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# InterCOM

October  
2003

TIPA Award-winner

A STUDENT PUBLICATION AT COLLEGE OF THE MAINLAND

TEXAS CITY, TEXAS

## Hayes addresses financial situation

By JESSICA ROBERTSON  
Assistant Editor

The rumors you've been hearing that College of the Mainland has financial problems are true, and the situation may get worse.

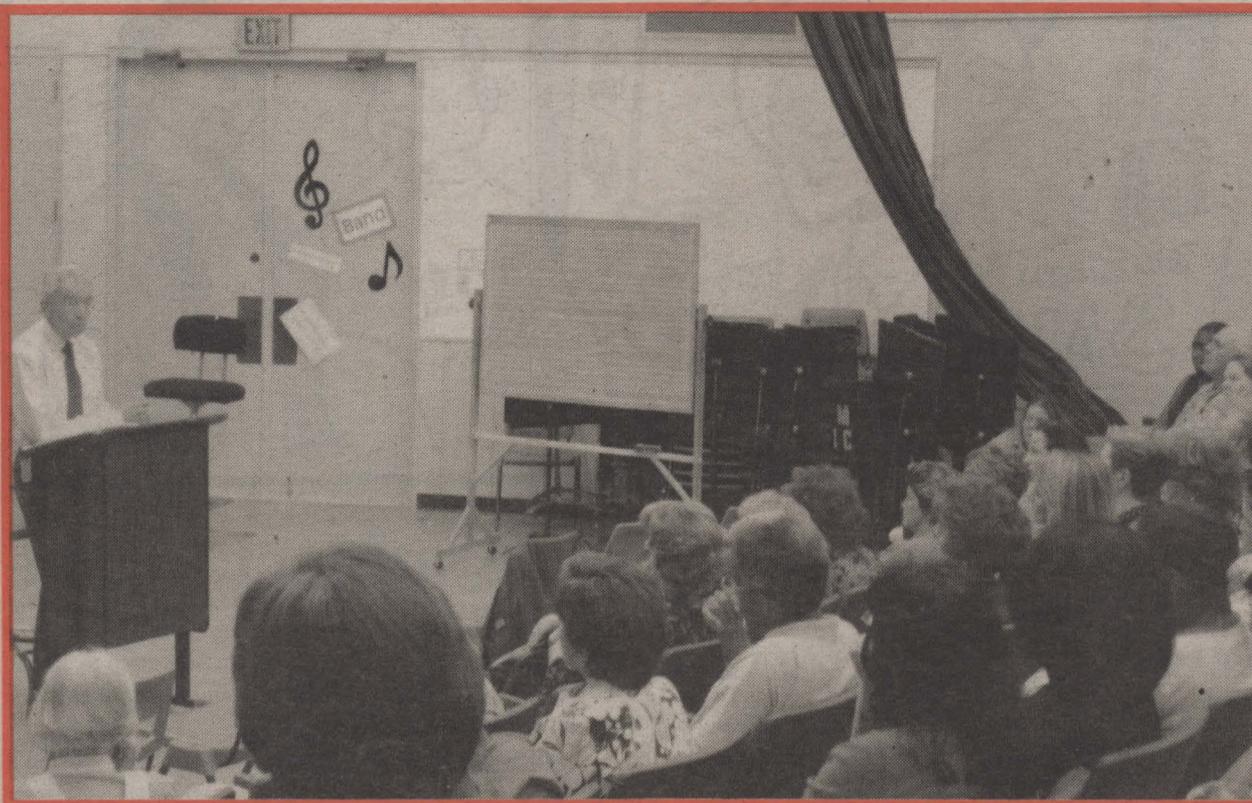
The biggest issue facing the college right now, said Lisa O'Neal, vice president for College and Financial Services, is a legal decision against the school, awarding the BP Refinery in Texas City approximately \$2 million by the fourth quarter of 2004. COM must also prepare for a software and hardware update in the coming years, costing nearly \$1.5 million, O'Neal said.

Last year's reduction of \$448,000 in state appropriations, which fund the college along with tuition and taxes, also decreased the budget.

College president, Dr. Homer "Butch" Hayes, held a town meeting on Sept. 25 to address these issues and keep the campus informed about COM's financial situation.

The meeting, held during College Hour (12:30-1:30 p.m.) in the Fine Arts Recital Hall, drew nearly 71 staff and faculty members.

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COM president, Dr. Homer "Butch" Hayes, discusses the financial state of the college at a town meeting Sept. 25 in the Fine Arts Recital Hall. Approximately 71 staff and faculty attended to hear Hayes address a software and hardware update, a retirement incentive plan and the school's BP Refinery debt. (Photo by Michael Navarro)

## Current budget crisis forces InterCOM newspaper to raise funds

By MICHAEL NAVARRO and  
JESSICA ROBERTSON  
Managing Editor and Assistant Editor

For the past three decades, InterCOM, the College of the Mainland student newspaper, has provided the community with an in-depth look at campus news.

InterCOM, a traditional print newspaper with a circulation of 5,000 copies, allows readers to pick up a paper at various locations on campus and in Galveston County. Due to budget cuts and lack of funding, the college now

will pay for only one printed issue per semester.

"They're looking at every little thing in the budget campuswide that can be cut and figured that since an online newspaper would be free, they could eliminate the cost of a printed paper," said Professor Astrid H. Lowery, who has been the InterCOM adviser for 17 years.

As a result, InterCOM will be online beginning with the current issue at <http://www.com.edu/intercom> by the end of October. Because InterCOM has not traditionally received sufficient funding to purchase the required hardware and software, the online newspaper will be main-

tained by COM webmaster Peter Lares, not the journalism students. Lares plans to format the online paper similarly to the press releases posted on the college's Web site, so initially it may not retain a newspaper design.

To preserve the printed newspaper, the InterCOM must raise funds to print the two additional issues per semester. An eight-page issue costs approximately \$700, and a 12-page issue costs approximately \$1,000. The InterCOM staff members are selling display advertisements and classified ads to raise these funds. The display ad prices vary,

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## Student loans Brazilian artifacts for exhibit

By JESSICA ROBERTSON  
Assistant Editor

College of the Mainland is observing National Hispanic Heritage Month from Sept. 15 to Oct. 15 with a video presentation and a display in the library.

The COM Multi-Culture Team is sponsoring an exhibit of Brazilian artifacts displayed in the library during this month. All artifacts are on loan from COM student Richard Joseph Frederick.

During his two years of living in Brazil as a missionary for the Church of Latter Day Saints, Frederick collected Brazilian money (pronounced "hey-al"), photographs of typical Brazilians as well as of their beautiful country, precious stones, traditional art and Brazilian music. Although his service work for the church kept him "really busy," Frederick spent most of his free time exploring "the parks and malls of the country."

When approached by history professor, Dr. Manuel Urbina, to lend his collection of Brazilian objects to the

display, Frederick eagerly agreed to participate.

Also on display in the exhibit are a Portuguese-English dictionary and a Portuguese Bible as well as various books about Brazilian history. The country's flag and map are prominently featured along with Frederick's artifacts.

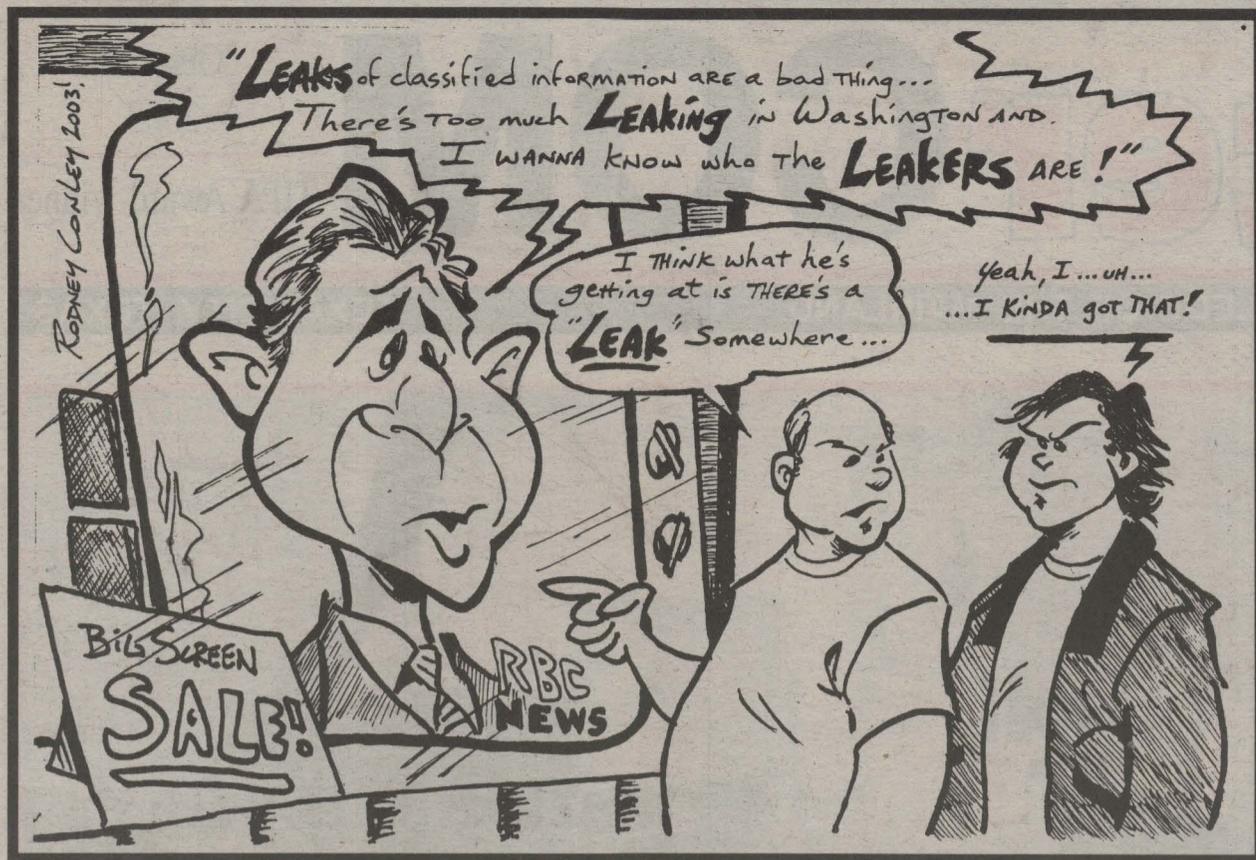
Originally initiated by the U.S. Congress as National Hispanic Heritage Week more than 20 years ago, the celebration was expanded to a month in 1989. This time period was selected to coincide with various Latin American celebrations of independence.

During this month Americans celebrate Hispanic cultures and achievements by honoring Independence Day (Sept. 15) for Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua; (Sept. 16) Mexican Independence Day; and El Dia de la Raza (Columbus Day) Oct. 12.

National Hispanic Heritage Month has been celebrated for 13 years at COM. Past festivities have included displays of authentic 17th century Spanish relics, a program about Cesar Chavez and the California farmworker's struggle, folkloric dancing and panel discussions.



COM student Richard Joseph Frederick loans Brazilian artifacts for an exhibit in the library. This display is in conjunction with National Hispanic Heritage Month, Sept. 15-Oct. 15. (Photo by Tara Land)



# Musicians' views ignite protests



Daniel K. Lai

Every once in awhile someone prominent in the entertainment industry voices an opinion and takes a stand on a controversial issue. More often than not these comments are misinterpreted by the American public who are quick to label musicians, actors and entertainers anti-Christian or in the Dixie Chicks' case, unpatriotic.

The Dixie Chicks came under heavy fire for a statement made at one of their concerts after the president's declaration of war on Iraq. Dixie Chick Natalie Maines said at a concert in England they were "embarrassed President Bush is from Texas," their home state.

As a musician I decided to address the forms of protest some Americans use, such as burning CDs, albums, T-shirts and other tour merchandise.

I understand Americans have a right to freedom of speech, but burning CDs in protest of what someone says seems ridiculously childish.

The incident with the Dixie Chicks parallels the Beatles' record burnings of the '60s when John Lennon was misinterpreted and quoted as saying the Beatles were bigger than Jesus Christ. The banning of both the Beatles and the Dixie Chicks' music in stores and on radio stations and the ensuing record-burning parties grew to such an extreme that both groups were forced to explain in interviews that they weren't directly attacking religion (the Beatles) or Bush (the Dixie Chicks.)

Perhaps some people think burning CDs and albums of outspoken artists makes the artists' ideas and statements magically disappear. These people should realize they are both unpatriotic (burning things that contain ideas one disagrees with is a trademark of fascism) and counterproductive. Protests such as these only focus the media more intently on the artist.

What aggravates me is that many Americans seem unwilling to tolerate anything other than total agreement with their leaders. I believe they have repressed doubts about their beliefs and are afraid their arguments against government policy are frivolous.

Why is this topic relevant today since the incident with the Dixie Chicks happened several months ago? The Dixie Chicks have yet to regain the success they enjoyed before their comments about the president. Although we still support our troops, support for President Bush's obsession with Iraq is dwindling, and it continues to raise eyebrows since Bush declared the war over in May. One must ask why are we still over there?

# Smoking outside vehicle subject to fine

By ROBERT A. McLEMORE  
Staff Reporter

Many students on the College of the Mainland campus can't seem to find the right place to smoke a cigarette due to all the signs prohibiting smoking. Campus police have given students citations for smoking in the parking lots while walking to class, which has prompted curiosity about the "no smoking" policy at COM.

Campus Police Chief E.W. Carr said, "College of the Mainland is a tobacco-free institution." He then pointed out the boundaries and rules that one must follow.

"Smoking is allowed *inside* your private vehicle if it is located in an approved designated parking area." When asked about those who ride motorcycles or bicycles, Carr

said, "As long as the owner is sitting on the bike," he or she may smoke. He added, "You are permitted to smoke if you are no further than 10 feet from the streets or roads around the grounds."

Those who own trucks may smoke in the bed of their truck but never on the tailgate.

Fines for tobacco policy violations for students and college employees are \$25 for the first violation and \$50 for the second. A third violation will result in referral to the college president for disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the college.

"Think before you light up," Carr said. "Consider your surroundings and the consequences of your actions." He said this after returning from his own "smoke break."

Students who wish to smoke between classes or on their lunch breaks need to be familiar with the rules and guidelines of the policy found on Page 21 of in the 2003-2004 Student Handbook. The handbook is available at the Information Desk in the Administration Building.

For more information or to simply voice your opinion about the rules, contact Carr at (409) 938-1211 or toll free 1 (888) 258-8859, Ext. 403.

## InterCOM display ad rates

The InterCOM monthly display ad rates can be obtained from the InterCOM newsroom in the LRC, Room L-246, from an InterCOM staff member or via e-mail at <intercom\_editor@yahoo.com>.



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InterCOM, a Texas Intercollegiate Press Association award-winning newspaper, is produced by and for students of College of the Mainland, 1200 Amburn Road, Texas City, Texas 77591; (409) 938-1211 or 1 (888) 258-8859, Ext. 314, e-mail <alowery@mail.mainland.cc.tx.us>. College of the Mainland is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Institution and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, handicap or Vietnam Veteran status.

## Jorge's Store of Many Things

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Gifts and More

The American empire is rolling across the world, much like the ancient Roman empire, and while our troops file across foreign deserts to plunder for riches, the imperial capital (Washington) becomes a snake pit and Americans have become bloated, self-indulgent zombies, ignoring everything that makes them feel bad.

We must not fall into the trap of conformity, which is a virus. We can't keep nodding our heads in agreement.

## Students for Christ club observes See You at the Pole

By TARA LAND  
Staff Reporter

Taking place around schools since 1990, See You at the Pole has rapidly become an annual tradition that grows with followers each year.

See You at the Pole was started by students in Burleson, Texas, on Sept. 12, 1990. At the first See You at the Pole, more than 45,000 students met at school flagpoles to pray. By the next year this number grew to over a million.

COM Students for Christ president, Leif Marquez, and secretary, Myia Joiner, began this year's pole service on Sept. 17, with a story about being consumed by Christ. After the story, Students for Christ adviser, Tammy Stafford, led the prayer, inviting each student and faculty member to address what he or she wished to pray for.

Following the 7 a.m. service Stafford invited everyone involved to meet in the Gym lobby for breakfast.

For those who could not make it at 7 a.m., Students for Christ held a second prayer at noon. Stafford began with a prayer and again asked for requests from students and faculty. After Stafford recited the Lord's Prayer, she invited all participants to the Gym lobby for refreshments.

Students for Christ also held a service at the Gazebo on Sept. 11 to remember the lives lost in the World Trade Center and their surviving loved ones. During the service, Students for Christ also prayed for the firefighters, police and EMT cadets at COM.

Students for Christ is an interdenominational organization dedicated to helping students understand Jesus Christ. The club meets every second and fourth Tuesday of the month at 12:30 in the Gym, Room P-118.

Starting in October club members will study *The Prayer of Jabez*, a book by Bruce Wilkinson, about Jabez's prayer in the book of Exodus in the Bible.

For additional information about the Students for Christ club, contact Tammy Stafford at (409) 938-1211 or toll free 1 (888) 258-8859, Ext. 417.

### Leadership conference Nov. 7-8

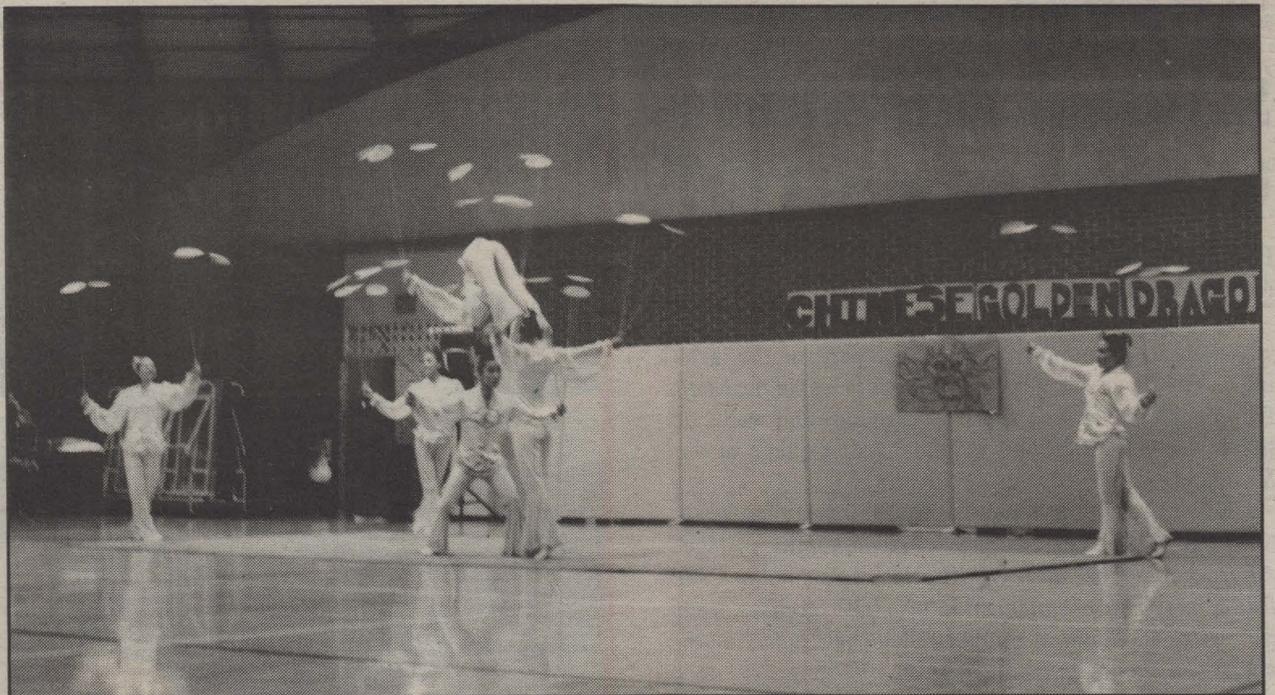
The University of Houston-Clear Lake Student Leadership Institute will hold its 7th Annual Student Leadership Conference Nov. 7-8. Keynote speaker Brendan Burchard is the author of *The Student Leadership Guide*.

Registration fees are \$30 per person for early registration, on or before Oct. 17, and \$40 per person for registration after Oct. 17.



Butch Carr, recently appointed chief of police for COM's Police Team, has been involved with the law enforcement program at COM for 10 years as an instructor, nighttime coordinator and team leader.

(Photo by Alice P. Campbell)



The Chinese Golden Dragon Acrobats perform a routine called Twirling Plates during a show Sept. 22 in the COM Gym, sponsored by the Student Activities Board. (Photo by Tara Land)

## Acrobats perform amazing feats with ease

By PEARSON LUBRANO  
Staff Reporter

Five minutes to show time. Both sets of bleachers and folding chairs placed over half-court were still filling with enthusiasts. They came to the Gym at College of the Mainland Monday, Sept. 22, to see The Chinese Golden Dragon Acrobats, sponsored by the Student Activities Board.

The single performance scheduled for 7-8:30 p.m. was delayed about 20 minutes because a line of eager, excited and fairly patient people reached from the ticket table in the Gym lobby to the Fine Arts Building.

The show, approximately 16 features, was divided into five acts. Performances in the first act included body contortion as well as juggling and balancing various objects with feet, hands and heads. At one point one of the performers juggled a large, wide-mouthed, 26-pound ceramic vase, allowing it to fly high above and then land on his shoulders, swallowing his head with a loud, percussive thump. The audience seemed to find that stunt both shocking and funny.

The second act featured spirited, colorful dances, some of which combined elements of tai chi, kung fu and karate. What became evident is how extraordinarily disciplined and coordinated these acrobats are.

The audience of more than 600—because of safety considerations for both acrobats and audience—was contained within an area of approximately half of the avail-

able bleacher space. The acrobats negotiated around a large rectangular mat, centered in their half-court sized performance space, all the while maintaining a moving circle on bicycles while mounting and dismounting, sometimes while they were upside down. What was a little hair raising at one point was seeing at least eight to 10 of the 12 performers all riding in a circle on one cycle, holding flags from outstretched arms, flanking both sides of the bike while simultaneously riding three people high.

There was a constant change of costumes throughout the show, along with a variety of upbeat, inspiring traditional Chinese and contemporary American music.

The audience showed no hesitation in clapping along with the music several times, and the performers received at least six standing ovations throughout.

When asked about their favorite parts of the show, some children replied the Chinese Lions, huge, colorful two-man costumed Lions with large, expressive eyes and mouths, who gave the impression of being almost real.

When they're not setting up, performing, breaking down or signing autographs, the acrobats are on the road traveling from one venue to the next. They're currently on a nationwide tour of the United States, which began in January. The troupe has appeared over the past 25 years in all 50 states and more than 65 countries, including performances at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., and Caesar's Palace in Atlantic City, N.J. They're due to return to China in May.

## Carr appointed chief of Police Team at COM

By ALICE P. CAMPBELL  
Staff Reporter

Butch Carr, team leader of College of the Mainland Police Team, officially became chief of police Sept. 8.

The COM Board of Trustees swore Carr in and appointed him the title in a short and casual ceremony in the Board Room in the Administration Building.

Having been a key contributor to the law enforcement program at COM for the past 10 years, Carr is known and respected at the college.

The 54-year-old Carr has been in law enforcement since 1971 when he was a patrolman for the Galveston Police Department. Twenty-two years later Carr felt "burned out" at Galveston and started a new career as a law enforcement instructor at COM. He then advanced to nighttime coordinator of the COM Police Academy and by 1994 was encouraged to become a campus police officer.

Carr has been team leader of the COM Police Team for the past three years, so he doesn't feel that being named police chief changes his job in any way. He still has the same duties he had before and feels that most people on campus have the same respect they have always had for

him. "It's just a title," he said. The title does have a purpose as far as accountability goes. As chief of police, Carr is officially accountable for all leadership decisions made by the Police Team.

There are 14 police officers on the team: six full-time and eight part-time, and they are always on duty, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Still, some students don't consider COM police officers "real" police officers. Carr believes that his new title will make students more aware of the fact that COM police officers are real police officers, given authority by the state of Texas to uphold the law.

Carr doesn't see much change in the future for the Police Team. Due to the budget crisis at COM and the "hiring freeze," there will be no expansion of the Police Team. "We have had one opening for a while, but it won't get filled for a long time," he said.

As for his future, Carr is not looking at retirement yet. He plans to stay at COM and do the same job he's been doing for years.

For any questions regarding the COM Police Team, contact Carr at (409) 938-1211 or toll free at 1 (888) 258-8857, Ext. 403. For emergencies, dial Ext. 599.

## Student finds keys to success at COM

By JESSICA ROBERTSON  
Assistant Editor

Whether agonizing over an English paper in the Writing Center or stressing before an algebra test in the Math Lab, people of various ages, backgrounds and walks of life find common ground as students at College of the Mainland.

Unique Losh, a sophomore at COM, found success after a bad experience at a previous community college. After receiving her EMT certification at a school in California in 1997, Losh planned to take basic courses, such as English and math, at another college but "failed miserably."

"I had been in a community college before I came to COM, so this time I researched schools," Losh said. "Through word-of-mouth from friends, I chose COM."

Friends brought her to COM, but it is the positive attitude of faculty and staff that have kept her here. Losh said one of her favorite things about COM besides the scenic atmosphere and "the ducks in the pond" is the support from her teachers.

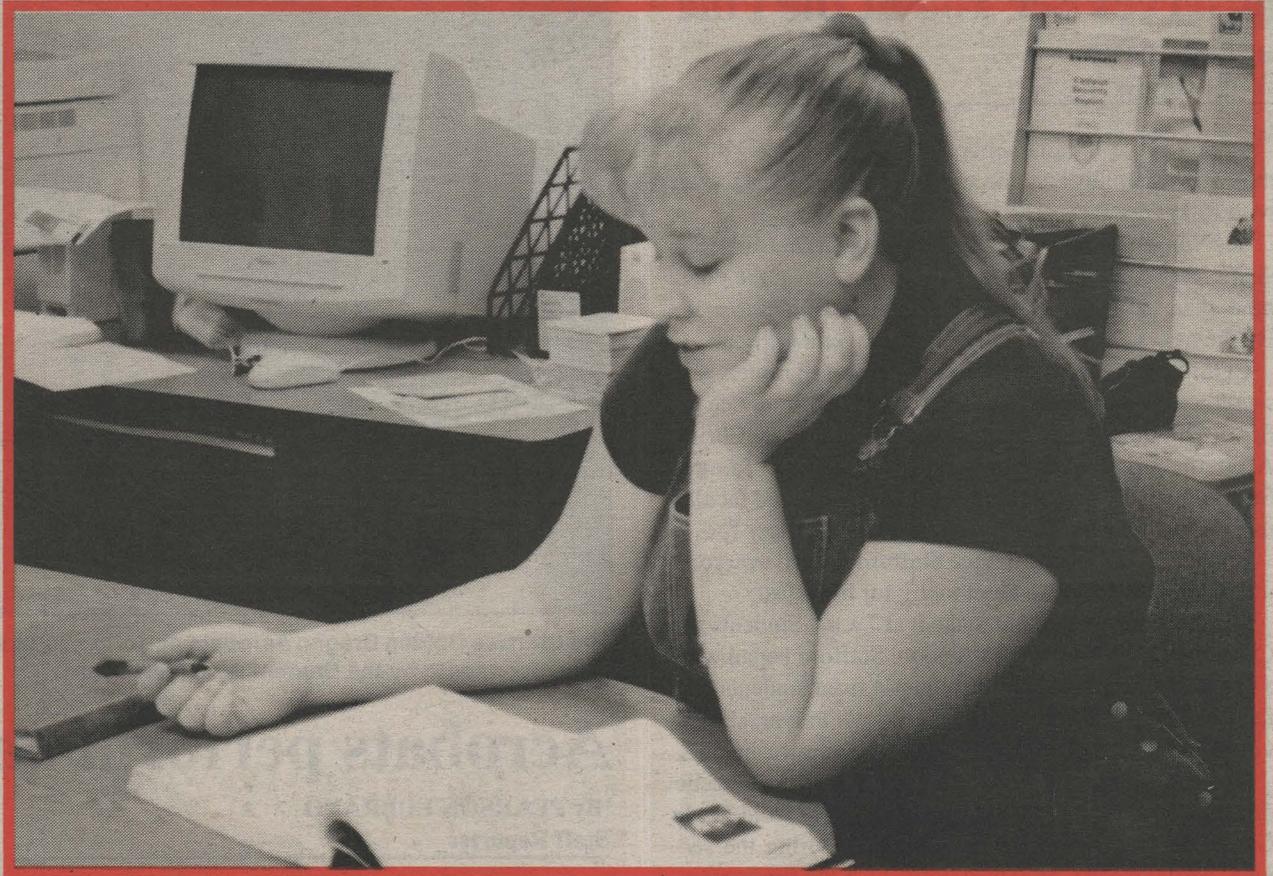
"Compared to other schools and even COM when I first started here, the faculty and students are really close right now," Losh said.

Losh named Dr. Nd Dikeocha and Professor Marilyn Kish-Molina of the Science Team as two especially influential teachers in her time at COM.

Other teachers, like psychology Professor Alice Watford and sociology professor Dr. Margaret Caylor, inspired Losh to change her major from elementary education to social work.

"Mrs. Caylor, especially, really pushed me in the direction of social work, which is where I feel like I belong," Losh explained.

Losh also credits her success at COM to clinics co-spon-



COM student Unique Losh balances her busy schedule with clubs such as COM Amigos, Student Government and Student Activities Board. She also serves as a part-time COM Ambassador. (Photo by Jessica Robertson)

sored by Career Services and the Student Activities Board as well as other support services.

"The Math Lab has been a *tremendous* help!" Losh said. Assistance from tutors and videos in the lab helped her to overcome math anxiety.

After finding such success at COM, Losh wanted to participate in school activities. She is a member of the SAB and the COM Amigos and serves as a part-time COM Ambassador. Losh also was elected vice president of the Student Government this semester.

"The reason I ran for vice president was because I wanted to bring the students and the faculty even closer."

Losh plans to attend COM through fall 2004 but has no time for a break then.

She has been accepted to Stephen F. Austin University, Nacogdoches, and will pursue her bachelor's and master's degrees there.

Like many other students, Losh credits the faculty, staff and programs at COM with helping her to overcome a negative attitude about education and to achieve her goals.

## Local artist's installation exhibit takes viewers on journey

By PEARSON LUBRANO  
Staff Reporter

When you were a child, did you ever visit a relative's house, where there was one room or several rooms you couldn't or wouldn't go into—because the upholstered



Sam Reyes (left) and Rick Allen observe the falling of the leaves on the piece titled, "Compost." The piece signifies memory loss. (Photo by Michael Navarro)

furniture was covered in hard, uninviting, clear plastic?

Baytown resident and studio artist Elena Lopez-Poirot knows exactly what that's all about. This graduate of the University of Texas at Austin and the University of Houston had an installation as part of her exhibit in the College of the Mainland Art Gallery in the Fine Arts Building Sept. 2 through Oct. 10 that literally invited you inside—as well as to explore and touch.

"Una Jornada" (A Journey), one of more than 10 works in her exhibition *Recuerdos Que Perduran* (loosely translated Memories that Last), is enclosed behind an 8 foot high, solid black curtain wall, occupying two corners of the gallery, measuring more than 20 feet diagonally across and more than 8 feet deep.

You can even *hear* this installation from outside the gallery doors. From behind the dark curtains are occasional sounds of birds chirping peacefully, along with the relaxing steady sound of some type of water stream. Then unexpectedly there is the sound of a ringing telephone (the old fashioned Bell model from the 1940s and later). Sometimes the phone is answered by a young girl who says nothing other than "Hello," followed sometimes by the sound of the phone handset being returned to its cradle.

Poirot doesn't always agree that "art" should be seen and not heard—or touched, handled or explored. In a note posted near the installation's entrance, she invites gallery patrons "to escape reality for a few moments," and "take time to investigate; take your shoes off or leave them on; sit down and rest for a while, or keep walking."

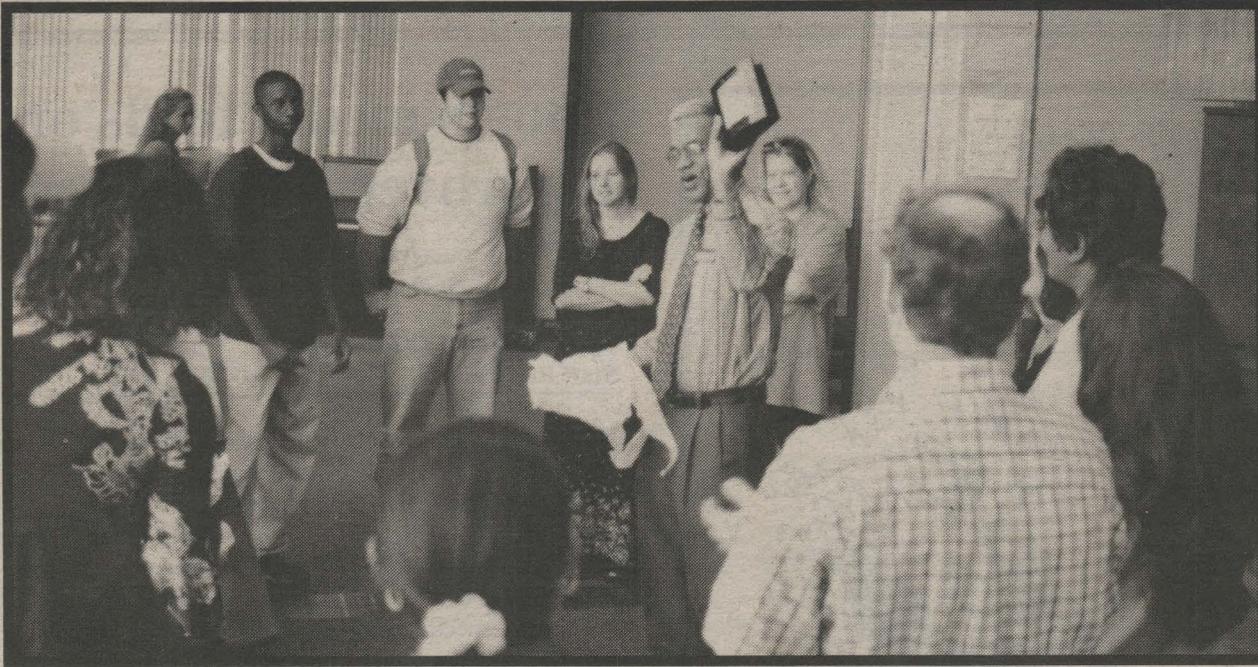
COM student and part-time gallery attendant, Amber Palmer, said: "My first impression was that of a forest. The sight, sound and smell of it. It was really relaxing. I was tempted to take off my shoes." She added, "Most everybody I've seen walking into the (installation) comes out looking like they've had a total makeover."

Mounted high above the floor, from an opposite corner is a tree branch titled, "Compost," which shares some similarity with "Jornada," but focuses on another of Poirot's major themes. Suspended below the tree branch are pieces of paper cut into the shape of various leaves. These "leaves," suspended in the air by thin wires hanging from the branch, actually are photos of people alone and with family or friends, or of automobiles or houses, by themselves or with people next to them. Gallery visitors will notice more "leaves" scattered on the carpet below.

Viewing the entire "Compost" piece from top to bottom, the thought sooner or later occurs that, even though this is a static display, not moving images on a television, the "leaves" suspended below the branch are really "falling" to the ground. Thus, at least three major themes of Poirot's work are expressed: "Life takes us on a journey, often maze-like (the "Jornada"), where we have little control over the direction we travel," and "letters and photos are a means for reflection" because life and our accompanying memories often seem, according to Poirot, to be "ephemeral." Poirot aims for us to become aware that because we are living and growing, we are in constant transformation, as are our families.

We are born into one family, and as we grow and mature, we create new families of our own that eventually replaces our original family. Yet, it's possible to maintain a connection from one generation to the next.

While we all eventually grieve over the loss of those who come before us, we have the means to reflect, honor and appreciate them—and tie them and ourselves to those who follow us. "Compost" illustrates the natural, ephemeral quality of our lives and memories—they eventually fade away, not unlike fallen (and falling) autumn leaves. "Mama's Dress" and "Enduring" are three-dimensional means of connecting one generation to the next.



James Shippy, associate vice president of Student Services, accepts a plaque during a party held in his honor. Members of the Student Activities Board and Student Government gathered in the Sunroom of the Student Center during College Hour (12:30-1:30 p.m.) Oct. 2 to wish Shippy well on his move to the Houston Community College District. (Photo by Jessica Robertson)

## InterCOM struggles to sustain program

Continued from Page 1  
but the minimum purchase is \$25 for a business card-sized ad.

Businesses wishing to be corporate sponsors can receive a full page ad, their logo on the top of the front page and an indication of their sponsorship at the top of each additional page.

Classified ads are \$1 per line with a minimum of a \$3 purchase. Display ad rates can be picked up at the InterCOM newsroom in the Learning Resources Center, Room L-246.

In addition to advertisement, the InterCOM staff and the Graphic Arts Club will hold a joint garage sale Friday, Oct. 17, and Saturday, Oct. 18, on campus from 9

a.m. to 1 p.m. in Parking Lot A in front of the Student Center, by Eckert Lake close to Amburn Road.

InterCOM is one of the few remaining college student publications in the area. Lack of funding caused by the economic climate and subsequent state funding cuts in education led to the demise of journalism programs at San Jacinto and Lee College.

"My journalism students are working hard to keep our printed paper alive," Lowery said. "They believe in the importance of a printed newspaper, and I believe in them."

For additional information about ad rates, the garage sale or helping to fund the InterCOM, contact the InterCOM at (409) 938-1211 or toll free at 1 (888) 258-8859, Ext. 314, or via e-mail at <intercom\_editor@yahoo.com>.

## Ambassadors prepare students for COM

By APRIL CLARDY  
Staff Reporter

For the past two years, a group of current and former College of the Mainland students, known as the COM Ambassadors, have visited Galveston County high schools to tell students what COM has to offer them.

The purpose of the Ambassadors is to represent the college positively, by recruiting new students or assisting the Strategic Management Team with retention efforts.

Since the Ambassadors were organized, COM has seen an improvement in enrollment. The number of credit students this fall is 3,991, an increase of 8.6 percent from last fall when 3,628 students were registered.

The Ambassadors work hard throughout the year doing various jobs, such as attending community events, throwing a recruitment drive at Mall of the Mainland twice a year, serving as tour guides during New Student Orientation and visiting local high schools.

Having the Ambassadors visit the high schools is a good idea simply because the high school students have someone closer to their age speaking to them, which makes them more interested in what COM has to offer.

The Ambassadors' newest project is the On-Line Student Orientation, which can be found at the COM Web site: <<http://www.com.edu>>. This helps new students who are not able to participate in on-campus orientations become familiar with the college. Included on this Web site is an interactive Q&A feature in which the Ambassadors post the answers to COM students' questions pertaining to the college.

The Ambassadors are employees of the college. They are required to be at least 18, be current or former COM students, have a positive attitude, have good people skills and have a flexible schedule.

A new Ambassador enters on the first level of a three-tier system, in which the student can work his or her way up while training. Ambassadors generally work five to seven hours a week and are paid between \$8 and \$12.50 an hour.

If you enjoy working in a fun environment and meeting different people, pick up an application in the Administration Building, Room A-146. If you have any questions call Mara Smith, Retention coordinator, at (409) 938-1211 or toll free at 1 (888) 258-8857, Ext. 660, or contact Jimmy Ramo's, college representative, at Ext. 661.

## Film series exposes public to classics

By RODNEY CONLEY  
Cartoonist

For true classic film aficionados, the Sewell-Naranjo-Kessler Great Films Series at College of the Mainland promises to feature pure cinematic gold.

The series, which began in March, was created and organized by Social and Behavioral Sciences Team professors, Dr. Steven Sewell and Rafael Naranjo, and Specialist Media Service Team/Media Technician Walter Kessler.

"We came up with the idea for the series last fall (2002) through casual conversation," Sewell said. "We were sitting around discussing these great films that were influential in our society, and it just went from there."

The film series is held the first Friday of each month at 7 p.m. in the Learning Resources Center Auditorium, L-131. Popcorn and sodas are for sale before the films from members of the COM Amigos.

The next film, *Rebel Without a Cause*, will be screened Nov. 7, and stars James Dean as an angst-ridden young man with a troubled past, who finds both friends and enemies when he arrives in a new town.

This will be followed Dec. 5 by the popular 1956 science fiction movie *Forbidden Planet* starring Leslie Nielsen and Robby the Robot.

The first film in the series was the vintage World War I drama, *Paths of Glory*, shown March 7. The 1957 film stars Kirk Douglas as a French army unit commander who must deal with the mutiny of his men when part of his force falls back under fire in an impossible attack.

"We gave an introduction before the movie where we spoke a bit about why we chose it and why it was influential," Kessler said. "Quite a few people stayed afterward, and we had a good discussion."

"The epic films get kind of long," Kessler stated. "*Dr. Zhivago* (the first film this fall) is over three hours long, so we found that people enjoyed the movie, but were a bit too worn out to stay afterward to discuss it."

Previous films include the Spencer Tracy thriller *Bad Day at Black Rock*, *Dr. Strangelove* featuring Peter Sellers and the epic romance *Dr. Zhivago* starring Omar Sharif.

"We thought about different themes for each film," Sewell said. "But we felt it would be better to sort of zero in on all genres from thrillers and screwball comedies to message films like *Bad Day at Black Rock*, which gives interesting enlightenment on racism."

The series creators wanted to give a younger generation the opportunity to see classic films that they otherwise would have missed.

"I saw *Dr. Zhivago* as a kid at one of these type of film showings and loved it," Sewell said.

Naranjo, a native of Oaxaca, Mexico, sees the series as a chance to open students' eyes to new experiences. "I saw a world beyond my village when I saw a film for the first time."

The organizers have found that a large senior citizen following has blossomed with each showing as well as a growing attendance from the rest of the community.

"We wanted to get together films for audiences—old, young and in-between," Kessler said. "Once it gets rolling and an audience clientele is built, we can better anticipate what movies they'll be interested in and maybe we'll get a different sort of movie list to choose from."

Naranjo emphasized the importance of the entire community's response to the series.

"We take seriously the fact that we are a community college," Naranjo said. "We are here to serve them, and because of that, we have the duty to share the beauty of film."

The series continued Oct. 3 with the 1942 Humphrey Bogart classic *Casablanca*.

Sewell said that the next film series will begin in the spring with *Bridge Over the River Kwai* starring William Holden and Sir Alec Guinness.

"It's up in the air on what we'll show from then on," Sewell said. He would eventually like to show films from directors, such as Alfred Hitchcock and Orson Welles.

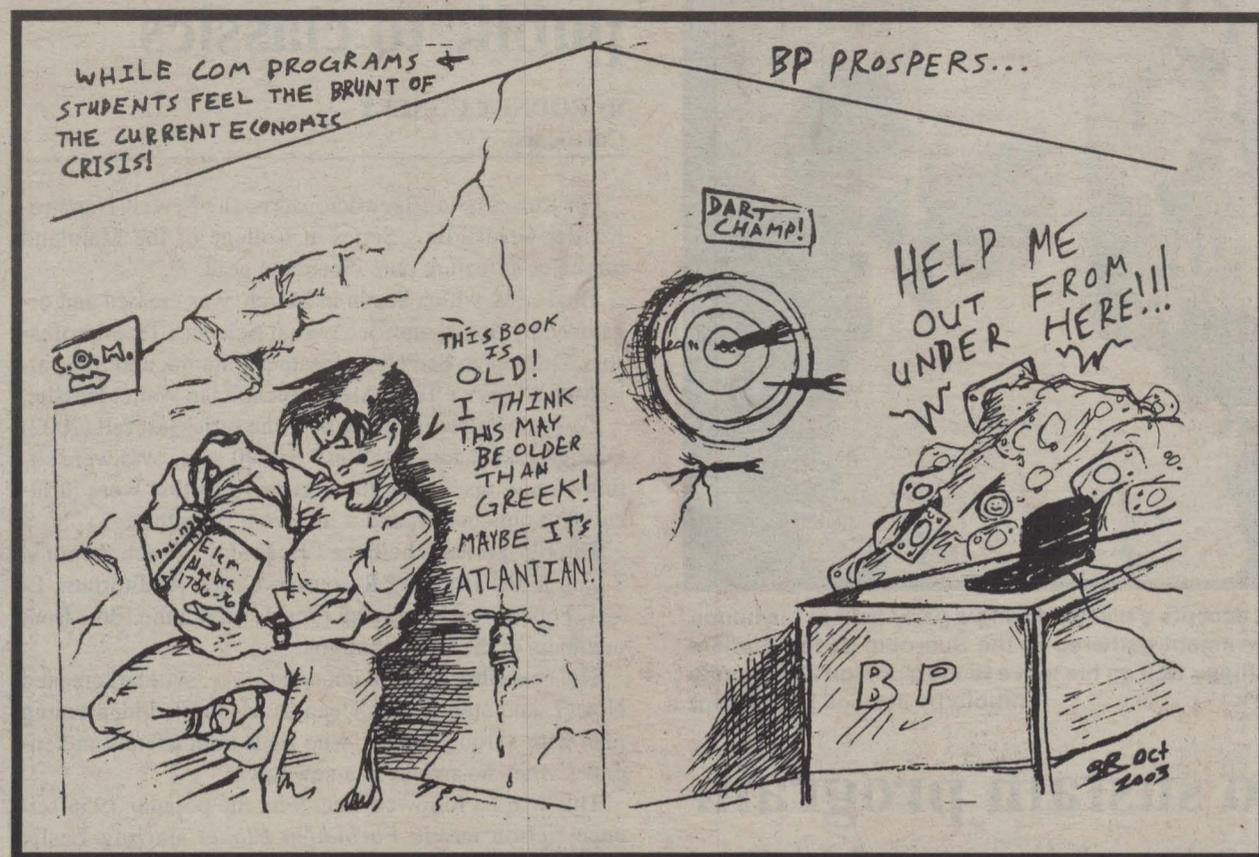
## Garage Sale

- Friday, Oct. 17 & Saturday, Oct. 18  
9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- Located at College of the Mainland  
campus Parking Lot A (by the lake).



Proceeds to benefit InterCOM and the Graphic Arts Club

## Campus Life



## More library services accessible on Internet

By APRIL CLARDY  
Staff Reporter

For several years the College of the Mainland Library has been devising a system to make the COM Library accessible at home.

Library personnel began planning for remote access with the selection of the new catalog system, Voyager, making sure that it could be used for the remote access process. It took more than a year to fully establish.

Librarians also had to find a way to authorize users of the database so that the library would not be in violation of database vendor contracts. That goal has now been accomplished, enabling COM students and faculty to see what the new On-Line Library has to offer.

Accessing the pages is simple. First, pull up the COM Library Web site at <http://www.com.edu>. Then click on one of the COM restricted resources, and a log-in page will show up. To log in, use your last name and social security number.

The library's databases, a formerly restricted area, are now available from off-campus. Through this link you can get direct access to thousands of full-text articles from more than 40 full-text databases. The databases are listed by subject, with quick links in the upper right hand corner. To directly access the databases, go to <http://www.com.edu/library/Articles/databases>.

Another area that is now accessible from off-campus is eBooks. Through the eBooks link, students and faculty can access full-text books. The free books listed on the page are available to anyone with Internet access. You can get direct access to the eBooks Web site by going to <http://www.com.edu/library/books/eBooks>.

One of the best resources COM's On-Line Library has to offer is access to other area community colleges or university library databases to find books COM does not carry.

Students must get a Textshare Card from the COM Library to check out a book from another school's library.

For questions about the On-Line Library, call the library at (409) 938-1211 or toll free 1 (888) 258-8859, Ext. 205.

## COM makes changes to meet SACS requirements

Continued from Page 1

When asked about open positions at COM, Hayes announced that James Shippy, associate vice president of Student Services, will move to the Houston Community College district in October.

Hayes noted that Shippy's position is now open and advertised, along with 16 other positions, to include several English and nursing instructor positions as well as program assistant positions.

A question was asked about raises and compensation during the current budget crunch. This year, for the first time in a number of years, employees did not receive raises or cost of living increases.

Employees who moved to higher-paying positions did receive salary increases. "No one simply received a raise," Hayes said.

He explained that the administration is working to follow through with personnel system revisions after the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools visit last spring and emphasized the need to make these changes. He also said that he realized a lot of changes were being made in a short period of time.

"We've seen a lot of change in the last couple years," Hayes said. He said the college did not follow through with its intended changes after a previous SACS visit in

1993, but he plans to make the required changes this time.

Many employees asked Hayes about a new retirement incentive package designed to decrease costs in the budget. As of Sept. 1, employees with 20 years of service to the college and whose age and years of service equaled 80 could retire by Jan. 31 with full medical benefits after notifying Human Resources by Sept. 30.

Approximately 26 employees, including seven professors, have taken advantage of the new retirement incentive package. Professors will serve through the end of their contracts. They do not need to leave by Jan. 31.

When asked if positions would be frozen or filled after the deadline for retirement, Hayes responded that the status of each position would be looked at individually, and he reinforced that his main concern was to "meet the needs of the students."

Hayes discussed the need for a new roof for the Gym, as well as other ways to "refurbish and modernize the campus," which is 33 years old. Hayes will also update the school's administrative software and hardware systems since the current system, COCO, will become obsolete by December 2005. The update is necessary for registration and financial aid purposes.

For information on the financial situation, contact Hayes at (409) 938-1211 or toll free 1 (888) 258-8859, Ext. 271.

## Sports media feeds on controversial athletes

Editor's Note: This is the first part of a three-part series concerning the sports world and the media.

By JASON OLIVER  
Staff Reporter

An actor or model realizes that he or she is in the celebrity spotlight at all times, but should an athlete be exposed to the same magnifying glass?

Although only a fraction of athletes ever get involved in legal disputes, the media tends to focus on the small percentage of controversial athletes. While plenty of well-behaved, respectful athletes can be found at all levels, those are not the athletes whose names lead SportsCenter, or show up on the front page of the local newspaper.

The media can be a powerful and influential tool, but it too often emphasizes negative images repetitively.

This first part of a three-part series examines the many situations in the sports world where the media has showered the public with negativity. When it comes to unsportsmanlike conduct, certainly there is no lack of media coverage. If a bench-clearing brawl, a concussion-causing stick check or even a relatively tame shoving match occurs, it will likely show up in print, on television and even on the Web.

In a recent game between the Yankees and Orioles, a brawl broke out and received excessive coverage.

"I must have seen it 150 times, and I wasn't even trying," said Bob Still, public relations manager for the National Association of Sports Officials. "They showed it over and over on SportsCenter. They showed it again when the fines were announced. Then they showed it again while they debated the penalties."

Fights always draw media attention, but it is important to remember that the media doesn't start the fights. Or do they? It can be argued that the media is like a needle poking and prodding, waiting for blood.

The latest media feeding frenzy stems from allegations of sexual assault by a 19-year-old Colorado woman, which has possibly tarnished Kobe Bryant's image, as well as the Los Angeles Lakers'. The trial and Lakers training camp begin in October.

Many athletes believe that we are a society overrun with negativity and fear; therefore, instead of role models, athletes are looked on as overpaid and temperamental jocks.

In a couple of incidents involving NFL players, the media coverage was massive. Ray Lewis and Rae Carruth were both involved in criminal lawsuits. Both were homicide cases that received national coverage because they involved professional football players. A non-celebrity homicide in Atlanta, Ga., or Charlotte, N.C., would be lucky to get the back page of a local paper, let alone nationwide coverage.

Hockey found its sport tainted by the Marty McSorley trial, which involved an incident in the game turning into an issue out of the game. McSorley found himself in court after hitting another player with his stick and knocking him unconscious. Vancouver police prosecuting McSorley determined his behavior to be assault and battery.

In the NHL, violence is commonplace and part of the game. Clearly the McSorley incident is an issue that should have been handled within the boundaries of the NHL, but with the constant media pressure, legalities were extensive and well publicized.

Whether it is baseball, basketball, football or hockey, the media is always watching, waiting and anticipating the next big scoop or story. The sad fact is that negativity sells, and society in general would rather see extremely talented athletes fall on their faces than succeed—just to show they are still human.

The majority of professional athletes are hard working and devoted to their sport. They stay out of trouble, but aren't excessively covered in the media. This is unfortunate because these athletes far outnumber the ones who do get in trouble.

# Unknown blues guitarist shows promise

By **MICHAEL NAVARRO** and  
**JESSICA ROBERTSON**  
Managing Editor and Assistant Editor

Listening to the radio these days can be quite a chore. The featured artists on many stations are bland rock bands, uninspired pop princesses and seemingly anonymous rappers, all leaving much to be desired by music fans. The days when the music was the most important aspect of the music industry are gone. Now, record labels carefully calculate which artists will generate the most publicity and appeal to a target audience of teen-agers with cash.

Fans of genuine artistry and musical credibility have every right to be discouraged with the current state of the music industry, but a small crop of new performers are making an impact on even the most cynical critics.

In this and the next two issues, we will showcase three of the best musical acts you are probably *not* listening to.

Our first artist is Joe Bonamassa, a 25-year-old singer/songwriter/guitarist, from Utica, N.Y., who began playing guitar at age 4 when his father, a vintage guitar dealer, bought him a scaled-down guitar because he was banging up the merchandise.

When he was 12 years old, Bonamassa's talent was the focus of a segment on *Real Life with Jane Pauley*. Soon after, record companies came calling, and he was touring upstate New York and opening for B.B. King.

In 1995 Bonamassa made his national recording debut as the lead guitarist and co-songwriter of Bloodline, a band composed of Waylon Krieger, the son of Doors guitarist Robbie Krieger; Erin Davis, the son of jazz king Miles Davis; and Berry Oakley Jr., whose father was a founding member of the Allman Brothers Band.

In 2000 Bonamassa released his solo album debut, *A*

*New Day Yesterday*, on the Medalist Entertainment label. The 13-track album is a blend of blues and rock featuring notable songs such as, "I Miss You, I Hate You," "If Heartaches Were Nickels," featuring Duann Allman, "Current Situation," which has been heavily played on the Alvin Community College's radio station 89.7, and the title track, a cover of the Jethro Tull classic.

After his tour supporting the album, Bonamassa released *A New Day Yesterday Live* on both CD and DVD.

His follow-up, 2002's *So It's Like That*, which topped Billboard's Blues chart, is a more melodic blues/rock album. Tracks such as "Mountain Time" and "Never Say Goodbye" show the guitarist's tender side.

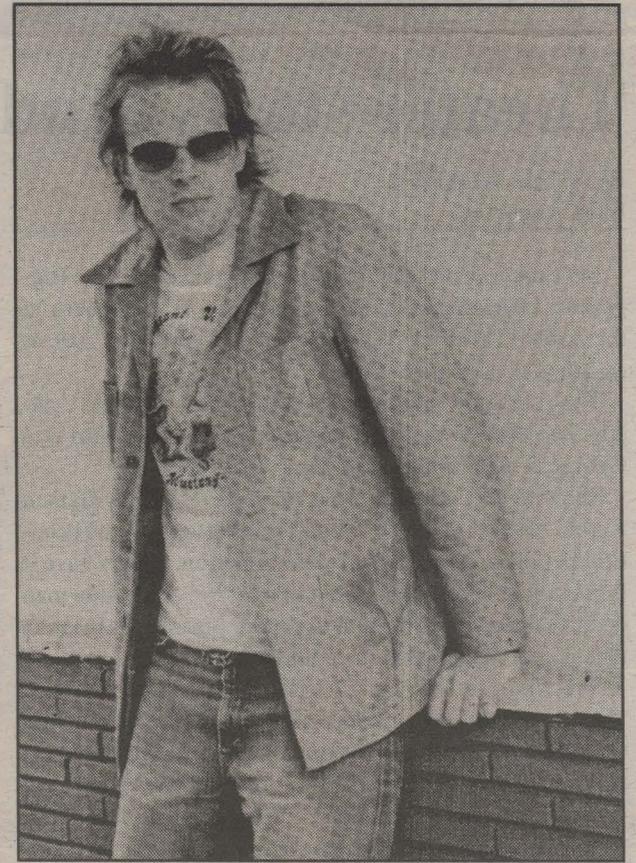
His latest album *Blues Deluxe* is currently No. 1 on Billboard's blues chart. The 12-track album consists of original songs as well as covers of classic blues songs, such as B.B. King's "You Upset Me Baby," and the title track, "Blues Deluxe."

Bonamassa has received nothing but praise from respected publications such as Billboard, Guitar World and The Associated Press. Music critics graciously compare him to guitar great Stevie Ray Vaughn.

Bonamassa visited Houston, opening for Peter Frampton Sept. 13 at the Verizon Wireless Theatre. Bonamassa's intense energy, blazing chops and hypnotizing guitar solos awed the crowd who, while expecting to see a guitar great in Frampton, discovered a guitar great of the future. His seven-song set left audience members spellbound, garnering him several standing ovations.

This reaction is a testament to Bonamassa's artistry. While his albums are modern-day masterpieces, his live performances and poetic guitar solos cement Bonamassa as one of the most promising acts of the future.

Bonamassa's albums can be found locally at Best Buy



Blues guitarist Joe Bonamassa's album *Blues Deluxe* currently tops the Billboard blues chart. He opened for Peter Frampton at Houston's Verizon Wireless Theatre Sept. 13. (Press Release)

or through his Web site <<http://www.jbonamassa.com>>, where tour dates and downloadable multimedia such as a live mp3 of "If Heartaches Were Nickels" can be found. Editor's note: Background material for this story came from Joe Bonamassa's electronic press kit.

# Handbook provides students with useful campus information

By **STEPHANIE SANCHEZ**  
Staff Reporter

Whoever said that "one can learn something new every day" is definitely right. Some students attend College of the Mainland for several semesters and never know that the college has a student handbook.

At first glance, one might think that a lot of *legal* articles (plagiarism policy, sexual harassment) are included in the handbook. Surprisingly, the handbook is filled with interesting tidbits about the college community. It carries the necessary information about what to do in an emer-

gency, tips on drug and alcohol prevention, help concerning student conduct and discipline procedures, as well as information on how to file grievances and complaints.

No doubt the handbook might be a bit boring, but it contains information all students should know. It also holds tools that can be useful to students. It has a blank schedule for fall, spring and summer classes, survival tips, as well as information about the resources COM

has to offer. A calendar that lists upcoming events is located at the back of the handbook. It even has space to jot down appointments and reminders.

After looking through the student handbook for the first time, one might be surprisingly impressed.

So, don't be shy! Drop by the Information Desk in the Administration Building and pick up your copy of the 2003-2004 Student Handbook. It's well worth it (and free)!

## InterCOM Classifieds

**GAMERS!** I'd like to start a gaming society here at COM. Please call Melani @ (409) 986-5084.

**Atari Lynx w/ four games,** Batman Returns, Hard Drivin', NFL Football, and Ninja Gaiden for sale \$40. No a/c adapter, runs on four AA batteries. Contact Michael (281) 460-1388.

**2 twin size hospital beds** fully operational \$1000.00 ea. or both for \$1800.00. Contact J.C. or Michelle at hm. (713) 941-2032 or cell (832) 816-6271.

**Electric Weedeater & electric edger.** Practically brand new. Used for one year and then stored. Electric edger \$25; electric weedeater \$20. (281) 339-5332.

**Star Wars Figures** Large assortment of Star Wars Power of the Force and Episode I figures, deluxe figures, and boxed sets mint in package. E-mail [magllan\\_vinn@yahoo.com](mailto:magllan_vinn@yahoo.com).

**Garage Sale** Fri. Oct. 10 & Sat. Oct. 11 8 a.m.-5 p.m. 4612 34 St. Dickinson.

**'88 Toyota Supra Auto.** 160K Mis. Runs great. \$1800.00 firm  
**'85 Toyota Landcruiser** FJ60 4 spd. 230K Mis. Runs great. Needs body work. \$3500.00 OBO. Contact Jack (281) 326-4829.

**Textbooks For Sale** English, speech, algebra, psychology, history, govt. Reasonable prices. Call Jessica @ (281) 648-2772.

**Car for Sale** '95 Buick LeSabre 118k miles \$3695 Contact Tony at (281) 534-4229.

**Place Your Classified Ad** \$1 per line 3 line minimum. visit InterCOM in LRC Room 246, call (409) 938-1211, Ext. 314 or e-mail <[intercom\\_editor@yahoo.com](mailto:intercom_editor@yahoo.com)>.



The fall 2003 InterCOM staff gathers for a picture on the Mezzanine of LRC Library. Members are (back row, from left) Jason Oliver, Pearson Lubrano, Copy Editor Daniel K. Lai, Alice P. Campbell, and (front, from left) April Clardy, Assistant Editor Jessica Robertson and Managing Editor Michael Navarro. Not pictured are Rodney Conley, Tara Land, Robert A. McLemore, and Stephanie Sanchez. (Photo by Astrid H. Lowery)

## What's Happening

# Theater starts 32nd season with comedy

By APRIL CLARDY  
Staff Reporter

It's time to welcome the amazing talents of "The Biggest Li'l Theatre in Texas" again. The performances in the Arena Theatre's 32nd season will surely be just as exciting as in years before.

The first show of the 2003-2004 season was the comedy *The Man Who Came to Dinner*, by Moss Hart and George S. Kaufman; it ran Sept. 4-28.

Showing Oct. 23-Nov. 16 is *Born Yesterday* by Garson Kanin. According to the Arena Theatre flier: "Some beautiful people are born to self-determination. Others have it thrust upon them and simply fall over it." A wealthy man decides his girlfriend could use more pizzazz, but what he gets is more chaos than he could ask for.

Showing Jan. 29-Feb. 22 is *Master Class* by Terrance McNally. In this performance, notorious opera diva, Maria Callas, is conducting a Master Class featuring three up-and-coming opera singers. Many people have described Callas as hysterically catty, theatrical and full of emotion. When one of her students flees in tears, the next student ignites Callas' dormant passion and finally her last student gives Callas a taste of her own medicine.

Showing April 15-May 9 is William Shakespeare's *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. This beloved classic tells the story of central character Sir John Falstaff's utter humiliation while flirting with two married women for financial gain.

Showing June 3-27 is *No Sex Please, We're British* by Anthony Marriot and Alistair Foot. In this kooky comedy, a newlywed bride sends off for some Scandinavian glassware, but what she gets is so scandalous that it has to be hidden. The newlyweds go through hilarious complications while trying to keep the package away from various unexpected visitors.

The final show of the season, which runs July 22-Aug. 15, is *How To Succeed In Business Without Really Trying* by Abe Burrows, Jack Weinstock and Willie Gilbert. This show is a satire of big business and all that is true of big business: power, sex, greed and ambition. J. Pierrepont Finch goes from lowly window washer to high-powered executive, thanks to his little handbook.

Performances run Thursdays through Saturdays at 8 p.m., and Sunday matinee performances are at 2:30 p.m.

For more information about the shows, free preview nights and ticket information call the theater office at (409) 938-1211 or toll free 1 (888) 258-8859, Ext. 345.

# Writing Center helps students achieve goals

By JESSICA ROBERTSON  
Assistant Editor

One of the many anxieties facing college students is learning how to properly write a paper. It seems like nearly every class requires some kind of essay, term paper or book report. The stress of creating a thesis statement or deciding where to put a comma is enough to drive any conscientious student insane.

The purpose of the College of the Mainland Writing Center is to help students with any type of writing assignment for any class. Located on the Library Mezzanine, the Writing Center provides one-on-one writing tutorials or computer-aided instruction.

Students should not expect tutors in the Writing Center to actually write a paper for them or discuss a grade assigned to a paper by a professor. However, tutors are avail-

able to help students brainstorm ideas and focus on a topic, as well as give honest feedback about papers. If necessary, students can visit the Writing Center on a regular basis to overcome specific writing weaknesses and develop writing strengths.

This semester the Writing Center is open on Mondays and Wednesdays from 9 a.m.-11:30 a.m. and from 1 p.m.-6 p.m.; Tuesdays from 3 p.m.-5:30 p.m.; Thursdays from 4 p.m.-5:30 p.m.; and Fridays from 10:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.

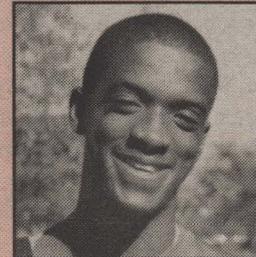
Walk-ins are welcome, and appointments can be made to meet students' schedules. Fifteen minutes should be allowed for each consultation, but 30 minutes is preferred.

If the Writing Center is not open, students can e-mail questions to <writingcenter@com.edu>. They should not send entire essays. For further information, contact the Writing Center at (409) 938-1211 or toll free 1 (888) 258-8859, Ext. 220.

## People Speak Out

By InterCOM Editors and Staff

College of the Mainland's student newspaper, InterCOM, is changing its format. Due to budget cutbacks, InterCOM must raise funds to pay for two of our three monthly issues. Because of these cutbacks and a continuing effort to better keep pace with technology, InterCOM is going online. With the possible extinction of the printed paper we've come to know and love, we asked the student body which is more preferable and accessible, the newspaper or an online site?



**Adrian Hall:** If all newspapers did that (go online), a lot of people would be out of work. I would rather have something you can pick up and go with.



**Katie Rupprath:** It's better for it to be on the Internet because everyone has it, and you can view it at home in your spare time.



**Lorie Alcazar:** I think that it is better to be able to pick up a paper whenever you see one and be able to take it with you wherever.



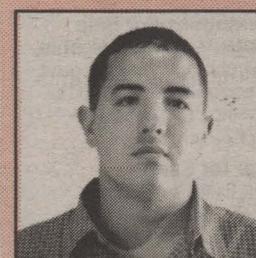
**Amy Jo Maldonado:** I'm not a computer person. I would think it would handicap those without computer access to go online.



**Jason Camacho:** Online is easier because computers are everywhere.



**Danny Doss:** The paper is more accessible for the students and would gain more circulation.

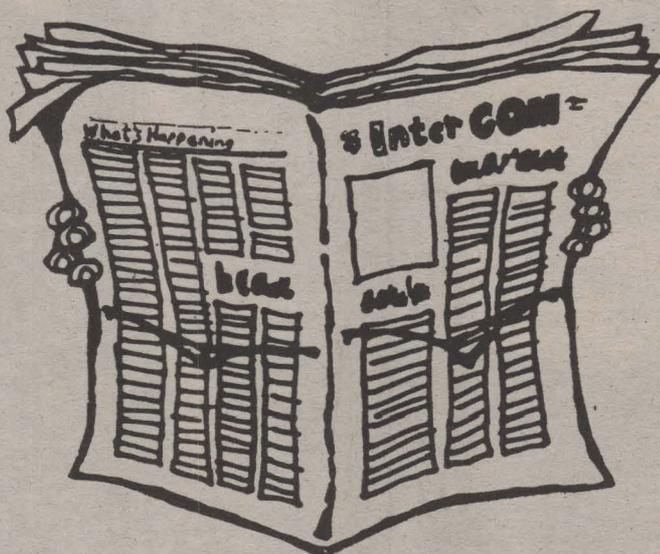


**Casey McIver:** With library access, it is more accessible to the students online.



**Megan Alexander:** Most of my time is spent online, so I would prefer to go online.

This space could be yours; don't waste it.



For ad rates, visit the InterCOM in LRC Room 246 or contact us at (409) 938-1211 or toll free at 1 (888) 258-8859, Ext. 314, or e-mail us at <intercom\_editor@yahoo.com>. Ask for Michael or Astrid.

Is kidnapped teen being exploited?  
See Page 3

JFK assassination retrospective  
See Pages 4 & 5

Meet The Waking Hours  
See Page 7



www.com.edu/intercom

# InterCOM

November  
2003

TIPA Award-winner

A STUDENT PUBLICATION AT COLLEGE OF THE MAINLAND

TEXAS CITY, TEXAS

## Elevator gets stuck, traps two students

By ALICE P. CAMPBELL  
Staff Reporter

At approximately noon on Nov. 6, the outside elevator in the Learning Resources Center once again became stuck, trapping two men for almost half an hour.

Officer G. "Willie" Huerta of the College of the Mainland Police Team said the two unidentified men called from the emergency phone inside the elevator which had stopped about two feet below the third floor.

Huerta pushed the elevator reset button, which usually causes the elevator to work again, but lately it has not solved the problem.

The elevator repairmen were called but were delayed because they were in Alvin. Huerta didn't want to leave the men in the elevator for too long because of inadequate ventilation, and the men were complaining about heat.

Huerta used the master key for the elevator to open the outside doors. Somehow the men inside had opened the inside doors of the elevator, and when the outside doors opened, they pulled themselves out and left.

"One of the guys was so nervous he forgot where he was 'cause he lit up a cigarette coming down the stairs," Chief of Police Butch Carr said with a laugh.

Huerta said the problem is electrical and mechanical, but college personnel don't know the exact source.

Of the three elevators on campus, the outside LRC elevator causes the most problems. Huerta said the elevator has been a problem since its installation 10 years ago, and the problems are becoming more frequent. Officer Kent Dowdy said the elevator now gets stuck about once a week.



Korean War veteran Jerry Anselmo speaks at COM's third annual Veterans Day celebration held Nov. 11 in the library. Anselmo now serves as chaplain of VFW Post #6378 in Dickinson. (Photo by Michael Navarro)

## Veterans Day program remembers Korean War

By JESSICA ROBERTSON  
Assistant Editor

Nearly 100 students, faculty, staff and community members gathered in the library for College of the Mainland's third annual Veterans Day celebration during College Hour (12:30-1:30 p.m.) Nov. 11.

This year's program recognized the 50th anniversary of the Korean War and remembered famed enter-

tainer to the troops, Bob Hope. Jerry Anselmo, Korean war veteran and chaplain of VFW Post #6378 in Dickinson, was the featured speaker. He began by noting the importance of the Liberty Bell and veterans.

"The Liberty Bell represents the freedom you and I enjoy today, and the veterans are the ones who fought for that freedom," Anselmo said.

He then asked for all attending veterans to stand and

See Bob Page 7



Dr. Judy Glaister addresses the audience of the workshop "Sexual Assault: It Can Happen to You" Oct. 23 in the LRC Auditorium. She is a student nursing professor at UTMB. (Photo by Michael Navarro)

## Workshop defines types of sexual assault

By JESSICA ROBERTSON  
Assistant Editor

Approximately 40 students and faculty gathered in the Learning Resources Center Auditorium during College Hour (12:30-1:30 p.m.) Oct. 23 for the workshop: "Sexual Assault: It Can Happen to You."

Guest speaker Dr. Judy Glaister, a student nursing professor at University of Texas Medical Branch, repeatedly told the audience that everyone is a potential victim of sexual assault.

"These crimes don't discriminate between females and males, heterosexual and homosexual, mentally competent or disabled," Glaister said. "It can happen to everybody."

Glaister was joined by Ginger Henkel and Bonnie Roberts of the Resource and Crisis Center of Galveston County, formerly the Women's Resource and Crisis Center of Galveston County. Henkel explained that the name change of the center was to encourage more men to come forward as victims of sexual abuse.

Glaister stressed that although sexual assault is commonly thought of as only rape, it can also include non-violent acts, such as suggestive or lewd remarks. She defined sexual assault as "any sexual act committed against another individual's will."

Glaister stunned the audience with the unsettling sta-

tistic that one in every eight women will be the victim of forcible rape in her lifetime. This number would be higher if all cases were reported.

She also discussed acquaintance or date rape, where victims know their rapists and may even be romantically involved with them.

"Date rape accounts for 80 percent of all rapes on college campuses," Glaister said.

She noted that these crimes often go unreported because victims feel at fault for "teasing" the rapist or "dressing in a seductive manner" that invited the assault.

Glaister said that locally, the Resource and Crisis Center of Galveston has a Sexual Assault Response Team that provides victims with information about pressing charges, documentation of injuries, and pregnancy risk evaluation and prevention. The team connects victims in support groups to help with the aftermath of sexual assault.

After the presentation, Roberts discussed the Crisis Center's thrift store program. This program is the major fund-raiser for the agency.

Donated items are taken to the shelter for clients, and the remaining items are sold in the thrift stores, located in League City, Texas City, Galveston and Crystal Beach.

For more information on the Crisis Center, visit its Web site at <<http://www.galveston.com/crisiscenter>> or call toll free at 1 (888) 919-SAFE.



## COM student wants to revert to childhood



Tara Land

I want to be a kid again.

I want to go back to the time when decisions were made by going "eeny-meeny-miney-mo." Mistakes were corrected by simply exclaiming, "Do it over!" and "race issue" meant arguing about who ran the fastest.

Money issues were handled by whoever was the banker in Monopoly, and catching fireflies could happily occupy an entire evening. It wasn't odd to have two or three "best" friends. Being old referred to anyone over 20. The net on a tennis court was the perfect height to play volleyball, and rules didn't matter.

The worst thing you could catch from the opposite sex was cooties. It was magic when Dad would "remove" his thumb. It was unbelievable that dodgeball wasn't an Olympic event, and having a weapon in school meant being caught with a slingshot.

Nobody was prettier than Mom, and when she kissed scrapes and bruises, they were immediately better. It was a big deal to finally be tall enough to ride the "big people" rides at the amusement park. Getting a foot of snow was a dream come true. Abilities were discovered because of a "double-dog-dare," and Saturday morning cartoons weren't 30-minute ads for action figures.

No shopping trip was complete unless a new toy was brought home. "Oly-oly-oxen-free" made perfect sense, and spinning around, getting dizzy and falling down was a cause for giggles. The worst embarrassment was being picked last for a team. War was a card game, and water balloons were the ultimate weapon. Baseball cards in the spokes transformed any bike into a motorcycle.

Taking drugs meant orange-flavored chewable aspirin. Ice cream was considered a basic food group, and the most stressful thing was creating hopscotch as long as your street and completing it. The biggest fight you and your friend had was who could sit next to the window on the school bus.

When we were kids life was great. We were ignorant of the evil out there, and we had our parents to protect us. Then we grew to be about 10, and we realized that everyone couldn't be trusted and evil is out there.

When we were kids we felt like we would never be alone; we always had someone. Now that we're grown up, we feel like we have to face the world alone.

The end of the semester is right before us—the most stressful time of the year—that time when all the professors get together and make everything due on the same date, or so it seems. The term papers are longer and harder, the finals are almost here, and we can't even remember what was on the midterms.

As the end of the semester and holidays approach, students work longer hours, study more and sleep less.

Just take it easy. Don't sweat the small stuff and remember—everything is small stuff. Laugh at yourself. It's OK not to be so serious.

## InterCOM editorial sparks controversy

*Editor's note: The following Letter to the Editor is in response to Copy Editor Daniel K. Lai's editorial "Musicians' views ignite protests" on Page 2 of the October.*

The comments made in the October issue of the InterCOM comparing the USA to the Roman Empire lack any substance and are very offensive to those of us who have loved and served this country like I have. The "overly implied" comments by Danny Lai in this issue and in back issues that this country is only interested in stealing oil from Iraq and other eastern countries are a lai, no pun intended.

To date not one barrel of oil has been "stolen" from Iraq or any other country in that area.

There have, however, been reports of the real reason we are there. While the numbers of weapons of mass destruction discovered have been minimal they have been found. Saddam most likely has them hidden out of

the country and only time will tell if all of them will ever be found. He had too much time to plan his escape as well as to hide his arsenal.

I served in the US Navy in the late seventies and early eighties. Me and my shipmates rescued the Vietnamese boat-people from the grips of Communism. I stood on the deck of my ship and listened with tears in my eyes as a grateful Vietnamese man read a letter of thanks to us for rescuing him and his family from a form of government that is so controlling and hideous.

It has been over twenty years since that day and now I am afraid that I am reading the rantings of an ungrateful child of these people, but maybe not.

It is my belief that Danny Lai as well as other young bright students in this college are being brain washed by a Liberal and Socialistic force imbedded deep within the tenure of the Administrative Staff of this college. These Socialists office mainly in the LRC building and I have been in class when they have openly admitted their political affiliation and beliefs. It is WRONG and should be stopped immediately.

Jeff Hollingshead  
"COM Conservative Voice"

*Daniel K. Lai's reply:*

I find this analysis of my political editorials intriguing. First, I would like to address the "socialistic" comment directed toward me. I do not consider myself a socialist; I just disagree with some of the actions of the Bush administration and our government. I support the decisions of our government and our president when they are within reason. Additionally, I was an avid supporter of former Vice President Al Gore when he ran for president in 2000.

My grandfather served as a captain in the U.S. Air Force for several years until he died in the line of duty in the 1960s. Therefore, I understand what our troops go through in the name of freedom.

My editorials are not brainwashing tools; they are written to allow others to examine a more liberal view on a subject. I would also like to address the comment made, blatantly accusing me of being an ungrateful Vietnamese child. These comments lack substance and were written out of spite. The truth is that my ethnic background is Hawaiian, Polish and Irish.

Finally, I would like to thank Mr. Hollingshead for his input on my editorial. At least I have one fan. I encourage him to keep reading. In the meantime, rest assured I will be not silenced as there are more editorials to come.

### InterCOM

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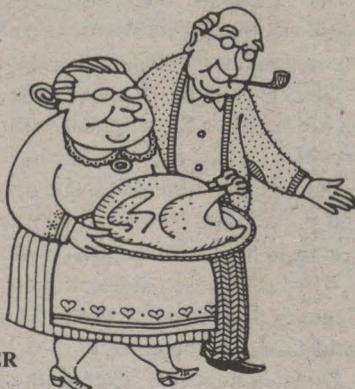
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### Letter to the Editor policy

InterCOM welcomes all Letters to the Editor. Please make letters brief and to the point. Letters should include a name and daytime telephone number for verification. We reserve the right to edit all letters for length, grammar, spelling and libelous content. Letters to the Editor will be printed on a space-available basis. They may be e-mailed to <intercom\_editor@yahoo.com>.



Wellness Center assistant Zelda Bourgeois helps student Belinda Ebert with the sit and reach exercise designed to test flexibility in Gym Room P-149, where the wellness program is located. The Employee Wellness Program was recently expanded to include members of the community. (Photo by Pearson Lubrano)

## Student Concerns Forum Nov. 20 in Student Center

Do you have a question or concern you would like to address? Is there a problem with College of the Mainland you would like to see fixed? The COM Student Activities Board will host the Student Concerns Forum Nov. 20 during College Hour (12:30-1:20 p.m.) in the Student Center.

COM President Dr. Homer "Butch" Hayes; Pam Davenport, vice president of Student Services and Institutional Effectiveness; James Templer, vice president of Instruction; and Lisa O'Neal, vice president of College and Financial Services, will be present to answer students questions.

For more information contact Maryann Urick, SAB adviser, at (409) 938-1211 or toll free 1 (888) 258-8859, Ext. 418.

# COM extends Employee Wellness Program to community

PEARSON LUBRANO  
Staff Reporter

If you frequent the Gym, you may have wondered about that recently erected sign outside the entrance to Room P-149 in the Gym, or the new exercise equipment and the addition of more than a dozen class offerings listed on Pages 24 to 26 in the College of the Mainland Continuing Education Fall 2003 catalog.

The newly refurbished and equipped room (adjacent to the swimming pool) is COM's newly instituted Community Wellness Program. The new wellness program, initiated just before the beginning of the fall semester, is a natural extension of the college's 15-year-old Employee Wellness Program which was administered for about 14 of those years by COM Physical Education Professor Jerry "JB" Bryant. Bryant recently handed the baton to the new co-directors of Employee and Community Wellness Program, Coach Al Bass and Terry Cornelius.

Bass said he and Cornelius went to President Dr. Homer "Butch" Hayes to ask him to consider their running the Employee Wellness Program following Bryant's retirement from it, as well as expanding the program to include the community. Hayes agreed to the proposal.

While the employee and community wellness programs serve two distinct groups, they now share the same facility, Room P-149.

According to Bass, the programs have purposefully been arranged to keep from infringing upon the use of the other Gym weight and cardio rooms by credit and continuing education students.

The wellness program is one of the benefits for employees, and it is open to the community when they sign up for one of the Community Wellness courses in the Continuing Education Catalog.

In addition to the nine dance classes and at least 10 fitness offerings, the new wellness lineup introduces about a dozen new classes, not including the Personal Trainer

Wellness and the three-tiered Community Wellness comprehensive testing and follow-up feature.

Starting in January, as part of a new partnership with Mainland Medical Center, wellness patrons can opt to receive blood work, in addition to the measurements and testing of the Community Wellness Program, for a nominal fee of about \$50 additional to the \$126 Community Wellness semester long monitoring.

Following the budget cuts imposed across campus, Bass and Cornelius have combined their efforts to expand the facility hours. Wellness Center patrons have access from 5:30 a.m. to 10 p.m. Mondays through Fridays; 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturdays; and 1 to 5 p.m. Sundays. "We wanted to offer a well-rounded, comprehensive program at value prices, that would attract more people to COM," Bass said.

InterCOM is now online. Visit us at <http://www.com.edu/intercom>.

## Parents capitalize on daughter's tragedy to further own agenda



Jessica  
Robertson

It's only been eight months since Elizabeth Smart was safely returned to her Utah home and family after she was abducted from her bedroom June 5, 2002.

It's only been eight months since the alleged sexual and mental abuse she endured from her kidnappers, Brian David Mitchell and his wife, Wanda Barzee, ended with her safe return.

It's only been eight months since she was forced to be Mitchell's "plural (multiple) wife" at age 14.

It's been less than a year since all of this, and how do Elizabeth's parents welcome her home? They welcome her with a book and a television movie deal about her experience, of course.

According to prosecutors, Mitchell, a 49-year old drifter and self-appointed prophet, and Barzee, his 57-year old wife, held Elizabeth captive in a makeshift campsite in the hills above her home until Oct. 8. From there, they took her to California until March 5 before her rescue in a Salt Lake City suburb March 12.

Her parents, Ed and Lois Smart, released details of what she endured in the book they wrote, *Bringing Elizabeth Home: A Journey of Faith and Hope*. They also sold the rights to her story for an authorized two-hour CBS television movie, *The Elizabeth Smart Story*,

that aired Nov. 9.

Interviews with Katie Couric on Dateline NBC and Oprah Winfrey were conducted as promotion for the book. Her uncles, Tom and David Smart, are writing a book about Elizabeth's capture, the search and rescue.

Elizabeth's struggle is being broadcast to the world through relatives who should be sheltering her from the media's spotlight.

Although her parents have indicated in several interviews that the entire family is in counseling to deal with the event, surely the exploitation of Elizabeth's experience cannot help her to heal.

Now that she is 16 years old, Elizabeth has said she wants to get back to being a "normal" teen-ager by learning to drive, going to high school and meeting boys. Should this transition to normal life also include photo shoots, nationally televised interviews and a tacky television movie?

Elizabeth's parents seem to be using the horrific nine months of torture she endured as a platform to spout their religious beliefs and gain their 15 minutes of fame.

Both the book and the movie are told from the viewpoint of Ed and Lois Smart and focus mostly on the emotions they experienced and their Mormon faith. If they're so intent on telling Elizabeth's story, why are they promoting their own personal interests, such as the Mormon church?

Although terms of the movie deal were not released, industry sources have speculated that the family could receive up to \$500,000 for her story rights. The Associated Press reported that the book deal could garner a similar amount for the family.

In a statement through CBS, Ed Smart said he wanted the movie to be "a message of hope and inspiration." Of course, I'm sure it's a mere coincidence this message was delivered during the all-important November sweeps period, gaining more than 10 million viewers.

Do we really need to know the gruesome details of what Elizabeth faced? Shouldn't some things be kept among those involved in the case? I find it extremely unsettling that Elizabeth's parents have decided to put their daughter's misery on public display.

One could argue that the Smarts have made the right choice by publicizing her kidnapping, and one positive effect will be a greater awareness of these crimes among parents. I definitely agree families should discuss abduction and learn to prevent cases like Elizabeth's.

However, as a young woman not much older than Elizabeth, I mostly empathize with her personal struggle to heal from this experience. I know it's hard enough being a teen-age girl without that added pressure.

Surely, Elizabeth's parents could educate the public about abducted children without compromising her right to privacy and need to heal. It seems to me that being a national curiosity for the next several months will only hurt Elizabeth's chance at recovery.

What happened to Elizabeth was, without question, something that no one should ever experience. She was robbed of her innocence and forced into a situation that would be nearly impossible for anyone, let alone a teen-age girl, to survive.

What's arguably worse, though, is that her parents are taking advantage of her story and using it for their own personal gain.

## Adjunct instructor has passion to teach

By ALICE CAMPBELL  
Staff Reporter

Bernie Smiley is not a teacher a student is likely to forget. He towers at above 6 feet with long dark brown hair down his back and an almost Victorian-style goatee. His usual attire is pajama pants and a KISS shirt. He's younger than many of his colleagues, but has taught English at La Marque High School for the past seven years and has taught at College of the Mainland as an adjunct-instructor for five.

Before students ever meet him at the high school, they already know who he is. Before they have set foot in his high school English class, they are already terrified. He has been dubbed with titles, such as "the coolest teacher ever" and nicknames, such as "The Evil Jesus." And he loves it.

"I like adulation. I'm a show-off," he said with a smirk. "I enjoy being the one in the room who knows what they're talking about."

That's about the only reflective comment he will give about himself. The rest of the conversation is about the joys of teaching.

Thirty-two-year-old Smiley has been teaching for about eight years. He got started teaching when a friend called him and asked him to try it. He liked teaching, and taught at Stephen F. Austin University in Nacogdoches for a year.

He then began teaching freshman English classes at La Marque High School. School administrators liked the way he taught the classes and had him teach senior English classes his second year.

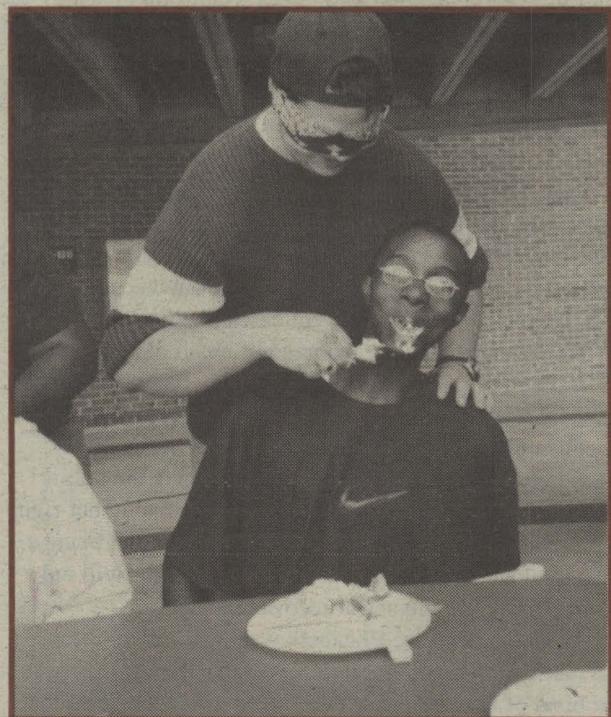
Comparing the two, he said, "Seniors are almost people and high school freshmen are not."

Regardless of the level, Smiley really enjoys what he does and has a good time teaching; he believes this enjoyment comes through to most of his students.

As he talks about teaching, his voice rises and he scoots to the edge of his seat, obviously excited; he's very passionate about the subject.

Smiley believes a lack of passion has kept many young people from becoming teachers. Because the pay is so poor, not many people want to become teachers. Instead, schools keep the same teachers they've had for years, and those teachers who do retire come out of retirement due to the shortage of new educators.

"We're hanging on to our teaching staff," Smiley said



Jack Sparrowhawk feeds teammate Lealand Kelley pumpkin pie during the pie-eating contest held Oct. 30 during College Hour (12:30-1:30 p.m.). The SAB Halloween party also included a Karaoke contest and a face-painting contest. (Photo by Maryann Urick)



Adjunct English instructor Bernie Smiley discusses an essay with his student Romulun Harris during an in-class conference. Smiley has been teaching at COM for five years and is notorious for his brutal honesty when grading papers. (Photo by Jessica Robertson)

of La Marque High School.

"I didn't go into teaching to get rich. I got into teaching to have a good time. If you go into teaching to make money, you're dumb. You're going to be sad your whole life."

Some teachers, he said, strive to become "status quo teachers": They write out lesson plans and make the students' lives miserable. Smiley doesn't believe enough teachers strive for respect. They just demand it without earning it. "Strive for respect, not adulation," he said.

That's what Smiley's intentions are—to have a mutual respect between his students and himself. He doesn't feel the respect he has gained comes from his age either.

"I don't think age has anything to do with identifying with students, just passion." He added his cultivating the "I don't care" look speaks to teen-age rebellion, making it easier for students to relate to him.

But relating to his students doesn't mean being nice. Smiley is notorious for being frank, sometimes even bru-

tal when grading papers. His explanation is, "If you give them a specific instead of a generalization, it makes them step up to the plate. Direct is always better."

Smiley thinks it's all for the students' own good. "If people know that you care, they will work hard for you, and they will take any criticism that you dish out."

And Smiley does care about his students. He hopes to be an "inspiration for knowledge" so that his students will be able to search out knowledge from within themselves.

Smiley's own inspiration came first from one of his English teachers. "I hated high school. It was the most boring place for me until I got to 12th grade English in Dickinson High School." The teacher, Ron Proctor, is retired now, but he started Smiley's fascination with learning and teaching.

When asked for words to describe himself, he opts for "personable, passionate, difficult, slob, and unnecessarily rebellious." But one word that fits Bernie Smiley the best is "genuine."

## JFK assassination unsolved after 40 years

By DANIEL K. LAI  
Copy Editor

It is a day that still haunts a nation, a day that defined a city and four decades later, a tragedy that continues to be the subject of much speculation and debate.

Nov. 22 marks the 40th anniversary of the assassination of John F. Kennedy, 35th president of the United States. Through movies, books, documentaries and conspiracy theories, the JFK assassination continues to live in the minds of Americans 40 years after it took place.

In 1963 Kennedy had begun campaigning for the 1964 presidential election. A large concern was the 25 electoral votes from Texas, a state where Kennedy's popularity was dwindling. Kennedy began his trip to Texas Nov. 21 with stops in San Antonio, Houston and Fort Worth. It was to end with a luncheon at the Dallas Trade Center.

The day before Kennedy was scheduled to speak at the Trade Center, the route of the presidential motorcade was published in the Dallas Morning News so spectators and supporters of the Kennedy/Johnson ticket could catch a glimpse of the president as he rode in an open-topped limousine through downtown Dallas and Dealy Plaza. Kennedy believed, despite firm protests of the Secret Service, riding in an open motorcade would help his chances

to gain the support from the people his campaign required.

On Nov. 22 around 12:30 p.m. CST, while riding in the motorcade with his wife Jacqueline, and Texas Gov. John Connally and his wife Nellie, Kennedy was shot and fatally wounded in the neck and the head. Vice President Lyndon Johnson and his wife Lady Byrd were in a separate car. Connally was severely wounded but survived. The Secret Service rushed Kennedy to Parkland Memorial Hospital where doctors worked to revive him, but the president was pronounced dead at 1 p.m., 30 minutes after the assassination.

Dallas police arrested Lee Harvey Oswald, an employee of the Texas Book Depository (a building overlooking Dealy Plaza, where several witnesses claimed to hear gunfire), on suspicion of murdering police officer J.D. Tippit.

After extensive questioning, Oswald also was charged as the sole assassin in the murder of the president. However, before Oswald could be put on trial, he was shot and killed two days after the assassination by Dallas nightclub owner Jack Ruby while being transferred to another jail.

After the assassination of President Kennedy, Johnson was sworn in as the new president aboard Air Force One with his wife and Jacqueline Kennedy at his side.

See Unanswered Page 5

# COM to implement new hybrid courses

By JESSICA ROBERTSON  
Assistant Editor

College of the Mainland students will have the opportunity to enroll in hybrid classes that combine face-to-face classroom meetings and Internet interaction in the spring semester.

Government Professor Michele Betancourt proposed the hybrid classes with input and support from English professor Dr. Gilchrist White. Each will participate in the pilot project by teaching hybrid versions of Government 2301 and English 1301, respectively.

Students in the hybrid classes will attend eight in-class sessions, scheduled one night every other week for lectures, discussions and peer evaluations. Each in-class session will be an hour and 20 minutes. The remainder of the classes will be completed online and on WebCT, the software used for all online classes.

The online portion of the classes will be approached similarly to strictly online classes. Students will use WebCT, which has sections for the class syllabus, discussion areas and quizzes. Functions for a chatroom and e-mail also are included.

"I was looking for new ways to reach different populations and students who learn differently," Betancourt said.

These different populations include evening students who normally may only be able to take one or two classes a semester due to time constraints. The hybrid classes will allow these students to enroll in more classes but spend the same amount of time on campus.

If the initial pilot semester is successful, Betancourt and White hope to add at least two more hybrid courses by fall 2004.

"A student could essentially earn 12 credit hours in just two nights on campus each week," Betancourt said.

Betancourt sees the hybrid experiment as a "bridge from a traditional learning environment, like lectures, to more independent learning styles." According to their proposal,



Government Professor Michele Betancourt (left) and English professor Dr. Gilchrist White discuss a proposal for hybrid classes that combine in-class meetings and online interaction. Two hybrid courses, Betancourt's Government 2301 and White's English 1301, will be offered in the spring. (Photo by Jessica Robertson)

the new classes have the potential to improve retention in both online and face-to-face courses.

"We both think it will help students to be more successful and introduce them to online classes," White said.

Betancourt hopes more instructors will take advantage of the hybrid courses if they prove to be successful. She pointed out that in the course evaluations of strictly Internet classes, most students complain that they never got to know their professors.

Betancourt further explained that in her government classes, she often raises controversial questions that can be difficult to discuss if the student is not comfortable with his or her instructor or classmates.

"With the hybrid classes, students can see the personality of their instructors with the face-to-face interaction, and that will make them more candid in online discussions," Betancourt said.

The hybrid course offerings would also benefit the college by providing more courses with the same amount of classroom space.

The hybrid classes have been approved by the COM Curriculum Committee and will be available in spring.

White recommends that interested students refer to the distance education section of the COM Web site, located at [http://www.com.edu/academics/dist\\_faqs.cfm](http://www.com.edu/academics/dist_faqs.cfm), to be sure they are prepared for the demands of online classes.

## Unanswered questions surround Warren Commission investigation

Continued from Page 4

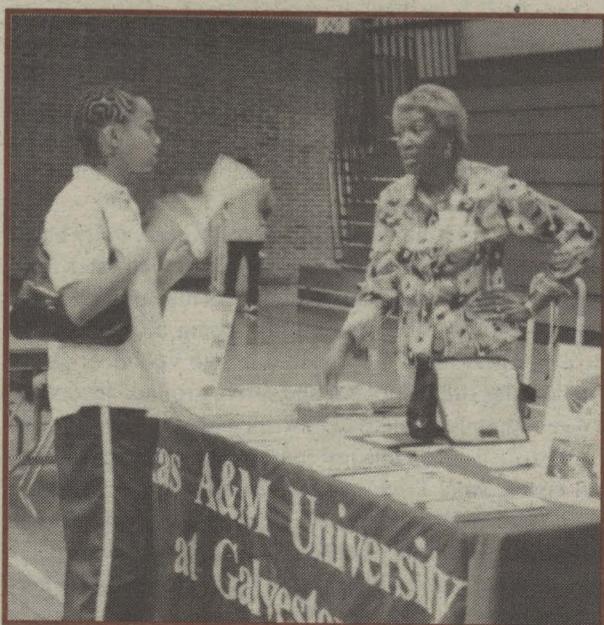
As president, Johnson appointed a special congressional committee to examine the evidence and question Dealy Plaza witnesses in order to find the assassin. However, the botched findings of the Warren Commission, headed by Chief Justice Earl Warren, raised more questions and doubts after it found Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone in the murder. The findings also produced the "Magic Bullet Theory." Junior investigator Arlan Specter's theory, published in the Warren Commission's Report, explains

that of the three bullets fired by Oswald from the sixth floor of the Texas Book Depository, one was responsible for seven of the combined wounds on Kennedy and Connally.

In the 40 years following the Kennedy assassination, the case remains as open as it was in 1963. More questions remain as more theories, evidence and testimony come to light. The conclusion that Oswald acted alone is not considered valid now. Although no one may ever know for sure who killed Kennedy and why, enough material is

available for the people to form their own theories and conclusions.

"The Kennedy assassination was a shock to the country because he was in the prime of life and all of a sudden he was gone," College of the Mainland history professor, Dr. Steven Sewell, said. "The assassination has never been definitively solved, and the mystery continues to keep people interested. Few people believe the Warren Commission's conclusion that Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone."



Denise Bell (left) receives transfer information from Mattie B.J. Peters from the Office of Student Relations at Texas A&M University at Galveston during College Day on Nov. 3. Several college recruiters attended the event. (Photo by Jessica Robertson)

## COM hosts Sports Day

By April Clardy  
Staff Reporter

College of the Mainland hosted and participated in the Gulf Coast Intercollegiate Conference Sports Day Oct. 9. Eleven colleges competed in nine events.

Because of rain, softball teams were able to finish only the first round. Tennis teams played until the rain started. COM placed in five of the nine events.

Ronnie Bell, Donald Spry, Robert Walker and Daniel Powell won first place in men's 3-on-3 basketball.

In men's tennis, Hung Ngo won first place during pool play. Queenie Nguyen tied for third place in the table tennis tournament which started after the women's tennis game was rained out.

Sterlin Guidry took third place in the 8-ball tournament, and Jesse Garza took second place in men's table tennis.

Colleges that participated in Sports Day in addition to COM were Alvin Community, Brazosport, Kingwood, Lee, North Harris County, San Jacinto-North, -South and -Central, Tomball and Wharton County.

## Graphic Arts Club Holiday Goods Drive

Donation Dates:

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Goal:

We will be donating the goods to the Salvation Army for distribution to families in need.

Drop off:

You can bring your donations to the graphic arts lab (T-64) or one of our drop boxes around campus.

## Campus Life



Music Professor Sparky Koerner eats lunch with students during the Student/Faculty Luncheon Mixer Oct. 21 during College Hour (12:30-1:30 p.m.). The event was sponsored by the Student Activities Board and promoted interaction among professors and students. (Photo by Jessica Robertson)

## Event promotes student, faculty interaction

By DANIEL K. LAI  
Copy Editor

Two very different worlds converged into one as College of the Mainland students and professors had their first opportunity to get to know each other on a more personal level without the formal confines of the classroom.

The Student/Faculty Luncheon Mixer was sponsored by the COM Student Activities Board Oct. 21 during College Hour (12:30-1:30 p.m.). The purpose of the luncheon, which was held in the breezeway of the Learning Resources Center, was to allow faculty and students to interact with one another away from the stressful classroom environment and in a more relaxed atmosphere.

Twenty-one faculty, three staff members and more than 70 students took a break from school, work and studies for an hour to enjoy a free lunch consisting of club sandwiches and Chex Party Mix provided by the SAB.

Question sheets were passed out at the tables with sample questions students could use to "break the ice"

and get to know the professors. Students were not limited to the questionnaire; it simply provided an outline of questions, such as "What drives you or motivates you?" or "If I pursue the same degree, what opportunities would there be now?" Students could use these in their conversations.

According to Maryann Urick, SAB sponsor, the student/faculty mixer wasn't just one member's idea.

"The members of the previous semester's SAB plan the activities for the following semester, and those members in spring 2003 decided the mixer would be a good way to create more student and faculty participation in events," Urick said. "It turned out well. I think there was good interaction going on, and it was beneficial to students who gained new information from the faculty.

"The group is open to suggestions to improve the student/faculty mixer before we try it again," Urick said.

For more information about upcoming SAB activities or if you want to give advice to the SAB to improve activities, contact Urick at (409) 938-1211 or toll free 1 (888) 258-8859, Ext. 418.

## Incentives, coaches influence athletes

Editor's Note: This is the second-part of a three-part series concerning the sports world and the media.

By JASON OLIVER  
Staff Reporter

Athletes are commonly recognized as role models and are scrutinized when they don't portray a positive public image. However, when the media covers a positive role model, the athlete is portrayed as an exception to the rule. The impression given is that this is a rare form of athlete, and not just another dumb jock. "It's the athlete's responsibility to worry about the image, not the media's," Jonell McFadden Priddle, a news editor at ESPN, said.

Professional athletes are paid millions of dollars to keep their composure in the spotlight, in addition to playing the game to the best of their ability. Coaches act as mentors and secondary guardians with the responsibility of teaching and guiding our youth.

Some people believe that professional athletes simply cannot handle the pressure associated with the fame and the extravagant contracts worth tens of millions of dollars, just to play a game. Is it possible for athletes just out of their teens to fathom the responsibilities that come along with fame? LeBron James, an 18-year-old senior from St. Vincent-St. Mary's High School, Akron, Ohio, became a multi-millionaire with endorsements from NIKE exceeding \$90 million, before he was ever drafted or played in an NBA game.

Are the owners of these prestigious teams held under the same magnifying glass? George Steinbrenner, owner of the New York Yankees baseball franchise, is constantly criticized because of his hunger to win despite the cost. Incentives are very popular now. When an athlete lives up to contractual stipulations or challenges, he or she is rewarded with more money. If an NFL running back runs for 1,500 yards in a season, it's an extra \$10 million or so.

"Win at any cost" seems to be the motto, but is that a proper image of sportsmanship? This kind of bargaining could persuade an athlete to keep playing during a serious injury. These kinds of bonuses actually could prove to be career-ending and cost the athlete more money in the long run.

Some people believe how reporters cover sports now has changed. The media used to brush the downfalls of sports figures under the rug, but clearly this is no longer the case. Many people would like to look into the past of an athlete to try to find where certain character traits have come from. It starts with the parents, then continues with coaches when we blindly entrust them with our youth.

Dave Bliss, a basketball coach at Baylor University in Waco, was exposed for organizing a cover-up involving the murder of Baylor student Patrick Dennehy. "Maybe the worst of this is an authority figure putting a kid in that position," said William Underwood, a member of the Baylor committee investigating possible NCAA violations in the basketball program.

Last May, 15 Long Island, New York City, varsity baseball players and two coaches were suspended after their school district learned that the players made a late-night trip to a Florida strip club during spring break. Four of the teen-agers hired a stripper, and two volunteer assistant coaches drank alcohol and drove around, according to a memorandum released by Principal Mary E. Metzger. These suspensions came just four days after Alabama football coach Mike Price lost his job after it was revealed that he had spent time at a strip club in Pensacola, Fla.

While the majority of coaches on all levels are respectable mentors, the media's focus stays on the small percentage who have issues. Regardless of the monetary pressures and false guidance athletes can endure over the duration of their careers, they are expected to keep an angelic status in society.

Editor's note: Background material for this story came from <<http://www.espn.com>>.

## Pumpkin Rolls

Do you want to try a new mouth-watering dessert for Thanksgiving? Then try a foot-long pumpkin bread roll filled with cream cheese. This is a dessert that everyone will remember. And it's only \$10!



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The current lineup of The Waking Hours minus Mike McCormack (left) is (from left) Lisa Mychols, Tom Richards and Ricky Tubb. Visit their Web site <[www.wakinghours.com](http://www.wakinghours.com)> for a free weekly mp3, CD ordering and additional merchandise. (Press Photo)

## Unsigned band garners media attention

By MICHAEL NAVARRO  
Managing Editor

This fall InterCOM promised to give readers a break from the current state of the music industry by showcasing three talented and entertaining artists whom many have yet to discover.

Last month InterCOM featured guitarist extraordinaire, Joe Bonamassa. This month we will introduce you to a band whose music you may have heard without even knowing: California pop-rock band, The Waking Hours.

In 2001 Tom Richards (vocals, guitar), Ricky Tubb (lead guitar, vocals), Mike McCormack (drums) and Mark Strong (keyboards) left their hometown of Richmond, Va., and headed to Los Angeles. Upon their arrival they met Lisa Mychols (bass), who was leading a local band, The Masticators. Soon after she was drawn into their music and joined the band.

Since then the band has been gigging around California, drawing a large fanbase and grabbing the attention of publications such as HITS, Music Connection Magazine and Amplifier. Additionally, their music has been featured on several compilation CDs, television shows and video game soundtracks. All these accomplishments, and surprisingly, they are not even signed.

## Bob Hope tribute part of veterans program

Continued from Page 1

be recognized. Anselmo provided the audience with a brief history of the Korean War and his experiences there.

"The Korean veterans and their sacrifices built the groundwork for what Korea is today," he said.

He emphasized the need to be thankful for every branch of the service and not show preference to one.

"It takes a team to win," Anselmo said. He also recalled seeing prisoners of war being released.

"It must have been the most beautiful sight I've seen in my life," he said. "Imagine a dump truck unloading all these people, and they got to go home to their loved ones."

President Dr. Homer "Butch" Hayes welcomed everyone, and Jerry Anderson of Media Services gave opening remarks. Master Sgt. Anderson, Senior Marine instructor; and Gunnery Sgt. Taylor, Marine instructor, led the La Marque High School Marine Corps JROTC Color Guard in the honor procession of the flags.

Music Professor Sparky Koerner played the national anthem on his trumpet, and speech Professor Roger Stallings recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Waking Hours show exactly why they have received all the attention on their new self-released album, *The Good Way*. Simply put, the 14-track CD is filled with music that just makes you feel good. You'll swear you've heard the opening track "Sunshine" as soon as you hear the harmonizing introduction and beginning guitar riff, and you probably have. The song was featured in an episode of *The Real World Paris*, the new Showtime series *Freshman Diaries* and EA Sports' NHL Hockey 2003. Other highlights of the CD include "Jade"; the up-tempo, "Used to It"; and the powerful ballad, "Almost Nearly There." *The Good Way* clocks in at just under an hour, but you'll probably never notice it.

It reached No. 19 for overall spins in HITS Magazine's February Post Modern Top 30 Specialty Airplay chart along with artists, such as Coldplay, The Ataris and AFL.

Currently, The Waking Hours is a three-piece band minus McCormack and Strong, and with Tubb now on the drums. They recently gained national exposure playing selected dates in the Vans Warped Tour.

You can visit their Web site, <[www.wakinghours.com](http://www.wakinghours.com)>, to download a free weekly mp3, order *The Good Way* or other previous Waking Hours CDs and concert dates (if you will be in the Los Angeles area).

Visit us online for an interview with The Waking Hours.

Lori Boyd, Financial Aid specialist and veterans representative, gave a history of the holiday, which was nationally recognized in 1954 by President Eisenhower.

Theatre Director Mark Adams spoke about Hope, who died earlier this year.

"What can anyone say about the man who was probably the greatest entertainer in western civilization?" Adams asked.

Hope served as the USO Entertainment coordinator from 1941 until his retirement in 2001.

In October 1997 a resolution passed, making Hope an honorary veteran. Adams shared one of Hope's most poignant statements about the time he spent with troops.

"I have seen what a laugh can do," Hope said. "It can transform tears and sorrow into something bearable."

Holly Anderson from Library Acquisitions later read a list of faculty with family serving in the military, followed by a moment of silence on behalf of all veterans, living and deceased, and those on active duty.

Music Professor James Heffel closed the presentation by singing "God Bless America."

## Prevention focus of breast cancer seminar

By JESSICA ROBERTSON  
Assistant Editor

A low turnout didn't distract from the message presented at the Breast Cancer Awareness seminar sponsored by the College of the Mainland Wellness Center and held Oct. 21 in the Gym.

"Breast cancer doesn't have to be a death sentence with early detection," said speaker Joyce Singleton, vice president for projects of D'Feet Breast Cancer Inc.

Dana Bjarnason and Amanda Kinsler of the Texas Nurses Association District 6 also spoke at the seminar.

Bjarnason opened the seminar by saying that "teaching people about the importance of early detection is a great opportunity to impact women's health."

Kinsler provided the participants with information about breast cancer and breast self examinations, or BSE, through a slide show. She dedicated the presentation to her grandmother, who died of breast cancer.

"Most of us have had someone in our lives who has had cancer already," Kinsler said. "Because of her (grandmother) encouragement, I'm able to teach others and promote early detection. The more you talk about it, the more you can help others."

Kinsler urged the women to be familiar with what their breasts feel and look like on a normal basis so that they can recognize changes. She mentioned that normal changes in breasts occur during puberty, menstrual cycles, pregnancy, menopause and periods of weight gain or loss.

Kinsler also discussed the risk factors related to breast cancer. Some of these are being female, having a previous personal or family history of cancer, being overweight, having a first pregnancy after age 34, consuming a high fat diet and being over age 40.

Kinsler noted 75 percent of cases occur in those without any risk factors. Although it is uncommon, some men have been diagnosed with breast cancer, she said.

The slide show included information on types of benign (noncancerous) and malignant (cancerous) lumps.

"Even if a lump turns out to be benign, it's always best to have any lump checked out by a doctor," Kinsler said.

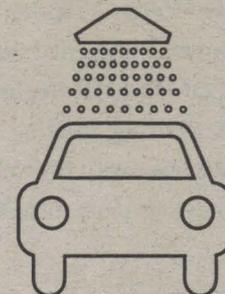
Each speaker stressed the importance of early detection and self examination. Kinsler noted that with early detection, 90 to 95 percent of cases are curable. She listed methods of prevention, such as yearly mammograms for women over age 40, regular physical exams by a doctor and breast self-examination.

Visit D'Feet Breast Cancer Inc.'s Web site at <<http://www.dfeetbreastcancer.com>> or the American Cancer Society's Web site at <<http://www.cancer.org>> for more information about the disease.

# CAR WASH

• Saturday November 15, 2004  
from 9am to 1pm

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Proceeds to benefit the Graphic Arts Club

# What's Happening



Harry Brock, played by Raymond Carmiciano (left), and Paul Verrall, played by Rick Watson, discuss a scheme to educate Brock's girlfriend in the play *Born Yesterday*, which ran Oct. 23-Nov. 16. Eddie Brock, played by Walter Mylett, acts as butler. This was Theatre Director Jack Westin's last show at COM. (Photo by Arena Theatre)

## Political satire is Director Westin's final show

By TARA LAND  
Staff Reporter

"The Biggest Li'l Theatre in Texas" (The College of the Mainland Arena Theatre) presented *Born Yesterday*, Oct. 23-Nov. 16.

The play was well-acted and directed, and made the point according to the theater brochure that "some beauties are born to self-determination, others have it thrust upon them—some simply trip over it."

Harry Brock (Raymond Carmiciano) is a newly rich hustler who decides his trophy girlfriend Billie Dawn (Martha Evans) needs some polishing. He hires journalist Paul Verrell (Rick Watson) to teach her some "smarts." But is too much knowledge a bad thing? Brock's plan to polish Billie goes horribly wrong, and the outcome is poignantly different from what he envisioned.

Helen (Angela Ferri), the hotel maid, gives a cute and

entertaining performance before the play begins, keeping the audience curious as to when the play would start.

This is Theatre Director Jack Westin's last show after 27 years of outstanding shows with the Arena Theatre. He is retiring from COM and will move to the Hill Country.

The play has a slow start and at first leaves the audience somewhat confused about Harry Brock's line of work. Scene 1 of Act I builds slowly, but the action intensifies by the end of Scene 2, Act I. Act II is fast-paced, and the motives of the characters, especially Brock's, become clear as everything comes together.

Designer Tom King created an elaborate set that includes a short staircase to an upper level. The set changes slightly after Scene 1, Act I to underscore Billie's "education." The set is so well-designed that no matter what seat audience members are in, they can see the action.

For tickets and show times contact the box office at (409) 938-1211 or toll free 1 (888) 258-8859, Ext. 345.

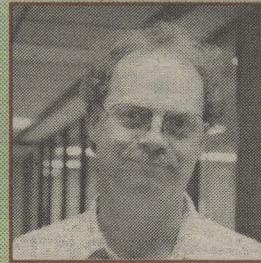
## People Speak Out

By InterCOM Editors and Staff

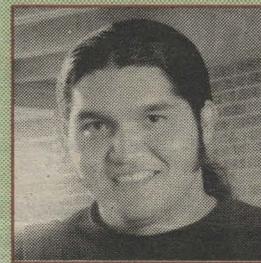
NBC and CBS aired competing television movies about captured POW Jessica Lynch and abducted teen-ager Elizabeth Smart, respectively. The movies, *Saving Jessica Lynch* and *The Elizabeth Smart Story*, both aired at 8 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 9, during the "sweeps" period. With all of the hype surrounding these television movies, InterCOM asked: "Do you think this media attention is important for viewers, or does it exploit its subjects?"



**Naomi Sims:** I think it's important because all teen-agers need to know what's going on.



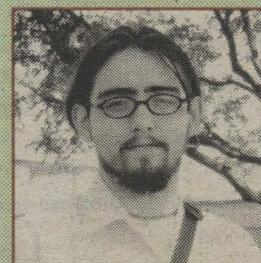
**Steve Sewell:** I think they are exploiting their tragedies for commercial purposes.



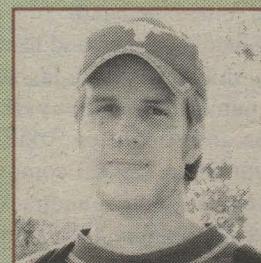
**Randy Ramirez:** It's a little of both, but it's mostly exploiting. Those girls don't want to relive what happened to them.



**Adama Kanu:** I think it's important to watch because it gives knowledge about what went on over there from an individual point of view.



**Cody Robertson:** I'd say it's exploiting them because they're making millions of dollars with these people's suffering and pain.



**Mike Glayzer:** It is my opinion that the two networks are only showing these specials for the profit, not the benefit of the children and others.



**Jim Hackett:** I think the sweeps are always used to exploit. The networks try to pull emotional strings every chance they get.



**Savannah Traylor:** I think they are exploiting them. They've gone through enough as it is without it being publicized.

## We want you!

### Do you want to improve your writing skills?

Or are you already a competent writer and just want to build portfolio pieces? InterCOM needs new and experienced writers for the spring 2004 semester. Anyone interested can enroll in **COMM 2311, Beginning Newsgathering & Writing**, meeting Mondays & Wednesdays 12:30 a.m.-3:20 p.m. No previous journalism experience required.

### Photography and advertising majors needed.

InterCOM could use your talents for photographing our events and selling advertisement space during the spring 2004 semester. Anyone interested can enroll in **COMM 1129, Newspaper Publication I**. Meeting times will be arranged to fit your schedule. No previous journalism experience required.

Are you a good tipper?  
See Page 2

Is Tupac really dead?  
See Page 5

Who says girls can't rock?  
See Page 7



www.com.edu/intercom

# InterCOM

December  
2003

TIPA Award-winner

A STUDENT PUBLICATION AT COLLEGE OF THE MAINLAND

TEXAS CITY, TEXAS

## InterCOM limited to one print issue

By JESSICA ROBERTSON  
Assistant Editor

This may be the last issue of the InterCOM as you know it. The InterCOM staff recently received word through the Humanities Team that Vice President of Instruction Dr. James Templer and Associate Vice President of General Education Dr. Andrew Nelson may not allow the printing of more than one issue of InterCOM next semester.

Instead, the administration wants the journalism courses to focus less on the production of the paper and more on newsgathering, interviewing, writing and editing.

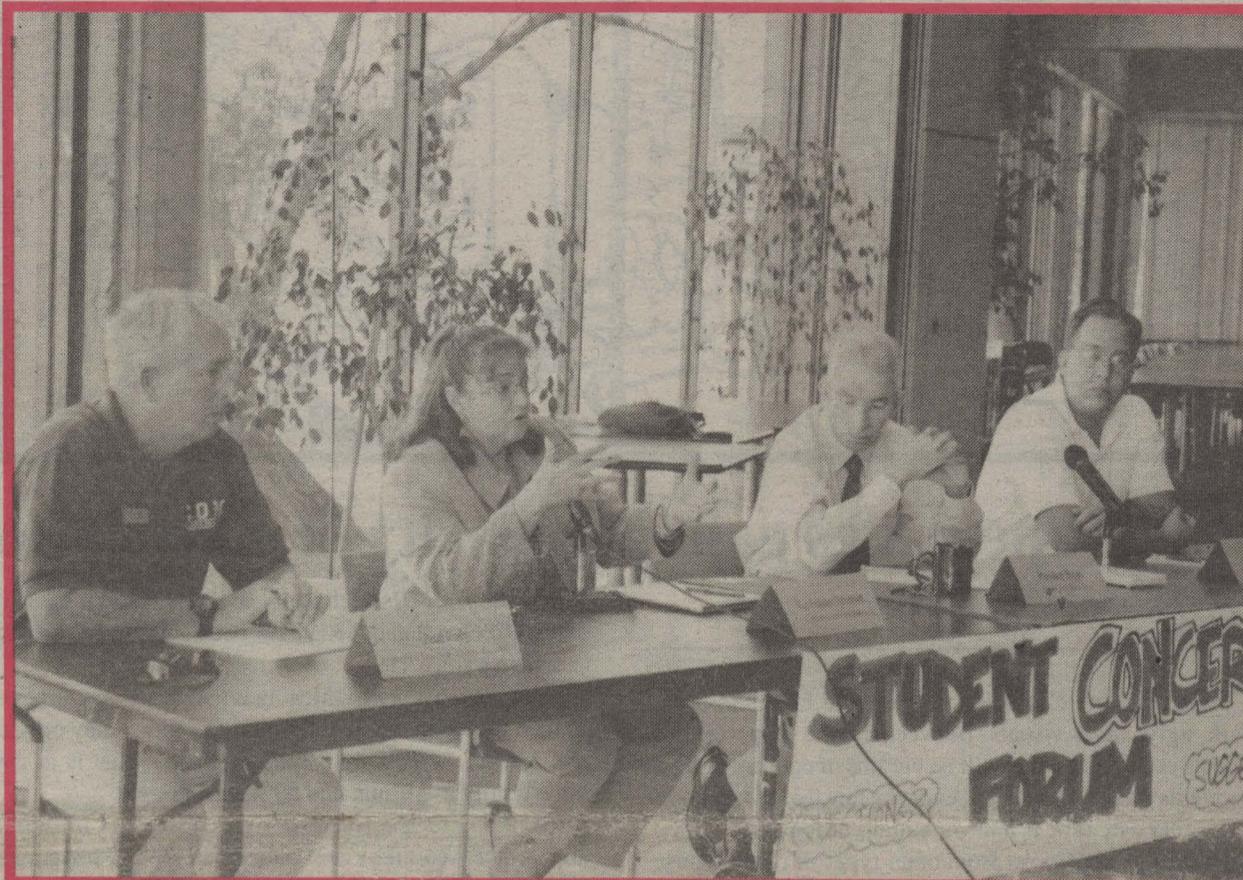
According to Nelson, the administration feels that the amount of commitment the newspaper class requires is what is keeping the enrollment low, and a reduction of the production process will entice more students to enroll. The administration also feels that the way journalism is structured now does not best serve students.

"Everything they want us to focus on is actually part of the production process, so we may as well have a printed issue," said InterCOM Managing Editor Michael Navarro.

The administration wants to begin using the online version of InterCOM, available at <<http://www.com.edu/intercom>>, to post the majority of students' articles. A major concern of the vice presidents is the cost of printing the paper.

At the beginning of the fall semester, the administration told InterCOM that the college would only pay for one printed issue. After hearing the news, the staff held a garage sale in October and sold ad space to pay for the costs of additional issues.

The current issue (December) is the only issue College of the Mainland paid for out of the Humanities Team budget this semester.



Panelists at the Student Concerns Forum held Nov. 20 in the COM Student Center (from left) Peter Early, director of Physical Plant; Pam Davenport, vice president of Student Services and Institutional Effectiveness; President Dr. Homer "Butch" Hayes; and Dr. Andrew Nelson, associate vice president of General Education, explain new college policies, such as the mandatory enrollment of 15 students in a class. (Photo by Jessica Robertson)

The staff began circulating a petition Nov. 17 to gain support for three printed issues per long semester.

Staff members created the petition requesting that students in journalism classes maintain the traditional three printed issues in addition to the online editions.

The petition included a statement that "the power of the printed word is the most valuable asset to any person

and institution" and that InterCOM "is a valuable asset to students, faculty and staff" of COM.

More than 200 students across various parts of the campus signed the petition in support of InterCOM and the journalism program. Several faculty members also have shown support for the printed newspaper.

See Students Page 7

## COM to host dual credit high school

By ALICE P. CAMPBELL  
Staff Reporter

Starting next fall, College of the Mainland will have a new high school program on campus for juniors and seniors interested in the petrochemical industry and industrial technology. The program will offer students a chance to earn an associate's degree in industrial technology, as well as a certificate in one of the certificate programs.

COM received a federal grant in October for \$700,000 from the U.S. Department of Education to create an industrial technology high school program on campus. Renea Campbell, director of K-12 Partnerships at COM, is now busy organizing the program.

Campbell held a meeting Nov. 18 in the Technical/Vocational Building to discuss the information with COM staff members and give more detailed plans.

The program is supposed to help high school students interested in the petrochemical industry advance into their field without taking duplicate classes and also to give them training and insight into the field.

Students will finish high school at COM with mainly dual credit courses in regular college-credit classes. They will attend these classes with other COM students to give

them the full experience of being in a college environment. For high school courses that can't be substituted with college courses for dual credit, certified high school teachers will be hired to teach the secondary-level courses here on campus. These courses include Algebra I and II and English III.

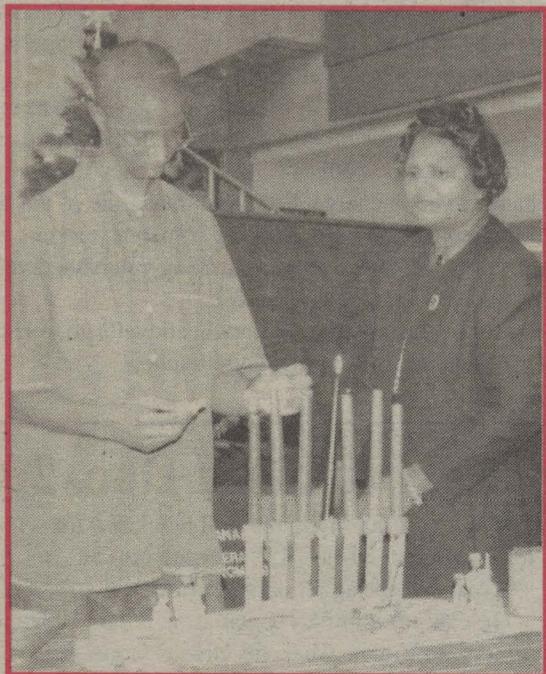
COM also held a curriculum meeting Dec. 12 with high-school level curriculum specialists and COM faculty to discuss the high school program's course requirements and eliminate repetitive classes so students won't take more classes than necessary. Tom English looked at the algebra curriculum; Dr. Greg Johnson, chemistry; Herman Trivilino, physics, and Dr. Gilchrist White, English.

"The goal is to get them through high school faster and get their associate (degree) faster," Campbell said.

To make the program as flexible as possible students will be able to create their own schedules.

However, students still will be enrolled at their own high schools and will graduate with their high school class; there will *not* be a COM industrial technology high school graduation. After high school graduation, the students will continue school at COM to earn a certificate and/or an associate's degree for an industrial technology career.

See COM Page 6



Lealand Kelly (left) and Tillie Henson, Library Circulation coordinator, light candles during the Kwanzaa celebration held Dec. 4. See related story on Page 7. (Photo by Phil Johnson)

## Tipping etiquette vital during holiday season

By JASON OLIVER  
Staff Reporter

Tipping is not a city in China.

Yes, tipping is an option, and certainly if you receive terrible service, not tipping also is an option. If you receive awful service, ask to talk to the manager. The manager can't fix the problem if he or she doesn't know about it. When a customer doesn't leave a tip, it only makes it worse for the next customer, who in turn, also will receive awful service.

But don't be so quick to assume that you had a bad server (waiter), when you may have had a good server at a bad time. A family emergency could be weighing on the server's mind.

Texas is among the many states that calculate a percentage of a server's sales as the server's tips. Therefore, a server's hourly wage is just over \$2, even lower than minimum wage. The obvious reasoning behind this is the belief that the public is educated in proper tipping etiquette. But with the failing economy, many people are shorting their servers.

Proper etiquette for tipping a food server is 15-20 percent of the total bill, and commonly it is the same for a cocktail server. For a bartender, the rate also is the same. Since most people begin at the bar and move to a table after a couple of drinks, they need to make sure they settle with the bartender before relocating to their table.

In many restaurants, employees such as busboys, hostesses and bartenders receive a tip pool. Tip pooling is yet another system used to take an estimated percentage of a server's sales and deduct it from the server's tips to distribute to the different employees. So, if a family has a \$100 dinner bill and only leaves a 10 percent tip, \$1 goes to the bartender (whether or not the customers had a drink), and \$1 goes to the busboys and hostesses. These are automatic deductions even before the government gets a chance to deduct taxes.

Essentially, the money a server walks out with at the end of a shift is that server's paycheck. Unless the server's paycheck contains tip pool for extra duties, a typical paycheck is no more than gas money.

Incomplete parties should not be seated until all members of the party are present. This will ensure that the server can get maximum use of the table.

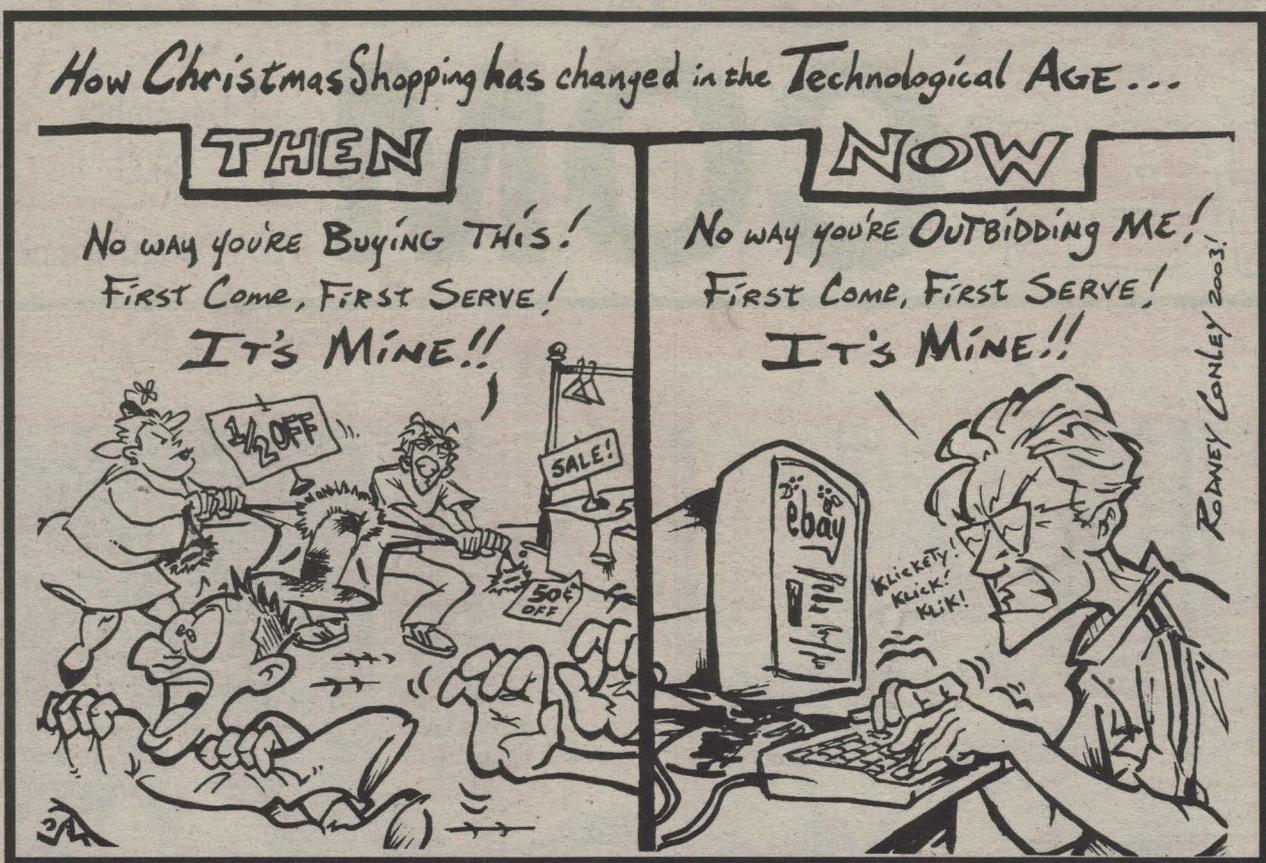
Also, if a party is having a good time talking, and consequently is spending enough time at the table that the server could have had another party at the table in that time, it is appropriate to tip the server again to compensate for the table. Most restaurants only give a server a certain number of tables, which makes every table vital and table-time highly valuable.

Finally, Christmas is a great time of the year to remember those who serve you frequently, but holiday stress often forces the worst out of people when they finally have a chance to be in charge. So forget the hassle of the mall and appreciate the hard work of someone serving you, but don't forget that the people serving you have families to provide a Christmas for, too.

For further information on tipping etiquette go to <<http://www.findalink.net/tippingetiquette.php>>.

### COM to close Dec. 20

College of the Mainland will be closed for winter break Dec. 20-Jan. 4. It reopens Jan. 5.  
Expanded spring registration runs Jan. 6-7.  
On-campus Saturday registration is Jan. 10 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Weekend classes begin Jan. 10, and weekday classes begin Jan. 12.  
Schedule changes and late registration will be available in the Student Center Jan. 12 and 13. It requires a \$25 dollar late fee.



## Date rape drugs gain popularity in club scene

By APRIL CLARDY  
Staff Reporter

Rape. The mere mention of the word brings to mind dark, ugly, angry visuals. Between 17 and 25 percent of female college students will be victims of date rape. Most incidents go unreported, but even the few that are reported show that date rape is a never ending problem.

Date rape is different from other types of rape because the victim knows her attacker and may even be dating him. In the past few years, there has been a growth in the number of rapes that involve the victim being drugged. Rohypnol and Gamma-Hydroxybutyrate, also known as GHB, are the major agents in the druggings.

First growing popular on the rave (an all-night dance

party known for DJs, techno music and rampant drug use) scene, Rohypnol and GHB have been gaining popularity at colleges since 1998.

What is even more frightening is that many people have no idea what either of these drugs are or what they can do to a person. Rohypnol is a potent sedative that is in the same family as Valium and 10 times stronger.

According to The National Women's Health Information Center Web site at <[www.4woman.gov](http://www.4woman.gov)>, Rohypnol's physical effects are noticeable between 15 and 30 minutes and range from loss of social inhibition to death.

Rohypnol is used in date rape situations because it can produce partial amnesia, causing the victim to black out and not remember what happened.

According to <[www.projectghb.org](http://www.projectghb.org)>, GHB was once used as a growth hormone stimulant for body building. In 1990, the Food and Drug Administration issued a warning for consumers to stop using GHB.

The side effects of GHB can be felt within 15 minutes and range from disorientation to coma. When ingested with alcohol, the effects can be life threatening. Without proper medical attention, the combination can be fatal.

Two characteristics make GHB so dangerous. One is that GHB is home-grown, or made by non-professionals in their own kitchens by mixing various chemicals, including floor stripper and drain cleaner.

As a result, there are differences in the purity, concentration, and potency of various mixtures. Another dangerous characteristic is that there is only a slight difference between the dosage that will produce intoxication effects and the amount that will induce harmful effects.

A liquid version of these drugs, especially Rohypnol, is being used to slip into unsuspecting women's drinks at nightclubs. After the drug takes effect, the woman is led to another location, away from the club and is assaulted.

A woman can protect herself from being drugged by staying alert to her environment. Not accepting open drinks from anyone she doesn't know is one of the best ways a woman can avoid being drugged. She should also never leave a drink unattended.

Rohypnol has been distributed illegally by drug dealers in these clubs. The drug is concealed in water bottles and sold by the capful. The price ranges from \$4-\$10 per serving. Possession of the original form of the drug leads to felony charges.

There have been recent cases in the Houston area involving date rape drugs in the club setting. According to the Houston Chronicle, approximately 1,000 of the 2,400 reported "date rape drug" cases in 1996 occurred in Texas.



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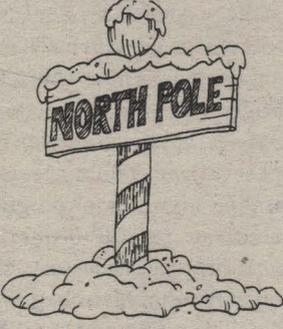
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## Confidence in jury selection questioned



Pearson  
Lubrano

Two months ago I reported to the Galveston County Courthouse on the Island in response to a jury summons. The summons advised the minimum age and citizenship requirement as well as that one can't have been convicted of theft or a felony. I don't have as much trouble with these as with the following requirements: 1) you must be of sound mind and good moral character; and 2) be able to read and write (in English).

How should I define "sound mind"? And what about people who, arguably, may not be totally of sound mind? And "good moral character"? Is someone determined to be of good moral character if a search reveals his or her name is not on the local sex offenders list? How about someone holding a "9 to 5" job, married with children, who may become "involved" with someone at work? Is that person less qualified to serve on a jury, especially a trial involving marital fidelity?

I didn't appreciate hearing a judge half-jokingly advise prospective jurors they are going to be "trusted" to determine for themselves if they are of sound mind. And I was both shocked and dismayed during the voir dire process (where prospective jurors are questioned) to hear the prosecuting attorney, in a lame attempt to promote participation, refer to the jury panel process and proceedings as "entertainment."

As for jury literacy, how about we replace the shallow, superficial voir dire process with the segment "Jay Walking" from the *Tonight Show* with Jay Leno? What better way for the officers of the court to be entertained and educated. It would be a better way for lawyers to get some idea of how sophisticated the 40 plus panel members might be, as all sides search for the all elusive "fair and impartial" jury.

And while we're pointing out foibles of the jury selection process, let's not neglect to look at other parts of the justice system.

We're told of tainted crime lab results, unqualified toxicologists, incompetent medical examiners and field technicians, as well as volatile "peace" officers. Apparently, certification doesn't necessarily equal qualification. Most alarming is that more than 130 ex-convicts nationwide, including 12 who were on Death Row, have been exonerated through new DNA evidence.

In the December issue of *Biography* magazine, DNA expert Barry Scheck estimates that thousands of wrongfully convicted, innocent people are behind bars. He also details unsettling lapses of technical knowledge by both the judge and the defense attorney in one particular case, as well as half a dozen other factors that often lead to the conviction of innocent people.

"Scheck emphasizes that relying on DNA alone isn't enough to ensure that innocent people won't be sent to jail," writes Paula Bernstein in *Biography*. She cites that "only about 20 percent of all serious felonies have any biological evidence where a DNA test can be used to prove guilt or innocence."

Rather than selling jury service as "entertainment" or rewarding grade school children (future jurors) with boom-boxes for naming the first U.S. president, we should examine our culture and educational system.

Our country's history reveals excessive attention to expediency as well as business and its bottom line.

We need to fund, support and pay attention to our children's education the same way we support contact sports and Hollywood. Were we to do so, there would be less need to rely on "entertaining" adults to participate on a jury, bribing children to know the most basic material, or forcing a growing number of people into prisons via unemployment and underemployment.



Music Professor James Heffel directs the COM Singers during the concert titled "Music for All Times—Music for Our Time" held Dec. 4 in the Fine Arts Recital Hall. Special guest Laura Kicklighter (left) accompanied the singers on the violoncello. (Photo by Tara Land)

## Choir concert features holiday favorites

By TARA LAND  
Staff Reporter

An important part of the community and of College of the Mainland is the fine arts department. The plays, bands and choirs entertain not only the COM community but also the surrounding communities.

On Dec. 4 the COM Singers and the COM Studio Group did just that. The Recital Hall in the Fine Arts Building was filled with siblings, parents, spouses, friends and community members to hear the two groups sing.

Choir director and music Professor James Heffel chose "Music for All Times—Music for Our Time" as the title for the concert. He included such classics as "Ave Maria" and Christmas favorites of all ages, such as "O Come Rejoicing" and "Carol of the Bells." Also included were pieces dealing with events today.

One particular piece, "God Grant Me to be Silent," spoke to Heffel. Of it he said, "You could have knocked me over with a feather when I read this piece." With all of our busyness we need to sit and be still, Heffel said, adding that we need to take time to enjoy life and not always be in a rush.

"Who are the Brave" was a piece that honors the men and women who have risked their lives in the war.

The COM Singers' last song, "There Will Be a New

Day," had the message that no matter what has happened today, we should cheer up because tomorrow is a new day. The choir received a standing ovation as they moved off the risers and into the aisles of the Recital Hall where they serenaded the audience.

Pianist M.J. Milford accompanied the COM Singers. Heffel said Milford, who has worked with the singers for 10 years, knows what Heffel is going to do before he does. Special guest Laura Kicklighter also accompanied the COM Singers on the violoncello for "O Music," and "God Grant Me to be Silent."

After a 10 minute intermission the COM Studio Group performed. The arrangements for their pieces were a little bit more jazzy and involved more Christmas songs.

COM student Tracey Suarez sang the solo listed in the program as "The Christmas Song," but otherwise known as "Chestnuts Roasting on an Open Fire." COM students Paulo Castillo and Jenna Contenta entertained the audience with a duet of "Anything You Can Do" from the musical *Annie Get Your Gun*. COM graduate Relana Gerami performed the last solo, "White Christmas." The audience clearly enjoyed all performances because the COM Studio Group also received a standing ovation.

Anyone who would like to be a part of either the COM Singers or the Studio Group should contact Heffel at (409) 938-1211 or toll free 1 (888) 258-8859, Ext. 200.

## 1980s toy lines back on shelves, television

By MICHAEL NAVARRO  
Managing Editor

When you were growing up, did you spend countless hours watching television cartoons such as *Masters of the Universe*, *Transformers* or *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*? Did you also re-enact the episode you just saw with your action figures? If so, you can now share these same cartoons with your own children.

All three cartoons are back in a big way. New updated cartoons of *Masters of the Universe* and *Transformers* are currently airing Saturday nights at 6 and 6:30 p.m., respectively, on Cartoon Network. New episodes of *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* are airing Saturday mornings at 9:30 a.m. on UPN.

All three cartoons revisit the same characters and settings, but do not necessarily follow the original storylines. However, their stories are more sophisticated and targeted more to adults. The new *Teenage*

*Mutant Ninja Turtles* cartoon is closely based on the original comic rather than the cartoon series.

The most drastic change is in the new *Transformers* cartoon, *Transformers Armada*. In this new cartoon, known for its robots that transform into vehicles, many of the characters are more modern than they were in the classic series. *Masters of the Universe* stays truest to its original series with few noticeable differences.

All three properties also have released new updated toy lines to accompany the cartoons. For those who were children when the toy lines first came out, both the *Masters of the Universe* and *Transformers* lines have reissued exact replicas of their original '80s toys.

And if that is not enough to satisfy you, each line has a blitz of additional merchandise, such as comic books, video games, T-shirts, bedroom sets and anything else you could possibly imagine.

Watch for more '80s toy revivals because G.I. Joe, Care Bears and Strawberry Shortcake are also in stores.

News/Features

## Biology professor receives several prestigious awards

By APRIL CLARDY  
Staff Reporter

College of the Mainland biology Professor Emmeline Dodd has led an extraordinary life. This mother of one has received distinguished alumni awards from both the University of Houston-Clear Lake and Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches. She has been with COM for 31 years and truly loves the school.

Dodd was an active volunteer with The Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo from 1991-1994, where she raised \$50,000 in scholarships each year. She is now an honorary member.

Recalling her school days, Dodd stated: "I loved school so much that I went for 35 years straight; I never skipped a class even through college."

It was at Stephen F. Austin in Dr. Gibson's biology class that Dodd realized she wanted to be a teacher. "He loved the subject so much that his love of biology came through to his students."

After realizing she wanted to be a teacher, Dodd was so thrilled about everything she was learning that she went home and taught her younger sisters everything each day. "They hated me for it," she added with a laugh. So, it wasn't much of coincidence that her sisters became teachers, she said, adding, "Teachers are born, not made."

Dodd earned both a bachelor's and a master's degree from Stephen F. Austin, and another master's degree from the University of Houston-Clear Lake.

Dodd taught at South Houston High School before becoming a college professor.

In comparing the two, she said, "Teaching high school is different from teaching college; high school students don't want to be in class and college students are inter-



**Biology Professor Emmeline Dodd tends to plants in the greenhouse in the Math Science Building. Dodd has received many awards in her teaching career, including being voted Outstanding Teacher of the Year four times. She also was named one of 10 Piper Professors in 1998.** (Photo by Jessica Robertson)

ested in being here."

While at COM, she served as president for the Texas Community College Teachers Association, where she was one of only five presidents over a 50-year period.

In 1982 Dodd initiated a student-selected Outstanding Teacher of the Year award. Students have named Dodd Outstanding Teacher of the Year four times.

After winning that award in 1998, Dodd was selected as one of the 10 Piper Professors in Texas. The Piper Professors are chosen from a pool of outstanding university

and college professors in Texas and are awarded \$2,500 along with a pin and certificate.

The biggest reward Dodd gets from being an educator is having her students acknowledge what they have learned from her. "When these students come up and thank me, that is the biggest reward that I could receive."

Dodd, who plans to retire after next summer, has remained a favorite teacher for many students. The energy and love that she puts into her teaching come through to her students, which adds a unique quality to her classes.

## SAB president enjoys COM atmosphere

By JESSICA ROBERTSON  
Assistant Editor

Prospective students consider many factors when choosing a college. Some base their decision on a field of study, while others select a school their parents attended.

When considering College of the Mainland, Lucero "Abby" Amaro cited convenience as the main attraction.

"My mom basically picked it for me since we only live five minutes away," Amaro said. "It's close to home, and

the tuition is really reasonable."

Amaro, who serves as president of the Student Activities Board, has found more than just convenience at COM.

"I ran for SAB president because I thought it would be a really cool position to have," Amaro said. "Rachel (Roberts, former SAB president) was leaving COM last semester when I was SAB historian, and that gave me the opportunity to run."

As the new SAB president, Amaro has initiated large-scale events for the school and community, such as the Chinese Golden Dragon Acrobat show in September.

"I wanted to have a big show for the students, employees and for the community," Amaro explained. "Seeing all the students and faculty enjoying themselves at our events makes it all worthwhile."

She also plans to have the Kuumba House Dance Theatre perform in February for Black History Month.

While managing a full schedule of classes and her obligations as SAB president, Amaro also manages to find time for leisure activities by using the pool room in the Student Center and going to the Gym.

Amaro, who has attended COM for a year, says professors, such as developmental studies Professor Catherine Moran and math Professor Rose Shirey, as well as tutors in the math lab have helped her to achieve her goals.

"Mrs. Shirey was a really good math teacher. She explained things and made me really understand math. I loved her sense of humor, too."

Amaro also credits SAB sponsor Maryann Urick for her success at COM. She calls Urick "an outstanding person" and says that she is grateful for her support.

Amaro is considering a major in real estate and also is interested in taking drama courses. After she finishes at COM, she would like to attend the University of Houston main campus, where she has lots of friends. Her mother, however, has different plans for her.

"She says the day I leave COM is the day she dies. She wants me to be here forever."

## Lynch not only soldier deserving spotlight

By TARA LAND  
Staff Reporter

The ambush of the Army's 507th Maintenance Company in Iraq, on March 23 was deadly. Of the 33 soldiers who made a wrong turn into the Iraqi town of Nasiriyah, 11 were killed and six were captured. The deadly battle produced what the media is calling the war's most enduring hero, a West Virginia teen-ager named Jessica Lynch.

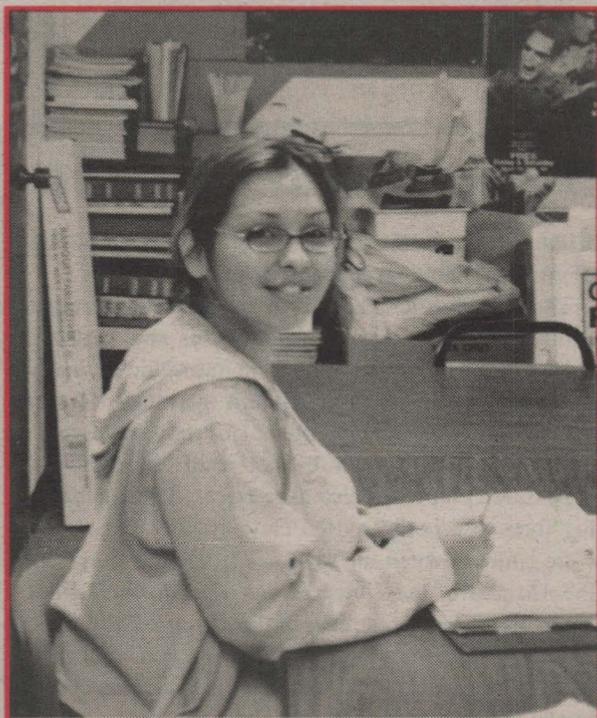
The nation has seen Lynch's rescue recounted all over the news and has watched her "made for TV movie" that aired Nov. 9. Not only Americans, but people in other countries are reading her book, *I am a Soldier, Too. The Jessica Lynch Story*, whether for a school assignment or to get more insight into what Lynch may have had to endure.

The nation aches for Lynch, but what about the her five comrades who were captured, or the 11 killed in the line of duty? What about their stories? Are they not heroes just as much as Jessica Lynch?

We don't read about Patrick Miller, who is responsible for saving Lynch's life, or Shoshana Johnson, who was shot in both legs and was a prisoner of war. How about Lori Ann Piestewa, who was the first American Indian female killed in combat, or Sgt. Rodrigo Gonzalez, who was the first casualty in the Iraqi war? Gonzalez was buried in Savinas Hidalgo, Mexico, with full military honors and was made a U.S. citizen after his death.

In Lynch's interview with Diane Sawyer, which aired on ABC Nov. 12, a lot of information was shared and the truth was told. There were no wit-

See Media Page 5



**SAB President Lucero "Abby" Amaro works in the SAB room in the Gym. In her first semester as president, Amaro has initiated large-scale events for the college community.** (Photo by Jessica Robertson)

# Media focuses its attention on Lynch

Continued from Page 4

nesses to what happened to Lynch because everyone else in her vehicle (part of a convoy) died. Lynch, herself, was not a very good witness because she was unconscious most of the time. The government and media decided to fill in the blanks on their own.

According to the Sawyer interview, the stories of Lynch fighting until she lost consciousness and shooting several Iraqis are untrue. In reality she said she huddled, prayed and did not fire a single shot since her gun had jammed.

On the other hand, Miller openly admits he was a lousy marksman, failed his first marksmanship test and hadn't fired a weapon in seven months. The story he tells has not been heard by many people. In the article "Patrick Miller—Jessica Lynch's Hero" found on <www.CBS.com>, Miller tells how he saved his own life as well as the lives of the others that day. "One guy jumped up to where I could see him, and he had a mortar round in his hand, getting ready to drop it in the tube," Miller relates. "I raised my rifle up and shot, and he fell over."

After his first shot, Miller's gun jammed, just like Lynch's. He said he pounded it on his hand after every shot to get the next bullet loaded. Doing that several times until he did not see any more Iraqis is what probably saved Lynch's and the other POWs' lives. Miller, who was in a different vehicle from Lynch but in the same convoy, said in the article: "It's good to know that you actually did something to save other people's lives, but for me, as far as people saying that I'm a hero, I don't feel that I'm a hero. I feel that I was doing my job as a soldier."

Johnson, a POW who was in the same vehicle as Miller, said: "He did an amazing thing; he saved our lives. If that mortar had hit that vehicle we were underneath, we'd be gone. And so would Jessica, because it would have been a chain reaction. It had all that fuel; we'd be dead."

Johnson and Lynch were wounded in the same battle. They were both captured on the same day, both wounded severely by the Iraqi soldiers, but Lynch gets all the fame. According to "A Tale of Two Soldiers," found at <www.bet.com>, Johnson was shot through both legs and was held prisoner for 21 days. She returned home but without the media flurry and official hype that her friend and



Two members of the U.S. Army honor guard fold the flag presented to the family of Rodrigo Gonzalez, the first casualty of the war in Iraq. His funeral was held in Savinas Hidalgo, Mexico. Gonzalez, a Mexican national, was the first person buried with full honors by the U.S. military outside the United States. This funeral also was the first attended by a military general. Gonzalez's brothers Ricardo (left inset), Rolando (right inset) and Ramiro (not pictured) also serve in the Army. (Photo courtesy Major Richard Crusan)

comrade-in-arms Jessica Lynch enjoyed.

Johnson walks with a limp and is unable to stand for long periods of time due to her injuries. With so many soldiers killed and wounded in Iraq, shouldn't all receive the same media attention? And in the case of Johnson, doesn't she deserve the same monetary benefits as Lynch?

According to "A Tale ...," Johnson is receiving 30 percent disability benefits for her injuries, whereas Lynch is receiving 80 percent. That amounts to a \$600 to \$700 difference per month. The Rev. Jesse Jackson, who plans to plead Johnson's case at the White House, the Pentagon and to members of Congress, is quoted in "A Tale ..." as saying, "Here's a case of two women, same (unit), same war, everything about their service commitment and their risk is equal .... Yet, there's an enormous contrast between how the military has handled these two cases."

In the article "Reading Between the Lines: Saving Private Johnson" found at <www.africana.com>, Amy Alexander writes, "The canonization of Lynch is, I suppose, understandable, given the extent of her injuries, and the fact that she is the rare woman soldier." However, is that enough reason to give Lynch more disability funds than another "rare woman soldier"?

Is this a case of discrimination, racism or favoritism? The public may not know the truth about why Johnson receives less money, but now we know that she does.

Miller, Johnson and all the soldiers who have fought, died and been wounded for America deserve the nation's attention just as much as Lynch does. The book deals, television movies and articles should not be just about Lynch but should tell the story of each individual hero, because they are all *heroes*.

# Notorious rapper's supposed death surrounded by speculation

By ALICE P. CAMPBELL  
Staff Reporter

Ever since Tupac Shakur's untimely death Sept. 13, 1996, there has been speculation that he is not really dead. With the release of the movie *Tupac: Resurrection* Nov. 16, it seems that the circumstances only get stranger.

In 1996 Shakur released two albums. The first was a double CD titled *All Eyes On Me*, which was released Feb. 13, 1996. On Sept. 7, 1996, Shakur was shot in Las Vegas as he was leaving the highly publicized Mike Tyson and Evander Holyfield fight. Counting the day he was shot, Shakur survived six days and died on the seventh day, eerily on Friday the 13th. No funeral was held, and supposedly Shakur was cremated the next day. On Nov. 7 Shakur's CD, *Don Kalluminati: The Seven Day Theory*, was released under the alias Makavelli.

The alias Makavelli on *The Seven Day Theory* album refers to Niccolo Machiavelli, a 16th century Italian philosopher who believed in faking one's death in order to deceive one's enemies and become powerful. In the first song released from the album, titled "Hail Mary," he raps about killing his enemies, and in one line Shakur refers to himself as a ghost.

The video for "Hail Mary," tells a spooky story of a spirit coming back from the dead to kill his enemies. This makes one wonder if Shakur was sending out a message to his enemies. His main enemy at the time; rapper Biggie Smalls, died March 9, 1997, six months after Shakur's supposed death.

Six other Shakur albums have been released since *The*

*Seven Day Theory*, along with the recent release of the soundtrack to *Resurrection*. Several other rap artists' albums also feature Shakur. In many of the songs released after the rapper's "death," he raps about already being dead and being in heaven.

One has to wonder why someone would write songs, especially enough to fit on six albums, about being dead already. It has been rumored that on recent albums, Shakur makes references to tragedies such as Columbine and 9/11, but no one can give the specific names of these songs.

There have been explanations deemed valid as to how a dead rapper can produce six albums about his death before he's dead. In the documentary "Biggie & Tupac," released in 2002 about the deaths of Shakur and Smalls, Shakur said in an interview that he received a prophecy that he was going to die, which would explain why many of his later songs are about death.

As far as the enormous amount of newly released recorded material after his death, those close to him say that Shakur basically lived in the studio during his last days, which is why he's had so many albums released since his death.

Some things still don't add up, such as Shakur's autopsy photo. According to <tupacnet.org>, the photo was featured in the book *The Killing of Tupac Shakur*, by Cathy Scott. The picture is hard to validate since only a profile of Shakur's body is seen and there is no evidence of the prominent "Thug Life" tattoo that is on Shakur's stomach. The black and white picture's very poor quality makes it difficult to tell whether or not it really is Shakur.

The connections with the number seven are too many

to be a coincidence. But many say that if the number seven were a sign that he is coming back, he would have come back in the seventh year since his death, which would have been Sept. 13 of this year. But with the release of *Resurrection*, it is possible Shakur would not have wanted to foul up the success of the movie, which brought in \$4.6 million within its first weekend of Nov. 16.

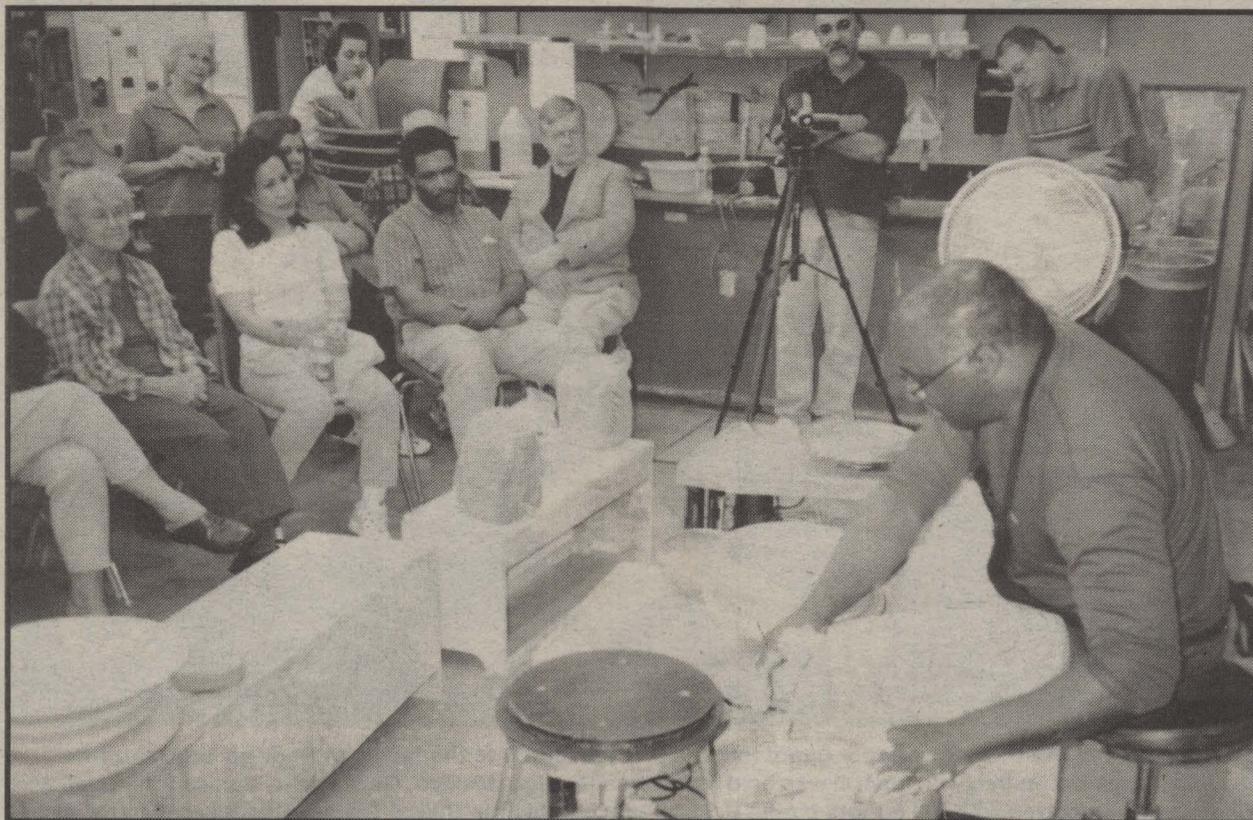
Shakur's album sales have been huge since his death, doubling the average sales of his albums from 3 million to 6 million copies. Newsweek reported that the six albums since his death have grossed more than \$40 million, and that soon a Makavelli clothing line will debut.

If the rapper is dead, it seems that the music industry is capitalizing on his death. The *Resurrection* soundtrack features a mixture of some unreleased tracks by Shakur, as well as some mixes of his vocals along with rapper Eminem (the producer of the album) and rapper 50 Cent. Before most of the public was aware of the filming of *Resurrection*, 50 Cent and Eminem had already remade Shakur's song "Hail Mary" in which 50 Cent raps about Shakur coming back from the dead.

Even the movie title, *Tupac: Resurrection*, perpetuates the idea that he isn't dead. The speculations have made Shakur more popular than ever and opened the eyes of the world to his legacy. MTV's *Tupac: Resurrection* special called Shakur the "Elvis of hip-hop," which is fitting, since he is No. 8 on Forbes magazine's richest deceased celebrities list.

But looking at the facts, the strange coincidences and the mysterious messages in Shakur's music, one could easily conclude that Shakur faked his death.

## Campus Life



Texas Tech University (Lubbock) Fine Arts Professor James C. Watkins holds a pottery demonstration Nov. 10. "The longer you practice, the better you start feeling the clay, instead of it feeling you," he said. His pottery and 60-pound double-walled cauldron were on display in November. (Photo by Pearson Lubrano)

## Workshop promotes creative exploration of art

By PEARSON LUBRANO  
Staff Reporter

"Sometimes it's very important to get closer," said Tracey McLaren, a former art student at College of the Mainland. "The farther away, the more distorted your (view) because of the shape of your eye. Sometimes it helps to close one eye." McLaren referred to how she drew a big-bellied man in his 50s or 60s named "Henry." Henry, the model, was seated on a raised wood platform, under soft incandescent lighting in the Fine Arts Building.

McLaren was one of more than 15 people who participated in this overnight event known as "Art Attack," held Friday night, Nov. 14.

The 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. event was inspired by art Professor Mark Greenwalt's time as a student at Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches. He thought it would be great to recreate an exciting, inspiring, fun atmosphere, similar to his time spent at SFA's 24-hour art studio.

This was COM's second Art Attack. Admission was free and open to any student, faculty, staff or member of the community. Anyone could simply walk in and look around, or participate if they wished.

A mother, Tierni Sager, and her 13-year-old son, Morton, came by during the intermission of the COM Arena Theatre's *Born Yesterday*. They came to try some free-handed paintbrushing on a 4 to 8 foot canvas. Nearby, McLaren and six other people drew or painted a likeness of the model on their own notepads or canvasses.

## COM adds industrial technology degree

Continued from Page 1

Students also will work on portfolios and resumes as well as go on group field trips designed to prepare them for jobs in the petrochemical field. Job shadowing and internship opportunities at companies in the industrial technology field also will be available.

BP Industries is depending on COM to supply the company with employees for the next 10 years as the last generation of employees begins to retire. Consequently, BP will have job opportunities for graduates of the program.

Campbell said the industrial technology degree will be added so that graduates of the program will have more than a certificate. Employees with degrees in the petrochemical field make more money and have better advancement opportunities than those with just certificates.

In the adjoining classroom, adjunct art instructor Joe Clark demonstrated printmaking. Participants worked with wood, metal or clay—painting, printmaking or sculpting.

The room with the model Henry was relatively quiet. In the background one could hear gentle, soothing classical music from a radio, as well as the distant, steady sawing and filing of metal sheets from the other room.

Several students who were painting on their 8 by 10 inch wood panels often painted over their pictures, wanting to try a different image—or engage in random brush strokes, not unlike young children. Other students, such as Virginia Murello, in Greenwalt's Drawing 1 class and Mona Marshall's photography class, preferred to stick to one image, seeing it to its completion. Murello said she's worked with pencil, ink and charcoal so far and that ink is her favorite because "it's harder to work with, more fun." And as one might guess, Greenwalt makes room for both of these two seemingly opposite approaches, in both his classroom and the Art Attack.

Greenwalt indicates that the creative process *can* be about simple exploration, not always about having a specific goal in mind. His message is that art is as much about a work in progress as it is about anything else.

Greenwalt invited all who wanted to work on the 4 to 8 foot canvas to do so, advising them that "the goal for that piece there is to not finish it." Someone replied, "Wow! If the goal's not to finish it, then we just can't lose with that, right?" This was followed by laughter, and he reassuringly replied in a calm, warm tone, "Can't lose."

Campbell said the program hopes to target the seven school districts in the COM service area (La Marque, Texas City, Hitchcock, Santa Fe, Friendswood, Clear Creek and Dickinson) to get 100 students enrolled in the program by fall 2004. After the first year, expected enrollment is 200 students a year for four consecutive years.

In February, applications will be distributed to high schools within the COM service area. The deadline to turn them in is Feb. 27. Students will turn in their applications to their school districts which will screen them in March. Those applicants who pass the screening will be interviewed at COM in April to be selected for the program.

For more information about the program, contact Campbell at (409) 938-1211 or toll free 1 (888) 8859, Ext. 110, or visit the COM Web site at <[www.com.edu](http://www.com.edu)>.

## Charities of athletes lack media coverage

Editor's note: This is the third part of a three-part series concerning the media's impact on sports.

By JASON OLIVER  
Staff Reporter

It seems that everybody agrees that bad behavior in sports is a problem that is out of control. But is the media making it worse by focusing on the bad behavior?

If the argument is that the media has an obligation to report the news, good or bad, why is there more emphasis on athletes' bad behavior? Shouldn't the overwhelming number of athletes that give back to their community be held in the spotlight for their good sportsmanship? The press focuses on negative incidents, but many athletes are doing great things for their communities.

Last year in the NBA playoffs, 13-year-old Natalie Gilbert was chosen to sing the national anthem and forgot the words in front of 19,000 fans in Dallas. Maurice Cheeks, coach for the visiting team, strolled over to the young girl, put his arm around her and started singing, thereby inspiring the whole crowd to sing in harmony. The NBA could not buy better publicity, but this selfless act was soon forgotten.

It is not uncommon to see the media exploiting a clip of kids talking trash to each other while playing basketball, no doubt impersonating their favorite NBA players.

Maybe instead there should have been some exposure of Toronto Raptor's star, Vince Carter, who founded the Embassy of Hope Foundation, which encourages young people to follow their dreams. And how about the "Read to Achieve" program that has NBA players going to schools during the year and reading to students?

How do professional athletic associations promote the enormous amounts of community service being provided without sounding selfish or egotistical? One example of a positive role model in the NFL is Michael McCrary who formed "Mac's Miracle Fund." He donated \$100,000 to the Maryland Special Olympics, the largest grant ever given to the Special Olympics by an athlete or entertainer.

Another positive example is Keyshawn Johnson, recently released by the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, who played host to 140 youths last Thanksgiving for dinner. Sadly, incidents like these don't get the publicity they deserve.

A positive influence in the NHL is Darren McCarty of the Detroit Red Wings. He started the McCarty Cancer Foundation to raise awareness of multiple myeloma (malignant tumor of the bone marrow), improve the quality of life for myeloma patients and work toward a prevention and a cure.

Probably one of the more well-known charities set up by a professional athlete is the Tiger Woods Foundation, which offers positive opportunities to underprivileged youths. Emphasis is focused on the importance of parental involvement and responsibility to their children.

Maybe the question should be, who is holding the media accountable for creating a negative stereotype of the professional athlete when the vast majority of athletes are vital parts of their community? The media is a teaching tool; unfortunately, it is helping to teach today's youth the wrong characteristics of sportsmanship. For more information go to <<http://www.ESPN.com>>.



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# Teen-age guitarist reminiscent of greats

By JESSICA ROBERTSON  
Assistant Editor

This fall InterCOM will have featured three talented up and coming musical acts which defy conventional trends. Blues guitarist Joe Bonamassa was showcased in the October issue, and pop-rock band The Waking Hours was featured in November.

Guitar prodigy Shannon Curfman is another artist who has rejected the more popular overproduced sound of mainstream radio for a mixture of blues, rock and R&B.

At only 18 years old, Curfman already has accomplished quite a bit in her career. According to her press release, she made her stage debut at age 7 in a local talent show in her hometown of Fargo, N.D., and was singing in local coffeehouses by age 10.

During this time, Curfman convinced her parents to move to Minneapolis, Minn., where she would have more opportunities than in her small hometown. There she met fellow teen-age musician and Fargo native Jonny Lang. His band at the time, Kid Jonny Lang and the Big Bang, was releasing an independent record and touring the area.

Lang inspired Curfman to learn guitar and study blues musicians such as Robert Johnson.

In April 1999 Curfman released the independent album *Loud Guitars, Big Suspicions*, which featured collaborations with Lang and veteran songwriters Kevin Bowe and

Bruce McCabe. Curfman co-wrote seven of the 11 songs on her debut album, which also includes covers of Sheryl Crow's "Hard to Make a Stand" and The Band's "The Weight."

The first single from her album, "True Friends," received airplay from local radio stations, and eventually, 32 stations across the country added the independent release to their playlists. Curfman's natural talent and songwriting ability made record labels take notice.

She received several offers and signed with Arista Records at age 14. *Loud Guitars, Big Suspicions* was rereleased on Arista in September 1999.

Critics instantly compared Curfman to legends such as Janis Joplin and Bonnie Raitt as well as her own inspirations, Lang and Crow. *Loud Guitars, Big Suspicions* is as diverse an album as Curfman's own musical tastes.

Yearning ballads, "Never Enough" and "If You Change Your Mind," showcase an emotional and vocal maturity beyond Curfman's age. More uptempo songs, such as "Few and Far Between" and "Playing with Fire," allow listeners to hear Curfman's blues-inspired guitar solos.

After completing a nationwide tour in support of her album, Curfman took a short break and decided to leave Arista. According to her official Web site, she is currently signed with Epic Records and working on a new album.

For more information on Curfman, visit <<http://www.shannoncurfman.com>>.



**Eighteen-year-old guitar prodigy Shannon Curfman is currently working on a follow-up to her critically acclaimed first album, *Loud Guitars, Big Suspicions*. Curfman has been compared to legends such as Janis Joplin and Bonnie Raitt.** (Press Photo)

# Kwanzaa celebration enlightens students of tradition, culture

By TARA LAND  
Staff Reporter

Kwanzaa is a non-religious African-American holiday that celebrates the family, the community and the culture. It is a celebration that is held for seven days, Dec. 26-Jan. 1.

Kwanzaa began in 1966, when Dr. Manulana Karenga, professor and chairman of black studies at California State University, searched for a way to bring the black community together. He founded a cultural organization, US (we, the people), and started to research African "first fruit" (harvest) celebrations. Several different harvest celebrations, such as the Ashanti, the Karenga and the Zulu, form

the basis of Kwanzaa.

The name Kwanzaa comes from the phrase "mantunda ya kwanza," which means "first fruits" in Swahili.

Those who celebrate Kwanzaa do so in their own way, but celebrations often include singing, dancing, African drum playing, storytelling, poetry reading and a large traditional meal. (Of course, what would any celebration be without food?)

College of the Mainland held a celebration Dec. 4 in the Student Center during College Hour (12:30-1:20 p.m.). Approximately 50 students, faculty and staff attended.

Janiece Thomas, president of the Organization of African American Culture, started the program by welcom-

ing everyone to the celebration.

Leroy August, COM counselor, gave a call to the elders to remember the elders from the East, West, North and South.

Before the event began, COM student Ross White, asked, "What is Kwanzaa? Is it a Jewish holiday?" Patricia Jackson, director of COM Career Services, answered his question by explaining the seven symbols of Kwanzaa. While she discussed each principle, one of seven COM students lighted one of the seven candles.

On each of the seven nights, the family gathers, and a child lights a candle on the Kinara (candleholder). Then one of the seven principles is discussed.

The first principle is Unity (Umoja)-(oo-MO-jah), which means to strive for and maintain unity in the family, community, nation and race.

The next principle is Self-determination (kujichagulia)-(koo-gee-cha-goo-LEE-yah), by which people define themselves, name themselves, create for themselves and speak to themselves.

Collective work and Responsibility (Ujima)-(oo-GEE-mah) is the third principle, which means to build and maintain the community and solve the brothers', sisters' and the community's problems together.

The fourth principle is Cooperative Economics (Ujamaa)-(oo-JAH-mah), which instructs the community of the need to build and maintain the stores, shops and other businesses and to profit from them as a community.

The fifth principle is Purpose (Nia)-(nee-YAH), which means the collective job of building and developing the community in order to restore the people to their traditional greatness.

The sixth principle, Creativity (Kuumba)-(koo-OOM-bah), means to always do as much as can be done, in order to leave the community more beautiful and beneficial than how it was inherited.

The seventh and last principle is Faith (Imani)-(ee-MAH-nee), which means the people should believe with all their hearts in their own people, parents, teachers, leaders, and the righteousness and victory of the struggle.

These seven principles are values of African culture which contribute to building and reinforcing the black community's culture.

After the principles were explained, Annette Haynes, COM student and singer/songwriter, entertained the audience with "Cultural Expression." The celebration ended with all enjoying a feast featuring salad, meatballs, chicken hot wings, fruit trays, vegetables and peach cobbler.

## Students fight to save printed newspaper

Continued from Page 1

"The printed version of InterCOM has been instrumental in the development and success of all the Spanish programs at COM," Spanish Professor Rafael Naranjo said. "As a community college, we cannot expect our hard-working students to buy a computer to read the paper online. We owe it to our hard-working students to have a paper they can take home, to work or other places to read at their leisure. Not having a printed version will be a disservice to the college."

Faculty from other teams agree with Naranjo and recognize the value of a printed newspaper.

"I think the InterCOM has been a viable part of COM for years, and it's given vital information to students that they would not get any place else," said music Professor Sparky Koerner.

Although students and faculty may value the printed newspaper, a school newspaper is not part of the college's vision and therefore, is expendable.

The vision statement, found on Page 8 of the 2003-2004 catalog, states that COM "will be a valued and vital community partner striving to enrich our expanding community and prepare our students to live and work in a diverse and global environment."

The second and largest concern of the administration is the program enrollment in classes, specifically in journalism.

At the Student Concerns Forum held Nov. 20 in the

Student Center, President Dr. Homer "Butch" Hayes addressed the college's debt and explained the new rule that requires 15 students enrolled in each class.

"Saying that we have to have 15 students in a class helps us get there, makes us more efficient and lowers our cost," Hayes said.

Traditionally, COM has offered one beginning journalism class (COMM 2311, Newsgathering and Writing I) and four pooled advanced journalism courses. Four newspaper publication labs are also offered. Meeting times for the labs are arranged between instructor and student.

InterCOM adviser Astrid H. Lowery has been informed that a total of 15 students must be enrolled in a combination of beginning, advanced and lab classes for the program to continue.

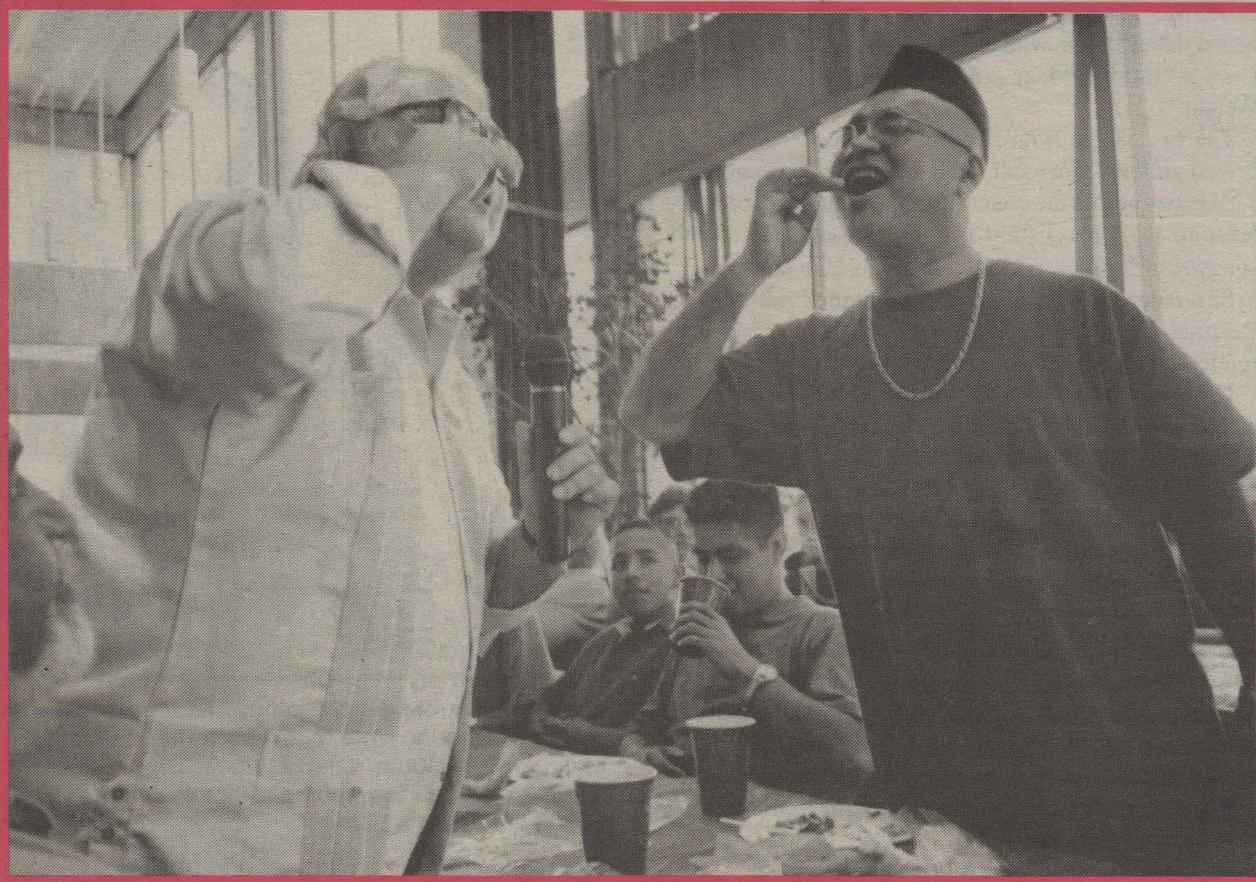
However, if 30 students enroll in classes and labs, Lowery will only have to teach three English classes and produce the newspaper.

If the enrollment for journalism classes is less than 30, Lowery will have to teach four English classes along with one combined class of beginning, advanced and lab students.

Lowery said the administration feels her salary is more cost effective if she teaches more students.

In reaction to the administration's decision, the InterCOM staff has scheduled a meeting Dec. 18 with Templer to discuss the future of the printed paper.

## What's Happening



COM history professor, Dr. Manuel Urbina (left), and Spanish Professor Rafael Naranjo sample grasshoppers Urbina brought from Oaxaca, Mexico, during the Multicultural Lunchfest and International Student Appreciation Day held Nov. 18 in the Student Center. The event was sponsored by the SAB. (Photo by Daniel K. Lai)

## Luncheon celebrates different cultures

By DANIEL K. LAI  
Copy Editor

Students, faculty and staff of several ethnic backgrounds were honored at the annual College of the Mainland Student Activities Board Multicultural Lunchfest and International Student Appreciation Day. Roughly 45 students attended the luncheon Nov. 18, held in the Student Center Sun Room during College Hour (12:30-1:20 p.m.).

In order to take part in the potluck luncheon, participants had to bring a dish from the country of their ethnicity to share with other attendees.

This year students, faculty and staff had to write the name of their ethnic country on a nametag supplied by the SAB. Some of the countries represented included: Poland, Mexico, China, Venezuela, Iran, Columbia, the United States, Russia and the Czech Republic.

The foreign delicacies adorning the buffet table ranged from fajitas and tamales from Mexico to hot dogs and buffalo wings from the United States and grape leaves with stuffing and eggplant dip alongside pork roast from the Czech Republic. A wide range of desserts including cakes, cookies and pumpkin rolls complemented the meal, but nothing stood out more than the two edible grasshoppers COM history professor, Dr. Manuel Urbina, brought from Oaxaca, Mexico, for COM Spanish Professor Rafael

Naranjo to eat with him.

Before enjoying the grasshoppers, Urbina and Naranjo took time to explain that the grasshoppers are considered a delicacy in Oaxaca and are usually picked from corn husks and fried with garlic, salt and lemon. Several students began snapping pictures as if the two professors were high-profile celebrities while others watched in awe and disgust as they heard the crunch of the grasshoppers' heads when the two professors bit into them.

"It tastes like a bug," Urbina joked amid laughter, as he quickly grabbed his soda to wash the insect down.

After everyone had a chance to eat, Maryann Urick, SAB sponsor, encouraged students, faculty and staff to share stories of how different their countries are from the United States and how grateful they are for the opportunities America has to offer them.

Math professor, Dr. Ali Ravandi, spoke of how beautiful Iran is, but how glad he is to be living in America. COM student Nathila Giralbo, a foreign exchange student, spoke of her native Columbia.

The luncheon lasted a bit longer than College Hour, and students who did not have a class to attend were encouraged to stay and talk to others about their ethnic backgrounds, countries and customs.

For more information on SAB activities call Urick at (409) 938-1211 or toll free 1 (888) 258-8859, Ext. 418.

## People Speak Out

By InterCOM Editors and Staff

This fall the college administration agreed to pay for only one issue of the InterCOM. In reaction, the InterCOM staff raised money to pay for the October and November issues. The administration recently informed the InterCOM staff they may allow only one printed issue next semester.

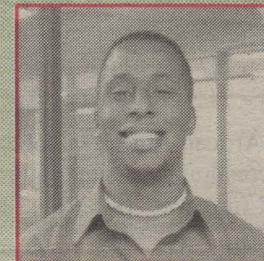
In light of this decision, InterCOM asked: "Do you think it is fair for the administration to limit the number of printed newspapers?"



**Shawn Johnson:** I think you should be able to put out three.



**Mileane Richmond:** No, because the students are paying for it out of their own pockets.



**Dave Thomas:** Politics of any government cannot foster their personal, idiotic interests for long without legitimate reasoning. I long for the day when this "administration" is brought down from top to bottom.



**Wailyn Schumann:** I think that's stupid. I don't see what the problem is, and I don't think the administration should control the school newspaper.



**Elizabeth Moore:** I think it's not fair. Students need to be updated on events around the campus. I think the students should be the ones to make that decision.



**Jasma Spells:** If you're fund-raising for it, how can they say how many issues? The community should have a say. It should be majority rules.



**Cullen Blaylack:** What's the freaking point? That just doesn't make any damn sense.



**Olin Pitman:** If you raise your own funds, how could they possibly object? That's silly.

## You don't have to be a journalism major

COMM 2311, Beginning Newsgathering & Writing will meet Mondays & Wednesdays 12:30 p.m.-3:20 p.m. for the spring semester.

Anyone with any writing aspirations is welcome. No experience is necessary.

Are you a born salesperson? Are you a photographer? We need ad salespeople and photographers for the spring semester.

Anyone interested can enroll in COMM 1129, Newspaper Publication I. Meeting times will be arranged to fit your schedule.