

THE SIGNAL

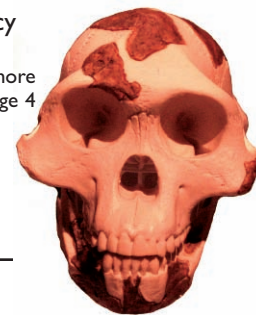
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October 22, 2007

Legacy of Lucy

- Read more on page 4



Armstrong urges Texans to vote for Proposition 15



Emily Jaschke: The Signal Staff

"It is a bold Texas sized initiative that says, we are not going to wait for Washington, we are going to take the fight into our own hands," Lance Armstrong said to a large crowd of supporters and patients at the Kelsey-Seybold Clinic—Main Campus on Tuesday, Oct. 16. Houston was just one stop on his statewide bus tour to urge Texans to vote for Proposition 15 on Nov. 6. If passed, the amendment would authorize up to \$3 billion in state general revenue bonds to the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas, thus opening doors to the possible eradication of cancer. It would also aid in the support of existing cancer research efforts in Texas. Ultimately, it would implement the Texas Cancer Plan, a statewide blueprint for cancer prevention and control.

Armstrong was joined by the authors of Proposition 15, Senator Nelson, Representatives Rose, Morrison, Bohac, Coleman, Cohen, Allen, Vo, and Hernandez. For more of Lance Armstrong's speech, visit The Signal online and for more information about Proposition 15, visit <http://www.livestrong.org>.

Man vs. machine: professors compete for student attention

Neesha Hosein
The Signal Staff

The use of technology in the classroom is steadily becoming a national trend and the University of Houston-Clear Lake is no stranger to this issue. In an age of technological advancement, more students are bringing technology into college classrooms.

Professors are having to make decisions about permitting the use of devices like laptops, cell phones and PDAs during their lecture time. Technology in the classroom can be disturbing, to both students and teachers, when cell phones go off and the constant clicking of text messaging and computer keyboards become a background drone to the professor's lecture.

"Having technology in the classroom has a lot of wonderful potential, but at the same time, there are many, many drawbacks," said Stuart Larson, associate professor of graphic design. "I actually find the technology in the classroom to be a great distraction. I am very, very strict in my classroom experience. I teach in the computer labs where all of the students have computers in front of them and I've actually used my lab fee to purchase special software for the lab so I can turn off all of the monitors."

Some students depend on the computer for faster note-taking. Many students follow along during a lecture using notes or PowerPoints that are accessible online through WebCT or professors' Web sites. Not all students who use technology in the classroom are abusing the privilege, but there are students who make it a habit to check their personal e-mails, shop, play games or visit Facebook or MySpace during lecture time.

"I have a no computer use policy in my classroom when I am lecturing or if we have a guest lecturer," Larson said. "Other than that, I turn the computers on and we do have a lot of work time in the classroom."

The debate about using technology in the classroom is not just dividing students against teachers, but also students against students and teachers against teachers. Certain students find that keyboard clicking or watching a fellow student surf the Web is a serious distraction. One teacher might ban technology use in the educational environment while another encourages it.

"I am sure that the Internet can be a useful pedagogical tool in some settings and for some subjects," said David

TECHNOLOGY: continues on page 10

SOE receives grant for first-generation college students

Kevin Kettle
The Signal Staff

The School of Education's Success Through Education Program recently received a \$25,000 grant that will be used for scholarships. The Greater Texas Foundation awarded the grant to the University of Houston-Clear Lake to benefit STEP students.

Educational institutions of Texas are served by The Greater Texas Foundation by supporting initiatives that increase access to higher education. It also encourages parental and community involvement in education.

The Foundation awarded the

\$25,000 grant to UHCL for first-generation college students. In order for students to receive the Generation Proud Scholarship, they must be first-generation college students enrolling in their first semester at UHCL.

Under their Generation Proud program, The Greater Texas Foundation mailed requests to universities in Texas inviting them to submit proposals. Dion McInnis, associate vice president of university advancement, played an important role in getting the grant for UHCL.

"We submitted a proposal based on STEP's excellent record of success and

SOE GRANT continues on page 10

Is the university's summer pay rate at odds with its own policy?

Kim Boswell
The Signal Staff

Three faculty members are attempting to reconcile a discrepancy between the University of Houston-Clear Lake's official summer pay policy and the actual percentage of pay being offered to faculty who teach these summer sessions.

On May 4, 2001, the University Council approved an increase in the summer pay rate for faculty from one-twelfth of a nine-month salary for a three credit-hour course, to a one-ninth rate. UHCL President William Staples approved this change and it was subsequently placed into the Faculty Handbook.

On May 7, 2007, Pat McCormack, associate professor of finance, Terry Dupler, associate professor of human performance, and John Gorman, professor of literature, filed a grievance against Staples, claiming that the increase in summer pay for faculty, approved in May 2001, by the University Council and approved into policy by Staples, has never been implemented.

UH system Interim Chancellor John Rudley denied the grievance on Aug. 2, 2007, asserting that the summer pay policy

and collateral documents did not "reflect a mutual understanding between UHCL and the faculty that summer salaries would be one-ninth of an individual faculty member's nine-month salary."

For the years 2002 through 2005, the university continued to pay summer faculty at one-twelfth of their annual salary for each three credit-hour course taught, as opposed to the approved one-ninth rate. The Faculty Senate, in the spring of 2005, urged the administration to begin working toward the promised one-ninth rate and the summer faculty pay of 2006 was increased to a rate of one-eleventh.

Michelle Dotter, vice president for administration and finance, cited funding availability and priorities as the reason why the policy was never implemented.

"We have a lot of activities at the university that are based on funding availability," Dotter said. "We have a university funding priority process. As a university, we make a determination on what items are funded each and every fiscal year. Some make the list; some do not."

McCormack, approaching this issue from

PAY RATE: continues on page 10



Livestrong Challenge

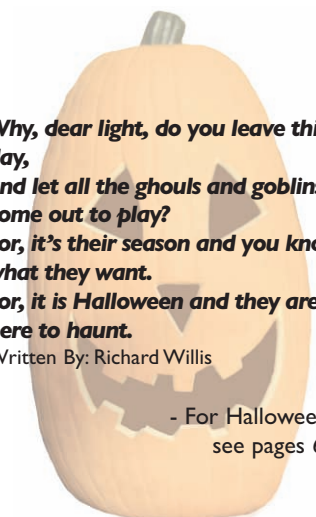


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Why, dear light, do you leave this day, and let all the ghouls and goblins come out to play? For, it's their season and you know what they want. For, it is Halloween and they are all here to haunt.

Written By: Richard Willis

- For Halloween fun see pages 6 & 7



Technology framed for classroom disruptions

In a world of texting, blogging and instant messaging, students are facing off with technology in the classroom.

Technology is moving faster; students and teachers are moving with it. All of the moving can create a disruptive learning environment.

Technology is already an established part of the learning environment. Everything from instructional videos and PowerPoint presentations to online and Web-based classes are included under the technology umbrella.

Technology can enhance students' learning environment, especially in computer-based classes. Most students are learning new programs in these classes and having the computers available helps students retain the material better because they work alongside the professor in class.

Students who have problems comprehending coursework could, in theory, look up what is being discussed on the Internet. As distracting as the Internet can be, it can be a very quick and useful tool for doing instant research on a particular concept.

Taking notes tends to be an art form for those with horrible handwriting. After a particularly verbose lecture, trying to decipher notes can be a task all in itself.

Laptops help those with less-than-perfect handwriting with their note-taking ability. Some students can type faster than they write and using a computer in class makes it easier for them to learn the material.

Some professors utilize PowerPoint presentations for their lectures. Students use this technology to their advantage by printing out the presentations and making notes in the margins. It allows for a huge head start on note taking.

As cliché as it is, cell phones have the ability to reach anyone anywhere, especially when there is an emergency. For the parents on campus, cell phones become a necessity just in case anything happens.

There could quite possibly be a situation where someone needs to be reached immediately, whether in class or not. This goes for professors as well as students.

Technology can also hinder the learning environment. Unfortunately, for every pro there seems to be a con.

While the ability to take notes on a laptop can be a great asset for students with bad handwriting, the tapping noise created by hitting the keys can annoy and distract other students trying to pay attention.

Sitting behind someone with a laptop also proves disturbing when the student is not taking notes, but is sending a message or playing on MySpace instead.

Not only is the one with the laptop not paying attention, but most students sitting behind him or her are not either.

In some classes, students who use laptops sit together and it looks like the "newest smoking section." It really does not matter if they all sit together or not, because the sound of typing is still there, coming from one distinct area instead of possibly being spread out among the class. Either way, the "newest smoking section" is disruptive to students trying to learn.

In some computer-based classes professors have resorted to "locking" students' computers during lectures so that there is no playing on the Internet or checking e-mails. The professors had to start "lock-



Richard Willis: The Signal Staff

ing" the computers because some select students would play on the computer instead of paying attention.

As convenient as cell phones are, they divert the attention away from the class when students forget to turn the ringer off or leave class to answer it. The constant text messaging during class is distracting as well.

Technology has forced everyone to re-adapt their skills. Most students rely on spell check for term papers and calculators to do math. Elementary students are learning how to type before learning cursive.

Technology has forced society to move away from the old ways of taking notes by hand and carrying change to use a pay phone.

Until the silent keyboard is invented or cell phones automatically turn off when you enter a "no-ring" zone, disruptions are inevitable unless everyone follows classroom etiquette. We need for the face-off between technology and the classroom to have a meeting of the minds. In the end, maybe we will have a new form of technology etiquette.

COMMENTARY

Halloween's ghost no longer haunting halls of local schools

Monica Buchanan
The Signal Staff

As kids, there was nothing more thrilling than to dress in costumes and pretend, for just a little while, that we were someone else. Boys draping a towel over their shoulders and pulling their underwear over their head could transform them into Superman. For girls, it was wearing their mother's best dress and clunking around in high heels that were too big. Imagination was never as fully realized as it was when we were in costume.

While at Christmas, there were presents to be opened, Halloween was the one time of year when fantasies came to life and we were able to roam around as wild and free as we wanted. If we could pretend, so vividly, we were someone else by simply slipping into a different wardrobe, what could we imagine with that \$25 Mike

Meyers mask in the Wal-Mart holiday bin? The possibilities were endless!

But now it seems as the years go by, Halloween has become more and more ostracized. While most religious groups have disagreed with the holiday for many decades, it seems now that public schools have become more and more disagreeable when it comes to celebrations and costumes. Elementary schools have begun canceling all Halloween-related activities with alternatives such as "Fall Festivals" and costumes are strictly banned in almost all grades. Some high schools have even begun suspending students for wearing anything that might resemble a costume, such as cat ears for girls.

After some deep thought on this issue, I have to ask if this is really a better life for today's children? Studies have proven that through the lack of creative stimulation, such as in art class or music class, children are having a

harder and harder time getting through school. School needs to be fun and enjoyable, and we keep stripping away every social opportunity these children have.

And while I do understand the argument for tolerance and equal opportunity, and that there are some children who do not celebrate Halloween for one reason or another, why are we taking away the privileges of many for just a few? Even in replacing Halloween-themed events with more politically correct friendly ones, give the children an opportunity to show off their unique personalities. Give the children the opportunity to dress up and celebrate in whatever way they choose instead of stifling their right to celebrate whatever holiday they choose. Taking away Halloween is the same as stripping children of their right to throw towels over their shoulders and morph into Superman. And just think of what the future holds if we continue...Valentine's Day might be next!

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How to plan a class reunion while keeping your sanity

Someday you will find yourself at a local hangout, where you grew up, with old classmates, and you are discussing who is going to be in charge of planning the upcoming reunion.

This is your chance to say I do not want to plan it, but I will come. Of course you can be the proactive, positive person, and jump in with both feet to help plan your infamous class reunion.



Nicole Wheatley
Meanderings

Remember, "infamous" being the key word here. It will amaze you how many (people you never thought would) take this little reunion to the extreme.

At my reunion, we had someone show up with two dates (which he rented), someone who rented the biggest limo in Corpus Christi at the time (it was a hummer), several who had plastic surgery done before hand, and, of course, too many who spent the last month on a crash diet to count.

My absolute favorite example of "extreme" at a reunion is: we had a guy rent the suite to the Marriott on Shoreline, land at the hotel flying from Houston in his rented helicopter, and showed up at the reunion with his rented entourage; all only to find out he was a starving writer with one huge imagination.

He later told some of us, "it was a hoax for my upcoming book," which still has not been published. This was almost 5 years ago.

When planning your reunion there are a few things you should know before you jump in, or you and your constituents could be up a creek.

First, always be prepared for the unexpected or awkward moments. I would love to share one of mine. We had a classmate who was known to be a "goody-goody." While in high school she was president of the Republicans Committee, and she decided to use the reunion as her moment to come out of the closet.

This is what happened. My husband, who graduated a year before me, asked my classmate to dance. She responded with a yes but with the condition I would dance with her significant other. Yes, of course I danced with her. The only reason I say this was awkward is

I am a shy person, and I am not really comfortable dancing with anyone I do not know, man or woman.

Second, remember you cannot and will not please everyone. One of our attendees showed up with his wife, both doctors, driving a brand new Porsche. He threw a tantrum when he found out it was going to cost \$75 per couple for the second night of the reunion. Looking back, I think we should have let him in free because it would have been a silent statement.

Third, remember you are planning this reunion as a group and you cannot do it all by yourself, so delegate. My reunion-planning committee consisted of two guys and two girls. It seemed the girls were more than willing to do all of the busy work, and the boys liked showing up to the meetings to share opinions and drink beer.

The lesson you need to learn from me is to delegate, delegate and delegate. If they want this event to be as nice as you do, they will do the work. And a side note, stay away from the control freaks, or you will never get anything done.

Fourth, the most tedious task you will find in this process of planning your reunion is locating your classmates. Some have moved away, got married, changed their name or are possibly in prison.

One of the first things to do is to start on the Internet by going to www.Classmates.com, or www.REUNION.com, and possibly www.2008uswhitepages.com under people search. Use your resources. It is likely there are many people who have kept up with each other over the years, so when one person gets in contact with you, ask if they have kept up with anyone else.

Finally, just have fun and live in the moment or everything will pass you by quickly. Remember, people who never spoke to you before will come up to you wanting to be friends. Your classmates will never forget your nickname. Mine was Moby Dick, or even worse, Mobish, and they will use it constantly at the reunion. The cheerleaders will NOT always be fat, but the majority of the football players will be balding, at least in my experience. There are those who will have big families and those who do not have any. There will be those truly successful and some who are not.

As Ferris Bueller would say, "life goes by pretty fast. If you don't stop and look around once awhile, you could miss it." You do not want to miss your reunion, I promise.

This fall's woos and woas

Fall is the time for football, changing weather and new television series. Some of this fall's season has been a success; however, some of the series this season have been a failure.

ABC's "Pushing Daisies" is a colorful drama about a pie maker who has an extraordinary power to bring the dead back to life. After his mother died, Ned, played by Lee Pace, is afraid to get close to anyone else. After using his powers on a runaway criminal, Ned is spotted by private investigator, Emmerson Cod, played by Chi McBride, and they form a partnership. They follow leads to wake the dead, ask them how they died and find the killer. During an investigation, Ned awakens his childhood love, Charlotte "Chuck" Charles, played by Anna Friel, but he is reluctant to send her back to the dead. Keeping Chuck alive by not touching her again, she becomes the third partner, and enters Ned's life once again. Watch the story and the murders reveal themselves on Wednesdays at 7 p.m.

"Cavemen," ABC's biggest mistake of the season, is absolutely horrible. Based on the Geico commercials about the stereotypical, simple-minded cavemen, we see them in their everyday lives. Joel, Nick, and Andy are three cavemen who moved to San Diego and are coping with the "homo sapien world." They all live together in an apartment and work human jobs. The show is as annoying as the commercials. If the sitcom makes it a full season, I will be very surprised. You can catch it on Tuesdays at 7 p.m.

"Carpoolers," another flop on ABC, is a sitcom about four men with different professions and lifestyles, in which the carpooling commute to work is the highlight of their day. Laird, played by Jerry O'Connell, is an over-dramatic divorced man who makes fun of the other three men because he is the only one not married anymore. Tim Peper's character, Dougie, is a newlywed who has a perfect life. However, the carpoolers, whom he trusts, cause problems in his life. Aubrey, portrayed by Jerry Minor, is a depressed married man because

both his stay-at-home wife and dead-beat son make more money than he does. The professional mediator, Gracen, played by Fred Goss, is the instigator of everyone's problems.

Though it may be a good concept for a sitcom, let us hope that it makes an entire season. The setting is about four men complaining while sitting in a car, which is not very interesting. Check it out on Tuesdays at 7:30 p.m., right after "Cavemen."



Cassandra Spencer
Woman of Entertainment

The CW's "Gossip Girl," from the creators of "The O.C.," is riveting and refreshing. Set in Manhattan, Serena van der Woodsen, played by Blake Lively, comes back to her school, following a mysterious disappearance to boarding school. Serena's best friend Blair Waldorf, portrayed by Leighton Meester, finds out that Serena disappeared because she slept with Blair's boyfriend Nate Archibald, played by Chace Crawford. With vengeance in her eyes, Blair sets out to destroy Serena. A constant drama that makes you realize that your own life is normal and sane, "Gossip Girl" is a must see. Watch it on Wednesdays at 8 p.m.

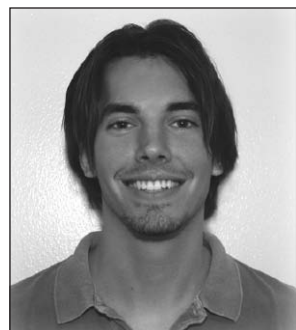
NBC's new hour-long series "Chuck" is sure to last the season. Zachary Levi, who plays Chuck Bartowski, a computer nerd at a local electronics store, witnesses an e-mail featuring the government's topmost secrets. Yvonne Strahovski, who portrays CIA agent Sarah Walker, and her partner, Major John Casey, played by Adam Baldwin, are sent to protect Chuck from assassins and international terrorists. NBC's new action-comedy will keep you on your toes with suspense and bellied-over with laughter. See what Chuck will battle his way through every Monday at 7 p.m. CDT.

Television is one of our escapes from the tedious school work that keep students occupied on a day-to-day basis. Though there are different opinions about everything on the face of this earth, there is a consensus about this season's flops. Check these new shows out and make an opinion of your own.

Common courtesy reduced to trivial triteness

In American society we have all either asked the question, "how are you?" or have been asked it. So what is the common answer? You guessed it! "Fine."

Working at my incredibly "fun" retail store, I am forced to ask that question to many a customer. I say "forced" because that is what I am told to say, not because



Josh Conwell
The Truth Teller

I always care about my customers' lives.

Here is how it goes at work. The customer comes up to the register and I say, "hi, how are you?" and they say "fine." No big deal. No revelation. We are both familiar with the question and answer time; we do our part and move on with our lives.

Some people might even catch me off guard by instead of saying "fine," they say, "I'm doing good" or "okay." After recovering from my shock of hearing a new word for the day, I finish the transaction, hand them their bag and put a great big smile on my face and say, "thank you so much!" Of course, I don't really care that they

made a purchase from my store; it is just the required thing to say.

However, there are a few customers who break the mold and when asked how they are doing, they, to my shock and horror, actually begin to TELL me their problems. The nerve of them! Just because I ask you how you are doing doesn't mean I really care to listen to all your problems.

The only time I don't mind listening to someone's problems is if it's a girl I think is really cute. Then I suddenly transform into the most interested person in the world and I try to give the best advice possible. I even go as far as trying to give her my phone number so I can talk to her and help her through this challenging time. Oh, come on! Don't judge me. Like you wouldn't do the exact same thing in this situation!

Another great saying at work with customers is the "have a nice day!" phrase. I don't care if customers have a nice day; I don't even know them. It's even better when a customer has been up at the counter complaining to me for five minutes that I over-charged him or her \$3.50 for a shirt when actually he or she was the one who read the sign wrong and it's another shirt that is on sale.

After we have our wonderful conversation and right before the customer leaves I get to say, "have a nice day,"

which can be translated as a thousand poxes on you and your family!

When looking back over what I have just written I can't help but wonder about this peculiar American custom. Why am I spitting out these phrases to people when we both know that I do not even mean them?

Perhaps it is because we have become so used to saying these phrases that we don't even think about what they mean anymore. Have you even stopped to think about what the phrase "I love you" means? All the time I hear, "oh, I love that band" or "I love pie." Well, do you love pie enough to marry it? Shouldn't everything we say to people be what we truly mean?

Instead of just pretending to greet someone and care about how they are, maybe we should actually make an attempt to connect with someone instead of just saying our routine phrases and then moving on with our own lives.

Maybe it's time to think about all the common phrases used today and really try and act like we mean what we are saying.

You never know-maybe all people need is for you to care about them.

Upcoming Events



The Nightmare Before Christmas 3-D Begins Oct. 19. 3 week engagement. Cinemark 18 Webster, AMC Gulf Pointe 30 Check theater Web site for tickets and showtimes.



UHCL Cultural Arts and Film & Speaker Series: "Nosferatu" Oct. 26, 8 p.m. Bayou Theater General Admission, \$7 with UHCL I.D. Costume Optional. A reception will follow.



Stage production of The Rocky Horror Show. San Jacinto College-Central campus in the Slocomb Auditorium. Oct. 26 - Nov. 5, with a special midnight performance on Halloween (Oct. 31). (281) 542-2039.



Zoo Boo 2007 Houston Zoo Oct. 27-28 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. <http://www.houston-zoo.org/zooboo07/> All Zoo Boo events are included with paid Zoo admission. Zoo Boo is FREE for Zoo Members.



Photo courtesy of Paramount Vantage

Taking the road less traveled: An interview with Sean Penn and Emile Hirsch

Bret Newcomb
The Signal Staff

Christopher McCandless had the American dream right at his fingertips. After graduating with honors from Emory University, his life was full of open doors. He chose the one that led outside. He chose the one that led "into the wild."

On Oct. 19, a film about McCandless' amazing, though short life will hit theaters nationwide. The film, based on the 1996 best-selling book by Jon Krakauer, was adapted and directed by Oscar-winning actor Sean Penn. It chronicles McCandless' travels across America and into the wilderness of Alaska.

McCandless graduated from college, donated the remaining \$24,000 in his college fund to charity, burnt the cash in his wallet, abandoned his car, changed his name and set out on the road less traveled. Seeking a Thoreau-like existence, McCandless disappeared from his former life and from society in search of an authentic, visceral experience. He got what he wanted.

In April 1992, McCandless walked into the wilderness of Alaska. His decomposed body was found in September. Since that time, his story has elicited passionate responses from many people. Some believe he was reckless and naive. Others view McCandless as a noble pioneer who refused to settle for status quo.

Penn, along with the actor who played Christopher McCandless, Emile Hirsch, commented on the film in a telephone conference call.

Penn believes that, regardless of what you think of his life, McCandless' story leads everyone confronted with it to ask some vital questions.

"Who am I without mom and dad, television, telephone, politics and pictures and whatever else it is that's telling me what community I'm supposed to define myself by and, rather, to define myself on my own terms, and that becomes a life-long pursuit," Penn said. "Chris' way of doing this, while very dramatic, and in some ways reckless, was none the less so brave and so clear that there are many inspirations to be gotten out of that that are very important."

For Hirsch "the idea of having new experiences" was how he most identified with McCandless.

"There was something about Chris' story that just really moved me," Hirsch said.

For Penn, Hirsch was an easy choice for the role of McCandless. After seeing Hirsch perform in "The Lords of Dogtown," Penn was drawn to the young actor.

"There was a mischief in his face that, while that wasn't particularly what I was looking for, it is what I thought I could relate to in him," Penn said. "His physicality and his heart, and those things, as an actor, I was able to feel very comfortable with very early on."

Hirsch does not star alone in this film. The stage is often stolen by Mother Nature. Throughout the film, Hirsch and the wilderness exist seamlessly on the screen. This union illustrates McCandless' desire to escape from the modern trappings of society, and to embrace a completely different way to live. Penn sees this kind of mindset as very relevant for our culture today.

"Despite what happened in this particular case, the tragic aspect of it, I think we have gotten to a place culturally where what once was intuitive is

now counter-intuitive in terms of stepping outside of our comfort zone," Penn said.

In this era of speed, communication and technology, it is easy to get caught in the current of immediacy and convenience, and, as Penn believes, to miss out on the fundamental experience of being human. In getting out of this "comfort zone," Penn sees the opportunity to actually experience what life is supposed to be like.

"You start to not only feel your life happening, but start to participate in it," Penn said.

For McCandless, and for Penn, truly experiencing life is absolutely crucial and the place where liberty can be found.

"If pursuit of freedom isn't necessary, I don't know what is," Penn said.

The film, also starring Vince Vaughn, Marcia Gay Harden, William Hurt, Jena Malone and Catherine Keener, opened nationally Oct. 19.

For a podcast of the entire interview, go to www.uhcl.edu/thesignal

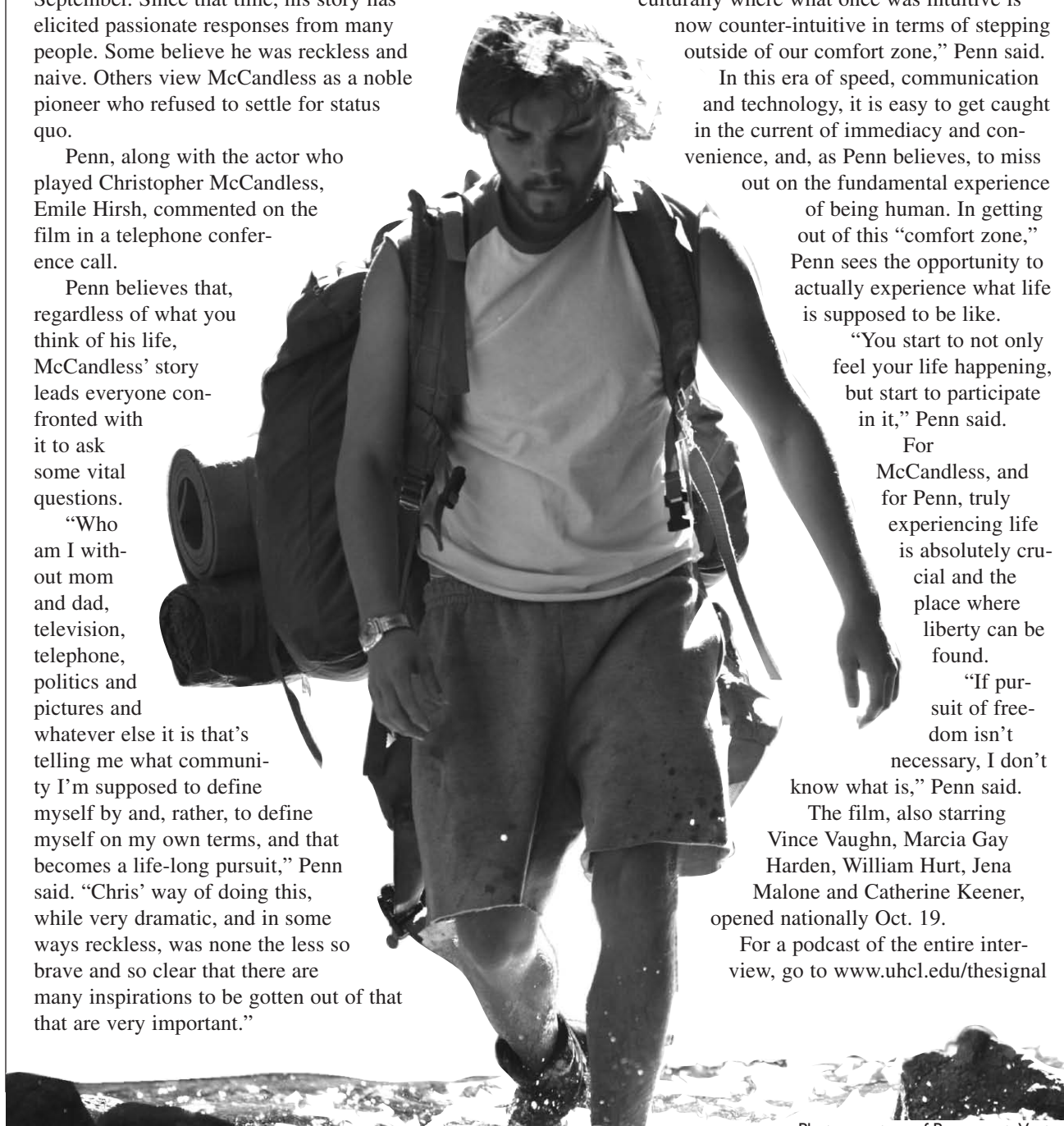


Photo courtesy of Paramount Vantage

Into the Mild: Mauled by modern convenience

Bret Newcomb
The Signal Staff

There are a handful of books that create an immediate response in me. Every time I pick one of them up, I stop shaving and threaten to go live in the woods for a minimum of one month. "Into the Wild" is one of those books.

There is something incredibly appealing about the Waldenesque lifestyle that McCandless chose for himself. At some point in every thinking person's life, one must ask the inevitable question of "Is this what life is really supposed to be like?" On some level, everyone answers that question with a "no." What makes McCandless so fascinating is that he just didn't say no, he lived it.

So, driving my Accord through the fourth-largest city in the United States and listening to my iPod on my way to the premier of the book's adaptation into a major motion picture directed by Sean Penn seemed painfully ironic.

I parked at the multiscreen theater, flanked on all sides by restaurants claiming to cook food from all manner of cultures, even though it was all trucked in by Sisco.

Following the trail of neon lights, upcoming attraction posters, and teenagers texting the person walking beside them, I made my way into the ridiculousplex. I stood in line for a medium popcorn and soda, and paid for the 150 percent markup with my ever-so-convenient debit card.

I sat in my plush seat and watched the depiction of one of my personal heroes starve to death on a screen more than two stories high. Before the credits could begin to roll, the theater was illuminated by countless cell phones and I felt a deep pain between my lungs.

I had to ignore it though, because I needed to focus on the questions I would ask Emile Hirsch and Sean Penn in the upcoming conference call — a call that I would be typing notes for on my Mac and recording so I could convert it to a podcast. A podcast that you can now listen to from any place that has internet access. You can download it and listen to it while you do any of the various task that fill up your downtime. You know, anything so you don't actually have to think about your life.

Somewhere, I can't help but think that Christopher McCandless would be very disappointed.

Student Life * Student Life * Student Life



The National Society of Leadership and Success

in partnership with the UHCL Student Leadership Institute
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Janet Attwood

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Visit her Web site at www.janetattwood.com

Date: Tuesday, Oct. 23, 2007
Time: 6 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
Location: Bayou 2512

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Honesty Integrity Communication Commitment Advocacy!!

The Executive Council will be traveling to Anaheim, California to attend the National Student Leadership Conference. Jenn Clark of the Student Leadership Institute will be traveling with them. They will return with a wealth of leadership experiences and new ideas!

You are invited to attend the weekly SGA meetings:
Tuesdays, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. in the SSCB Lecture Hall!

CONTACT THE SGA EXECUTIVE COUNCIL:

- Joyce Delores Taylor, President
 - Michael Phillips, VP-Committee Coordinator
 - Nida Ajaz, VP-Student Outreach & Communications
 - Patrick Cardenas, VP-Administration
- SGA@uhcl.edu (281) 283-2556 www.uhcl.edu/sga



Nosferatu

**Friday, October 26
8 p.m., Bayou Theater**

**General Admission:
\$8 presale/\$10 at the door
With UHCL I.D.:
\$5 presale/\$7 at the door**

An evening of chills and thrills! F.W. Murnau's classic silent vampire film, *Nosferatu, ein Symphonie des Grauens*, will be screened with live music accompaniment. Musician Tom McDermott will use several instruments including a theremin to create an eerie atmosphere. This film is not rated. Special garlic treats will be served at the reception. Capes and costumes are encouraged!

For tickets or information, call the Student Life Office at (281) 283-2560 or visit the Cultural Arts Web site at www.uhcl.edu/culturalarts.

This event is presented in conjunction with the UHCL Film & Speaker Series. Complimentary reception will be held after the concert.

You have a reason to hide ...

Halloween is here

They will find you, even if you are too scared to SCREAM

Melissa Bird
The Signal Staff

If you should find yourself driving down Beltway 8, near TC Jester and Ella Boulevard, and suddenly hear shrieks of terror and the suspicious howls of wolfmen and droning zombies, don't be alarmed - it is only the frightful sounds of **Screamworld**.

Screamworld, voted one of America's top 11 haunts by americasbesthaunts.com for 2007, has been freaking out Houstonians for years now and does not show any signs of stopping. Owners Jim Fetterly and Mike Darling, along with their dedicated crew of creatures, work throughout the year to produce what Fetterly considers a "fright level second to none in Houston."

"We really work hard at the element of surprise and catching people off guard," Fetterly said. "We also operate a very safe haunted house and walk a fine line in making an attraction where families can come and still remain very scary."

With five distinctly different attractions under one roof: "The Maze of Maniacs," "The Haunted Hotel," "The Edge of Darkness," "Movie Monsters in 3-D" and "Tobias Strange's Family Cemetery," there is something for everyone all across the fear spectrum at Screamworld.

The tour begins with the "Maze of Maniacs," which features actors leading fear-seekers into dead ends of the maze to merely give them a hint at what is to come in the main house's attractions. After leaving the haunted maze, with a little less breath and a little more apprehen-



Melissa Bird: The Signal Staff

Actors in the "Maze of Maniacs" await customers to frighten. Some of the characters in this portion of the haunt are Pinhead and the Wolfman.

sion, those who are brave enough to enter the house are warned by security not to run or touch the actors. After all, Screamworld operates on a very strict "you don't touch us, we don't touch you" policy.

The next two attractions, "The Haunted Hotel," a high-tech approach on haunting with animatronics and highly developed scenes, and "The Edge of Darkness," with long, twisting halls and creatures just waiting to pounce, are in classic haunted house style with a few modern surprises. The fourth attraction, "Movie Monsters in 3-D," is something completely different and innovative.



Melissa Bird: The Signal Staff

Customers are given 3-D glasses from a zombie in a ticket booth and instructed to wear them to enhance the experience. The brightly colored walls and 3-D murals that seem to jump out are a welcomed change from the darkness that came before. This attraction features classic movie monsters with some modern ones thrown in as well, all in three-dimensional fluorescent color. Just when you think the haunting is over, you are ushered outdoors to "Tobias Strange's Family Cemetery," a swamp-like lot accented by the deceased members of the Strange family with a little surprise at the very end. Thrill-seekers are home free and sent away with a little bit more adrenaline pumping through their systems.

"It was pretty scary," said Alyssa Abbel, fear enthusiast. "I would definitely come back to Screamworld and recommend it to my friends."

Intense as the thrills at Screamworld may be, it is important for the faint of heart to remember that "it's a haunted house; you pay people to jump out and scare you," Fetterly said. "Nobody is going to hurt you, but some people get so scared that they can't move and they just drop to the floor."

The staff of Screamworld all seem to enjoy their working environment and coming to work everyday. For them, getting made into a scream-inducing monster is just part of the job. All makeup and costuming is done just 30 to 45 minutes before the opening of the show and all varieties of creatures can be found backstage drinking bottles of water or taking a smoke break just after a squirt bottle of fake blood and an airbrushing of glowing green skin is applied to their faces. It may look a bit odd to an outsider, but for them, it is a uniform just like any other job would require.

Screamworld, voted the "best of" in haunted houses for the Houston area by The Houston Press, has a haunt for every palette and despite their horrifying costumes and frightening faces, a friendly and open staff ready to scare the daylights right out of you.



Ashley R. Marie: The Signal Staff

The Scarecrow Festival is held annually every October in historic Chappell Hill.

A no-brainer: the Chappell Hill Scarecrow Festival is fall family fun

Ashley R. Marie
The Signal Staff

Founded in 1847 by Mary Hargrove Haller, Chappell Hill attracted families who were drawn to the fertile land of the Brazos River, which was great for growing cotton, the main crop.

As a result of the yellow fever epidemic in 1867, many residents either died or left Chappell Hill and the town never fully recovered.

Today, Chappell Hill is a small town located in Washington County on U.S. Highway 290 between Houston and Austin. It offers an old-town feel with a combination of restored homes and shops that are located on Main Street.

Main Street has been designated as a National Register Historic District and is the home of the annual Scarecrow Festival. The festival is held annually along Main Street in October. This year's festival was held on Oct. 14-15.

"The Scarecrow Festival has been going on for 31 years now," said Donna Cummins, publicity director of Chappell Hill Historical Society. "The festival brings

over 350 vendors, live entertainment, country-style foods and children's activities, such as a petting zoo, face painting and pumpkin decorating."

Washington County is known as the "Birth Place of Texas" and on March 2, 1836, 59 delegates, including Sam Houston and George Childress, got together in the community of Washington-on-the-Brazos to draft and sign the Declaration of Texas' Independence. After hearing the news of the Alamo defeat, these men declared Texas "a free and sovereign nation," going on to fight the Battle of San Jacinto.

Chappell Hill is wealthy with historical sites from the Republic of Texas era.

"The whole town of Chappell Hill transforms into the Scarecrow

Festival," Cummins said. "There are scarecrows everywhere, not only in Chappell Hill, but all over Washington County."

The festival is held by a nonprofit volunteer organization, the Chappell Hill Historical Society, whose goal is to stage a high-quality, fun show in the downtown National Historic District. The 2008 Scarecrow Festival will be held Oct. 11-12. For more information log on www.chappell-hillmusem.org/festivals.



Ashley R. Marie: The Signal Staff

The Scarecrow Festival brings 1,500 visitors each year with 350 vendors, live entertainment, country-style foods and children's activities.

Kemah giving sightseers a good fright

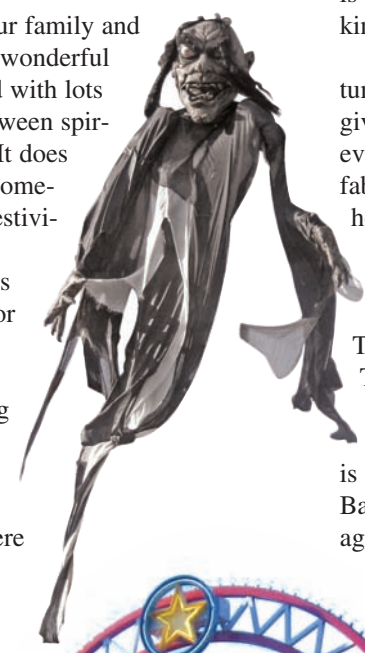
Alicia Gutierrez
The Signal Staff

Kemah is a great place to take your family and have a great time. The atmosphere is wonderful year-round. This month will be filled with lots of spooky fun to get you in the Halloween spirit. It's called Boo on the Boardwalk. It does not matter how old you are; there is something for everybody at the seasonal festivity.

Every Saturday and Sunday of this month you will find great activities for the whole family. There are a lot of activities to do, but do not worry, because all the activities will be going on throughout the day.

Start off the day with an interactive dress-up show called the Ghost Ship. The Ghost Ship is an event where children get to dress up and act like pirates. Another event is the

Beetlejuice & Graveyard

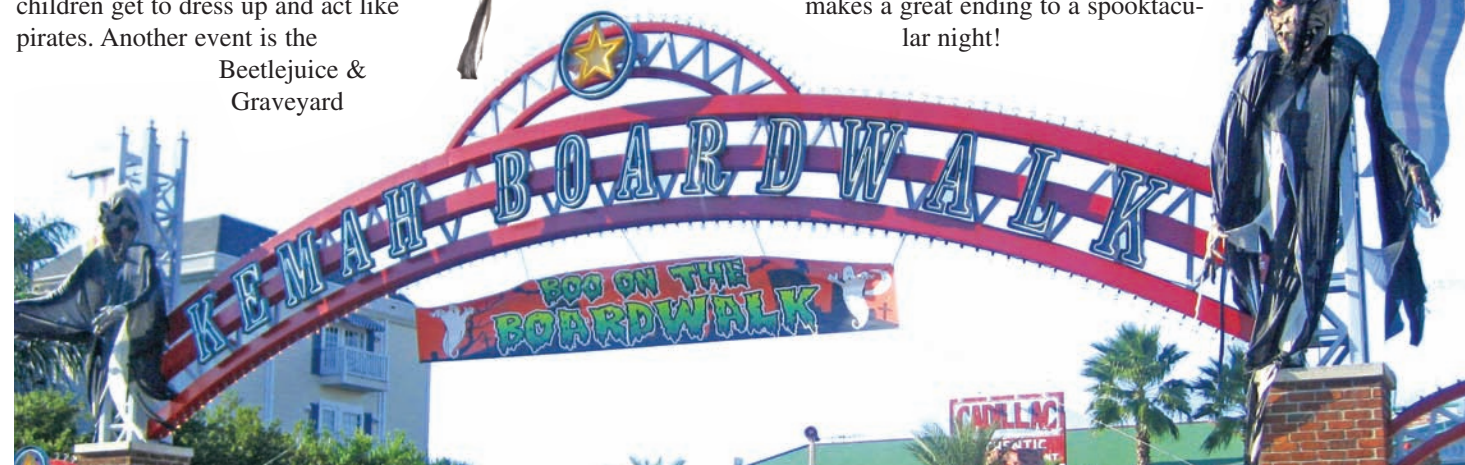


Revue, which is a performance based on characters from the movie and includes audience participation. During the day there is an arts and crafts tent where children can go to decorate pumpkins, make a Halloween mask and enter a coloring contest.

Dress up the little goblins because there will be a kid's costume contest at 4 p.m. Oct. 20 and 27. Children will also be given the opportunity to trick or treat. There is something for everyone, so while you are there, try your luck and enter to win a fabulous weekend package at the Boardwalk Inn by guessing how much "Texas' Largest Pumpkin" weighs.

Do you have what it takes to face the Dungeon of Doom? The Dungeon of Doom is one of the scariest haunted houses around and is located conveniently on the Kemah Boardwalk. The haunted house is open daily for your enjoyment, Monday - Thursday, 6 - 10 p.m., Friday 6 - 11 p.m., Saturday 2 p.m. - midnight and Sunday 2 - 10 p.m.

It does not end there because when the sun goes down that is when the ghouls come out to play. From 7 - 11 p.m. the Boogie Band plays live music for people of all ages to enjoy. The band is amazing and makes a great ending to a spooktacular night!



Alicia Gutierrez: The Signal Staff



Alicia Gutierrez: The Signal Staff

As you enter the Kemah Boardwalk, it is apparent by the scarecrow skeleton that Halloween is here. You will find these scarecrow skeletons throughout the boardwalk.



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CAMPUS CALENDAR

October 23

TSTA-SP Halloween Bake Sale, all day, Bayou Atrium I

NSLS Speaker: What Major or Career Should I Choose?, 6-7:30 p.m., Bayou 2512
*Registration required

October 26

Workshop: Dealing with Difficult People, 1-3 p.m., SSCB 1.202.07
*Registration required

Film: Nosferatu, 8 p.m., Bayou Theater
*Tickets: \$5-10

October 29

IISS Dia de los Muertos, noon-1 p.m., Bayou Atrium I

BSA Speaker Series: Homeland Security: What You Need to Know!, 5:30-7 p.m., Bayou Garden Room

November 3

Film & Speaker Series: Sicko, 7 p.m., SSCB Lecture Hall

November 6

Workshop: The Leadership Paradox: To Be Great, You Must Be Least, 5-7 p.m., SSCB 1.202.07
*Registration required

November 13

NSLS Speaker: Rules for Renegades: Make More Money, Rock Your Career, Revel in Your Individuality, 6-7:30 p.m., Location TBA
*Registration required

November 14

IISS Global Expo, noon-5 p.m., Bayou Atrium I

YOGA: every breath you take, every move you make

Amy Parnell
The Fitness Zone

Nowadays it is difficult not to hear about Yoga. Movies stars like Reese Witherspoon and Jennifer Aniston and musicians such as Sting, members of the Beastie Boys and Red Hot Chili Peppers all credit yoga for their physical health and emotional well-being.

The number of Yoga studios is on the rise, universities and community colleges offer classes, and recreation centers and local gyms, including UHCL's Fitness Zone, offer at least one Yoga class.

Yoga is a physical exercise that includes a number of physical postures performed in coordination with breathing. The combination of postures and breath promotes good health by cleansing the body's organs and bloodstream while simultaneously regulating respiration, circulation, and hormones.

You may be asking yourself, "How does a series of poses possibly do all of this?"

The secret to reaping Yoga's many rewards is in the

breath. Yogic breathing is through the nose using the diaphragm.

Practicing a fuller inhale and exhale using the diaphragm increases the amount of oxygen and decreases the amount of carbon dioxide in the body, helping to clean the bloodstream. Using a full "Yoga Breath" helps elevate the body's metabolic rate during and after practice.

Many people tell me they really want to begin Yoga when they are "more flexible," "thinner," or "more energetic." However, in Yoga we work with what we have: a body, a mind and the breath.

When someone attends a Yoga class for the first time, the experience can be daunting. Self-conscious of standing barefoot on a Yoga mat in clingy clothes; the inclusions of poses initially causes discomfort for first-time Yoga students, who want to make sure and "do it right."

The postures are designed to stretch and strengthened certain muscles for particular physical and emotional results.

For example, Cobbler's Pose, a seated position, stretches and tones the inner

thighs, groin, knees, and glutes while opening the hips.

The combination of stretching and toning increases range of motion in daily life and workouts, helping students feel a sense of greater stability and balance. The pose also helps relieve depression and fatigue because seated positions help reduce tension and regulate breathing.

By holding a pose and breathing, Yoga students learn to concentrate on the moment. For most of us multitasking is a way of life, and sadly many suffer from having too much to do and feeling as if there is a lack of enjoyment in the fast-paced world of traffic, work, errands and family.

Yoga classes provide a scheduled time to concentrate on each pose, breathe, and quiet the mind. While clearing the mind, students strengthen the ability to concentrate.

Many students tell me they began Yoga class to strengthen their body but stay with the practice because of a noticeable improvement in their state of mind and ability to cope with daily stress.

When asked why I practice Yoga, I always reply, "Because it makes me who I am." Most people comment

on my usually happy state of mind and I credit my Yoga, meditation, and breathing practice. I like who I am when I continue to practice Yoga.

Our next Yoga Session begins the second week of November with another session starting during the spring semester. If interested please come by Student Life to register. We meet Mondays to Thursdays at lunchtime.

Peace, Amy



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The Fitness Zone

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SSCB 2302

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www.uhcl.edu/fitnesszone

For more information about any of the campus events listed above, check out the Students News and Events calendar on the UHCL Students page.

Recognized for excellence: UHCL's distinguished professors

Lauren Taylor
The Signal Staff

Terry Feagin, professor of computer science, and Vance Etnyre, associate professor of management information systems, have been awarded the University of Houston-Clear Lake Distinguished Professorship awards.

"Each of the professors were nominated by their peers," said Carl Stockton, senior vice president for academic affairs and provost. "The credentials of the professors were reviewed by the faculty advisory committee and recommendations were given to the provost. The former provost, Jim Hayes, made his recommendation to the president for consideration of the awards. It is a great honor to be recognized by your peers and colleagues for this award."

Feagin received the award for the UHCL Distinguished Professorship in Computer Science and Engineering for the period of 2007-2009.

"What does it mean to me to win this award?" Feagin asked. "Well, it is certainly an honor. There are many other very deserving faculty members in computer science and engineering."

Feagin joined UHCL in 1984. He came here from the University of Tennessee where he

was head of the department of computer science. Feagin had previously served as the head of the department of computer science at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville. He was a resident research associate of the National Research Council stationed at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Md. Feagin has a Ph.D. in aerospace engineering from the



FEAGIN

University of Texas. He has served for six years as chair of UHCL's Library, Research and Computing Committee. Feagin has not only taught many courses, he has also developed courses.

"My area of greatest achievement has been in the numerical solution of ordinary differential equations, where most recently I discovered a new 12th order Runge-Kutta method (this is the highest order Runge-Kutta method ever determined)," Feagin said. "The previous record-holder is a 10th order method from 1978."

"The purpose of the award is to recognize faculty for their substantial and outstanding contributions to their professions in the

area of teaching, scholarly activity and service to the university, professional organizations and the community," Stockton said. "Both professors have demonstrated extensive teaching, scholarship and service."

Etnyre was awarded the UHCL Distinguished Professorship in Management Information Systems for the 2007-2009 period.

Etnyre joined the UHCL faculty in 1978. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Illinois in industrial engineering. In 2000, Etnyre

ETNYRE

received approval to offer bachelor's and master's degrees in management information systems. He has been very active in the university service.

"Winning this award is a terrific honor," Etnyre said. "It means we will be able to provide better support to our program."

"Drs. Etnyre and Feagin are outstanding faculty members who have a long list of accomplishments," said William Staples, president of UHCL. "They are truly distinguished in their respective fields and are most deserving of this award and recognition."

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were fortunate to garner the funds," McInnis said. "The Greater Texas Foundation has been a good friend to UHCL and has funded a scholarship endowment previously."

STEP is a program that works with four local-area school districts and community colleges to provide guidance and assistance for young students who are interested in pursuing a teaching career. Prospective teachers are identified at the high school level. STEP attracts diverse students from low-income populations to help replenish the teacher shortages in and around our community.

Nancy Wright, lecturer for the School of Education, serves as UHCL's faculty liaison for STEP. Wright works with teachers from the collaborating high schools and community colleges to help prepare the students for a teaching career.

"This program does provide scholarship support, along with many other support features, for diverse students, many of whom are first-generation college students seeking teacher certification," Wright said.

Jerricia Ulmer, STEP/collaborative coordinator and academic adviser, serves

SOE GRANT: continued from page 1

as the academic adviser for STEP participants once they enroll at UHCL.

"The School of Education's Success Through Education Programs do target students traditionally underrepresented in higher education, including minority students, those who struggle with socio-economic obstacles, and those who are first-generation college students," Ulmer said. "Because of STEP's target demographic, it was used to connect UHCL with The Greater Texas Foundation's goals."

Eligible STEP students are given priority in the disbursement of the awards, but awards are not limited to students in STEP. First-generation School of Education students starting their first semester at UHCL are also eligible to receive the scholarship.

Applications for UHCL's School of Education scholarships are available in the SOE Academic Advising Office, Bayou Building, Room 1231, the SOE Web site or electronically from a STEP adviser. Applications packets are due in the UHCL Office of Student Financial Aid by noon, Friday, Oct. 26, 2007.

TECHNOLOGY: continued from page 1

Cole, a professor at Georgetown University Law Center, in his April 7, 2007, article in The Washington Post. "But for most classes, it is little more than an attractive nuisance. Technology has outstripped us on this one, and we need to reassess its appropriate and inappropriate role in teaching. The personal computer has revolutionized our lives, in many ways for the better. But it also threatens to take over our lives. At least for some purposes, unplugging may still be the best response."

Although incoming students at Georgetown University Law Center are now required to have laptops, Cole still decided to ban them from his classroom.

Cole discovered a "can you repeat the question?" phenomenon resulting from students being so engulfed in their laptops that they missed crucial lecture material and frequently asked him to backtrack. After repeating the question, the student's gaze went right back to the laptop screen "as if the answer might magically appear there."

On the other side of the coin, some professors feel that technology enhances the learning environment and can actually help students perform better once distraction is limited.

"Technology is fine, but the only problem that I find is that many times it can be distracting to the teacher in the sense that the students are not attentive," said Mohammad A. Rob, associate professor of management information systems in the School of Business. "As a human being, what you are hearing and what you are typing many times doesn't go together. As long as they go together in doing the job, like taking the notes, and if some people are fast enough and they type it up, I don't see any problem. In this time of technology, we should be positive."

In addition to professors who support bringing technology in to the classroom, many students also see the benefits.

"In my experience so far, I believe it is more a help than a hindrance to bring technology into the classroom," said Michael Phillips, graduate student in Management Information Systems and VP-committee coordinator for the

Student Government Association. "Once students are responsible enough to use it appropriately, it enhances the learning experience the classroom provides, especially when it comes to practical classes."

Laptops are not the only representation of technology. Something as simple as a tape or digital recorder is a piece of technology. Certain cell phones are equipped with Internet access and voice recording. Most digital cameras have video recording capability. In computer labs students have a computer available at every desk. PDAs and Blackberries are very common devices for people who intend to remain accessible at all times, including class time.

"I feel like students pay for the class time and also for their laptops, so I don't think it's fair to be banned from using what you pay for, however you choose to [use it]," said Sylvia Smith, education major. "Professors get to use their computers when they show slides or online videos and many of them use their Blackberries during class. I think it should be up to students to decide for themselves."

Not only is technology used in traditional classrooms, but with online courses and distance education, technology actually becomes the classroom.

"As an instructor of online classes, I know students enjoy the flexibility these classes offer instead of the necessity of meeting face to face every week," said Ann Pearson, distance education instructor at UHCL. "And, some students do very well keeping up with deadlines and the frequent frustrations of computers and the classroom software. As such, online classes can be extremely effective depending on the student."

"I'm afraid some students are under the impression that online classes will somehow be 'easier' than traditional classes, but if anything, these classes are more demanding and require far more self-discipline and focus on the student's part. I advise all of my students to communicate with me all the time to keep up and keep me informed of any potential problems. Technology is just another tool we use to help students succeed; we all have to use the tools wisely and well."

a business angle, feels that the faculty has a contract with the administration and that it need not be a priority for the policy to be fulfilled.

"Say you have a mortgage on your house," McCormack offered. "That's like a contract, just like our policy. Now, does the mortgage company say 'Were we on your priority list this year?' and the answer is, they really don't care, because they have a contract, just like the faculty feel like they have a contract. We're just saying 'You made a promise. It doesn't have to be a priority.'"

McCormack also contends that more than just immediate implementation of the one-ninth rate is due.

"I also feel we are owed back pay," McCormack asserted. "And interest and penalties. A policy is the law of the university. There is no wiggle room around a policy. If this happens, that happens. I have been reminded many, many times by the administration 'We need to follow policy; we must follow policy.' Well, here's a policy that they are not following."

Gorman makes it clear that this is not personal, but an issue of fairness, good faith and a desire to promote quality of life for the faculty.

"I get along very well with the president and Michelle Dotter, and the new provost seems like somebody very congenial," Gorman said. "You know, I've taught summer school every summer since this university began. It's important to me financially to be able to do that because my school, HSH, and my program, humanities and fine arts, is at or near the bottom of the pay scale. It would make a difference to me. [The faculty] try to act for the common good. And since we do, we ought to be honored with fair treatment when it comes to this pay policy."

Glen Houston, vice president of information resources, wants the faculty to know their concerns are being heard.

"Right now, I am working on strategic planning for the university and effort to progressively fund the summer pay policy is an important item on our list," Houston said.

Dotter claims that, regardless of the wording in the Faculty Handbook, faculty is to negotiate with their respective dean for the summer pay rate.

"You'll find, I think, in talking with the deans," Dotter said, "that they'll say 'Well, I don't have enough money to pay you [the one-ninth rate]. Will you teach this course for this dollar amount?' So, it's a little bit more of a negotiated rate, is my understanding from the deans."

When informed of this statement by Dotter concerning negotiation, Dupler looked perplexed.

"Where in the policy does it say that?" Dupler asked.

Dotter was asked to point out where in the faculty handbook it indicated faculty

PAY RATE : continued from page 1

was to negotiate with the dean for summer pay.

"I'm the financial person," Dotter explained. "I'm the wrong person to be talking to about that. We need to get you with some of the academic folks who do that on a regular basis. I don't know whether it is in there or not."

Howard Eisner, associate dean in the School of Human Sciences and Humanities, had this understanding of the matter.

"It is my understanding that until recently full-time faculty received one-twelfth of their nine-month salary for each summer course they taught," Eisner said. "Recently, that was modified to one-eleventh of their nine-month salary. Hence, there was not really any 'negotiating' between the faculty member and the dean. Every faculty member was treated alike."

Dupler says his reason for filing the grievance is mainly to clarify what policy means.

"We want to find out what having a policy on the book means," Dupler said. "Is a policy something everyone must follow or is it just for certain groups or people?"

It was noted that sometime between the denial of the grievance on Aug. 2, 2007, and two months later on Oct. 10, 2007, a sentence was added to the Faculty Handbook regarding summer pay. The new sentence reads, "Summer pay is subject to funding availability."

Houston was asked to explain how changes to the Faculty Handbook occur. He indicated that the same "Shared Governance" process through the University Council, with approval by the president that puts policy in the handbook, also makes additions or changes.

When asked for information about the process that added the new sentence to the handbook, Houston suggested checking with the Office of Communications.

"UHCL's policies are subject to review and revision by the university of Houston system. Including the office of General Council," said Karen Barbier, associate director of communications.

Oct. 15, 2007, Staples issued the following statement to all University Council members regarding the added sentence to the summer pay policy:

"Based on a review of UHCL's summer pay policy by the University of Houston System's Office of General Counsel, UH System Interim Chancellor John M. Rudley instructed me to revise the policy to indicate that summer pay at one-ninth of a faculty member's annual salary is subject to funding availability. As directed, we have added the following statement to section 3.4 of 6.10 Summer Pay Policy in the Faculty Handbook, 'Summer pay is subject to funding availability.'"

McCormack, Dupler and Gorman have appealed the grievance denial to the Board of Regents.

MD Anderson Blood Drive at UHCL



Melissa Bird: The Signal Staff

The UHCL Accounting Association hosted a blood drive Oct. 9 and 10. Vice president of the association, Candice Lacombe, gets her blood drawn by Allen Lee.



Heather Frame: The Signal Staff

Lucy: mankind's big breakthrough

Heather Frame
The Signal Staff

The Houston Museum of Natural Science is showcasing Lucy, the first hominid early human ancestor discovered, as part of its latest exhibit "Lucy's Legacy: The Hidden Treasures of Ethiopia."

Lucy, who is also known as Dinkesh to Ethiopian people, which translates to "you are beautiful," was discovered in Hadar, Ethiopia in 1974 by Arizona State University Professor Donald Johanson. Johanson's discovery helped scientists reveal which human trait developed first.

Before Lucy's discovery, scientists had several speculations as to what became the first human trait. They wondered whether the first human ancestors walked upright. When did the larger brains develop in relation to body size? Did they make and use tools? Did they develop a language?

Johanson's discovery of Lucy led scientists to the conclusion that the first human trait was walking upright, followed by developing larger brains.

"As we do our best to put these puzzle pieces together, we learn about ourselves and possibly move closer to answering the questions of our genus and our reason for being here," Johanson quoted in the Houston Museum of Natural Science media release.

Lucy's discovery led scientists to classify a new species of human ancestor known as Australopithecus afarensis, now better known as "southern ape of Afar." Afar is the specific region in which Lucy was discovered in Ethiopia. She is believed to be 3.2 million years old.

Ashley Hardage, an education major, is excited to learn of Lucy's visit to Houston.

"Evolution is definitely a hot topic for conversations, but it does make you think about where we came from and how we got here," Hardage said. "By people visiting the museum, they can make their own choices about what they think and feel about human ancestry."

Scientists determined that Lucy was a female because of several distinctions: the way her pelvis was positioned and her size. Lucy is believed to be about 3.5 feet tall and possibly weighed about 60 pounds. In 1974, Lucy's fossil was the most intact human ancestor ever found, with 40 percent of her skeleton preserved.

Lucy is smaller in shape and her skull is much smaller than that of a male. In 1994, a male afarensis was discovered and his skull and weight were double that of Lucy.

Dirk Van Tuerenhout, curator of anthropology at the Houston Museum of Natural Science, is proud to be a host to one of the greatest discoveries of human ancestry.

"Lucy's brain is small compared to ours, it is about one-third the size; however, there is no doubt that she walked upright full-time, just like we do and she remains to be very important in the study of human origins," Tuerenhout said.

Lucy received her English name the night she was discovered by Johanson when the song "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds" by the Beatles was played during the celebration of her discovery.

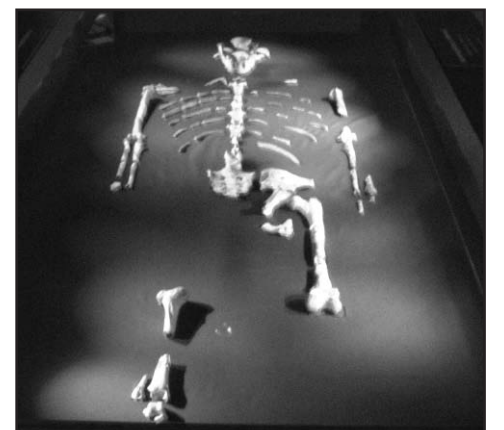
Ethiopia has always claimed to be the "cradle of mankind"; Lucy's discovery validates that claim. Ethiopia is unique in that it has had three tectonic plates slide away from one another, which helped to expose more fossils. Because of this exposure, it has been easier for scientists to discover fossils from earlier human ances-

try and other artifactual discoveries such as early stone tools, manuscripts, unique crosses and a Koran discovered in the city of Harar.

The discovery of Lucy has strengthened the relationship between the United States and Ethiopia, and with it has come many other discoveries in the field.

"U.S.-led research teams, as well as European and Ethiopian teams, have been searching for fossils ever since Lucy was found," Tuerenhout said. "I would say that one of the most important developments has been the training of Ethiopian-born scientists at schools abroad, and many have returned to Ethiopia to conduct field work over the last 20 years, many of whom have greatly contributed to our understanding of human origins."

Lucy will be on showcase daily until April 20, 2008. Anyone interested in visiting the museum to learn more about Lucy should log onto the Houston Museum of Natural Science at www.hmns.org or call (713) 639-4629. Tickets for this exhibition start at \$20 for adults; \$12 for children between the ages of 3 and 11; and \$12 for college students with a valid school I.D.



Heather Frame: The Signal Staff

A depiction of how Lucy may have looked.

Lucy's hominid remains found in Ethiopia.

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ARE YOU UP FOR THE CHALLENGE?

Photos & Text by Emily Jaschke

"Unity is strength,
knowledge is power and
attitude is everything."

Mantra of the Lance Armstrong Foundation



Sisters Brianna and Melanie Wood "Fight (cancer) for good."

The day breaks casting a golden halo over the city; the air is crisp and invigorating. The Texas capital stands majestic over Congress Avenue where 3,000 runners and walkers have united to honor the struggle, triumph and defeat of the millions upon which cancer encroaches.

The stalwarts, aged, youth, ailing, and canines are the fibers binding the massive yellow quilt blanketing the capital's front lawn. All listen intently as tennis great Andy Roddick and the founder of the movement himself, Lance Armstrong, inspire the crowd as to their purpose this morning and in the months to come.

Armstrong was diagnosed with cancer at age 25 and created the Lance Armstrong Foundation while undergoing treatment. Adopting the mantra of "living strong," he went on to become the seven-time winner of the Tour de France.

"This is the opportunity for Texas to step up," Armstrong said. "This a logical state and we have the best cancer research facilities in the country, if not in the world. We, as citizens, are going to invest this money and give the money to the best and brightest scientists in the world. We are going to make a difference."

This year marks the 11th year of the LIVESTRONG CHALLENGE and the 11th anniversary of Armstrong's first cancer diagnosis. More than \$39 million has been raised through events across the nation by tens of thousands of participants to date.

This year's series of running, walking and cycling events took place in Philadelphia, Pa., Aug. 25-26, and then headed to Portland, Ore., Sept. 29-30. This past weekend, Oct. 12-14 the challenge came home to Austin, Texas, with the 5K run/walk and the 10-, 40-, 60- or 90-mile ride.

"Cancer affects everyone," Armstrong pointed out at the end of his speech. "I thank you in advance for voting on November 6th in favor of Proposition 15."

Armstrong is hosting a statewide bus tour that began Oct. 13 to urge Texas voters to support legislation that could generate \$3 billion

dollars to cancer research if passed.

I personally take great pride as one of this year's 5,500 participants who aided in the grand total of \$3.8 million to help support the fight against cancer. For me it is more than raising money, it is honoring the 600,000 people who die every year from cancer. It is the inspiration I get from the suffering, yet jubilant children blowing bubbles from their pedicabs who are given a chance to participate in the 5K.

The stories you hear by being a part of that community and talking to people are amazing. Last year, there were five nationwide events in which a teenage boy recovering from leukemia participated in each challenge, accompanied by his entire family.

On Sunday, in Running Springs, emotions ran high as young children, 8 years old at best, crossed the finish line after cycling 10-plus miles. Equally amazing was the band of 30 cyclists who traveled eight days, totaling 2,400 miles, to Austin from Calgary, Alberta. Each sponsored a cancer-affected "warrior" at Saturday's 5K.

"She wants to walk across the finish line," said Graham Reiser as he pushed his wheelchair-bound warrior, Lynda Donaldson, "It was an honor to witness such a triumphant moment."

Immense gratification surges through my body when surrounded by thousands of dedications and the lengthy paper chain adorned with names of loved ones draped from corner to corner of the devotional tent, just one of the many activities in the LIVESTRONG Village.

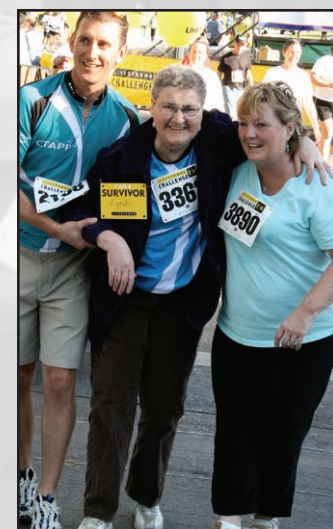
I added four names to the chain, honoring both my grandfathers, my grandma and my father. All "lived strong." The tinkering cowbells and whistles resonate fresh in my ear, I feel all warm and yellow inside.

For Lance Armstrong's entire speech, additional photographs and footage from Austin's LIVESTRONG CHALLENGE, please visit The Signal online at <http://www.uhcl.edu/thesignal>.

To register for next year's challenges, visit www.livestrongchallenge.org.



Armstrong displays patriotism during the national anthem moments before the 5K started.



Graham Reiser and Heather MacKay assist Lynda Donaldson cross the finish line.



A couple holding hands display the motto "unity is strength."



Pedicabs assist children living with cancer to participate in the 5K.



Canine friends join the LIVESTRONG CHALLENGE 5K.