0.65. Bottle of water - \$1.19. Helping the beggars while providing valuable public service messages - Priceless. ■

LUCK

continued from page 9

detector go off. The security guard told her to stand aside in a little area and called to his co-workers, "We need a female inspector." As I stepped through the metal detector (no I did not set it off) and passed this area, I heard a female security guard ask the woman, "Ma'am, do you have any (indistinct) items on you," and I saw her put on plastic latex gloves. I don't know if that woman ended up being patted down or not but your guess is as good as mine.

Southwest is ghetto. I had a boarding pass with an "A" on it and this airline uses the letters A, B, and C in order to board passengers by groups but that's where the organization ends. After boarding the plane, I'm wondering where my seat is because I don't see any kind of marks on my boarding pass indicating where I should sit (as in row P seat 6). Southwest does not have assigned seats in their airplanes; instead they have open seating. What is that? Well, as you walk into the plane, you pick a seat and sit in it (fun right?). I guess Continental has me spoiled because I did not like the idea of open seating. What if someone has to have a window seat because they freak out if they can't look outside? I am not one of those people but what about all those Twilight Zone traumatized individuals? Nothing is on the wing, okay? Then during the flight, I was given one complementary drink and no peanuts. I thought peanuts were supposed to be given to you when you fly but not this time. At the rate I was going, I wouldn't have been surprised if my luggage ended up in El Paso. ■

EARTH TALK



Questions & Answers About Our Environment

EARTH TALK
From the Editors of
E/The Environmental Magazine

Dear EarthTalk: What environmental impacts should our community expect if we allow Wal-Mart to open up a store nearby?
--Sara Jones, Davenport, IA

With more than 6,000 stores spread out across the globe--Wal-Mart is the world's biggest retailer, hands down, and also a magnet for criticism for its low wages, inadequate health coverage and effect on struggling downtowns. Wal-Mart has also had its share of environmental problems.

Environmentalists complain that the company's stores--often on the outskirts of rural communities--eat up open space, replacing farms and forests with concrete and pavement. And the company has been fined repeatedly in recent years by various agencies for environmental negligence. For example, in 2005, Wal-Mart paid \$1.15 million in fines to the state of Connecticut for the improper storage of pesticides and other toxins that polluted streams near its stores there, according to the website WakeUpWalMart.com.

A year earlier, Florida fined the company \$765,000 for violating petroleum storage tank laws at its auto service centers. The company admits that it failed to register its fuel

tanks and to install devices that prevent overflow, and that it did not perform monthly monitoring, and that it blocked state inspections. That same year, Georgia fined Wal-Mart \$150,000 for contaminating water outside of Atlanta.

And the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency penalized the company \$3 million in 2004 for violating the Clean Water Act in nine states. The company was also forced to change its building practices so as to prevent future water contamination. This came on the heels of a \$1 million fine for Clean Water Act violations at 17 locations in four other states. Wal-Mart also agreed to establish a \$4.5 million environmental management plan to improve its compliance with environmental laws at construction sites.

Wal-Mart says that change is afoot within the company. CEO Lee Scott has said that sustainability in all its forms is a key concern moving forward. "As one of the largest companies in the world, with an expanding global presence, environmental problems are our problems," Scott told company employees last October.

Scott's green vision includes powering facilities and fleet with renewable energy, cutting back on waste, and selling green products. Wal-Mart reportedly crafted their greening plan with the help of former Vice President Al Gore. Commitments include reducing greenhouse

gas emissions by 20 percent at existing locations 20 percent, and investing \$500 million in environmental improvements each year moving forward.

Wal-Mart is also reportedly ramping up plans to offer organic produce and using local farms to save transportation costs. According to Ron McCormick, an executive in the company's produce division, Wal-Mart is already buying a wide variety of produce based on what's available in each region, instead of shipping produce across the country. "Our whole focus is: How can we reduce food-miles?" he says.

The green attitude also extends to other products, with the company increasing offerings of sustainable harvested fish and organic cotton clothing and bedding. Critics say Wal-Mart is so focused on profit that such efforts will never stick. Only time will tell if Scott's vision for a greener Wal-Mart becomes reality.

Contacts: Wal-Mart, www.walmartstores.com; WakeUpWalMart.com, www.wakeupwalmart.com.


Got An Environmental Question? Send it to: EarthTalk, c/o E/The Environmental Magazine, P.O. Box 5098, Westport, CT 06881; submit it at: www.emagazine.com/earthtalk/thisweek/, or e-mail: earthtalk@emagazine.com. Read past columns at: www.emagazine.com/earthtalk/archives.php. ■

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