



The Cadillac Ranch is a pop-culture icon just two hours north of Lubbock. Read more on page 16!

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Campus Carry goes into effect for Fall 2017

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Professor helps students and community flourish

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Check out reviews for DC, Marvel, and others on first Comic Corner

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Men's and women's track teams win at first meet

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Art installation on Route 66 becomes pop culture attraction

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Calendar of Events

Sept. 18

Last day for 70 percent refunds.

Sept. 19

Pickin' on the Plains at 12:15 p.m. at Tom T. Hall.

Sept. 21

SPC rodeo teams in compete at Eastern New Mexico University.

Sept. 25

Last day for 25 percent refund.

Sept. 26

SPC Lubbock Center Grand Opening, 10 a.m.

Sept. 28

SPC rodeo team competes at Vernon College.

50¢ lunch every Monday and Thursday at the BSM

Worship Service every Wednesday in the Sundown Room from 8 to 9 p.m.

New campus easily accessible to southeast Lubbock residents

by **MATT MOLINAR**
Editor-in-Chief

South Plains College's newest campus location offers a workforce hub with easy accessibility to those who live in Lubbock.

The new facility, located at 3907 Avenue Q, increases student accessibility by offering a variety of programs in technical fields, including automotive technology and machinist trades, along with academic courses. The location houses more than 77,000 square feet, which will provide students with state-of-the-art equipment, multiple labs, and classrooms for instruction.

"It's all about accessibility," said Kevin McConnic, executive director of the Lubbock Center. "Lubbock is a population center. So by nature, having a facility here allows us to grow our accessibility. It gives folks an opportunity, who otherwise would not be able to make it to the Levelland, or even Reese campuses."

At the Byron Martin Advanced Technology Center just down the street from the new location, SPC began offering courses in a community partnership with the Lubbock ISD. According to McConnic, the Byron Martin ATC was at full capacity, with a waiting list. The need for more space, along with the community's need for a skilled work force, led to the planning and construction of the new facility.

Ecological challenges arise as climate change increases



[Editor's note: This story is the first part of the multi-part series "Climate Crisis" examining the causes and effects of climate change that begins with Issue #1 and concludes in Issue #6. Several staff members took it upon themselves to interview and conduct research. The results of their combined efforts follow.]

by **MATT MOLINAR**
Editor-in-Chief

The idea of climate change has become a largely politically po-

struction of the Lubbock Center.

"The partnership with Lubbock ISD lasted about 17 years," McConnic said. "But, both programs were busting at the seams. Last I looked, we were at 790 students. That's 53



A grand opening for the new Lubbock Center will be held on Sept. 26.

RILEY GOLDEN/ PLAINSMAN PRESS

percent up from enrollment at the ATC from last fall. I expect that a year from now, we will be close to capacity, which is maybe more than 400 more students. However, at this new location, we have more core offerings. The ATC was focused more on workforce development and technical fields. But here, you can get your academics."

One wing of the Lubbock Center is where all labs and classroom for technical fields are located. The technical labs are stocked with high-tech equipment, which allows instructors

larized concept. But the nation's leading climate scientists say it's time to make a choice.

Using tools to measure precipitation, temperature, and sea level, climate scientists have noticed that the average amount of rainfall has increased over time, along with the average sea level and temperature. However, almost half of the planet's population does not agree with these research discoveries.

According to a study by the Pew Research Center, out of 40 nations that were polled, including the United States and Latin America, the global average of people who say climate change is a serious problem is 54 percent. Ninety-seven percent of climate scientists claim that climate is changing.

At the beginning of September, three hurricanes, Harvey, Irma, and

See "Warming" on page 2

to adapt to using newer technologies.

"The AutoTech program is already rockin' and rollin'," McConnic said. "Almost everything in here is brand new. So the instructors are being instructed. I know we have already received

calls from shops in town asking if we have any students that would want to begin working in their shop. So, these guys are the experts. They will teach you everything you need to know. One interesting thing is that some of this technology is so new, that when students find a job in an auto shop, students will end up going backward in technology, because many of the shops in town just don't have it yet."

New, high-tech equipment, ranging in cost from \$20,000 to \$100,000, is also provided in the welding and metal fabrication program, which is currently at full capacity, with a waiting list for next fall.

"I currently have 16 students in class, with seven on the waiting list," said Larry Kirk, welding instructor at the

Lubbock Center. "The only issue here is that the next group of students will have to wait the whole year to enroll in the next program. This situation is high demand."

McConnic says that around 30 instructors

are currently working in the new facility, with more to come as new programs and labs are being constructed.

"Whether it's paralegals, real estate agents, firemen, we have those experienced people here," McConnic explained.

Kirk has been in the welding industry for 40 years. He says after he graduated with his associate's degree in welding technology, he was able to work his way up to leadership positions. After leaving the industry, Kirk decided he wanted to teach and joined the advisory committee.

"I've been on the committee for about 28 years before teaching," Kirk said. "So most of our programs have an advisory committee that does consist of people in the community that work in that specific

field. They tell us what kind of equipment we need, and what skills and knowledge the students need to go and be remarkable and hireable."

Like Kirk, McConnic was able to work his way up to a leadership position, and found himself at the Lubbock Center. But his background is slightly different.

"For most of the past 11 years, my work has been in retail," McConnic explained. "I worked with United Supermarkets, where I started as a seafood clerk before I was able to get my degree. But I quickly moved into a leadership development role. The last position I had there was Manager of Education in Community Partnership. I was a really big part of trying to help out with our culinary arts program."

After receiving his master's degree in organizational management from Wayland Baptist University, McConnic worked in higher education for three years in student business services at Texas Tech University.

At the Lubbock Center, three women, who have been named "Student Support Specialists," have been cross-trained in the three main student services, further adding to the campus' ease of accessibility.

"If you go to Cindy, one of our Student Support Specialists, you can talk to her about financial aid, business, and registration," McConnic said. "They have a very broad base of information they've got to know. We've got great folks here that are going to take care of you."

emolinar0541@students.southplainscollege.edu

DeMerritt named new vice president of student affairs

by **TINA GONZALEZ**
Editorial Assistant

South Plains College has a new face for vice president for student affairs.

Dr. Stan DeMerritt recently was select to take the position after having served as dean of students since November 2016.

He has devoted his time and career to helping students and faculty.

"I get to improve students' lives," Dr. DeMerritt said. "I look forward to working with multiple departments with the college and finding ways to assist in increasing retention and completion at SPC."

See "DeMerritt" on page 3



Dr. Stan DeMerritt is the new vice president of student affairs at SPC. MATT MOLINAR/PLAINSMAN PRESS

September 18, 2017

Plainsman Press

Warming world more susceptible to natural disasters

Continued from pg. 1

The idea of climate change has become a largely politically polarized concept. But the nation's leading climate scientists say it's time to make a choice.

Using tools to measure precipitation, temperature, and sea level, climate scientists have noticed that the average amount of rainfall has increased over time, along with the average sea level and temperature. However, almost half of the planet's population does not agree with these research discoveries.

According to a study by the Pew Research Center, out of 40 nations that were polled, including the United States and Latin America, the global average of people who say climate change is a serious problem is 54 percent. Ninety-seven percent of climate scientists claim that climate is changing.

At the beginning of September, three hurricanes, Harvey, Irma, and Katia, made their way into the gulf of Mexico, while wildfires began engulfing the West Coast. The closeness in time of these events has increased the growing concern about climate change.

However, according to renowned atmospheric scientist Dr. Katharine Hayhoe, associate professor of political science at Texas Tech University, having multiple hurricanes in the Atlantic, along with large amounts of land engulfed in flames around this time of year, is not to be indicative of climate change.

"Whenever we get so many intense events at the same time, we naturally think, 'Why is everything happening at the same time like this?'" Dr. Hayhoe explained

in an interview with the Plainsman Press. "The reality is that a lot of the timing is just bad luck. At the same time, though, we do know that climate change is exacerbating the



Photo courtesy of Dr. Katharine Hayhoe

risks associated with them [natural disasters]."

Studies conducted by climate scientists, such as Dr. Hayhoe, claim that in a warming world, forest fires in the West have claimed more land on average today than they have in the past. Dr. Hayhoe says that the same idea can be applied to hurricanes.

"For any given hurricane, there is more precipitation associated with the hurricane in a warmer world," she said. "Sea level is higher, so storm surges are stronger. Hurricanes also get their energy from warm ocean waters. So we don't expect more frequent hurricanes in the future. But what we do expect is that the hurricanes we get on average will be stronger from the warming ocean waters."

According to NASA, the climate has naturally fluctuated in the past 7,000 years, when the modern climate era began, as a result of small variations in Earth's orbit and solar energy. In 1950, carbon dioxide emission levels increased dramatically. Sixteen out of 17 of the warmest years on record have occurred since 2001. With statistics such as these discovered by

researchers with the same

methods that predict when the next solar eclipse will occur, Dr. Hayhoe says that denial of climate change can be associated with one's political party.

"Climate change is one of the most politicized issues in the entire country," Dr. Hayhoe said. "A colleague of mine did a study in New Hampshire, where they had a record warm January a couple of years ago. He asked people, 'Was this January unusually warm?' The further to the right on the political spectrum they were, the more likely they were to say, 'No.' They knew what it felt like, and they lived through January. Why don't they think it was warm?"

According to Dr. Hayhoe, people will deny the evidence from their own lives in order to maintain the image of which political party they identify with.

"For example, if I'm a Republican, I don't have to believe all this stuff that people are telling us," she said. "So I'm going to deny what I see, because otherwise, I can't be who I am. It's important to point out that this is not a liberal or conservative thing. It's a fact."

There are solutions across the whole spectrum, according to Dr. Hayhoe.

"That's where the argument should be," she adds. "We should be arguing in politics today over what the best solutions are, because that's not science. That's politics."

According to Dr. Hayhoe, it is in the best interest of fossil fuel production companies to slow the momentum of the transition into using clean energy. Making the switch to clean energy may not be expensive to the economy, but to fossil fuel production companies.

"If you look at the 10 most wealthy corporations, five out of 10 are fossil fuel companies," Dr. Hayhoe explained.

"But just look at the impact clean energy has on our economy. Here in Texas, we have over 25,000 jobs in the wind energy industry alone. In the first quarter of 2017, we got 23 percent of our energy from the wind."

Dr. Hayhoe says that wind and solar energy are so cheap that Fort Hood signed an electricity contract for wind and solar energy in order to save tax payers \$158 million, compared to if they had used natural gas.

"There are more jobs

in the solar industry in the U.S., than there are in the coal industry," she said. "Clean energy is great for our economy, but there are always going to be winners and losers. We're getting around to the fact that fossil fuel industries are going to be losers."

According to Dr. Hayhoe, reversing the effects of climate change could be a possibility, with the added benefit of sustainable construction materials as a result.

"Scientists are working on ways to suck all

that carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere," she explained. "They are turning it into blocks, baking soda, and figuring out ways to do it. The only problem is that it's very expensive to do this. For right now, it's a lot cheaper to replace fossil fuels with clean energy than to suck all that stuff out of the atmosphere."

emolinar0541@students.southplainscollege.edu

Campus carry law now applies to all colleges

by BRANDI ORTIZ
News Editor

Concealed firearms are now legal to carry on South Plains College campuses.

Any student or faculty member who has a licensed to carry (LTC) or a concealed handgun license (CHL) is now able to carry handguns on campus.

Senate Bill 11, also known as "campus carry," went into effect for community colleges on Aug. 1, and allows any individual who has a LTC or CHL to carry a concealed handgun on a college campus. To be eligible to carry a handgun, a person must be a license holder, and the handgun must remain concealed at all times.

According to Chief Nickolis Castillo, director of Campus Police at South Plains College, "before this law you could not bring a firearm on campus. It was a federal offense. Now as long as you have the license, you do so if it is concealed."

The Campus Carry bill does not specifically state what is considered "concealed." But as long as the firearm is "on or about" the person and the license holder has full control over the weapon, it is considered concealed.

If a student is living on campus, he or she will still be able to carry a firearm. When a firearm is not carried on or around the person, it must be locked inside a personal vehicle or locked inside a gun safe. Gun safes must be able to contain all firearms and equipment. The exterior must be made of a mini-

mum of 16-gauge steel, and have a mechanical or biometric lock. A key lock will not be allowed.

Though the bill allows concealed carry, an institution can create further rules and regulations that restrict license holders from carrying on certain areas of the campus.

"On the Levelland campus, [the campus carry committee] has decided to permanently ban only one facility, the Natatorium," says Chief Castillo.

South Plains College has a list of other locations and events that will be "Exclusion Areas" online at the SPC website. Some of those include UIL activities and meetings of the Board of Regents.

Campus carry allows handguns, according to Chief Castillo, which are "any gun that is designed by its manufacturer to be fired with one hand." The bill does not allow rifles or shotguns to be carried on college campuses.

Any student or faculty member who may feel anxious about others carrying firearms on campus should have confidence that any LTC or CHL holder is statistically less likely to use a gun to promote violence, according to Chief Castillo.

"Nationally, we have a very, very low statistic on violent incidences involving somebody that is a license holder," says Chief Castillo. "In fact, anybody that you could see a problem from, is from somebody that does not have a license and they can't legally carry."

If a student or faculty member sees a handgun

on campus, they may contact the SPC Police Department and they will conduct an investigation.

Students who have a license to carry a handgun are not required by law to disclose to the college or any other people. If a student is carrying and somebody sees it, he or she is not required to tell the person if they have a license. The only person a CHL or LTC holder is required to disclose to is a law enforcement official.

If a student or faculty member would like to carry a handgun on campus, he or she must obtain a LTC. To get an LTC, a person must be 21 years of age or older and submit an online application at dps.texas.gov or go to the local Department of Public Safety office to get an application. Applicants must also complete four to six hours of classroom training, pass a written examination and pass a proficiency demonstration.

Chief Castillo said he believes that there are benefits to Senate Bill 11.

"There are many pros and cons," he said. "The biggest benefit that I see is the knowledge that Texas colleges are now concealed carry campuses leaves me to believe that a violent intruder is less likely to act in one of those schools. I think it brings a lot of people some peace of mind that they are able to take their survival into their own hands."

bortiz1552@students.southplainscollege.edu

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR POLICY

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Staff Writers & Photographers

Dominick Puente
Adán Rubio
Thalia Gonzales

Plainsman Press
South Plains College
1401 S. College Ave.
Levelland, TX 79336

PHONE: (806) 894-9611 ext. 2435
EMAIL: ppress@southplainscollege.edu

New Texas law ends texting while driving

by NICOLE LOPEZ
Sports Editor

Imagine being on the scene, looking at a wrecked vehicle belonging to a loved one.

Visualize hearing the heartbreaking news that one you love has been killed due to an accident because he or she couldn't put their phone down.

This incident happened to Jeanne Brown, a mother who lost her teenage daughter to a texting and driving accident.

Last year, there were around 10,000 traffic crashes caused by distracted driving, according to the Texas Department of Transportation. The Texas Legislature has decided to limit the amount of car accidents and death totals by passing a new law. The law is called "The Alex Brown Memorial Act," in honor of Alex Brown, who lost her life to texting and driving on her way to school. The law went into affect on September 1. The new law focuses on the use of messaging applications, which include reading, writing, or sending text messages while driving.

This new law has hit close to home, especially for Brown, who is a teacher at Brownfield. Brown, her husband, and her two daughters used to reside in Seagraves. Brown taught business, while her daughters attended school. In November of 2009, her oldest

daughter Alex, who planned on attending South Plains College to become a broadcast journalist, was killed in an accident because she was texting and driving on her way to school.

"Alex went off the road and rolled her truck," according to Brown. "When we lost our daughter, my husband and I felt we needed to share our story to people. We had to let them know it was dangerous to text and drive."

Brown and her husband dedicated the next three years to sharing the story of their daughter. Brown's husband shut his business down and Brown resigned from teaching at Seagraves, where she had been teaching for 12 years.

"Alex died in November," recalls Brown. "So, in December we went to our first school, and it was kids who knew Alex. We felt we needed to talk and tell them this can happen to you if you don't stop texting and driving."

According to Brown, from Dec. 1, 2009, her family traveled to different places in Texas, sharing their story. Sharing the story of their daughter didn't go unnoticed. In April of 2010, they were guests on the Oprah Winfrey show. Later in the fall, "Extreme Makeover Home Edition" was wanting to build a house for someone who has been affected by texting and driving.

"The people who

we met from the Oprah Winfrey show said they sent our name in," says Brown. "In June 2010,



Alex Brown
Courtesy of Jeanne Brown

we were contracted by the "Extreme Makeover" producers, and they asked us to send in an application."

In November 2010, "Extreme Makeover" built Brown's family a house, and the show aired in January 2011. From the exposure of being on the Oprah Winfrey show and school publications writing about the family, opportunities were presented to the Brown family to travel and share their story with the world.

"With 'Extreme Makeover' working with us, they told us if we were selected for the house, we would have so many offers that I wouldn't be able to con-

tinue teaching," Brown explains. "So, I resigned in July 2010 from my position."

events in the fall of 2010. When "Extreme Makeover" aired, the family kept getting calls to speak, which had them on the road for two years.

"We've been to almost every state," says Brown. "I tried to keep a list at first. But we got so busy. We drove a lot because we had Alex's pickup on a trailer. We had to end up flying most of the time because we were so busy. We still have Alex's pickup. It's currently behind our house."

Brown has been back teaching for five years, and she said she still takes days off and shares their story with people. Even though she likes the law, Brown thinks it could be a little more restrictive with regard to what people are able to do with their phones while driving.

"I feel like the law is going to help," says Brown. "We've shared our story for the last eight years, and I feel we've done everything we can to help people realize how dangerous texting and driving is. There has to be discipline somewhere. I'm just thankful we are starting somewhere."

Brown encourages South Plains College students to think before they pick up the cell phone, because you don't know what could happen.

"I know when you're young, you think you're invincible," explains Brown. "because I remember thinking that when I was in college. It's not true, and I hope all the students at South Plains College know how valuable their life is."

nlopez0806@student.southplainscollege.edu

New director of student life strives for diversity, community involvement

by STACY JOHNSON
Editorial Assistant

The Student Life Center has a new director who plans to bridge the gap between community and community college.

Miranda English officially began her new role as director of student life on Sept. 11.

A Levelland native, English worked as an advisor at South Plains College for two years before becoming the director of student life. She fills a void created by the departure of Ann Epps during the summer.

English earned an associate degree from SPC before attending West Texas A&M University, where she graduated with a bachelor's degree in education.

"My favorite part of being an advisor has been to help a student that has fallen onto probation or suspension, and provide resources, and watch them come out of that, and watch them grow and understand that we all fall, but what really matters is how we rise," English said.

She said she believes her previous job as resident coordinator at Portfolio Resident Services Inc. prepared her for her work at SPC. The nonprofit organization operates community centers. There, she ran a center that helped Levelland students prepare for college.

Though she is no longer an advisor, English expressed plans to work actively with the Advising

Center to bring beneficial college preparation activities to students through the Student Life Center.

"We say we meet students where we're at, and we have to do that literally as well," she said.

"I'm hoping that I can pull that collaboration together so that we can bring

tures and come to understand a lot more cultural diversity," she said.

English discussed upcoming plans for Student Life, including a Hurricane Harvey relief benefit concert.

"We just want to make sure that we're providing exciting, safe, culturally diverse activities for students to be a part of," said English. She emphasized the importance of student interaction and community involvement.

According to English, developing and maintaining a strong sense of community is central to the aim of Student Life.

"We want students that are living on and off campus to know that this is a community here, and we want them to interact not only with other students, but within the Levelland and Hockley County communities as well," she said.

Another priority for Student Life will be showcasing the talents of SPC students within the larger community.

"We want to have the community exposed to what our students are doing here as well," English said.

English expressed a desire to get students involved by supporting causes such as Child Abuse Awareness Month, back-to-school supply drives, and Hurricane Harvey relief efforts around town.

"Community is my favorite part about Levelland," she said, "and we want to bring that back to South Plains College."

sjohnson3075@student.southplainscollege.edu



Miranda English, the new director of student life, settles into her office on the Levelland campus.
STACY JOHNSON/PLAINSMAN PRESS

advisors to meet students in the dorms for a workshop, or in the Student Life Center, so we can host some more of those events from this office," she explained.

According to English, one of her primary goals is to hold more weekly activities and events on campus.

"We're hoping to bring about some exciting things like art walks, and concerts, and things that we can get coming up on a regular basis," she said.

Awareness and support of cultural diversity on campus is something that English expresses as an important goal, which she plans to make a reality.

"We're hoping to expand and bring some activities that really help students immerse in activities that allow them to experience different cul-

DeMerritt improves communication between department leaders

Continued from pg. 1

Dr. DeMerritt has developed the interactive online Student Handbook under the Digarc's Acalong, the same platform as the Academic Catalog. Dr. DeMerritt has improved communication with and between department leaders in his division. Also, he has coordinated with the Health and Wellness Center to increase discipline referrals related to drugs, alcohol, relationships and personal responsibility to provide a more holistic approach to student success. Dr. DeMerritt also updated policies related to parking, student sexual assault/harassment, and student travel within the past year.

"Basically, the needs of students are on my shoulders," Dr. DeMerritt said.

For 20 years, Dr. DeMerritt served as associate academic vice president, university registrar, associate registrar, veteran affairs certifying official and coordinator of external campus registration at Wayland Baptist University.

Dr. DeMerritt accepted the position of associate registrar at Wayland

University in 1996. Three years after, he became the registrar. Then, in 2006, Dr. DeMerritt became the associate academic vice president. During his career at Wayland, Dr. DeMerritt focused on implementing accountability systems for advisors and evaluators to confirm accuracy and continuity. He has guided a committee in the development and implementation process to reengineer official degree plans for the undergraduate academic records office.

Dr. DeMerritt earned an associate's degree in pre-business at New Mexico State University before moving on to Wayland Baptist University, where he earned a bachelor's degree in Business Administration and Religion. He also earned a master's degree at Wayland Baptist. Dr. DeMerritt earned his Ph.D. in higher education at Texas Tech University.

Dr. DeMerritt is affiliated with Student Affairs Professionals in Higher Education (NASPA), along with the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers Board of Directors (AACRAO). Dr. DeMerritt was the

Vice President for Finance from 2013 to 2016 and a part of Texas Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (TACRAO). Dr. DeMerritt has served as vice president for several boards and has been a chairman in multiple associations, including Member Services Committee, Annual Program Committee, and Professional and Management Development Committee.

Dr. DeMerritt received a Staff Award for Community Service in May 2004 and the Outstanding Performance Award in September 1998, both at Wayland Baptist University.

He increased student, faculty, administration and staff approval ratings of the Office of University Registrar from below 75-percent approval on all measures for the 1999-2000 year to 95-percent on all measures. Also, Dr. DeMerritt established a transcript request audit to assist in determining the production time and institutional accountability.

tgonzalez2552@student.southplainscollege.edu

September 18, 2017

Plainsman Press

Freshman keeps positive attitude despite her adversities

by **AUTUMN BIPPERT**
Editorial Assistant

Abby Rodgers has overcome physical challenges she has been living with all her life by keeping positive and working towards her goals every day.

Rodgers is currently attending the South Plains College Levelland campus to pursue an associate's degree in education. She found her passion for teaching after participating in peer buddies, a program where students help their peers who have special needs in class, at Georgetown High School. She plans to transfer to Texas Tech University after two years to reach her goal as a special needs teacher.

Rodgers was born two and a half months early due to a placental abruption from her biological mother's drug's use while pregnant with her. When Abby was born, the doctors discovered she was not fully developed.

Rodgers was born without a developed bottom jaw bone, no arms and no legs. She was admitted to the NICU for 30 days until she was released to her biological mom, Tori. At 5 months old, Rodgers was taken by Child Protective Services from her biological mom.

After a month in Child Protective Services, Rodgers was placed in a foster home that later she would call her forever home. Originally, Rodgers wasn't supposed to stay with her foster mom, Angela Rodgers. The plan was for her birth mother, Tori, to get her back. But

her by Child Protective Services.

After being with her foster mom, Angela Rodgers, for two years, Angela decided to adopt her. On Sept. 21, 2001, Abby was officially adopted.

Later, her family grew when her mother married Jacob Lester. Rodgers is

helped her through all the hard times and have taken care of her.

"I know I'm extremely lucky to have ended up where I did," Rodgers said, "my life would not be anywhere near as good if I had not ended up with my mom and dad."

Growing up and going to school was a hardship on Rodgers.

"There were a lot of times I got made fun of in school, or people told me I was abusing my accommodations," recalls Rodgers. "I don't really know how I dealt with it. A lot of the time I just internalized it. I realized that wasn't healthy. I guess another way I dealt with it was, I wasn't social. I'd have one or two close friends to talk to and deal with it."

Even though Rodgers has gone through a lot in school with bullying, she keeps a great sense of humor about her situation. She often jokes about her lack of hands or about popping off her legs and throwing them.

"I just have to keep positive," Rodgers explains. "There are two things I can do. I can joke

about it and stay positive, or I can lay in bed and cry about it, which isn't going to get me anywhere in life. So I stay positive."

The majority of the

“I just have to keep positive. There are two things I can do. I can joke about it and stay positive, or I can lay in bed and cry about it, which isn't going to get me anywhere in life. So I stay positive.”

Another major surgery was a bone graft. Normally with bone grafts, live bone is taken from the tibia or the scapula. But in Abby's case, the bone had to come from her femur. Two weeks before doctors took live bone from the femur, they stretched the muscles from the bottom jaw so that there was room for the new bone to heal properly. After she healed, doctors took 11 centimeters of bone from both femurs to place in the jaw bone.

Although Rodgers has no hands or legs, she still functions independently, using prosthetics. She takes care of herself like any young adult would. She has her driver's license and can drive a car without any special modifications. She can do a wide range of things, from putting in and taking out contacts, to tying a tie and texting.

"I'm excited to go start school here, because it's a good place to start out," Rodgers explains. "It's a small place where you can get hands-on help from professors."

"This is where my whole family started out, so I'm happy to be close to them this year," she adds.

abippert0518@student.southplainscollege.edu



Abby Rodriguez, a freshman Education major, outside of North Sue on the Levelland campus. **AUTUMN BIPPERT/PLAINSMAN PRESS**

she did not follow through with the plan set out to very grateful to her mother and her father who have

Alum uses degree to chase dreams, travel world with U2

by **NICOLE LOPEZ**
Sports Editor

It's not every day you get to live out your dream.

But South Plains College alumnus Anne Butt is doing just that.

Butt attended SPC in the fall of 2011 and majored in general studies. A year later, she switched her major to sound technology. She was also crowned Miss Caprock in 2014, before graduating in December of that year.

"I took a year to get those basics out of the way, just in case I wanted to transfer and get my bachelor's," according to Butt.

Moving from New Jersey to come to Levelland wasn't a huge transition for Butt. Her mother grew up in the surrounding area and also attended SPC.

"I knew I wanted to do sound, and SPC was one of the schools that had a sound program," says Butt. "I still had family that lived in Shallowater, so it was a little familiar and cost effective."

Butt said she knew she wanted to work in sound ever since she was younger. Her father was a musician, so she was always around live music.

Then, in the seventh or eighth grade, her class was running sound waves, and she remembered what was said in one of her textbooks.

"In one of our textbooks, there was a little blurb about being an audio engineer, and working in concerts," Butt recalls. "I thought that sounded like the coolest job ever, because it involves math, science, and you get to travel. That sounded perfect. I decided to do that."

Butt is currently working as a touring audio technician for a company called Clair Global,

which is one of the biggest sound reinforcement companies in the world. "I fly the speakers that

are up in the air and do the cabling, and stuff like that," explains Butt. "I also plug all of the equipment and make sure ev-

erything is working. I help out whoever needs help, like patching the stage, or helping our crew chief."



SPC alum, Anne Butt, recently toured Europe with rock band, U2. **Courtesy of Anne Butt**

Soon after that, I got a phone call to set up an interview."

Butt resides in Pennsylvania, but is on the road most of the time. She says Clair Global makes sure a road staff member has 200 days on the road yearly.

"In October, which is when I'll go home for about a week, I'll have worked 268 days on the

road this year," says Butt. Butt is currently touring with U2, a rock band from Dublin, Ireland. The tour started in April, and they'll be finishing up in North America before travelling to South America in October. "I've been all around the United States," Butt explains. "I've been to Hawaii and all the way up to Canada. This summer, I did my first European tour. We travelled to London, Paris, Amsterdam, Berlin, Spain, Rome, and Brussels. I did a gig in Mexico City last year too. In October, we're traveling to Chile, Argentina, Brazil, and Colombia."

Some days Butt can't believe she's doing what she really enjoys. She likes to look back and see how far she has come. She said she believes everything boils down to hard work.

"You're like, man, the really crappy gigs I did, and now I'm here," says Butt. "At the time, those gigs were challenging, but they were fun too. It still blows my mind sometimes. I'm like 'Oh my god, I graduated three years ago, and it's only been three years and I'm out on tour with my company's greatest bands.'"

Even though Butt has a blast and loves what she does, every job has its challenges. "There are definitely hard days for the nature of touring," explains Butt. "We had one show in

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Lubbock Downtown Farmer's Market offers variety of merchandise

by **ADÁN RUBIO**
Staff Writer

Fresh produce, savory meats, and handmade crafts are a few of the goods sold at the Lubbock Downtown Farmers Market.

Now active for its fourth year, the LDFM brings in many local farmers and small businesses to sell their produce and wares for the Lubbock community. The market will be held at 19th Street and Buddy Holly Avenue every Saturday until Oct. 28, from 9 a.m. to whenever the vendors have sold out of their products.

If the LDFM is not a viable choice, there is also the West End Farmers Market at West Loop 289 and 34th Street. It is open every Saturday this summer from 9:30 a.m. to noon. Even

the community of Levelland can access fresh produce from the new Farm Fresh Levelland Market on Houston Street and Avenue G, which is open from 7:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. every Saturday until Sept. 24. The opportunities are endless when it comes to events like these.

This annual Lubbock event is known for its quality produce, meats, and dairy products. Additionally, the market has

been known to showcase many homemade wares such as art, crafts, jewelry, and flower arrangements. But there are many other perks that people can gain from the market.

One thing that many people consider when

consider when selling at the Farmers Market.

"We sell hot products that we have to get in the ovens at 5 a.m.," said Warren, "and we get down here around 8, and it takes us 35 to 40 minutes to set up."

ple cannot get in a typical grocery store. Whether it is the type of products or the festive atmosphere, people are drawn to this event for many reasons.

"The culture, the friendly faces, the local produce, the good qual-

to choose, and people get the opportunity to feel open with one another.

"It gets them connected with their community," Reimer explains, "and nutritionally, it's better to buy local."

Through the LDFM, vendors can make ideal social interactions a priority and can create lively relationships with their customers. These connections that surround the livelihood of the market grants the vendors much support but also gives the buyer something to look forward to as they purchase produce and other items.

Miles Condon, a regular visitor of the market, regards the accessibility of the local farmers and their input on the produce that is sold.

"Being able to get the local food, talk to the actual growers," are factors that Condon stated to be reasons why he has revisited the market. The access to the farmers of the products has even impacted Condon's thought process toward the source of his food.

"I'm definitely more cognizant of it being local and thinking about where the food actually comes from," said Condon.

The LDFM makes it possible for people who want fresh food and handmade crafts to obtain what they desire while also creating a deep relationship with the vendors of the market. The appeal of

genuine products and their unambiguous sources are traits that many people of the Lubbock community look for in their selection of groceries.

The market attracts many visitors, young and old, to take part in the festivities. Kathryn Parsley, a local college student and frequent market visitor, said she believes the LDFM offers many advantages to people of all ages.

"It introduces college students to the idea of taking better care of their health," said Parsley. "The older crowd can reconnect with their past."

This niche of the Lubbock community is for anyone interested in buying local and willing to experience new and fresh options while creating relationships with idealistic people.

The Lubbock Downtown Farmers Market is an event that offers so much more than fresh produce. The market holds many opportunities for everyone despite age or interests in agriculture. This community-driven market serves not only as a source of quality products but as a source of unity within the Lubbock community.

"The LDFM is one of the few events that is the great equalizer," said Parsley. "Everybody has got to eat."

arubio2831@students.southplainscollege.edu



An entrepreneur is selling her fresh produce to a customer at Lubbock's Downtown Farmer's Market on Sept. 2.

TINA GONZALEZ/PLAINSMAN PRESS

purchasing an item is the vendor. The vendors of the LDFM work hard to prepare their products for the public.

The compassion the vendors show their customers and products can easily be seen through the amount of preparation and dedication the vendors undertake throughout the market. Ann Warren, owner of Holy Cow Beef, says getting to the site early is part of the preparation to

Warren said she feels that a vendor should work not only to sell exceptional products but also to give the customer a sense of security.

"I didn't want to make a single purchase unless I had a relationship," said Warren, "I need a relationship with someone telling me about their product and where to get it."

These vendors strive to create an experience for the community that peo-

ity products everyone is selling," are all reasons that Angelique Reimer, a vendor for Reimer Farms, believes that people are attracted to the market.

Through her experience as a vendor, Reimer said she believes that one should relate to the community before they start selling. Reimer feels that the Farmers Market is beneficial for the residents of Lubbock, as there are a variety of healthy options

Tomorrow's Leaders transforming lives of Lubbock children

by **TINA GONZALEZ**
Editorial Assistant

Four men are on a mission to impact lives, make a difference in their community, and build relationships.

Nine years ago, Noe Brito, Mark Cavazos, Michael Goen, and Eric Strong came together for lunch to create an organization that would eventually grow to be something that will help and alter kids' lives.

"Building strong youth rather than repairing broken adults" is the motto of Tomorrow's Leaders, an organization that takes 40 to 50 boys and girls who are in 5th grade from Title I schools in Lubbock to mentor them for a whole school year. Volunteers do

kids, teaching them life and organization skills. Almost being kind of a parent figure for these kids has helped Cavazos realize the importance of education and life values for them.

"Exposure," Essie Alvarado, the organization nurse, said. "The kids get exposure to stability and support."

For a whole school year mentors get assigned four to five boys or girls from Irving, Guadalupe, Ramirez, and Alderson Elementary schools in Lubbock. Most of the 5th graders participating have never seen anything other than the four walls of their home. By being a part of Tomorrow's Leaders, he or she gets a year of exposure, such as seeing

get to travel to New York City and Washington, D.C. to tour monuments, museums and tour the cities.

"They completely forgot about all their fears," said Cavazos.

Tomorrow's Leaders focuses on education, health, and wellness for kids who may or may not have parents there for that.

"We have become more recognized and more organized," said Cavazos.

Through the years, Tomorrow's Leaders has been able to make more of an impact in the kids' lives. They also have established partnerships with Texas Tech University and Alliance Federal Credit Union.

"One thing that makes us stand out is we are

focused on getting more grants and more partnerships for the future, which will help with funding.

The organization was created for the sole purpose of mentoring and altering lives of kids who need it most.

"For the first time, later this year, we will have

an etiquette dinner," said Cavazos "We want our kids not only be prepared for high school but for the real world."

tgonzalez2552@students.southplainscollege.edu



as much as they can in one school year to help motivate and sculpt these kids into becoming something bigger.

"I kind of wear several different hats," said Cavazos. "I helped create the Facebook page, website, and brochures."

Being a part of Tomorrow's Leaders has given Cavazos a perspective on life. Cavazos, along with other volunteers, has spent their time mentoring

college campuses and meeting with college professors, attending Texas Tech sports events, going camping and having various talks about finance, sex, and life.

"We are impacting lives," said Cavazos, "seeing the change."

After the year is over and each student has participated in the activities and kept up their grades, those kids in the Tomorrow's Leaders program

100-percent volunteer," said Cavazos. "We don't even have a building."

Tomorrow's Leaders are pushing the focus for kids to take education seriously and to set goals, because education can make your life go a long way.

"We're stressing better behavior, pushing more education," said Cavazos.

The organization gets different kids but the agenda never changes,

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Plainsman Press

Art professor uses passion for comics to create teaching aids

by **DEZ MENDEZ**
Feature Editor

Living two lives, Marc Watson doubles as a beloved comic book creator and professor.

Watson moved to Lubbock in 1999, having grown up in El Paso. Watson has always been focus on his art since he was younger, although his medium has changed a lot since then.

“The combination of extreme unchallenging boredom at school, with the inspirational awesomeness of Sonic the Hedgehog and The Simpsons, had me doodling all the time,” said Watson.

Drawing fan art was an obsession of Watson’s, but that all changed when he picked up a copy of “Sonic the Hedgehog #10” from a gas station during a family trip. That issue is what inspired Watson to start creating his own ideas. It helped Watson express ideas to others and to make a difference.

“Art can be the purest form of an expression of who we are,” said Watson. “By creating the works, I am giving life to my ideas and beliefs, as well as my greatest passions.”

Watson has showcased his art work in various countries such as Australia, Germany, Italy, France, England, Spain, Brazil and many more. Watson’s art is also in some private collections from around the world.

“I have been showcased on MilkTv in Victoria, Melbourne, Australia,” said Watson. “I have also done various album cover designs.”

Recently, Watson has been focused on creating graphic novels as tools for education. “I have released several books, with the latest being a comic that teaches one point perspective,” explained Watson.

Watson’s comic is now in the hands of most Lubbock area art teachers from grades K-12, some teachers in the Houston area, as well as in a high school in Germany.

Watson’s earliest involvement in the art community, started in 2002 as Vice President of the National Art Honor Society at Coronado High School. For the last 10 years off and on, Watson has been involved with the First Friday Art Trails and local art shows in Lubbock.

Lubbock-Con is another great community that Watson is strongly involved in. The newest roll that Watson has is as an administrator and moderator for Lubbock Artist Collective, which is a group of artists working together toward shared goals.

Watson participates in the Pokémon Go art drop in Lubbock, also run by the founder of the Lubbock Artist Collective. This event is free to the public and is put on by local artists. They draw the characters and place them around town for people to find.

“First off, I play Pokémon Go regularly, so no shame there,” stated Watson.

Watson’s latest creation is “Meteors ‘n Milk,” a story of an alien and cow that fall in love while trying to survive a post-apocalyptic world.

The characters come

from various events and concepts in Watson’s life, as well as influences from specific people. His characters are a unique

know them personally and feel what they would feel.

In 2002, Watson decided to attend Texas Tech University. He began working on his Bachelor of Fine Arts. Watson found himself teaching others how to do certain techniques and concepts.

Watson began to attend the Lubbock Sketch Club, founded by Warner Brothers character

designer Will Terrell.

“Working with Terrell, I ended up doing a lot of events where I drew with children and adults,” said Watson.

After receiving his BFA, Watson then later went on to pursue a Master of Art Education degree. This past August, Watson graduated with his masters and took a

teaching position at SPC as Professor of Art Education.

“I love teaching and it is truly a passion of mine,” said Watson.

Watson’s passion is to be able to give children a better and more accessible world. Watson also believes in transcultural education that places no child or student at a disadvantage.

“I am teaching not only students but the future teachers as well,” said Watson. “I am inspired by the abilities of art and teaching that I possess to make a positive difference in this world.”

Watson’s advice to other artist is to remember that you are always learning, and that no one is better than anyone and you can learn from one another.

To check out Watson’s work visit: meteorsnmlk.com

Facebook.com/meteorsnmlk, Twitter.com/meteorsnmlk, tumblr.com/meteorsnmlk, Instagram.com/meteorsnmlk.

dmendez2933@students.southplainscollege.edu



Marc Watson uses the medium of comic books to teach the fundamentals of art.
DEZ MENDEZ/PLAINSMAN PRESS

existence, so he writes and illustrates them as he feels they are portrayed.

“You can not say, ‘Oh, so this is you and that is her, because the truth is they are their own identity and that is important to me,” said Watson.

Watson wants the readers to be able to connect with his characters, as they would

designer Will Terrell.

“Working with Terrell, I ended up doing a lot of events where I drew with children and adults,” said Watson.

After receiving his BFA, Watson then later went on to pursue a Master of Art Education degree. This past August, Watson graduated with his masters and took a

Professor turns love of personal narratives into fulfilling career

by **STACY JOHNSON**
Editorial Assistant

Whether she is taking on the roles of coach and tour guide, or entrepreneur and metaphorical gardener, Wanda Clark has worked to help students, professionals, and the community blossom.

A central Pennsylvania native, Clark has taught behavioral science courses at South Plains College for 20 years and has lived in Lubbock for nearly 30 years.

She earned a bachelor’s degree in comparative religion from Gettysburg College in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania.

“I was just fascinated with people’s belief systems,” Clark says.

She then went on to earn a master’s degree in English and American literature from

Texas Tech University in Lubbock. After studying anthropology at the University of Washington in Seattle, she returned to Texas Tech, where she completed a Ph.D. in marriage and family therapy.

Clark says her degree

therapy led her to begin teaching psychology at SPC. But education did not stop with college for Clark, who describes herself as a “perpetual student.”

“As long as I can keep learning, I kind of feel like that’s con-



Dr. Wanda Clark, professor and lifelong learner, says she loves her work at South Plains College. STACY JOHNSON/PLAINSMAN PRESS

scious, and then students keep learning, too,” Clark says.

Clark says she con-

siders her work to be interdisciplinary, and she recognizes that her passion for behavioral sciences stems from her interest in people.

“The theme that draws all of my coursework together, though, is I love people’s stories,” she says.

“My mother taught me to read when I was 3 years old,” Clark recalls. “I was reading before I went to kindergarten. I was such an avid reader that that idea of stories started very, very young and has never stopped.”

Clark says the most exciting thing about teaching is seeing students make educational breakthroughs as they learn to apply classroom knowledge in meaningful ways.

“When I see students connect things that they haven’t connected previously, I find that to be the most fascinating and most interesting thing,” she says.

“When I can learn from my students, that’s really exciting too,” she adds.

Clark says her favorite things about teaching at SPC are the way the small class sizes allow her to get to know her students, as well as the sense of community.

“There really is a family atmosphere,” she says. “People care about each other.”

Clark says metaphors and language are of great interest to her. For her Ph.D. dissertation, she investigated the language that therapists used to describe their work.

“It’s very revealing, very quickly, about where people are coming from,” she says. “I think it gives you a snapshot view of who that person is.”

Clark uses many frequently changing metaphors to describe her work as a professor. This week, Clark says she would describe herself as a coach helping her students practice for game day.

“Sometimes, in World Cultures, I feel kind of like I’m the tour guide, and that we’re kind of going on a trip together,” she muses.

Clark says people describe her as a “workaholic,” but she does not see it that way.

“When you love what you do, that doesn’t feel like work,” she says.

When she is not teaching, Clark says she prioritizes fitness and physical activity. She describes her interest in family genealogy as a hobby she could spend hours on.

According to Clark, her fascination with genealogy began with that of her own family. However, it eventually broadened to a new way of understanding more about history.

“When you have an ancestor, for example, who was like a Civil War veteran, all of a sudden the Civil War becomes very interesting,” Clark says. “You can invest in it in a different way.”

Clark says she has always been active in LG-BTQ causes. In 1990, she and her partner opened Ellie’s Garden, a small gay and lesbian bookstore that operated in Lubbock until 1994, when Clark closed Ellie’s Garden to pursue her postgraduate education and subsequent career as a professor.

Named for her grandmother, Ellen, who enjoyed gardening, Clark describes Ellie’s Garden

as a place where people could gather without fear of discrimination.

“That was at a time when there really were not safe spaces for LG-BTQ people to go,” she says, “and that was one of our goals, to try to establish a place.”

While Clark’s experience running Ellie’s Garden was not without challenges, she says she was pleasantly surprised by how many supportive people she met along the way.

“I expected a lot more resistance or push-back, and was kind of mentally prepared for that,” she says. “And there were certain other pockets or communities that were very supportive in ways that I didn’t expect, which sort of renewed my faith in people in general.”

The transition from entrepreneur to professor was a natural one for Clark.

“When you’re a good sales person,” she says, “it doesn’t make any difference whether you’re selling books or magazines, or ideas. It’s all the same skillset.”

sjohnson3075@students.southplainscollege.edu

Back to School Bash
on Levelland campus
Aug. 29. Photos by
Autumn Bippert and
Thalia Gonzales



Pattinson delivers powerful performance in 'Good Time'

by TYLER YORK
Editor-in-Chief

The bond between brothers is one worth fighting for.

But as the Safdie brothers' "Good Time" illustrates, tirelessly defending familial love can sometimes cause us to destroy ourselves in the process.

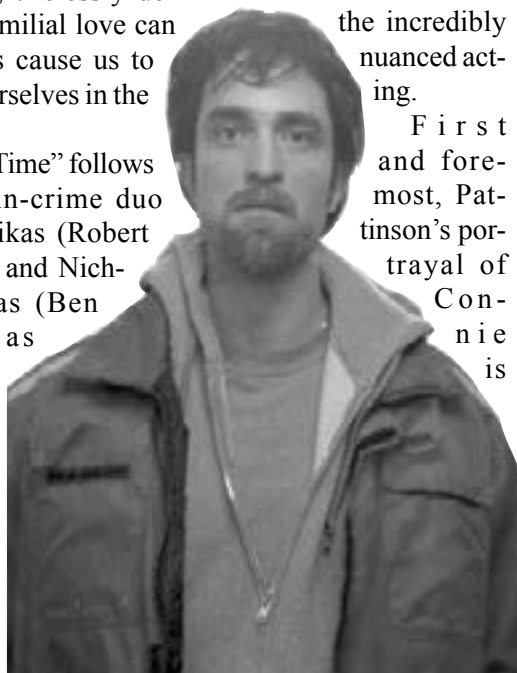
"Good Time" follows brothers-in-crime duo Connie Nikas (Robert Pattinson) and Nicholas Nikas (Ben Safdie) as they prepare for, carry out, and subsequently attempt to outrun the consequences of a non-violent bank robbery.

Continuing in the tradition of many of A24's films that preceded it, "Good Time," bathed in a comforting neon glow and scored with the hums of unsettlingly cheerful synths, manages to walk a confident line between

playful mischief and mortal terror, sometimes within a single blink of a dilated eye.

Even with the quality of the music and the wonderfully stylistic visuals, the obvious stand-out in this movie is the incredibly nuanced acting.

First and foremost, Pattinson's portrayal of Connie is



transformative to the point of almost being unrecognizably Pattinson. To think that this is the same actor who once brooded, pale and sparkling, in the "Twilight" series is beyond comprehension.

It's clear from the first moments we see Connie

on screen that Pattinson can put everything he has into a role, and, in doing so, raise a story to transcendent heights. Pattinson conveys Connie's love for his mentally challenged brother Nicholas—played with incredible care and truth by Ben Safdie—with a subtlety that is as foundational and indestructible as the bond between the brothers themselves.

Connie is obviously a criminal, but he has an uncharacteristic compassion that helps him keep sight of what's important. Nobody can get hurt if they rob a bank without using a gun, but can the same be said for going up face-to-face against actual drug dealers in broad daylight?

All the main cast is just as believable and raw, with other prominent—if brief—performances by Jennifer Jason Leigh as Connie's travel-obsessed girlfriend, and Taliah Webster as an unwitting teenage accomplice. Even Academy Award nominee Barkhad Abdi, best known for portraying the Somali pirate ringleader in

"Captain Phillips," makes a far-too-brief, almost unintentionally comical, appearance as an amusement park security guard.

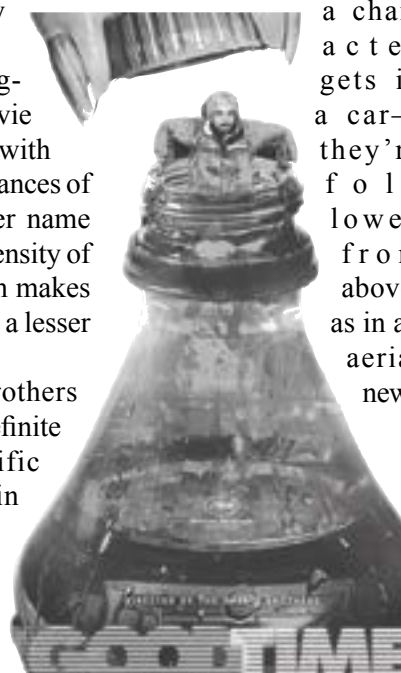
Likely the biggest fault this movie could be branded with is the short appearances of some of its bigger name actors. But the intensity of the rest of the film makes it, pardon the pun, a lesser crime.

The Safdie brothers seem to have a definite love for a specific time and place in young adulthood. It's a time when walking around the city with a tough crowd doing things of questionable legality was just a way to pass the weeknights, along with a place where being showered in the aura of bright, warm neon lights is a regular occurrence.

The Safdies' New York isn't reflective of grandeur or big-city dreams. It's dark, it's backlit, and it thrives on its own seediness. But it's home to these characters, and they fit right in.

The beginning of the movie especially paints a very different picture of a crime action setting, with many of its shots taking

place in claustrophobic, stabilized close-ups. The same unnatural stabilizations occur anytime a character gets in a car—they're followed from above, as in an aerial news



unnervingly happy and upbeat. In many moments, the score will be gently pulsing underneath, then suddenly unleash an onslaught of jarring sound, which matches the utter confusion and panic that permeates many of Connie's decisions he is forced to confront.

The score was written by Oneohtrix Point Never—also known as Daniel Lopatin—and from top to bottom, it feels just as purposeful and dripping with atmosphere as other big-name composers' works in similar movies such as Trent Reznor and Atticus Ross' "Girl With The Dragon Tattoo" and "Gone Girl."

There are drugs. There is crime after crime. But there is also a brother who cares so deeply he's willing to throw caution to the wind in order to rescue the ones he cares about. It's a disquieting film with incredible chameleon-like acting and dreamy visuals. Anyone watching would almost be guaranteed to have a good time.

I give "Good Time" 8.5 out of 10 stars.

8.5/10

tyork0243@students.southplainscollege.edu

Empty thriller 'Kidnap' bores audience with unrealistic scenes

by NICOLE LOPEZ
Sports Editor

A lovely day at the carnival with her son turns into a nightmare for a single mother.

Halle Berry stars as single mother Karla Dyon in the abduction thriller film, "Kidnap." Karla takes her 6-year-old son Frankie (Sage Correa) to a carnival one afternoon, and it's a day they both will never forget.

Karla leaves Frankie on a bench for a quick minute to talk on the phone with her divorce lawyer. When Karla comes back, Frankie is nowhere to be found. After shouting her son's name and looking everywhere for him, Karla sees her son being dragged into a car by a woman. Attempting to stop the vehicle, Karla clings to the car. She fails to hold on and immediately goes to her van and chases after the car.

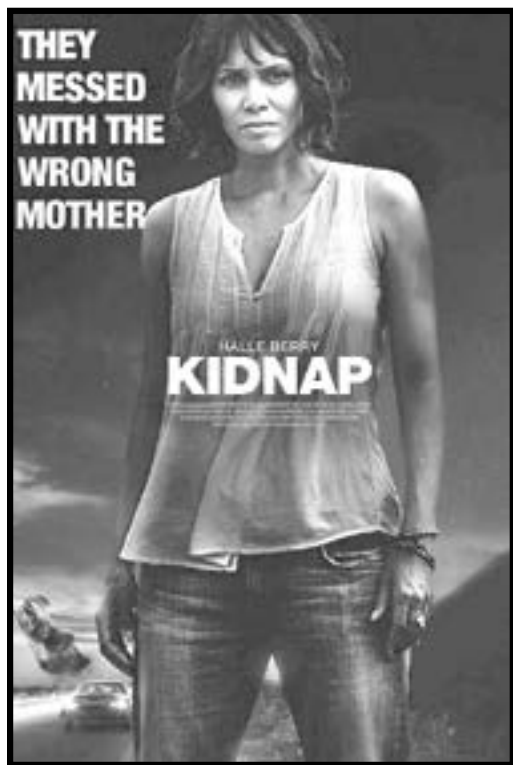
The car chase scene is lengthy, but it does have some suspenseful moments.

Karla is hot on the abductors' tracks and tries to grab the attention of other drivers by driving radically. By coincidence, a police officer comes up behind Karla and notices her driving. The officer pulls up next to Karla and she rolls down her window, explaining to the officer that the car in front of them has her son. When the conversation is over, the abductor's car pulls over, waits for Karla and the officer, and wedges the officer between the two vehicles. The police

officer flies off the motorcycle and gets thrown to the side of the street.

Karla is hysterical, and the abductors lead her to a grassy field. A woman named Margo (Chris McGinn) gets out of the car and tells Karla her and her husband Terry (Lew Temple) won't give her son back unless she pays them a \$10,000 ransom. Karla agrees to give them the money, and, for reassurance, Margo rides with Karla while Terry follows them.

When reaching a tun-



nel, Margo fails to kill Karla. Karla ends up throwing Margo out of the van, while tricking Terry into thinking his wife is driving the vehicle. The rest of the movie is kind of bland. It involves more car chases and uninteresting dialogue.

"Kidnap" was released on July 31 and has received good feedback. Berry starred in a similar film four years ago, and she did great in that one as well. She portrayed

a single mother desperately trying to get her son back realistically. Her acting didn't seem fake, but genuine.

One thing I didn't like about the film was that some parts didn't seem realistic. There was a scene where Berry is driving her mini van and the speedometer read an unrealistic speed for a mini van. Also, I think there was too much car chasing in this film. There wasn't enough action during the car chasing either.

Another problem I had with the film was that the abductors never explain why they were abducting children. There was a scene where McGinn speaks to someone on the phone about having the child. But, the film never explains why they were doing it. That really bothered me. I hate it when films don't tie up loose ends, or they don't explain things that need to be explained.

Overall, "Kidnap" is a good movie, but it's not great. It could have definitely been more suspenseful and more action packed.

I give this movie 5 out of 10.

5/10

nlopez0806@students.southplainscollege.edu

Black Sabbitch rocks Lubbock crowd

by DEZ MENDEZ
Feature Editor

Black Sabbath fans gathered inside of Jake's Backroom in Lubbock recently to hear the all-female tribute band Black Sabbitch.

The Los Angeles-based tribute band consists of Angie Scarpa on drums, Blare N Bitch on guitar, Melanie Makaiwi on bass, and Aimee Echo supplying vocals. Black Sabbitch is the brainchild of Scarpa and Blare N Bitch, who both share a love for Black Sabbath.

They started Black Sabbitch because they thought the name was funny, and Black Sabbath is Scarpa's favorite band. Makaiwi had asked Scarpa if she wanted to do a Sabbath band, so they started. Five years later, they are touring all over the world.

All the women had already been in the music scene before forming Black Sabbitch, so they were all already considered to be the best at what they do. Blare had led the all-girl band "Betty Blowtorch," and Scarpa was drumming for post punk thrashers, "The Art of Safecracking." The

two have been friends for more than a decade, so they decided to get together and play some Sabbath.

Makaiwi was their first choice to play bass. She had been in "The Art of

"It's the understanding of that you are playing in a heavy blues band with a jazz feel, and not heavy metal," said Scarpa.

Black Sabbitch opened the set on Sept. 6 in Lubbock with "War Pigs," one of Sabbath's classic tracks. Echo's vocals rocked the crowd, as they went crazy with applause and cheering.

Black Sabbitch not only was able to wow the crowd, but gave a true Sabbath feeling to the night. The crowd was approving of their style and sound.

Jake's Backroom was the final Texas stop for the women,

having just gotten back from Houston. They were advised not to go down to Houston since Hurricane Harvey had caused so much damage there. But they didn't want to cancel, as they felt that the city needed something to look forward to.

Black Sabbitch gives a true experience to fans who have not been able to see Black Sabbath. From the wicked left-handed guitar playing of Blare, to the insane drumming of Scarpa, the talented bass playing of Makaiwi and the howling vocals of Echo, if you closed your eyes, you would think you were listening to Sabbath.

To check out Black Sabbitch, visit www.blacksabbitch.com

dmendez2933@student.southplainscollege.edu



Black Sabbitch hanging out before taking the stage on Sept. 6 in Lubbock.
DEZ MENDEZ/PLAINSMEN PRESS

'Batman and Harley Quinn' pays homage to 'Animated Series'

by RILEY GOLDEN
Entertainment Editor

The earth is being consumed by climate change, and Poison Ivy and the Floronic Man have decided to reverse it by turning every living creature into plant hybrids.

In the animated movie, "Batman and Harley Quinn," Pamela Isley, Poison Ivy, and Jason Woodrue, the Floronic Man, break into Star Labs for information about Swamp Thing, to help them create the formula to turn living organisms into plant hybrids.

Batman, billionaire playboy Bruce Wayne, and Nightwing, Dick Grayson, the original Robin, meet the police on the scene after the break-in and begin to devise a plan to track down Ivy and Woodrue. Nightwing realizes that looking for Ivy is going to involve talking to none other than Harley Quinn.

Nightwing tracks Harley to a restaurant called Superbabe's – a Hooters-esque restaurant with a superhero theme – where she is hiding in plain sight as a waitress.

When Nightwing confronts Harley, there's a surprisingly good fight scene between the two

that ends with Nightwing being knocked out.

Harley ties Nightwing up in her apartment – on her bed – and Nightwing



wakes up to her trying to figure out what she's going to do with him. Harley has gone straight, so she decides not to kill Nightwing and starts changing clothes in front of him. She turns around to see that he has "something" she wants, and she tells him she has something he wants.

At this point, if you're thinking that this movie is very sexual, I was thinking the same thing when I was watching it.

While Nightwing and Harley are obviously hooking up, Batman visits the crime scene where Dr. Harold Goldblum, a

specialist in biological warfare, went missing and finds a leaf that fell off the Floronic Man.

Batman hasn't gotten word from Nightwing, so he goes to look for him and finds Nightwing and Harley playing around in Harley's bed. Afterwards, Batman and Nightwing try to ditch Harley to follow their new lead. But she demands to tag along to talk her BFF, Ivy, out of sparking the plant-pocalypse.

Batman deduces that Ivy and Woodrue want to synthesize the formula that created Swamp Thing and turn it into a virus.

Harley doesn't know where to find Ivy, but she takes Batman and Nightwing to a bar where a lot of criminals are hanging their hats right now. This leads into about two to three minutes of twin brothers singing a number, which then leads to Harley performing a two to three-minute number. Honestly, this is not just the worst scene of the movie; this is just a terrible scene altogether.

Harley's contact at the bar, Shrub, one of Ivy's lieutenants, leads her and

the Dynamic Duo to the location where Ivy and Woodrue are holding Dr. Goldblum and making him work on their formula.

When the three vigilantes step on the scene, one of the coolest animated fight scenes I've seen breaks out between Batman, Nightwing, and Harley Quinn vs. Poison Ivy and the Floronic Man. The villains flee and the heroes follow them to Slaughter Swamp, which leads to another fight scene with an awesome appearance from Swamp Thing that ends the fight and the movie.

The style of this movie is extremely reminiscent

of "Batman: The Animated Series" (1992-1995), and I love it. Not only is the style aesthetically pleasing, but I grew up watching "The Animated Series," which remains the best animated material to come out of DC Comics.

Part of that show's success is thanks to Kevin Conroy, the voice actor of Batman who returned for "Batman and Harley Quinn," which makes it all the more awesome.

I also love how Ivy and Woodrue's motivations are that climate change is getting out of control, and they think they need to reverse it. Harley's response to Ivy when hearing this is

"vote Democrat," which is true and funny.

It isn't the only funny part in the movie, either. There are a few jokes that fall flat, but the movie is actually quite funny if you're a Batman fan.

If Conroy's voice acting didn't make this movie great, then the art style would. I appreciated most of the humor, however, I did not like the five-minute-long musical number. I give "Batman and Harley Quinn" a 7.5 out of 10.

7.5/10

rgolden3411@students.
southplainscollege.edu

R&B sensation releases impressive debut album

by DOM PUENTE
Staff Writer

Tone Stith has broken through the R&B world, creating a following of young and old listeners with his first album, "Can We Talk."

Many R&B singers entering their careers having recently incorporated auto-tune or a type of rap style into their songs. They categorize themselves as both a singer and rapper.

Stith, a young and talented R&B singer, has stuck to the category of only singing in R&B, and I enjoy the type of songs he has released on his album. His smooth voice and ability to hit high notes with ease are a nice change of pace from other male singers of his genre.

While listening to the album, I was not concerned with the technical portions of his songs. What brought me in were his lyrics and his soft voice.

Literally, his songs were simple and easy to listen to without having to wonder why he said that to begin with. A few songs do have a sexual encounter within them. But the majority stray away from portraying sex and focus on love or the beauty a girl has.

I noticed that even though every song may switch topics about a girl,

the main idea is loving her more than anybody while showing his affection to her every second of the day.

The album begins with "Oh My Gosh," which I found to be my favorite song of the album. This song does use a sexual encounter as the basis of the song, but Stith puts the qualities that he admires in a girl while displaying affection for her in any way into the song, which flows well.

The overall messages within the songs really appeal to me, because not every song is about sex or the visual of having so many girls or relationships. I can respect Stith for creating an album that is built on taking care of a woman and showing her love in many aspects in a relationship.

I don't have a song that I dislike. But there is one song that is more of a non-traditional song and almost a throwback for me.

The song "Every Hour" carries a Michael Jackson-esque feel to it. The track has a upbeat hip-hop feel that you could find on an '80s track or just a Jackson song.

Even with a different style of song such as "Every Hour," it sounds great, and the singing blends well with the beats used.

It is different seeing that variation of beats and singing style in songs these days, but it presents a nice change of pace for me.

Throughout all the songs, I was pleased with Stith's work for a first album, and I anticipate he will continue to get better from here. As long as he heads in this direction with his music, I will continue to be a fan. I give this album an 8 out of 10.

8/10

dpuente3388@students.
southplainscollege.edu

Tattoo expo 'draws' in large crowds

by ANNIE GOLDEN
Editorial Assistant

Tattoo enthusiasts come to Lubbock to satisfy their craving for more of the culture.

The first Tornado Alley Expo was held Sept. 8-Sept. 10 at the Clarion Hotel in Lubbock. People from across the country attended, including more than 100 artists who came to enjoy the experience and provide a good time for those attending.

It was a whole new level of portraying tattoo culture, including a wide range of entertainment all weekend. The event featured tattoo contests, vendors, a pin-up pageant, comedy shows, and a DJ.

When entering the Clarion Hotel, ladies at the front desk were handing out wristbands and telling guests to have a good time. The energy at the event was instantly welcoming, but definitely edgy and daring.

People were laying in booths getting tattoos. Some were walking around with bandages over their fresh tattoos, and many had fresh piercings as well. Overall, these

in attendance seemed to be having a great time. The booths provided free stickers, temporary tattoos, and knick-knacks that you could buy.

Tattoo artist John Miller and attendee, Lizzett



Jon Miller is a stipple artist in Austin.
BRANDI ORTIZ/
PLAINSMAN PRESS

Vargas, were happy to share their thoughts about tattoos and the event. "I was 17 when I got my first tattoo," said Miller. "My first tattoo was a [expletive] cartoon duck that I tattooed onto myself. It is terrible. I created the tattoo because I used to have a pet duck when I was growing up, whose name was Alfred. My favorite

tattoos ever are sacred-geometry themed tattoos."

"Also, I will never be satisfied with the amount of tattoos I have on my body," he added.

The Tornado Alley Tattoo Expo was Miller's first tattoo expo. He said he produced a large number of tattoos at the event throughout the weekend.

"My favorite tattoo that I did this weekend was on a girl's back on Friday,"

said Miller. It took me about five hours," John says. Miller has been doing tattoo art for almost seven years. He said a tattoo artist named Yogi Berra from South America is the one who inspired him. He describes his personal work as "enlightening."

Vargas also was attending a tattoo expo for the first time. She got her first tattoo at the Tornado Alley tattoo expo.

"I am from Plainview and got my first tattoo here today, at 21 years old," Vargas explained. "I also got my nose pierced today. My first tattoo was inspired by the idea to commemorate my uncle, and I would like to get more tattoos eventually."

The next tattoo expo in Lubbock is scheduled for Feb. 2-Feb. 4 2018 and will be the fourth Lubbock Tattoo Expo. The second Tornado Alley tattoo expo is expected to return next year. If one of the many ink lover's lives nearby, there is a good event for them to attend in the years to come.

rgolden0133@students.
southplainscollege.edu

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'The Defenders' satisfies Marvel fans with exciting team ups

by RILEY GOLDEN
Entertainment Editor

The underground criminal ninja organization known as the Hand is after the Immortal Iron Fist, and they are willing to level New York to get him.

"Marvel's The Defenders" is an eight-episode series on Netflix that sees Charlie Cox, Finn Jones, Mike Colter, and Krysten Ritter reprise their respective roles as Daredevil, Iron Fist, Luke Cage, and Jessica Jones in the culmination of what their individual series' have been approaching for the past two years.

Matt Murdock (Cox) was blinded as a child and developed super hearing abilities that allow him to pinpoint things better than those with sight. Now he is a lawyer by day and Daredevil by night. Between "Daredevil" seasons 1 and 2, the Devil of Hell's Kitchen stopped Madame Gao's (Wai Ching Ho) underground Hand operations, confronted and defeated Wilson Fisk (Vincent D'Onofrio), and encountered the Punisher (John Bernthal).

The other individual Defenders' series are good, but Charlie Cox does an incredible amount of justice to the role of Daredevil. Seasons 1 and 2 of "Marvel's Daredevil" are arguably the best material to come out of the Marvel Cinematic Universe to date.

Jessica Jones (Ritter) is an alcoholic private investigator with superhuman strength. In "Marvel's Jessica Jones" season 1, Jessica takes a case that leads her to Zebadiah Kilgrave, or Purple Man (David Tennant), who she kills. Jessica also meets and hooks up with Luke Cage (Colter).

"Jessica Jones" season 1 is kind of boring, but Cage's presence is great for the dynamics of the series and Kristen Ritter plays a perfect Jessica Jones.

Luke Cage was in jail when he was beaten within an inch of his life. A doctor at the prison did an experiment on Cage that gave him unbreakable skin and super strength. In season 1 of "Marvel's Luke Cage," Cage encounters Cottonmouth (Mahershala Ali), Black Mariah (Alfre Woodard), and Diamondback (Erik LaRay Harvey) and comes out on top. That is, until the prison he broke out of years ago comes looking for him. The stakes never really feel too high in "Luke Cage" like they do in "Daredevil." The action is cool, and Mike Colter fits the role extremely well.

When Danny Rand (Jones) was 10 years old, his parents' plane crashed with him on and his parents on board. He was the only survivor. Danny was

rescued by some monks from a different dimension, known as K'un-Lun. He was trained by the monks of K'un-Lun and became the Immortal Iron Fist.

In "Marvel's Iron Fist" season 1, Danny meets Colleen Wing (Jessica Henwick), and encounters two of the leaders of the Hand, Madame Gao and Bakuto (Ramon Rodriguez), who also trained Colleen. Danny's one responsibility as the Immortal Iron Fist was to protect K'un-Lun, and he failed. His guilt from this will follow him into "The Defenders" series.

Claire hook up, and afterward, Detective Misty Knight (Simone Missick), a friend of Cage, comes looking for him to update him on what's going on in Harlem and to let him know how he can help.

Matt is working as a pro bono lawyer, trying hard to keep his feet on the ground and off the rooftops, and letting the NYPD do their job. After he finishes the case he was working on, Karen Page (Deborah Ann Woll), a close friend of Matt's, asks if she can get a statement on the case

"it's ready." New York then experiences a massive earthquake. Right before the earthquake, the husband that Jessica was tracking killed himself in

“But when we first see Daredevil, he’s questioning White Hat, and there’s no doubt that this is the Devil of Hell’s Kitchen”

her apartment. After the earthquake, Misty takes Jessica in for questioning.

Some kids break into someone's store, and the owner tries to shoot them when Matt saves them,

getting mixed up in something bad. So Luke followed him to a warehouse where he sees a man they call White Hat, one of the five founders of the Hand.

The sword wielded by the ally Danny and Colleen met in Cambodia leads them to the same warehouse as Cage. When Danny goes after the kid that Luke was following,

them to the same place.

Danny calls out Alexandra, who's having a meeting at Midland Circle, and she sicks her ninjas on Danny for an awesome conference room fight. When Danny starts getting pinned down Luke shows up just in time to help. This makes for some sweet tag-team action when Jessica and Matt – with Jessica's scarf tied around his head – show up to join the party for one rad fight scene that leads them into hiding in a Chinese restaurant.

Danny writes the restaurant owners a nice check so they can stick around, and the restaurant owners insist that they prepare food for them. So the Defenders sit down for a late-night meal and to get to know each other when the Hand comes after them with full force, which is when Matt finds out that Elektra is alive.

As cool as this show is, we don't get to see Matt suited up until the fifth episode of the season, which is kind of a bummer. But when we first see Daredevil, he's questioning White Hat, and there's no doubt that this is the Devil of Hell's kitchen. The Murdock boys have the devil in them, and the first appearance of Charlie Cox as Daredevil in this series had me on my toes. It was brutal and left no questions about who Matt Murdock is.

Fast forward a little bit and the heroes have gathered all of their friends at Misty's police station. Danny has been taken by Elektra, and the other Defenders are stuck at the police station, brainstorming how to get out and save Danny.

In the middle of this, Foggy brings Matt a "change of clothes," his Daredevil suit. This scene is so cool, because it shows Foggy taking steps to accept who Matt is.

So, the drunk private investigator with super strength, the unbreakable man, the Immortal Iron Fist, and the Devil of Hell's Kitchen go to stop Elektra and the Hand in what is an awesome fight scene between the Defenders and the three remaining leaders of the hand.

Madame Gao was one of the cooler enemies in this series, but Sigourney Weaver's Alexandra was a weak villain and pales in comparison to Vincent D'Onofrio's Wilson Fisk from "Daredevil."

"The Defenders" is a decent culmination of events for these four heroes with super cool team-ups and fight scenes. But it lacks a true villain.

I give "Marvel's The Defenders" a 7.8 out of 10.

7.8/10

rgolden3411@students.southplainscollege.edu



Jessica Jones, Danny Rand, Matt Murdock, and Luke Cage team up to take on the Hand in "Marvel's The Defenders."

Photo courtesy of NETFLIX

At the beginning of "Marvel's The Defenders" season 1, we meet Alexandra Reid (Sigourney Weaver), the leader of the five founders of the Hand, who is dying of cancer.

Luke is getting out of

over a bite to eat.

Jessica is still drinking out of contempt for her powers, and she meets up with her friend, Trish Walker (Rachael Taylor), on her way home. When she gets to her apartment,

telling the owner that they're just kids. Later, he meets up with Foggy, who tells him his knuckles "speak volumes" about what he has been doing. Matt gets upset when Foggy calls him out, but

Luke steps in to protect him, and a fight breaks out between Luke Cage and the Immortal Iron Fist. This is just so cool. Cage brushes off every attack and throws Danny around until he unleashes the power of the Iron Fist on Luke's face and sends him flying.

Claire and Colleen bring Luke and Danny together to talk to each other, and they realize that they're on the same side and can work together to fight the Hand.

Alexandra brings Elektra Natchios (Elodie Yung), Matt's ninja girlfriend, back from the dead and calls her the



The Murdock boys have the devil in them, and sometimes you can see it.

Photo courtesy of NETFLIX

prison when he's met by none other than Foggy Nelson (Elden Henson), who is there to let Luke know that the law firm of Hogarth, Benowitz & Chow are at his disposal, should he ever need them. Seeing Foggy, Daredevil's best friend, greet Cage in the second scene of the series is so cool and delivers a solid foreshadow of how awesome it's going to be to see these heroes and their supporting characters meet each other.

Cage couldn't care less and immediately goes to Harlem in search of Claire Temple (Rosario Dawson), the nurse who also gave medical aid to Matt Murdock. Luke and

there is a mom and a daughter waiting for her so they can ask her to look for their husband/father. Jessica begrudgingly accepts the case, only to be told by her "friend," Jeri Hogarth (Carrie-Anne Moss), of Hogarth, Benowitz & Chow, that she should drop it.

After a brief stop in Cambodia, where they may or may not have encountered Elektra – yes, the dead one – Danny and Colleen meet an ally just in time for him to die, but he tells them to track the Hand in New York.

Alexandra is sitting on the roof of a high rise when Madame Gao approaches her and tells her

Foggy tells him he's there to help. He offers Matt some pro bono cases that he doesn't have time for, one of which involves Jessica Jones.

Jessica is being questioned by Misty when Matt bursts through the door and tells Misty she can't question Jessica anymore without him present. This scene is cool because it's basically Daredevil and Jessica Jones in the same room together, although Matt is the only person in the room aware of it. Jessica doesn't know who he is and doesn't want his help.

The investigation that Misty gave Luke led him to some 18-year-old kid

Black Sky. Bringing her back to life used up the last of the Hand's life-restoring substance, which seems to be their largest motivator in this series. Alexandra plans on using the Black Sky to get the Iron Fist, the only thing that can unlock the door to their substance. Alexandra is holding Stick (Scott Glenn), Matt's and Elektra's mentor, hostage when he cuts off his hand to get free.

Danny's and Luke's investigations lead them to Midland Circle Financial – where Daredevil had his showdown with the Hand – while Jessica's investigation and Matt's history with the Hand lead

Comic Corner

Comics of the week for the weeks of
Aug. 30 and Sept. 6

BOOM! Studios

Go Go Power Rangers #2

"Go Go Power Rangers #2" is following the teenage Rangers a short time after they became the Power Rangers. They're all struggling to balance being a Ranger and a high school student.

Trini, the Yellow Ranger, and Jason, the Red Ranger, start testing their powers and abilities as Rangers and they develop a nice sense of chemistry.

Rita Repulsa, Alpha, Zordon, and the Rangers triggered my nostalgia. The pages of this comic are colorful and beautiful.



Red Hood and the Outlaws Annual #1

In "Red Hood and the Outlaws Annual #1," Red Hood -- Jason Todd, a former robin -- and the Outlaws -- Bizarro, a faulty Superman clone, and Artemis, a renegade Amazon -- team up with the original Robin, Dick Grayson, Nightwing.

The Outlaws track the Russians to a circus and are blending in as acts to follow the investigation.

The fact that Dick grew up in a circus makes him kind of vulnerable during this mission, which opens the door for him and Jason to reconnect.



Dark Horse Comics

Halo: Rise of Atriox #1

"Halo: Rise of Atriox #1" follows a squad of United Nations Space Command Marines who are stranded on a planet. They could leave the planet if it weren't for Atriox and his Brutes.

Beatrix, the A.I. personality in this "Halo" comic, tells Sergeant Kress that it's "safe to assume" that the Brutes just want the Marines dead.

Beatrix proceeds to inform Kress as the Marines' numbers dwindle, which adds a real sense of drama and peril to the comic.



Marvel Comics

Astonishing X-Men #3

In the first two issues of "Astonishing X-Men," the reader learns that Professor Charles Xavier is alive in the astral plane and being held captive by the Shadow King.

Psylocke sends Logan, Gambit, Rogue, and Fantomex into the astral plane. In "Astonishing X-Men #3," the reader gets a glimpse into the mind of former Wolverine, Logan. He feels unworthy and irredeemable as his insecurities cause him to fall under the Shadow King's control.



DC Comics

Batman #30

In "The War of Jokes & Riddles" series, Joker and the Riddler have assembled different villains from Batman's rogues gallery to fight each other over Gotham.

Batman has joined the Riddler's side and fights Kite Man. Batman repeatedly tells Kite Man to stay down because Batman doesn't take pleasure in fighting him.

The story of this issue is followed by a conversation that Kite Man has had with his son about his son's mom calling Kite Man a joke.



Generations: The Iron #1

"Generations: The Iron #1" follows Ironheart, Riri Williams, to the future, where former Iron Man, Tony Stark, is now the Sorcerer Supreme.

Riri meets the kids of some of the Avengers, and Sue and Reed Richards' son, Franklin.

Tony shows Riri a beautiful future that she will one day help build. "Generations: The Iron #1" brings Tony Stark and Riri Williams together in a beautiful spin of colors and panels.



The Black Racer and Shilo Norman Special #1

In "The Black Racer and Shilo Norman Special #1," Shilo Norman is Mister Miracle, a man who can get out of any trap. While performing a challenge for some playboy, The Black Racer, the herald of death for the New Gods, appears to kill Mister Miracle.

"The Black Racer and Shilo Norman Special #1" is a fun, refreshing, action-packed cosmic thriller about Jack Kirby's New Gods.



Iceman #5

In the first four issues of "Iceman," Bobby Drake, Iceman, has been struggling with reconnecting with his parents who don't approve of his powers or him being a part of the X-Men.

On top of that, Bobby is gay and in "Iceman #5," the reader gets a glimpse of what it might be like to come out to unaccepting loved ones. Bobby's struggle of coming out to his parents adds an incredible dynamic to the pages of these comics, and gives him the anger to demolish Juggernaut in a fight.



Darkseid Special #1

In the pages of "Darkseid Special #1," readers see a side of Darkseid rarely seen -- a vulnerable one.

Darkseid is the ruler of Apokalips for several reasons, but one more than any other: fear. Then, a group of teenagers broke out of the orphanage and started a rebellion, encouraging people not to fear Darkseid.

At the end of the issue, he reveals to one of the rebels that every night he dreams horrible visions that people will stop fearing him.



Venomverse: War Stories #1

In the Venomverse, all of the heroes possess the venom symbiote. In "Venomverse: War Stories #1," the reader sees Dr. Stephen Strange and Captain America talking about losing a war and needing more recruits. To get these recruits, Dr. Strange pulls whoever possesses the symbiote in that universe, to the Venomverse.

In "War Stories #1" the venom symbiote bonds with the Black Panther, Dr. Doom, and the Punisher.

The Punisher is by far the most stirring (anti) hero that I've seen bonded with the venom symbiote.



Star Wars: Mace Windu: Jedi of the Republic #1

"Mace Windu #1" takes place during the Clone Wars, when Master Windu takes Jedi Knight Kit Fisto, Jedi Master Prosser Dibs, and Jedi Knight Rissa Mano on his covert mission to a jungle planet in the outer rim called Hissrich.

Kit Fisto, a Nautolan, has the aptitude for surviving harsh environments. Prosser Dibs is blind and has an intense connection with the Force, and Rissa Mano is a young Jedi Knight and an amazing pilot. Mace Windu and Kit Fisto are my two favorite Jedi, and their purple-and-green lightsabers swinging gracefully through the pages of this issue is beautiful.



Green Arrow #30

In the first four issues of "Hard Traveling Hero," Green Arrow, former billionaire playboy Oliver Queen, teamed up with the Flash, Wonder Woman, Superman, and my favorite, Batman, to take on the Ninth Circle, a criminal organization that controls corporations by means of blackmail.

In "Hard Traveling Hero Part 5," Green Arrow teams up with Green Lantern to go to space and find the Ninth Circle's satellite, their "eye in the sky." Lantern gives Arrow a sweet space suit, and the issue overflows with emerald.

Back Talk: Campus carry sparks disagreement among students

Concealed carry can keep campuses safe

Campus carry puts student on edge



by NICOLE LOPEZ
Sports Editor

Texas has allowed concealed handguns in public for about 20 years. Now, college campuses can be added to the list.

On June 1, 2015, Texas Senate Bill 11 was passed and signed by Governor Greg Abbott. The bill states any individual who has a license to carry, or a concealed handgun license, can carry a firearm on public college campuses.

Last year, this bill went into effect for only universities. On August 1, the bill went into effect for all college campuses.

It's a smart and safe move from the Texas Legislature. Many individuals would argue that having a gun on campus is not safe, no matter what the situation is. This is something I can't agree with. Having a weapon to protect yourself, or others, is probably the best thing in this day and age.

Imagine if a faculty member had a weapon during the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting in Connecticut

on December 14, 2014. I know it's not a college campus. But, it's still a campus. If one faculty member had a weapon, I can guarantee the end result would have been different.

Another example is the Virginia Tech shooting, which happened on a college campus in Blacksburg, Virginia. It's considered the deadliest shooting by a single gunman. Again, the aftermath would have been completely different if a student, or a faculty member, would have been carrying a weapon.

I know many students are concerned about their safety because the weapon is concealed. But I don't understand why this is an issue. If anything, if it wasn't concealed, I think it would cause a greater distraction, and you'll be more worried about the weapon because it's seen. You know what they say, "out of sight, out of mind."

There are also concerns that if a student is carrying a gun, they might use the weapon for the wrong reason. For example, if a professor makes them upset in any way, many are concerned the student can use their weapon on the professor.

I can see where this can be concerning. But, in order to get a concealed carry license or gun permit of any kind, you have to go through different kinds of tests, including a background check. They check to make sure you're stable enough to own a gun, and I'm sure they

wouldn't let someone carry one if they get upset about every little thing.

I think having a concealed weapon is beneficial, especially if a shooting were to happen (hopefully it never will). Let's say there was a shooting on campus, and the campus was open carry, meaning you could see the weapon. The gunman would shoot anyone who has a weapon, because they can see it, and they want to take out those people first. There wouldn't be much of a point protecting yourself if you're the first target.

Now, let's try the same scenario, except the campus is concealed carry. The gunman wouldn't know who has a weapon. This gives an individual who is carrying the element of surprise, which can stop the shooter and save lives. Saving lives and avoiding a school massacre can be done because of this bill.

I believe the Texas Legislature was thinking long-term when passing this bill. It's beneficial for students and for faculty members. If a campus shooting were to happen, I believe this bill could save lives. That's always something we should strive for.

nlopez0806@student.southplainscollege.com



by RILEY GOLDEN
Entertainment Editor

College campuses are no place for guns.

On Aug. 1, Texas Senate Bill 11 went into effect, allowing concealed carry permit holders to carry side arms on community college campuses.

Although there are some benefits to passing the bill, allowing the concealed carry of a firearm on a college campus is just not necessary. There have been numerous high school and college shootings in my lifetime, but never did I think the state would be handing out permits to 21 year olds with a measly eight-hour training course under their belts and saying, "hey, this permit lets you take your gun onto college campuses."

I understand that is an extreme viewpoint, but there are extreme people out there. That Glock 18 on your hip might help you feel safe, but how is the rest of the class going to feel when

the professor is threatening you with failing grades? In most cases, it would be better if campus carry only allowed professors and faculty members to carry weapons. Take it even further and only allow tenured professors, or

police because he seems like one of them "good ol' boys," then he shoots up your class for failing the midterm? You never know what someone's intentions are, and if they may or may not have a gun. Since you can't ask them about it, you are left to speculate.

The most troublesome aspect of the law may not be the fact that people can carry concealed handguns on campus. The fact that I legally cannot ask you if you have a



professors and faculty with military training, to carry a concealed weapon.

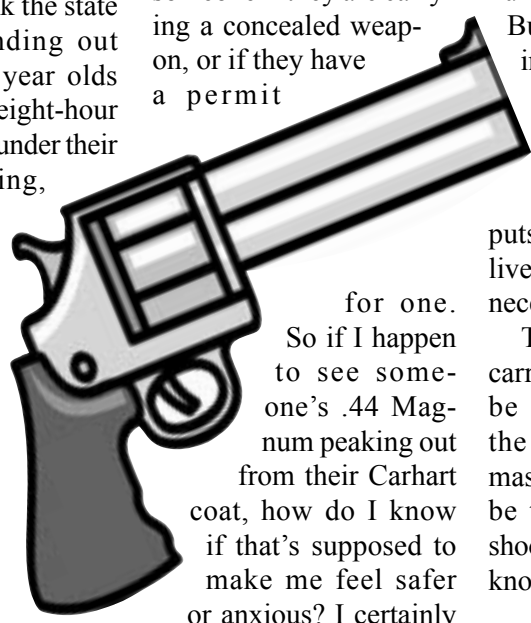
The thing is, as a student, professor, or faculty member, you cannot ask someone if they are carrying a concealed weapon, or if they have a permit

concealed carry permit makes it really hard for me to just ignore or accept the bill and move on with school.

Guns are great for hunting and war zones. But what kind of hunting is going to be done, or war is going to be fought, on a college campus? Passing Texas Senate Bill 11 puts too many students' lives at risk. It is also unnecessary and illogical.


The person you see carrying a firearm might be the one who stops the shooter attempting mass murder, or he might be the mass-murdering shooter and you just don't know.

rgolden3411@students.southplainscollege.com



Word on the Street

Is your tuition worth it?



“Yes, I had mine paid for with scholarships. But I feel like it’s a good price here.”

Destiny Lyon
Elementary Education
Freshman
Lenorah

“Absolutely, my professor knows exactly what he’s doing. I think this is a great way to go.”

Lane Farrar
Electrical and Power Transmission Technology
Freshman
Spearman

“Yes, a week and half in, and I’m just feeling hopeful about what this semester looks like!”

Juan Rodriguez
Commercial Music Performance Certification
Sophomore
Clovis, N.M.

“Well, honestly, I don’t pay for my school, but I believe if I did, my tuition would be worth it. I mean, it’s going for my career, and so I think every bit would be worth it.”

Angelly Perez
Nurse Anesthetist
Sophomore
Plainview

“Yes, I’d say my tuition is worth it. I’m on financial aid, so it pays for everything I need. The classes are great. They’re not bad at all, so the instructor really makes sure you understand.”

James Mile
Industrial Manufacturing and Merging Technology Use
Junior
Denver City

“Yes, my professors are really nice, and they really help you out if you need something, and encourage you to ask questions and make sure you understand what you’re learning.”

Miguel Perez
Diesel Mechanic
Freshman
Gruver

Compiled by Randi Jimes and Rebecca Ruiz

Beauty standards of society could lead to misconceptions with self image



by **RANDI JINES**
Editorial Assistant

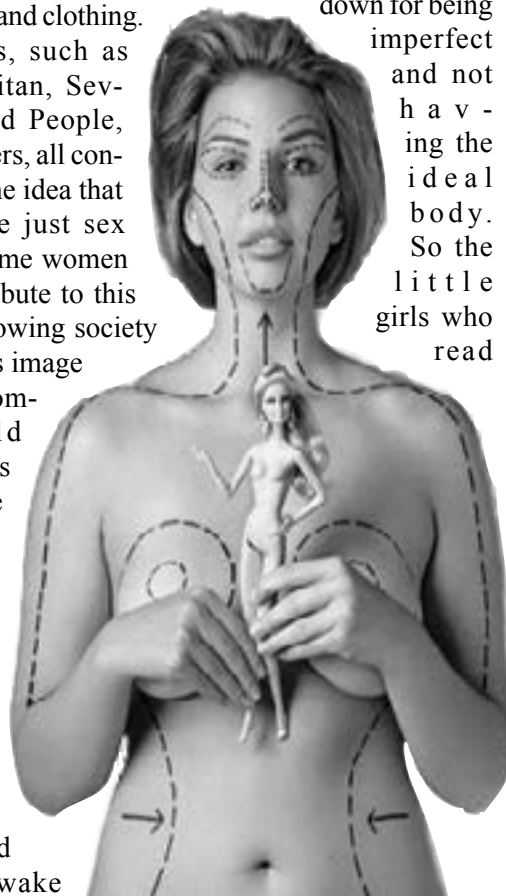
For decades, the media has highlighted how women look, what they wear, and how they portray themselves.

The focus point is always based on their body, face, and clothing. Magazines, such as Cosmopolitan, Seventeen, and People, among others, all contribute to the idea that women are just sex objects. Some women even contribute to this idea by allowing society to form this image that all women should be flawless and wake up without a blemish or imperfection in sight.

Even if these women who are considered beautiful wake

up with an imperfection, it is edited out, giving people the false idea of what beauty is. Although it may be rewarding to some women to give the impression that they are considered "attractive" to society, is that all that a woman's worth depends on?

There are endless headlines comparing what singer or actress wore a certain article of clothing better, or pointing out the cellulite and stretch marks that photographers captured while the celebrities were at the beach, highlighting every flaw they may have. Little girls look up to these influencers while society tears them down for being imperfect and not having the ideal body.



So the little girls who read

these articles grow up with the idea that their

perfect body and luscious hair, not intelligence or

who are not considered beautiful can still be suc-

own definition of beauty. Celebrities and influencers

need to show the younger generation of girls that it is OK to have flaws, because everyone does.

Freckles, pimples, stretch marks, cellulite, birthmarks, scars, or whatever else considered to be imperfections are all beautiful in their own way and should start to be seen as such. Women should start to be recognized for more



body is the way to success, and that any flaw on their body is considered ugly. Sadly, that is the way it is for women and young girls.

They are praised for having the perfect abs and curves. But no one cares to praise what knowledge and talents they may have. Women who are considered "beautiful" are physically appealing. Girls grow up believing that if you want to be considered beautiful or worthy, you have to have the

kindness. This is why so many girls struggle with self confidence, because they are taught that the only beauty that matters is physical. Little girls should not be taught that stretch marks, cellulite, or even pimples are an imperfection, because they are a part of being human.

Society needs to start recognizing and praising women for their intelligence, knowledge, and grace, not for having perfectly toned and tan legs. Janis Joplin is the perfect example of how women

successful. She grew up being criticized for how she looked, but it did not stop her from becoming an icon of the music industry.

Society sets these expectations of beauty on girls at such a young age but does not recognize that there is more than just outward appearance that makes a person beautiful. No one was created the same, so there should not be one idea of what beauty is.

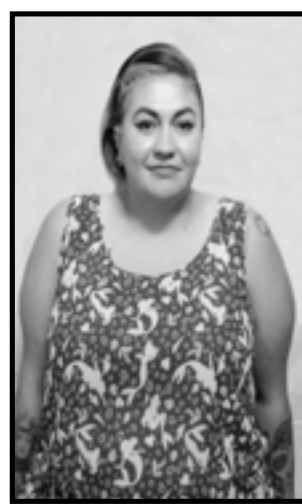
People need to start recognizing that each and every person has their

than just bodies and more of what their minds hold, because that is where knowledge and power come from.

Women should start to set an example for younger generations that focusing on their bodies is not the way to lead a rewarding life. They need to show these young girls that the body they are given is beautiful in its own way.

—
rjines4851@student.southplainscollege.edu

Students speeding to class can cause traffic fatalities



by **DEZ MENDEZ**
Feature Editor

As the journey into a new semester of college begins, remember some common sense when it comes to driving.

On Aug. 28, as I was driving to my first class, I stopped at a red light on 13th Street and College Avenue in Levelland, and waited for my turn. When the light changed, I waited for a few seconds before I took off. As I was heading toward the college on my now green light, I had to speed up as someone who ran the red light was speeding. He or she would

have wrecked into me if I hadn't.

When I made it to class, I began thinking about what had almost happened. It could have been a horrible wreck, as it would have hit on my side. College kids are always in a hurry to get to class because they are running late and not paying attention to how they drive.

I have noticed that almost all the wrecks that seem to happen in Levelland once class is in session are due to speeding college kids trying to get to their class.

You always see Highway Patrolmen along side the road where they have pulled students over for speeding. Speeding tickets

are not cheap guys! You can eventually lose your license.

It seems that most students are speeding due to being late, because they either over slept, or didn't want to wake up a little earlier. Sleeping an extra 10 minutes is not worth putting your life, or someone else's life, in danger, because you are trying not to be late for class.

Whatever the case maybe, nothing is worth the alternative of what could happen.

This irritates me a lot due to the fact that younger kids do walk to school along the route



that many college students take. If you are not paying attention, you could

hit or run over one of those kids. It is not worth killing someone because you wanted to party the night before, or you just wanted to sleep an extra few minutes.

Cars can be dangerous objects, especially if you are speeding and not paying attention.

Nearly 1.3 million people die in car crashes each year. Of the 3,287 deaths occurring each day as a result of motor vehicle accidents, more than half involve adults between the ages of 15 to 44 years old, according to one road safety organization.

Do you ever catch yourself speeding, almost running a red light or running the light all together?

Do you ever wonder what might happen if you did hit someone or wreck?

Trust me, it is not worth wrecking or hurting someone. You have a life to live, and so do others. Use caution and better judgment when driving. Wake up early, I know it is not fun, and sleeping in is nice. But it's better to be safe than sorry.

As the new semester progresses, take the time to stop, think, go to bed earlier or wake up a little earlier to drive smarter and safer. Driving is a privilege that can be easily taken away.

—
dmendez2933@student.southplainscollege.edu



Value of college degree makes cost worth it



by ANNIE GOLDEN
Editorial Assistant

In this day and age, college tuition bills have reached astronomically high costs.

Adding books from large companies, school supplies, and technological or physical tools that help students outside of class, only costs more money upfront out of a student's pockets.

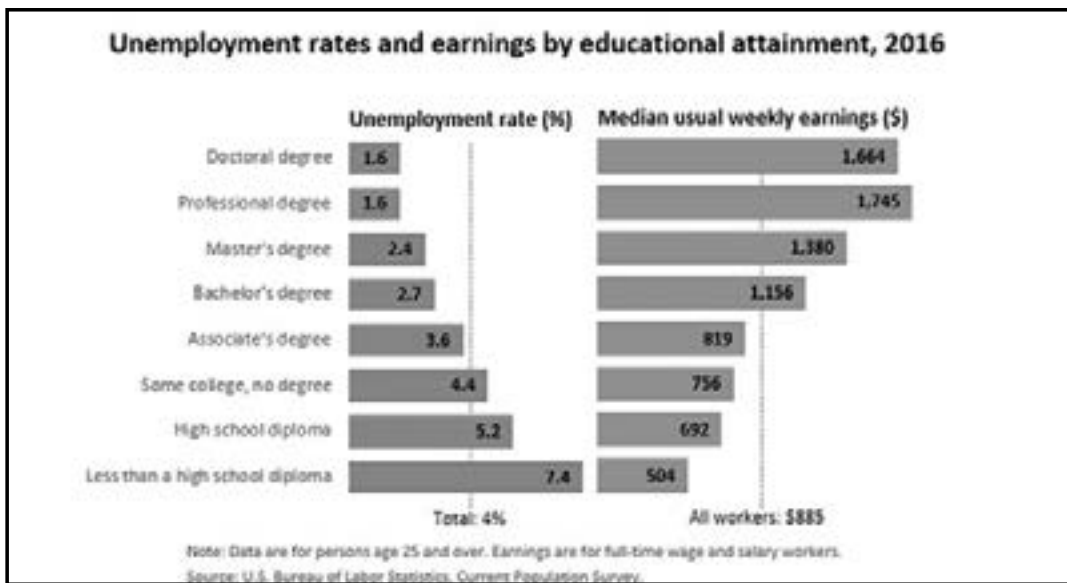
It is a hotly debated topic for most, but I believe college is worth the money. People who graduate from college make more more capital per year, with more job opportunities open to those who have established themselves with college degrees. Young adults learn more, including important interpersonal skills, in college.

According to one study, in 2016, the average salary for those with a high school diploma who were 25 years old or older, was about \$35,615, while the income for those with a bachelor's degree was \$65,482, and \$92,525 for those with advanced degrees. The median salary was \$100,096 in 2011.

It is crucial for me to make a high salary later in life to obtain the lifestyle I prefer. College debt is real, but if you obtain your college degree, you will be able to pay off your debt and upgrade your life from that point on. You also can create more opportunities for yourself.

Corrupting my future opportunities and career by getting a minimum-wage job or relatively low pay for a mediocre job is unwarranted in a century when students have limitless possibilities in their choice of degrees.

After careful



deliberation, I consider long-term goals to be most important, because when I am in my 60s, I would prefer the ultimate sum of money for sustaining my preferred lifestyle.

In order to achieve that, grasping a degree in whatever my interests are can help me get a job that has a built-in retirement plan or provides a sum high enough for a savings plan.

Young adults need college to teach them interpersonal skills, to teach them lessons only capable of learning in real-life situations in college. Having broad knowledge is always useful. Interpersonal skills to learn in college are speaking publicly to groups and

being a leader anywhere you are, along with ad-

but also a lot of triumph, which can lead to self-



beginning in life, it is time to let go of the past, which is so important when both blessings and lessons are being thrown like sacks of flour at your face. As a result of all of the accomplishments and failures from college, there will be no regrets standing in the way.

Chase opportunity, chase a degree, and live a life of

serenity. To create peace in my life, I will obtain a degree, because I will make the money back and prove college is worth the money

jgolden0133@students.southplainscollege.edu

Different opinions should not lead to criticism



by NICOLE LOPEZ
Sports Editor

The world is filled with people from different backgrounds.

We all have our own opinions and beliefs. But, since when is it OK to criticize people for thinking differently?

I saw a post on Facebook a few days ago. One of my friends posted on their status saying that if anyone didn't agree with

him about a certain topic, then unfriend him and not be friends with him anymore. I mean, it's not a big deal; it's Facebook. But, it's the principle of the matter.

Why go to great lengths just because someone doesn't agree with you? We're human! We're different! We all have different opinions on topics. It's going to happen. The world isn't in black or white.

This is something I have to get off my chest. I hate when people say they can't be friends with someone if they don't have the same beliefs or opinions as they do. It's idiotic.

There was a point in time when people had rational discussions about religion or politics and, that was it. It was discussions. It wasn't cussing

each other out on Facebook, or bashing people on Twitter, or making snarky comments and telling people they're idiots. Why does it have to go that far? Why can't it go back to when people respected a person's opinion and moved on?

I'm a religious person. Most of my friends are non-religious, or they do not share the same religious beliefs as I do. Does that matter to me? Absolutely not. Do I make Facebook

statuses about it? Nope. I have different political views than my friends and peers. Do I make a status on Facebook or Twitter saying "delete me because your opinion is not like mine, so it's irrelevant." Can anyone see how childish that is, or is it just me? If the person is a jerk about their beliefs and tries to force other people to agree with them,

then I can see why that's acceptable. But, you don't have to announce it on

It's like you're throwing a temper tantrum.

If the topic upsets you

of course. You can unfriend someone if they don't share your same



Photo illustration by AUTUMN BIPPERT/PLAINSMAN PRESS



Facebook statuses about it? Nope. I have different political views than my friends and peers. Do I make a status on Facebook or Twitter saying "delete me because your opinion is not like mine, so it's irrelevant." Can anyone see how childish that is, or is it just me? If the person is a jerk about their beliefs and tries to force other people to agree with them,

Facebook. Be a man (or woman) and delete them yourself.

I don't see the need to not be friends with someone because they don't believe, or share, the same beliefs as I do. That's like saying I'm not going to be friends with anyone because their favorite color is red and mine is blue. It doesn't make sense to me. I can't wrap my head around the idea of someone actually being upset with someone because they don't have the same opinion on something.

so much just don't talk about it. It's that simple. I hardly talk about religion or politics. Why? Because it always leads to someone getting upset, and then the discussion turns into an argument. If it's something I feel strongly about, that's when I will share my thoughts and opinions rationally. I would expect other people to do the same. But, of course, we can't always have it our way.

In the end, this is America. You can do whatever you want, within reason,

opinions. Just like how I can express my thoughts in this article.

Believe in what you want, who you want, and when you want. Don't let anyone influence you differently and definitely, don't let anyone tell you your opinions are wrong. If you have to change for people to be friends with you, then they're the problem. Never change for anyone.

nlopez0806@students.southplainscollege.edu

NCAA ruining college football with unneeded rules



by **Dom Puente**
Staff Writer

With the college football season in full swing, the NCAA continues to dictate the game with pointless rules and an outdated perspective.

Thousands of sports fanatics tune in to watch college football every year, while the fan base continues to grow with younger generations eager to experience college football.

As I have become one of those young fans who enjoys the game, I feel college football has been lacking an exciting factor to create more order and gain more money for the NCAA.

ple touchdown.

Being told there are only a few ways to display emotions after something big is a disappointing use of power. Having penalties such as excessive celebration and unsportsmanlike conduct due to celebrating can hinder the outcome of a game. The NCAA feels a player is being over the top with his personal expressions, which is a bad look for the game.

Players and coaches may not feel the same about the type of celebra-



power the NCAA uses to take advantage of and holds players back from expressing themselves.

The efforts of making a game safer by implementing rules can create a better game for players and

not determine if a player should be penalized for diving into the end zone if no one was near the player.

Rules such as this should be excluded from the game of football. They

implying a total makeover of the way the game is played. Creating a better game that appeals to the excitement a younger audience can admire should be a top priority.

When Oregon began their uniform and style transition, players flocked to the university in order to play for the Ducks. They weren't the best team in the country, yet the style and little change inspired other teams to do the same and change the status quo.

This became an on-going trend that has changed the way coaches recruit and how schools and the NCAA market college football.

With changes such as bright and attention-grabbing uniforms, reformed celebration rules that can keep the audience excited during the game can bring more attention. Having crazy uniforms and celebrating big plays can be perceived as negative, but it is just kids expressing themselves and displaying excitement for their accomplishments after putting in countless hours of hard work.

The game has become a way to make money and bring in sponsors along with marketing opportunities. The focus needs to be shifted back to the players and creating a game that

is fun and exciting, while bringing people back for more without questioning the NCAA's decisions and rules.

After all, the players are what keeps the sport going. That applies to any sport, whether it be men's or women's sports in junior leagues, high school, college or the professional level.

We turn our televisions on and flock to stadiums in order to watch athletes play sports. The NCAA might create rules and regulations, but athletes do not have to play.

They can do anything else with their lives, yet they make the sacrifices to play a game that we love to watch. Without the athletes, we don't have sports, which is a discussion the NCAA needs to have because they are working in their best interests, not for the athletes.

College football players are the reason why colleges have million-dollar facilities, stadiums and bring them schools millions.

While the NCAA meets to discuss rising topics, they need to talk about ways to create a more exciting game for the players, instead of ways to create a game that is already outdated, bland, and dull.

dpuente3388@students.southplainscollege.edu



Through the years, the NCAA has flooded the game of football with rules that do not affect the game in any shape or form.

An example of pointless rules are celebration penalties. A player and a team should not be penalized for celebrating an accomplishment, whether it be a game-deciding touchdown, a tackle that could decide the game's outcome or even a sim-

ulations being penalized or that they may fall into the gray area for the officials to call. If that is the case, the rules of celebrations should not be as strict or even used.

Younger fans such like me enjoy over-the-top celebrations, as they bring an exciting atmosphere to football. Regulating celebrations is a form of regulating emotions, which should not be a loud. It is a form of excessive

the people participating in football.

The game of football has been played for decades, yet the NCAA continues to flood in rules that hinder the game, as if there are not hundreds of rules already in place in a text book the size of a dictionary.

If rules are continuously being made, they should be placed in an effort to make the game better overall. They should

benefit an era of football that is dead. The older generations loved watching offenses run the "Power-I," yet it is hardly ever used because the game has adapted and evolved.

I see the game as being outdated, with rules benefiting an older generation who does not appreciate the flair and excitement the players are trying to create.

Change can scare people. However, I am not




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Cross Country teams begin season with dominant performance

by **DOM PUENTE**
Staff Writer

The South Plains College men's and women's cross country teams began the 2017 season with an impressive outing at the Texas Tech Open.

Erik Vance, head track and field coach at SPC, expressed his happiness to see how well his runners for both the men and women competed.

"Overall, I thought both teams did great to start the season," Coach Vance said. "Our runners showed that they can compete with just about anyone as long as they continue to get better from here."

Sophomore All-American Felix Kosegi, who is returning for his final season, led the Texans to a first-place finish with a time of 25:02.50 in the men's 8k race, which was held Sept. 9 at Chaparral Ridge Golf Course in Lubbock.

"Felix is one of the top runners in college," explained Coach Vance, "and he showed it pushing a professional athlete toward the end of the meet to finish second, yet finished first collegiately."

Andrew Bosquez

placed fifth for the Texans with a time of 25:57.10, while Benjamin Ronoh finished 18th with a time of 26:48.10.

Also competing for the Texans were Eric Arambula, who finished with a

stepped up and performed well, along with our other returning sophomore Leobardo, who improved significantly from where he started last year," said Coach Vance.

As a team, the Texans finished with 52 total team points, with an average team time of 26:47.16.

In the women's competition, SPC placed fifth in the 5k race with an average time of 20:26.42 and a total of 116 points.

"I thought our girls competed well," Coach Vance said. "The course seemed to be a little tougher on the women than the men, but they stepped up and put up solid times."

Sophomore Seselia Dala finished 11th overall with a time of 19:00.50, and sophomore Leslie Romero

finished 17th with a time of 19:21.70 out of 100 runners.

Also competing for the Lady Texans were sophomore Poro Gahekave, who finished with a time of 19:56.90, sophomore Caitlyn Mercer,

who finished with a time of 20:47.00, and Agnes Abrocquah, who finished with a time of 23:06.00.

For the Texans and the Lady Texans, both teams will be looking to top their impressive 2016 season, which was capped by a pair of top 10 finishes at the NJCAA national meet.

Coach Vance explained that the goal is to be better every season. But with the amount of success achieved last season, winning nearly every meet except for nationals, it can be difficult.

"After seeing the guys compete the way they did this week, it has shown me that we can hit the ground running and move up to the second or third position in nationals," explained Coach Vance.

The Texans will be competing this season with the task of defending their NJCAA Region V Championship from last season. That goal is more than possible with Kosegi as their top runner and an All-American a year ago. Kosegi led SPC to a third-place finish at the 2016 Cross Country National Championships in El Dorado, Kansas.

Competing against 298 runners, Kosegi placed fifth last year at the national meet with a time of 24:51.09. The Kenya native will lead the charge in hopes of bringing a national title back to SPC.

As for the Lady Texan cross country team, SPC is fortunate to have multi-

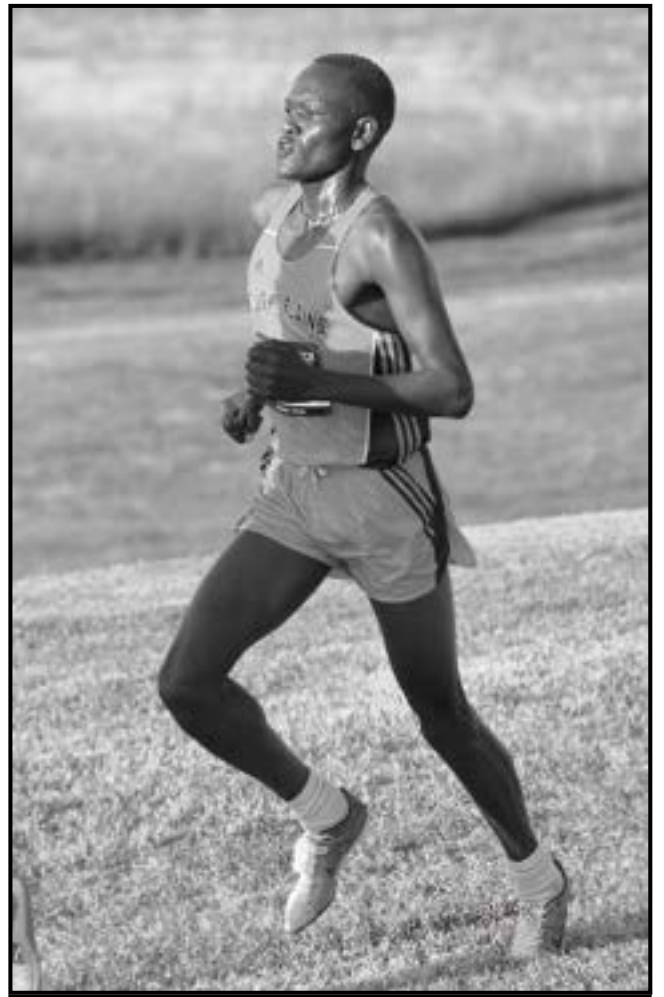
ple veteran All-American returners in Dala, Romero and Gahekave.

tional meet as a freshman, while Romero finished 14th and Gahekave fin-



Lady Texan Leslie Romero competed in the Texas Tech Open in Lubbock, finishing 17th in the women's 5k on Sept. 9.

DOM PUENTE/PLAINSMAN PRESS



Felix Kosegi placed second at the Texas Tech Open, helping the Texans place first as a team on Sept. 9.

DOM PUENTE/PLAINSMAN PRESS

"On the girls side, I feel that we need to be able to repeat what we did last year," Coach Vance said, "and give our girls a chance to bump up a few spots in the national meet and possibly take a home a national title for the women as well."

Experience will be a strength, as Dala placed 10th last year at the na-

ished 22nd out of 313 runners.

Both men and women's cross country teams will go on the road to compete in the New Mexico Highlands meet on Sept. 23.

dpuente3388@students.southplainscollege.edu

nlopez0806@students.southplainscollege.edu

NFL players get paid too much money



by **NICOLE LOPEZ**
Sports Editor

The NFL season has begun once again, and many people are excited to see how far their team will go this year.

I love watching football, and I know the players work hard for their money. But I can't

ber hearing on ESPN that Matthew Stafford, quarterback for the Detroit Lions, had signed a five-year contract extension worth \$27 million per year. This contract made Stafford the highest-paid player in NFL history!

I know this topic has been going on for quite some time now. Many people, including me, feel NFL players get paid too much for what they actually do. I'm not saying what they do isn't great. But, I'm saying getting paid millions of dollars for playing football shouldn't be on the highest-paying jobs list.

Doctors, firefighters, and military personnel

effects of playing football can be damaging to their health. Some of that is true. But, it doesn't come close to what military personnel go through every day. Military personnel are actually risking their lives on a day-to-day basis. They can end up dying from the work that they do. When is the last time a NFL player died during a game? Doctors and firefighters are saving lives. NFL players aren't saving lives. They're saving us from being bored every Sunday, Monday, or Thursday night. But that's about it.

NFL players might be the best in the world. But, do they really need to be making millions of dollars every year? Stafford is going to be making too much money! That's more than I can imagine. Also, I don't think he's worth the money. I'm not just targeting him, though. I can make any NFL player an example, including my favorite NFL team.

For example, I don't think quarterback Aaron Rodgers should be getting paid a lot either. I think he should be getting paid more than Stafford, but that's a discussion for another day.

It's not a favoritism thing. I'm not trying to single anyone out. I love watching the NFL as much as the next person. But maybe they can lower the sum they get paid. I think that's a great solution. Even though they're not risking their lives, they do entertain the public, and deserve some amount

of money. The NFL team owners should really think about how much they're paying these players. If we cut some of the players' salaries, we can use that money for more important things. The money can go to charities, people in need, lower ticket prices, or raise salaries for people who deserve it.

The NFL players play extremely hard, and they do risk their time to play the game we love to watch. I hope maybe someday, though, the NFL owners can see the players are getting paid too much for what they do.


nlopez0806@students.southplainscollege.edu



help thinking that maybe they make too much of it.

I kept up regularly with the NFL news during the off-season though, since I watch a lot of football. I remem-

ber don't even get paid that much money, and they're actually risking their lives every day. Someone can argue that football players risk their lives because of potential injuries, and the long-term



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September 18, 2017

Plainsman Press

Buried Treasures



Cadillac Ranch brings roadside culture to historic Route 66

by TYLER YORK
Editor-in-Chief

AMARILLO—

Just off a Texas highway, a pile of luxury cars sits nose-first in the dirt, stripped to the chassis, covered in graffiti, and baking in the sun.

A mere two-hour drive north to the historic Route 66 is a one-of-a-kind permanent fixture, one that indescribably draws people from around the country to express themselves in a way only Amarillo seems to offer.

Cadillac Ranch, as the art installation is known, has a history that spans more than four decades, having been set up originally in an Amarillo wheat field in 1974. But its inception story has an air of Hollywood mysticism that feels out of place in a setting like rural West Texas.

It all started with Chip Lord, Hudson Marquez and Doug Michels of San Francisco, who, as a combination of architects and artists, were known collectively as Ant Farm.

Supposedly inspired by a children's book about cars left at a bar, Ant Farm drafted the design for what would eventually be Cadillac Ranch. The piece itself would become a slanted tribute to Americana, as well as a celebration of the old classic Cadillac tailfin's evolution through the years.

As the story goes, Ant Farm was given a list—

public who would make it possible. So in 1974, a row of 10 junkyard Cadillacs was loaded into Texas soil, nose-first, reportedly leaned at an angle that corresponds to Egypt's Great Pyramid of Giza.

The installation stayed there for many years, before eventually moving from its original spot in 1997 with little fanfare. It was brought just a few miles down the road to its

A typical day out at Cadillac Ranch is a revolving door of photography, paint, and travelers from all around the country—sometimes even from beyond the border.

"You get all kinds of people out there," said Eric Miller, director of communications for the Convention & Visitor Council with the Amarillo Chamber of Commerce, regarding the variety of visitors Cadillac Ranch attracts. "There could be just as few as one car. I've been here when a couple church bus groups, I mean just came pouring off their buses."

The art project has obviously cemented itself as a part of West Texas roadside culture, if not American pop culture at large. For nearly three years, Cadillac Ranch has even been featured on the front page of popular highway oddities website Roadside America, in the site's Top Ten Trending list.

But what do visitors think about the installation?

Florida natives Keith and Charlotte Hines recently were passing through, on their way back from a wedding in California.

"It's iconic for sure," Keith Hines said, with his camera in hand.

There are usually few



ever, who just seem to be at Cadillac Ranch to

eos by James Brown and Cage the Elephant, among

a fun thing for people to leave their mark on? For lack of a definitive answer, most people just need to experience it for themselves.



"Most of the time, if it's daylight, somebody's out there" said Miller. "It's open 24/7, so you can even walk out there at night if you wanted to."

If you happen to forget your can of spray paint, never fear. There is almost always a friendly fellow vandal nearby to lend you their leftovers.

PHOTOS BY TYLER YORK/ PLAINSMAN PRESS

tyork0143@students.southplainscollege.edu

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new permanent home, which is on the side of an Interstate 40 frontage road in a cattle pasture.

Perhaps the most surprising piece of history about Cadillac Ranch, even for those who are familiar with the project and its impact on roadside culture, is the fact that the cars were initially untouched. They stood exactly as they had been loaded in, and people would come to see them at all hours of the day, staying a respectful distance away and respecting the art for the visual appeal the artists intended.

But it wasn't long before the more unsavory type of visitors began pulling off parts to take as criminal trophies, or graffiti tagging the cars.



literal, physical note with names written on it—of millionaires who might be interested in helping to finance a new art installation. That's when Amarillo local and billionaire eccentric Stanley Marsh 3 came into the picture.

Ant Farm had the idea, and it seemed Marsh was their man with the land, money, and allegedly a desire to create a piece of art that would confuse the

This happened slowly at first, but the practice grew so exponentially that it became the norm for visitors. After a certain point, it was explicitly encouraged by the artists themselves. The saying "if you can't beat 'em, join 'em" comes to mind, and it seems the artists knew well enough to embrace the power of a subversive cultural art movement when they saw one.

people in attendance without a device held out taking photos, at least on a mobile phone. Many bring along a more professional camera setup with them to document their visit.

There are some, how-

