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# THE PAN AMERICAN

The Student Newspaper of The University of Texas-Pan American

September 29, 2005

## SGA gives update on progress

By SANDRA GONZALEZ  
The Pan American

In recent years there have been all kinds of superlatives recorded at the University of Texas-Pan American, from construction to the hiring of the first female president in school history. Last week another precedent was set with the presentation of the State of the Student Body Address.

The Student Government Association (SGA) President Edward Adrian Sandoval, senior political science major, took the stage of the Student Union Theater Thursday. His goal was to present his plan for the next year and to let the 150 or so students in the audience know how they can help make it possible. It marked the first time a leader of student government took his message publicly to the constituency who made it happen at election time.

Sandoval made it a point to address some of the accomplishments made by SGA since the new administration took

See **SGA** page 12



Courtesy of University Relations

**SANDOVAL**

## Blind Faith?

By CLAUDETTE GONZALEZ  
The Pan American

In California a federal judge recently ruled that requiring school children to recite the Pledge of Allegiance is unconstitutional.

U.S. District Judge Lawrence Karlton ruled that the reference to "one nation under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance violates the children's First Amendment rights.

The ruling once again brings the issue to the forefront after the U.S. Supreme Court put it aside in June 2004 on procedural grounds. The court never actually addressed the merits of the case.

While the recent ruling applies only to three school districts in California, questions are arising about whether the U.S. Supreme Court will take the case again and what the verdict will be. Their ruling would affect schools across the nation, including the Rio Grande Valley.

"There is no assurance that the Supreme Court is going to take this case. They have complete discretion over their case load," said Political Science Department Chair Jerry Polinard. "But in all likelihood they'll bring it back up."

The Pledge of Allegiance was originally published in 1892 with no mention of God. That was not added in until 1954.



Melissa Martinez/The Pan American

**PLEDGE OF FAITH** - California courts have ruled against requiring school children to recite the Pledge of Allegiance each morning. Judge Lawrence Karlton said that the phrase "under God" violates the children's First Amendment rights.

"Because of what was called the Cold War - the conflict between the Soviet Union and the United States - we wanted to show the Godless communists that we were God-fearing people and so we injected that phrase, 'under God,' in there," said Polinard.

Locally, members of the University of Texas-Pan American community have strong opinions about whether the phrase

should stay.

Many, including Polinard, believe that this is one example of religion in government where it shouldn't be.

"I'm much more comfortable with religion being in the province of churches, and government being in the province of elected officials," said Polinard. "I prefer God-fearing people to run the country but I also think that whenever govern-

ment gets involved in religion, one ought to be a little nervous."

Others, such as Robert Rueda, director of Baptist Student Ministries (BSM) on campus, believe that the phrase should stay.

"I do believe that the phrase should be there for the very reason that this was a nation that was founded on the basis of

See **PLEDGE** page 12

## Shuttles cut distance to parking

By NAOMI MISON  
The Pan American

And you thought it couldn't get any worse.

Almost 300 parking spots will disappear in favor of new campus dorms, making the parking situation at the University of Texas-Pan American dicier in the months to come, following the closure of parking lot J located in front of the police station.

But, to help students scrambling for parking, an overflow parking lot has

opened up next to the Edinburg Baseball Stadium on Schunior Road. Shuttle services have helped relieve some pressure, but one of the buses currently remains out of service. Harlingen business "Go with Jo" will provide backup service in the meantime.

Feeling the pressure of the broken buses is director of Auxiliary Services Letty Benavidez who is in charge of the shuttle services.

"It's a recurring problem," she said. "Right now, one of the shuttles is being

assessed at the Hacienda Ford mechanic shop. We have to rent a shuttle, while the other one is out of commission."

With the recent spike in demands for a shuttle on the UTPA campus, a proposal for purchasing more of them is currently being reviewed by the state, a process that will take approximately 30 days. In the meantime, the shuttles serve between 400 to 900 students daily.

Marianella Franklin, the construction special project coordinator for facili-

See **PARKING** page 12



Celebs and engineers unite at the fourth annual HESTEC week. See pages 4 - 5 for details and photos.

**TOW-AWAY ZONE** - Pizza Hut keeps track of license plate numbers of cars left in their lot and will tow repeat offenders.



THE PAN AMERICAN

1201 West University, CAS 170 Edinburg, Texas 78539  
 (956) 381-2541 Fax: (956) 316-7122  
 http://www.panam.edu/dept/panamerican  
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**Editor**  
 Emma Clark  
 thepanamericannews-  
 per@yahoo.com

**News Editor**  
 Claudette Gonzalez  
 claudetteelena@gmail.com

**A & E Editor**  
 Jason Chapa  
 jason.chapa@gmail.com

**Sports Editors**  
 Joey Gomez  
 joegomez23@yahoo.com

**Daryl Gonzales**  
 daryl\_gonzales2002@yahoo.com

**Graphics Editor**  
 Dägoberito Pérez  
 dagoberto.perez@gmail.com

**Photography Editor**  
 Joel de la Rosa  
 delarosa.joel@gmail.com

**Layout/Photography**  
 Delisa Guadarrama  
 delisaegua@aol.com

**Designers**  
 Lylony Cazares  
 lylony@gmail.com

**Web Master**  
 Ed Martinez  
 ed@inspiredmedia-  
 works.com

**Reporters**  
 Nayelly Barrios

Sandra Gonzalez

Angela Salazar

David Rodriguez

Joey Hinojosa

**Photographers**

Joey Cortez

Melissa Martinez

**Secretary**  
 Diana Corpus Garza

**Adviser**  
 Dr. Greg Selber

**Delivery**

Anthony Pinal  
 Thursday at Noon

**The PAN AMERICAN is the official student newspaper of The University of Texas-Pan American. Views presented are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect those of the university.**

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# Hurricanes, Tigers and Monks, Oh My!

By DAVID RODRIGUEZ  
*The Pan American*



Undeniably, our world and our daily lives are very different from those of the generations that came before us. The Plague doesn't scare anyone anymore, we don't have to step over horse dung on the sidewalk and I don't think I've ever given a second thought as to whether or not I will think the bride my parents choose for me will be hot.

We live in a modern world and a modern country at that. Our day-to-day worries are a bit more oblique than they once were. We don't fret about whether we will eat or not, instead we obsess over whether or not what we are eating is low in sodium. We don't worry about having a roof over our heads; we worry about whether that roof will be classical or Spanish tile.

This is a good thing. I wouldn't trade my Taurus for the fastest horse in Texas. Although with my luck I'm sure it will soon have just as many spots as an Appaloosa. Crappy paint-job aside though, I'm a huge proponent of progress. However, I do think we have developed an interesting set of neuroses because of it.

I'm sure you remember when Roy, of Siegfried and Roy, also known as "the dark-haired one," was attacked by his white tiger, Montecor, or something like that. One of the most interesting aspects of the news-driven aftermath of the attack was the never-ending speculation as to why Montevideo attacked his partner-in-magic. Theories abounded. Some speculated that it was financially driven; many assumed

Montenegro was angling for a bigger bite of the profits. Others actually believed it may have been a terrorist attack and waited for videos of the tiger on monkey bars in some training camp in a Middle Eastern desert. What fascinated me the most was not the ridiculous theories that surfaced but the almost rabid quest for an answer, and more often than not, the answer had to be convoluted with man as the culpable party.

The same can be said for the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11. Many people, including a crackpot fraud of a professor who shall remain nameless (Ward Churchill), spent a lot of time trying to get the country to figure out why these murdering wastes-of-life would try to kill us en masse. The same crackpot, attention-whore professor even posited that we deserved it. It was not unlike a rape trial where the victim is left to cry on the stand and try to convince everyone she's not a slut.

Or how about Katrina? Even before the dead were counted, "scientists" were beating the gong of sadomasochism by claiming the tragedy was our own fault because the wind and rain were the results of global warming. In one story the New York Times reported that hurricane winds will increase 6 percent by the 2080s because of global warming. The researchers that provided the data for this boring, all-too-common sign of the apocalypse used a model for their experiments called the General Circulation Model. The assumption in this model is that the concentration of atmospheric carbon dioxide will increase by 1 percent per year, compounded yearly. Warm water creates stronger storms thus, poof, we are to blame for our own demise. However, Patrick J. Michaels, senior environmental studies guru at the Cato Institute, will be happy to tell you that the

atmospheric carbon dioxide is not rising at that rate and hasn't been for decades. According to Michaels the increase has been four-tenths of a percent per year, averaged over the last 30 years.

All boring science aside, the point here is our almost pathological obsession with self-flagellation. We have become like Franciscan monks who walk up stairs on their knees in acts of contrition. Except we don't bother to live moral lives. Why can't we simply understand that a tiger is a tiger and that sometimes wild animals do unpredictable things? Why can't we simply blame 9/11 on the terrorists? You know, those guys that actually piloted the planes into our buildings with their own hands. Why can't we simply do what we can for the survivors of hurricanes Katrina and Rita and recognize that nature is destructive as well as beautiful?

If I didn't know better, I would think maybe there is some sort of misplaced guilt going on here. Or maybe we just don't have enough to worry about now that the whole Plague thing has been taken care of.



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## Lawmakers learn from Katrina

By DAVID DAVILA  
*The Pan American*

Last weekend Hurricane Rita spared Houston and did not cause the devastation that Katrina inflicted on the streets of New Orleans. When Rita first passed through southern Florida and made its way into the gulf, its projection was to hit somewhere in Texas and Louisiana's port cities.

The Rio Grande Valley was on its estimated projection path and would have suffered the wrath of Rita's power; luckily it didn't. Instead Rita made her way upward to Port Arthur and Beaumont and made landfall in Lake Charles in Louisiana.

If Rita had unleashed her power here, would the valley have been able to withstand it?



Joel de la Rosa/*The Pan American*

**PREPARATION** - Congressman Doggett addresses measures that must be taken to improve the Rio Grande Valley's drainage system.

State Representative Lloyd Doggett, McAllen Mayor Richard Cortez, Precinct 2 County Commissioner Hector "Tito" Palacios and Drainage District Manager Godfrey Garza discussed preparations for possible flooding if a major storm were to hit the Valley, claiming that some of the levees in Hidalgo county need to be rehabilitated.

They had a roundtable discussion on the matter Sept. 26 at the McAllen City Hall.

"Both New Orleans and McAllen, and most of the communities here in the Valley depend upon levees," Doggett said. The area is similar to New Orleans in that both cities have not had enough

See **DOGGETT** page 11

## Education makes a leap toward technology

By LUKE KOONG  
*The Pan American*

In the past, psychology professor Jerwen Jou avoided using charts and graphs during his lectures. If he absolutely needed to, though, he would draw very crude versions on the blackboard.

Those days are gone. Jou, who would have been forced to bring an overhead to his class to show his students information, is one of the many who now benefit from the recently installed smart classrooms. The new rooms across campus have enabled professors like Jou to bring a new form of teaching to their students.

"It makes it possible to display more vivid multimedia information that the traditional classroom cannot," he said.

Smart classrooms, also known as

technology-enabled classrooms, are not physically any different from other rooms. They are, however, outfitted with special equipment to increase the opportunity to use multimedia in teaching.

"A traditional classroom in the pure sense has a desk, a blackboard and some chairs," said Gary Wiggins, chief information officer for the university. "One of these classrooms still has desk and chairs, but it has equipment and tools to support teaching and learning with technology."

According to Wiggins, the classrooms come with numerous benefits.

"It allows the faculty to use the Internet, to use multimedia, to project various sorts of content, so we believe it adds, potentially, a great deal to the experience."

See **CLASSROOM** page 11



Joey Cortez/*The Pan American*

**HIGH TECH** - Communication professor Petra Guerra uses the technological equipment in a newly outfitted "smart classroom" to increase the multimedia component during her Survey of the Media class.

## Facebook links UTPA to students nationwide

By CLAUDETTE GONZALEZ  
*The Pan American*

Across campus, the word is spreading quickly. The University of Texas-Pan American is finally on the Facebook. For students who have long been taunted by their friends' accounts of the wonders of Facebook, this is a godsend.

"Finally! I think that word covers it all," wrote University of Texas student Tessa Alaniz on a UTPA student's Facebook Wall.

The Facebook is an online directory of students from universities across the nation. All that is required to join is a

valid university e-mail address. Once in, students have the option to display a profile and photo, form and join groups, throw parties, send e-mail-like messages to other members, write messages on friends' "walls," and "poke" each other.

According to Chris Hughes, spokesperson for the Facebook, it began as the brainchild of a Harvard student less than a year ago.

"Mark Zuckerberg, a student at Harvard, had the idea in the winter of 2004," said Hughes. "It was a pretty simple concept: to create a universal online database for college students

with social-networking functionality."

Hughes indicated that the idea was to improve on traditional yearbooks with the usual mug shots that nobody ever liked.

"[Zuckerberg] revamped the idea of the original college facebooks - the books of bad freshman-year ID photos and boring information - by putting them online and giving students the control over the information they wanted to share with others," said Hughes.

What was meant to be a small Harvard project quickly spiraled into something much bigger, encompassing schools all over the nation including

The University of Texas, Texas A&M University, Texas State University, Rice University, Southern Methodist University and now UTPA.

"At the outset, Facebook was a project by and for Harvard students, but because over 6,000 Harvard kids signed up within the first three weeks, it seemed ridiculous not to open it up to a few other schools," said Hughes.

On the Facebook, students are able to contact friends at any school connected to the project.

"[The Facebook] ties our Pan Am Facebook community to every

See **FACEBOOK** page 11

## Making memories: saving phone calls to CD

By CHRISTINA FLORES  
*The Pan American*

Planning for posterity would seem to bring to mind making funeral arrangements while you are still alive or buying life insurance. But it is also the creative concept behind a new service that made its debut just over a year ago.

"People realize that posterity is something you have to plan for, it doesn't just happen," said David Arellano, owner of Capture the Moment, a brand new company with a very innovative idea targeted at people of all ages: recording and burning telephone conversations to CD or transferring any audio to CD.

For a base fee of \$10 per call, plus \$2.99 per minute, anyone in North America can record their telephone conversations onto CD and have them shipped via standard U.S. mail. In addition, Capture the Moment covers the cost of the call itself, whether it be local or long distance.

The clients are as unique as the service itself, ranging from people with loved ones in hospices who want to capture private and loving moments for posterity, to college students who want to have audio memories to look back on.

Since the service was introduced last year, Arellano noted that he sees his college clients using the service most often

for recording conversations with their friends or significant others.

"It gives you some retrospect of who you were, what you were like, and 20 years later pull them out and say 'This is really something.' It is nice to know where your head was at," said Arellano.

Arellano explained the taping process in detail. Client confidentiality is fundamental. Since the conversation is monitored by graphs, there is no one sitting in silence listening to the private conversation. The recording automatically stops when the conversation is through.

For potential clients worried about the legality of the service, Arellano stat-

ed that most states don't have any objections to recording phone conversations as long as one person (the person purchasing the service) is aware of being recorded. However, he did add that, as a courtesy, the person purchasing the service should let the other person know they are being recorded.

The company also offers the transferring of any audio to CD for just \$10 per recorded hour. That includes records, cassettes or VCR tapes. In addition, they can transfer photographs and video to CD.

Lucian Silcox, a senior computer science major at The University of Texas-

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Melissa Martinez/The Pan American



Joel de la Rosa/The Pan American

**HESTEC Photo Essay**  
 Counter-clockwise from top right:  
 Letty Valadez, News Channel 5  
 anchor moderates a Q&A session  
 with Joel Cantu, an Edinburg  
 Economedes student asking a ques-  
 tion; Ines Lucio, Education major and  
 Sam Iglesias, pre-med Biology, view  
 the Albert Einstein Exhibit at the  
 Engineering Building; Richie  
 Villareal, St. Joseph 8th grader, lands  
 a simulated space shuttle at NASA  
 exhibit outside the UTPA Field  
 House; John Quinones, ABC anchor  
 of "Primetime Live," speaks with stu-  
 dents and faculty Monday at ITT  
 building; Economedes Mariachis  
 perform during intermission on  
 Wednesday at the UTPA Field House.



Joel de la Rosa/The Pan American

# Earache, my eye

## Cheech comes to town

By **JOEY GOMEZ**  
*The Pan American*

In 1978, a comedy premiered that seemed to bolster the waning hippie counter-culture of the time. What resulted was the perpetual stoner cult-classic "Up In Smoke," driven by the exploits of Cheech and Chong. It raked in more than \$100 million, enough to be ranked as one of the highest grossing comedies of that year.

It's safe to say that things have changed for at least one-half of the dazed and confused duo.

Richard "Cheech" Marin, an actor with more than 30 years in the business, exclusive owner of one of the largest Chicano art collections in the world, musician and a voice for Chicanos across the country, will speak to UTPA students Oct. 1 during Community Day, wrapping up HESTEC activities on campus.

"Cheech" is another name for the pork-skin snack that he purportedly loved as a kid.

In an online interview with CNN, Marin once commented that he "grew up being a Chicano. I didn't feel Mexican-American, I didn't feel Hispanic and I definitely wasn't the Dick-and-Jane American. But when I got to Chicano, when I heard that term I felt loved. That's me..."

In that same interview Marin said the label of Chicano was originally a derogatory name from Mexicans to other Mexicans living in the country. Chicanos were not truly Mexicans, they were something smaller, they were chicos.

Born on July 13, 1946 in South Central Los Angeles, Marin majored in English at California State University in the 1960s then moved to Canada after the implementation of

the draft during the Vietnam War.

Marin's meeting with strip-club owner Tommy Chong in Vancouver, B.C. resulted in what is often termed "modern day burlesque" that evolved into the pot-smoking exploits found in their later movies. These performances lasted until 1985.

Since then, Marin has either starred or appeared in over 50 films, wrote and directed one feature film ("Born in East LA," 1987), and has 37 notable guest TV appearances. Incidentally, Marin was also the first Celebrity Jeopardy Champion in 1992, creating somewhat of a different image than what some were led to believe, especially after "Still Smokin'."

Apparently, there is much more to Cheech Marin than meets the eye. His contribution to the Chicano art movement is astounding. Currently, his collection is featured in his most recent museum exhibition called Chicano Visions: American Painters on the Verge Visions. This exhibition was featured by the Mexican Fine Arts Center in Chicago, and will tour the country the next two years.

His other project, "The Chicano Collection," is a digital reproduction of paintings in his collection that is barely picking up steam in Los Angeles.

Cheech will also be seen directing a Broadway production of "Latinologues," which is a collection of monologues depicting the Latino experience in America. It takes the stage at New York City's Helen Hayes Theatre Sept. 13-Dec. 4, starring Eugenio Derbez, an extremely popular comedian in Mexico.

As for movies, Marin will star in "Underclassman" along with Nick Cannon, and lend his voice to the upcoming animated story "Cars," in summer 2006.



Joey Gomez/The Pan American



# Circle of life: native plants bring wildlife to backyards

By **LYLONY CASAREZ**  
*The Pan American*

Tired of the cold Minnesota climate he and his wife were accustomed to, Bob Hulett of Mission decided to move to the Rio Grande Valley several years ago. Having been an urban forester in the city of Burnsville, Hulett was astounded by the Valley's diverse plant life. Hulett, 71, is now president of the local Master Gardener Association.

"Wildlife is thriving down here. It's plentiful in different seasons—there are fruiters and bloomers and larvae plants and nectar plants everywhere," said Hulett. "The amount of varieties is amazing. You don't see this up where I'm from."

Hulett is one of the many individuals who have taken the landscaping design classes offered by the Texas Cooperative Extension Program in Edinburg. The courses consist of four sessions given on consecutive Saturdays and have been offered every spring and fall for the past three years. Anyone is welcome to be part of the class but vacancies tend to fill up quickly.

Frank Gonzales, licensed nurseryman and landscape designer, says that since the courses are during the spring and fall planting seasons, students can plant once they're over.

No experience is required for those

who sign up. Participants have included community members between the ages of 14 and 76. Among these have been citrus and vegetable producers, grade-school teachers, and students. However, the majority of those who enroll are middle-aged homeowners, said Gonzales.

Sharon Cardenas took the landscaping course several years ago. The backyard of her Mission home has since become a certified wildlife habitat garden.

"I was really just trying to work on the garden of my new house up when I first moved down from north Texas," said Cardenas. "I had no professional experience. This was just a byproduct of me playing around the yard."

According to Gonzales, the Valley has 11,000 to 12,000 plant species, with more bird and butterfly species than any other state.

"This area is home to about 510 species, and a lot of people aren't aware of what an incredible amount that is. We often don't realize what's in our backyards," said Gonzales.

When Gonzales was asked by the Harlingen Parks and Wildlife Department to teach people to landscape, he decided to take it a step further.

"The goal of the program soon became to attract wildlife—birds, butterflies, and hummingbirds," said Gonzales.

"We were very successful. Seeing the

habitats is very rewarding."

Jesus Franco, an urban biologist for Texas Parks and Wildlife who takes part in class instruction, said that the course tries to emphasize the diversity of plant life in the Valley.

"What we try to do is introduce people to the concept of using native plants," Franco said. "By having these habitats as backyards, people save themselves from wasting water and energy, and having to deal with chemicals and pollution."

Most native Valley plants do not require much water. They're very low-maintenance and don't attract too many unwanted pests. They also provide food, cover and water for birds and butterflies that migrate to the area.

"The typical lawn in the United States is one filled with nothing but grass. It's usually St. Augustine grass, commonly referred to as 'carpet grass,' which has a support system that requires a lot of water," said Franco. "It is also often attacked by a lot of insects and diseases, which require pesticides."

Extension horticulturist Barbara Storz, along with Gonzales, is responsible for teaching the heart of the course.

"What we do is put our students' ideas on paper. Sometimes we have a lot of ideas rolling around in our heads, but we don't move on to the next step, which is actually acting on them," said Storz.



Joel de la Rosa/*The Pan American*

**NATURE** - Habitat landscaping class teaches locals to use plants native to the Valley in their own backyards.

She adds that many grade school, high school, junior high, and even kindergarten teachers join the class.

"Landscaping ties in with math and science, and some grade school programs like to teach children these sorts of things at a young age. McAllen officials do a lot to beautify the city, and they even hold contests for kids to participate in," said Storz.

Storz is planning to offer a new

course at the end of next summer that will provide Master Gardener certification for those who complete it.

"Gardening is the most popular hobby right now," said Gonzales. "The second most popular is birding, and it is the fastest growing."

The first landscaping design class will take place Saturday, Oct. 23 at the Texas Cooperative Office in Edinburg. There is a \$35 fee for enrollment.

# Popularity of vegetarian lifestyle sparks new club at UTPA

By **BRIAN CARR**  
*The Pan American*

Kaleena Cruz hasn't eaten meat in seven years.

"I would feel guilty whenever I would eat meat," explains the president and original member of the Association of Vegetarian Awareness (AVA) now in its second year of existence at UTPA. "The feeling would be overwhelming at times."

Knowing that she would be unable to personally slaughter an animal for food, the 21-year-old communication disorders major, decided to give it up.

"I knew I wouldn't be able to actually kill an animal," Cruz said. "So I didn't see why I should be asking somebody to do it for me."

For Sunaina Chugani, founder, original president, and current secretary for the AVA, the decision to go vegetarian was sparked by research.

"I was reading up on Gandhi and I found out he was a vegetarian," the 22-year-old MBA student remembers. "Then I read the book 'Animal Liberation' by Peter Singer. I knew after that I wanted to be a vegetarian."

But as both Cruz and Chugani agree, deciding to become vegetarian has had its consequences. And as far as the two are concerned the greatest hurdle is explaining their motivations to people.

"People always want a reason," Cruz vented. "I don't ask people why they eat meat, so why should I have to defend my reasons?"

This was, in part, why Chugani decided to launch the AVA – to educate people about vegetari-

anism as well as give fellow vegetarians an opportunity to get together. There was, however, an admitted hesitance upon her part to do so.

"One of my concerns was making people around me feel uncomfortable," Chugani said. "I thought by making such a strong statement by starting a club for vegetarianism, people might feel

uncomfortable around me."

Dr. Scott Gunn, biology professor at UTPA, is sensitive to the notion that a person's diet can evoke strong feelings.

"For many people who are vegetarian and especially vegan there are philosophical reasons behind their decisions," Gunn said.

But regardless of philosophy Gunn is steadfast that a healthy vegetarian diet is possible.

"Protein is protein," Gunn said. "I don't care where you get it from."

Though Gunn does acknowledge that animal protein is easier for human beings to process, he declines to rate one or the other as better.

"Human's are technically considered to be omnivores," Gunn elaborates. "This means that we can basically take in and process anything to a reasonable extent. We're opportunistic."

Gunn does warn, however, that plant proteins must be supplemented by other plant proteins, as there are deficiencies in certain vegetables such as corn.

According to the latest food pyramid, as released by the FDA in 2005, the practice of cross consumption of vegetables should be observed whether or not you are vegetarian.

The new pyramid, which can be found at mypyramid.gov, specifies quantities of food groups based upon age and activity. It stresses the importance of vegetables, and also points out that protein can be easily found in nuts and beans as well as meat.

Chugani feels it is AVA's mission to bring these facts to people's attention.

"We just want to let people know what vegetarianism is about," Chugani said. "Of course if we convert some people I will take that as a plus."

AVA's next meeting is at noon, Oct. 4 in room 306 of the University Center.

In the *Hunger Report 1993*, Peter Uvin of the **Brown University World Hunger Program** illustrates that a vegetarian diet can feed significantly more people than a meat-centered diet:

Populations Potentially Supported by the 1992 Global Food Supply with Different Diets

Almost purely vegetarian diet	6.3 billion people
15% of calories from animal products	4.2 billion people
25% of calories from animal products	3.2 billion people

Source: FAO, 1993

World hunger is a complicated problem, which we will not necessarily alleviate in the short term by becoming vegetarian. However, eating vegetarian is a positive step toward saving resources that can be used to feed people in the future.



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## UTPA artistic alumnus shows work at UTB-TSC

By **JEANETTE FERRY-GOMEZ**  
*The Pan American*

The artwork of University of Texas-Pan American alumnus Rigoberto Gonzalez is being showcased as part of The University of Texas-Brownsville's new art exhibit this fall.

"We are very proud to be showing the work of Rigoberto Gonzalez," said Teresa Eckerman-Pfeil, the director of the Richardson Art Gallery at UTB. "The opening on Monday kicked off our fall season with attendance of about 300 people."

Gonzalez graduated from UTPA's art program in 1999 and went to graduate Cum Laude in 2004 with a master of fine arts degree in painting from the New York Academy of Art.

"It's a very rigorous and highly acclaimed program," commented Eckerman-Pfeil.

A skilled artist, Gonzalez has been drawing since early childhood. He experimented with oil paints when he was 14, but it frustrated him; finally at UTPA he forced himself to master the difficult medium.



Courtesy of Richard Pfeil/UT-B

"Oil paints make me feel a kinship with the artists of the past which I admire such as Caravaggio, Juseppe de Ribera and Rembrandt," said Gonzalez.

In the years since he has worked with everything from watercolors and etching, to oil on linen, graphite, charcoal and silverpoint. Gonzalez confessed he does have a special fondness for sculpture, a medium in which he plans to continue working.

Gonzalez values his experience in Edinburg and the tools it gave him to become an artist.

"The education I received from UTPA has been indispensable, and it's hard for me to imagine my direction as an artist without it," said Gonzalez. "It molded me intellectually, added fuel to the fire that was already there in me."

The artist also teaches art at Harlingen South High School and mentioned some of the teachers who had an impact on his education.

"Phillip Field was a great source of knowledge and wisdom. He made me aware that art

had to be more than just a craft, made me understand the importance theory and the idea play in creating a painting," said Gonzalez.

Field has been teaching at UTPA since January 1971, and will complete his 35-year anniversary at the university next term.

"It gives me a feeling of great satisfaction to know our best art students are producing fine artworks and exhibitions," said Field, Gonzalez's former instructor.

"A student with the talent and sensitivity of Rigo is very rare. He has an extraordinary sensitivity in his drawing and painting of the human figure. He already has and will continue to produce art at the very highest level."

Gonzalez finds inspiration in everything around him. Books by authors like Carlos Fuentes, Jose Saramago, Cervantes and Nietzsche hold special meaning for him.

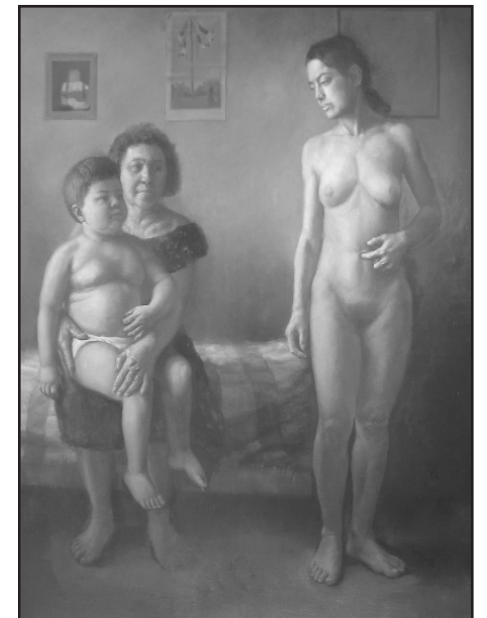
He discussed some of his favorite works which include "El Recuerdo transfigurado."

"The painting depicts the moment when a child first witnesses the nude figure, she represents a fading, distant memory," said Gonzalez, explaining the significance of the figures in the painting.

"The overgrown infant with its distorted proportions is meant to represent also the growth from childhood to maturity There is also an elderly woman holding the baby. She is in a way holding him back and trying to prevent the growth of the child."

"Taller Latino Americano" and "Another Room

Gallery" are two of Rigoberto Gonzalez's other exhibits in New York. He also does commissions and some can be seen at the San Martin de Porres Church



Courtesy of Rigoberto Gonzalez in Weslaco.

For more on Rigoberto Gonzalez and UTB's other art exhibits click over to <http://blue.utb.edu/artgallery/> or e-mail the Fine Arts Gallery at [finearts@utb.edu](mailto:finearts@utb.edu).

## Lack of marching band leaves key element missing

By **MEREDITH LAGRONE**  
*The Pan American*

Most students at UTPA are not aware that the university has a band. Contrary to popular belief, there is a small, somewhat developed curriculum for those wishing to go into the field of music education. One thing students do know: there is no football team. Because there is no football team, the university cannot support a marching band. Without that, the instrumental music education students, better known as the band, might be missing a vital part of their education.

According to Pedro Martinez, trombone instructor and assistant band director, 90 percent of the students who are in the band are enrolled in some type of music program. Martinez is confident the music education students are not missing out on the marching process.

"I wouldn't say it hurts the students as much as they don't have the opportunity," said Martinez. "We cover the things that need to be covered. It's something that would be addressed in the future when we get a football team."

UTPA does not currently have a football team. While Martinez said the school cannot support a marching band without a football team, he didn't seem concerned.

"If the students were not getting what they needed, it would be a problem," said Martinez. "We do cover the things that are expected of them when they work. We don't have the hands on experience. All

these kids did it in high school, so it's not like it's something foreign."

Roel Canales, music education graduate from Texas A&M-Kingsville and band director for Weslaco ISD, said he believes attending a school with a marching program was beneficiary to his career.

"Most employers are looking for someone who actually has that experience at the college level," said Canales. "Dealing with those types of situations and getting that experience helps when you're looking for a job."

Santiago Mendoza, graduate of UTPA's music education program, is a band director for Weslaco ISD as well. He also believes marching experience does make a difference when searching for employment.

"I got edged out myself at another job interview to someone who graduated from PanAm the same time I did and had marched with the Cadets, a drum and bugle corps," said Mendoza. "Even though I had already passed both my exit exams and the other person had not, he got the nod."

Mendoza also said his age played a factor in the way the lack of a marching band affected him personally.

"I was already in my late 30s, had a wife and two children when I came back to school," he said. "For someone like me, the biggest thing I would have gotten out of it was some experience in refreshing my marching memory."

Mendoza believes a marching program at UTPA would make a big difference for other reasons, also.



Joel de la Rosa/*The Pan American* **MAKES PERFECT** - Arnold Maldonado, freshman music major, practices the tuba for a November show.

"I think that for young people getting out of high school and coming to college, it would mean the world of experience to them," said Mendoza. "It would give them a chance to be part of something,

and the fun of being in a marching program would increase their interest in their major."

Plus, having a marching band at UTPA would increase enrollment into the music program, which in turn would benefit the music department immensely."

Mendoza reiterated his concerns about the lack of marching at UTPA.

"If a student is considering a college, for music, he should attempt to attend one with a marching program," he said. "Being able to connect with other students in something you enjoy can help students make valuable connections. In turn, they will learn responsibilities they can pass on to other students."

Canales agreed.

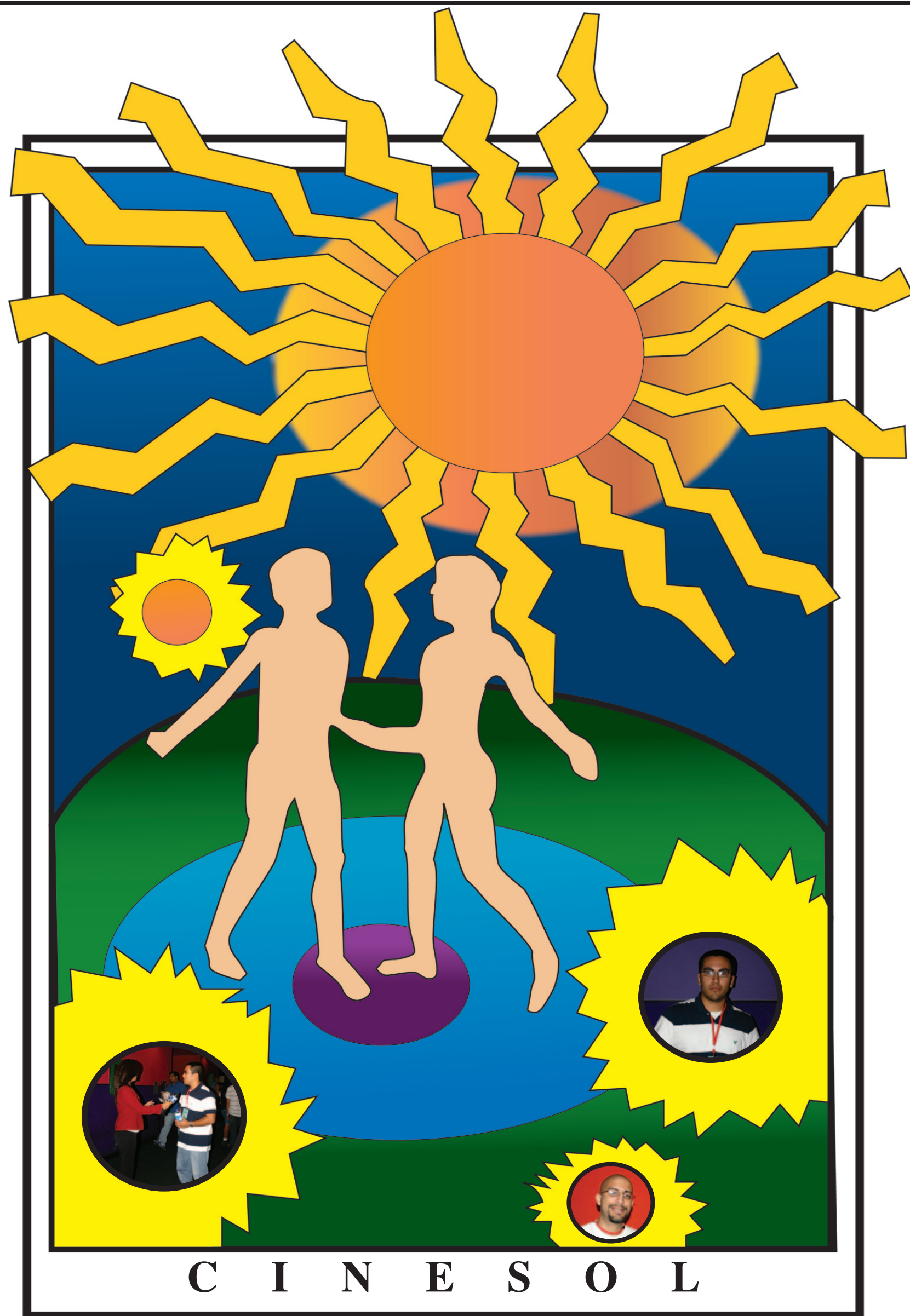
"I think more support would be poured into the band program if there were a marching band program at UTPA," he said. "The kids' degree would be more valuable. They would be able to get a job anywhere, instead of just [in the Valley]."

Canales ended his statements by adding one last comment.

"Most directors in the Valley believe the only quality directors UTPA can produce are mariachi directors. They don't give much value to anything else."

Martinez said the department is currently attempting to put together some classes for the purpose of teaching students these skills. "We're being proactive," he said. "By next year we expect to have a marching band technique and instruction class."





Graphics By Erika Lopez

# CINESOL

## FILM FESTIVAL

**L**ocal filmmakers kicked off the 12th annual Cinesol Film Festival in Brownsville this weekend with a celebration of talent from both sides of the border, as the local scene continues to grow.

The weekend was filled with workshops and viewings of films, shorts and documentaries filmed in the Rio Grande Valley or Mexico, all in an effort to promote Latino film-makers.

Sponsored by the Texas Commission On The Arts and the Brownsville Border Film Commission among others, Cinesol has been high on Brownsville's social event calendar since 1993.

Enrique Leal, director and writer of "The Recruiter," featured at Cinesol, explained why the Valley was the obvious choice, and why the area has aided the event's success.

"I really do think that the reason the festival began here in the Valley and not in a bigger city [with a large Hispanic population] like San Antonio or Los Angeles is that the Valley is in a very special geographic region - the U.S./Mexico border," Leal said.

The National Association of Latino Independent Production (NALIP) agrees that the Valley is bursting with talent in the arts. Carlos Garcia, a Valley native, is attempting to start the Valley chapter of that organization. The San Antonio chapter of NAPLIP has already proved to be a success, explained Dora Pena, a director from San Antonio. The benefits of joining the national association, and being part of the surge are apparent for the Latino community.



"Even though Latinos were growing as a minority, in 1998 the fall line-up on the major TV networks did not represent brown and black equally," Pena said. "The percentage was going down. I asked where are our shows?"

Through NALIP, she has been able to attend national conferences and has made contact with producers from HBO, CBS and ABC.

"How often do you get to speak one on one with the major networks, and pitch your idea? It's about encouraging that energy," Pena explained.

Pena also explained about funding available to

Latino filmmakers that simply wasn't being fully utilized.

Leal agreed, and said that this is why film making in the Rio Grande Valley has taken off at a slower pace.

"Of course what we lack is the means (money) to make these things happen. Filmmaking, even when it's low-budget, is still VERY expensive. Unlike music or the other arts, filmmaking is a team sport where lots of different people must be assembled," the Cornell University graduate said.

"A filmmaker needs at least a small army of people and a whole day to accomplish what could be just a 15-second shot. Just even getting your hands on a film camera is hard..."

Musicians, explained Leal, possibly have an easier



task in molding their craft.

"I'm no expert, but I'm guessing the acoustic guitar/drums/violin, etc., haven't changed much in the last 300 years," he said.

Editing equipment, he said, has changed, but has also now reached a more affordable level.

"Finally the video equipment on the low end of the spectrum is now at a price where many Valley filmmakers can afford and start experimenting with the film medium."

Like the NALIP people, Leal also sees a social shift in attitude among young people.

"Independent cinema is also a hot trend nowadays," he noted. "Maybe 20 years ago every kid's dream was of being a rock star, now I think kids dream of being movie moguls or directors. I think that's why there's been a mini-boom of filmmakers and aficionados here in the Valley in the last five years or so."

Nonetheless, Garcia, who plans to begin the local chapter of NALIP shortly, said: "Excuses. Everyone's got them. There are so few Latinos out there making movies, and now is our time. We should be at the forefront."

Leal, who split his time between Matamoros and Brownsville as a child, believes strongly in the Valley's uniqueness.

"It was only natural that something like CineSol could come out of such a place that is bursting at the seams with originality, culture, and history," explained Leal.

This, Leal says, is what may bring Hollywood to the Rio Grande Valley.

Henry Serrato, another local filmmaker who's mockumentary, "Search For The Chupacabra," was shown Sunday at Cinesol, disagrees.

"Hollywood won't come here because of the location of the studios," Serrato said.

He did say however, that Austin plays a key role in independent filmmaking. Headliners like Robert Rodriguez ("Sin City," "Spy Kids") continue to bring

the production process to Texas. Rodriguez is renowned for his work in what call the independent movie capital of the world.

Unlike many other movie-making cities across the United States, Brownsville does not tax film makers to come in to the city and use its facilities. The Brownsville Border Film Commission is also keen to let movie-makers know that permits are not required for most filming.

According to the commission Web site: "We work closely with all city departments to support [the films] needs. Our uniformed services, both police and fire are accustomed to working with industry professionals. Whether it be traffic control, emergency standby or on-camera requirements our officers are ready to help."

It comes as no surprise that the mission of the commission is to provide on-call problem solving for challenges faced in making a movie in a 91 percent Latino population. Cross-border relations is also a specialty of the commission, which has close ties to Matamoros.

"The only border we recognize stretches as far as your imagination," explained film commissioner Peter Goodman at the screening of locally filmed movies on Sunday.

Films like "The Soulless" and "Punos Rosas," filmed recently in Brownsville are projects that Goodman hopes to continue to see.



Photos By Karla Niedzwiedz



# Turning a new leaf; turning the page

By **MARK LAGUNEZ**  
*The Pan American*

It's autumn in the Valley. The temperature shifts from hot to slightly less hot. The leaves begin to turn red and gold – hundreds of miles away. Change is in the air, at least in the new books people are reading this fall.

The first book is one highly recommended by Lee Hamilton, a professor in the English Department of The University of Texas-Pan American. "Lost in the Cosmos" by Walker Percy is more than a few years old, but for the majority who haven't read it, it's new to them.

"The subtitle tells it all," said Hamilton, "'The Last Self-Help Book You'll Ever Read.'" That's actually one of several more subtitles on the first page, including "...or

Why it is possible to learn more in ten minutes about the Crab Nebula in Taurus, which is 6,000 light-years away, than you presently know about yourself, even though you've been stuck with yourself all your life."

"It's not written like a regular book," said Hamilton. "But instead follows the format of those quizzes you

see in magazines."

The chapters consist of questions, each followed by possible answers and instructions to pick one. As you read, however, you begin to find they're all right, according to Hamilton. People who enjoy existential literature will love this book. But a philosophy degree isn't required, just a sense of humor and an open mind. In short, it's fun.

Diana Rivera, a lecturer in the English Department, suggests people check out "George Washington Gomez" by Americo Paredes. "George Washington Gomez" is the coming-of-age story of a boy, Gualinto Gomez, growing up in South Texas during the '30s.

"The novel continually engages the reader till the conclusion," said Rivera. "It's an excellent view into the Valley's past, told from a Mexican-American perspective. The story deals with personal and social issues grounded in the racist, segregated environment of South Texas that's largely left out of the history books."

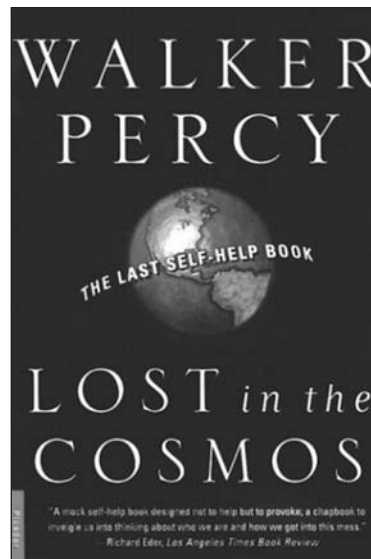
"George Washington Gomez" outrages and enlightens, and its final chapters offer some disturbing insights into

the present-day culture of South Texas. According to Rivera, Valley natives interested in their cultural heritage should take a particular liking to the novel.

Those professionals in the literary field aren't the only ones who know what makes a good book.

Christina Villalobos of the department of mathematics is currently reading "The Hot Zone: A Terrifying True Story" by Richard Preston. The book is the account of an actual outbreak of the Ebola virus in Reston, Virginia, 10 miles from Washington D.C. It's told in horrifying detail, made all the more harrowing by the fact that it really happened.

Despite the rigors of college life, many students take time out to read and have several books on their wish lists.



Courtesy of Amazon.com

"I'm really looking forward to the new Robert Jordan novel coming out next month," said Alex Garcia, a senior computer science major. The book called "Knife of Dreams" is the 11th in Jordan's "Wheel of Time" series.

Jordan's works are said to be steeped in the "Tolkien tradition," in that readers become completely immersed in a beautiful, complex world. Each book is often years in the making (his last release was in 2003). "Knife of Dreams" goes on sale Oct. 11.

Christian Frye, a senior computer science major, recommends "anything by Terry Pratchet." That would include Pratchet's latest published titles: "Thud!," "The Color of Magic" and "Equal Rites." Pratchet is a prolific writer, but quantity over quality is never

an issue. His books, on the whole, are laugh-out-loud tales that often juxtapose elements of fantasy with modern culture to paint absurdly hilarious pictures. No prior reading is necessary to enjoy a Pratchet novel, and many will find themselves unable to stop from delving further into Pratchet's creations.

Books have certainly been a buzz on campus, but what's flying off the bookstore shelves?

According to Norma Weston, department manager of Barnes & Noble on North 10th in McAllen, C.S. Lewis's "Chronicles of Narnia" has been popular among all age groups.

"A lot of graphic novels, anything sci-fi...Jennifer Weiner's 'Good in Bed' and 'In Her Shoes', which is now a movie...are hits among college students," said Weston.

Some great selections are out there, so shake off the laziness of summer. Enhance the new season with some fresh reading material. For all those still confined to the last Harry Potter book, Snape kills Dumbledore on page 606. Now get up and turn some new pages!

The University of Texas-Pan American

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## CLASSROOM continued from page 3

riences of teaching and learning.”

These new additions are a result of President Blandina Cardenas’s Technology Equipped Classroom Initiative, which has produced around 40 such rooms so far.

Standard in each classroom are an ADA-compliant instructor’s desk with a networked Dell computer, DVD/VHS player, VGA input for laptops, document camera, and system-controller that turns the system on and off. Everything is projected onto a large screen using a LCD projector and audio is delivered from ceiling loudspeakers.

While all these acronyms may not mean much to the typical technology-illiterate person, the new systems are designed to be user-friendly and easy to use. Faculty members can watch an online tutorial, attend training and view the instructions on the lectern. All the equipment is controlled from a touch-screen control center, enabling faculty members to access the whole system at the touch of a button.

Omar Cantu, director of video resources, is in charge of managing the project; from proposing how to manage the new equipment to training faculty in the use of the new system.

According to Cantu, there are no limitations on how faculty members can use the new systems. In fact, some are finding unique ways to integrate new technology into their lectures.

“If it’s a communication class, they’ll show speeches or press conferences. If it’s a news production class, they’ll show how to do news reporting. If it’s a business class, they’ll show a bunch of PowerPoint slides on business models,” Cantu said. “Sociology faculty show documentaries. The health sciences have a lot of anatomy type slides. I’ve seen the music department put sheet music on the document camera and put notes on there.”

Wiggins believes students should be excited with the new technology-enabled classrooms and the upgrade in their educational environment.

“[Technology-enabled classrooms] offer [stu-

dents] the opportunity to interact with the professor in a greater variety of ways, and give the professor the opportunity to enhance the experience,” he said.

Phase One was recently completed during the summer, with two more phases in the works with plans to equip the remaining classrooms, roughly 90 or so. Officials would even like to upgrade some of the classrooms with existing equipment. The hope is that the entire project will be completed by next year.

The entire initiative is being funded through the state’s Higher Education Assistance Fund [HEAF]. Money from this fund goes toward the improvement of the university’s infrastructure, as in new buildings and/or new equipment.

At present, the largest concern with the new system is keeping everything in working order. The Video Resources Department is charged with maintenance and upkeep of the technology. Although the system can be maintained from one central location, technicians are still necessary. According to Cantu, his department has done a good job at providing professors with tech support.

“We go and take care of it as soon as possible. It usually doesn’t take longer than a day,” he stressed. “Within the same day, we’ll address it because we know how the faculty depends on these things.”

“A lot of faculty, if the system’s not working, you just ruin their class period,” he admitted. “They depend heavily on it. But we go out there and we take care of their issues so that whatever problem it is gets addressed immediately so they can use it again during their next class.”

The system is still in its early stages. There are plans to upgrade how professors can control the system during their lectures, and to possibly obtain special equipment for certain courses. In addition, as current equipment ages, university officials plan on upgrading intermittently.

## FACEBOOK continued from page 3

Facebook-enabled college community in the United States. It opens us to a new opportunity to keep in touch with the friends we’ve had who’ve chosen to go to other universities,” said Student Government Association (SGA) Vice President Joey Nichols, who currently has 82 Facebook friends from a total of 14 institutions.

Senior biology major Eddie Ramirez agreed.

I’ll use Facebook to communicate with friends and family because phone bills and gas are expensive,” said Ramirez.

However, Nichols, a junior biology major, believes that even more useful is the ability to interact with other students within the UTPA community.

“Facebook has an extraordinary capacity to bring together people who would have been strangers on the same campus, people whose lives are incredibly linked, who maybe share classes with each other and have the same interests, but never would have run across each other,” said Nichols. “It can shrink a 17,000-student school down to the size of your desktop. That’s the beauty of Facebook.”

In particular, Nichols sees it as a tool that student organizations on campus can use to increase

and manage their membership.

“Student organizations can use Facebook as a way to mirror their identity on campus within Facebook, which makes them searchable and cross-referenceable,” said Nichols. “It helps other students find them.”

SGA has already set the example by forming a group and using the Facebook to publicize the recent State of the Student Body Address and the Meet and Greet Your SGA Social. The events were listed under the party category “Not really a party,” and were open to all UTPA students.

“If you join the SGA group, you can receive our updates, you can post on our message board, you can see what we’re doing and when our meetings are,” said Nichols. “If we throw a ‘party’ within SGA, you’ll get invited to it because you’re a member of our group. And since every student at UTPA is a member of SGA, we invite you all to join.”

Some students have mixed feelings about joining the Facebook, citing its addictive time-wasting potential.

“I think it’s overrated,” said junior chemistry major Elvis Cavazos. “But I do think it’s a new and innovative method for Pan Am students to foster stronger and longer lasting relationships.”

## CAPTURE continued from page 3

Pan American, was most interested in this service.

“That’s actually pretty useful; it’s harder to find cassette players these days, so salvaging old music, especially home recorded stuff, this is a nice service to offer,” Silcox said. “Even better if they can salvage old video as well as audio to DVD or CD.”

The service is growing in popularity through good old-fashioned word-of-mouth advertising.

Many are intrigued when they first hear of it. However, other students express concerns over how the service will be used and indicate that in

their eyes, there are pros and cons.

“Not everyone can afford recorders and sometimes recording conversations is necessary,” said David Casas, a junior chemistry major. “My only worry is that somehow the taped conversations may be used in the wrong way. But as long as the technology is there to use, it seems very convenient.”

More information about Capture the Moment can be found online at [www.Capture-The-Moment.org](http://www.Capture-The-Moment.org) or by calling toll free to 1-866-497-0001.

## DOGGETT continued from page 3

funding to reinforce their levees, some of which are over 50 years old.

After the incident in New Orleans, and the controversy around the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) aid, Doggett believes that improvements need to be made on the levees in Hidalgo County, or the valley might wind up in the same situation.

“The International Boundary and Waters Commission (IBWC) is responsible for the levees in Hidalgo County, but if a disastrous blow were to hit the valley from a major hurricane, FEMA would step in,” Garza said.

Doggett said that if a storm hit the Valley and caused these levees to breach it would have a “tremendous impact on our economical development here, not to mention the potential cost in lives, and the damage that we see on TV each day that our neighbors in New Orleans are facing.”

The IBWC budget that was supposed to fund the area’s rehabilitation for levees has been cut in half, totaling \$5 million. But Doggett and other members of Congress have joined together in a letter to ask two top representatives of the House Appropriation Sub-committee to double the money. The congressmen have also joined in a letter to the IBWC, who

reports the budgets to the State Department and the president, and can ask for help.

“I believe if we invest these ten million dollars per year in strengthening our levees and widening our floodways, we have a chance of avoiding billions of dollars in damage in the future,” said Doggett

Garza added that the river levees have been here for over 50 years, and need repairs.

“The overhaul system in Hidalgo County is way behind its time. We need some major improvements,” he said.

Garza declared that a hurricane is not necessary to create severe flooding in the Valley.

“We need six inches of rain for a couple of hours and you have seen what past events have done to all our communities,” said Garza.

Garza agreed with Doggett, saying that we cannot start building ditches when we are underwater, and that we must act fast to get the funding to prevent potential disastrous events in the future.

Doggett also added that it’s acting now is imperative.

“We want to get the message to the White House, before disaster strikes the Rio Grande Valley.”

## COMMUNITY continued from page 4

“We know of kids that have attended the first HESTEC Community Day and [they] make sure to return each year,” said Aldape. “A research study has shown that HESTEC has significantly impacted the attitudes of young students towards careers in science and engineering.”

According to LeMaster, there are multiple benefits to HESTEC for the university’s image, its students, and for the community.

“It allows us and others to realize that this university is a serious university,” said LeMaster.

“[Community Day] is a vital component for UTPA,” added Salinas. “It allows both national corporations and the local community to visit the campus when they would have not otherwise.”

While the events and speakers of each HESTEC may vary, its goals remain the same.

“Our goals are to open the doors of our campus to families and pre-college students of the Rio Grande Valley and bring them in to show them the fun and challenges of learning,” said LeMaster.

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## SGA continued from page 1

over last semester. Included here was a new policy that allowed student input in the commencement ceremony, and discontinuation of student ID validation stickers.

### LET THERE BE LIGHT

The president also went on to address the issues that SGA is in the process of solving. For example, its newly created senate, the Campus Safety Committee, is working on properly lighting the campus.

Two weeks ago, the committee met at 10 p.m. and walked around the campus to assess the current status of the lighting, as well as ensure that campus help buttons were operable.

What they found was a serious lack of lighting between the Fine Arts Building and the Academic Services Lab. Head of the Campus Safety Committee Argelia Barrera said that they are working to get lights installed in this area.

"Some students have night classes and it's very dangerous when it's dark at night and you're walking and there is no light," said Barrera, a junior double major in English and political science.

She added that this safety precaution is important because nearly 50 percent of enrolled UTPA students are taking at least one night class.

"That's a big chunk of students that don't come during the day and have the same right to feel safe," Barrera said.

### HUNGRY? WHY WAIT?

Another project in development, according to Sandoval, is the expansion of food services to the east side of campus.

"It has been expressed that with the hectic schedules of our science and engineering students, it is difficult for them to cross campus to eat a meal or come to the cafeteria to eat during lunch," he said.

On the east side of campus are two of UTPA's biggest colleges, Education and Science and Engineering, and Sandoval said that it is important to grow with the campus and its individual colleges. Most of the food options besides vending machines are located in the Student Union.

"As we grow and as the infrastructure grows away from [the west side] of campus, we're going to need to perfect the process of doing these micro-stations where we need them," he said.

This proposition came with great support from students who said it would bring great convenience.

"When I first came to Pan Am I was going to be a dance major and I would have to come all the way to the Union or walk all the way back to my dorm," said Kimberly Guerra, a junior business major. "I would spend 30 or 40 minutes walking back and forth."

### GIVING BACK

While SGA recognized that student issues are the number one priority, leaders also stressed the importance of community involvement. One way to promote this is through their semester-long food drive coordinated by the University Community Relations (UCR) Committee.

"The Rio Grande Valley is in need, and we need to assist our fellow man," Sandoval said.

The head of the UCR Committee, Norma Padron, said that the drive will serve many purposes. The main purpose will be to assist the food bank currently supplying not only Cameron, Willacy, and Hidalgo counties where most of UTPA's students come from, but other food banks, as well as an acting regional bank.

"This is a very ambitious project in that it is going to be held throughout the semester," Padron said. "We are trying to get all the student organizations on campus not only aware but involved."

In fact, they are offering prizes to the top donating organizations. First place will receive \$200, followed by \$100 for second place, and \$50 for third. The goal is 500 cans and progress will be tracked by way of a thermometer that will be placed in the library tracking the "heat" of donations.

However, Sandoval pointed out that any changes made would be in vain if students weren't proud of the accomplishments they've made such as the impressive percentages of medical and law school acceptance and the recent triumphs of student organizations in national competitions.

"What is important to recognize is that we, the students, are competing in the same category as other institutions and in many cases we are not only on equal footing, but we are more prepared than they are," he said. "In recognizing these achievements, we can contribute to the pride that we have in our degrees."

## PLEDGE continued from page 1

recognizing certain rights given by the Creator," said Rueda.

According to Polinard, the Constitution is unambiguous in its demand for maintaining a separation between church and state, or religion and government.

"The only reference to religion in the original draft of the Constitution says that there should be no religious test for public office in the United States," he said. "In other words, there's a direct statement about religion, and what it speaks to is separating religion from government."

"So you end the Constitution separating church and state with no religious test for public office in the United States," he continued. "And then you begin the Bill of Rights separating church and state, 'there shall be no establishment of religion' and 'government shall not interfere with the free exercise of religion.'"

Rueda, on the other hand, believes that the Declaration of Independence clearly shows that any rights Americans have are given by the Creator, and therefore the phrase "under God" is a good reflection of the nation's foundation.

"If we don't recognize God, then the rights that, according to the Declaration of Independence,

were given to us by our Creator, then are those rights still in existence?" asked Rueda. "This country is founded on the notion that those are rights that are given to us by the Creator and nobody can take them away, and it is within those boundaries that an atheist has the right to be an atheist."

Others have supported the phrase "under God" by arguing that it is not a religious phrase, but rather a tradition.

"Sandra Day O'Connor articulated the position of a couple of other members of the Court, and also the position of many of these people. She used the phrase 'ceremonial deism,'" said Polinard. "What she was saying is there's an obvious reference to God but it's not a religious reference, it's more part of the ceremonial culture of the nation."

No matter what side of the argument people are on, the distinction is blurry between what does and does not interfere with Americans' First Amendment rights.

"What we're debating here is where is that invisible line that someday you cross over and run head on into the First Amendment provision about establishing religion," said Polinard. "It changes all the time. The line moves."

## PARKING continued from page 1

ties planning and construction at the Physical Plant, oversees the project for new campus dorms.

"There are always plans for growth at the university," she said. "The Planning Committee has coordinated with other facilities, such as the shuttle services, in preparation for the closure of parking lot J."

According to Parking Manager Eddie Morin, the university is working on the problem.

"The overflow (S-1) parking lot has over 300 spaces. Although this does not [completely] solve the problem, UTPA is currently working on paving a new parking lot by the railroad tracks, which will eventually provide 350 spaces," said Morin.

The Student Government Association addressed the parking issue at the State of the Student Body Address on Sept. 22.

"I empathize with my fellow students that we have trouble parking, but it is not an issue that we can solve overnight," said Student Government Association President Adrian Sandoval, senior political science major. In the meantime, "choose lots that you know will be open and choose what is available rather than what is closest," he said.

However, some students are not satisfied with that response.

"The shuttles only run at certain times of the day. It's not 100 percent convenient," said Tom Cagle, sophomore music major. "You either get here at a certain predetermined time and fight with people to get a parking space just so you can go get a shuttle and then wait for the shuttle after class."

Shuttle services will continue to be run Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.



# Music players cause hearing loss

By **LYLONY CAZARES**  
*The Pan American*

On any given day, students can be seen traveling across The University of Texas-Pan American campus with compact headphones plugged into their ears without knowing to the damage they may be inflicting on their ears.

But according to recent studies, many portable-music-player users are listening to loud tunes for large periods of time, sometimes leading to noise-induced hearing loss.

Bailey Wang, audiologist at UTPA, agrees that portable music players can put an individual's hear-

ing at risk.

"It depends on how long is too long and how loud is too loud," Wang said. "Music or noise can physically destroy the hair cell within the inner ear. This can happen without inducing any painful feeling."

Some individuals may begin to feel tired after long periods of listening to music, he explained, along with feeling less alert, drained and even tinnitus, an internal ringing, buzzing, or whooshing sound in the ears.

"If you are listening to music for too long, you cannot shut off your hearing or stay away from noise," Wang said. "You are bombarding your hearing system with a large unneces-

sary amount of physical energy."

By the time an individual notices signs of hearing loss, damage to the ear has already been done. Some signs include asking people to repeat themselves more often, especially in noisy situations. Also, sounds may become distorted or muffled.

Wang suggests listening to your own body's warning system to determine the duration and volume of listening.

"If you notice your hearing becomes muffled or your ears start ringing, this is actually the warning signal from your system," said Wang. "Some people are more vulnerable to noise pollution."

However, this news does not faze students.

"I don't really worry about my hearing, because most of the time I'm too busy thinking about my school work," Melissa Santos, a sophomore engineering major said.

However, Wang noted that studies have shown that the younger an individual is, the more vulnerable they are to noise-induced hearing loss, so students should be worried.

Any students or staff interested in hearing evaluations can visit the Speech and Hearing Center on campus; for hearing problems, ear infections and hearing aid use call 956-381-3587.



# SPORTS CLIPBOARD

## Carrigan voted Indie Defensive Player of the Week Libero receives award for showing against International

Junior Chrissie Carrigan has been announced as the Independent Defensive Player of the Week by Sports Information Directors from NCAA Division I independent institutions.

Carrigan competed in one match against Texas A&M - International, which the Lady Broncs won 3-2. She recorded a career-high as well as the fifth-highest single-match digs total in UTPA program history with 35 digs. She also notched one kill and one assist in the match.

For the season, Carrigan leads the team with 231 digs, averaging 4.81 digs per game. She currently has 569 digs for her career as she continues to gain ground on the top-ten all-time career digs list.

### UTPA Sports Information

## Saints make debut at Alamodome Katrina brings new team to San Antonio

The New Orleans Saints are getting set to take on the Buffalo Bills at their new home in San Antonio. This Sunday's game will take place at the Alamodome after the Saints lost their home to Hurricane Katrina's destructive path.

The Saints haven't had to play a single home game until now, but the quick-thinking minds of the team's officials came up with this idea to move their home for this season to San Antonio and other areas. The Alamodome was once home to the San Antonio Spurs is now the home of high school football and basketball state championship venues, along with college football's Alamo Bowl held each December.

The tickets for this season's home games have been on the market for a week now and there are 14,200 seats remaining for Sunday's Saints-Bills match-up, including several high-quality seats.

The Alamodome will be used for three NFL games this season, with the first being this weekend. Oct. 16 for the Saints will face the Atlanta Falcons and then again on December 24 the Dome will host the NFL when the Detroit Lions visit the Saints.

Fans may purchase tickets by calling Ticketmaster at 800-877-0898. Tickets are also available on-site at the Alamodome box office (10 am-6 pm CT) and online at both [www.NewOrleansSaints.com](http://www.NewOrleansSaints.com) and [www.Ticketmaster.com](http://www.Ticketmaster.com).

## Cards, Niners head south of the border Azteca Stadium to host NFL game

The NFL is in Mexico this weekend.

On Oct. 2 the game between the San Francisco 49ers and Arizona Cardinals will be the first game in NFL history to be played on foreign soil during the regular season.

The game will be televised at 7:30 p.m. central time on ESPN. Mexican station Televisa will broadcast live from Mexico City's Estadio Azteca, which boasts the largest attendance ever recorded in a single game. The stadium can hold more than 100,000 people.

The first Mexican preseason game took place on Aug. 5, 1978 when New Orleans took on Philadelphia in front of a crowd of 30,000. Since then, a total of seven preseason games have been played in Mexico including six as part of the popular American Bowl series.

The 49ers have played in eight American Bowl games so far. According to articles on NFL.com, officials on both teams use the game to expand their foreign fan base, showcasing the teams to international audiences.

Management for the Cardinals told the Web site that the final season at Sun Devil Stadium in Arizona provides optimal timing for their hosting at Mexico.

On a historical note, it was an important milestone in the NFL when, on Aug. 15, 1994, 112,376 fans packed the same stadium for the annual American Bowl between the Dallas Cowboys and Houston Oilers. This attendance figure is currently the largest in NFL history.

## FOR THE RECORD

### UTPA SPORTS

#### VOLLEYBALL

##### Texas A&M-Corpus Christi match

Tuesday, Sept. 27  
Moody Fieldhouse

TEXAS A&M-CORPUS CHRISTI DEF. UTPA  
24-30, 31-29, 30-26, 30-24

UTPA: Kills, Heather Bravo 23; assists, Karen Lyons 53; digs, Chrissie Carrigan 20; aces, Kellie Phillips 3, Chelsea Blakely 3.

record: (3-10)

TAMUCC: Kills, Anna Machado 16; assists, Paula Araujo 45; digs, Carol Marcengo 23; aces, Carol Marcengo 2.  
record: (5-3)

#### 2005 UTPA Volleyball Schedule

<b>Oct. 4</b>	<b>Texas State</b>
Oct. 8	Utah Valley State
<b>Oct. 11</b>	<b>Texas A&amp;M -Corpus Christi</b>
Oct. 14	North Dakota State
Oct. 15	South Dakota State
<b>Oct. 21</b>	<b>Prairie View A&amp;M</b>
<b>Oct. 22</b>	<b>Prairie View A&amp;M</b>
<b>Oct. 22</b>	<b>TCU</b>
<b>Oct. 28</b>	<b>Utah Valley State</b>
Nov. 3	Texas A&M-Kingsville
Nov. 5	Texas A&M-International
Nov. 10	Northern Colorado (NIT)
Nov. 10	IPFW (NIT)
Nov. 11	Texas A&M-Corpus Christi (NIT)
Nov. 11	TBA (NIT)

Note: All volleyball home games in bold.

#### Golf

##### Women's

Unlimited Potential/Bay Tree  
Sept. 23-25

1. Middle TN. State	298	304	299	901
2. Cincinnati	305	302	301	908
2. Coastal Carolina	312	298	298	908
4. Charleston	304	307	301	912
5. Ball State	309	316	297	922
6. Western Michigan	308	318	299	925
<b>7. UT-Pan American</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>927</b>
8. Methodist College	318	305	308	931
9. Fla. International	309	310	313	932
10. Southern Illinois	319	315	311	945
11. Wm. & Mary	327	313	314	954
12. Tennessee Tech	316	320	321	957
13. Newberry Coll.	334	313	328	975
14. Charleston So.	337	329	325	991
15. Old Dominion	334	337	333	1004
16. Tusculum Coll.	337	351	338	1026

#### UTPA 2005 Cross Country Schedule

Oct. 1	Cowboy Jamboree
Oct. 15	Pre-Nationals (men) Chili Pepper (women)
Oct. 29	Independent Championship
Nov. 12	NCAA South Central Champ.
Nov. 22	NCAA Championships

#### RGV Football

##### Week 5

##### Friday, Sept. 30

##### Non-district

McAllen Memorial at Edinburg  
St. Joseph at Lyford  
MMA at La Villa

##### District 31-5A

Edinburg North at Donna  
PSJA at Edinburg Economedes  
PSJA North at Weslaco

##### District 32-5A

Brownsville Porter at Brownsville Rivera  
San Benito at Harlingen South

##### District 32-4A

Brownsville Lopez at Mission Veterans  
Edcouch-Elsa at Roma  
PSJA Memorial at Mercedes

##### District 32-3A

Hidalgo at Port Isabel  
Progreso at La Feria  
Raymondville at Rio Hondo

##### Saturday, Oct. 1

##### District 32-5A

Harlingen at Brownsville Pace

##### Week 4

##### Thursday, Sept. 22

##### District 31-5A

PSJA North 46, Donna 28  
Edinburg 27, Weslaco 7

Open: La Joya, Rio Grande City, McAllen, Santa Rosa, Sharyland.

##### District 32-5A

Harlingen South 42, Browns. Porter 14  
Harlingen 41, Brownsville Rivera 13  
Los Fresnos 31, Brownsville Pace 14  
SanBenito 32, Brownsville Hanna 7

##### District 32-4A

Weslaco East 24, Mission Veterans 21  
Edcoud-Elsa 21, Mission 0

##### District 32-3A

Lyford 49, Raymondville 21  
Hidalgo 14, La Feria 13  
Rio Hondo 45, Progreso 0

##### Non-district

St. Joseph 55, Monterrey Prep 6  
Falfurrias 28, Port Isabel 14  
Benavides 13, La Villa 7

##### Friday, Sept. 23

##### District 31-5A

ENHS 10, Edinburg Economedes 9

##### District 32-4A

Brownsville Lopez 42, Mercedes 0  
PSJA Memoria 54, Roma 71

##### Non-district

Zapata 21, Rio Grande City 3  
McAllen High 21, PSJA 20  
MMA 21, Santa Rosa 20

##### Monday, Sept. 26

##### Non-district

La Joya 41, CC King 21  
Sharyland 28, CC Moody 10

#### Edinburg High School's season schedules

##### Edinburg

Sept. 2	San Benito	L (13-21)
Sept. 9	Harlingen	L (33-41)
Sept. 16	Calallen	L (12-32)
Sept. 22	*Weslaco	W (27-7)
Sept. 30	McAllen Memorial	
Oct. 7	*PSJA North	
Oct. 14	*Edinburg North	
Oct. 21	*PSJA	
Oct. 28	*Economedes	
Nov. 4	*Donna	

##### Edinburg North

Sept. 1	Brownsville Rivera	L (7-31)
Sept. 8	McAllen	W (21-15)
Sept. 16	Sharyland	W (13-12)
Sept. 23	*Economedes	W (10-9)
Sept. 30	*Donna	
Oct. 7	*Weslaco	
Oct. 14	*Edinburg	
Oct. 22	*PSJA North	
Nov. 4	*PSJA	

#### Edinburg Economedes

Aug. 26	Sharyland	L (17-22)
Sept. 3	Brownsville Pace	L (7-31)
Sept. 8	<b>La Joya</b>	L (7-37)
Sept. 16	BYE	
Sept. 23	*Edinburg North	L (9-10)
Sept. 30	*PSJA	
Sept. 30	McAllen Memorial	
Oct. 7	BYE	
Oct. 14	*Donna	
Oct. 21	*Weslaco	
Oct. 28	*Edinburg	
Nov. 4	*PSJA North	

Note: All home games in bold.

\*Denotes district games.

## College Football

### AP Top 25

#### Week 4

1. USC 3-0
2. Texas 3-0
3. Virginia Tech 4-0
4. LSU 1-0
5. Florida 4-0
6. Florida State 3-0
7. Georgia 4-0
8. Ohio State 3-1
9. Miami 2-1
10. Tennessee 1-1
11. Michigan State 4-0
12. California 4-0
13. Notre Dame 3-1
14. Arizona State 3-1
15. Alabama 4-0
16. Texas Tech 3-0
17. Wisconsin 4-0
18. Minnesota 4-0
19. Virginia 3-0
20. UCLA 3-0
21. Boston College 3-1
22. Purdue 2-1
23. Iowa State 3-0
24. Louisville 2-1
25. Georgia Tech 3-1

## NFL

### Week 4

#### Sunday, Oct. 2

- Houston at Cincinnati, Noon
- Denver at Jacksonville, Noon
- San Diego at New England, Noon
- Buffalo at New Orleans, Noon
- St. Louis at N.Y. Giants, Noon
- Detroit at Tampa Bay, Noon
- Indianapolis at Tennessee, Noon
- Seattle at Washington, Noon
- N.Y. Jets at Baltimore, 3:05 p.m.
- Philadelphia at Kansas City, 3:15 p.m.
- Minnesota at Atlanta, 3:15 p.m.
- Dallas at Oakland, 3:15 p.m.
- San Francisco at Arizona, 7:30 p.m.

#### Monday, Oct. 3

- Green Bay at Carolina, 8 p.m.

### Week 3

#### Sunday, Sept. 25

- Cincinnati 24, Chicago 7
- Atlanta 24, Buffalo 16
- Indianapolis 13, Cleveland 6
- Tampa Bay 17, Green Bay 16
- Jacksonville 26, N.Y. Jets 20
- Philadelphia 23, Oakland 20
- St. Louis 31, Tennessee 27
- Miami 27, Carolina 14
- Minnesota 33, New Orleans 16
- Arizona at Seattle 37, Arizona 12
- Dallas 34, San Francisco 31
- New England 23, Pittsburgh 20
- San Diego 45, N.Y. Giants 23

#### Monday, Sept. 19

- Denver 30, Kansas City 10

Note: all times central standard time

# Golfers finish South Carolina tourney with solid scores

The University of Texas-Pan American finished seventh overall at the Unlimited Potential/Bay Tree Classic hosted by the College of Charleston in Myrtle Beach, SC, with a final tally of 927 (310-312-305) this past Sunday.

Senior Stefanie Maynard notched her second consecutive top-10 finish as she fired a three-round total of 225 (75-78-72) to finish tied for eighth overall. The placing marked her seventh consecutive top-10 finish dating back to last season.

Nikki Boychuk was a pair of strokes back of her teammate as she concluded the tournament with a three-round total of 227 (76-78-73) while fellow UTPA senior Daniela Cortes was tied for 23rd overall with a 52-

hole total of 230 (77-74-79).

Newcomer Bronwyn Sandberg finished tied for 63rd overall with a final tally of 245 (82-82-81) while fellow freshman Rachel Gee collected a three-round score of 258 (92-84-82) to finish tied for 76th overall.

Middle Tennessee State captured the Unlimited Potential/Bay Tree Classic with a three-round score of 901 while Coastal Carolina (908), Cincinnati (908), College of Charleston (912) and Ball State (922) rounded out the top five.

The Lady Broncs will be action next at the Battle at the Lakes Tournament hosted by Oral Roberts University, starting on Oct. 3 in Tulsa, Okla.

UTPA Sports Information



Joey Gomez/The Pan American

**ON THE GREEN-** Freshman Bronwyn Sandberg shows off her chip in a recent practice. The team heads to Oral Roberts Monday.



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# Holthe hailed as one of UTPA's leading clutch players

By **DARYL GONZALES**  
The Pan American

The University of Texas-Pan American has seen many Lady Bronc volleyball players come and go, but this will be the final season for one of the most successful players to have ever played at the UTPA Field House.

Danielle Holthe has had a remarkable tenure at UTPA, having set six school records. When all is said and done and the ball hits the court for the final time, the Lady Bronc middle blocker will be listed among the program greats that have left their mark, such as Lisa Yanez, Jaclyn Muszynski, and Cathi Netemeyer.

The middle blocker concludes her career this season with the Lady Broncs alongside her best friend on the squad, senior Stephanie Redd. The duo has been a dominant force in the past and their presence on the court is documented in the UTPA record books.

Some of the more notable records that the duo owns are block assists where Holthe is second with 187 and Redd is third with 186 on the list. In total blocks, the two switch places with Redd currently possessing second place with 240 and Holthe one notch below her teammate with 234 total.

The two have been starting at the middle blocking position since their freshmen season, and even though they play the same position, there have never been any signs of athletic envy. In fact, it has been the exact opposite, as they have both played an important role in each other's growth both on and off the court since their arrival.

"Of course, Stephanie is my best friend," Holthe said. "She and I have been roommates since our freshmen year so we gotten to know each other very well. Even though we grew up in different states and have different backgrounds, we really have grown close to each other over the past four years."

Playing alongside another record-breaker in the UTPA volleyball program, Holthe has also seen her game rise to another level as she is currently ranked sixth in block solos, eighth in matches played, ninth in kills and tenth in total attacks midway through the 2005 season.

Heading into her final season with the Lady Broncs, Holthe set some goals for herself and her fellow Lady Broncs. They did that in 2003 where UTPA tied a program record with a 19-15 record.

"I just want to have fun and go out with a bang. When I look at the team, we have a lot of talent, and our main goal is to break the single-season wins record by getting 20 this season. I want to do whatever I can do help us achieve that goal," Holthe commented about her final season at UTPA.

During her four seasons, Holthe has been teammates alongside 24 different players. Every new player brings a new attitude and personality to the squad, and Holthe believes that different players are the ones that have made her stay in the Rio Grande Valley more memorable.

"I have had a lot of good experiences meeting new people who have different personalities and backgrounds than I do," she said. "It has always been really good. We always get along, and we always try to be open-minded to everyone that comes in."

While UTPA has seen almost two dozen players come and go in her four seasons, two constants have always remained on the roster: head coach Dave Thorn and associate head coach Fabiana de Abreu.

Holthe believes that her relationships with her coaches has truly made her a better player on the court, and a better person off of it.

"They have really given me so many words of wisdom that far exceed anything on the court. I don't think my experiences would have been as memorable had it not been for them. It is really a good relationship between us," Holthe said.

Those words of wisdom have truly paid off for the UTPA senior as Thorn believes that Holthe has grown from her freshman year

when she was a quiet newcomer and now has blossomed into one of the Lady Broncs' top leaders.

"She came in like so many freshmen who were not as aggressive, really quiet and reserved. Physically, she is much stronger than when she initially came here. It's been great seeing her develop over the last couple of years, and I believe that she is ready for her best year yet," Thorn added.

Since her arrival, Holthe and Redd have each made an immediate impact on the UTPA lineup by helping the Lady Broncs record 50 victories over the past three seasons, which are most triumphs during a three-year span in program history.

Some of the best memories of her Lady Bronc career include tying a program record with 19 victories during the 2003 season, finishing second at the Independent National Championships in her freshman season and being a part of a team that has beaten some of the toughest competition in the nation for the very first time.

"Every moment has been very memorable, but my favorite one was when we beat Texas State in my first season at the Fieldhouse. It was the first time that the program has ever beaten them, and it was just a great match and a great feeling to win it," Holthe said.

All of her memories and experience at UTPA wouldn't have occurred had she not taken the chance to attend a school so far away from home. Holthe believes that attending UTPA has given her a new sense of independence and allowed her the personal growth that she was seeking during her final year of prep schooling.

"When I came here

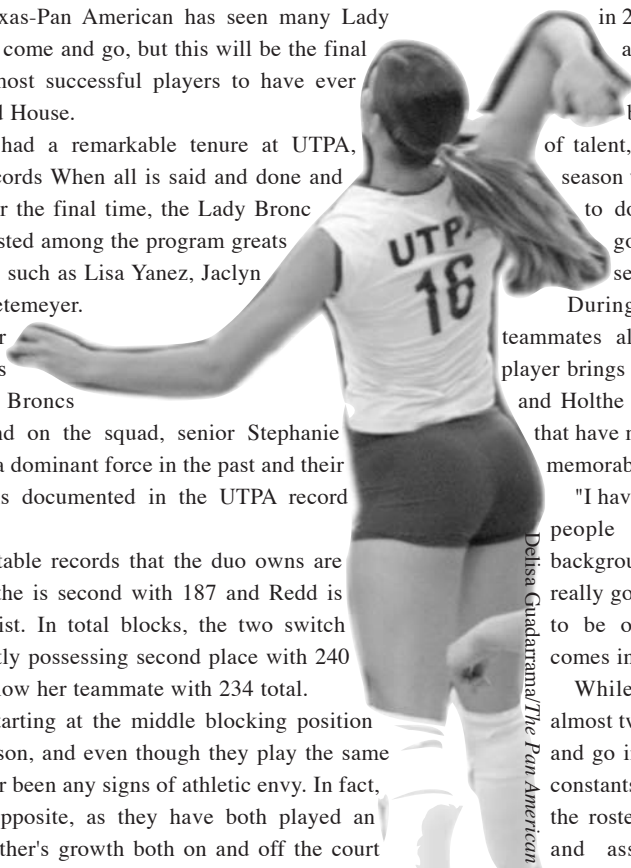
on my recruiting trip, it reminded me so much of California. I came down here, and I really got along well with the coaches and administrators and really thought that this would be the best atmosphere for me. Also, it didn't hurt that the climate reminded me of home either," commented Holthe.

In every situation, there always has to be some kind of motivation and support that comes from somewhere. Holthe believes that volleyball has been an important part of her life; even though she has only been playing it since freshman year in high school. The one thing that has been there alongside her sporting career has been her family.

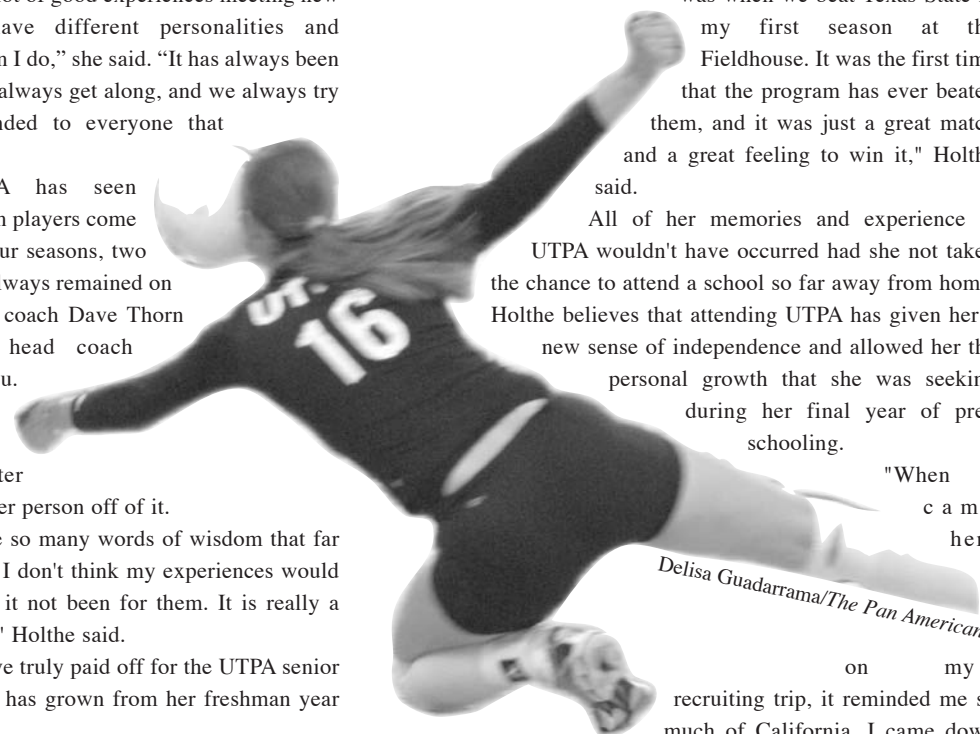
"My family has been very supportive, and since it's my senior year, they have been coming to a lot of matches. Even since I was little, they have always been to every single one of my games, never missing one. My mom is just a big-hearted woman, and it really makes me admire her a lot," Holthe said.

In her final season, Holthe will be looking to build upon her experiences and expand her memories in a green and orange uniform. While the Lady Broncs are only 3-9 so far this campaign, Holthe believes that the team will be able to turn the table and make a strong run towards the National Independent Tournament.

No matter what the season holds for the Lady Broncs, Holthe's career has already established herself as one of the all-time greats in program history.



Delisa Guadarrama/The Pan American



Delisa Guadarrama/The Pan American

## Broncs prepare to pack the house Tuesday

By **JOEY HINOJOSA**  
The Pan American

The UTPA volleyball team competed against Texas A&M-Corpus Christi Tuesday evening, but were only able to win the first game (30-24). The next three games went to the Islanders giving them the match win. The Lady Broncs have compiled a record of 3-10 for the season.

The contest was originally supposed to take place last weekend and was to be a part of the Islander Invitational. Hurricane Rita led to the tournament's cancellation.

Prior to the Tuesday night match, UTPA volleyball Head Coach Dave Thorn expressed his thoughts on how his team is doing now that they are halfway through the season.

"I knew going into the season that these first three tournaments were going to be really tough for us, and unfortunately we didn't get many wins," said Thorn. "However the team is working really hard and they are coming together. My thoughts since the beginning of the season were that right around early October is when everybody would be coming together."

Thorn is optimistic about the team's play for the rest of the season.

"Overall the players are working hard. They are improving. I like the progress of the team," said the Spokane, WA. native. "We just aren't seeing the results in the win and loss column

yet, but if they keep improving like they have been then that will take care of itself."

Against the Islanders, UTPA standouts included junior Heather Bravo, who recorded a .380 hitting percentage with a match-high 23 kills and only four errors. Junior Karen Lyons finished with a match-high 53 assists, and Junior Chrissie Carrigan had 20 digs.

The team's next match will take place Tuesday, Oct. 4 against the Texas State Lady Bobcats. On that night the UTPA Athletic Department will be having 'Pack the House Night' at the Field House Tuesday.

Thorn is looking forward to the next home game.

"I'm very excited about that. Texas State is a very talented team," he said. "They are usually one of the top two or three teams in the Southland Conference, and having them come down and play at our place is a great opportunity for us to show how we can compete against the best teams in the Southland Conference."

"If we can get a packed house and get over a thousand people in here then that's going to go a long way toward providing the atmosphere we need to go and beat those guys."

According to UTPA women's basketball Administrative Assistant Chelsea Bell, the goal for the evening is to have 1,300 fans attending the match. Bell says the effort will hopefully

produce more of an interest in UTPA sporting events.

"Our athletic director came up with the idea to get the school more involved in athletics," said Bell. "We are just trying to see if we can pack the house."

Food provided by Sodexo, music, and a couple of prizes will be a part of the festivities as well.

UTPA Sports Information Director Joe Monaco also is excited about the occasion.

"We just thought it was a great opportunity to try and make it a fun event for the students who would like to stick around for the volleyball match," said Monaco. "It just seemed perfect for having them come over here, eat dinner, and have the volleyball match that same day."

Like Bell, the Ashland University alumna hopes the event draws students more to UTPA athletics events.

"For some this will be their first chance to come and see our team in action, and it will be a great opportunity to provide more exposure to the student body of our athletics program," said Monaco.

The record for most people attending a UTPA sporting event in the Field House occurred on Dec. 27, 1981 when the Broncs basketball team hosted Lamar University in front of a crowd of 5,648.

# SPORTS



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## AD speaks on Broncs' conference affiliation future

By **JOEY GOMEZ**  
*The Pan American*



**STREET**

Now that the Athletic department at UTPA can finally catch its breath following last summer's race for conference affiliation, Athletic Director Scott Street said he has options, despite another two years waiting for the next turn.

The footrace is over, now the marathon begins.

Street said that since the Southland Conference deferred the program's application, meaning they took no action, rules imply that UTPA can't apply again for another two years.

"They were careful not to deny us an opportunity so we could still be available in the future," Street said.

Street said that UTPA will take another approach into conference affiliation, as current conferences already know that the program is

available, and looking for a spot.

"As a whole athletic department, we are also looking to be affiliate members with conferences in specific sports," Street said. "So if for example a conference only has one sport that they need to fill, then we can become an affiliate in that conference for that specific sport."

UTPA currently has one Southland conference-affiliated sport, in men's tennis.

"(Positively)we are still eligible to be in a NCAA championship," Street said. "The negative part is that we aren't able to compete for conference championships and that our students are not awarded individually."

Some personalities well-known in the program have their own opinions about the current situation.

Jeff Koch, long-time radio announcer for men's basketball, expressed frustration about the program's inaction for conference affiliation. He said his frustrations are a combination of things that stem from his professional associations with the team, as well as his personal views as a fan.

"As a fan, I am frustrated that they are still independent," Koch said. "In my opinion, to be in a conference requires initiative and I haven't really seen that (from administrators)

"The president has to make up her mind,"

Koch added. "That wasn't there in the previous administration...the problem is reaching a decision, if you want it you need to do it (and) if you're not willing then stop pretending."

Koch said he is still amazed at the level of players they have attained despite being independent, and that says a lot about the coaching staff.

He said that he continues to have a close association with the basketball team as he has had the opportunity to travel with them and considers them "quality human beings," but he said the program needs to decide.

"They're in athletic purgatory," Koch said. "Every year, what you offer athletes is a conference championship."

Koch said one of the most important things the program can offer is money.

"In my opinion, every year attendance will continue to flounder because of the lack of natural rivalries found in conference play," Koch said.

He uses Centenary College, located in Shreveport LA., as an example of a team that went the extra mile to gain affiliation with the Mid-Continent conference.

"The school has 1600 people, roughly 10 percent of the population of UTPA and how did

they get in a (Division I) conference?," Koch asked. "They have something to offer the city of Shreveport."

In the past, Koch has even suggested that the school could downgrade to Division II status. Street doesn't think that is the answer.

"I think that we bring a lot more recognition as a Division I, but not only from the RGV, but on a national scale," Street said. "We compete in the most competitive division there is."

"Financially, we are comparable to schools in the Southland Conference and other like Division I 3A schools," Street said. "I don't think that Division II is the answer."

From a basketball perspective, conference affiliation has changed four times for men's hoops beginning with the Big State Conference from 1953-1962.

Following a stint in which men's basketball captured the national independent title in the NAIA conference in 1963, the team has been involved with the American Athletic Conference (1979-1980), American South (1987-1991) and most recently the Sun Belt from 1991-1998.

The women's team, by comparison, has been involved with two conferences since their inception in 1988. The American South from (1988-1991) and the Sunbelt from 1991-1998.

## Runners ready for a wild-west showdown at Oklahoma

By **ANNALISA LIMAS**  
*The Pan American*

Grab your hats and boots – the 8th ranked cross country team in the nation is headed to the Cowboy Jamboree. The Broncs will travel to Stillwater, Okla., this weekend ready to buck the competition and finish within the top three teams.

After a second-place finish at the season-opening Rice Invitational, the men's team is hoping to carry that momentum into the upcoming meet.

"We're going to see some really great competition this weekend, head coach Ricky Vaughn said. "It has always been a high-quality meet."

High quality is exactly what the Broncs will find, as they will face the No.1-ranked team in the nation, Arkansas, as well as powerful Oklahoma State and Texas A&M.

This is the team's first trip to the Cowboy Jamboree, but the men are confident they will earn a top three-finish. The course will be a full 8k race for the men's side and 5k for the women. Assistant coach Brian Cunningham said this longer race will give his team a head start on the work it needs to prepare for the regional meet in November.

"We'll be running tired again but this meet

will be a great opportunity for the guys to start comprehending how to attack the longer races," said Cunningham.

Seniors Westly Keating and Hector Gandara are heading into this race with top 10 finishes already under their belt. Keating finished 3rd at the Rice Invitational with a time of 17:21 closely followed by Gandara, in 7th with a time of 17:49.

The sport offers a hybrid between a team and individual activity. Cross country team scores are compiled based on individual performance; then, place finishes for the team's top five runners are added and the lowest total score wins the meet.

"A lot of the team's success does really depend on these two guys because you can always count on them for a top 10 finish," said Vaughn. "But a lot is also depending on our three freshmen who all had a solid performance at the last meet."

Rounding up the top five runners are freshmen Luis Nava, Juan Davila and Alex Moncivais.

"In a bigger meet like this, the closer your top five runners are to each other, the better chances you have of winning," said Vaughn. "Our freshmen just need to close the gap

The Lady Broncs are also looking to improve this weekend after finishing 6th at the Rice Invitational. Leading the team, was junior Karla



Mario Orta/*The Pan American*

**RUN LIKE...** - Bronc cross-country runners Luis Nava (left) and Westly Keating take some laps in a recent practice on the track. The nationally placed Bronc team heads to Oklahoma this weekend.

Hernandez, who finished 20th with a time of 15:56. Lorraine Garcia and Ashley Perez also provided the Lady Broncs with solid performances, 32nd and 35th respectively.

"I was very pleased with the way they ran the first meet," said Vaughn. "Mostly, we're just looking for improvement and another top 6th finish."