



PLAINSMAN PRESS

Levelland, Texas

A bi-weekly collegiate publication

Vol. 59 • Issue 11 • April 18, 2017

Livestock Judging Team wins national championship

by STEVEN GEHEGAN Sports Editor

20 events from December to March of this year, finishing

youngest head coach to win a national championship. He

that he had made that history. "It took a little bit for it to

Along with the hard work, Newsom said, "a good work ethic with a lot of hours and dedica-

overall in team results and sixth overall in team cattle.

The South Plains Livestock Judging Team made history while doing something that has not been done in more than two decades.

The Livestock Judging Team brought home a national championship from the Houston Collegiate Judging Contest that took place on March 20 participating. Three students also placed in the top 10.

It is the first national title for the Livestock Judging Team since 1991, under the leadership of head coach Conner Newsom.

"It's pretty exciting to say the least," Newsom said. "It took a lot of hard work for this team to win a national championship. It took a lot of work, a lot of time and dedication into it. It also took a lot of long nights and early mornings."

Newsom joined SPC in 2013 and has led the Livestock Judging Team in more than

in the top in each event. Newsom, 25, became the

said it was "kind of surreal and shocking" when he found out

soak in that this actually happened," Newsom added.

Tyler Kelly of Bullard; Sterling Scott of Lubbock; Dylan Bostick of Bangs; Trace McBride of Abernathy; Kelton Matthews of Abilene; Logan Bauer of Llano; and Kenzee Criswell of Dora, New Mexico.

In addition to the overall championship, the Livestock Judging Team placed first in both goat and sheep, tied for first in swine, finished second overall in team placing, third



Photo courtesy of Connor Newsom

Journalism students awarded at intercollegiate competition

by PLAINSMAN PRESS STAFF

South Plains College student Sara Marshall was selected as Editor of the Year for two-year colleges and current or former Plainsman Press staff members won 11 other awards during the annual Texas Intercollegiate Press Association spring competition and convention.

There were 519 participants representing 45 community colleges and universities from across the state at this year's TIPA convention, which was held March 30-April 1 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in downtown Dallas. TIPA is the largest student press association in the nation.

The Plainsman Press also was recognized with an Honorable Mention Award in the category of Overall Excellence.

Tyler York, a freshman print journalism major from Tallahassee, Florida, received an Honorable Mention award for Headline Writing during a live on-site competition held on March 30.

Marshall, a sophomore photojournalism major from Andrews who currently serves as editor-in-chief of the Plainsman Press, won three first-place awards and a third-place award in the competition for Previously Published material.

Marshall placed first for News Feature Story for an article she wrote about a student who hung a banner from a building in downtown Lubbock which had made national news, Feature Page Design for her page layout featuring a butterfly exhibit at the Science Spectrum in Lubbock, and Single Subject Presentation,

Golden currently serves as entertainment editor of the Plainsman Press.

Matt Molinar, a sophomore public relations major from Levelland, placed second in the category of Opinion/Editorial Page Design and received an Honorable Mention Award in the category of News Story for coverage of a Black Lives

man from Schulenburg, placed third in the category of General Column.

Students participating in the trip and also competing in live contests were: Marshall, who competed in News Writing and Newspaper Design; Brandi Ortiz, a sophomore public relations major from Lamesa who competed in News Photo; Desiree Mendez, a sophomore from Levelland, who competed in Feature Writing; Steven Gehegan, a sophomore print journalism major from Lubbock, who competed in Print Sports Writing; Jordan Patterson of Lubbock, who competed in Sports Photo; Tovi Oyervidez, a sophomore photojournalism major from Lubbock and Molinar, who competed in Two-Person Photo Essay; Alex Perez, a sophomore public relations major from Lubbock, who competed in Feature Photo; Golden, who competed in Critical Review; Molinar, who competed in PR News Release Writing; Brittney Stegall, a freshman print journalism major from Crosbyton, who competed in Editorial Writing; Stacy Johnson, a sophomore general studies major from Lubbock, who competed in Copy Editing; and Aric Mitchell, a freshman radio, television and film major from Lubbock, who competed in Live Video News.

Plainsman Press staff members have won 156 awards in TIPA competitions since 2004.



Plainsman Press staff poses with TIPA awards. TOVI OYERVIDEZ/PLAINSMAN PRESS

and honor she shared with former staff members Chesanie Brantley of Sudan and Nicole Trugillo of Amherst. Marshall also placed third for Newspaper Ad Design.

Among other Plainsman Press staff members receiving awards for Previously Published material is Riley Golden, a sophomore print journalism major from Lubbock. Golden placed first in the category of Critical Review for his article featuring the "Bioshock" video game.

Matter protest in Lubbock. Molinar currently serves as associate editor of the Plainsman Press.

Dominick Puente, a sophomore print journalism major from Levelland, placed second in the category of Sports Column for a story he wrote about the accusations of rape involving members of the Baylor University football team. Puente currently serves as a sports writer and editorial assistant for the Plainsman Press. Kaci Livingston, a fresh-

man from Schulenburg, placed third in the category of General Column.

University graduate discovers passion in escorting, adult films



[Editor's note: This story is the fifth part of the multi-par series "Risqué Business," examining the dangers of prostitution that begins with Issue #7 and concludes in Issue #12. Several staff members took it upon themselves to interview take photographs, and conduct research. The results of their combined efforts follow.]

[Be advised: In order to protect his identity, the subject's name has been changed to "Adam."]

by MATT MOLINAR Associate Editor

For one Texas Tech University graduate, a job in the sex industry wasn't his first choice.

But after years of dedication, he's discovered just how profitable a double life can be.

Upon first impression, it is clear that Adam is studious, hard working and maintains a proper diet and exercise routine.

Known online as "TexasBull," Adam is most well known for his film work. He has earned the no. 4 spot in the Adult Entertainment Broadcast Network's top 10 male performers. On top of his film work, Adam works as an escort in the Lubbock area.

"I do many things, really," Adam said. "I provide sexual services, I offer a masseuse service, and I model. I started acting and escorting when I started college, which helped cover some of the tuition. I've got a few top-selling DVD's with my face on the cover."

Adam has been a part of the sex industry for four years. During the four years, he earned a Bachelor

see "Male" on page 2

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Male escort gives insight on life in sex industry

Continued from pg. 1

of Science Degree in chemistry from TTU. He says that while his job schedule and school schedule often clashed, he doesn't regret any of the decisions he has made.

"I really enjoy what I do," Adam said. "It was hard to balance my new job and school. You have to plan your schedule out very carefully. It's important to take into consideration when you have exams and classes in order to plan when you do your job. Sometimes, there is a certain season for filming that gets in the way."

Adam says he began thinking about the possibility of a career in the sex industry while he was in high school. He says that during the years leading up to college, he was sexually oppressed and described himself as a "prude."

"The first time I ever had to change in front of other people in a locker room, my peers began pointing out certain attributes that I had," he said. "They would jokingly say, 'You should do porn.' As the years went on and I heard it more and more and as I made the transition into college, it just kind of happened."

Adam says he spends much of his free time eating, exercising, and doing independent study in chemistry. He also spends time studying the languages of French and Mandarin.

"Somewhere along the line, I'd like to get a job as a lab technician," Adam explained. "Learning French and Mandarin are just something I have been interested in recently."

Adam says that a large amount of effort is required to be an escort, or adult film

actor. He says that actual enjoyment of the job is crucial in the sex industry as well as a certain skill set.



TexasBull, a sex industry worker, enjoys offering services to clients while independently studying.

BRANDI ORTIZ/PLAINSMAN PRESS

"If you're doing it for the money, don't do it," he said. "This job requires you to be comfortable with expressing yourself. The sex industry isn't some get-rich-quick scheme. It's just like any other job in any other industry. You have to work hard for it. You have to maintain your successes."

Adam says that the cash he earns is spent on personal expenses, developing his portfolio and occasionally spent on his siblings. He says if his siblings, who are currently going through college, need financial help, he is happy to contribute.

For an hour of service, Adam says he charges \$300. The reason he has a high price

point is due to the notoriety he has received from doing film work. He says his clients come from all different walks of life, including some who hold high-profile jobs.

"I've worked with a philanthropist, as well as the head of a company that caters to football players, politicians, and massive parties," Adam said. "There are cons, of course. People can be pushy and try to force their friendship on me. Some can even be dangerous. But here, in Lubbock, there's nobody who is really too dangerous."

Adam says that while there may be a higher request for female escorts, there is a higher risk of danger for women in the industry than there is for men.

"I've been doing this for about four years now," he said. "I've never once truly feared for myself. I'm a big man, and not many people would try something like that with someone like me."

Websites such as Backpages.com are where escorts and prostitutes would normally advertise their services, but due to the increase in human trafficking, the site has taken down its "adult services" page.

"It's a big epidemic," Adam said. "Underage boys and girls are brought from overseas where they are sold to traffickers against their will for the sake of their families having the ability to afford a green card."

Adam says that, on average, clients will contact him around

nine times a week. However, due to his price point, actual business calls only happen about four times a week. He says that many of the requests he gets are non-sexual.

"There are a lot of times where people will call and pay for me to just sit down and have a chat with them," Adam said. "When you're an escort, as opposed to a prostitute, you're catering to a lot of different needs and interests. There is a distinct difference between an escort and a prostitute. Sometimes, I'll get a call from a

couple who are just asking for a massage – nothing sexual."

Adam says that there is a stereotype that people who find jobs in the sex industry are "mindless and stupid." He says that, on the contrary, many of the people he has worked with in the industry are educated and respectable.

"I work with somebody who currently holds a master's degree and continuing on to do doctoral work," Adam explained. "He loves this job. You hear about it all the time – professional athletes getting

caught doing porn and Ivy League students holding escort services to pay for school. It's the oldest living profession."

Adam says he has learned many life lessons from his job, as well as how much he enjoys the notoriety.

"I've learned from this job that life shouldn't be taken that seriously," he said. "I can do this, and I can enjoy it. And it doesn't stop me from doing anything else."

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Service animals becoming more common on campus

[Editor's note: This story is the first part of the three-part series "Doggone It!" examining the differences between therapy dogs, service dogs and emotional-support animals that begins with Issue #9 and concludes in Issue #12. Several staff members took it upon themselves to interview, take photographs, and conduct research. The results of their combined efforts follow.]

role in the seeing-eye dogs utilized by those with vision impairments.

Service animals go through extensive training, often for several years, before they are ready to serve a handler.

"Service animals are generally trained to do a specific task," said Young. "They range widely. Most of us know of them from someone who is visually impaired who uses a service animal to navigate."

"But now we're seeing more service animals used in different areas," she added, "in psychiatric areas, in mental health, and certain disabilities."

The training can be separated into two categories of actions: "work" and "tasks." Tasks are behaviors that are prompted by commands, while work is cued by environmental factors, or even a reaction in the handler's body.

For people with memory loss issues, a service dog could remind a handler to take his or her medication regularly, or to find a mobile phone. If someone experiences hallucinations, a service dog might be trained to help the handler discern what noises or people are real.

In some extreme cases, a handler might struggle with something such as depersonalization, or a detached sensation of being an observer in one's own body. A service dog can provide tactile stimulation via petting or deep pressure therapy to help relax and ground the handler, thereby providing some relief for symptoms that can otherwise be difficult to manage alone.

Young recommends that anyone with a service animal on campus should have his or her animal registered with the office.

"A student does not have to be approved through the Disability Office to have a service animal," explained Young. "But it is recommended that they identify it with us so we know the animal is on campus."

There are a few considerations students should be aware of for having service or emotional support animals on campus.

Handlers of both ESAs and service dogs should always promptly and properly dispose of any waste. In addition, ESAs specifically are not allowed in classrooms, and must remain in a student's dorm room.

Students should always strive to represent themselves as positively as possible. This includes any service animals or ESAs they may have in their care.

"Your dog is an extension of you," said Young. "There are many who actually need these animals to help relieve symptoms of their disabilities. So if they aren't trained to behave properly, they will be asked to be removed."

These rules are in place to help ensure that students who need the assistance of a service animal aren't punished because of those who just want to try to sneak a pet on campus.

"What I would hate to see," said Young, "is for the law to become so restrictive because everyone else abused it that people who need service animals can't get them."

There are likely students who are uncertain about how to best handle themselves around service animals, because their only experience is with dogs as pets. For those students, Young has a key piece of advice.

"Always talk to the handler," said Young. "A handler will be trained to say no to certain things. You never want to go to pet an animal, and then distract them, and that would keep them from doing their job."

Students shouldn't be afraid to be around service animals on campus, because they are well-trained for the situations they encounter.

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Math Department hosting Advising Day for students

by BRANDI ORTIZ
News Editor

Math and Engineering students who are struggling to plan their schedules for the Fall 2017 semester at South Plains College now have the chance to ask for help.

Faculty in the Math Department at SPC will be hosting an Advising Day for all Mathematics, Computer Science, and Engineering students on April 21. The event will take place in the Sundown Room on the Levelland campus, beginning at 8:30 a.m.

All students who currently major or are planning to major in either of those related disciplines are highly encouraged to attend the event.

If a student wishes to set an appointment with a faculty advisor, he or she will only be scheduled after the Advising Day on April 21. Advisors will not be setting up any meetings regarding scheduling prior to that day.

Former SPC students, as well as representatives from surrounding universities, will attend the event to speak about their experiences both in the

Math and Science departments, as well as their continued journeys beyond their time at SPC.

Any high school students who are interested in a STEM major are also invited and encouraged to attend.

Pre-registration for the fall semester will start on April 19.

Those interested in requesting more information can contact Shirley Davis, associate professor of mathematics, at (806) 716-2699.

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by TYLER YORK
Online Editor

After decades of absence, service animals are becoming more of a fixture at South Plains College.

In the Disability Services Office, Linda Young, disability accommodations specialist at SPC, noted that despite her 30 years of time with the college and the 27th anniversary of the American Disabilities Act (ADA) coming this summer, service animals have only recently made an appearance on campus.

"It's not an accommodation," explained Young. "It's a right protected under the ADA. But we've only really seen them here on campus in the last two or three years."

There are three distinct categories of support animals recognized in the United States: emotional support animals (ESAs), therapy animals, and service animals.

Service animals come in many varieties, but most people may recognize a common

PUBLICATION STATEMENT

The Plainsman Press is published every two weeks during regular semesters by journalism students at South Plains College in Levelland, Texas. Opinions herein are those of the writer and not necessarily those of the staff, the administration, Board of Regents, advisor or advertisers.

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Former student recalls sexual assault experience

[Be advised: The names and places in this story have been changed or generalized to protect the identity of the sexual assault survivor. In order to protect anonymity, the survivor's name has been changed.]

by **SHELBY MORGAN**
Staff Writer

College is supposed to be one of the best times in the lives of students. But for one former South Plains College student, the experience was tainted by unwanted sexual advances.

Abbey Rogers, not her real name, was the victim of sexual assault during her sophomore year of college, following a night out with friends.

"I had gone out with some friends, and we met up with some guys who were buying us drinks," she recalls. "We were all having a good time, but then I blacked out. It's like everything that happened after midnight was erased from my memory"

Incidents such as the one Rogers experienced, where the victim is intoxicated, are extremely common. Sexual assault campaigns across the country have adopted the phrase, "Just because she didn't say no doesn't mean she's saying yes," in hopes of educating and bringing awareness to the stigma that drunk girls are fair game.

"I woke up in a strange bed with a guy who I barely knew and instantly had a moment of regret and started to blame myself," Rogers says.

According to the National Sexual Violence Resource Center, (NSVRC), most victims of physically forced or incapacitated sexual assault were assaulted by someone they knew (79 percent and 88 percent, respectively).

"I didn't report it because I didn't want to be shamed for being drunk," says Rogers, "or for someone to tell me that I was asking for it that night. I was having a good time with my friends and had too much to drink, and someone took advantage of that."

The NSVRC reports that less than 5 percent of completed or attempted rapes against college women are reported to law enforcement. However, in two-thirds of the incidents, the victim did tell another person, usually a friend, not family or campus officials.

"I wish guys and girls knew that just because you're too drunk to say no, doesn't mean that it's OK," Rogers says. "Don't see the drunk girl at the bar as an opportunity."

Sexual Assault Awareness

and Prevention Month is recognized during April. It is an annual campaign to bring awareness to sexual assault. According to RAINN.org, the rate of sexual assault and rape has fallen by 63 percent since 1993.

Every two minutes, someone in America is raped. One in six American women are victims of sexual assault. That means that someone you know has been or could be the victim of sexual assault. It could be your mother, aunt, sister, daughter, friend, or the girl next to you in class. Sexual violence has become an epidemic and affects the families of victims, friends, co-workers, and communities.

Board of Regents discuss housing cost increase, curriculum changes

by **SARA MARSHALL**
Editor-in-Chief

Increases in housing costs, curriculum changes and the proposed 2017 employment list were among topics discussed during the April meeting of the South Plains College Board of Regents.

Cathy Mitchell, vice president for student affairs, presented the Board with a comparison of SPC's housing and dining costs to comparable colleges in the area and across the state.

"It's been several years since we have increased these costs," Mitchell said. "Even though our board costs continue to increase on our side, we have not increased the cost of housing for the students in several years."

Dr. Robin Satterwhite, president of SPC, continued Mitchell's housing discussion, asking the Board to approve an increase in student housing cost.

"Our room and board is, on average, about \$550 less than our counterparts," Dr. Satterwhite said. "This increase would only affect those in the residence halls."

The total recommended increase is \$150, which Dr. Satterwhite explained would cover a \$100 increase in fall housing costs, as well as provide resident students with free washer and dryer access for another \$50 increase.

"This is becoming more and more of a benefit that colleges provide to their students," Dr. Satterwhite said. "We have many students that don't have the opportunity to wash and dry their clothes as much as

they'd like. Fifty dollars would more than offset what we were receiving on the current machines. Upkeep costs will go up, but we feel like this will be an opportunity for our students to have access to that, which they don't currently have."

The Board voted upon the proposed Fall housing increases, unanimously agreeing upon the change.

Further changes happening for the Fall 2017 semester include several curriculum changes. Dr. Ryan Gibbs, vice president for academic affairs, presented the Board with 34 courses which were brought up for deletion by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. Of these 34 courses, 99 percent of them were deleted.

SPC has also added 40 courses for Fall 2017, many of which are substitutions for courses which have been deleted. Ninety three courses have also been revised for the Fall 2017 semester.

"Sometimes that's as simple as a name change," Dr. Gibbs said. "Most of the time, it's an addition of a special course fee or a raising of a special course fee to meet the needs of the supplies of a particular course."

Dr. Gibbs also presented the Board with a list of faculty for the 2017 - 2018 school year. According to Dr. Gibbs, there will be 453 faculty members at SPC. This number includes both full-time and part-time faculty members, with more than 50 percent being composed of full-time members.

Stephen John, vice president for institutional advancement, presented the proposed 2017 Distinguished Alumni:

Jennifer Galey and Kenneth Alan Foster. Graduating from SPC's Nursing Program in 2004, Galey has pursued a career in nursing and is now a Family Nurse Practitioner in Littlefield. Graduating from SPC's Welding Technology Program in 2004, Foster has pursued a career in mechanical engineering and is currently employed by Lyondell Basell as a technical assurance manager for global projects.

"Our Distinguished Alumni awards selection committee reviewed nine different nominations this year, and these two individuals rose to the top," John said. "We're proud of both of these former students and the success they've achieved in their careers."

As the end of the spring semester nears, Dr. Satterwhite updated the Board on upcoming events. The Student Awards Assembly will take place on May 4 at 7 p.m. in the Texan Dome. The Retirement Reception will take place the following day on the Level-land campus in the Sundown Room of the Student Center, beginning at 1:30 p.m.

The Employee Recognition Banquet will take place on May 11, in the PE Complex at 6 p.m., and the ADN Nurses Pinning will happen in the Texan Dome at 8 p.m., also on May 11.

The Commencement Ceremonies will take place on May 12 in the Texan Dome, with ceremonies at 9:30 a.m. and 1 p.m.

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Photo illustration by **JORDAN PATTERSON/PLAINSMAN PRESS**

Walk a Mile in Her Shoes is an annual march for the non-profit agency Voice of Hope: Rape Crisis Center.

The walk is held in order to raise funds and awareness about the issues of sexual assault and sex trafficking. The march is a one mile walk, and participants can, if they choose, don 4-inch-high stilettos to speak out against sexual violence. The event will be held on April 22 from 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. at South Plains Mall in Lubbock.

If you or someone you know is a victim of sexual assault, help can be found at Voice of Hope of Lubbock, The Health and Wellness Center at South Plains College, the County Health Department, or by calling the National Sexual Assault Hotline at 1-800-656-HOPE.

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Denim Day serves to educate students on sexual assault, victim blaming

by **RILEY GOLDEN**
Entertainment Editor

Students, faculty, and staff at South Plains College are encouraged to wear denim on April 26.

They will be joining more than 155,000 people across the United States who have pledged to wear denim to bring awareness to sexual assault.

In Italy in 1992, an 18-year-old girl was picked up by her 45-year-old driving instructor, taken to an isolated road, where he pulled her out of the car, wrestled one leg out of her jeans, and raped her.

Later that night, she told her parents about the incident, and they helped her press charges. The man was convicted and sentenced to jail. He appealed his sentence and it made it all the way to the country's Supreme Court. The verdict

was overturned "because the victim wore very, very tight jeans, she had to help him remove them, and by removing the jeans, it was no longer rape but consensual sex."

Enraged by the ruling, women in Italian Parliament began protesting the verdict by wearing jeans to work. This call to action spurred the California Senate and Assembly to do the same.

The movement made its way to Patricia Giggans, executive director of Peace Over Violence, and the first Denim Day in Los Angeles was in April 1999. It has continued to spread across the nation every year since then.

"This is the first [Denim Day] we've done," said Chris Straface, counselor at South Plains College. "But Denim Day has been around for 18 years. The whole purpose of Denim Day is to bring some

focus to victim blaming, because that's something that is a big problem in our society."

The Health and Wellness Center is selling buttons for \$1 as well.

"If we did Denim Day traditionally, it would be a fundraising event for Peace Over Violence," Straface explained. "But, to my knowledge, they don't have an organization that impacts this area, and we didn't want to raise funds that would leave the area. So it's a way for us to raise money for Voice of Hope in Lubbock."

For more information, go to denimdayinfo.org to register as a supporter of the cause. So, on April 26, wear jeans with a purpose and make those around you aware of sexual assault and victim blaming.

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Mikayla Holmes, a freshman broadcast journalism major from Lubbock and president-elect of the Student Government Association, was elected to the State Student Government Director of Public Relations Position on April 2 in Houston at the State Student Government for Junior Colleges Conference. This is the first time an SPC student has been honored with a position on the state level of student government in more than seven years.

BRANDI ORTIZ/ PLAINSMAN PRESS

BackTalk: Controversy develops around proposed wall

Build relationships, not borders | Wall could enforce war against drugs



by **BRITTNEY STEGALL**
Opinion Editor

With President Donald Trump wanting to build a wall, it is making the United States look like cowards.

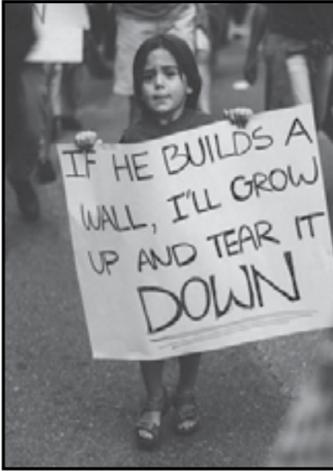
A proposed wall between the United States and Mexico is one of the bigger controversies today. Many in the world say the United States of America is where dreams are made, the home of the brave, the land of the free, where opportunities are made. How will it be possible to make dreams if there is a wall put up around us? It shows we are scared and do not trust people. It will hurt more people than it will help.

Nearly 6,000 aliens have died trying to cross the Mexico-U.S. Border since 2000. Think about how much worse it could be if there is a wall put up to "prevent" them from entering the United States. It would kill hundreds, if not thousands, and possibly even more if the wall is put up. Aliens are entering the United States illegally already. If the entry to the United States was easier, they would not be entering illegally. It is about how hard it is to enter,

not how hard you try to keep them out.

God said love your neighbor as you love yourself. We are not following God's command by keeping everyone out. Just because a few terrorists have harmed the United States, that does not label everyone as a terrorist. People need a chance; everyone needs a chance.

President Trump is hiding behind his words. He is not facing the problem itself. He is just creating an even worse problem by talking about the



wall. He is supposed to protect the citizens of the United States, as well as everyone who enters into it. If the wall is a problem just talking about it, think about how big the problem will escalate if there is a wall.

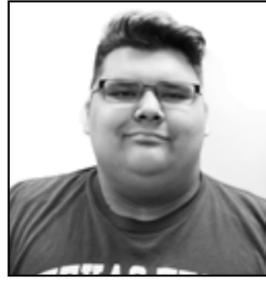
I know many may agree with the wall being built to "protect this country" or "to keep illegal aliens out." That is not the way I believe it will work. If a wall goes up, it

will make the United States a prime target for terrorists, because of the "they think they can keep us out, think again" mentality. It will be a challenge for terrorists, and everyone likes a good challenge. As for keeping the illegal aliens out, that will not keep them out. It might make it harder for them to enter the United States, but it will not prevent it. It will just harm and kill many more humans than the border already has.

We need to think about the future of our children and their children. It will tear families apart, harm them, and possibly even kill parts of their families. Many illegal aliens come this way to protect their families, to get them out of harm's way, or to obtain a better life for them. It is too hard to legally enter the United States. That is why many are coming illegally. They need a quicker way to make their way into the United States. They do not need to be waiting for months or years to get a better life or protection for their families. They need a sanctuary. They need the United States to help them, not scare them.

We need to come together as a country and speak our minds about this issue. We need to love our neighbors. We need to take a stand for those who cannot stand for themselves. We do not need a wall.

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by **DOMINICK PUENTE**
Editorial Assistant

While creating a wall to separate the United States and Mexico is thought of as absurd or necessary by different groups of people, I believe creating the wall would help both countries.

Some groups call for a wall to be built in order to decrease the number of illegal aliens coming into the United States. I see the wall benefiting both countries as far as limiting the amount of drugs and money flowing back and forth.

I understand that building the wall is a way to limit illegal crossing into America. However, the war on drugs is taking a back seat in the debate. Yet it affects all parties in negative ways and continues to take lives and hurt people in both countries. Although limiting the amount of people crossing the border illegally is important, it is not the only point that should be discussed within the debate.

While marijuana has become more available in this country, the drug cartels are transporting chemically-engineered drugs such as methamphetamines, heroin and cocaine across the border. While the cartels

make hundreds of millions of dollars flooding in these drugs, families and friends have to deal with loved ones overdosing on heroin and being imprisoned for pushing meth and cocaine to make some money for their next hit. Extra measures such as building a wall should be taken without thought to prevent these harmful chemicals from entering the streets.

Building a wall will not solve the overall problem with limiting the amount of drugs being pushed across the border. However, it will cut out a portion of the drugs while also limiting the income cartels receive.

For years, the cartels have been pushing drugs into the United States. As the years have gone by, the government has implemented technology to limit the drug flow. However, while the governments try to adapt to the new methods of drug smuggling, cartels continue to stay a step ahead of both the Mexican and American governments.

Establishing a wall will help in the defense against the war on drugs, along with ensuring the wall has a good amount of width and length to avoid tunneling for drug smugglers. While people side against the wall for personal reasons, drugs will continue to flood the streets and continue to cripple Americans.

If the wall is built, there will be a sure obstacle that cartels will have to consider, along with different variables of smuggling in drugs, such as the technologies and strategies that the United States Border

Patrol implements. The more effort that is enforced to regulate and eliminate the drug trade will keep the streets safe, along with crippling the power of the cartels creating a safer lifestyle for the people of Mexico who are affected by the cartels.

With the wall built and drug traffic limited even more, drug abuse and sellers will decrease. The amount of crime and number of deaths will decline as well. While limiting drug flow, crime will become less common, including theft in order to pay for drugs.

Jails and prisons will be at a safer capacity, as the number of people who are faced with drug-related charges will decrease due to the lack of usual drug flow. Keeping the inmate count at a reasonable number will allow jails and prisons to run efficiently and keep the court system focused on more important issues and cases.

Death tolls will go down as well with the decline of overdoses and hallucinations that lead to death. Homicides will also decline with a limited amount of drugs flowing through the streets which influence turf wars within gangs.

Although building a wall will enrage a large number of people, it will help the streets stay clean of harsh drugs and keep cities and neighborhoods safe.

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Medical drug abuse becoming wide spread in college



by **VANESSA DELGADO**
Staff Writer

In this day and age, medications are being over used and abused.

Being a college student is stressful, and apparently many students are taking that same complaint to the doctor. Many of my friends

are on several medications for various reasons. Some of these include anxiety, depression, and ADHD.

Only recently, has medical drug abuse become a pandemic among college students. For even the slightest reason, a student can acquire prescription medication.

It is no secret that college students tend to be broke. Many students who are on these medications tend to sell them to others who do not have prescriptions. So for those who may be recovering, it is still easy to get their hands on more and relapse.

It seems that students are becoming mama's boys. They

depend on medications to overcome their own obstacles instead of dealing them head-on with a clear mind.

In some cases, medication is required. But I feel that many students exaggerate their supposed diagnosis. This causes many people to become addicted to medications.

Many people may be ignorant to the truth, but it is there nonetheless. Not only are many people overusing these drugs, they are using them recreationally and not for their intended purpose.

Medication also has side effects. When they are abused, the chance of these side effects surfacing is increased.

When college students misuse or abuse medications, they are also more likely to turn to illegal drugs such as cocaine and marijuana. They are also more likely to be binge drinkers. These are messy and dangerous combinations.

Most students indulge in drinking throughout their years in college. So those who take drugs such as Adderall and Vyvanse while drinking have an even higher risk for alcohol poisoning, heart problems, and behavioral issues.

Medical drug abuse may only be the beginning for some students. It can lead to even harder drugs that have the potential to ruin lives. It's

crazy that I am only 20 years old and I have known countless people who have had to go to rehab in order to treat their addiction.

I had heard stories but never thought it would happen to people I was close to. Thankfully, many of my friends have turned their lives around.

One of the best and simplest things that someone can do to help someone in the same situation is to provide moral support and encouragement.

With drug abuse in colleges rising, more actions needs to be taken in order to get the situation under control. The majority of the people I have

met throughout college have at least tried one drug.

One is just the beginning. One leads to two, and then three. The goal should be to stop it in its tracks.

Apparently, in college, some students seem to think it is cool to use drugs. Many users don't understand the serious risks that come with many of these drugs. More information should be available to college students.

The situation needs to be taken more seriously by college campuses and students.

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Man on the Street

Should we keep daylight savings time?



"I like it, because there is a change. You have more time to do stuff during the day."

Arlene Ortez
Sophomore
Graphic Design
Bovina



"No, because you lose an hour of sleep. But the afternoons don't get as dark."

Alejandro Gonzales
Sophomore
Mechanical Engineering
Slaton



"It's mutual because I lose an hour of sleep one time, then gain one another."

Dario Rafael
Sophomore
Business
Dallas



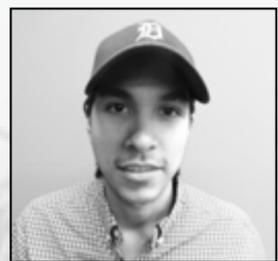
"No, because I like sleep."

Mikail Toralva
Freshman
Architecture Engineering
Tahoka



"No, because it feels like we are losing a part of our day, especially for the people that sleep in."

Elijah Cisneros
Freshman
Radio, Television, Film
Slaton



"If I am losing an hour, I think it'll be more stressful on a college student, because they wouldn't be awake during class or focused while doing their homework."

Victor Martinez
Freshman
Constructional Engineering
New Home

Compiled by Noell Luna and Mariah Deleon

College students underrated in eyes of society



by ALEX PEREZ
Feature Editor

Welcome to the real world, where you have to juggle school, work and a social life as a college student, all while trying to not drown in debt because of tuition and that really cute dress you saw at Zara.

Life in college has its ups and downs. But let's be honest, there are more downs than ups. When people think of college students, they think of either kids who are partying until they wake up in a field covered in their own vomit,

or a die-hard student who is constantly on his or her laptop doing homework or some kind of student organization requirements. Yes, there are those students in real life. But more often than not, most college students are a mix of that, which is honestly a talent to achieve.

Of course, everybody has their majors, and some even have two. But every student has a master's degree in multitasking. Multitasking is an essential skill to have in college, especially if you work and go to school. I am a sophomore at South Plains College, and before last week, I had two jobs. I am a writer and editor for the award-winning Plainsman Press and a full-time student four days out of the week. So, of course, multitasking and

having an amazing planner is necessary.

There are so many students, such as myself, who have encountered this very stressful and high-intensity lifestyle. In some cases, they drop out of

underrated in the sense that not everybody appreciates and acknowledges the intense amount of effort they are putting in to achieve their goals in life. Professors, for example, give out assignments

student's world and think that it is a necessity to have a job and to have a source of income, which is true. But in order to have time for a job, it takes a balancing act. Having a job and going to school

as well. For any human being, there is a necessity to have interaction with other people and to take breaks from a high-stress life. For some students, this isn't as easily achieved because there is not enough time in the day to work, do homework and have dinner with some friends.

As a college student, there will be invites to different parties and dinners, and along with it is this stigma that you can't say no to any of them. If you do, then you're not cool, or you're a "buzz kill." This stigma can also translate into the professional side of interactions, as you have to constantly keep networking with people any chance you get to get a job after school. That also causes a lot of stress in itself.

College is not the easiest thing to do in the world. But it should not put students through as much stress as it does. Working students are constantly on the go and achieve so much in the little time that they are given. Acknowledging the effort from students is needed in today's society, and I think it is about time we get it.



college or have to quit a lot of things in order to make time for the rest, which, in a lot of cases, is very unfair.

College students are very

like the student does not have any other classes, when, in fact, most students have other classes that they have to do homework for, and then some if they are involved in any student organizations.

College students have so much on their plate as it is, and to add to that they have to get a job or even two to continue to survive is crazy. It should be looked at as an achievement, not a necessary requirement.

Parents and professors sometimes look into a college

fulltime, and doing it well, is a talent that not everybody has. When a student can achieve this without having a mental breakdown very five minutes is a great achievement that should be at least acknowledged. I'm not saying that students should receive accolades for having a job and still keeping up a decent GPA, but some acknowledgment would be nice.

Work is not the only thing that is thrown into a student's life, but socializing is important

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Controversy arises from recent Pepsi commercial



by RYAN SHANKS
Staff Writer

Pepsi is getting a lot of heat for their latest television commercial.

It's official title is "Live for Now Moments Anthem" and features reality star and alleged model Kendall Jenner. It tries to portray that we should stand together and "join the conversation."

In that way, the Pepsi ad was successful. It did indeed provoke conversation about Pepsi's tone-deafness.

In the 2-minute-39-second "short film," Jenner throws off the chains of the modeling industry by taking off her wig, then leaving a photo shoot to join a protest. After sharing some knowing nods and fist bumps with her fellow protestors, the "Keeping Up with the Kardashians" star manages to bring everyone together by handing a cop a Pepsi. The message is clear: All those Women's Marches, Black Lives Matter protests, and demonstrations outside Trump Tower would be much more effervescent and effective if someone had just brought some soda.

The Internet, as you might suspect, disagreed. Within 48 hours, the video got nearly 1.6 million views on YouTube

(five times as many down votes as up votes), and Twitter and Facebook lit up with people pointing out just how gauche the whole thing was. Activist DeRay McKesson called it "trash," adding "If I had carried Pepsi, I guess I never would've gotten arrested. Who knew?"

People made memes (some even reaching back and evoking Pepper Spray Cop). Rightfully, many people pointed out that using protest imagery in order to sell soda, particularly images that evoked the photo of Ieshia Evans facing down police in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, last year, was pretty tasteless. It was one of the few times the internet ever agreed on anything.

And that, in and of itself, is noteworthy. For years, conversation online has

Soda companies sell harder to young consumers than to anyone else, and they've been pitching to that coveted demographic messages of global unity for years. The most well-known of these attempts is Coca-Cola's peace-for-all 1971 "I'd like to buy the world a Coke" (The one Don Draper dreamed up in the series finale of "Mad Men"). But even before that, Pepsi was targeting youth culture with slogans such as "Pepsi Generation" and "For Those Who Think Young"—both of which launched in the '60s.

Soda companies have continued to aim for hip kids throughout the ensuing decades with celeb-packed ads featuring everyone from Michael Jackson to Drake to a truck-driving P. Diddy. Now Pepsi has tried to cross the streams, pairing a millennial

mega-celebrity with what the company clearly thought was a fun spin on the ability of young people to change the world. Between 1971 and now, though, people got the tools to

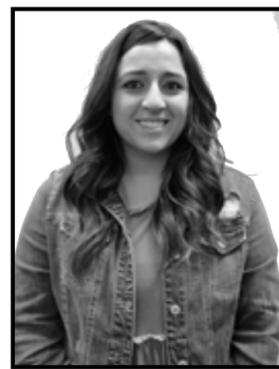
respond to the misguided mash up on a mass scale in 140 characters or less.

From Black Lives Matter to the Women's Marches, politically active people are already affecting change around the world, and they're not doing it with soda and reality stars. They are using the same tools that organized those movements to express how ill advised it was to use their work to sell carbonated beverages. The reaction to Pepsi's ad, not the ad itself, brought people together. That's refreshing.

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College requirements for students cause frustration



by SHELBY MORGAN
Staff Writer

The general education requirements that college students have to complete are ridiculous.

Most of the courses that are required have already been taken in high school and are just a repetition of what has already been learned.

Typically, you spend 12 years in school learning basic fundamentals such as math, reading, and writing. You know your strengths and weaknesses by the time you graduate.

When you go to college, you are going into a certain field and should be able to focus on the career path you have chosen.

On average, students have to have 42 semester hours of core credits in order to graduate. So, on top of the time spent learning these basic skills, students have to spend another two years learning some of the same things they learned in high school.

I think that it would be a more beneficial use of students' money and financial aid funds to cut the required courses, or

amend them to better educate students. Requiring students to take a financial planning or tax preparation course would make more sense than College Algebra or Statistics.

As a journalism major, I am never going to need to know the Pythagorean Theorem, or how to graph a circle, in order to write or edit a column effectively.

two science courses should be required, or that there should be creative arts requirements.

Even if I did retain the information I have learned in class, when am I ever going to put it to use as a journalist?

Colleges need to teach students to have life skills that will benefit them and focus more on students' majors. A class on how to effectively create a resume or compose a business e-mail would be a tremendous help to a college student who has never had to create one before.

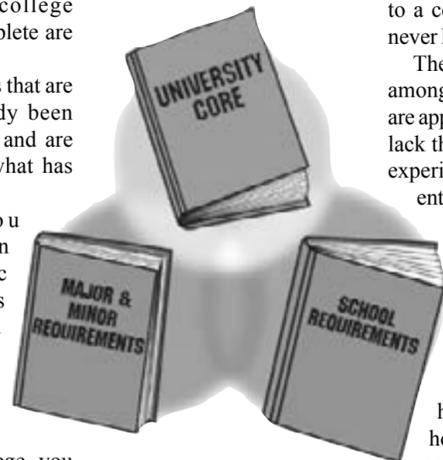
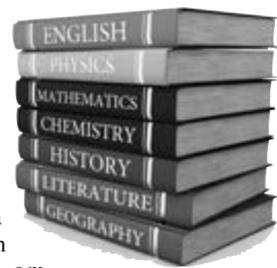
There is a serious problem among college graduates who are applying for jobs that either lack the education or lack the experience required for many entry-level positions today.

Using the time spent in Art Appreciation could be better spent preparing for the workforce. A class that teaches basic life skills, like how to change a tire or how to perform CPR on someone who is choking would be very useful in everyday life. Many nursing schools require students to take an etiquette class to prepare them for job interviews and real-life scenarios that they may encounter.

I don't believe that all of the general education requirements should be removed or changed. But there is an issue with the current requirements that should be addressed by the state.

I don't mean to just pick on the math requirements, because I also don't agree that

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April 18, 2017

Plainsman Press

Student sees Border Patrol from different perspective



by **TOVI OYERVIDEZ**
Photo Editor

Building a wall between the United States and Mexico has been a very heated topic ever since President Donald Trump announced it during his campaign.

With American's differences about the wall, has anyone ever thought about the people who protect it every day?

I was given the privilege of visiting the United States Border Patrol Academy in Artesia, New Mexico on March 9. With my own eyes and camera, I was able to capture and witness the training that protects our borders.

Like any morning for a

trainee, it's waking up before sunrise and heading down to the chow hall and rushing out before 7:30 a.m. before the first class. Being late is not acceptable.

Spanish class was first on the agenda. The class uses local residents as volunteer actors who speak Spanish to help participate in scenarios such as border checkpoints that the trainees might need to help them in the field. It can be a challenge to use your

training you learned and then speak Spanish at the same time, without messing up. Not all the trainees are Hispanic, and most do have to learn Spanish. Every graduating officer becomes

fluent in Spanish. I always believe communication is key with people.

After Spanish scenarios, we

blank. I, on the other hand, needed another hand pressed against my back so I wouldn't fly away.

After lunch, we did the best thing our stomachs could ask for. We headed to the driving course to get in on their driving skills. We were

each given our very own Border Patrol SUV and driver. My driver, Richie, was the first person I have ever felt so comfortable driving with. His skills were impeccable, and the ride was so smooth, even though the tactics we were experiencing were wild, especially when we were practicing pitting and pursuits.

I never really knew how much time and effort went into becoming a Border Patrol Agent. We

were only there for a day, and I

saw so many things they do to train the best agents possible.

The physical training, learning Spanish, and driving skills are just a few of the skills the agents need.

Capturing my time there was beyond amazing, and everyone was very courteous and generous. We felt welcomed everywhere we went. Never once did anyone bring up the wall. The main things they are trying to stop from entering the country are terrorists and drugs, especially heroin. The agents know even with a wall, they are still going to be doing their jobs.

I have never felt so safe in any type of facility, and I knew we were in such good hands. I am very grateful to have witnessed the special training that is required to protect this land. I'm most grateful for the men and women who protect and serve our borders every day.

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Border Patrol agent demonstrates vehicular tactics and maneuvers on March 10.
TOVI OYERVIDEZ/PLAINSMAN PRESS

headed to the gun range. Let me just say that I have never shot any kind of automatic rifles before. Cheers to the women who can stand their ground and shoot targets point

Eating lunch in the chow hall was probably the cheapest meal I have ever eaten. It was better than the food at a college cafeteria, which I wish could be as cheap.

Experience with Border Patrol shatters preconceived notions



by **SARA MARSHALL**
Editor-in-Chief

Not all opinions are set in stone... Sometimes people can change their minds

I used to have this unexplainable negative attitude toward the United States Border Patrol. I'm honestly not sure why. Maybe it was all the bad press I would hear about when I was growing up, or the way the movies tend to portray law enforcement and Border Patrol agents.

Maybe it was because of my own personal assumptions. When I think I'm right, I'm right. Don't we all?

Who knows at this point? But I believed that I was right; that the U.S. Border Patrol was full of racist, misogynistic, "Make America Great Again" kind of people.

And I was happily surprised to find out something that nearly never happens: I was wrong!

I was absolutely and inexcusably wrong about how I had been thinking all these years.

During spring break this year, I had the wonderful opportunity not only to research and write a story about the U.S. Border Patrol Academy in Artesia, New Mexico, but interacted and even befriended

some of the agents assigned there.

While staying at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, the agents exposed me to some of their intensive training and proved that they train potential agents to ask questions first and assess a situation before reacting.

I had the opportunity to shoot various weapons, under the supervision of experienced agents, of course, and I learned how the agents are trained to react to situations.

a shooting range and shoot a target at the end of the day: it can be fun and a way to destress. It's their end of the day beer, so to speak. So it's definitely not something to scoff at, as long as they're doing it in a safe and controlled environment.

Prior to this experience, I always assumed those Border Patrol agents were gun-wielding hillbillies, ready to shoot any Mexican they saw fit. This was not the case. They are encouraged to always be

reflexes and cool minds make for extremely level-headed, capable law enforcement personnel.

Many attending the Academy, as far as I saw, have prior law enforcement experience or had law enforcement backgrounds. Many trainees are well educated, holders of college degrees. Not the racist hillbillies I had been lead to believe.

Surprisingly enough, many trainees are at the academy because it offers them an opportunity to be outdoors and in nature. Many love interacting with weapons, but in a safe environment. Others choose to go to the border to ensure their families are safe from cartels and the drugs being smuggled.

It was extremely eye-opening as I slowly realized that these amazing men and women are normal people with normal lives, just like me. Some have families that they go home to. Others stay at the Academy and live in their on-campus dorms, much like I do at South Plains College.

So overall, I had an amazing experience and learned so many new things about our country and about the U.S. Border Patrol. I believe that we, as a country, need to have an open mind about our law enforcement personnel and those in the Border Patrol. We are all humans, and we should give everyone the benefit of the doubt, without considering preconceived notions of negativity.

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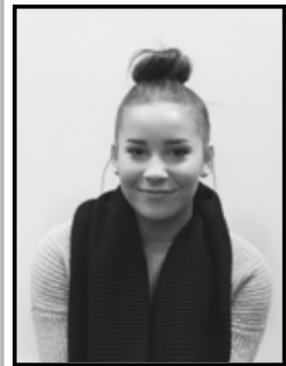


Border Patrol agent instructs student on proper firearm techniques on March 10.
TOVI OYERVIDEZ/PLAINSMAN PRESS

Before I thought large guns were extremely scary and unnecessary. Now I realize why some people just go to

on guard in case a situation goes awry, but these amazing men and women learn to first be human beings. Their quick

Students in college susceptible to more stress, depression



by **CHANISE RAY**
Staff Writer

Untreated mental illness could be seen as an epidemic in the United States.

As a college student I can personally say college is very stressful. Students, who conjointly have a load of stress, can be treated. Most college campuses have a health and wellness program where counselors can be used at students' disposal just to talk, or vent. Talking to someone can help relieve stress and ease your mind. Carrying stress inside and not talking about it could be unhealthy.

College students are jam packed with things to do. Not to mention college athletes have even more to do, especially if they obtain a scholarship. Being sleep deprived because you have to stay up until 3 a.m. writing a paper could put anyone in a bad mood. Sleep deprivation is known to play a role in depression.

Depression is relatively common among college students because of the everyday stress of homework. Students can utilize their academic advisors as well. They specifically aim to help with students' studies and possibly their organization. However, being able to vent to a person who knows about what you are going through and can possibly explain why you could be experiencing certain things is very refreshing.

As a student at SPC, I utilize the college's counselors because I believe it is very healthy to decompress and talk about everyday things.

I do not always go to my counselor to vent, or cry. Sometimes, I like to go just to talk. I have friends I talk to, of course. However, I find it more useful to talk to my counselor because I usually find out more about myself and what type of person I am. With my friends, I am uncensored and I can say just about anything. But with a counselor, obviously I can say anything. But when I feel as if I am embarrassed to tell my counselor something, or before I say it and I think it sounds funny or incompetent, I realize that maybe I have an opportunity to grow. In other words, I feel as if counseling has made me a better person.

Students who are athletes in college could benefit from a counselor not only for their studies but also for their performance in their sport. A friend of mine who currently plays basketball for Florida State University tells me all the time about how the team has access to a therapist. He says his coach believes that a healthy mind helps with efficiency on the court. So the players are not stressing about anything during game time.

Of course, counseling is not the quick fix to being perfect all the time. Everyone has breakdowns and bad days. But having someone to talk to when these breakdowns occur can be very abating.

College is especially stressful when dealing with the workload put upon most average students, not to mention the social life mixed in. It can be pretty overwhelming. College campuses are more vulnerable to acts of bullying and assault. These things can be traumatizing to some students and can cause them to abandon classwork and class in general. Counseling can be especially beneficial to these students because of the affects these things may have on them.

I would recommend counseling to every one of my classmates because of how helpful it has been in my life. There is always someone that is willing to listen to you vent, and you are not alone.

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Cosmetology instructor inspires students with lifetime of experience

by **DESIREE MENDEZ**
Staff Writer

Instructor by day, rock star at night, Juan Partida is a man of many talents.

Partida, who some may know as Johnny Rockstar, is an instructor of Cosmetology at South Plains College. He was born and raised in Levelland, attending Levelland High School and graduating in 1986. Partida then attended SPC three times for an Auto mechanics certificate, Cosmetology certificate and his Cosmetology Instructors certificate.

Partida has been married for 27 years to Lori Partida. They have two kids together, Madalynn and Jazz Partida. His son-in-law, Taylor Colwell, also attends SPC for cosmetology. Partida has two granddaughters, Analeigh and Lyllah. Partida's mother, Maria Partida, has been a cosmetologist for 30 years. Jazz is also a cosmetologist. They both work along side Partida at his Levelland salon.

Partida wasn't always an instructor for Cosmetology. He also taught boxing for 10 years to his son, Jazz, and another student who was deaf. Partida learned sign language so that he could help this student learn boxing.

"Well, my dad is an

awesome person," said Jazz Partida. "He's hard working and knows how to enjoy life. My dad has always been a mentor and role model to me. He has always been there to push me and help me every step of the way, and I am lucky to have had such a great dad."

Partida became a cosmetologist 21 years ago after his wife talked him into

him, "Dude, I want to be just like you. He told me, "Go to school, get licensed and find a hair team to get on with."

Partida decided he was going to prove people wrong who didn't believe in him and told him that he would never make it.

"Back when I was in cosmetology school, it was very hard for a male to succeed, because it was a very female-oriented field," explained Partida.

Partida then started to work for Sexy Hair as a stylist for hair shows. It was one day in Los Angeles that he helped the owner of Sexy Hair on the platform. For eight years, Partida was a platform artist.

"I love being able to make a difference in someone's life," said Partida. "When someone comes to you for a haircut or a color, they come in looking one way, and then you help them feel better and they leave looking like someone totally different. That is what I love being able to do."

In 2000, Partida opened his own salon, Attitudes. "There is only Juan cut," is the slogan on his billboard.

"I opened Attitudes because I was always told that I would never make it, and here I am today," said Partida. "Never give up your dreams, no matter what anyone tells you. Always believe in yourself!"

In 2007, Partida went back to SPC for his Cosmetology

Instructor's license. He has been an instructor for 10 years. He is also the cosmetology instructor for the Levelland High School program. When he first started the high school program, he only had five students. Five years later, he has 31 to 35 a semester.

"I became an instructor because I was traveling way too much, and my kids were getting to that age that I needed to be around more," explained Partida, who opened a second salon, Bella's, in 2010.

Partida said he enjoys passing on his knowledge to the next generations of cosmetologists.

"Teaching can be very challenging, and every day is an adventure," said Partida. "But I wouldn't change anything about it. Getting to meet new people every day and building new life-time friendships is worth waking up every day and coming to work."

Partida wanted to be able to give advice and help teach students on a level that he didn't have while he was in school. He wanted to inspire students to create art with hair and to never give up on their dreams.

One of Partida's students, Jackie Guadalcazar, a second-semester cosmetology student, said, "Juan is so open and easy going. He's not one of those people that are super judgmental and won't criticize you. He gets it."

Partida is like a parental figure to some of the kids in the cosmetology program. They always come to him for fatherly advice or problems they are having, because he has kids and he has been

in Dancing with the Texans at SPC. He also takes ballroom dancing classes, taught by Vanessa Moffett.

"Dance is life," stated Partida, who has not been able to participate this year



Cosmetology professor, Juan Partida, enjoys being a hair dresser and sharing his vast knowledge to his students at SPC.
DESIREE MENDEZ/PLAINSMAN PRESS

through those types of things before.

"He is very nice, blunt and very helpful," said Sara Quintanilla, another one of his students. "He is always willing to help you, no matter how many times you ask for help. He's just fun to be around."

Partida currently has 11 seniors and 17 juniors in his high school program.

Partida isn't just an instructor and hairstylist, he also has a father-and-son duo called "LEWD and TATTOOED." They are an '80s cover band, and he is known as Johnny Rockstar. Along with their band, they are also members of the band where they attend church.

In 2016, Partida participated

after having knee surgery in December.

In 2009, Partida ran for mayor for the City of Levelland. Even though he didn't win, he still does his part to help the community.

"Being able to help students make a difference in the world, and make friendships that will last me a life-time, I wouldn't change any of that," said Partida. "Whether it is being a hairstylist or an instructor, helping people is what I love to do."

Rock star at night, instructor and hairstylist by day, Partida is living life to the fullest.

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Songwriting group allows students to create original music

by **HANNAH NELSON**
Staff Writer

Passionate members of the South Plains College community are uniting to make new music and spark creativity.

A few students and staff members have created a song writing group within the college to give the people a chance to write music collectively.

One of the group's members, Jeremiah Patterson, had been interested in song writing since he was in high school. Once he came to SPC, he realized all the resources that were available for song writing.

"When I got here, I found out they had a CD that they did of original music, and there was even a class for it," said Patterson.

This lead Patterson to the thought of getting into writing more and having others be part of it with him.

"I was like, you know what, it would be really cool to try and do stuff with other students involving original music," Patterson recalls.

He began talking with people within his song writing class. They decided that it would be great for them to get

together away from the class to share writing ideas.

"We have so many great song writers living on this campus, or at least in Levelland," Patterson explained. "Why not have something right here in Levelland for those people so they don't have to go all the

each other's strengths and help each other with weaknesses."

A big part of what the group does during their meetings involves individuals sharing what they have written, and the members collectively giving feedback and helping build the song.

thought...constructive ideas," adds Patterson.

The meetings are different every time, depending on what members bring in.

According to Patterson, there are many goals that he hopes the group can accomplish for this semester

is creativity that is right here in our own backyard. Why not share it with each other?"

The group meets most Tuesdays in the lobby of the Lamar residence hall. The meeting typically runs from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m. or 10:30 p.m.

"I say, if you want to be a part of this, the best things are a good attitude and a spirit of cooperation," says Patterson.

He also recommends

people who have their own instruments, such as an acoustic guitar, bring it to the meeting.

"If you have absolutely no song writing experience but want to learn how to write songs, then I say come in, observe, listen, and feel free to ask questions," Patterson says.

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Songwriting group formed by students meet to encourage original music and practice their musical talents. Members include Matt Cross, Davis Alaniz, Jeremiah Patterson, Mylon Hembree, and Jason Sains.

HANNAH NELSON/PLAINSMAN PRESS

way to Lubbock to find people to write with?"

The group is a way for budding songwriters to get together, show what they have, give each other ideas, and grow.

"When you are working with someone else," says Patterson, "you can feed off

"We have someone start off on a new idea they have, whether it's a completed song, just lyrics, just music," Patterson said.

A member is able to present his or her work to the group so that he or she can receive input from others.

"We give ideas on what we

and semesters to come. These goals include having a performance to showcase what the group has been writing.

"Hopefully, this semester, if not next semester, we want to have a little performance on campus of the songs that we've been writing through this," Patterson explained. "It

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April 18, 2017

Plainsman Press

Hobbs, Thompson shimmy to victory at Dancing With the Texans

by BRANDI ORTIZ
News Editor

Costumes, music, and a shiny disco ball.

Season Five of “Dancing with the Texans” was held in the Sundown Room at the Student Center on April 13 at South Plains College. Members of the SPC Ballroom Dance Team and selected faculty put on a performance and competed to win the disco ball trophy.

This season’s theme was “TV Night.” With their jazzy take on the “Fresh Prince of Bel Air,” Justin Hobbs, assistant track and field coach at SPC, and sophomore Rebekah Thompson took home the prize.

“We work hard, and we just try to make it as fun and enjoyable as we could,” said Hobbs. “With so many good dancers out there, we just go out, do our thing, have fun and hope everything works out.”

There were seven teams competing in “Dancing with the Texans,” each consisting of one dance team member

and a staff contestant. The night opened with a group dance to the theme song from “Saved by the Bell.”



Justin Hobbs and dance partner Rebekah Thompson celebrate after winning Season Five of Dancing With The Texans on April 13.

TOVI OYERVIDEZ/PLAINSMAN PRESS

The first pair to perform was Laci Singer, assistant

professor of chemistry, and Ashton Steffey. They danced to the “Glee” cover of Amy Winehouse’s “Valerie.” The second pair was Miranda English, academic advisor, and Lawrence Hernandez, who danced to “The X-Files” theme song. The third pair consisted of Kathryn Townsend, associate professor of chemistry, and Joseph Hinojosa. They danced to the theme song of “Inspector Gadget.”

The fourth pair included John Barnes, instructor of law enforcement technology, and Mirna Gonzalez, who danced to the “Game of Thrones” theme. They were followed by Dustin Wimmer, recreational activities coordinator,

and Adeva Jennings, who danced to two variations of the “Spiderman” theme song. The sixth pair consisted of Hobbs and Thompson, performing their rendition of “Fresh Prince of Bel Air.” The final pair was Dennis Churchwell, director of purchasing, and Katelyn Albrecht with their take on “American Bandstand.”

In between acts, there were special performances from members of the SPC Ballroom Dance Team, along with intermissions when the audience was invited to show off their moves.

Throughout the night, it was evident that each participant put forth a lot of time and energy into their performances.

“They all did outstanding,” said Vanessa Moffett, instructor and choreographer for the SPC Ballroom Dance Team. “They all put in a whole lot of work, and it turned out really well.”

Dance team members

who participated were encouraged to go back to where they started and learn the opposite roles of what they are used to.



“It was a challenge for some of them, because they have never done the opposite part,” said Moffett. “By coming to my basic class and learning the opposite

role, [students] were able to teach [the role] easier and learn how to teach it.”

Near the end of the night, Moffett performed to the theme song from “I Dream of Jeannie” with judge Joshua Flores.

“I’ve always wanted to do a dance to “I Dream of Jeannie” because I love the show and I love the music,” said Moffett. “When the students voted for the theme to be “TV Night” [it was perfect].”

Moffett said she hopes that contestants who participated will continue to participate in dance or another form of exercise.

“[We] encourage people to dance and get out on the floor and try something new outside of their comfort zone,” Moffett said. “Hopefully, they will find an exercise they like or an activity that they like, that doesn’t really feel like exercise.”

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Synthetic drug use creates risk for teens, young adults

by BRANDI ORTIZ
News Editor

While states are focusing on how to control the legalization of marijuana, they might not be paying close enough attention to the lab-created drugs that are even harder to control and are destroying families.

In West Texas, synthetic drugs have caused many families heartache and grief. In 2015, Lubbock’s University Medical Center (UMC) helped to create NEIDS, Nurses Educating on Illegal Drugs & Synthetics. NEIDS is an outreach group whose “mission is to provide education to the public on the health risks and hazards of the use of synthetic marijuana and other harmful drugs.”

“We are Emergency Room nurses, and we have noticed an influx of patients that were dying due to synthetic drug use,” said Charlie Williams, one of the co-founders of NEIDS and a registered nurse. “None of our medications worked, and a lot of our patients were dying. It kind of fueled our fire to go out and educate the public, because

they honestly don’t know that they are ingesting poison.”

According to Williams, with both Lubbock and Levelland being college towns, synthetic marijuana is one of the more common synthetic drugs.

Synthetic marijuana, or synthetic cannabinoids, as some law officials prefer to call them, has been on retail shelves since the early 2010s.

Going by names such as “K2”, “SPICE”, and many more, the product consists of dried plant leaves sprayed with synthetic cannabinoid like THC, the primary ingredient in marijuana. Some retailers package them with names that could appeal to kids, such as “Scooby Snax” or “Blueberry Haze.”

Per findings of Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton, many users are 12 years old to 20 years old. Paxton also found that the younger kids believe that “because the drugs are ‘fake marijuana,’ they will be less likely to hurt them.” But oh, are they so wrong. According to Williams, just like other lab-created drugs,

synthetic marijuana offers the heady highs and the dangerous lows.

“Now we are seeing a lot of the aftermath that these drugs leave,” says Williams. “Whether it be permanent anxiety, heart conditions, seizure disorders. Many of them are not the same person as they were before.”

Many users have described being high on synthetic drugs is “what hell is,” leaving users with violent and irrational behavior, becoming paralyzed, even committing murder, according to Williams.

“Legal Weed” has often been described as “herbal incense” or plant fertilizer. But even then, a 2012 National Institute on Drug Abuse survey found that 11 percent of high schoolers have tried them, and more than 11,000 ER visits were associated with the drug.

“You don’t know what is in [synthetic drugs],” says Williams. “The chemical compound comes from China, and who knows what is in that. The list of ingredients found from reverse MSDS

(Material Safety Data Sheet) lists things like chloroform. All of these chemicals and ingredients say, ‘If ingested, can be harmful or deadly.’ Then people who get it here, lace it with other chemicals, like Drano, ammonia. So, you don’t know what is in the drug.”

NEIDS has originally only done presentations at small schools. But after word got around of their program, they were contacted to testify in Austin before the State Legislature.

“In the state of Texas, they made four bills making the sale of synthetic drugs illegal based on our testimony,” says Williams.

After the Legislature passed the so-called “analogue laws,” which restricted the sale of look-alike drugs, synthetic cannabinoids seemed to disappear from retail counters. But, in 2015, calls to the nation’s 55 poison control centers about synthetic drug overdoses increased from the 3,700 calls in 2014 to more than 7,800 calls in 2015.

Williams says she sees a case of synthetic drugs on a daily basis.

“Just last week, I had two patients in the same zone that were both on synthetic marijuana and were causing problems,” says Williams. “One guy wrecked his car, and the other was smoking in his room.”

According to the National Institute of Drug Abuse, synthetic drugs weren’t always meant to be dangerous. Instead, they began with the best of intentions, as an attempt to create a safe, medicinal and legal form of marijuana. Researchers had been interested in developing synthetic forms of THC in the hope of developing a licensed drug that could relieve the symptoms of previous forms of synthetic drugs. After a chemist at Clemson University, John W. Huffman, published his results from creating hundreds of synthetic cannabinoids (JWH-007), a new drug was produced in Germany that included plant leaves sprayed with chemicals

so it could be smoked and consumed. The drug was being sold as synthetic marijuana under the name of JWH-018, also known as, Spice, one of the most common synthetic drugs in West Texas.

“If you want to get high, do not do this drug,” said Williams. “Nobody who has used this drug comes in and says, ‘it was great, it was a great high.’ They are only complaining of being sick or ill.”

If you or someone you know has taken synthetic drugs, seek help.

“Call somebody who can help,” said Williams. “Do not try to help them yourself, a lot of time, people who take synthetic drugs have hurt our paramedics, officers, fire department, and our nurses. Patients that are on bath salts and synthetic marijuana have killed people, have done a lot of damage. I recommend to just call someone who is able to help them.”

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NEIDS hosts synthetic drug awareness booth in the Student Center on the Levelland campus on March 22.

TOVI OYERVIDEZ/PLAINSMAN PRESS

Alum finds career with Border Patrol after criminal justice degree

by SARA MARSHALL
Editor-in-Chief

[Editor's note: This story is part of an ongoing project in conjunction with the South Plains College Alumni Association. The project highlights former SPC students and their achievements.]

Dan Harris, Jr. has law enforcement in his blood.

His father had dual careers serving in law enforcement and education. He was a Denver City police officer and reserve commander of the Yoakum County Sheriff's Department and with the Denver City ISD as a coach and eventually high school principal.

"I am a sixth generation law enforcement officer," Harris said. "As a small child, all I have ever wanted to do was be in law enforcement, a true calling in my blood."

The Denver City native moved to Seagraves before his sophomore year and soon graduated from Seagraves High School.

Harris chose to attend South Plains College after graduat-

ing because of the great reputation of the Law Enforcement Program and of SPC's overall positive reputation.

"I gained so much from attending SPC," Harris said. "From the education and experiences to the relationships, just so much. I was named one of two Outstanding Law Enforcement Students in 1989, and today we both are senior leaders in our Law Enforcement agencies and still work together."

Coming from a small town, Harris found that the small community of SPC was very similar to the atmosphere of his high school.

"The transition was very easy, and the staff and my fellow students were great," Harris said. "My best memory

at SPC was meeting my wife, Katrina, in the Texan Dining Hall. We have now been married for almost 27 years."

ferent for college students now, than when I was at SPC," Harris said. "Primarily in the technology world. My advice

the [U.S. Border Patrol's] highest award for valor and courage, the Newton-Azrak award."

catching the bad guys, especially those who bring drugs into our country. It is a remarkable thing to serve and protect.

I would never change anything about my career choice."

Harris said his favorite part of being a Border Patrol agent is that he gets to make a positive difference in the security of the country every day.

"As with any law enforcement officer, you have times of great hardship and

challenges, shear terror and tragedy," Harris said. "Those are what make your job so challenging. But when you save someone's life, when

you make a positive difference in someone's life and in the protection of our country, well, words can't describe how incredible your service truly is. My experiences have been absolutely phenomenal."

Out of the many years of being in the Border Patrol, Harris has had his fair share of crazy and wonderful moments.

"There are so many best moments it would be hard to define just one," Harris said. "Receiving the U.S. Border Patrol's highest award for valor and courage, the Newton-Azrak Award would be one of those. Receiving that honor in memory of our fallen heroes, those who have died in the line of duty and knowing that 10 years ago this year

two of my fellow officers did not come home with us after that call, well, honoring them will always be one of those moments."

Harris has so much wisdom to share with current SPC students.

"Whatever career field you choose, be your absolute best and don't let anyone or anything ruin your life," Harris said. "Work hard and enjoy every minute. I sure enjoyed every minute of SPC. I'm so proud to be an SPC alum and wish everyone at SPC the absolute very best."

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While attending SPC, Harris kept himself extremely busy. While taking a full course load, he worked full time for Levelland EMS, served as president of the SPC Law Enforcement Club and was a member of the Student Government Association.

"Times are definitely dif-

is not to let that technology such as the Internet ruin your future. It can be such a great thing to help you, especially with your studies, but there are a lot of bad people and bad things on that web."

After graduating in 1989 with a degree in Criminal Justice, Harris moved to San Angelo, where he went to work for the city as a police officer. Soon after, he went on to attend the U.S. Border Patrol Academy, using his prior education to aid him while moving up the ranks.

"My SPC education has helped me in my current role as a great foundation of both general and law enforcement education and experience," Harris said. "My role now is to lead those who provide the most outstanding training to new Border Patrol agents and advance training to approximately 20,000 current agents. My SPC education is a key part of that."

In 2008, Harris was recognized as a Distinguished Alum by the SPC administration.

"It is a huge honor to be recognized as a SPC Distinguished Alum," Harris said. "I was awarded for my leadership in the law enforcement profession, including being awarded

In July 2017, Harris took over the Artesia Border Patrol Training Academy as the Chief Patrol Agent.

"I wanted to make a posi-



Dan Harris credits his time at SPC for giving him the training in criminal justice prior to joining the Border Patrol. PHOTOS BY TOVI OYERVIDEZ/PLAINSMAN PRESS

Student breaks college stereotype at older age

by HANNAH NELSON
Staff Writer

With a degree in chemistry and having already attended up to nine different colleges in his lifetime, Jim Mabarak is not a typical South Plains College student.

Originally from Michigan, Mabarak was married and has three sons, along with a few grandchildren.

Mabarak, who will be turning 78 in May, attends SPC solely for the fun of learning.

"I take courses just for enjoyment," says Mabarak. "I don't worry about grades. If I can audit the classes, I do, unless I feel that I need the pressure of a test."

He doesn't worry about the credits and doesn't keep any of his diplomas.

"Some of them are like 50 years old, and I don't really need them for anything," says Mabarak.

Mabarak has attended many colleges through the years, including University of Dayton and the University of Michigan. He discovered SPC while listening to YouTube. He found an instructional video on how to play a song. When he looked up the instructor in the video, he found out that the instructor taught at SPC but had since retired. From there,

Most of Mabarak's classes consist of music. He takes two guitar classes a week, bass lessons, and keyboard.

"I am really taking more classes than I should be, because I am a very slow learner," Mabarak says. "But I still enjoy it, so I do it."

After Mabarak finished school, he worked in Indiana with Western Electric as a chemist for 40 years. He has also worked with the Federal Government Navy Facility, managing hazardous waste.

"I asked the instructor if he would listen to him, and if he would take him," Mabarak says.

Now the oldest boy is a church choral director and his three children all play instruments.

"It's a whole family thing," says Mabarak. "It's been passed down from generation to generation."

In his free time, reading is one thing that Mabarak enjoys doing. Every time he goes to the SPC Library, he likes to check out the new books available. He has even been asked to leave the library while staying past closing time.

"I'll tell my kids I was asked to leave the library, but I won't tell them why," Mabarak said with a laugh. "They will think grandpa is getting in a lot of trouble."

One of Mabarak's favorite past times is to sit in the cafeteria and talk with other students.

"The students will call me over and say,

'Come on, sit over here,' or they will come join me," says Mabarak.

Mabarak says that he spends up to three hours a day sitting in the cafeteria during breakfast, lunch, and dinner, "just sitting, hanging out, even having a third or a fourth cup of coffee."

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Michigan native, Jim Mabarak, travels to SPC to continue his education, fulfilling his desire to learn continuously. HANNAH NELSON/PLAINSMAN PRESS

He had taken music lessons while attending grade school and started taking lessons from a college while working in Indiana.

"I think if a person takes music, it's kind of with them all their life," says Mabarak.

He started taking piano lessons from an instructor who only takes on adults. However, while taking lessons, Mabarak discovered that his oldest son had some talent.



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April 18, 2017

Plainsman Press

Blink-182 puts on intense show for Lubbock crowd

by **SERGIO MADRID**
Editorial Assistant

God shed some tears the night Blink-182 came to Lubbock.

Hundreds waited in line in front of the Lonestar Amphitheater on March 28 to see Blink-182. When gates opened at 7 p.m. people piled in for about 30 minutes, but some were stopped after reports of an oncoming storm.

The line came to a halt when a lady came out to tell those in line to take cover. No one was getting in until the rain stopped, and all they could do was suggest taking cover to wait out the storm.

Most people left to take shelter in their vehicles, though there were some who endured the wind and rain to hold their place in line.

After about an hour of waiting, the gates opened at 8:45 p.m. Once inside the theater, people bunched together, trying their best to squeeze past each other, attempting to get as close to the stage as possible.

With hundreds in

attendance, the wait was becoming almost unbearable. People were shouting, pushing, and shoving, all eager for the show to start.

Finally, the lights went out, and the crowd roared in excitement as the opening act, The Naked and Famous, came on stage. There was an

Ours.” It’s a very invigorating song all on its own, but it seemed to give everyone chills, as the rain came pouring back down not long after the song started.

People raised their hands, welcoming the rain as they swayed from side to side in pure emotion. Captivated by

Alisa Xayalith, was cut off during her band introduction to be informed they were cutting their set short to prepare for Blink-182.

I’ve seen sets get cut short, as well as people get cut from a show, but never have I seen a band get on stage and only get to play one song.

The crowd would ease up and join in a sing along to “Baby Got Back.” It was enough to invoke tons of laughs.

When Mark Hoppus (bass, vocals), Travis Barker (drums), and Matt Skiba (guitar, vocals) of Blink-182 walked onto the stage, the crowd lit up.

Starting the concert with a familiar tune, “Hey Ho, Let’s Go,” Blink-182 got the crowd going right away. This short cover of the classic Ramones song led into one of Blink’s biggest hit songs, “Feeling This.”

After every line, the words, “I’m feeling this” followed as everyone in attendance joined in a chorus-like fashion.

Hoppus made sure to keep the crowd involved for the majority of the show. After “Feeling This,” Hoppus said, “I have to do this at least once while we’re here.” And he shouted, “the stars at night, are big and bright,” and the crowd responded with, “deep in the heart of Texas,” accompanied by the famous five-count clap.

Hoppus also said they would do something to share with everyone after the show. He had the Amphitheater turn off the lights and requested

everyone light up their phones, as they played a couple of songs in the dark.

Having released their latest album, “California,” last summer, Blink still made sure to play both new and old fan favorites.

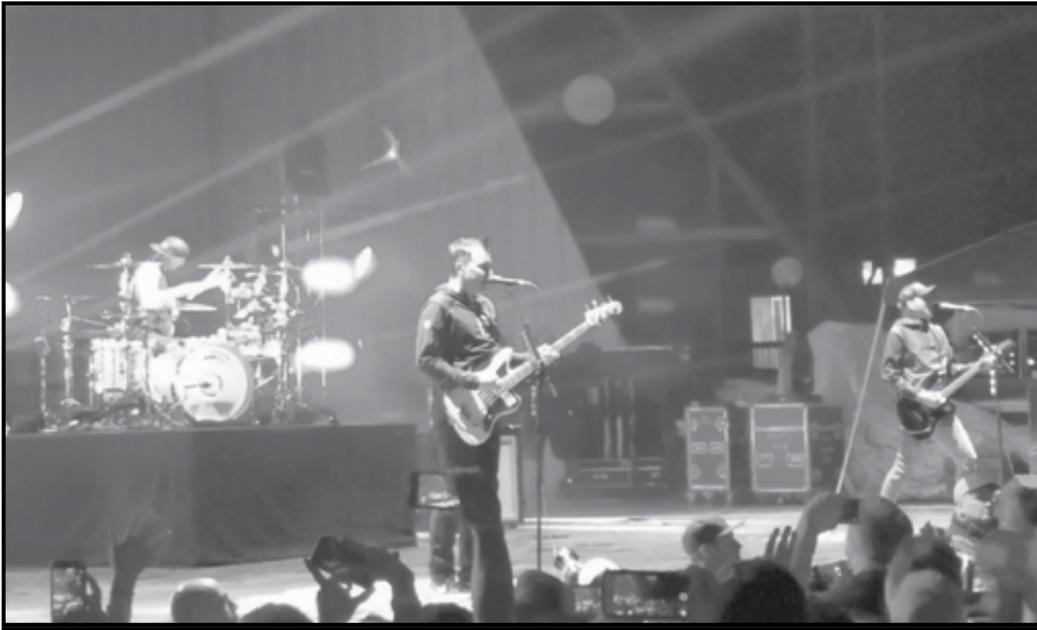
They played songs such as, “Bored to Death,” “Los Angeles,” and “She’s Out of Her Mind” from their new album, as well as older hits, including “First Date,” “All the Small Things,” and “What’s My Age Again.”

The show was full of emotion, made apparent by fights that broke out, the drugs passed around, love and anger between couples. To top it all off, a very unfitting mosh pit broke out.

Of course, for the last song on their set, Blink jumped into their most prominent song, “Dammit.”

As most bands do, they made the most of this one, letting red and white confetti fly as they threw picks and drum sticks. Hoppus even brought a kid on stage to go wild on the drums alongside him.

Though the show seemed to have ended abruptly, and without an encore, this was still an intense show you would expect to see from the leaders of the punk-rock genre.



Blink-182 performs at the Lubbock Amphitheatre on the evening of March 28.
SERGIO MADRID/PLAINSMAN PRESS

opener before them, Makeout, but they were cut due to time constraints caused by the storm.

Without saying a word, The Naked and Famous, kicked off the show with, “Hearts Like

an electronic wave of quarter notes from the keyboard cutting through the rain into their ears, the crowd was putty in the hands of the Naked and Famous.

After the song, lead singer,

It would be almost another hour before Blink would start and the crowd showed its impatience, with yelling and complaining, throwing beer cans, boos, and unnecessary cheers.

accompanying the famous five-count clap.

Hoppus also said they would do something to share with everyone after the show. He had the Amphitheater turn off the lights and requested

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Dallas Comic-Con helps fans escape reality

by **RYAN FITZGERALD**
Staff Writer

DALLAS -- Fans across the state flocked to Dallas for 2017’s Fan Expo with hopes of seeing the best in popular culture and mainstream entertainment.

Located in the heart of downtown Dallas, the Kay Bailey Hutchinson Convention Center was the site for thousands of attendees who travelled hundreds and even thousands of miles for the state’s largest comic convention, which was held the first weekend of April.

The convention itself is more than a centralized location for fans of all ages to don outlandish, yet creative, outfits paying homage to fictional heroes of old and new – it’s a celebration of all things nerd culture.

This year’s most famous guests included Mark Hamill, Tim Curry, Stan Lee and even an appearance by ‘70s rocker, Meat

Loaf. On top of that, there were tons of panels and booths packed with cast members of the “Walking Dead,” including Norman Reedus, Jeffrey Dean Morgan, and Khary Payton. Across the exhibit hall was the cast from “Harry Potter,”

“The Boondock Saints,” “The Power Rangers” and the CW’s “Arrow,” just down from Adam West, Burt Ward and the original Batmobile.

Among the lines of fans waiting for photo-ops and autographs were cosplayers bringing their unique takes to video game characters, comic

book heroes, and other familiar

figures from the silver screen

in an attempt to connect to

the mythical and fictional

influences from their own

lives.

Aside from the best in iconic

celebrities and cosplayers, you

have tons of shopping - aisles upon aisles of rare comic books, figurines, costumes, Hollywood memorabilia, autographed merchandise, and artwork.

All of this taken as a whole, the event exists to provide an environment that is an opportunity to find a

bit of peace and enjoyment in the pop culture niche of your choice. Children and adults, women and men, lawyers, doctors, high schoolers, and college students – all running around dressed as anything from Batman to Kevin Smith impersonators, to Jedi and random Pokémon that only three attendees actually recognize, who are in search of that must have Pop! figure or wait in line with fellow nerds just to snap a picture in front of a life-sized “Star Wars” land speeder.

That’s the whole purpose behind the comic convention “craze.” During the first night of Fan Expo weekend, Mark Hamill, known for portraying Luke Skywalker in the beloved “Star

Wars” franchise, addressed a packed ballroom of fans on this very subject. Every person in the entertainment industry, every star who portrays a character in any television show or in a movie, is in the escapism industry.

Comics may not be your thing, nor manga, independent film, or even cosplay. But maybe your escape is music, sports or video games. Whether a world of science fiction and fantasy or one grounded in the post-apocalyptic world that’s to come, the convention has something for everyone.

Consider the convention a form of “personal development.” Your personal development comes in many shapes, sizes and even art forms. Sometimes individuals have to simply improve themselves, through whatever medium works for them. Life is about the process of learning to work through the hard realities we all face during our lives, week in week out. That is why “escapism” exists.

The event offered a little bit of everything: from Q&A panels with the best in comics including Jim Lee, a DC comics staple, writer Scott Snyder of “Batman” and Image Comics fame, and Lubbock’s own Sam de la Rosa, who is among the best at drawing Spider-Man, to photo-ops and autograph signings with cast members

from “The Walking Dead,” “Dr. Who,” and the original cast from “The Rocky Horror Picture Show.”

Additionally, the event wouldn’t have been worthwhile if it wasn’t for the fans. The lines were long, the staff disoriented, and directions few and far between. But among the disorganized mess, the beauty of frustrated fans relying on one another for details or a little comic relief while waiting in line with hundreds of others was the most enjoyable part. Discussions related to “Star Wars,” everyone’s daily finds, their favorite panels and the shared hatred of wading through packed aisles of sweaty fans while trying to find a specific vendor offering the rarest in books, toys and memorabilia.

So you see, escapism is a necessary aspect of our lives, because being berated day after day by the same routine tasks in the name of earning a paycheck to cover the bills, simply wears on you. You can become the hero of your own story – or someone else’s. You

see, no one has to go it alone, and there are people scattered far and wide that find pleasure in the weirdest of things.

Everyone has a chance to rip through the fabric of their woven reality, to bring out the adventurous side each fan has tucked away deep inside. If you’re niche was “Star Trek,” go buy an authentic phaser from the original series, or maybe you prefer a Jeffrey Dean Morgan-autographed replica of “Lucille,” Negan’s infamous baseball bat from the latest season of “The Walking Dead.”

I know it may blow your mind to think that people would actually flock to a convention hall full of notorious books from the golden age of comics and hard-to-find action figures. But sometimes people just need to re-connect to that one part of their past that brings a smile, as they remember a time in their life that once was.

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Mark Hamill talks about the highlights of his career at Dallas Comic-Con at the Kay Bailey Hutchinson Convention Center on March 21.

RYAN FITZGERALD/PLAINSMAN PRESS

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'Batman Detective Comics' executes great Rebirth story

by RILEY GOLDEN
Entertainment Editor

The vigilantes of Gotham City are being watched.

Batman has his suspicions, but as Batman typically does, he's keeping his team in the dark. He lets them know what they need to know to do their job, but nothing more, and nothing less.

In the DC Universe Rebirth of "Batman: Detective Comics: Vol. 1 Rise of the Batmen," Batman puts together one of his most versatile teams yet to take on an army of Batmen.

Batman cannot do this one alone, and he knows his loner mindset will not be beneficial to the mission. He needs someone who thinks like him, but is also military minded. So he recruits his cousin and ex-marine, Katherine "Kate" Kane, or Batwoman, to help him train and prepare the younger generation of vigilantes.

I have never read any Batwoman comics, and I think "Rise of the Batmen" does a great job of telling her story in conjunction with the main story of the comic. Her dad is Bruce's uncle and an Army colonel. Kate was dishonorably discharged by the Marines for being lesbian, so she turned to fighting crime, vigilante style. Her costume is black, with red details, and although she keeps her head buzzed, there's a long, red wig attached to her mask.

Next is the Spoiler, Stephanie Brown. Trained by Catwoman and raised by two geniuses, she turns every

challenge on its head in the most unexpected way. Wearing a homemade purple and

unrefined but extremely determined. Batman made the mistake of underestimating her

former partners, Tim Drake, a.k.a. Red Robin. He is a tech genius and the most tactically

unexpectedly, is Clayface, or Basil Karlo. Karlo was an actor until an accident turned him into a giant clay monster. Often an enemy of Batman, it's great to see him willingly help Batman for the possible chance of getting his life back.

As the mission begins, Batwoman is training the rest of the team at the Belfry while Batman works to figure out what exactly is going on. The Belfry was designed by Tim to be a new frontline for the war on crime. It's basically a massive Batcave in the center of Gotham City, and, according to Tim, it's now fully operational.

While Batman is out investigating, 50 soldiers trained to fight like him, and assisted by an algorithm in their helmets, ambush him.

Back at the Belfry, the team watches the recordings of Batman's fight with the Batmen. It's brutal, and they win. They capture Batman, so it's time for the team to go on the offensive to save Batman.

Batwoman brings in her dad for help, and it is the worst thing she could've done. Colonel Kane was behind it all. He's been studying Batman for years so that he could take his abilities and apply them to the military. And now that Batman is trying to stop him, he has to act on the team so that he can keep progressing.

The Batmen storm the Belfry, and Clayface forms a ball around the team, and they drop 300 feet into the Old Gotham subway tunnels, escaping the Batmen.

Back at the Batmen headquarters, Batman is being held captive and two soldiers are going through his utility belt, which provides one of my favorite scenes from the comic. The men have almost catalogued 40 items from his belt, and they are barely halfway done with it. They find antitoxins, lock picks, tools, an ungodly amount of bat-rangs, and, of course, a chip of Kryptonite.

Batman escapes captivity on his own and investigates the headquarters on his own until Colonel Kane finds him and holds him at gunpoint. Out of nowhere, Batwoman shows up and tells her father she picked a side, and tells her team to attack.

The Colonel reveals to Batman that he developed these Batmen in order to destroy the League of Shadows, which is a ruse to take attention off the real threat, the League of Assassins. Colonel Kane tells Batman he's blinded by his ego. But, on the contrary, I think the Colonel is blinded by his ego, especially when he doesn't even entertain the idea that the League of Shadows might not be real.

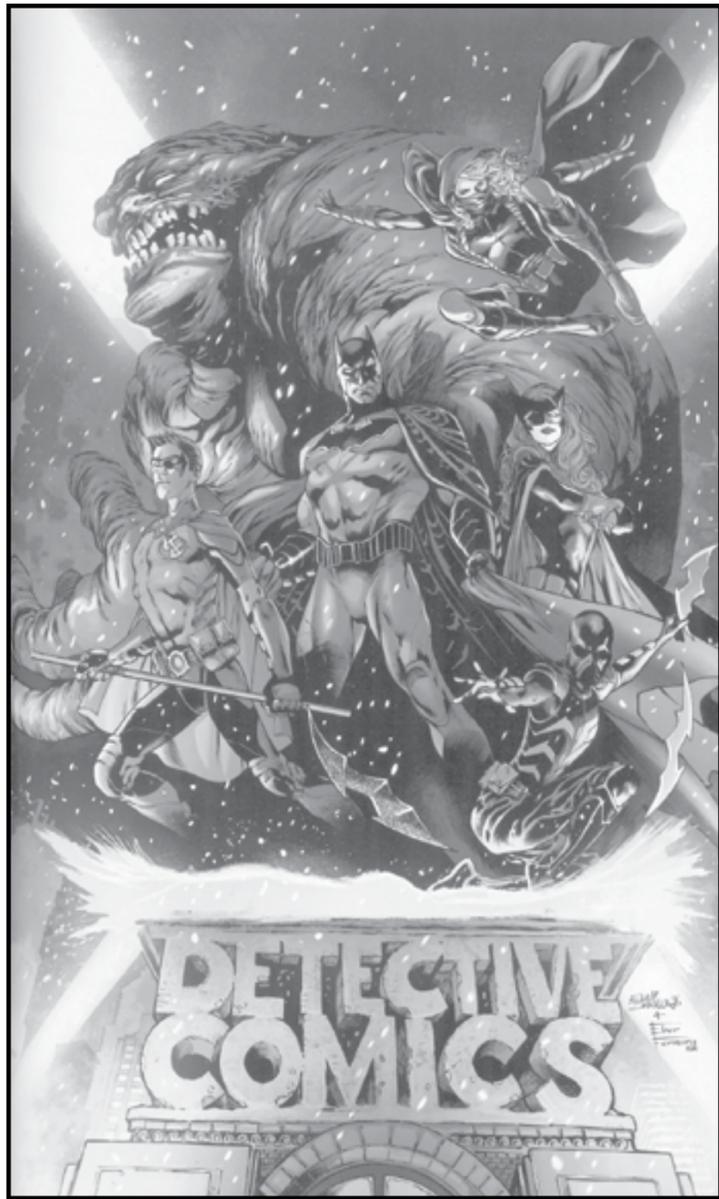
But after this interaction, they decide that all of the Colonel's targets are innocent people. Their targeting system would not only kill the 100 innocent targets, but hundreds of people in the same vicinity.

So, Red Robin hacks their systems and tells their targeting drones to come after him. He sends all of the drones after himself, to help save hundreds of innocent lives, even if it means giving up his. Tim was ready to go to college and move on from being Batman's partner, yet he did the most selfless thing possible to save the people of his city and his friends. This hits me right in my Bat-heart. And although it doesn't quite seem like the end of Tim Drake, the reader is left wondering what will happen to him.

This is a great Rebirth comic that has a great story, great action, and amazing art, adding a layer of emotion to Batman that is so often lost under the cape and cowl. I give "Batman Detective Comics: Vol. 1 Rise of the Batmen" 5 out of 5 stars.



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gray costume, with her long blonde hair hanging out, she's

once, and he won't do it again. Next is one of Batman's

man is the first person to ever show Cassandra affection, and she admires him for it. According to Batman, Cassandra is the most dangerous fighter that he has ever seen in action and they're lucky to have her on the side of justice. She wears a black-and-gold costume with a solid black mask that covers her entire face and appears to be stitched right over the mouth.

Finally, and probably most

'Get Out' delivers modern take on racism, horror

by VANESSA DELGADO
Staff Writer

Many movies portray racism, but they don't always portray it as it is in the real world.

In the new movie, "Get Out," racism is shown in a more current setting. It focuses on white people targeting the black community.

The story is about a young couple, Chris and Rose, who have reached the parent-meeting stage in their relationship. They go on a trip to meet Rose's parents, and it quickly turns into a nightmare for Chris. Chris' instincts work in his favor throughout the movie.

Some of the real-life situations portrayed in the movie are when Chris fears his girlfriend's parents will not like him simply because he is black. Another is how they only kidnap African Americans throughout the entire movie, as well as when a cop asks for his ID when Chris did nothing wrong.

"Get Out" is a psychological thriller. All good scary movies should come with a sudden twist or turn of events, and "Get Out" did not disappoint. The movie portrays many real-life situations specifically related to racism.

The movie is great overall, except the ending is a little too far-fetched for my taste. They turned a movie that is based on real-life situations into a science fiction film. In the movie trailer, it doesn't seem as though the movie

would have any science fiction elements, so it definitely took me by surprise.

I wouldn't say the change was very drastic or affected my overall perception of the film, but it did not increase

like comedic thrillers, this is the film for you.

The movie's cast was chosen well. The cast includes Daniel Kaluuya, Allison Williams, and Catherine Keener. None of these actors or actresses seemed to be extremely well known. It is kind of a relief to see some unfamiliar faces. It allows you to picture the actor or actress in their new role, instead of them possibly reminding you of another movie that they were previously in.

These fresh-faced movie stars really made the film enjoyable, bringing it to life. Each one fit their role well.

The director, Jordan Peele, does a great job of portraying a deeper message of racism. Once skin color starts defining how people are perceived, we have already lost our humanity.

The movie is great, except for aspects that didn't match my particular movie tastes. If some plot details would have been changed, I would have liked the movie a lot more. I give this movie 3 stars out of 5.



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'Rangers' reboot: teens fight monsters, feelings

by TYLER YORK
Online Editor

In a world containing secret, ancient alien technology, the new "Power Rangers" movie spends a lot of time on far less interesting subjects.

Growing up in the late 1990s and early 2000s, "Power Rangers" was less of a blowout phenomenon than it was an understood part of after-school entertainment. It's easy to look back now and see the show through a parent's dismissive eye, with the nonsensical story and over-the-top antics. But "Power Rangers" were what the youth of the day held up as awesome heroes capable of anything.

For the 2017 reboot, I'm not sure newcomers to the franchise will have as much to draw them in as the original first did more than 20 years ago.

The film hinges on an unusual contradiction. Both

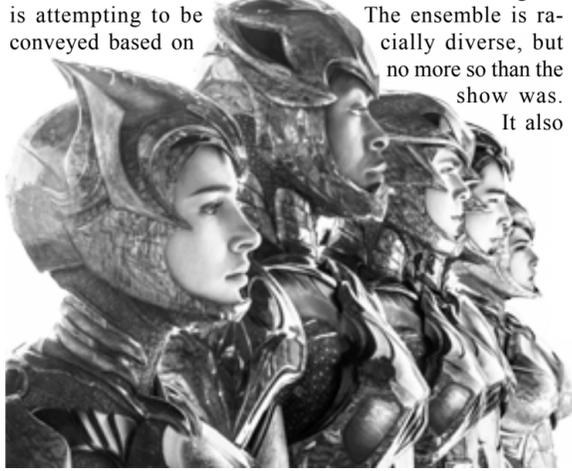
the main complaint of weakness and the commendation of strength for the "Power Rangers" reboot is that it offers no more explanation for its plot than either the original series or movies did.

Elizabeth Banks as Rita Repulsa still wants to destroy the Zeo Crystal, killing all life on Earth. Bryan Cranston as Zordon, the former Red Ranger, appears as a face stuck in a wall. When faced with finishing off an opponent, neither side does the smart thing, instead electing to either drag out a fight or start explaining their actions.

This sounds like a put-down, and, to an extent, it is. But what it means is the movie remains no less enjoyable and evocative of a similar nostalgia as the source materials were several decades ago.

The acting is better than expected for a group of unknowns. There is a sense of authenticity in seeing these young characters struggle with

their identities, and it asks an interesting question: Is it harder to be a superhero, or just a regular teen? But these moments tend to get lost behind others when it's unclear what emotion is attempting to be conveyed based on



a general facial seriousness and a clenched jaw. It's not readily apparent whether this is directing confusion or the actors' inexperience. But it wouldn't be surprising to see

the raw materials present here turn up more refined in future films.

"Power Rangers" feels like it started to tread new ground in character diversity, but it lands short of that goal. The ensemble is racially diverse, but no more so than the show was. It also

features a gay ranger, Trini, and even a ranger with a psychological disorder, Bobby.

This is a move in an admirable direction, and for kids on the autism spectrum, it's

easy to imagine that seeing a superhero with similar traits finding a place and making a difference is an empowering image.

But it toes a weak line, even failing to say the word "autism," almost like it's a dirty word, which ends up casting it back into the shadows of something to hide out of shame. It isn't offensive whatsoever, but one could argue it's two steps forward and a step back.

If you're looking for action and visuals, this is what will bridge the gap between "Power Rangers" fans both old and new. There are plenty of dangerous cliff-dives. There are giant mechanized animal battles. The kids feel more super-powered and less like spandex-clad high school acrobats.

A sheen of metallic flares and modern Hollywood polish both provide a credibility that audiences tend to look for today. It helps make the

movie feel, if not like a great superhero movie, at least like a solid action film that a new generation may or may not choose to care about. There are a wide variety of other superhero movies with better-reasoned plots and more relatable characters. But very few of those have giant robot battles, so only time will tell.

As an action movie, it checks a lot of the boxes for an enjoyable spectacle. As a fresh retelling of a childhood favorite, it does a lot of the job right there, too. If you're in the mood for an easy watch that doesn't ask for much in the way of brainpower, with a healthy hit of nostalgia on the side, "Power Rangers" should be a good fit.

I give "Power Rangers" 3.5 out of 5 stars.



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New 'Kong' movie brings excitement to classic

by RYAN FITZGERALD
Staff Writer

"Kong: Skull Island" brought action-packed excitement, along with a new violent and honest take on the classic film.

The picture chronicles the tale of scientists, soldiers and adventurers who unite to explore a mythical, uncharted island in the Pacific Ocean. Cut off from everything, they venture into the domain of the mighty Kong, igniting the ultimate battle between man and beast.

A mission originally focused on discovery soon becomes one of survival. What remains of the original group of wayfarers must fight to escape a land they weren't meant to control.

Fans of the classic narrative were given a monster-mashing, gory, grisly approach to the Kong origin story. Mixed with a splash of "Apocalypse Now" reverence, the mad-

ness of the journey to Skull Island stays hidden among the darkness and fog, where the cinematography builds up the ambience of mystery and delusion, while the characters, and even viewers, struggle to honestly accept the reality of the dangers that are continuously found on the island.

The action and special effects are top quality, making it is especially fun to watch the monsters in action. However, in terms of the overall story and the quality of writing, the film falls flat.

With stars such as Golden Globe-winners Tom Hiddleston and John Goodman, alongside the Oscar-nominated Samuel L. Jackson and the Oscar-winning Brie Larson, audiences should have expected a narrative with an intriguing plot, as well as complex and deeply personal development of characters. Instead, they're not really impressionable.

Movie-goers ended up with an underacted mess of lines that

don't relate to the scene being depicted on screen. When Preston Packard (Jackson), a hard-nosed, unforgiving, paranoid colonel, references the Vietnam conflict, claiming "we didn't lose the war, we abandoned it," the text, along with its context and tone, really fall on deaf ears, as images of a hard-nosed napalm attack on Kong is seen from every seat in the theater. At best, it is an attempt at foreshadowing the encounters and quarrels to come as a result of the unprompted assault on Kong and his territory. But it still remains misplaced during the film.

Oddly enough, the actor who runs away with the entire movie is John C. Reilly.

Portraying Hank Marlow, a Cubs fan and pilot who has been stranded on the island in the South Pacific since his plane crashed there during the Second World War, Reilly continually brings heart and wit-filled comic relief, serving

as the 'everyman' character and giving the audience a relatable character to agree with throughout the film.

One of director Jordan Vogt-Roberts' better ideas was setting the film in the year



1973. Set on the tail end of the Vietnam War, the time frame for "Kong: Skull Island" allows for a spirited choice of music, which is reflected in the selection of classic rock 'n' roll favorites from the decade, explicit with their politically-centric overtones.

The mix of Creedence Clearwater Revival's "Bad Moon

Rising" and "Run Through the Jungle," following Black Sabbath's "Paranoid" and Jefferson Airplane's "White Rabbit," with a dash of David Bowie's "Ziggy Stardust," helps bring life to the nostal-

gic backdrop of action-riddled combat sequences and a story of survival.

The film finishes strong with homage to the original 1933 movie. Mason Weaver (Larson), the empathetic and gutsy war photographer who understands Kong's need to protect all that is his, is eventually saved by Kong,

providing an allusion to the classic image of the beauty being held by the beast, even if only for a few seconds.

Set in the same universe as Gareth Edwards' 2014 "Godzilla," Vogt-Roberts gives us a scaled up Kong with all the human-smashing, monster action he could fit into the movie's 118-minute run time, matched with some of the most captivating visuals and special effects the industry has to offer. Though "Kong: Skull Island" is only Vogt-Roberts' second feature film, it is obvious the director struggled to adapt and react from small-screen story-telling to a world of big budget blockbusters.

I give "Kong: Skull Island" 3.5 stars.



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Real Book and Western Swing ensembles perform in Tom T. Hall in the Commercial Music Building on the Levelland campus on April 6.



PHOTOS BY CHANISE RAY/PLAINSMAN PRESS

Texans finish third at national tournament after falling short of perfect season

by **STEVEN GEHEGAN**
Sports Editor

The South Plains College men's basketball team finished the season in third place after advancing to the national tournament for the fourth time in six years.

The Texans finished the season with 33-2 record, following a perfect regular season.

"It was an outstanding season," said Steve Green, head men's basketball coach at SPC. "We introduced a new style of playing to the league, a team built around a three-point attack."

Green credits the success to the players and coaches.

"Who wouldn't want that if given the choice at the beginning of the year," Green said. "To run the table in both the conference and entire regular season is a tremendous accomplishment for these players and coaches."

The Texans advanced to the Division I National Junior Collegiate Athletic Association Men's Basketball National Tournament, which was held March 20-March 25 at the Hutchinson Sports Arena in Hutchinson, Kansas.

The second-seeded Texans took on the number-eight seed,

Lady Texans end season after falling in second round of national tournament

by **DOMINICK PUENTE**
Editorial Assistant

After earning a trip to the NJCAA Division I Women's Basketball National Tournament, the South Plains College women's basketball team advanced two rounds before having the season come to an end.

Finishing the season at 28-6, the ninth-ranked Lady Texans fell in the round of 16 to Seward County Community College, 87-69, at Rip Griffin Center in Lubbock on March 21.

The Lady Texans worked quickly to gain an early lead in the first quarter, jumping out to an 8-0 advantage. However, as the quarter came to an end, the Saints found offensive production around the three-point line, pulling within one point of SPC at 17-16.

The Lady Texans' offensive attack was being led by sophomore forward Yanina Inkina. SPC found open looks on the inside, along with down-range three-pointers, to open the floodgates for point production with 25 points in the second quarter.

As for Seward County, defensive struggles allowed SPC to stay close, but the Saints' offense gained momentum as well, finishing the second quarter with 30 points to take a 46-42 lead going into halftime.

With only a half to go and trailing by four points, the Saints continued to put pressure on the Lady Texans defense in the third quarter. Seward took advantage of early momentum and scored 23 points to keep the lead.

The Lady Texans stalled on offense in the third quarter and could not get shots to fall in their favor, scoring only 12 points. However, the Lady

Northwest Florida State College, in the third-place game of the National Tournament on March 25. With a hot shooting



Jordan Brangers shoots over defender against Eastern Florida State College during a game on March 24 at Hutchinson Sports Arena.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF JORDAN IRVINE

night and tenacious defense, the Texans pulled away for a 103-75 victory.

Northwest Florida State was able to stay close with the Texans during the first part of the first half, with the score being 22-20 with 10 minutes left. But SPC was able to go on a run and stretch the first-half lead to 47-34.

The Texas opened play in the second half with stifling defense, dominance in the paint and superior bench play to cruise in the second half to the tune of 56-41.

Sophomore guard Jordan Brangers had a game-high 20 points, while freshman guard Raquan Mitchell tossed in 10 points. Freshman guard Josh Webster led the team in rebounding and assists with eight and six, respectively. He also added five steals.

Coming off the bench, forward Shawntrez Davis added 18 points, while freshman guard Grantham Gillard chipped in 11 points.

The Texans took on the sixth seed, Eastern Florida State College, in the semi-finals of the NJCAA tournament on March 24. In a defensive slug fest, a poor shooting night from the Texans caused a 77-65

loss to Eastern Florida State. Eastern Florida State brought their top-ranked de-

finish off her career as a Lady Texan.

In the opening round of the NJCAA National Tournament, SPC defeated Monroe College 85-73 at the Rip Griffin Center in Lubbock on March 20.

After a slow start in the first quarter, the Lady Texans encountered early trouble offensively, only scoring 11 points and allowing 17 points on defense.

Trailing 17- 11 in the second quarter, the Lady Texans found offensive momentum, outscoring the Lady Mustangs and flipping the lead. SPC scored 26 points in the second quarter while holding Monroe College to 14 points, taking a 37-31 lead going into halftime.

With a six-point difference entering the second half, the Lady Texans continued to attack offensively throughout the third and fourth quarters.

Monroe rallied by scoring 21 points in each of the last two quarters.

However, the Lady Texans outscored the Lady Mustangs with 23 points in the third quarter and 25 points in the fourth quarter.

After capping off an offensive night for the Lady Texans, Beard finished with a career-high 31 points.

Inkina finished the game with 22 points, while Cera chipped in 13 points.

After completing her second year and leading the Lady Texans to the NJCAA National Tournament, SPC head coach Cayla Petree was named a finalist for the 2017 United States Marine Corps Women's Basketball Coaches Association National Coach of the Year award.

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fense into the game, holding the Texans' offense down in the first half. Yet the Texans

from both teams, late heroics from Brangers helped the Texans to a 69-67 victory.



Josh Webster dunks on a defender against Eastern Florida State College during a game on March 24 at Hutchinson Sports Arena.

were able to still keep things close in the first half, trailing only by three points, 33-30, entering the second half.

In the second half, both teams were able to keep up the defensive pressure. With about 12 minutes left, the Texans took a 46-45 lead, but they were not able to hold on. SPC was outscored in the second half 44-35.

Brangers led the team in scoring with 18 points, while Tripp chipped in 11 points while leading the team in rebounds with nine. Gillard came of the bench to score 11 points.

In the quarterfinals, the Texans faced the seventh-seeded Vincennes University on March 23.

After poor shooting nights

Both teams struggled to find their offense in the first half of the game. After going back and



Jahlil Tripp drives against a defender against Northwest Florida State College on March 25 at Hutchinson Sports Arena.

forth for most of the first half, Vincennes was able to take a 33-32 lead.

The Texans traded baskets with Vincennes for most of the first part of the second half, before SPC went up by four with 14:45 left to play in the game.

With the game remaining close for the rest of the game, Vincennes was able to take

a one-point lead with 10.4 seconds left. With only five seconds left, Brangers hit a deep three-point shot to win the game for the Texans.

Green says the shot was "a great made basket by an outstanding basket maker."

Brangers led the Texans in scoring with 19 points, while sophomore forward Montell McRae chipped in 11 points. Webster was able to lead the team in rebounding with eight points and four assists. Coming off the bench, sophomore guard Roberto Gallinat added 11 points.

The Texans took on the number 15-seed Panola College in the second round of the NJCAA tournament on March 21. Both teams were locked in a tight battle throughout the contest, before the Texans pulled out an 88-84 victory.

The Texans were able to get off to a good shooting half while holding Panola to an ice-cold shooting half from behind the arch. The Texans went on to take a 41-36 lead at the end of the first half.

Both teams were able to pick up the scoring in the second half. With dominating performances from both Tripp and Brangers, the Texans were able to hold on for the victory, despite being outscored 48-47 in the second half.

Brangers led the team with 18 points, while McRae chipped in 14 points. Tripp contributed a double-double with 14 points and 10 rebounds. Webster led the team in assists with five while adding three blocks. Gillard added 12 points off the bench.

When looking back on past teams and how this team compared, Green said, "South Plains College has been home to many outstanding teams, and this club will take its respective spot near the top along with others."

"An undefeated regular season, unblemished throughout what is arguably the most competitive conference in juco basketball, and scoring at a 90-plus point per game average is worth special distinction," added Green.

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Impressive seasons earn basketball players multiple honors

by **DOMINICK PUENTE**
Editorial Assistant

After the completion of the 2016-2017, several members of the South Plains College men's and women's basketball teams have received All-Western Junior College Athletic Conference honors.

With the Texans making an impressive run throughout the season that culminated at the NJCAA National Tournament, the mastermind behind every decision, head coach Steve Green, was selected as WJ-CAC Coach of the Year.

Coach Green has been the leading the Texan program for 17 seasons, accumulating more than 400 victories. The NJCAA Hall of Fame coach has continued to bring in top-tier athletes to SPC, along with sending off players to NCAA Division I.

Shooting guard Jordan

Brangers was selected as the conference Most Valuable Player, as well as the Freshman of the Year in the WJ-CAC.

Brangers set the SPC record for most three-pointers in a season with 131, while leading the Texans in offense, averaging 20.9 points per game.

Sophomore guard Josh Webster, who has committed to Texas Tech University, was selected as Defensive Player of the Year and Newcomer of the Year, along with making the All-Conference team.

Other Texans to receive All-Conference honors are freshman forward Jahlil Tripp and sophomore guard Roberto Gallinat. Tripp became a force for the Texans on the inside offensively, along with being a staple on defense. Gallinat was a rebounding force and a defensive standout.

For the Lady Texans,

who advanced to the NJCAA National Tournament, sophomore guard Brittany Smith was selected as the Defensive Player of the Year. Smith, who led the defensive attack for the Lady Texans, also landed herself a spot on the All-Conference team.

Jasauen Beard, a sophomore guard, received Co-Newcomer of the Year and made the All-Conference team to add to her resume. Beard presented the ability to drive inside and find offensive production. Along with that presence, she also was a solid defender.

Also earning All-Conference honors was sophomore forward Yanina Inkina. Inkina led the charge offensively and defensively on the inside, using her 6-foot-2 frame to control and dictate the inside game.

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Rice speaking out about domestic violence experience



by **DOMINICK PUENTE**
Editorial Assistant

With domestic violence and sexual assault cases becoming common in sports across the globe, former Baltimore Raven Ray Rice is attempting to help prevent sexual assault by telling his story.

In September of 2014, Rice was released by his team after a video of him punching his fiancée became public. While being one of the best running backs in the NFL at the time, this incident caused the fall of his career.

After investigations were

complete, Rice attempted to get his career back in order and return to the NFL. However, due to sexual assault cases beginning to cause more uproar, teams refused to sign Rice to avoid tarnishing the franchise name.

Three years later, Rice has begun to speak to programs and different schools about the topic of decision making

and facing consequences after choosing the wrong path.

Although people may or

lives in a negative way. Not only do these actions affect him, but he has finally understood that what he had done affected the lives of others.

Although people may or

may not believe in second chances, the fact that Rice is

attempting to help people through his mistakes shows that he deserves to be given a second chance. Few guilty parties of

sexual assault can own up to their actions and consequences

to talk to young kids to help them before they make the same mistakes he made.

Rice has visited Don Bosco Prep High School in New

Jersey recently to talk about his sexual assault incident, and he also has been volunteering at New Rochelle High School in New Jersey for the football team throughout the year.

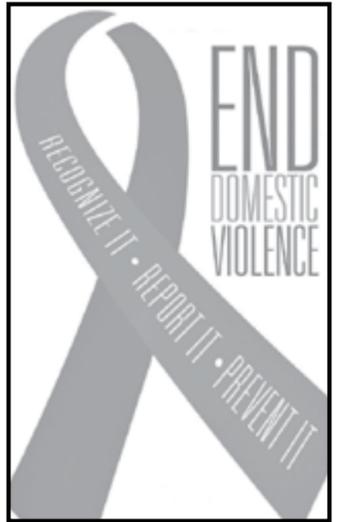
His message of being able to have quality decision making, along with perseverance, are traits that kids need to be taught at an early age to decrease the chances of sexual assault in the future.

Many athletes who face sexual assault allegations do not go the extra mile past forgiveness and apologizing while continuing their careers in sports. Rice has gone an extra step to talk to college and high school students to spread awareness. Yet when the topic of sexual assault is brought up, Rice is one of the notable people brought up out of hatred and spite.

Whether coaching at Don Bosco High as a running back coach is what Rice wants to do with his life, or returning to the NFL for another shot,

he should be granted his wish as long as he stays on a clean path and does not make any more life-changing mistakes.

He has gone out of his way to help shape the minds of young students and athletes while educating the younger generations on sexual assault. Rice is doing more than any

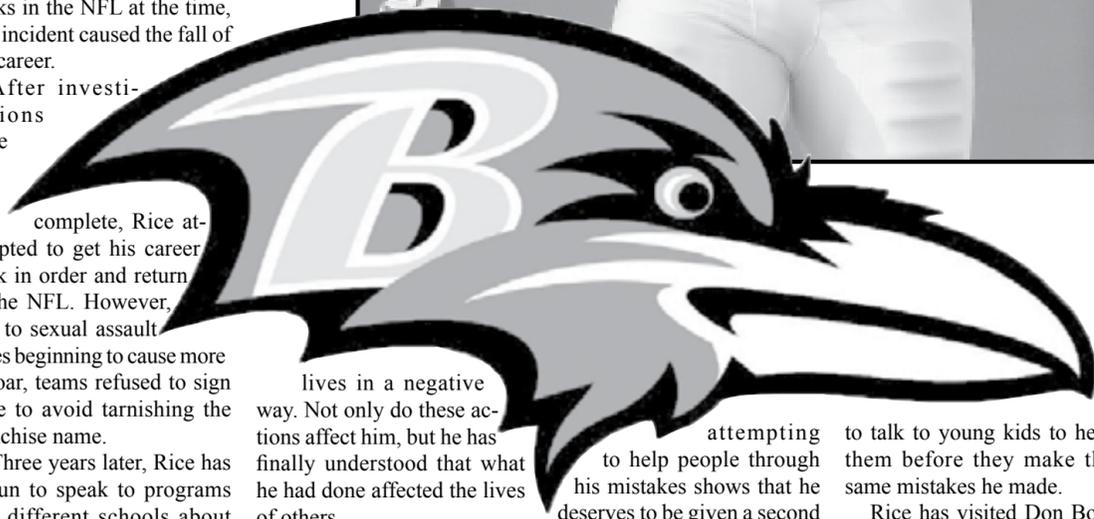
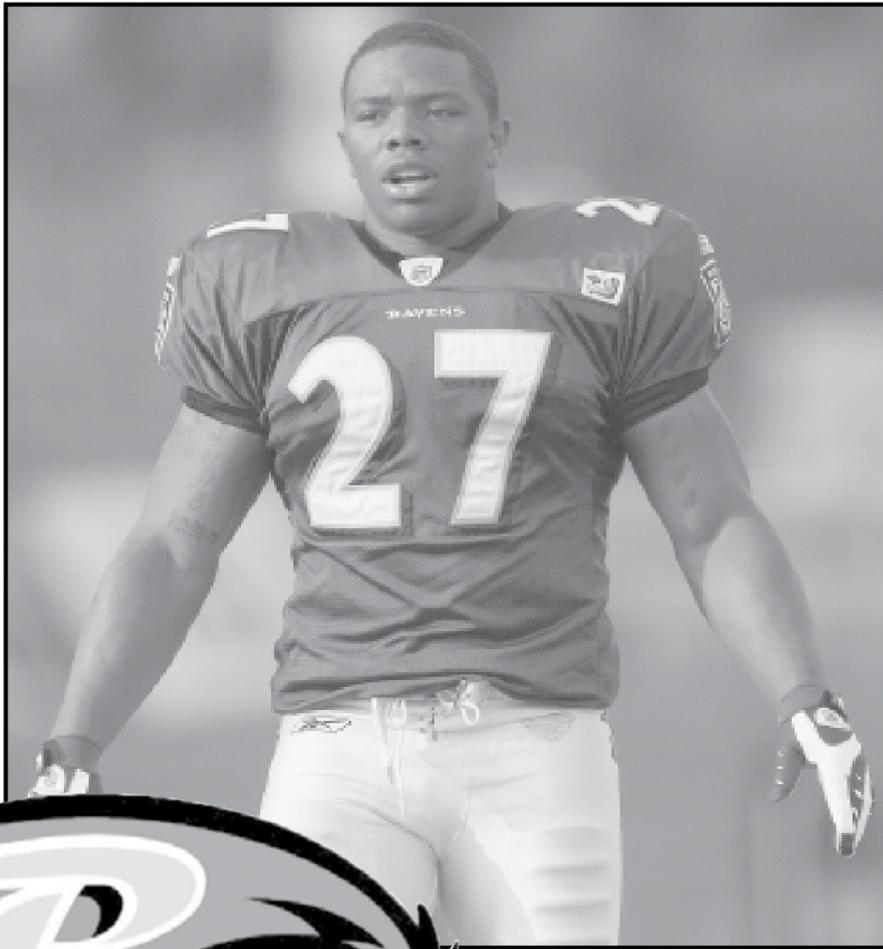


other athlete who has been involved in sexual assault.

While sexual assault is an occurring problem, having the ability to prove to the public that he has overcome the obstacles he has faced during the past three years should be good enough to reinstate Rice with the rest of society.

Rice deserves a second chance to do what he wants as a career. Instead of being labeled as a monster, he is attempting to rewrite his legacy in a positive way, and he is proving why he should be thought of as a reformed man.

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Relocation of Raiders could hurt city of Oakland



by **STEVEN GEHEGAN**
Sports Editor

It seems that the National Football League cares more about making money than its fan.

After moving the Rams out of St. Louis to Los Angeles, the league wants to continue to allow teams to move from places with strong fan bases to places where support is nonexistent. Now the NFL is going to move the Raiders from Oakland to Las Vegas. For several reasons, that team will never be able to thrive there.

One reason the move is confusing is the fact that the Raiders are moving to a place where the NFL will not be able to support a team. The city of Las Vegas is the tourist capital, where people go to gamble and have a good time. But people will

not come to see any NFL team when going on a vacation. Most people are loyal to a team

that they grew up around or an area that they live in. So why put a team in Vegas, where not that many people live in the surrounding area? Vegas is a place for tourists to go.

It could be a fun place for the fans of the visiting teams, but it would seem hard for that team to draw in

a home crowd. However, it might be easier for the Raiders to draw fans than the Rams.

The Raiders have had more recent success and are projected to be a good team for the next several years with Derek Carr on offense and Khalil Mack on defense. But with Vegas mainly catering to tourists, it would be hard for the Raiders to draw a consistent home crowd like they have in Oakland.

Another problem with mov-

ing a team to Vegas would be the issue of gambling. The NFL has always taken a hard

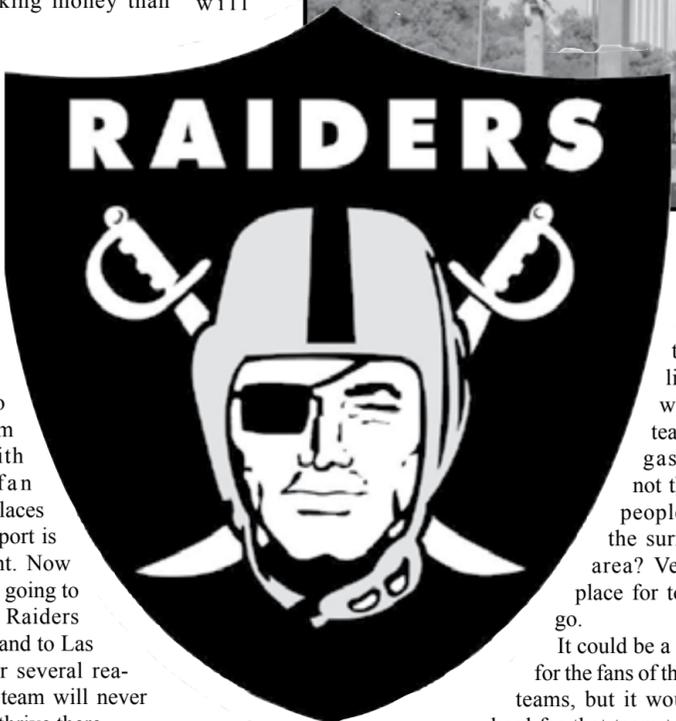
stance against sports betting. So it seems strange to put a team in one of the biggest hot spots for gambling. Betting on sports can compromise the integrity of the game. In

most areas of the country, it is still illegal to gamble. So why would the NFL want to put a team full of rich players in a town where it can be easy to get carried away? The easier it is to have access to gambling, the more likely players might do it. This could cause problems for the Raiders and the NFL the same way it did in Major League Baseball and for Pete Rose.

Another problem would be mainly for the players mostly. But who would want to live in Vegas? While it may be a cool place to visit, most people would never want to live there. For one thing, the heat is unbearable, plus there is the fact that the city of Las Vegas might not be around in the distant future. A huge city in the middle of the desert is quickly running out of water for the people who live there.

For these reasons, the NFL needs to leave teams in the city that they are thriving in, instead of trying to fit teams in cities they do not belong in.

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Track teams trounce competition with outstanding performances

by STEVEN GEHEGAN
Sports Editor

The South Plains College track and field teams continue to have outstanding performances as the season progresses.

The track and field teams competed in the David Noble Relays on April 6 – April 8 in San Angelo.

In the 200-meter run, freshman Jordan Atkinson placed first with a time of 20.98.

In the 800-meter run, freshman Felix Kosegi placed first with a time of 1:58.05, while sophomore Omero Rodriguez placed second with a time of 1:58.75.

In the 1500-meter run, Kosegi placed first with a time of 3:58.95, while Rodriguez placed third with a time of 4:02.41.

In the 110-hurdles, freshman William Watson placed second with a time of 13.97, and freshman Mason Weh placed third with a time of 14.03.

In the 400-meter hurdles, sophomore Okeen Williams placed first with a time of 51.04, while freshman Rayan Holmes placed second with a time of 51.32. Watson placed third with a time of 52.24.

In the 3000-meter Steeplechase, sophomore Nicholas

Rotich placed first with a time of 10:06.15.

In the 4 x 400-meter relay, sophomore Robert Downs, freshman Dekaryea Freeman, Holmes and Watson placed third with a time of 3:17.20.

In the long jump, freshman Laquan Nairn placed second with a jump of 7.75 meters, and sophomore Saahir Bethea placed third with a jump of 7.61 meters.

In the women's 100-meter run, sophomore Mauricia Prieto placed first with a time of 11.44, and freshman Omotayo Abolaji placed second with a time of 11:54.

In the 200-meter run, freshman Natassha McDonald placed third with a time of 23.95, and freshman Safia Bright placed fourth with a time of 24.17.

In the 400-meter run, sophomore Latriceia Smith placed second with a time of 57.12.

In the 5000-meter run, freshman Seselia Dala placed second with a time of 18:45.96, while freshman Caitlyn Mercer placed eighth with a time of 21:01.20.

In the 3000-meter steeplechase, sophomore Poro Gahekave placed first with a time of 11:49.33.

In the 4 x 100-meter relay, sophomore Taylor Hill, Prieto, Bright, and Abolaji placed first with a time of 45.68.

In the shot put, sophomore Kiona Bradshaw placed third with a throw of 14.56 meters.

Katelyn Clarkston placed first in the javelin with a throw of 38.52 meters.

The track and field teams also competed in the Clyde Littlefield Texas Relays on March 29 – April 1 in Austin.

In the 400-meter hurdles, Williams placed eighth with a time of 52.25.

In the 4 x 400-meter relay, freshman Junior Charles, Holmes, Williams, and freshman Montel Hood placed third with a time of 3:07.72

In the high jump, sophomore Kwaume McGee finished 10th with a jump of 2.05 meters.

In Section A of the long jump, Nairn placed third with a jump of 7.83 meters.

In the javelin, sophomore Adrian Williams placed 10th with a throw of 63.94 meters.

In the women's 800-meter relay, a team of Abolaji, Bright, Hill and Prieto finished 12th with a time of 1:37.98.

In the 4 x 400-meter relay, a team of Smith, McDonald, Prieto and freshman Agnes

Abrocquah finished eighth with a time of 3:42.14.

In the Sprint Medley Relay, a team of Abolaji, Hill, Bright and Smith finished 10th with a time of 4:06.07

In the long jump, sophomore Melody Korie finished eighth with a jump of 5.70 meters.

The SPC track teams competed in the University of Texas at El Paso Relays on March 25.

In the 400-meter run,

Charles placed second with a time of 48.03, while Hood placed third with a time of 48.15.

In the 800-meter run,

Downs placed first with a time of 1:53.58, and Freeman placed sixth with a time of 1:55.80.

In the 5,000-meter run, Kosgei placed first with a time of 15:20.61, while Rotich placed third with a time of 16:19.25. Freshman Leobardo Michel placed seventh with a time of 17:32.52.

In the 110-meter hurdles, Watson placed first with a time of 14.22, while sophomore Robert Dunning placed second with a time of 14.32. Weh placed third with a time of 14.37.

In the 400-meter hurdles, Holmes placed first with a time of 52.54, while Watson placed second with a time of 52.81. Freshman Myles Scott placed seventh with a time of 54.71.

In the 4 x 100 Relay, a team of sophomore Roje Jackson-Chin, Williams, sophomore Derrick Monroe and Atkinson placed

first with a time of 40.65.

In the 4 x 400 Relay, a team of Williams, Holmes, Hood and Charles placed first with a time of 3:13.62.

In the pole vault, freshman Jonathan Witt placed first with a jump of 3.95 meters, and freshman Collin Rodriguez placed third with a jump of 3.65 meters.

In the long jump, Nairn placed first with a jump of 7.54 meters, while freshman Derrick Monroe placed second with a jump of 7.44 meters. Freshman Patrick Johnson placed fourth with a jump of 6.24 meters. In the shot put, freshman McLendon Hill placed second with a time of 14.99 meters.

In the javelin, Williams placed first with a throw of 65.68 meters, while Witt placed third with a throw of 41.23 meters. Sophomore Zach Hancock placed fifth with a throw of 33.63 meters.

In the women's 200-meter run, Prieto placed first with a time of 23.84, while Bright placed sixth with a time of 24.57.

In the women's 400-meter run, McDonald placed second with a time of 53.60, while Smith placed ninth with a time of 57.18.

In the 5,000-meter run, Gahekave placed second with a time of 18:52.32, while Mercer placed fifth with a time of 21:39.41.

In the 4 x 100-meter relay, a team of sophomore Joi Gill, Abrocquah, sophomore Shirley Vunatup and McDonald placed third with a time of 46.37.

In the 4 x 400-meter relay, a team of Smith, freshman Ashley Hughes, sophomore Kadrienne Sanders, and Vunatup placed third with a time of 3:56.13.

In the shot put, Bradshaw placed first with a throw of 14.05 meters.



Rodeo teams have good performances with season winding down

by STEVEN GEHEGAN
Sports Editor

The South Plains College men's and women's rodeo teams are having strong individual performances as the season progresses.

The teams competed in the Howard College Rodeo, which was held April 6 – April 8 in Big Spring.

In the barrel racing event, sophomore Rainy Robinson posted a time of 16.35 seconds in the long run and 16.45 seconds in the short run, scoring 60 points and placing fifth.

In the breakaway roping

event, freshman Baylee Henderson posted a time of 2.9 seconds in the long run and 12.5 seconds in the short run, scoring 10 points and tying for ninth place.

In the men's competition, freshman Chet Boren posted a time of 4.2 seconds in the long run and 3.9 seconds in the short run in steer wrestling, scoring 160 points and placing first. Sophomore Coy Surratt posted a time of 4.8 seconds in the long run and 4.1 seconds in the short run, scoring 100 points and tying for third.

In the team roping event, freshman Denton Halford and

sophomore Kade Cotton posted a time of 7.7 seconds in the long run and 11.9 seconds in the short run, scoring 20 points and placing seventh.

The rodeo teams also competed in the Western Texas College Rodeo on March 30 – April 1 in Snyder.

The women failed to earn any points in the events that they participated in.

In the goat tying event, freshman Sierra White posted a time of 7.6 seconds in the long run and 10.6 seconds in the short run, placing 11th. Freshman Megan Burbidge posted a time of 7.6 seconds in the long run and 10.7 seconds in the short run, placing 12th.

In the barrel racing event, freshman Alex Odle posted a time of 14.27 seconds in the long run and 19.38 seconds in the short run, placing 10th.

The men's team scored 215 points at Snyder, which earned them sixth place. All off their points were scored by Boren, who tallied 150 points, and freshman Zach Kirkpatrick, who scored 65 points.

In the tiedown roping event, Kirkpatrick posted a time of 9 seconds in the long run and 11.1 seconds in the short run, placing fifth. Fresh-

man Jhett Trenary posted a time of 9.5 seconds in the long run and 109.5 seconds in the short run, placing 10th.

In the steer wrestling event, Boren posted a time of 4.1 seconds in the long run and 3.9 seconds in the short run, placing first. Freshman Cameron McCarley posted a time of 5.4 seconds in the long run and 3.8 seconds in the short run, placing second.

The teams also competed in the Ranger College Rodeo, which took place from March 23-March 25 in Ranger, Texas.

In the goat tying event, Burbidge posted a time of 7.7 seconds in the long run and 11.6 seconds in the short run, scoring 30 points and tying

for eighth.

In the barrel racing event, Robinson posted a time of 17.61 seconds in the long run and 17.55 seconds in the short run, scoring 140 points and placing second. Odle posted a time of 17.65 seconds in the long run and 17.71 seconds in short run, scoring 100 points and placing fourth.

In men's competition, Trenary posted a time of 9.1 seconds in the long run and 10.6 seconds in the short run in tiedown roping, scoring 70 points and tying for fifth. Sophomore Hadley Cloward posted a time of 9.4 seconds in the long run and 23.1 seconds in the short run, scoring 20 points and placing eighth.

In the steer wrestling event, McCarley posted a time of 4.4 seconds in the long run and 7.2 seconds in the short run, placing first. Freshman Chase Wilson posted a time of 6.1 seconds in the long run and 5.6 seconds in the short run, scoring 110 points and placing second. Freshman Payson Moore posted a time of 4.4 seconds in the long run and 15.3 seconds in the short run, scoring 55 points and placing fifth. Kirkpatrick posted a time of 5.2 seconds in the long run and 100 seconds in the short run, scoring 20 points and placing ninth.

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Cameron McCarley ropes a steer at practice on March 27.
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Securing Our Borders . . .

Future Border Patrol agents endure rigorous academy training

by SARA MARSHALL
Editor-in-Chief

ARTESIA, N.M. -- In an uncertain world, brave men and women train every day to protect America's borders from potential threats.

Jaron Sidwell, a 23-year-old U. S. Border Patrol Agent Trainee, has gone through grueling training and real-life situations which tested his entire being.

"I will be completely honest," said Sidwell. "The first reason that kept me going was my wife and family. I could not have lived with myself knowing that I let my family down because I quit. The second reason is this: How many people can say that they are a Federal Agent? Not many, because, it's not that we can and others can't. It's that we will, and others won't."

Pulling on his prior experience, Sidwell made a big jump from one federal agency to another.

"When I was in college, I interned with the ATF (Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives)," Sidwell said. "I then got a chance to talk to a former Border Patrol Agent and was hooked from there on. I have always loved the outdoors. I am a huge hunter and fisherman, and as soon as I heard that the Border Patrol spends a lot of time outdoors, I fell in love."

Once Sidwell had made up his mind to join the Border Patrol, he started on the long road to becoming an agent.

"Going through the application process was nerve racking to say the



least," Sidwell said. "When you apply, you are always waiting for something, so it definitely tests your patience."

To begin the application

him to continue to the U.S. Border Patrol Academy in Artesia, New Mexico. For students who are close to graduation and wish to become



process, Sidwell had to take a written entrance exam, which included a comprehensive Spanish exam within it to prove you are capable of learning the language. After passing this exam, there is an extensive background check and the first physical test.

"I had an oral

panel interview five hours away from home and then the second physical fitness test was around that same location," Sidwell said. "The thing that gets most people is the polygraph exam. I sat in a room for nine hours being asked questions strapped to a chair. Needless to say, the application process is not enjoyable, but it is definitely worth it in the end."

Sidwell passed all his exams, which allowed

involved in the Border Patrol, Sidwell suggests applying as soon as possible, since the application process can take so long.

"Being a trainee is obviously not as good as being a regular agent," Sidwell said. "But I love learning new things, especially for my career. Before I came here, I viewed life in a different aspect. Once you go through all of this, it changes you mentally and physically, and definitely prepares you for life in the patrol."

At the Federal Law Enforcement Center (FLETC), trainees have to go through courses which include Communications, Ethics and Conduct, Report Writing, Introduction to Computers, Fingerprinting, and Constitutional Law.

"Academics were definitely the hardest thing for me," Sidwell said. "I have always struggled in academics, no matter what it is. I had to study more than I ever have, even for college exams."

Trainees also participate in Physical Techniques (PT) five days a week throughout their time at the academy. PT isn't just about physical fitness though, trainees are taught how to defend themselves. It is every day, five days a week. According to Chief Patrol Agent Dan Harris, the training associated with PT is more than just physical fitness and conditioning. It also includes skills such as defensive tactics to keep you safe when attacked or when someone resists arrest, arrest techniques, handcuffing, post arrest searching, and safely securing someone who has just been arrested.

"Physical fitness here at the Academy is no joke," Sidwell said. "They push you to

Then we would go to either scenarios or another classroom session."

After that, Sidwell would go to lunch. After eating, he would have PT for two hours. After PT, Sidwell would go to some sort of law class, which would depend on how far he was into the course.

"For the first month, it was tough getting used to everything, especially PT right after lunch," Sidwell said. "The hardest part about the day was staying awake for our last class of the day, because PT would drain you mentally and physically."

Once his daily activities were done, Sidwell would go back to his room to study.

"This is no joke either," said Sidwell. "The academics are mentally challenging, and if you do not study, you will not do well. And you have to march in formation everywhere you go. That will get annoying, but you would be surprised how well you come together as a team. You will question yourself a lot every day on why they make you

fairly small. But other than that, it is nice to be able to go back and just relax by yourself sometimes. You just have to get used to it whether you like it or not, because you have to call this place home for a while."

Now that Sidwell's training is nearing an end, he can reflect fondly on his experiences at the Border Patrol Academy.

"My best moment was by far walking across the stage and seeing my family sitting in the crowd because I graduated from Basic Training at the Border Patrol Academy," Sidwell said. "I also had my dad pin my badge, which was something I will never forget. That day goes by so fast, but you will never forget that day because it is a huge accomplishment."

Sidwell says an important part of being in the Academy with so many other trainees for weeks on end is to bond with your classmates, because you never know when you will need to rely on them some day.

"You will get on a bus with people you have never met before in your life and then realize five months later that you would take a bullet for them any day," Sidwell said. "That bond is huge and will go a long way. Even right now, I have two weeks left in Spanish training, and sometimes I feel like I hate my classmates, because I've



your limits because they want you to break and go home. The funny part about PT is that you hate your instructors when you first meet them. And then, once you graduate, your PT instructors become your

favorites and you really look up to them."

Sidwell says he never really had a typical day at the Border Patrol Academy because trainees are always doing something different day-to-day. "My day always started by getting breakfast," Sidwell said. "But after breakfast, we would go to either the shooting range or go to class for the first two hours, depending on what day it was of the week.

do certain things, but you just have to keep pushing."

According to Sidwell, the housing is pretty nice. The rooms are set up in dorm-like buildings with private bedrooms and bathrooms. Each room has a small TV, and each trainee receives daily maid service.

"You get your bed made and room cleaned every day while you are at work," Sidwell said. "The shower is

been with them 24/7, seven days a week, for six months. Although, in the end, you still come together, fight alongside of each other and will defend each other at all costs."

PHOTOS BY TOVI OYERVIDEZ/ PLAINSMAN-PRESS

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