



News

KTCU REVAMPS: Radio station's specialty programs and student focus aim to reach campus **Read It Thursday.**



Features

You know they are coming and there is nothing you can do about it. "Snakes" are inside **PAGE 5.**



Sports

With athletic scandals throughout the nation, find out what TCU media relations is doing to sustain the positive image of the athletic department **PAGE 6.**



TCU

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Background checks considered after Rec Center incident

By ANDREW CHAVEZ
Staff Reporter

Administrators at the University Recreation Center are re-evaluating their policy on community membership after a 35-year-old accused pedophile was detained at the facility by TCU Police for violating his bond, a TCU Police detective said.

Ruben Edwards Jr. was detained on Aug. 8 after a complaint from a Rec Center staff member about his suspicious activity in the pool area, said TCU Police detective Sgt. Kelly Ham.

The staff member was also suspicious of Edwards because of an ankle monitor he was wearing, said Rec Cen-

ter director Steve Kintigh. The monitor most likely went unnoticed by staff members because it was not visible from behind the front desk, he said.

His bond conditions prohibited him from being within 100 feet of children, Ham said.

During the fall and spring semesters, children under 16 are only allowed in the facility from 6 p.m. on Friday until the facility closes on Sunday.

The Rec Center pool is occupied almost exclusively by children dur-

ing the summer when all operating hours are family hours. In addition to members' children, there are also children from various on-campus summer programs, Kintigh said.

"If we had seen an ankle bracelet we might have said, 'Maybe we need to take a look at this,'" Kintigh said.

Edwards got access to the facilities by buying a monthly community membership, said Mary Ellen Milam, associate director at the Rec Center.

"We had a complaint," TCU Police detective Vicki Lawson said, "and we did some investigating and he was issued a bench warrant immediately."

Edwards was on bond after being

arrested on Aug. 1, 2005 for exposing himself to a young female on June 18, 2005, Lawson said.

He will go to trial in the 1st Criminal District Court, most likely during the third week in September, said Page Simpson, a prosecutor in the Tarrant County District Attorney's Office.

He is now being held without bond at the Tarrant County Jail, according to jail documents.

The Rec Center staff is "certainly concerned about the incident," Kintigh said, and is currently looking into policy changes to prevent similar incidents.

"As a rule we don't require a picture ID," Kintigh said, "and that is

something we're going to look at."

He said background checks are also being considered.

Background checks are cost prohibitive, Kintigh said, and might be considered an invasion of privacy by some members. He said such measures are also rather unprecedented in a university setting and going back to perform checks on current members would be burdensome.

The 1996 Megan's Law requires all states to provide a publicly accessible online database with names and photos of convicted sex offenders. However, Edwards was not in the database. See **EDWARDS**, page 2



EDWARDS

Political issues causing rift within church, leaders say

By MICHELLE THOMAS
Staff Reporter

Divisions in the Episcopal Church regarding the inclusion of female leadership and gay and lesbian clergy are beginning to hit home in Fort Worth.

The new presiding bishop-elect of the United States, Katharine Jefferts Schori, aside from being female, is a strong supporter of gay and lesbian ordination and the blessing of same-sex couples in active relationships.

Jack Iker, bishop of the Diocese of Fort Worth, is seeking alternative leadership after Schori's election in June.

The Diocese of Fort Worth is one of three conservative dioceses in the United States that do not license female priests. With 56 congregations and 19,000 communicants in the 24-county diocese, the issue is growing in urgency.

"We would really like to just go to church and worship," Suzanne Gill, director of communications for the Diocese of Fort Worth, said, "but we have come to the point where we cannot ignore the politics."

Along with churches in the Fort Worth Diocese, Gill said that students at TCU will be taught traditional, sound theology.

"Historic faith will continue to be taught and exemplified at TCU," Gill said.

TCU's Episcopal Student Association, Canterbury House, led by Father Jonathan Ogujiofor, will begin meeting at TCU Thursday nights.

"Canterbury House is alive and well on campus," Ogujiofor said.

"I want Episcopal students to come and enjoy fellowship and make friends," he said. "I don't want them to have to deal with the conflict."

The Rev. Angela Kaufman, the minister to the university, said that the ultimate hope is to find a way to compromise, rather than divide the church.

"As a woman in church leadership," Kaufman said, "I don't think that gender, race, class or background should prohibit people from using their God-given gifts."

Schori will be inducted as the new presiding bishop in October. See **RELIGION**, page 2



SCHORI

All jacked up



Dirt flies as the TCU construction continues throughout the 2006 school year. (Top and bottom right) Sight of construction in front of the Student Center. (Bottom left) Rendering of residents halls looking toward University Union.

Official: construction aimed to help learning

By MICHAEL BOU-NACKLIE
Staff Reporter

Students can expect a whole new campus to develop over the next two years as TCU's \$100 million Vision in Action project moves forward, turning the university into a walking campus, according to the TCU Web site.

Construction around campus will be occupying most of the Main Campus over the next two years, as a new student union and four dormitories are constructed in front of the Student Center, said Don Mills, vice chancellor for Student Affairs.

Chris Reed, a sophomore business major,

said he was annoyed with the construction in front of the Student Center.

"It's not even that it's ugly — it's a pain to get around," he said.

Many students have begun coining the phrase "Texas Construction University" said John Householder, director of Admissions Operations, at the university's opening luncheon.

The increasing size of TCU will not affect enrollment, said Mills, adding that he hopes the construction will make the university more conducive to student learning. Since campus will be more traversable by foot, students will be better able to interact with faculty and other students.

See **CAMPUS**, page 2

Organization recognizes university for contributions

By JOANNA BERNAL
Staff Reporter

TCU made history in the Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce when it became the first academic institution to win the Spirit of Enterprise Award in the 30 years of the award's existence.

The Spirit of Enterprise Award recognizes local businesses for their contributions to the development of the city of Fort Worth, said Larry Lauer, vice chancellor for marketing and communication.

"Overall, TCU has become more aware that being a part of a great city helps make the university a greater university and vice versa," Lauer said. "We've been working on that partnership, and it's been recognized in this award."

The MBA program was ranked 18th among the nation's regional programs, one of the reasons TCU was selected for this award Lauer said.

Dan Short, dean of the School of Business, said he believes the award improved TCU's image.

"We are definitely a hot school in Fort Worth," said Short. "I suppose that anything that enhances our credibility in Fort Worth would make us hotter."

The chamber also noted the School of Business because they work with them through internships, said Marilyn Gilbert, executive vice president of marketing for the Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce.

TCU's arts programs were also noted in the chamber newsletter.

"Virtually every major arts organization in the city started at TCU at one time or another," Lauer said.

The Van Cliburn International Piano Competition and the Latin American Music Festival in April were noted in particular.

Other programs mentioned are the School of Education's laboratory schools, KinderFrogs and Starpoint School. TCU's other academic programs, professors and leadership programs were also recognized.

One of the major contributions the chamber notes is the plan to improve Berry Street, Gilbert said.

She added that the \$200 million improvements to TCU itself also contribute to the recognition.

Faculty say professor leaves religious legacy

By LAUREN PICK
Staff Reporter

Former students and co-workers remember Kenneth Lawrence, former chairman of the religion department and TCU professor emeritus, as a good friend.

Lawrence died unexpectedly on Tuesday, Aug. 15.

"Dr. Lawrence didn't have many

acquaintances, but rather a lot of friends," said Josh Long, a student of Lawrence's.

Lawrence came to TCU in 1972 and later served as department chair for 16 years. During his tenure, the faculty of the religion department became more diverse, and additional focus was put on the academic study of religion, said

David Grant, professor and current chair of the religion department.

"We wouldn't be who we are today without him," Grant said. "His emphasis on the study of religion and the quality of faculty are all part of his legacy."

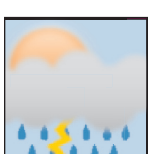
The Rev. Angela Kaufman, a former student of Lawrence's, said Lawrence was most passionate about art and

finding religious meaning in it.

Known as "Lorenzo" among friends, Lawrence was an avid traveler who visited several countries, most frequently Italy, said Kaufman, who attended one of his trips to Italy.

"Going on a trip is one thing," Kaufman said, "Going with Ken Lawrence is another. You see the

See **PROFESSOR**, page 2



WEATHER

TODAY: Isolated T-Storms, 98/77
TOMORROW: Isolated T-Storms, 98/77
FRIDAY: Partly Cloudy, 98/77

FUN FACT OF THE DAY

Las Vegas county government says starting next week, its marriage license bureau will no longer be open 24/7. Due to budget constraints, to-be brides and grooms will only be able to apply between 8 a.m. and midnight. -The Associated Press

TODAY'S HEADLINES

FEATURES: "Snakes" is surprisingly good, page 5
OPINION: Chemo should be optional, page 3
SPORTS: Athletes receive media training, page 6

CONTACT US

Send your questions, compliments, complaints and hot tips to the staff at NEWS2SKIFF@TCU.EDU

EDWARDS

From page 1

because he does not have a reported conviction for a sex crime yet, Simpson said.

All university staff members and volunteers who have contact with TCU students are subject to background checks, said Jacquelyn Curry, employment coordinator in the Human Resources department.

Those background checks are paid for by Human Resources and department policy prohibits performing those checks on nonemployees and requires consent from employees before the check is performed.

The University of Texas at Arlington and Southern Methodist University also sell community memberships to their recreation centers. Like TCU, UTA does not require a photo ID, said Allyson Weitz, an associate director at UTA. However, SMU does require a photo ID,

said SMU director Judith Banes. Neither facility runs background checks on their members.

Community memberships are available to anyone 18 years or older whether or not they have an affiliation with the university. As of a May 15 report, there were 103 members enrolled at the \$600 yearly rate and 114 members on the \$65 month-to-month plan, Milam said.

Edwards had his monthly membership for less than a week before the incident, Kintigh said, and his membership was immediately canceled after the Aug. 8 incident.

TCU Police turned Edwards over to the Tarrant County Fugitive Squadron who took him to the Tarrant County Jail where he is currently being held without bail.

Edwards was issued a criminal trespass warning by TCU Police on Aug. 8 and Lawson said he will not be allowed back on the campus.

RELIGION

From page 1

bishop at the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., Nov. 4. Gill said the Fort Worth Diocese and its supporters hope that the conflict will be resolved before this date so that further and permanent action will not have to be taken.

"Because we are not able to accept the leadership of Schori," Gill said, "we are seeking another relationship with an archbishop to give our bishop someone he has a similar faith and practice with."

Gill said that Iker is concerned that the increasing shift toward liberal leadership is causing a compromise in the doctrinal beliefs of the church.

"Scripture prohibits homosexual activity. America has accepted this standard and it has begun creeping into the church," Gill said.

Doug Newsom, director of graduate studies in the Schieffer School of Journalism and member of the Trinity Episcopal Church, said these divisions are not new. "The conflict between the U.S. church and the Anglican Communion is deep rooted in our history," Newsom said.

Conservative churches in the Anglican Communion objected to decisions made by the American church in 2003, after the confirmation of the first openly gay bishop, V. Gene Robinson, of New Hampshire.

Individual parishes in Southeast Asia and Africa

sought alternative jurisdiction in response to Robinson's ordination.

Gill said that Anglican churches in other parts of the world are concerned about the American branch's actions.

"It appears that the American church does not care about the opinions of the world church," Gill said. "They are not taking responsibility for their actions and the effects it has on others."

Iker has requested new leadership for the Diocese of Fort Worth and is awaiting response from the Most Rev. Dr. Rowan Williams, archbishop of Canterbury. Iker is asking that the archbishop assign someone else to a position of leadership over the Diocese of Fort Worth.

PROFESSOR

From page 1

country through his eyes."

After his retirement in 2001, Lawrence continued to take students overseas and also taught the Honors' Program colloquia course, Nature of Values, Grant said.

Lawrence was scheduled to teach the Nature of Values class this semester, as well as a liberal arts course for the graduate program, said Peggy Watson, director of the Honors Program.

"That class was known as one of the best classes TCU offers," Watson said. "He was definitely missed on the first day of class."

Nature of Values was not a religion class, but rather an in-depth study of the values found in visual art, Watson said.

Listening to Lawrence share his adventures gave more color to what his students were learning, said Long, a senior finance and accounting major.

"His death was very surprising," said Long, president of the Honors Cabinet. "It is a loss to all the students that didn't have him."

Lawrence also played a key role in the community at University Christian Church, said Kay Higgins, associate dean of Student Development and fellow member of UCC.

Two of his more prominent involvements with UCC included his roles in the artwork of the church and in originating one of the church's annual festivals, Higgins said.

Bobby Hawley, former teaching assistant for Lawrence and member of UCC, said, "The response in the congregation to Ken's death was overwhelming; it was the largest funeral I've seen in this sanctuary."

CAMPUS

From page 1

The construction of the new union will allow for the current student center to be renovated into an academic building.

In comparison, the new student union will have 130,000

square feet, as opposed to the current student center, which is 83,000 square feet. Flanking the new dorms will be two open walkways that will extend along the new residence halls to the new student union. The new dorms will house 315 students in addition to those already living on campus, according to the TCU Web site.

The walk-friendly campus will also allow for the new union to be used not only by students living on campus, but by everyone who comes to the university. This coincides

with the plan "to bring the academic programs and the residential programs together," Don Mills said in a Fort Worth Star-Telegram article.

Mills said he believes that if students are encouraged to stay on campus, they will "be doing quite a bit more of student learning because the longer you stay on campus, you learn more about diversity, you learn how to work in groups."

Mills added that he hopes the new facilities will allow TCU to have "programs that cost nothing, to encourage student learning."

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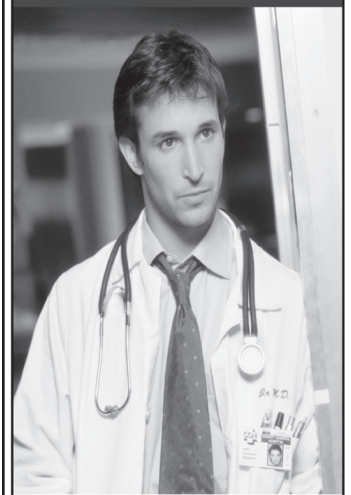
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PHYSICIANS COMMITTEE FOR RESPONSIBLE MEDICINE

HOWDY WEEK '06

sponsored by SGA Programming Council

Tuesday, August 22

Merchants Fair
11:00AM-2:00PM ~ SC Lounge

Back to School with Mr. Belding
6:00PM ~ SC Ballroom

Wednesday, August 23

Sociology Society Meet & Greet
5:00PM-6:00PM

Disciples on Campus Cookout
5:00PM-7:00PM ~ Sadler Lawn

Delta Sigma Theta & Sigma Lambda Alpha Block Party
7:00PM

Prime Time Praise
7:00PM ~ SC Lounge

Thursday, August 24

Frogpalooza
5:00PM-7:00PM ~ Sadler Lawn

TropiAKAI Luau
7:00PM ~ Rec Center

Catholic Mass & Free Meal
5:15PM ~ Reed Hall 214

Friday, August 25

Construction Celebration with Live Music
Noon ~ Main Campus

Movie Night
9:00PM ~ Foster-Waits Lawn
Showing V for Vendetta

Saturday, August 26

Meet the Frogs
11:00AM ~ Amon Carter Stadium

Wednesday, August 30

Activities Fair
4:00PM-7:00PM ~ Rec Center

Sophomore Splash
5:00PM-8:00PM ~ Rec Center Pool

Intercultural Student Welcome
8:00PM-11:00PM ~ Rec Center Pool

Thursday, August 31

Church Fair
11:30AM-1:30PM ~ Sadler Lawn



NO SURVIVORS

A Russian passenger jet crashed in eastern Ukraine yesterday, killing at least 170 people, including 45 children. The cause of the crash is unclear.

-Associated Press

THE SKIFF VIEW

Students deserve better construction plan

The construction going on throughout TCU, despite its good intentions, is a hassle for current students. Terrible parking has become worse and walkways across campus have been detoured or cut off completely. "Texas Construction University" is an apt nickname many students have adopted for our school.

Upon completion, the more than \$100 million main campus overhaul will be a fantastic sight to see: arcade walkways, amphitheaters and a five-story bell tower. In its current state, however, the main campus looks like some ugly mining expedition.

Imagine if TCU had decided to take twice as long for the entire renovation, but built individual buildings much quicker. Current students could have benefitted from at least some of the planned buildings.

Or perhaps the entire process could have been built in three simple phases, much like the Berry Street renovation. At any given time at least part of our main campus

would have remained in tact while the other was restricted to Caterpillars and hole-drillers.

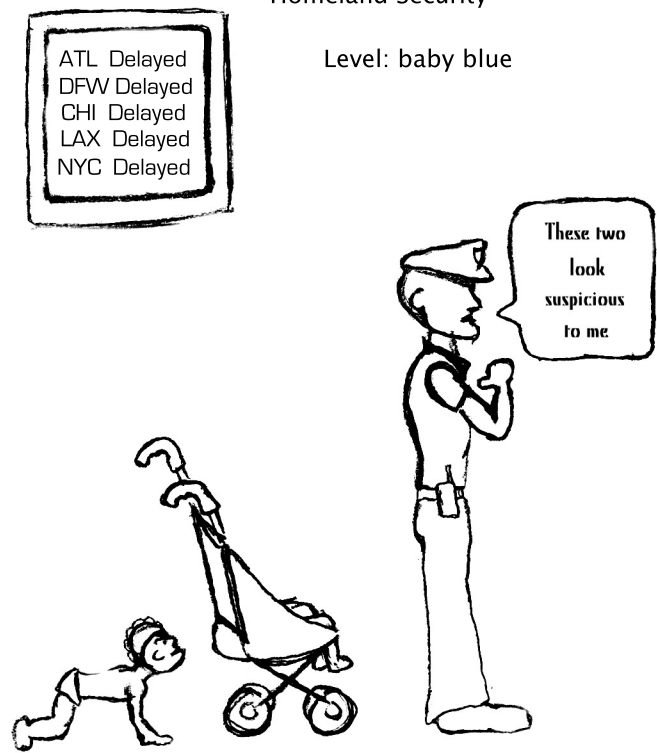
Freshmen who visited TCU prior to enrolling are no doubt shocked to find much of what they saw last year is entirely different. A bulldozer sits where Frog Fountain once stood. Freshman students' first two years will be marred by memories of navigating orange fencing, squinting through dusty wind kicked up by earth-movers, and listening to the banging of metal on metal. Seniors might remember their last year as "the year TCU disappeared."

Construction will always be a headache for all parties involved, but TCU's Vision in Action committee should have voted to build our new campus in smaller bites, rather than one large cumbersome chunk.

While spending so much time (and money) focusing on TCU's future students, it would seem many administrators have forgotten about those already here.

News editor John-Laurent Tronche for the editorial board

BY ROLF NELSON



COMMENTARY

Facebook hinders the art of flirting

I recently noticed a disturbing trend among the college-age crowd. This trend is that, due to the proliferation of Web sites such as Facebook and MySpace, the national pastime of flirting as we know it, has become a drastically under performed sport. So much so, in fact, I would say it is becoming less like the Super Bowl and more like Backgammon. "This is preposterous!" you might say. Well, let's review flirting as it once was. A guy goes with his buddies to a party and meets a few more of his friends who, in turn, introduce him to their friends. But alas, no sparks fly.

The party seems to be winding down as he finishes his last drink and then, it happens. Out of the corner of his eye, he sees her; she sees him. Time seems to stand still as the two of them make their way across the room.

They converse on a variety of topics, many of which they seem to have in common. Finally, it's time to head home, and tension mounts as both wonder who will make the next move. Soon, the guy casually states, "So hey ... um, I'm heading home ... but are you on Facebook? I'll Facebook you!"

What the heck? Two completely single people just spent the last half hour discussing their equal loves for Star Wars and coin-collecting, and all the guy can do is relegate himself to requesting an Internet friendship so he can grovel over the 137 photos of her in her last semester's "Trip to Spain" photo album? Forgive me for sounding frank, but you better get those digits!

Now obviously this type of occurrence doesn't happen all the time. Of course, there are still the avid "digit-getters," the occasional hookups as well as the ill-advised one-night stands.

Now, I must state that, as a devoted "Facebooker" myself, I am not bashing these online communication sites. With the hectic schedules people face these days, Web sites such as these are needed to stay in contact with one another, as well as to provide a quick diversion from our busy college lives.

Not all conversations are meant to lead to a romantic courtship. Many times these Web sites can help a student get to know someone better before taking that first big step of asking for a phone number. But at the same time, you shouldn't let someone who could potentially turn out to be really special be subjected to a semester of "pokes" and "What's up?" messages while you work up the courage to ask what should've been asked the first night.

For a large part, it seems that many guys (and a few girls) have sadly demoted themselves to becoming mere bench warmers in the "game of love," while a starting position patiently awaits their arrival. To that I say: So what if you get shot down? It happens to me ... um ... I mean my friends, all the time. Also, just because of the simple fact that girls outnumber guys at TCU, and most colleges, almost 2 to 1, guys, you really have nothing to lose (sorry, girls).

So, the next time you hear "last call" at the bar and that conversation of model airplane-building starts to wind down, take a chance. Get the digits.

Glenton Richards is a senior radio-TV-film major from Carrollton, Texas.

Chemo should be option for patient, not order

Drained. Aching. Weak. Nauseated. Sixteen-year-old Abraham Cherrix of Chincoteague, Va. is no stranger to struggle. But struggle shouldn't be necessary to obtain the right to make decisions about one's own physical health and well-being.

Abraham endured several bouts of chemotherapy last fall after being diagnosed with cancer of the lymph system, or Hodgkin's disease. The treatments left him exhausted and frail, his 5'11" body dropping from 156 pounds to a meager 122. Chemo took so much out of him that his father sometimes had to carry him.

After three months of treatment, his cancer went into remission. But not for good. When his cancer returned this February, Abraham, with the support of his parents, declined both chemo and radiation. Instead, he opted for an alternative form of treatments based on herbs and an organic diet. But his decision did not find favor in the eyes of the Accomack County Department of Social Services, who accused Abraham's parents of medical neglect.

While both Abraham and his parents adamantly opposed chemo for its damaging effects, a juvenile court judge granted Social Services joint custody of Abraham and ordered that his parents take him to Children's Hospital of the King's Daughters in Norfolk, Va., and comply with any and all treatments that the hospital con-

sidered necessary.

No one should be subjected to medical treatments against their will, especially ones with such cataclysmic effects.

"It nearly killed me," Abraham said of his chemotherapy last fall.

Even with successful chemotherapy, it is not likely that a patient with Hodgkin's will live much longer than five years after being diagnosed with the disease. Abraham should rightfully be allowed to determine in what state he will spend the remainder of his life, no matter the length, and with what method he will battle his ailment, no questions asked. Abraham is fully capable of making his own decisions. He is, after all, the one immediately affected by them.

"I did my research," Abraham said. "I believe alternative medicine is the cure."

While it may be true that he is legally a minor, it is also true that a 16-year-old who commits murder can be tried as an adult. A 16-year-old cancer patient should be legally treated as one as well.

And even if he is not old enough to legally take charge of his own medical choices, his parents, who are his legal guardians, advocated his stance completely. It is not medical neglect to support a patient seeking the therapy of his choice.

"Stress is one of the worst things you can deal with when you have cancer," said Abraham's mother, Rose Cherrix.

Stress is exactly what the legal battles Abraham has had to face have inflicted on him.

He unfortunately, however, is not the first teenager afflicted with cancer that has been forced to undergo legal conflict for the right to choose a treatment.

Katie Wernecke of Corpus Christi, Texas, then 13, was sent by court order into foster care to receive chemotherapy for Hodgkin's disease last year. Her parents were opposed to the treatments.

"This is not a case about what treatment is best," said John Stepanovich, spokesman for the Cherrix family. "It's a case about who gets to decide."

Abraham's wishes should always have been the highest priority.

Fortunately, Abraham's court ordeal ended in victory. Legal representation for the Cherrix family and social services officials reached an agreement a week ago: he will be permitted to treat his cancer with alternative medicine by a board-certified oncologist of his choice, while also undergoing hormone therapy and radiation in small doses.

While Abraham did eventually win the right to choose his treatment, the battle was one he should never have had to fight.

Opinion editor Jordan Cohen is a sophomore English major from Lewisville, NC.

'Talladega Nights' uses exaggerated Southern humor to poke fun at social issues: religion, drugs, marriage, homosexuality

I hesitate to wring too much sociological meaning out of "Talladega Nights: The Ballad of Ricky Bobby." I hesitate — and now I plow ahead.

The movie, which stars Will Ferrell as Ricky Bobby, a not-very-bright, obnoxious but still likeable race car driver, is by far the most popular movie in America. A juvenile, cliché-ridden, potty-mouthed spoof set in the world of big-time, big-money stock car racing, has earned around \$100 million in box office receipts in just 12 days. It was made with the approval of, and in collaboration with, NASCAR and includes the participation of many of its multimillion-dollar corporate sponsors.

The movie is also immensely enjoyable, accepting its modest aspirations: getting people to laugh at oafish stereotypes in comic scenes stitched between high-energy racing sequences. I've seen it twice, and I laughed through it both times along with everyone else in the theater.

Yes, over-analyzing comedy is fraught with risk, but there's something else going on in this unapologetically mainstream, over-the-top farce — something sociological and political but not ideological.

An underlying assumption of "Talladega Nights" is both simple and, in a way, subversive. It's saying that Americans really are not so polarized and angry at each other as the shills and myth-makers of the extreme right and left would have us believe. If we were, we'd have to be appalled by the wild comic exaggerations the movie constructs around hot-button issues that supposedly have us at each other's throats. Instead, millions of us are getting together and laughing at them:

Responsible parenting? Ricky Bobby and his wife, Carley (Leslie Bibb), encourage and approve of the shockingly profane, undisciplined behavior of their young sons, Walker and Texas Ranger (TR for short). In one scene, as the boys verbally abuse Carley's aging father, TR explains, "I'm all jacked up on Mountain Dew!"

Holy matrimony? Carley, "my red-hot smokin' wife," as Ricky calls her, is a sexually charged gold-digger who deserts her husband at the first sign of financial trouble. Within hours, she has taken up with Ricky's best friend and fellow driver, Cal (John C. Reilly), and drives a wedge between them.

Illegal drugs? The film is littered with casual references to cocaine, marijuana and alcohol. Ricky's irresponsible and mostly

absent father, Reese Bobby (Gary Cole), uses drugs, sells drugs and shares drug stories with kids. Although hardly admirable, Reese is undeniably appealing.

Religion? In a hallucinatory panic after a crash, Bobby runs around the race track in his underpants screaming, "Help me Jesus! Help me Jewish god! Help me Allah! Help me Tom Cruise!"

Arguably, the movie's funniest scene is set around the family dinner table, with Ricky saying grace. He dedicates it to the "Dear Lord baby Jesus" and the "tiny infant Jesus," then explains at length why he prefers "the Christmas Jesus" to the bearded Jesus, teenage Jesus or grown-up Jesus. Cal says he pictures Jesus on stage as a member of Lynyrd Skynyrd and sees himself in the crowd "totally hammered." Ricky notes that a sponsorship deal requires him to mention POWERade, the official sports beverage of NASCAR, in every grace. An exasperated Carley finally screams, "Ricky! Finish the damn grace!"

Homosexuality? Here, "Talladega Nights" defies what you might well expect from a film set in the Southern-based, macho culture of stock car racing: There are no swishy gags, no effeminate portrayals, no "fag" jokes.

The gay character Jean Girard (Sacha Baron Cohen) is a champion driver from France who comes to the United States specifically to challenge Ricky Bobby's dominance of the NASCAR circuit. He's funny, not because he's gay, but because Cohen's fake French accent is bad to the point of incomprehensibility. He's funny because he spouts ludicrous non-sequiturs, such as saying he and his husband want what all couples want: to retire to Stockholm and invent a currency for dogs and cats.

Girard is no patsy. He proves himself to be a fearless, winning NASCAR driver. His voice and image are used in arcade video driving games. Kids run around wearing jerseys with the Jean Girard logo on them.

What to make of all this? When a movie sanctioned by the marketing geniuses of NASCAR and embraced by moviegoers in all regions of the country uses comedy to neutralize the stereotypes of rural, family, religious and Southern culture, it becomes a lot harder for urban Northerners to take such notions too seriously. Redneck humor has long trafficked in self-mockery, and "Talladega Nights" constructs an even bigger comedic tent.

Eric Mink is commentary editor for the St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

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• Add the Myers's and then fill the glass with crushed ice
• Garnish with a strawberry and a sprig of mint — Associated Press

SNAKES ON A PLANE!



www.moviepublicity.com

“Snakes” likely to become the next modern day cult classic

By ALY FLEET
Staff Reporter

“Snakes on a Plane,” in a word, was ridiculous. Just as I fully expected, every snake attack, death and line of expletive-littered dialogue was laughable.

Somehow though, the audience at my showing got the wrong impression from previews.

“I’m hoping it will be scary,” 18-year-old Vanessa Recendiz said before the film began.

“If not, I want a refund.” Stacy Dickerson, 40, said the

same thing.

“I want lots of scary stuff.”

I guess they didn’t get the hilarious phone call from Samuel L. Jackson yelling “Hey, Aly. Go see my movie August 18th.”

“Snakes” centers around a laid-back surfer named Sean (Nathan Phillips) who witnesses a murder. FBI agent Flynn (Jackson) convinces Sean to testify against the murderer, and the two must take a five-hour flight to attend the trial.

For the first 45 minutes, everything is meticulously set up to cause com-

plete chaos later in the story line. We meet the passengers: a first-time flier, two young boys, a baby, a flight attendant on her last flight, a rapper with obsessive-compulsive disorder, a rich girl with a lap dog, and newlweds.

When everything is in place to go wrong, it does.

Snakes come from everywhere — the oxygen mask compartments, barf bags and, of course, the toilet — making for some very entertaining, yet somewhat disgusting deaths.

People begin dying left and right. And the ways they die? Absolutely

hilarious.

Just a hint — the first fatalities on the flight are a couple about to join the “mile-high” club. Take a guess where they get bit.

After an hour of snake onslaught, the film neatly — and quickly — wraps up. The remaining passengers arrive safely at LAX, where plenty of anti-venom awaits them.

Genevieve Nesom, 15, called it “incredibly predictable.”

But really, could you expect anything more?

The film was obviously made with

the intention of being predictable in every way possible — the cliché passenger list, the corny dialogue, the unnecessary nudity and the out of place, although entertaining, cursing.

The predictability of everything just makes it all the more entertaining.

So, if you’re up for one hour and 46 minutes of absurd and ridiculous entertainment, then absolutely go see “Snakes on a Plane.”

But if you want a terrifying movie that keeps you guessing, “Snakes” is not for you. You will be sorely disappointed.

“Snakes” slithers into theaters and succeeds

By MATT MABE
Staff Reporter

Not since “I’m Gonna Git You Sucka” came out in 1988 has there been such an enthralling movie title as “Snakes on a Plane.”

The film received huge Internet buzz when its title was first uttered in the media world.

The Internet frenzy then exploded when everyone heard Samuel L. Jackson had been cast in the lead role.

Bloggers from all over the globe showed tremendous interest in the film. My personal favorite being snakesonablog.com, which is a blog run by Brian Finkelstein.

Finkelstein was invited to the premiere by New Line Cinema, which was held at Grauman’s Chinese Theatre in Hollywood.

Sensing they had a stinker on their hands, New Line Cinema had several new scenes added to bump the film up from a “PG-13” to an “R” rating.

Receiving an “R” rating on a movie can potentially be box-office suicide because, while it may make the film appear to be more edgy, it alienates younger audiences.

“After nearly a year of buildup, I have to say that the movie exceeded my expectations,” Finkelstein wrote on his blog. “It had snakes, it had planes, it had Sam Jackson, it had swearing,

It had, in short, everything we were looking for.”

“Snakes” made a modest \$15.2 million in the North American box office, which is seen as a disappointment since the film was expected to make the \$22 million range by New Line Cinema.

The flick still managed to be the No. 1 film in its opening weekend, according to the weekend box office numbers on boxoffice Mojo.com.

The film actually is not all that bad. Its diverse cast is definitely a plus, which includes an Oscar nominee, an Emmy winner and even a former Power Ranger.

Julianna Margulies (“ER”) does a great job as one of the flight attendants, and Jackson reprises his usual role of the loud, tough officer who saves the day.

Comedic relief is provided by David Koechner (“Anchorman”), and Kenan Thompson, who plays a passenger (“Kenan and Kel”).

The film is B-movie campiness at its best. Anywhere you can think of someone getting bit by a snake, and I mean anywhere, passengers seem to get bit there.

This movie packs enough screaming and gory snake attacks to make even Steve Irwin cringe. There’s even a gratuitous sex scene in the lavatory of the plane. Honestly, what else can you ask for?

“After a year of buildup, I have to say that the movie exceeded my expectations”

-Brian Finkelstein

“Snakes” bites yet surprisingly pleases audiences

By RICH COPLEY
McClatchy Newspapers

The only innovation of “Snakes on a Plane” is in the title.

All the airline disaster clichés it presents have been done and have been brilliantly lampooned in “Airplane” (1980). Same goes for the cop drama. They are the same old archetypes we’ve been seeing for years.

No, if it wasn’t for the snakes on the plane, most of us, including Samuel L. Jackson, wouldn’t have given a rip about this movie. But we have the snakes and to director David R. Ellis’ credit, he has seized the opportunity afforded him by the title, Mr. Jackson and a legion of loyal-beyond-reason Internet bloggers to put together a ripping little thrill ride to end the summer. If you’re looking for anything else from a movie called “Snakes on a Plane,” save your money.

“What were you expecting?” one guy asked his friend in the restroom after Thursday night’s screening. “Character development? A plot?”

Well, there is a bit of a plot. Surfer dude Sean (Nathan Phillips) accidentally spies gangster Eddie Kim (Byron Lawson) carrying out a brutal murder of a Los Angeles prosecutor in Hawaii.

Police and Kim both find Sean, and he is eventually put on a plane to Los Angeles to testify against Kim. Escorting him is the coolest FBI agent in the land,

played, of course, by Jackson.

Kim concocts a plot to release a load of exotic, deadly snakes onto the plane and utilize a pheromone to make them highly aggressive.

If you’re already seeing plot holes in this, trust us, there are loads. Even a character observes that releasing snakes on the plane would be no guarantee Sean would die. That character, by the way, gets it.

This may be one of the most self-aware movies in quite a while. It knew it needed to get to the action quick. It knew it needed to be graphic, but not too graphic. It knew that a cheesy line would probably get as many laughs as groans. It knew that bad was sort of its standard. “Snakes” actually seizes opportunities to appeal to the lowest common denominator, like some of the body parts the snakes attack.

Nobody’s trying to win an Oscar here.

And while that may bug some film-goers, they probably weren’t going to go to a movie called “Snakes on a Plane” anyway. There are moments it’s so bad it’s good. It’s mugging to the camera, saying “C’mon, let’s have some fun.”

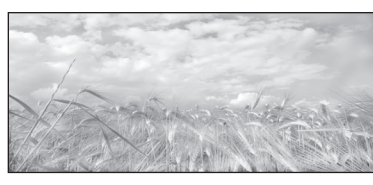
Already, people are talking about “Snakes” becoming a midnight movie staple, with audiences performing it in front of the screen, a la “The Rocky Horror

Picture Show” (1975). You can see that, because part of the fun of “Snakes” is the ridiculous and the awful. Dr. Frank-N-Furter would approve.

If you weren’t expecting much from “Snakes on a Plane,” that’s about what you get. But in a perverse way, you get more.

SNAKES ON A PLANE
3 stars
Starring: Samuel L. Jackson
Directed by: David Ellis
Rated: R
Running time: 105 minutes





FAMOUS QUOTE

"Always acknowledge a fault. This will throw those in authority off their guard and give you an opportunity to commit more." — Mark Twain

TODAY IN HISTORY

1913: Automobiles were legally allowed to enter Yosemite National Park, Calif., for the first time, making a huge change in the national park system.

Quigmans

by Buddy Hickerson



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9x9 Sudoku grid with some numbers filled in.

HARD

#1

Directions

Fill in the grid so that every 3x3 box, row and column contains the digits 1 through 9 without repeating numbers.

See Thursday's paper for answers to today's Sudoku puzzle.

Tuesday's Solutions

9x9 grid showing the solution to the previous day's puzzle.

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Crossword

- ACROSS 1 Benefit 6 for thought 10 Hat part 14 Multiunit complex, briefly 15 Actress Skye 16 Astronaut Sally 17 Bikini, e.g. 18 Mason's wedge 19 Misfortunes 20 Tom Jones hit 22 Fortified residences 24 Substructure 26 K.C. writer hrs. 29 avis 30 Dig down 35 d'oeuvres 37 Attaches temporarily 39 January in Spain 40 Verbal exams 42 Greek letter 43 Inferior 44 Old treasure 45 Part of SASE 47 Religious faction 48 Theatrical works 50 Island garlands 52 Ordinal ending 53 Ecstatic 56 Auto frame 60 Rescinds formally 64 This place 65 Muse of history 67 Plumed wader 68 Author Haley 69 Younger Saarenen 70 Poker action 71 June 8, 1944 72 Arrest 73 Criticize strongly

Crossword grid with some letters filled in.

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8/23/06

Tuesday's Puzzle Solved

Completed crossword puzzle grid.

- DOWN 1 Large number 2 Carry 3 Organic compound 4 Off-the-cuff remark 5 Billfold filler 6 Farms for fry 7 Exclamation of wonderment 8 Chilling 9 Claim as a right 10 Man from Manchester 11 Streamlet 12 Inactive 13 Disorderly state 21 Hurry-up acronym 23 Superman's makeup? 25 Fireplace shelves 26 Combination of tones 27 More achy 28 Musical syllables 31 Son of Seth 32 Small flycatcher 33 Put up 34 Bridge position 36 Actor Pickins 38 Product display area 41 Wound surfaces 46 High-pitched flute

The K Chronicles

Grid of 12 small political cartoons with captions like 'DID YOU KNOW THAT G.W. BUSH WAS A CHEERLEADER DURING HIS COLLEGE YEARS? IT EXPLAINS A LOT... WE REALLY!!' and 'IS FOR THE CAPTURE of Saddam who was insane!!'"/>

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