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■ VALLEY

Homeowners not pleased with news of new establishment

Club to open, locals worried about noise

By **MANUEL TISCARENO**

The Pan American

Residents in a McAllen neighborhood thought their days of complaining about late-night loitering, trash and noise were over last January after nearby club Mint was shut down by the City of McAllen. But now, only five months later, another club owner plans to build near the same location.

Residents of the Las Villas neighborhood, located off Nolana Street, complained to the McAllen Planning and Zoning Commission in hopes of keeping Havana Club and Grill from opening. However, the commission overruled the residents' request to prohibit the bar and grill, leaving neighboring homeowners worried that pre-January problems will arise again.

Havana Club and Grill will continue construction despite a 10-foot radius violation toward the residents' property. According to Edgar Taylor, senior McAllen planner, bars or nightclubs within city limits cannot be within 600 feet of apartment or home property, yet the scheduled building of Havana Club and Grill comes in at a distance of 590 feet away from the nearest home property.

Amanda Hernandez, a McAllen city planner who is working with Havana Club and Grill owner Benjamin Robalino, said that an exception can be

granted if city commissioners choose to do so.

"You can't be within 600 feet of a residential-zoned property, but the city commission has the right to overrule and grant a variance," she explained.

Discontented Las Villas homeowners like Rueben Fonseca believe Havana should not be allowed to open its doors near any neighborhood.

"It affects our neighborhood negatively," he said. "If there are clubs, you're going to have loitering. I use to have to pick up beer bottles around here all the time."

Fonseca said when The Mint was open, he would hear yelling, noises and forceful door slams around 2 a.m. Though he still experiences some noise disturbances, he said they are not as bad as when The Mint was around.

Hernandez said she understands that homeowners object because they fear problems will arise for their neighborhood, but noted that the variance was granted because Robalino made good points in his PowerPoint presentation to the commission regarding sound travel. She said he also included a promise to surround the area with an eight-foot brick wall.

A retired 80-year-old Las Villas resident, who asked to remain anonymous, said a wall would be of no help to the residents if a large club capacity creates traffic problems.

"Of course a wall would block out some of the noise, but I don't think that is going to do a thing for the traffic," she said. "And I don't know if building a great big wall is what I want around my neighborhood."

She did say that she values local

business owners and that she would not like to see Robalino shut down merely because of the 10-foot problem.

The club will operate on a one-year conditional permit and will be shut down in the event of constant disruption. A capacity has not been determined by the fire marshal, according to Hernandez.

The club was not granted a variance waiver on its first application, but an appeal from Alonzo Cantu, president of Cantu Construction, eventually won over the zoning group.

"I concur that the building to be constructed on this lot has the characteristics and specifications mentioned in the letter, making it unlikely to generate noise suf-

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■ CAMPUS

Students participate in creative writing course

By **MANUEL TISCARENO**

The Pan American

Everybody was waiting anxiously under the dim lights of the Schelling Room on the second floor of the University of Texas-Pan American library earlier this week. They were about to host a series of distinguished speakers from the university's fifth annual Creative Writing Institute seminar.

The speakers who read various literary pieces Tuesday are part of an intensive three-week program designed to create a unique three-credit creative writing course

Tuesday speakers included Rob Johnson, Erick Williams and Steven P. Schneider; each made sure their readings weren't your usual snoozers. The established writers and editors covered interesting stories and poems. Most notable was a real story about a famous author's friend who got eaten by a lion in an old Reynosa bar after having disturbed the lion with a flashlight.

Schneider, the founder of the CWI and former chair of the English department, created the program with the help of a colleague, Rene Saldana, in 2002 after having realized the need for student expression.

"We needed to place emphasis

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THIS WEEK

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SPORTS

Littleton continues form at summer meets

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■ CULTURE

eHarmony sued for excluding homosexuals

By **BRENDA RODRIGUEZ**

The Pan American

Homosexual communities across the country and the Rio Grande Valley are speaking out against eHarmony for excluding gays, lesbians and bisexuals, following news of a law suit filed against the popular dating Web site.

Joe Sanchez, a 21-year-old funeral director from Mission, was surprised to find out that eHarmony, which was founded in 2000, does not

include the options "man seeking man" or "woman seeking woman" on its site.

"The focuses on the site are things like compatibility and personality," said Sanchez, who is openly gay. "So what, us gay don't have those things? It's not fair."

The site was sued May 31 by Linda Carlson in the Los Angeles Superior Court, charging discrimination based on orientation, according to

an article on the Reuters Web site.

Carlson, who lives in the San Francisco Bay area, reported that she tried to use eHarmony's services in February 2007 and was denied because she is gay. She wrote the company a letter saying that its anti-gay policy was discriminatory under California law. Her lawyers were seeking to make it a class action lawsuit on behalf of homosexuals excluded from the online service.



Sanchez thinks if eHarmony continues to exclude homosexuals from its site, people will begin to view it as an intolerant association.

Neil Clark Warren, eHarmony founder, is an evangelical Christian who has had strong ties with Focus on the Family, a conservative religious

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Opinion

■ ENLIGHTENED BY LUCAS

Things that caught my attention

BY: LUKE KOONG

Hurray! The blonde heiress is finally behind bars!

I applaud Superior Court Judge Michael T. Sauer for sending Paris Hilton back to jail. It gives somewhat spoiled individuals like me a wonderful sensation up our spines to know someone completely spoiled is being punished.

Hilton said she used to act dumb. But now she won't be dumb. What she really means is that her next sexscapade will be released on the big screen.

KIDNAPPING AND TARGET

It's pretty sad when society gets so horrible that you can't even go to Target without needing a male escort.

Kelsey Smith was kidnapped in a Target parking lot in Kansas on June 2 and then later found dead across state lines in Missouri. A 26-year-old man was arrested and charged with first-degree murder and aggravated kidnapping in connection with the crime.

Police and rescue workers were able to locate her body on June 6 in a wooded area. Investigators said they used cell phone signals to narrow down the search for Smith.

Cell phones are pretty amazing.

In order for them to remain amazing, your phone has to be on. That means, silent mode is okay, and vibrate is okay, but off is not okay.

I can't begin to count the many times I've been frustrated at being directed straight to voicemail. Now I have a decent argument to convince people to keep them on.

And while we're talking about cell phones, please personalize your voicemail message. I would like to know if I was redirected to the correct voicemail box at least.

DEATH TO PORN

That is literally the case in Iran

now. For all of you voyeurs and wannabe amateur porn stars, watch out. The Iranian government is coming for you.

Yesterday, it voted 148-5 to label porn elements as "corrupters of the world." Under the Islamic religion and as stated in the Quran, "corrupters of the world" are worthy of the death penalty. The Guardian Council must approve the motion before it becomes law.

So don't go to Iran.

Haha, imagine if Paris somehow ended up there...

CLEAN SHEETS

So how about them Yanks? And no, I'm not talking about the baseball team. Team USA has rolled through the group stage of the CONCACAF Gold Cup 2007, finishing at the top of Group B and undefeated going into the knockout round.

Their most recent victory came at the expense of El Salvador where the U.S. scored four goals, two in each half. The American side looked dominant for a majority of the game and Everton-based keeper Tim Howard ensured his squad remained unscored upon in the tournament.

The futbol squad's performance helped it shoot up 13 positions to No. 16 in the world. The Americans been as high as No. 4, back in November 2006.

I've only been soccer-crazy for a few years now, but I actually feel good about supporting our team now. I know most of the countries we've gone up against aren't that strong, but that doesn't lessen the accomplishments of Bradley and his men.

I almost bought their blue pinstripe third kit a few days ago. Almost. The balance of my bank account didn't agree. Mark my words. I will get one. And a Houston Dynamo kit. The orange one, mind you.

I'd make comments on how the Mexican national team is doing in the same tournament, but that could end up badly.

GO ROCKETS, GO!

Is a sweep in order tonight? I'm feeling a game five, only so the league can make a few more dollars in tickets and advertising. Watch the game tonight. I have this secret notion that pivotal games are fixed so that the NBA can make more money. You'll know if there's some shady business going on if the Spurs lose by more than 15.

I'm kind of curious as to how the Cavalier fans will react if their team losses. Cleveland fans are known to be quite rowdy. Remember that incident with the NFL referees back on Dec. 16, 2001? Those crazy Ohioans tossed plastic bottles filled with beer all over the field like projectiles. They got mad after the officials overturned a fourth down call which would have kept the Browns' drive alive with about one minute left in the game.

What's going to happen if that happens at Quicken Loan Arena? Can you imagine the calamity and chaos? I'd be scared. The Spurs should be scared. In fact, that could be such a large motivator that the series ends up shifting back to the AT&T Center for a game six. Imagine that...



■ Please send all comments, questions and dessert recipes to lkoong2004@yahoo.com.

■ IN THE NEWS

Judge makes headlines for dry cleaning lawsuit

BY: ANA LEY

Ridiculous as it seems for a person to actually sue a dry-cleaning business for \$54 million over a pair of lost trousers, even more ridiculous is the fact that such a lawsuit is being filed by a federal judge. I can't even begin to fathom why the U.S. judicial system would allow someone so bananas to hold so much power.

In case you're uninformed, the person I'm talking about is Roy Pearson, a D.C. administrative hearings judge. The defendants are Korean immigrants Jin Nam Chung, Ki Chung and their son, Soo Chung, who own and operate Custom Cleaners in the District. Pearson claims he's acting in the interest of all city residents against poor business practices by suing the Chungs.

In other news, the Honorable Judge Pearson is apparently going through financial troubles after going through a costly divorce.

While initially he wanted cash for damages related to the pants - which allegedly cost more than \$1,000 - he has increased his demands after three settlement offers, including asking for money to rent a car so he could go somewhere else to get his laundry cleaned. This even after the Chungs found his pants.

Oh, and get this: he represented himself in court, so he called himself as



■ Do you think I'm awesome? Please tell me all about it! If not, I guess you can e-mail me anyway. Drop me a line at: analey23@yahoo.com

a witness, began to recall his lost pants, started weeping like a little child and eventually ran out of the courtroom.

Still, not every judge making headlines this week is a incompetent lout. Thomas H. Wilson, the guy pushing to pull Genarlow Wilson out of jail, gave me great hope in the legal system. Wilson was convicted of aggravated child molestation at the age of 17 when he participated in oral sex with a 15-year-old girl.

And I feel kind of nasty admitting it, but reading about how adamant Paris Hilton's judge is to keep the spoiled blonde in jail makes me happy.

Ana Ley recently completed a semester-long Archer Fellowship in D.C.



Not Pearson's trousers

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Pan American gladly accepts letters from students, staff and faculty regarding recent newspaper content, campus concerns or current events. The Pan American reserves the right to edit submissions for grammar and length. Please limit submission length to 300 words. The Pan American cannot publish anonymous letters or submissions containing hate speech or gratuitous personal attacks. Letters are printed at the discretion of the editor and must include the writer's name, phone number, classification/title and major if applicable. Please send all story ideas to the corresponding section editor or to thepanamerican@gmail.com at least two weeks prior to event.

NEWS

■ CAMPUS

Free GMAT training course shows good results after pilot run

By **LUKE KOONG**
The Pan American

Results from a mock exam administered June 2 have administrators at The University of Texas-Pan American feeling positive about a pilot Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT) training course that was administered to prospective MBA students.

During the mini-mester, the MBA program provided free training for students preparing to take the GMAT. Average scores from the first pre-test were 329 out of a possible 800. That average increased to 408 three weeks later, with a high score of 710, mainly as a result of the course according to information compiled by the MBA program.

"You could tell by seeing the students' faces and eyes that they were proud of themselves in having accomplished the tasks that they went through," said Teofilo Ozuna, interim dean for the College of Business Administration.

Most of the participants worked during the day and attended the training in the evening, Ozuna explained. In addition to work done in the classroom, students were required to complete homework assignments.

"It showed a lot of character. They were able to improve their scores and feel very confident in themselves," said Ozuna, who added that several students had final scores twice as high as their

pre-test results.

Monica Garcia, who works at Magic Valley Electric Co-Op as the finance and accounting manager, said the course was very demanding.

"You literally eat and breathe GMAT during these few weeks," she said.

Garcia, who left work from Mercedes at 4:30 p.m. every day to attend the course, said she is grateful for the training.

"The course was very helpful to me because it familiarized me with the GMAT. I probably would not have spent the time studying and would have been in for a big surprise on test day," Garcia said. "Believe me, it was worth every effort."

The Princeton Review offers a GMAT classroom course for \$1,200. Its online courses range from \$99 to \$899. The premiere tutoring package comes in at \$4,800. Kaplan offers a course at \$1,299.

Ozuna said offering the GMAT training course will hopefully encourage more students to apply for graduate school.

"The GMAT is a stumbling block to go into graduate school, not that they don't have the capabilities but because students have been dormant for so long," he said.

Two doctoral students and two MBA students served as tutors for the course. The focus of the work was to re-familiarize students with math and ver-

bal sections of the exam. A majority of the students had been out of the university setting and required a refresher on the subject tested.

The program initially began with 50 participants, but only 36 students finished. Garcia and the 35 others who remained encouraged each other to complete the course.

"Each of us committed ourselves and we worked really hard helping each other out along the way," she said. "We come from different backgrounds but we met on a common ground and focused on doing our best on the GMAT."

The encouraging results of the GMAT course have convinced the university to offer a second session, with orientation July 5 and the beginning of classes July 9. Currently, 30 students are on the waiting list for the second session.

Several changes will occur for the July training. The GMAT course will be extended from a five-six-week course instead of a three-week one. In addition, there will only be two tutors.

UTPA is also beginning to look into assessing a fee for the course. According to Ozuna, some students said

a free program was helpful but might also discourage other GMAT-takers because they would feel that the quality of the program was not good.

Ozuna said that the service provided by the university is important in encouraging the community to continue graduate work.

"This is a need that the students in the Valley need. It is very important that we help them be successful at the graduate level," he said.

Individuals interested in participating in the course should contact the MBA program at (956) 381-3313.



Daniel Flores/*The Pan American*

ACCOMPLISHMENT - Kai Koong, director of the MBA program addresses the participants of the GMAT training course on June 2 at Crucitas Kitchen. The students completed the program with an average score of 408.

■ NATION

Border fence creates controversy among various groups

By **KRISTEN VILLEGAS**
The Pan American

While the Congress struggles to solve the riddle that is immigration, Rio Grande Valley residents continue to express concern over the pending homeland security part of the proposed bill that includes funds for a border security fence. Many worry that the fence will affect landowners, farmers and environmental factors.

"Aside from the monumental environmental damage, it is a regressive policy that will undermine good relations with Mexico and our Latin American allies," said Gary Mounce, professor of political science at The University of

Texas-Pan American.

The fence will more likely affect farmers by taking away their water access and will destroy key feeding and rest areas for migratory birds according to Martin Hagne of the Valley Nature Center.

"(Building a fence) will be one of the largest environmental catastrophes to happen to the Valley in my lifetime if they do what they're telling us might happen," he said in an article by the Houston Press.

Overall, this government project has called for 700 miles of fencing across the United States-Mexico border. Congress allocated \$1.2 billion to construct 370 miles of fencing by the end of

2008. Of those 370 miles, 153 miles are set to be in Texas, 129 miles in Arizona, 76 in California, and 12 miles in New Mexico.

"In this day and age of innovative technology, I believe there are smarter, more economical ways of securing our borders than by erecting a prison style, barbed wire fence," said Mark Pena, chairman for the Edinburg Environmental Advisory Board.

The project features several types of fencing including metal panels, cable barriers, wire mesh and steel poles designed to stop vehicles from crossing the border. It will also include a virtual fence made up of motion sensors, ground-based radar and unmanned sur-

veillance aircraft.

"These are not terrorists as some would like to scare Americans into believing," Pena said. "Rather, these are hard working men and women who are struggling for a better life."

"A far better way would be to take the billion dollar cost of construction, which says nothing about guarding or maintaining, and invest it in economic development in Mexico and Central America," said William Turk, SACS coordinator and liaison. "Creating jobs in the home country of the immigrant would do more to keep him or her there than any fence."

Even though there has been no final decisions as to where the fence will

be built or what kind of fence it will be, locals have begun wondering if this is the right direction for correcting border security.

"It is a slap in the face of Mexico, unneeded and impractical," Mounce said.

Pena said he understands border security is important, but worries about the negative side effects of erecting a fence.

"I agree that the United States has a responsibility to protect its borders," Pena said. "However, as a country that has benefited and continues to benefit from Latin America, I believe the U.S. also has a responsibility to address the economic plight of its peoples who are forced to come into this country illegally in search of work."

CWI continued from page 1

more on opportunities for our students to express themselves creatively, especially in writing," recalled Schneider.

This week the students have attended morning workshops, afternoon discussion panels, and nightly readings. Tricks of the publishing and literary industries have been discussed.

For some, the sessions are lengthy and time consuming but Angella Marie Mendez, a 25-year-old senior from Weslaco, really enjoys it.

"Personally I think this is an experience of a lifetime. This is really broadening our horizons in writing,"

said the communication major. "[They know] the fact that you are trying to be a published writer and are giving you hints and advice about things that editors are looking for."

Past speakers have included writer Dennis Chavez, recognized Mexican poet Rich Yanez, and Dagoberto Gilb, a successful Mexican-American author.

Moreover, after the intense week of ongoing seminars and readings, the students will then have two weeks of independent study to submit a portfolio of their work, said Emmi Perez, a professor of creative writing.

"I think this is a good opportunity for the students," said Perez. "I'm enjoying it a lot because my students are with me all week and we're spending a lot of time together."

Both Perez and Schneider are very proud of the program and feel that the support from the university is very helpful. The professional writers will stand back from the podiums today as they let students present their own work. The CWI will continue to hold these seminars every summer and hopes to expand the creative community to include local teachers and other interested individuals.

HARMONY continued from page 1

group.

"He's probably an old-fashioned, strict Christian who says gays are going to hell. Clearly he doesn't like us," Sanchez said of Warren.

Although eHarmony's exclusion of gays on its site may seem like a setback for homosexuals, Sanchez said he believes that society in general is more accepting of gays now.

"I believe that as time moves on more generations to come will accept it," he said. "Since we are in the Valley, we have a lot of old-fashioned people that see and deem it as wrong, but I've learned that the new parents are teaching their children to accept everyone and respect those that have different lifestyles."

The site released a statement claiming allegations of discrimination against homosexuals were "false and reckless."

The company said it researched years of patterns found in successful heterosexual marriages that help it match couples together.

eHarmony added that there is nothing that would prevent them from providing same-sex matching in the future.

Krystal Rodriguez, a freshman political science major from Edinburg, said eHarmony is not being fair to gays and hopes that the company

changes its policy in the future.

"For [eHarmony] to say that they've only done research on heterosexual marriages to justify why they exclude homosexuals is dumb," Rodriguez said. "Everyone should be given the same opportunities, and I hope that eHarmony reconsiders its policy."

Gabriel Suarez, a waiter from Mercedes, said that he does not see any wrong doing on eHarmony's part.

"I'm sure there are hundreds of other dating sites these gay people can use," said Suarez. "Every site is different and every site tries to attract a certain type of group."

He believes that there are other Web sites homosexuals could use instead of eHarmony.

"Maybe eHarmony wants to relate to straight people only. I'm sure there are other sites where it's just for gay people only," Suarez said. "As a straight man why would I go to a gay site? So why would a gay guy use a straight site?"

eHarmony is one of the nation's biggest Internet dating sites, with more than 12 million registered users "looking for love," according to its Web site. According to a study by Harris Interactive, on average 90 eHarmony members wed every day.

BAR continued from page 1

ficient enough to disturb nearby neighbors," said Cantu in a letter submitted to the Zoning Board seven days after the first decision.

Hernandez said the grill has a fair chance to make it as a business, but it is a privilege that can be revoked.

"This is a business owner that wants to locate in our city and we want to give everybody a chance," said Hernandez. "If the commission determines that the bar and grill is not being a good neighbor to these people, it can change its mind."



Jennifer Durheim/The Pan American

CLOSED - Mint was shut down in January 2006. Havana Club and Grill, a new club, has nearby residents concerned about noise again.

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- Thurs. Jun. 21 Free Salsa Lessons
From 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. at the Ballroom
- Tues. Jun. 26 Free Salsa Lessons
From 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. at the Ballroom
- Tues. Jun. 27 TX Hold'Em Poker Tournament
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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

LOCAL SCENE

College students, staff exhibit ceramic works

By **JEANETTE PEREZ**
The Pan American

On May 7 South Texas College in McAllen opened its doors to a different kind of art gallery, "A South Texas Ceramic Sampler." The show, which is currently held in the Pecan campus's art gallery and second floor of the library, consists of 36 ceramic pieces submitted by both students and staff from five Texas universities: STC, The University of Texas-Pan American, University of North Texas, Texas A&M-Kingsville, and the University of Texas at San Antonio.

STC art department assistant chair James Miller worked alongside UTPA ceramics professor Chris Leonard for four months to display an exhibit offering fresh opportunities and different approaches in the world of ceramics while providing representation to various Texas schools - a first of its kind in the Valley.

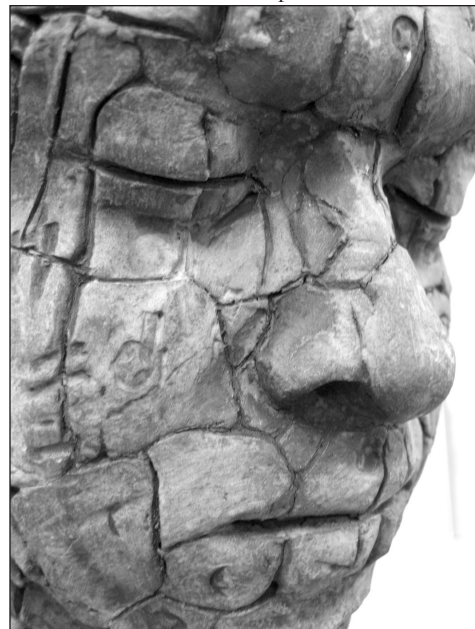
"It's a show that I and Chris put together. He and I decided it would be nice to invite regional colleges for a gallery display," said the STC instructor, who has taught there for four years. "We chose five institutes and each institute would then select 10 of their students to submit works so that different schools would be represented."

The contributions from the five universities sets this particular exhibit apart from previous local ceramic displays and is an attempt to form connections and open doors to new possibilities in

ceramic-making for both students and the public alike.

"This show offers public access," Miller said. "The community gets to see what the students are doing and the students are given an opportunity for criticism, showings of their work and open communications with students from other colleges."

With no theme incorporated, the exhibit



Jennifer Durheim/*The Pan American*
LIFE-LIKE CREATIONS - "Incomplete" by Mario Godinez is a low-fire ceramic with stains and glazes.

offers a variety of pieces which are each unique in their own way. Abstract forms hang from the wall, while functional bowls, cups and vases sit atop the bookcases intermixed with tiled pieces and sculptures of all kinds. Neutrals, primaries, and brights all come together as one in this diverse mixture of earthenware, fired ceramics, clay, porcelain, and stoneware with each piece a work of art all its own. Where else can someone see porcelain seals shaped like bananas, a sculpture of intertwining eyeballs, legs, breasts, torsos and overlapping tentacles, large amorphous shapes and perfectly designed China dishes all in the same place?

"Not many people realize they can do these sorts of things with ceramics. It's not just for utilitarian use. This is a purist show based solely on ceramics. There are no other mediums involved. That's what makes this very special," Leonard said.

Inspiration drew it all together.

"I'm inspired by the quality of contemporary ceramics," continued the STC instructor. "We have some of the best ceramicists and potters in South Texas. A big part of art making is exhibiting your work because why make art if you're not going to show it to other people. It's a showcase."

What Miller likes most is the intimacy and familiarity offered by the campus, something rarely found in exhibits.

"It's just very refreshing and it's in an intimate venue," he said. "Usually people have to drive many miles to see a show like this but we're



Jennifer Durheim/*The Pan American*
OLD WORLD ART - Julian Rodriguez's "Untitled" is a collection described as primitive fired ceramics.

offering it at a much closer and open place."

Miller hopes the exhibit will spark inspiration in those unfamiliar to the arts.

"People who aren't taking a studio art class want to after coming to see the exhibit. We've had such a success that we're going to try to make this an annual event," he said.

The exhibit runs through June 29 and pieces are on display at the upstairs library art gallery and the STC gallery in building B. Library hours are 7:30 a.m.-10 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 7:30-5 p.m. Friday, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Saturday and noon-6 p.m. Sunday.

For more information, contact James Miller at (956) 872-2668 or jmiller@southtexascollege.edu.

CAMPUS SCENE

Summer theater lineup presents numbers, drama, songs, romance

By **LAURA GARCIA**
The Pan American

"Season of Change" is this year's Pan American Summer Stock's theme and given long-time leader Dr. Marian Monta's retirement, the motif suits the season just right.

This summer PASS 2007 will feature three plays: "Arcadia," "The Rainmaker" and "The Fantasticks" all at the Albert L. Jeffers Theatre in the Communication Arts and Sciences Building, from June 21 through July 8.

According to Tom Grabowski, senior designer, the three plays were chosen due to their few constraints. The theater students worked on three plays in three weeks, when it usually takes six weeks just to get ready for one.

"There is no time to do 'Hamlet,'" said Grabowski, and for this reason shorter, less elaborate plays were chosen.

The summer opens with "Arcadia," a tale of love and math. The story begins in 1809 and spans 200 years, wherein a 13-year-old genius named

Thomasina invents fractal geometry and foundations for Chaos Theory. Her descendant, Valentine Coverly, discovers her notes on thermodynamics 200 years later and the two eventually meet onstage, compressing both time periods. Until then the scenes shift back and forth from period to period.

Chelse Benham is directing the play as part of her senior graduate degree plan and did extensive research before deciding on "Arcadia."

"I liked all the subjects brought up and the dry, British wit of the play," said Benham.

The second play of the summer is "The Rainmaker," directed by Pat McEnnis. The romantic comedy tells the story of a lonely girl on a farm during a drought who meets a stranger promising rain in exchange for \$100. Never really interested in love, the girl falls for the stranger, but her family believes him to be a con man.

PASS 2007 comes to an end with "The Fantasticks," directed by Brian Warren. The show ran for over 40 years in New York City and is a musical dealing with romance, changes and comedy. The story shows two fathers who scheme to

bring their children together and are in for a surprise when the couple unites.

However, the main storyline in "The Fantasticks" is about the changes we all undergo as we progress from innocence to experience.

"Specifically, insofar as the boy and girl in the show are concerned, it is about the changes we experience as we grow from a merely romantic idea of love to an understanding of the real, profound, complex emotion that is called love," said Warren.

Each play features characters going through changes with love and life and the summer theatre's theme "Season of Change" is clearly noted. After 35 years of hard work and dedication to the theater program at UTPA, Monta stepped down and this is the first series of performances without her. From love and laughter to math and sex to meddling parents, the plays hit every note.

The three plays will be playing in the Jeffers Theatre from June 21 through July 8.

For more information, contact the box office at (956) 381-3581.



Stella Benavides/*The Pan American*
ALL SHOULD COME TO P.A.S.S. - Shaelene Tisdale and Jonathan Dimas rehearse their parts for "Arcadia," opening June 21.

■ FEATURE STORY

Summer movie season overloaded with stars, sequels, special effects

By **FRANK CALVILLO**
The Pan American

School is out and the sun is scorching more than ever. With most of the population taking vacations in the next three months, the busiest place around town is not the beach or the mall, but rather the local movie theater.

Any hardcore movie buff knows that the summer movie season, which begins in early May and lasts until the end of August, is the most anticipated time of the year for films. It is during this time that families, teenagers and just about everyone else are treated to a cavalcade of special effects, loud explosions, top-name movie stars and no fewer than two comic books turned into feature films.

As usual, most movie fans are eagerly awaiting the release of certain titles.

"I can't wait for the new Harry Potter movie to come out," said Erica Peralez, an Edinburg native. "I'm buying some tickets to the midnight showing as soon as they go on sale."

"The best movie of the summer is definitely going to be 'Transformers,'" said Alex Jimenez, a student at Texas State Technical College. "My friends and I have been looking forward to that movie since last summer."

Before the season starts however, it is customary each year for Hollywood insiders to analyze each of the summer's major releases and make predictions as to how some projects will fair over others.

With the first month - one of the more crucial in the summer movie season - already behind us, it is time to reflect.

May promised three high-profile releases in a row with "Spiderman 3," "Shrek the Third," and "Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End," each promising to deliver bigger thrills and/or laughs than the last.

Dubbed "the month of three-quels" by most, all three films were universally panned by critics, and by some audiences who felt their favorite movie franchises had let them down.

"I saw 'Spiderman 3,' the day it came out, but it was kind of boring," said Jimenez. "It wasn't as good as they made it look."

Although each movie set its own record as far as ticket sales were concerned, subsequently recouping the amount of money each film cost to make, no film came close to making the same mark on the box-office as its predecessor.

The release of such "blockbusters" saw other May releases including the Jane Fonda/Lindsay Lohan vehicle "Georgia Rule," and "Bug" - the latest horror offering from "Exorcist" director William Friedkin - come and go without a trace.

However, with June already under way, the summer seems to be finally finding some hits with both audiences and critics.

The breakout comedy "Knocked Up," the Kevin Costner/Demi Moore thriller, "Mr. Brooks," the slickly produced "Ocean's Thirteen" and the animated penguin tale "Surf's Up," have all received their share of critical praise as well as audience approval.

However June's future is still up in the air thanks to a number of "dicey" releases including "Fantastic Four: Rise of the Silver Surfer"- the sequel nobody asked for, "Nancy Drew," starring newcomer Emma Roberts (niece of Julia), and the overly-hyped "Evan Almighty."

By contrast, "Ratatouille," the latest adventure from Pixar and the long-promised "Live Free or Die Hard" starring Bruce Willis are set to be true audience-pleasers.

In a month crammed with more films than it needs, some titles such as Angelia Jolie's "A Mighty Heart," the Diane Keaton/Jon Heder comedy "Mama's Boy," the John Cusack drama "Martian Child," and the overly dramatic-looking "Evening" starring Meryl Streep and Glenn Close, all look as if they'll be relegated to the sidelines upon release.

Considered by many to be the summer's busiest month, July looks set to bring on the

requisite set of hits.

The month starts out with the Independence Day release of popular 80's phenomenon "Transformers," in live-action form on the big screen. July promises to deliver a sure-fire hit each week as the latest Harry Potter installment, the remake of "Hairspray" starring John Travolta and Michelle Pfeiffer and "The Simpsons Movie" are all expected to score with movie goers.

However with the hits come the misses, as well as the "it was okay" type of films which include "License to Wed"- the latest from Robin Williams, the Catherine Zeta Jones romantic comedy "No Reservations," and the fantasy adventure "Stardust," with Pfeiffer and Robert DeNiro. Meanwhile the Stephen King horror tale "1408," and "I Now Pronounce You Chuck and Larry," starring Adam Sandler could go either way.

August is generally regarded as the least profitable month of the summer movie season. With most moviegoers bogged down from three months of action sequences and superheroes, the studios decide to release the films that barely made the summer movie cut out into the ocean and pray they don't sink too fast.

Aside from "The Bourne Ultimatum,"- the latest in the Matt Damon franchise, the unnecessary "Rush Hour 3," and the Nicole Kidman horror film "The Invasion," no other release looks to be a standout.

Of course for most movie theater employees, the summer movie craze is nothing new.

John Villalobos, head manager of McAllen's Hollywood USA movie theater, notices a big difference in audience attendance.

"I'm not allowed to share any specific numbers, but this time of the year is definitely busier than any other," he said.

So while hyped-up projects fail miserably and underdog films become surprise hits, it's safe to say that movies and the stars within them provide an undeniable escape from the hot summer sun.



ON THE REEL - From top to bottom: "Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End," "The Simpson's Movie," "Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix," "Hairspray," "Shrek the Third" and "Stardust" are among the many summer films of 2007.

Layout design by Roy Bazan

■ TRACK & FIELD

Littleton ready for USA Championships

Senior Bronc high jumper extends success

By **ERICK QUINTERO**
The Pan American

Will Littleton had already leapt headfirst into the UTPA record books, but on June 8 the Bronc All-American high jumper took his high-flying act to the Alex G. Spanos Sports complex in Sacramento, Calif. to compete in the NCAA Division I Outdoor Track and Field Championships.

After only needing two jumps June 6 to advance to the finals, Littleton finished fifth in the nation with a jump of 7-3, behind Kansas State's Kyle Lancaster. Lancaster cleared the same height as Littleton, yet got the nod at fourth place because Littleton, the son of McAllen Memorial head football coach Bill Littleton, notched a few more scratches.

Scott Sellers of Kansas State took home the top spot with a jump of 7-7 1/4, followed by Texas' Andra Manson, who cleared 7-6. Donald Thomas of Auburn cleared 7-6 but was relegated to third for scratches.

"I could have easily been fourth. I think I should have been fourth, but the top three guys, they jumped extremely well," Littleton said. "I had to bring my

A-plus game to compete with those guys. For the most part I was in the mix when it came late."

Head coach Ricky Vaughn said the performance was a success against some of the best competition Littleton has faced. In addition, he said Littleton's effort should attract more top-notch recruits, as well as shed light on the university on a larger scale.

"They (recruits) always want to go to a program where they are going to have success, so whenever we are able to come in and produce All-Americans are always going to help our program," Vaughn said. "We are right in there with the biggest schools in the country. It gives our university a lot of good positive publicity."

By Littleton's account, the jumps in the preliminaries weren't prime leaps and he is focusing on patching up certain tweaks.

"I knew that I needed to be clean, don't miss early, just keep myself in the competition and see what happens late, and I pretty much did that," Littleton said. "There were three guys over 7-6 today. The next bar was 7-5 and I felt like I should have cleared that."

Littleton added that he had two great attempts at 7-5, but didn't climb enough to get over it.

Still, his showing at Sacramento has propelled the Bronc reecord-setter into the last meet of the year. From here on out the competition doesn't get any

easier as Littleton will begin preparation for the USA Championships, which pits him against the top 24 jumpers in the nation. He competes against professional and amateurs from all levels for a chance to earn a spot on the U.S. National team June 22.

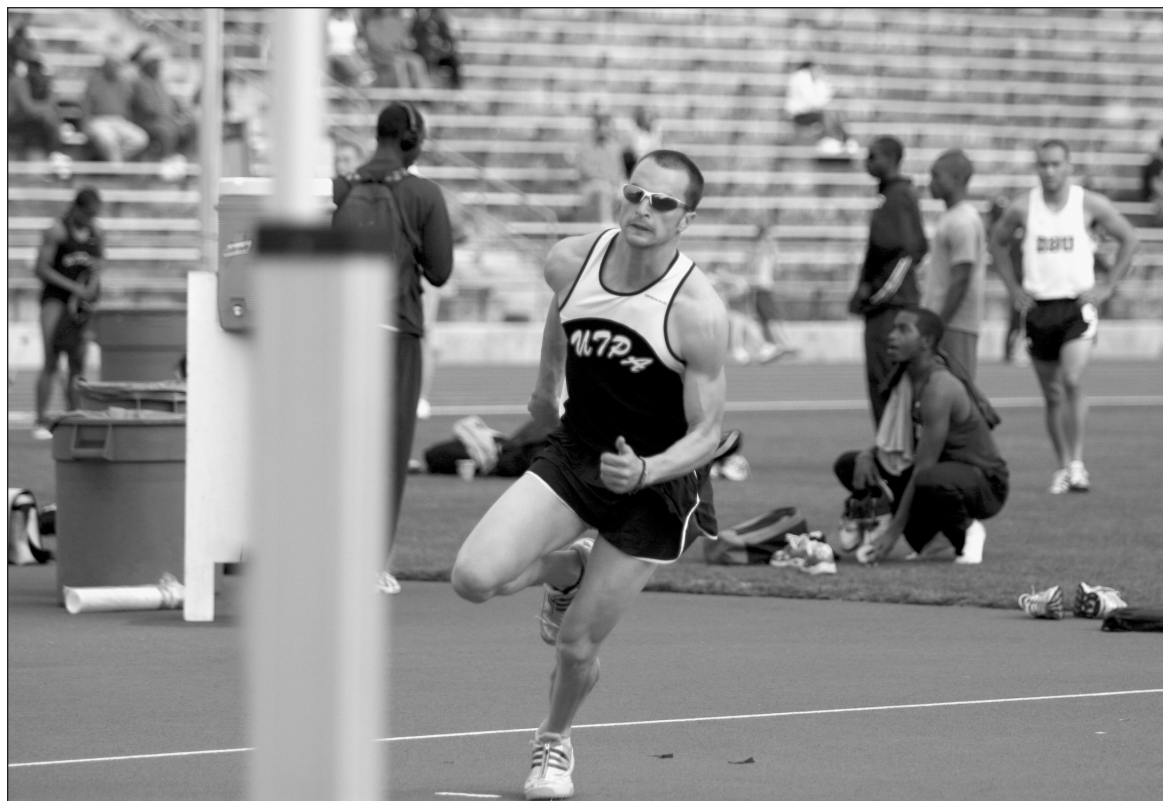
The senior will look to close out his final year donning green and orange

strong as he gears his preparation toward the indoor season. This is his last outdoor effort.

"The guy that won it, he's the only one coming back, so I have a great opportunity next year with indoors," he said. "It will be my last season to compete with Pan Am, so I'm real excited."

Littleton said his he will make the best of his last year training with Vaughn.

"I got 2 1/2 inches better in 18 months and I think in another 6 months, there's no telling what he will do to me," Littleton said. "I really think he will make me a 7-7 or 7-8 high jumper."



REVING UP - Senior Will Littleton charges up to the bar during the Longhorn Invitational in Austin. At the event held on April 22, Littleton garnered second place with a performance of 7-2 1/2.
Onydia Garza/The Pan American

■ MEN'S GOLF

Golf team rallies, defends title in Port St. Lucie

Senior Norris seals major win for men's season

By **ERICK QUINTERO**
The Pan American

Now that time has passed, the golfers can look back at their final competition with some perspective, and they should like what they see. It took some final-moment heroics from the University of Texas-Pan American senior golfer Colin Norris for the Broncs to defend their PGA National Minority Collegiate Golf Championship on May 13 at Port St. Lucie, Fla.

"Colin came up huge for us at the end. It all came down to him. He had to make par on the last hole and he did it," said Andrew Tredway, men's head golf coach. "You couldn't write a better ending for his college career."

Norris also became only the sixth athlete in the history of the school on any sport to garner Academic All-American honors.

UTPA climbed out of a six-shot

"I think for those guys, they can really see that you can do some special things if you work hard," Tredway said. "I don't think he has as much talent as some of the other guys, but he makes up

nate that we were able to execute. We worked in on a lot of flop shots, wedge play, bunker play and chipping," he said. "In the last 16, 17 and 18 we had all those shots. It was very important for us."

UTPA entered the tournament as the defending champ and the top ranked team. The victory boosts the Broncs' national ranking to 169 out of 292 Division I teams, the highest ranking ever for the program.

"Basically, what we need is maybe more support from the school so that we can continue to move forward and compete with the top programs," Tredway said. "We are doing everything we can, so I'm just hopeful that the school and the community will recognize what a great thing it is."

The victory comes as a huge boost for a young golf club that is headed in the right direction, according to Tredway.

"I think for one, it proves to them that they can win golf tournaments and that they can come from behind with a lot of pressure on them in front of a national TV audience," Tredway said.

The men's championship play was recently featured on the Golf Channel on June 6, with a replay to be broadcast on June 23 at 3 p.m.

National Minority Golf Championship	
UTPA - 870	Bronc Scores
Bethune-Cookman - 871	Colin Norris - 215
Florida A&M - 872	Armen Kirakossian - 216
Jackson State - 875	Shane Pearce - 217
	Kyle Tudi - 222
	High Wongchindawest - 228

deficit in the last day on the green to fend off several squads. Norris played his way to a total tally of 215 (71-71-73) over three days and 54 holes later he tied for third place overall.

Tredway said Norris' work ethic was "dramatically different" and an improvement from previous years.

for it by working hard and thinking correctly on the golf course."

He added that his team focused on the correct facets of the game, which paid off in the final holes. Execution in crucial moments paid huge dividends.

"We were fortunate that we worked on the right things and even more fortu-

Freshman Armen Kirakossian looks poised to take the reins of the golf program for years to come. The Oregon native finished fifth overall in the links with a score of 216 (69-73-74).

As a team, the men claimed their second straight championship with a tournament score of 870 (286-295-289).

SPORTS

Editor's Pick: Game to Watch



Cavaliers

When: Thursday
Time: 8 p.m.
Where: Cleveland
Will be aired on ABC



Spurs

Aaron Guerra stands out for Coyotes

By **ERICK QUINTERO**
The Pan American

Aaron Guerra, a pitcher now in his sophomore campaign with the Edinburg Coyotes, has seen the last of his Bronco days, but the lessons and people who played a part in his success are still fresh in his mind.

The former pitcher at The University of Texas-Pan American was part of the pitching class of 2006, which featured some of the finest to don Bronco colors including Tim Haines, drafted in the 27th round by the New York Mets, and Bobby Gomez, chosen by the St. Louis Cardinals in the 24th round. Dane Mason also went pro out of the group.

For Guerra, an Edinburg native, everything changed three years ago with

the arrival of current Bronco pitching coach Justin Meccage. Now in his second season with the United League Baseball club, Guerra is grateful Meccage made the move to South Texas.

"He (Meccage) played Double-A ball with the Yankees and when he came in everything just changed," said the Edinburg High graduate who was one of the more successful Broncos. "We went from not having a dominant pitching coach to someone who knew what we needed to do to get to where we are right now. His overall knowledge of the game is just amazing."

Overall, the UTPA pitching class of 2006 featured some excellent talent, so it comes as no surprise that Guerra is making waves within the Coyotes organization. He had an ERA under 2.00 last season and

leads the team in wins with six this year after entering the starting rotation.

It wasn't always like this. Guerra garnered little attention from scouts coming out of college and went undrafted. The only attention came from south of the border, mainly Saltillo and Monterrey. He eventually played winter ball with Saltillo, but nothing further materialized. He chose not to dwell in the disappointment and instead focused on the positive tangibles of baseball.

"In a way it was good but in a way it wasn't because baseball got me through college and I was able to play Division I baseball, so I can't complain. You know? It was good," Guerra said.

Guerra, a chemistry major and 2006 graduate, now teaches science at Pharr San Juan Alamo High School and

coaches baseball at PSJA North. And pitches in the pros for the Coyotes, who return to town for a homestand next week.

"Teaching was the only thing that gave me the opportunity to keep playing ball," Guerra said. "It's the only thing that gives me time off in the summer. It fell into my lap, and I can't complain," he commented.

His early accomplishments on the mound and recent success have made him a crowd favorite and one of the Coyotes' most reliable starters in 2007.

"To be honest it's kind of surprising because last year I was a reliever and this year I had the chance to come in and start when the team needed me to. I'm pretty happy about it," Guerra said.

Guerra is currently 6-1, a feat he said he "never would have expected" as a reliever. Currently Guerra is tied for first place in wins with a glittering 2.61 ERA and 29 strikeouts in 31 innings pitched.

"Usually you don't have relievers that have that high of wins," he said. "It's just been exciting. I never had that record at UTPA, I mean even as a starter I don't think I ever had that many wins."

The independent baseball label doesn't stop major league scouts from searching for new talent within its ranks. Edwar Ramirez, a former Coyote pitcher with a low to mid 90 mph fastball and a nasty change-up, is making strides within the New York Yankee organization, having climbed all the way to Triple-A affiliate Scranton/Wilkes-Barre Yankees. Former Edinburg stars Robinson Cancel (catcher) and Aaron Sisk (infielder) have also gone from the Coyotes to affiliated ball.

The possibility of moving up is exciting for the young pitcher and one of Guerra's professional goals.

"No one is really comfortable being here because it's independent baseball," he said. "Everyone that's here is looking forward to go over to the next level, so of course that's my hope."

However, Guerra said he has no plans on quitting even if never gets picked up.

"I'm going to keep playing until my arm doesn't allow me anymore," said the righthander.

The Edinburg Coyotes continue to execute their dominance over the rest of the United Baseball League with a spot atop the league standings. They are on pace to defend their regular season title and with Guerra lurking in the bullpen, Edinburg looks right on target.

StatsAtAGlance

19-15

The current season record for the Coyotes

7-3

Will Littleton's most recent high jump result at the NCAA Outdoor National Championship

870

Final score of the golf team at the National Minority Collegiate Golf Championship

ShortSports

■ GOLF

The men's and women's golf teams were featured on the Golf Channel June 6 as one of five hour long programs highlighting various teams competing in the PGA National Minority College Golf Championship.

Each program reviews teams from each of the six collegiate divisions competing in the tournament. The PGA Club considers action from the 21st Championship as some of the best in the history of the tournament.

The Bronco men came from behind to claim the title for the second straight year. The women finished second again, finishing behind Bethune-Cookman.

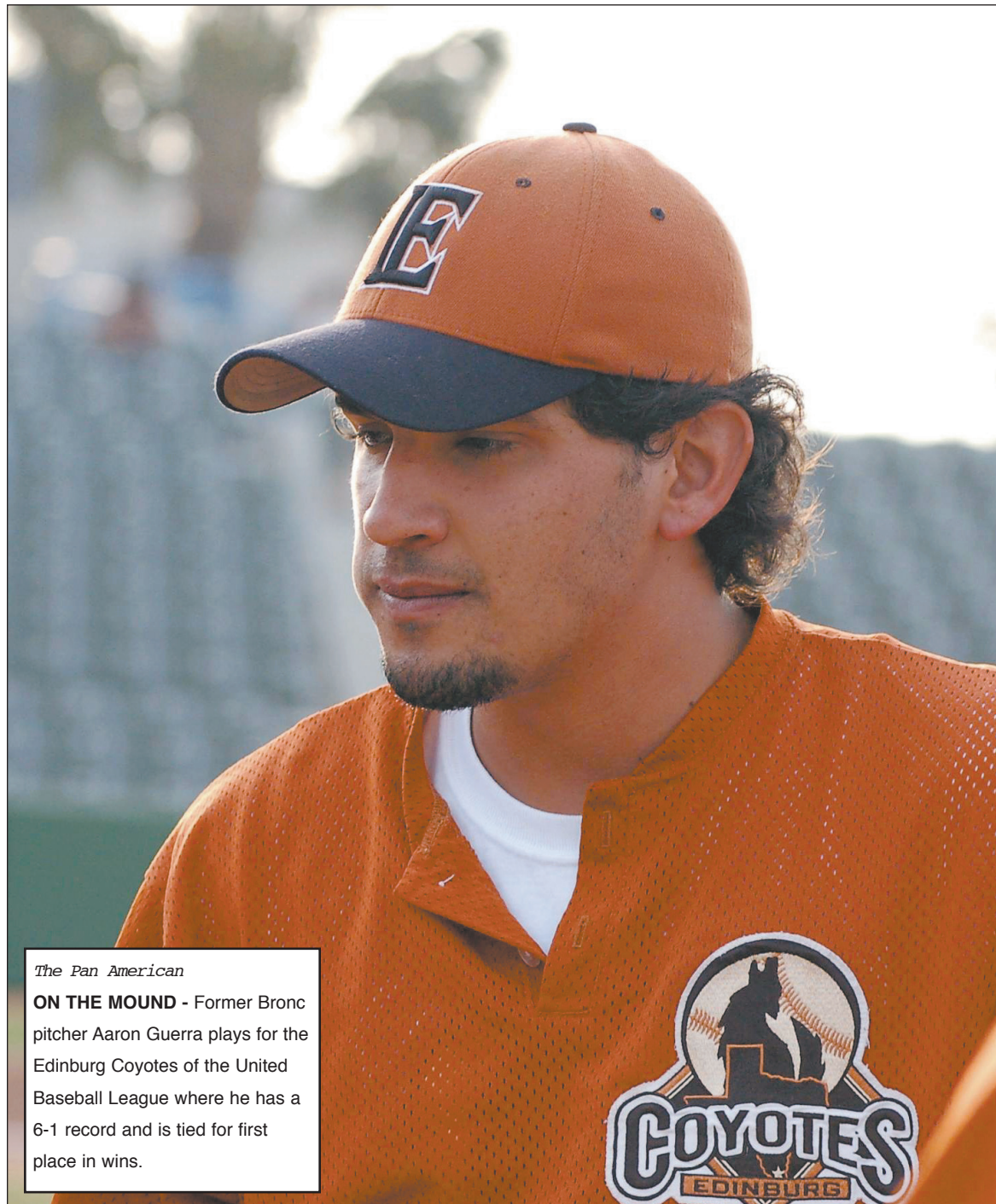
The Golf Channel will re-air the program on June 23 at 3 p.m.

■ UPCOMING EVENTS

June 18 - 21
UTPA Future Bronco Baseball Camp 9 a.m.

June 20 - 24
AT&T USA Outdoor Track & Field Championships TBA

June 22 - 24
Girls' Team Basketball Camp 9 a.m.



The Pan American

ON THE MOUND - Former Bronco pitcher Aaron Guerra plays for the Edinburg Coyotes of the United Baseball League where he has a 6-1 record and is tied for first place in wins.