



## SPORTS

Get to know a student who also plays for the U.S. National Kayak Polo team **TOMORROW.**



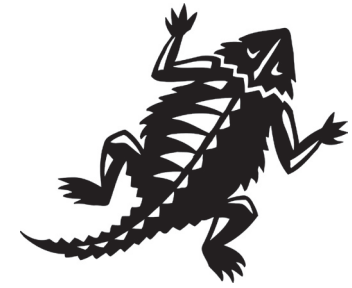
## FEATURES

"Jackass" is back and see if it is worth the money **TOMORROW.**



## NEWS

Find out how one student is using Facebook to make his alternative religious group an official campus organization **FRIDAY.**



TCU

# DAILY SKIFF

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## Frog Bytes serves up Fair Trade coffee

By ALEX ZOBEL  
Staff Reporter

Fair Trade coffee is available in Frog Bytes again after student activists met with representatives from TCU Dining Services last week.

At the end of the 2005 spring semester, the activist group Frogs for Fair Trade succeeded in its mission to make fair trade coffee available in Frog Bytes, Bistro Burnett and the

now closed Jazzman's Cafe, said Seth Harris, president of Frogs for Fair Trade.

Harris said when he returned this fall, he was surprised to find fair trade coffee wasn't being sold anymore.

"We've been trying since February of last year to get it sold at TCU," Harris said. "So for a lot of us it was frustrating not to see it when we came back this year."

The director of operations for TCU Dining Services, Everett Barnes Jr., explained to Frogs for Fair Trade members in a meeting last Thursday that fair trade coffee was no longer offered due to a lack of demand.

"When we first put the fair trade coffee out, there was a fair amount of people that ordered it," Barnes said. "As the year went on it dissipated

tremendously to where we'd brew a pot and maybe one person, or two or three people would order it."

However, Dining Services agreed to put fair trade coffee back in Frog Bytes on the terms that Frogs for Fair Trade create a demand for the product by promoting it.

Harris said he is frustrated the agreement is not permanent, but the group will

respect the agreement with Dining Services and continue to raise awareness for the coffee on campus.

"Fair trade should always at least be offered if not just totally replacing the entire line," Harris said. "It should be more of an ethical commitment and a commitment based on the values that I feel TCU has and are hopefully shared by people running Dining Services."

Frogs for Fair Trade received \$1,000 from the Student Government Association, which they have used to make shirts and give away free coffee every Thursday night at Senseless Acts of Comedy's show.

This semester the group also plans to have information tables in the Student Center and will put up banners and See **COFFEE**, page 2

## A STROLL IN THE DARK 2008 class gets new dean



ANDREW CHAVEZ / Staff Photographer

Freshman international news-editorial journalism major Katie Bain and freshman English major Megan McBurnett pass by a light pole near Colby Hall on Wednesday night. TCU officials will take a lighting walk during the new moon to find poorly lit areas on campus.

### Lighting walk aims to build safety

By JOANNA BERNAL  
Staff Reporter

Construction adds shadows and new dark spaces on campus, creating a need for more lighting, TCU Police said.

Twice a semester, members of the police, administration, Physical Plant and Student Government Association walk the campus searching for dark areas that need lighting, said TCU Police Chief Steve McGee.

This semester, the lighting walk will take place on a new moon during daylight-saving time so it is as dark as possible earlier in the night, McGee said. This will occur on Nov. 20 or 21 according to stardate.org.

Growing tree branches and new buildings also adds shadows, said Sgt. Kelly Ham of the TCU Police department.

"It's a constant effort to keep visibility for the students so they can see at night and there are no hiding places for the bad guys," Ham said.

Student Body Vice President Jace Thompson, a junior entrepreneurial management major, said the need for campus lighting walks increases with construction.

"It's been crucial the past couple of years because the campus has been expanding," he said. "So as we expand out and as more buildings go up, we'll install more safety."

The estimated cost to repair a light is \$150 or less, which comes out of the Physical Plant budget, said George Bates, manager of electrical maintenance.

He also said the cost to install a new light pole varies from

\$3,000 to \$5,000 per pole, a cost which occurs because the poles are supposed to be decorative and are made of concrete.

He said the average cost spent to increase lighting after a walk is about \$10,000 to \$15,000 but sometimes the committee spends more if everyone agrees that more poles need to be added or fixed.

Some lights previously added by the walk are those along the jogging trail in Worth Hills, said McGee. He said campus is more well lit than when he came to TCU 11 years ago.

The lighting also adds to the look and feel of the campus, McGee said.

"The way we have (the light) gives out an ambience instead of making our campus look like a prison," he said.

See **CRIME**, page 2

By MORGAN BLUNK  
Staff Reporter

Not only is the new dean of the class of 2008 implementing plans for the junior class — he's also on Facebook, so contacting him should be a piece of cake.

Chuck Dunning, associate director of University Career Services, has added the title of class dean to his resume, a position he said he hopes to make more public by increasing his accessibility to students.

Being a class dean means acting as a liaison between the class and the university, Dunning said. This means assisting students whom are seeking information as well as helping them with problems or concerns, he said.

Dunning said in addition to sending out weekly class e-mails, he also plans to be involved with campus events and encourages students to contact him through Facebook.

It's difficult to pin-point the responsibilities of a class dean because they are so broad and numerous, Dunning said.

"I also kind of serve as a cheerleader to the class of 2008," Dunning said. "I'm expected to participate in activities that are directed toward the class of 2008 or in which the class is going to be especially involved."

The position was formerly held by Shelley Story, who was the assistant dean of Campus Life.

Story, who is fluent in French and Italian, moved to Florence, Italy, after accepting a director position for Gonzaga University's international program, said Susan Adams, associate vice chancellor for Student Affairs and dean of Campus Life.

"I think she took the job in Italy because it was such a good fit," Adams said. "It matched



JENNIFER BICKERSTAFF / Photo Editor

Chuck Dunning, associate director of University Career Services, became the new dean of the class of 2008 at the beginning of this semester.

her interests and it matched her skills. We will miss her very much, though."

Dunning said he has already implemented plans for the junior class this semester.

He said Junior Jump Start, a career development event Oct. 21 in the Student Center, will be the first event. He said it will help juniors prepare for their senior year by teaching them how to develop their resumes and how to start networking and making contacts for their career interests.

Another program Dunning said has already started is FrogHouse, a student-run community service project that is teaming members from the class of 2008 with Habitat for Humanity to help build a house in Fort Worth.

## Program efforts, scholarships attract more Saudi students, director says

By RACHAEL EMBLER  
Staff Reporter

The number of Saudi Arabian students who attend TCU has increased over the past year because of scholarships offered by the Saudi government to go to U.S. schools, said the director of the Intensive English Program.

The scholarship program was instituted after an April 2005 meeting between King Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz of Saudi Arabia and President Bush, said Kurk Gayle, director of the Intensive English Program. Gayle said the scholarships cover all expenses, including housing, food and tuition.

He said the first group of Saudi students came in the fall 2005.

Joan Yates, an administrative assistant for international admissions, said 15 Saudi students are enrolled in either the Intensive English Program, which aims to equip individuals of any first-language background to communicate actively in English, or TCU's undergraduate program. Six more students are expected to join within the next three months, Yates said.

Muhammad Alowaity, a student in the Intensive English Program, said he was happy to come to the United States for the educational opportunities and to learn about American culture.

"Learning English was my dream since I was a child," Alowaity said.

Students who come to TCU with limited

English skills must make a minimum score of 79 out of 120 on the Test of English as a Foreign Language, or demonstrate equivalent English proficiency, which is the purpose of the program.

Fahad Alofan, who came to TCU in November 2005, was able to start as an e-business major after graduating from the Intensive English Program in May.

"They don't offer e-business there, and TCU has a good school for that," Alofan said of his decision to choose TCU.

John Singleton, director of International Student Services, said this collaboration between the United States and Saudi Arabia was meant to mend the relationship between the governments that were damaged after 9/11.

Singleton said TCU is one of four Dallas/Fort Worth area universities to be approved by the Saudi Arabian government for students. Southern Methodist University, the University of North Texas and the University of Texas at Arlington are the other three.

Gayle said, "The IEP nearly collapsed after Sept. 11 because the U.S. stopped granting visas to individuals." On the day of the Sept. 11 attacks, the program had three Saudi students.

About a month after the attacks, one student was detained by the Immigration and Naturalization Service, and the other two went home for fear of discrimination, Gayle said.

## Discover how to use major

By CORTNEY STRUBE  
Staff Reporter

Students can get advice on what they can do with their degrees after college tonight in Moudy South, said an adviser of a recently renewed special interest group.

The American Society for Training and Development, an organization geared toward students, faculty and staff who are

interested in workplace learning and performance, will kick off its first meeting tonight with free Chipotle, said Debi Iba, the organization's faculty adviser.

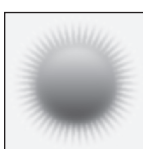
"ASTD gives students a sneak peak into what professional life is like after graduation," Iba said.

Shelah Mabeus, president of ASTD Fort Worth/Mid-Cities Chapter, will speak at tonight's

meeting.

"The chapter meetings provide networking opportunities with practitioners in the corporate, consulting and institutional environments," Mabeus said.

The special interest group will provide a forum for tailored discussions about professions, trends in learning and information for students entering the workplace, Mabeus said.



### WEATHER

TODAY: Isolated T-Storms, 90/73

FRIDAY: Partly Cloudy, 96/77

SATURDAY: Scattered T-Storms, 94/69

### PECULIAR FACT

A drunken Chinese migrant worker jumped into a panda enclosure at the Beijing Zoo, was bitten by the bear and retaliated by chomping down on the animal's back. -Reuters

### TODAY'S HEADLINES

OPINION: Pornography ruins ideals, page 3

SPORTS: Soccer team to defend 4-4 record, page 6

### CONTACT US

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# U.S., Europe back President's plan for united government

By WARREN P. STROBEL  
McClatchy Newspapers

The United States and its European partners said Wednesday they fully backed Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas' efforts to form a national unity government with the ruling Hamas party, which Washington considers a terrorist group.

In a carefully worded statement after a meeting, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and her colleagues said they backed Abbas' negotiations with Hamas "in the hope that the platform of such a government" would allow a resumption of peace talks with Israel.

U.N. diplomats and European officials said the statement amounted to an easing of the Bush administration's conditions for dealing with Hamas.

Those conditions are that Hamas renounce violence, recognize Israel's right to exist and live up to past agreements between the Palestinians and Israel.

Rice, speaking to reporters later, said there was no change in U.S. policy.

"It only goes without saying that you cannot have peace if you do not recognize the right of the other partner to exist

and that the renunciation of violence is a key to negotiations," Rice said.

Diplomats, speaking on condition of anonymity, said there was also considerable friction between Rice and the Europeans over Europe's push to ease the international boycott on the Hamas-led government. The aid cutoff has dramatically worsened conditions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

President Bush in recent days has signaled that he is eager to see progress on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Reaching out to the Muslim world in his speech to the U.N. General Assembly Tuesday, Bush forcefully reiterated his backing for an independent Palestinian state.

Last weekend, a top Rice aide, Philip Zelikow, acknowledged what many outside the Bush administration have long said: Progress on the Arab-Israeli dispute is needed if the United States is going to get cooperation from moderate Arab states on other important issues.

The Bush administration has argued that spreading democracy is the central issue in the Middle East. Arab moderates and Europeans argue that the

Palestinian-Israeli conflict is fundamental to the region's other problems and that progress on resolving it must come first.

"We can rail against that belief; we can find it completely (un)justifiable, but it's fact. That means an active policy on the Arab-Israeli dispute is an essential ingredient to forging a coalition that deals with the most dangerous problems," Zelikow said at a policy conference Sunday, according to a transcript by the organizer, the Washington Institute for Near East Policy.

Zelikow's remarks broke new ground for the Bush administration and immediately alarmed Jewish-American groups, who fear the White House might pressure Israel to make compromises. Bush has been staunchly supportive of Israel.

The president met Wednesday morning with Abbas and reiterated his hopes for a Palestinian state.

"I fully understand that in order to achieve this vision, there must be leaders willing to speak out and act on behalf of people who yearn for peace, and you are such a leader," he told Abbas.

## COFFEE

From page 1

signs to promote their cause, Harris said.

The remainder of the money will provide funding for group members to travel to Denver for the United Students for Fair Trade conference in February, he said.

Legia Abato, the marketing manager for TCU Dining Services, said fair trade coffee has been available in the library since the re-opening of Bistro Burnett two weeks ago, and said Dining Services intends to honor the commitment they made last spring by selling fair trade coffee in Frog

Bytes again.

In Bistro Burnett, there is a sign next to the coffee dispensers advertising the availability of fair trade coffee; however, it is not on the overhead menu and there is not a fair trade label on the coffee dispensers.

When asked for fair trade coffee Monday, an employee behind the counter was unable to provide it.

The manager of Bistro Burnett, Tina Gordon, said this situation was most likely because the employee lacked proper training and the coffee should have been available upon request.

Kelly Hanson, Frogs for Fair Trade co-coordinator,

said she wanted to buy fair trade coffee in Bistro Burnett when it opened, but didn't because it didn't appear to be available.

"If it's not on the menu then what's the point?" Hanson said.

Abato said a new, more detailed sign will be put up in Bistro Burnett as soon as possible that will make ordering fair trade coffee less confusing for students.

In Frog Bytes, students ordering fair trade coffee will pay for it at the register before they are given a cup, which they will then fill up themselves, said Stan Rush, retail manager for Dining Services.

## CRIME

From page 1

cover the areas in the way we want them covered," he said.

Pamela Hughes, executive assistant to the vice chancellor of student affairs, said campus is designed to add safety. For example, she said the gates added to the parking lot on Bellaire Drive and Stadium Drive are designed so police officers on patrol can see into the parking lot through the gates.

In addition to lighting, TCU Police increase its number of officers on patrol, Ham said.

"As the university is growing, we need more officers to

TCU Police receive several phone calls a day from students reporting suspicious persons, Ham said. However, he said most of the calls are about people who have a valid reason for being on campus. Those people are usually construction workers staying late to finish a project, an older student or people from the community passing through.

In the past year, he said only 10 calls were written up as reports of suspicious people but added that he would rather have students call just to be safe.

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**OWNERS INDICTED**

The owners of a nursing home where 35 patients died in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina were indicted Wednesday on charges of negligent homicide and cruelty to the infirm.

The Associated Press

**THE SKIFF VIEW**

**Top 10 percent law discouraging**

Texas legislators are considering suspending the University of Texas at Austin's admissions regulations for an unspecified number of years, according to a Sept. 18 article published by insidehighered.com, a Web site pertaining to higher education news.

Specifically, the change would do away with the uniform admission law, better known as the top 10 percent law. The law specifies that Texas high school students who graduate in the top 10 percent of their classes are automatically accepted and guaranteed places in the Texas public universities or colleges of their choices.

The moratorium would apply only to UT Austin.

According to the article, the 1997 law was passed to give students at traditionally underperforming high schools a chance to get into the system and to help ensure campuses remain ethnically and racially diverse.

While successful at creating a diverse

campus, the law has also created drawbacks at UT Austin.

The school's prestige and size has put constraints and limitations on freshman classes, limiting the admissions of students who are not guaranteed spots by Texas law.

The law is fair and sets a goal for higher education, but it's discouraging to high school students who are talented and intelligent but not in the top 10 percent of their classes. The moratorium would level the playing field for all students who apply to UT Austin.

Students across the board, in state and out, would be subject to the same criteria as students who do not currently fall in the 10 percent rule. The moratorium will let UT Austin serve as a test site to see whether the intent of the law can be accomplished in Texas without the undue problems it has foisted into UT.

—Ryan Claunch for the editorial board

**OOFSPOOF • ROLF NELSON**

Venezuelan President  
Hugo Chavez's  
take on Bush



*Rolf Nelson*

**Porn destroys ideals, marriage**

Pornography. Few subjects are so ubiquitous and taboo in American culture. But it seems the taboo factor is wearing off.

Over the past three decades, our society has become increasingly porn-friendly. What was once the occasional

Penthouse stashed away in your grandfather's garage has blossomed into what is now a \$12 billion industry, according to The Christian Science Monitor.

What has caused this sudden moral shift? Was it the liberating sexual revolution of the 1960s? Or perhaps the embracing of postmodernism and its relative views on morality?

Both of these explanations for America's porn explosion miss the mark. It is not shifting ideology, but the greed of corporate America that has turned pornography into one of our nation's largest industries.

In pornography, big businesses have had the opportunity to play at one of human's natural desires — sex — and make big profits. These businesses have given little thought to pornography's devastating effects; they're in it for the money.

Large American corporations rake in more than half of pornography's \$12 billion in annual revenues, according to a 2000 article in The New York Times.

The pornography industry has cast its lure, and America has taken the bait. By making pornography mainstream, corporate America has said that it's acceptable, and we've begun to believe them.

Already, much larger companies, including General Motors Corp. and AT&T Corp. had been raking in heavy profits from the pornographic industry, according to a 2002 Frontline report on the Public Broadcast Service.

According to the Frontline report, General Motors owned DirectTV, which channeled pornography into millions of American homes.

When Frontline asked AT&T executives why their respectable company would dabble in the taboo industry, their answer was simple — everybody else was doing it. Since more companies are producing more pornography, more Americans consume it and are subconsciously beginning to believe it is acceptable.

But what we do not realize is the way that it has twisted our views of sexuality and ripped apart marriages and families.

Pornography degrades

women, showing them as submissive sexual objects. A 2003 TCU study, according to a 2004 issue of the Skiff, showed that men who view pornography frequently have more discriminatory views of women than men who do not view pornography.

According to a 1988 article in the Journal of Applied Social Psychology, pornography leads to lowered sexual satisfaction. Those who regularly view porn are likely to have trouble separating reality from fantasy.

Pornography destroys marriages. Divorce lawyers at the 2003 meeting of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers reported that Internet pornography played a significant role in more than half their divorce cases, according to Time Magazine.

The negative effects of pornography go on. Pornography twists the good and natural human desire for sex.

Without a fight, America has let a few large corporations determine its sexual values.

It's time we decide if we really want pornography to be a defining aspect of American culture.

*Matt Messel is a sophomore sociology and political science major from Omaha, Neb. His column appears every Thursday.*

**Ads, communication reveal benefits of networking sites**

MySpace and other networking Web sites have been consistently attacked by the mass media to the point that the controversies surrounding them are mostly old news.

The fact is, despite the many stories in the media about creepy men stalking underage girls through MySpace, chances are the audience to which these stories are targeting are active users of MySpace.

According to Seeking Alpha, a leading provider of stock market opinion and analysis, MySpace has over 100 million users and, according to CNN, about 230,000 new members join every day. Obviously, the question to ponder is not how to deter the usage of such a dangerous Internet community, but rather, "What does MySpace do for these people?"

I remember sitting in my first grade classroom on the last day of school; the last day I would see my friends and teacher. My friends' hugs and my teacher's gentle words, "keep in touch," did

little to comfort me because that was just something people said when others moved away. Keeping in touch was easier said than done.

This past summer, I found one of the many classmates that watched me as I cried that summer day of '93. It's amazing to see a picture of a childhood friend and realize how much we've grown up. MySpace has given us the opportunity to be able to get in touch with old friends and, to people like me who have moved around the world four times in 18 years, that is a big deal.

In some instances, MySpace supports an entire company. Buzz-Oven, a thriving company of young music lovers, was started by CEO Aden Holt to showcase bands all over the Metroplex without having to sign contracts or sell products.

Fifty percent to 60 percent of Buzz-Oven's advertising is on MySpace; other means of advertising include handing out free CDs with the music of the three selected bands Buzz-Oven promotes, handing out flyers and putting up posters, Holt said.

"Now, we use MySpace as a tool to reach the demographic that we go for — early high school students to college stu-

dents — in a localized area," Holt said. "I definitely think MySpace has opened up communication."

Even without Buzz-Oven, bands and their fans are increasingly dependent on MySpace. Through MySpace, fans are constantly updated on the news of their favorite bands, from their CD releases to concerts in their area.

When the common youth think of MySpace, they don't think about creepy old men and hooking up with strangers. They log onto MySpace with the innocent intentions of getting in touch with their friends or listening to their favorite band's new single. Yes, MySpace is a dangerous realm, and boundaries need to be drawn. But unfortunately, that is a choice that must be made by individuals.

Deadly car accidents don't deem cars to be evil; everyone knows that bad choices made when driving a car can very well lead to harm and death. MySpace is not much different. It is a tool when it's used with caution, and a weapon when used without giving thought to the potential consequences.

*Saerom Yoo is a sophomore news-editorial journalism major from Pusan, South Korea. Her column appears every Thursday.*

**Fitness requires eating right and exercise**

Achieving physical fitness is possible for everybody. There is nothing too difficult about it.

By the time you get to college, you know the benefits are endless. By being physically fit, you not only look better, you feel better, too. There are two major requirements to consider when striving toward physical fitness, eating right and exercising. This formula is a simple one, but there's a catch: you must perform these actions on a regular basis.

College students know the general tactics necessary to gain a physically fit physique. The most important element, however, is often overlooked — consistency. Physical fitness cannot be achieved if you do not follow through with two simple steps — eating right and exercising.

Notice I did not say diet when I described the formula for a healthy body. I said eating right. Nobody can stick to a diet for the rest of their life. Dieting is both exhausting and frustrating. Some diets also rob the body of essential nutri-

ents needed to function correctly and be as productive as possible. If your goal is to fit into the perfect dress for a night, your solution might be to eat lettuce the whole week before and eat nothing the day you plan to wear the dress.

But crash dieting destroys your metabolism and makes you susceptible to weight gain once you decide to eat again. Your body goes into survival mode, and it stores fat in case you decide to go without eating again.

The sensible way to achieve and remain at an ideal body weight is to eat enough and to eat well-balanced meals on a daily basis. Experts say, "you are what you eat."

This advice puts an emphasis on just how important the food you choose to put into your body is. Empty calories in sodas and alcohol are detrimental to one's figure. They have little to no health benefits and are difficult to burn off.

A college student's typical food choices, such as pizza, ice cream, or lattes, are hard to resist, especially if they are offered for free. Ask yourself if the food choice you are about to make is really worth putting in your body.

Eating right is not the only factor of

physical fitness. Exercise is crucial.

A popular tactic many college students opt for is the crash workout plan. When we see someone with a physically fit body, it makes us want to strive toward fitness ourselves. We realize we need to exercise when summer is a month away and we have to look our best in a bikini.

Unfortunately, burning fat and toning muscle takes time. A consistent workout plan is your best bet. Without a weekly workout regimen, you miss out on all the benefits exercise can provide for the mind and body. According to Florida State University studies, exercising releases endorphins which make you feel happier, more productive and alert. Not only will exercise provide you with a firmly toned body, but you will be more focused at class and while studying.

Next time you feel like indulging in a late-night trip to Whataburger, ask yourself if it will benefit anything other than your taste buds. Always remember physical fitness is a lifestyle that is fun and energizing once you routinely do it. The most important thing to remember is that fitness is not a goal; it is a process that will entertain you for the rest of your life.

*Michelle Anderson is a sophomore broadcast journalism major from Tyler.*

**Plus/minus system, step in right direction**

For the past few weeks, I have heard a lot about the plus/minus grading policy. Even though I agree that the policy will help students in the long run, I believe the issue directly relates to TCU's national ranking. The new grading policy will help raise the academic bar for students. Raising this bar will make grade inflation a thing of the past and give students more options. A student who goes the "extra mile" will be rewarded for working harder. Although the system will make it difficult to get the coveted 4.0, it will in essence, make a TCU degree worth more.

Students will have to work harder just to maintain the same grades, but we know it will be an investment in our futures.

Yes, other top ranked schools implement the plus/minus system. However, other top schools also have lower acceptance rates, higher

alumni support and higher graduation rates. If our school wanted to have a higher ranking like SMU, Rice and Baylor, it would need to focus on these categories. The criteria I have listed are major factors when U.S. News and World Report formulates their annual rankings. A plus/minus grading system may go into the ranking, but working on the important categories will notably increase our ranking.

After we implement the new plus/minus policy, questions will arise. Which professors will use it? How much of an impact will the new grading system have on students who have taken classes before the new policy? Although in time these questions will be answered, I hope the faculty can work with students to create a system that is beneficial to all parties involved.

*Peter Parlapiano is a sophomore finance major from Houston.*

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and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the editorial board.

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LEFT TO RIGHT: Astronauts Heidemarie Stefanyshyn-Piper, Steve MacLean, Christopher Ferguson, Joe Tanner, Daniel Burbank and commander Brent Jett, leave the Operations and Checkout Building to board Atlantis at Cape Canaveral, Fla., Sept. 9, 2006. RED HUBER / MCT

## Atlantis cleared for landing

By MARTIN MERZER  
McClatchy Newspapers

Extensive inspections detected no damage to shuttle Atlantis, and its six astronauts were cleared to land this morning at the Kennedy Space Center, mission managers said.

The crew, led by Brent Jett Jr., is scheduled to end the 12-day mission at 6:21 a.m. EDT, shortly before dawn. A second opportunity will arrive at 7:57 a.m. Meteorologists predict favorable weather.

The development came after Jett's crew employed cameras mounted on Atlantis' robotic arm to inspect the shuttle's protective skin, which must shield the astronauts from the blow torch of heat produced during re-entry through the Earth's atmosphere.

Concern about the shuttle's structural integrity was aroused after several unknown objects were seen floating near the craft. The objects apparently separated from Atlantis, but meticulous inspections found no evidence of any impacts or any other reason to worry about the ship, NASA said.

"We are cleared for entry," said Wayne Hale,

shuttle program manager for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. "Nothing was found to be missing or damaged."

At least two objects appeared to float away from Atlantis on Tuesday as the crew tested steering jets and other equipment needed during landing.

One was believed to be a plastic bag. The other, Hale said, probably was a "shim stick" — a thin, plastic, 4-inch-long, 1-inch-wide tool used during the installation of the shuttle's protective tiles.

"Sorry we're being a litterbug here," he said.

Three other pieces of debris were seen near the shuttle Wednesday, but mission managers said they were of no consequence.

"It's not uncommon to see little bits of pieces of things floating by," said flight director Paul Dye.

Still, anything that might damage Atlantis' heat shield is carefully analyzed by NASA.

An undetected gap in shuttle Columbia's left wing triggered the chain of events that destroyed that shuttle and killed its seven astronauts.

## Tainted spinach outbreak puts food safety regulation in spotlight

By MICHAEL DOYLE  
McClatchy Newspapers

The contaminated spinach that's sickening consumers is emboldening lawmakers who want to strengthen federal defenses against future outbreaks of food-borne illness.

With at least one death and 130 sick patients attributed to California spinach tainted by E. coli, the moment seems ripe for action. That could mean more money for research, more muscle for regulators and reformed oversight of the nation's food supply.

But while past food scares have likewise prompted shake-ups, second-guessing and open wallets, federal power remains both limited and complex. Top regulatory positions remain unfilled. And there are multiple federal agencies with over-

lapping responsibilities coping with a hodge-podge of at least 30 different laws touching on food safety.

And, as shown in a recent failed effort to open a new food-safety center at the University of California at Davis, political impediments can be stubborn.

"There's always a need for these things to be reviewed," Rep. Sam Farr, D-Calif., said Tuesday, "and with this kind of crisis, it's probably a good thing to be checking in."

Unlike some lawmakers, Farr, whose district includes the Salinas Valley fields where the tainted spinach was grown, does not want a wholesale overhaul of federal regulatory efforts. He does want more money, so scientists can track how the E. coli bacteria usually found in ani-

mal intestines made its way into fresh-cut spinach.

"In terms of the emergency response, there's enough money for the short term," Farr said. "I don't think there's enough funding for the long term."

By the numbers, food safety regulation is already big business.

The major federal regulatory agencies devote some \$1.7 billion a year and roughly 15,000 employees to enforcing food safety. They do not all wear the same uniform.

The Agriculture Department handles meat, poultry and some eggs. The National Marine Fisheries Service handles seafood. The Environmental Protection Agency oversees pesticides.

The Food and Drug Administration is responsible for fruits and vegetables, so it is investi-

gating the contaminated spinach traced to the Salinas Valley. It's familiar territory: Last month, citing the "recurring outbreaks of E. coli" that have included at least 20 episodes since 1995 linked to spinach or lettuce, the FDA unveiled its "Lettuce Safety Initiative." It includes visits by FDA officials to farms, cooling and packing facilities.

The agency, however, lacks the power to recall tainted produce.

Nor do the different federal agencies all follow the same rules. The Agriculture Department, for instance, inspects canning facilities daily if the plant produces canned beans with meat or chicken. If the canned beans lack meat or chicken, the FDA will inspect the plant between a year and up to every five years.



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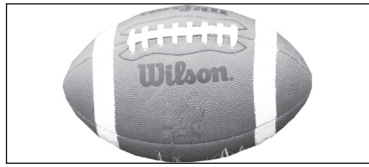
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**TOMORROW IN SPORTS**

Read about how the Horned Frogs football team is gaining recognition for TCU.



STEPHEN SPILLMAN / Staff Photographer  
Freshman midfielder Michelle Nguyen launches the ball into the Sam Houston State net making the second goal for the Frogs Friday night. The Frogs' record is 4-4.

## Players hope to extend winning home record

By MARCUS MURPHREE  
Staff Reporter

The soccer team will try to improve its 4-4 record in a pair of matches this week at Garvey-Rosenthal Stadium.

Thursday's and Saturday's games will be at 7 p.m. against SMU and UT San Antonio.

Last week, the Horned Frogs extended their home winning streak to two games with a win over Sam Houston State, but fell to the Nebraska Cornhuskers 4-0, Sunday in Lincoln, Neb.

The focus of practices this week has been on keeping team composure through the course of a match, said head coach Dan Abdalla.

"We are working on not getting sucked into the game of the other team,"

Abdalla said.

In an interview Monday, Abdalla said he wants to get more out of his goalkeepers, but has no intention of switching up his starters before Thursday's match.

Abdalla is looking for a couple of his freshman forwards to rise to the occasion this weekend.

"I think we need to get a lot out of our strikers Lizzy Karoly and Chelsea White," Abdalla said.

In addition to production from the freshman forwards, Abdalla said leadership in defense from senior Breanne Kaldheim and sophomore Sara Schneider will be important in the coming matches.

Sophomore defender Caroline Starns was a recipient of the Mountain

West Conference Player of the Week honor earlier this season.

Starns said the team is focusing on its own quality of play rather than that of the visiting squads.

"We are a good team this year and we want to set the pace for what we want to play," Starns said.

With emphasis on composure for the matches, Starns said Abdalla has been working on the team's ability to keep the formation of the midfield line.

"We are focusing on our confidence and capabilities in the midfield through the back," Starns said.

The starting formation for Thursday's match is not yet known, Starns said. "We change it up," Starns said, "so we'll see what

"We are a good team this year and we want to set the pace for what we want to do. We are focusing on our confidence and capabilities in the midfield through the back"  
**Caroline Starns**  
Sophomore defender

happens."

With a win on Thursday, the Horned Frogs could extend their home winning streak to three games.

Junior midfielder Lauren Pope is still out with a leg injury, and the details of her MRI have yet to be disclosed, Abdalla said.

## Golf teams rally to improve final scores in tournaments

By AMBER PARCHER  
Staff Reporter

The men's and women's golf teams came back in the final rounds of their tournaments to jump up several places in the final standings.

The women's golf team tied for second out of 16 teams Tuesday at the Jeanine McHaney Intercollegiate Tournament in Lubbock after a slow start in the first two rounds, said head coach Angie Ravaioli-Larkin.

"We left a few shots out there the first two rounds, but we talked about being focused Monday night and it worked out," Ravaioli-Larkin said.

The team shot a final round 2-under-par 286 for its second lowest round in team history.

Senior Catherine Matranga shot a 4-under-par 68 in the final round to finish in an individual three-way tie for second place. The Frogs were only three strokes behind the championship team, SMU.

Ravaioli-Larkin said the leadership and depth on the team helped the team play well in Lubbock.

"We have so much talent, and our seniors did a fabulous job competing," Ravaioli-Larkin said.

Senior Camille Blackerby, who was the other top 10 finisher for the Frogs at No. 9, said mental toughness helped the team come back in the final round.

"We played really well when we needed to, which was at the end," Blackerby said.

The men's team faced a similar situation this week-



STEVEN WALTERS / MWC  
Senior frog Drew Stolz finished tied for 27th out of 90 competitors at the Carpet Capital Collegiate Sunday in Rocky Face, Ga. TCU finished in 12th place in the tournament.

end in Rocky Face, Ga., at the Carpet Capital Collegiate Tournament. The team finished No. 12 out of 18 teams in the most competitive tournament of the season, said head coach Bill Montigel.

"We got off to a slow start, but played well the second round and great the last round," Montigel said.

TCU was No. 15 going into the last day, but senior Drew Stolz shot a 2-under-par 70 Sunday to help the

Frogs climb up three places. Stolz was the team's highest finisher, placing No. 27 out of 90 golfers.

Junior Franklin Corpening finished one stroke and three places behind Stolz to be the Frog's second highest finisher.

The women's team will tee off Oct. 6 in Greenville, S.C., at the Lady Paladin Invitational.

The men's team will play Oct. 2 at the Colonial Country Club in Memphis, Tenn.

## Big 12 league losing ground; 4 unranked teams undefeated

By JIMMY BURCH  
McClatchy Newspapers

ESPN dubbed it "Separation Saturday," and way too many Big 12 football teams embraced the concept.

One after another, schools separated themselves from undefeated records and BCS bowl dreams in matchups against Top 25 opponents. The final ledger: 0-4 in four opportunities to boost the league's national image, which has been in backslide mode since Texas fell, 24-7, to top-ranked Ohio State on Sept. 9.

It would be easy to sit here and rail about defensive lapses (Oklahoma), punchless offenses (Texas Tech, Nebraska) and ill-fated fourth-down decisions (Iowa State) that conspired to lay the latest blemishes on the Big 12's sagging reputation as a power football conference.

As it stands, only four league teams, all of them unranked, remain undefeated: Missouri and three schools coming off losing seasons (Kansas State, Oklahoma State and Texas A&M). Honk if you think that will impress poll voters.

Funny, I didn't hear anything.

But this message should be coming through loud and clear: The Big 12 is a regional league, not a prime-time national player, in 2006.

Look for a heck of a race to see which team wins the conference title and winds up playing in the Fiesta Bowl on Jan. 1 in Glendale, Ariz. That's as close as any Big 12 team figures



ANDREW CHAVEZ / Staff Photographer  
Senior offensive tackle Maurice Bouldwin (77) and senior defensive end Jared Retkofsky (83) celebrate following the 12-3 victory over the Texas Tech Red Raiders.

to get to this year's BCS national championship game, played in the same stadium on Jan. 8.

Based on three weeks of evidence, especially the results on "Separation Saturday," it's pretty clear there is ample separation between the nation's top three teams (Ohio State, Auburn, USC) and Texas, followed by even more separation between UT and the rest of the Big 12.

How best to improve Big 12 football? Here are some suggestions:

Extend TCU an at-large bid to the Big 12 Championship Game. Have the Horned Frogs meet the winner of the play-in game between Texas and Missouri.

Better yet, add No. 16 TCU (3-0) as the league's 13th school, following the lead of the 11-member Big Ten. That way, the Big 12 would still have an undefeated team in this week's Top 25 poll.

Refuse to play in Pacific-10 conference stadiums unless you can bring your

own replay official. For further clarification, consult Oklahoma coach Bob Stoops.

If you're going to make a head-scratching decision on fourth down and put your team in position to lose in the waning minutes, make sure you do it against Army (1-2) and not No. 14 Iowa (3-0). Isn't that right, Texas A&M coach Dennis Franchione?

As his team prepares to open the conference race this week against Iowa State, Texas coach Mack Brown declared it "too early" to dismiss this as a down season in the Big 12. "You really can't tell," Brown said. "Every time you think you know what's going on in college football, something changes."

Unless something changes in a big hurry, Brown should feel comfortable looking in the rearview mirror as the Big 12 race unfolds. The defending champs have slipped since last year's national title run. But nobody is gaining on them, either.

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