

THE SIGNAL

Wings Over Houston
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Voting 2008



Jim Livesey: The Signal

A week before the election, early voters at the Freeman Library found themselves waiting in long lines that stretched around the building. Record numbers of voters turned out during early voting this year - 24,616 at the Freeman Library alone and 678,312 at all locations throughout Harris County. In addition to this number, 76,187 Harris County voters mailed in their ballots. For more information about voting and elections results, visit the Harris County Voter Web site at www.harrisvotes.com.

UHCL proposes expansion

Amy Garcia
The Signal Staff

Faculty and staff debated the pros and cons of going to a four-year institution at a meeting held Oct. 27.

The university filed a report with the UH System Board of Regents requesting planning authority for downward expansion. While the decision has not been made as to whether the university should go to a four-year institution, the report is the first step in getting approval.

At the meeting, administrators received positive and negative feedback. Some faculty voiced concerns over how the possible inclusion of freshmen and sophomores will affect the upper level programs.

Carl Stockton, senior vice president for academic affairs and provost assured faculty and staff that the university would maintain its mission to serve upper level and graduate students. Stockton said that 43 percent of current credit hours are graduate classes, so the atmosphere around campus should stay the same.

“The university, if we add freshmen and

sophomores, will still strongly support upper level and graduate education,” Stockton said.

One reason behind the proposed expansion is to attract local, graduating high school students and keep them enrolled all the way through college. Darlene Biggers, associate vice president of student services, spoke about how the transition from community college to an upper level university is as difficult as the transition from high school to college. Instead of losing those students in the community college to upper level transition, Biggers explained that the university could help them succeed by being there the whole way through the experience.

“Students shouldn’t have to go across the nation or state for a top notch school when there’s one in their backyard,” said Connie LaFayette, Student Government Association vice president-administration.

Within the next few weeks, the university will know if UHCL’s proposal for downward expansion will be included in the UH System’s December board meeting. If the proposal passes, the next step is the state legislature. If the proposal is approved by the state, then UHCL will be granted planning

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Students can earn their associate degree after transferring to UHCL

Kimberly Olivarez
The Signal Staff

The University of Houston-Clear Lake and San Jacinto Community College have partnered to give students reverse credit for the hours they take at UHCL. The reverse transfer agreement will allow former SJC students to transfer course work taken at UHCL to SJC in order to complete the requirements for an associate degree.

Students must have completed at least 24 credit hours with SJC and meet the college’s resident

credit requirements to be eligible. Students who earn an associate degree using the reverse transfer can also participate in the SJC graduation ceremony.

The agreement is an innovative approach to higher education. Usually, completed credit hours taken at a community college are transferred to an upper level university, not the other way around.

“Students earn an associate’s degree simply by pursuing their bachelor’s degree – the advantages are win-win,” said Catherine O’Brien, San Jacinto

College dean of teaching and learning. “It’s a measure of completion that can benefit them in building a resume, employment and higher earnings.”

Blinn Community College was the first to establish the reverse transfer agreement with Texas A&M University. SJC emulated the reverse agreement for their students and community. UHCL signed the agreement with SJC June 2. The program went into effect this semester. SJC plans to make reverse transfer agreements with other universities

Reverse: continued on page 10

Online degree audits available to students

Amy Parsons
The Signal Staff

A new feature called Degree Progress Report, available through E-services, now allows University of Houston-Clear Lake students to view their degree progress, or see how adding a minor or changing their degree plan would affect their current progress, without having to schedule an appointment with an academic adviser.

A DPR is an automated advising tool available to undergraduate students who were admitted to UHCL in fall 2004 or later and have completed 42 hours or more by the end of spring 2008. Graduate students will be able to access their DPR beginning January 2009.

The new online tool compares students’ completed coursework with their degree requirements

and produces a report detailing their degree completion progress. It also allows students to track requirements that have or have not been met, track exceptions or course substitutions, simulate degree plans or course changes using a “What-if” function, view lists of classes that may be taken to satisfy a requirement and track courses transferred to UHCL.

All features are working properly, except one: The feature allowing students to track transferred courses is not fully functioning for students who transferred to UHCL prior to fall 2008. As the system was implemented this semester, transfer courses will show correctly for students who enrolled this semester.

“It is a complex and tedious process because we have to build it from the ground up,” said

Audit: continued on page 10



Karen Raney: The Signal

Ayoade Olorunlero, a nursing student at University of Texas-San Antonio, celebrates with her guardian Pius Amani.

Series on diversity: Striving to succeed

Oraleyda Cantu
The Signal Staff

Every day different faces, young and old, fill our classrooms and halls where cultures mix into a big educational melting pot. UHCL prides itself on this. This semester, each issue of The Signal will focus on a different aspect of diversity on our campus. This third article in a series of five focuses on African-American students, the challenges they face and what each of their cultures brings to UHCL.

“Diversity helps the well-being of the university and the community,” explained Everett Penn.

As expressed by Penn, diversity in all aspects of society, from economics to race to gender, makes an impact on society as a whole.

“Challenges I see students face, and perhaps more so for African-American students, is

the lack of social networks that will allow them to readily use the skills they have gained at UHCL,” Penn said.

Intrigued by many of the issues that concern African-Americans, Penn has used his criminology background to research young African-American males.

Penn published his first book, “Race in Juvenile Justice” in 2006. His motive and drive to find the answer as to why young African-American males made up a high percentage of the criminals in his experiences as a private investigator for the District of Columbia inspired him to choose the field of criminology as a profession. During his research on challenges and obstacles faced by African-Americans, Penn found some of the issues come from lack of social networks.

“Today it is not uncommon for students to graduate with a

Diversity: continued on page 10

The Times They May Be A-Changin: UHCL to consider transition to four-year university

The University of Houston-Clear Lake has submitted a proposal to the University of Houston System Chancellor and Board of Regents for permission to have planning authority toward making UHCL a four-year institution.

If approved, it will go to the state legislature. UHCL will then examine the issues involved with this potential change.

Examining the issues involved does not mean that the plan is set, but to get to this point it is obvious that a great deal of thought has already gone into the proposal. It is a long process merely to have the authority to research the subject. But what discussion has occurred? Who is backing this and what future do they see for UHCL?

To The Signal staff, a decision like this is anything but clear-cut. It could, in the end, help transform UHCL into a school that fits the needs of a larger group of students. It would increase our operating budget and the number of programs offered, and it would bring sports programs and all of the activities that are normally associated with a university of our caliber.

It could allow UHCL to attract faculty that may not have considered us in the past and broaden the entire educational base of the Houston area. It could do a lot of things. Many of which could turn this university into an even better institution.

What it would do for sure is change the university we have all chosen, because there is no way the character of the school, as it now exists, could remain with the

changes that will be needed to convert UHCL into a four-year institution.

What we are looking at is creating a new university that shares the name with the old one. More buildings will be built, programs will change, and many of the reasons we found ourselves at UHCL may go away.

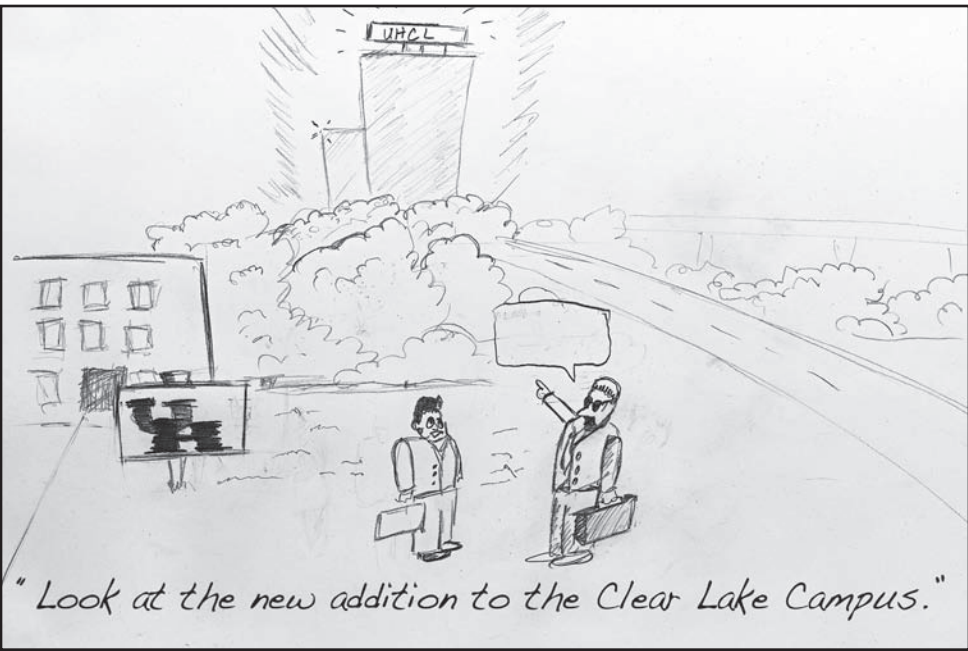
We are all at UHCL for a reason. Most of us at least considered going to the main campus at some point; it is only 22 miles away. A choice to attend UHCL was made by each of us.

This choice may have been about the price, the travel or the caliber of programs at UHCL. For many, it is an opportunity to work toward a bachelor degree after graduating from a community college. We have the chance to study at a university that makes us feel welcome and one that has an open admissions policy.

If we chose to attend UHCL because it was the school closest to home, then that same reasoning will hold. If we came because of the open admissions policy, then what happens when we are faced with the same admission policies of other four-year universities?

What does this mean for current students? The short answer is not much. If these changes take place, it will not be until at least 2011. Also, it is important to remember that right now the proposal is merely to consider the change. So it is the potential future students of UHCL that may be impacted by this change.

These future students are our brothers



Jeff Meier: The Signal

and sisters, sons and daughters so it is important that we keep informed about this process and not be afraid of asking questions. We all need to listen to the facts then stand up and speak our minds.

The Signal staff is looking forward to the possibilities that this could open up for UHCL, yet at the same time urge caution and thoughtfulness in proceeding in this investigation. We need to look at the good that could come from this and to be honest with ourselves about the bad, then make the best choice for the right reasons.

For now there is just not enough information about the proposal to make a

decision, and in the end the UH System may not want another four-year university so close to the main campus. If we do receive permission to investigate the possibilities, this should not end up being a decision made in a back room, by a select group. It needs to be a decision we all have input on and it should take into account the special place UHCL has held in the community. Remember, this is the university we made the choice to attend.

Be informed, be vocal, or the choice will be made for you.

Cross Signals

The Signal staff members share their opinions on the 2008 election. Join the discussion by logging on to The Signal blog at:
www.myspace.com/signal_UHCL

How do you feel about the outcome of the election?



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The Signal is a public forum and will print letters to the editor subject to the following: letters must be no longer than 500 words. Where necessary, letters will be edited for grammar, spelling and style requirements. Letters must be signed and include the writer's full name, address and phone number. The editors reserve the right to refuse letters, announcements and contributed articles deemed libelous.

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Individual fashion and culture collide

Srishti Saini
The Signal Staff

Fashion is an expression of individuals, special groups and cultures. Fashion is important as a means of interpreting social attitudes and values in a particular period of time. To the individual woman, fashion may be a means of expressing a particular element of her personality. Rich colors and luminous accessories may suit an extrovert personality.

On the other hand, beliefs can be powerful forces that affect our health and capacity to heal. This is often in conflict with fashion; whether personal or cultural, fashion and culture usually affect us in modifying our behavior. It refers to contemporary mass culture, and all of the influences that color it – current slang, movies, television, music, products and technology. It implies a widespread familiarity with common entertainment and consumer items, and will vary from one generation to the next as these things change.

Some may feel more comfortable following a trend set for them. Glamorous fashion magazines or celebrities set these fashion trends. Others may express their individuality by creating their own fashion.

For each generation, fashion is different from their parents’ fashion. Skirts have gone from ridiculously long to ridiculously short and back again. Men’s trousers have been baggy, skinny, flared and bell-bottomed, not to mention worn backwards or hanging down past hips. Hair has been long, short, shaved, spiked, and streaked.

Culture reflects patterns of human activity and the symbolic structures that give such activities significance and importance. Cultures are systems of symbols and meanings that even their creators contest. They lack fixed boundaries, are constantly in flux and both interact and compete with one another.

Similarly, fashion creates a sense of self-satisfaction and self-awareness. Fashion attracts the opposite sex and makes a person more appealing. A fashion statement can make us appear sexy, trashy, classy, modern and frumpy or what we will.

Fashion gives each of us an opportunity to accent our personalities and characters by providing us with clothing and accessories that constitute our appearance. All of us want to mark our individuality and be distinguished from the crowd. Fashion is one of the ways to do this.

One reason to follow fashion is because people us better when we are well dressed. It should not happen, but it does; people have prejudices and will form opinions based on the way we look. By taking pride in our appearance, we show the people we meet that we care about how people view us and that we have respect for ourselves.

Fashion is not just about how we look; it is about how clothes make us feel. Dress like a supermodel and we instantly feel gorgeous, glamorous and more confident.

Contrarily, culture is not one of life’s luxuries: it is life itself. It is all the ways of life including arts, beliefs and institutions of a population that are passed down from generation to generation. Since life is implemented with culture as well, culture

covers all aspects a human might come upon during his life from language, politics, and economic systems; traditions, behavior, religion; even fashion and food. Culture becomes the medium through which we perceive and evaluate the world around us. Fashion and culture are completely intermingled with each other. Fashion is a huge part of the artifacts, behaviors, values, customs and shared beliefs members of

“Fashion plays such a large role in our culture because it is the basis, or foundation, in all that we do.”

- Srishti Saini
The Signal Reporter

society use to cope with their world or one another, and passed down to the next generation. Fashion plays such a large role in our culture because it is the basis, or foundation, in all that we do. Fashion sets the standards in society. All of civilization tries to match their clothing, mannerisms, pets, and the food they eat to what is known at that time to be fashionable.



Srishti Saini
The Signal

Tell Me About It

by Carolyn Hax



Opus

by Berkeley Breathed



BIG DREAMS WITHIN REACH

Dreaming Tree bears new fruit

Amanda Fittge
The Signal Staff

Ever dreamed of a career in filmmaking but believed that experience and opportunities for exposure were only for the Hollywood types? Thanks to Dreaming Tree Films, the chance to be part of the movie-making process is now within reach.

"It is important not only to be book smart, students also need to gain hands-on experience so they will pursue opportunities outside of just what the university has to offer," said Alana Bardauskis, publicity spokeswoman for Dreaming Tree Films.

Dreaming Tree Films was developed out of a desire to empower youth with the experience and confidence they need to find their dream job. What began as an after school program in Chicago, now spans across the country to teens and young adults with a passion for creativity.

"Not all participants become filmmakers, but all take with them the experience and confidence that they can do anything," said Aviva Kleiner, marketing director for Dreaming Tree Films.

Dreaming Tree Films partners with sponsors who want to make a difference in the lives of future innovators. Each program harnesses the creativity of hardworking, self-motivated students and pairs them with peer interns who have previously participated in one of the programs. The result is, from start-to-finish, student-made films.

Programs such as Fresh Films, designed to equip and guide students to produce cinematic genius, and Got Noise, the newest program being launched in March 2009 that pairs students with musician Usher on his next music video, are geared toward 14 to 19 year olds, but there are great opportunities for young adults up to 24 years old.



Dreaming Tree Films: Courtesy

The Dallas crew on the set of this year's winning film "Saturday." (From left to right: Brent Coble, Devon Saber, Randy Champagne, Taylor Washington, Ashley Stephens, Annelica Parent, John Dunne, Jean Luc Kradin)

For example, throughout the year the Dreaming Tree Web site posts calls for new designs. The design competitions range from clothing to fresh Web site ideas. Anyone up to 24 can enter.

There is also an opportunity for this age group to have their screenwriting produced. Each year in February, students can submit their completed screenplay in the genres of drama, comedy or action. Nine of the submitted works are produced as part of a national competition under the Fresh Films program. Out of those nine, the film/screenplay that receives the most votes in the online poll goes on to be shown at the AFI Film Festival in Hollywood. Along with the online vote, the films are reviewed by a juried panel of professionals in the film industry. This year's panel consisted of celebrities such as Sean Astin and Tom Skerritt.

Another great opportunity for the college-age crowd

comes from a program entitled Fresh Sounds. Fresh Sounds offers musicians a chance for their music to be featured in one of the student films. A collaboration of approximately 30 student songs is sent with each film crew for possible use in their movie. If an artist's work is chosen, Dreaming Tree Films pays the musician for rights to use their song in the movie.

The core philosophy of Dreaming Tree Films is to encourage growth as both an artist and a person, resulting in individuals who will then be able to go out into the world and accomplish whatever they dream.

"The goal of Dreaming Tree Films is empowerment, putting the tools in their hands," Kleiner said. "If we open one door for them, they open five more for themselves."

Film festival showcases independent filmmakers

Amanda Fittge
The Signal Staff

CALLING ALL MOVIE BUFFS; the annual Gulf Coast Film & Video Festival will be held Friday, Nov. 14, through Sunday, Nov. 16. The original September dates had to be pushed back due to Hurricane Ike. Not even a hurricane can deter die-hard film fans from this 9th annual festival that welcomes everyone.

The Gulf Coast Film & Video Festival showcases work from independent filmmakers from all over the world. It is a great opportunity for all in attendance to meet filmmakers, actors, directors, producers and other admirers of the film and the video industry.

The event's wide range of audience members includes not only spectators and other filmmakers, but celebrity guests as well. Each year, a celebrity in the film industry is invited as a guest speaker. This year's guest speaker is Erin Gray. Gray is best known for her portrayal of Colonel Wilma Deering from the 1979 television show "Buck Rogers."

Along with the guest speaker, the event draws attention from local television personalities and community leaders in the film industry who will serve as presenters for the event. Houston Film Commissioner Rick Ferguson, Channel 11 KHOU's Nellie Gonzales, Channel 8 PBS's Ernie Manouse, and Channel 26 FOX's Emmy Award winner Robin Craig, will be among the presenters.

The event was founded nearly 10 years ago by actor Hal Wixon. Wixon's love for independent films was the

driving force behind the festival.

"We are here to promote independent filmmaking and independent films," Wixon said. "For the majority of filmmakers, this is much more than a hobby; they plan to make it their career."

Andrew Elam, a student at San Jacinto Community College-Central campus whose collaborative work entitled *Walk With Me God* is being shown at the festival, agrees with Wixon.

"Who wouldn't want to go to work everyday doing what they love?" Elam said.

Elam believes the festival is a great opportunity to add to his resume for the University of California at Los Angeles where he plans to continue his studies in motion picture arts and pursue a career in filmmaking.

For this very reason, Wixon intends for the annual event to promote these aspiring artists and give them the recognition they deserve for their hard work. Some of the filmmakers showcased over the past years have gone on to work in Los Angeles and have been featured at other international

independent film festivals.

A buffet mixer will be held at 7 p.m. Friday, Nov. 14 at Villa Capri Restaurant in Seabrook. The screening of the films will begin Saturday morning and continue through Sunday evening at San Jacinto Community College-Central campus in Pasadena. There will also be an awards dinner Saturday from 6:30 to 10 p.m. at Bailey's American Grille in Seabrook.

"Who wouldn't want to go to work everyday doing what they love?"

- Andrew Elam
Student at San Jacinto
Community College-Central



Gulf Coast Film Fest: Courtesy

ERIN GRAY

For the full schedule of events and screening times of the films, along with pricing and any additional information, visit Gulf Coast Film & Video Festival's Web site at www.gulfcoastfilmfest.com, e-mail them at whiteriverrock@webtv.net, or contact them by phone at 281-333-5804.

Artist brings Hopi pottery traditions to campus

Amy Carr
The Signal Staff

Rachel Sahmie, a fifth generation Hopi potter, has been creating pottery since she was a little girl. On Oct. 29-31, Sahmie visited the University of Houston-Clear Lake to give students a workshop on how to create Hopi pottery using traditional Native American techniques that have been passed down from generation to generation. “I’m really blessed to have a job that I love,” Sahmie said. “I’m thankful for being able to share what I do with others.” Sahmie lives approximately 300 miles from Santa Fe, Ariz. where the Hopi people have lived for at least 2,000 years. The oldest inhabited Hopi village in the United States is the Village of Arriving, a Hopi reservation. The Hopi are peaceful people and did not make good warriors. In the late 1600s, they sent a delegation to the neighboring Tewa people, who were good warriors, and said “if you will send some people back out to Hopi to help protect us, we will give some land in return and you can live with us.” Around 1700, a delegation of 100 Tewa people walked for 300 miles from the Rio Grande to the Hopi pueblos. The Hopi people had land waiting for the Tewa people, and on that land they settled as protectors of the Hopi. This is how the Tewa and the Hopi people came together. Sahmie has a mixed Hopi background with a substantial Tewa background. The inheritance comes from the mother; it is a matriarchal society. There is a mesa in Arizona called “Black Mesa.” There are formations that look like three fingers coming off of it that are called First Mesa, Second Mesa and Third Mesa. Back in that time period pottery was made at all three mesas, but for the last 150 years most pottery is made at the First Mesa. This is where Sahmie lives. “There is a wealth of information that comes from the Native American pottery,” said Nick de Vries, professor of art.

Sahmie has been molding pottery for more than 30 years. When she first started, she would take old images and designs and create the pots in a more modern way. Her mother did not approve of this technique, so Sahmie’s newer pots go back to the traditional style. “Some of the newest potters are technically extraordinary; they are so perfect that it looks like a decal and you don’t get the energy,” said Craig Oettinger, associate professor of sociology. “Rachel’s pots aren’t perfect and so they have energy to them and they are attached to the older tradition. She is a master at doing that and it’s an honor to have her here.” Sahmie’s pottery is all natural. She uses grey and yellow clay; once the clay is fired it turns red. Sahmie’s husband, Claude Pahona, helps her gather the clay. “We go to Jeddito to dig it out and it is really a simple process to get the clay ready,” Sahmie said. “We don’t add anything to it; we just collect the clay and dry it out. When it’s dry, we soak it in a bucket and it melts down and then we put it through a strainer to take the roots and rocks out. The clay that we get I pour into a pillow case and tie it and lay it on the ground allowing the excess water to seep out. It takes about a day and I’ll check it until it gets to the consistency I can work with.” Sahmie uses the coil method to make her pots and sets it in her “pookie” as she molds her pottery. A “pookie” is used to prepare the beginning form of the pot so it will not fall apart; it looks like a bowl. After the pot has dried completely, she uses sandstone to sand it down so it becomes smooth and then polishes it with a river stone. She applies her designs on the pot by freehand with a Yaka brush. The paint she uses is made from a bee plant, which she gathers in the spring with her husband. Sahmie and Pahona pick and boil it, then eat the plant. They usually



Nick de Vries: Courtesy

Above: Rachel Sahmie and Claude Pahona place sheep manure and pottery shards into the fire over the students’ pottery.



Nick de Vries: Courtesy

Left: The students’ finished pottery on display.

gather a bunch and store it for the winter months. As she steams the plant, the broth from the plant reduces and it boils down to a consistency of elastic. She waits for it to get thick and then pours it onto corn husks and waits for it to dry. It dries very hard, but it is sticky. She mixes it with water on a rock palette and it turns into black paint. “In our tradition, what we take we usually try to give back,” Sahmie said. “We were brought up that way. When I go to fire I stick little pots in there, so I can leave those where I gather my clay.” The process of firing for Sahmie takes place outdoors on the ground. She builds a fire with charcoal and sheep manure. The sheep manure comes in slabs and she has to chip it down to the size of a slice of bread. Crumbs fall off and she sprinkles them on top of the charcoal and then places all of her pottery over the fire, covering each piece with pottery shards. She places the large pieces of sheep manure into the fire and waits for it to turn to ashes. After it is done burning she waits about an hour

for it to cool and then she gets to uncover it and polish the pots. The traditional way the Hopi potters polished their pots was by using fat from mutton. Sahmie found that Crisco does the same thing, so that is what she uses to give her pots shine. “Members of my family have fired their pottery in the kiln,” Sahmie said. “Some of the really famous potters in my family are doing that now; I guess it gives them satisfaction, but I just prefer to keep it the traditional way.” Sahmie’s mother passed away three weeks ago. She was very close to her mother and her death has not been easy on Sahmie, but she continues to stay positive and share her pottery with many people. “This for my mother; she told me to continue and it will take you places,” Sahmie said. “She was a great teacher and without her I don’t think I could create like I do.”

Getting Inked: it’s more than just skin deep

Ashley Helms
The Signal Staff

Tattoos have been around for centuries. Even so, they are still not accepted as part of our mainstream culture. Often times those who bare a tattoo are viewed as a delinquent or are told they will never get a good job. Tattooing is an art form that goes much further than skin deep. The art of tattooing dates back to 2000 B.C. where it was used for tribal customs in many different parts of the world. There is a myriad of reasons people have gotten tattoos including: magical protection, to relieve pain, vengeance, or as a marking of a crime. “Historically, tattoos were created to beautify, shock or humiliate and they could proclaim valor, religious belief, group solidarity or personal independence,” said Vince Hemingson, creator of the World’s Largest Online Tattoo Museum. “Tattoos are now part of everyday society with over 60 percent of all North Americans aged 18 to 30 years old having at least one tattoo.” In a study conducted by Health Canada between 1960 and 1980, the number of U.S. women who were tattooed quadrupled. Many people get tattoos as reminders. “I got my first tattoo when I was 18,” said Michelle Rodriguez, 22. “I wanted something to remember the fun times my friends and I had in high school before we

all went our separate ways. Your memory can only last for so long.” Gabriel Ayala Sr., 31, is the manager and head artist at Mainline Ink. He has been tattooing since he was 14 years old. He feels like there are some people who still have the mentality “hey, let’s go party and get a tattoo.” Ayala says that is good for business but he wishes people put a little more thought into it. His advice is to always think about a tattoo before getting one. He reminds people interested in getting a tattoo to thoroughly research the artist by looking through their profile, asking around, and by paying attention to the way he or she works. “You know, a lot of people come in here expecting things to be a certain way and don’t even think about the artist,” Ayala said. “They don’t realize we’re normal people too. A lot of artists are single fathers trying to raise their families. We’ve all got the same problems everyone else has – we just learn how to put it away to better serve our customers.” Stephen Yates, 25, owner of Mainline Ink, or Steve-O as most people know him, started his own tattoo shop at 22 years old. Before he was a tattoo artist, he was a volunteer firefighter. Yates wanted a career



Ashley Helms: The Signal

Tattoo artist Steve-O finishes up a tattoo on Becky Bowman.



Ashley Helms: The Signal

Gabriel Ayala Sr., teaches his son, Gabriel Ayala Jr., the art of tattooing.

that he knew he would always love. “I’ve been tattooing for almost four years now, and I will never stop,” Yates said. “I like the idea that even if I were to die tomorrow that I’ll be remembered on a countless number of bodies.” Steve-O also believes that there are a few misconceptions of tattooed people and their artists. “A lot of people assume we’re all ex-cons and drug addicts,” Yates said. “While some are, not all of us fall under that category. It’s not a party all the time, there’s a time for the fun and a time to be serious. I’ve tattooed everyone from lawyers to doctors. I have a friend who is a general manager of a five-star restaurant and he has a whole sleeve done.” For some, tattoos are much more than

body art; they’re about gaining confidence. “I think tattoos can completely change the way a person feels about their own selves,” Ayala said. “I once tattooed this guy who had acne real bad on his back. Once the tattoo was done he was much more confident, much happier. He started walking around with his shirt off more, and eventually he got married. It was pretty amazing how much of a change the tattoo caused for him.” Author Jack London once said, “show me a man with a tattoo and I’ll show you a man with an interesting past.”

WINGS OVER HOUSTON

Story and Photos by:
Andrea Drake

Most of the Clear Lake area was able to see part of the airshow, but on Oct. 25 the crowd at Ellington Field had the best seats of all.

The Wings Over Houston Airshow was a very patriotic event. The National Anthem was performed over the intercom, joined by singing from the crowd, while skydivers flew in holding the American flag, followed by the Texas flag.

The stars of the airshow were the Thunderbirds. The jets were poised at attention on the airstrip waiting for their time slot in the sky; even parked, there was precision involved.

While the crowd waited for the Thunderbirds, remote control airplanes entertained them. The first remote control airplane was a witch, in the spirit of Halloween. Next was a lawn mower; pretty amazing that it was able to fly. The cost for one of the remote control planes was about \$20,000.

A daredevil flying father and son team, Sean and Erick Tucker, relied on precision and faith in each others' flying abilities in their biplanes. The Tucker men

flew their bright red and white airplanes through the smoke trails and dared to meet in the middle.

An Apache helicopter demonstration also impressed the audience. Several helicopters flew in several directions. It was amazing that none of them hit each other.

It was a beautiful day for an airshow. The crowd casually walked around the base checking out the vintage planes, rescue planes and a NASA plane.

One of the largest planes there had a huge wingspan. It was so large that later in the day people sat in their lawn chairs under the wings to take advantage of the shade. The airshow had vintage airplanes on display from WWII, the NASA Boeing 747 shuttle carrier, Coast Guard and Apache helicopters.

The Disabled American Veterans organization was there, handing out stickers and papers with airplane facts. U.S. Rep. Nick Lampson spoke about the veterans of America.

"Our troops' fight should not continue in hospitals all across



Andrea Drake:The Signal

This C-130 J, part of the Air Force Reserve Command's arsenal, was used in the search and rescue efforts after Hurricane Ike.



Andrea Drake:The Signal

This T-38 Talon is flown by NASA astronauts from Houston's Johnson Space Center to Kennedy Space Center in Florida.

this country to receive the care they were promised," Lampson said. He was cheered loudly by everyone there, especially the DAV.

The airshow not only showed amazing planes and helicopters, it also raised money for a scholarship program. This program awarded four local students a total of \$15,000 to continue their education in aviation. This scholarship was a small portion of the generosity from the Houston airshow. On Friday, Oct. 23, children and adults with disabilities were given a special airshow.

There were plenty of

concession stands and souvenir stands for the crowd to enjoy. The day of the airshow was hot, but most of the crowd stayed to watch every plane in the show. One older gentleman walked by and looked like he was about to pass out from the heat, "I would like to go home because it is too hot," said Ken Booth.

The airshow was a successful tribute honoring the brave men and women who served in past wars and for those who are serving today. For more information about Wings Over Houston, including the scholarship program, visit www.wingsoverhouston.com.

Ike needs a home

Story and photos by:
Karen Raney



Karen Raney:The Signal

Ike, a labrador retriever-smooth collie mix, showed up in the parking lot of BAPA as they were preparing to evacuate for the hurricane.



Karen Raney:The Signal

Chulla, a schnauzer, was found after the hurricane. The staff at BAPA discovered a microchip embedded in her skin, and she is consequently being returned to her owner this week.

When Hurricane Ike slammed into the Gulf Coast, it displaced defenseless animals as well as humans.

Bay Area Pet Adoption, located in San Leon, is a non-profit organization that rescues dogs and cats from the Bay Area and houses them until a loving home is found. They were formally known as The Bay Area SPCA. Karen Morris is the Bay Area Chapter President and spends most of her time at the shelter.

“The cat house had several feet of water,” Morris said. “The administrative building lost its roof; however, a contractor donated his time and replaced the roof this week.”

When the news broke that Hurricane Ike was heading towards Galveston, BAPA had to find a way to transport and shelter around 101 pets. Their original and approved plans of housing the animals at NASA were turned down without explanation on Wednesday afternoon, Morris said.

“The shelter frantically convoyed the animals to the Houston SPCA to ride out the storm, then to Katy for five days and, finally, to Galveston for one night,” Morris said.

Upon returning to Galveston, Morris went back to the shelter and began trying to get the water pumps working. Her biggest challenge was electricity;

however she was able to get the pumps back to operational status in one day. The staff was then able to move the animals back home.

“I tried to avoid the busy roads for the sake of one of my convoy drivers and ended up getting lost at one point in the Heights,” Morris said.

As the volunteers and staff were loading the cars late Wednesday night to evacuate to Houston, a small dog walked into the parking lot. They could not leave him behind so they took him in and named him Ike. Ike is a Labrador Retriever-smooth Collie mix, with a playful temperament.

The shelter has also taken in animals from owners who have nothing left after the hurricane.

“One man fell apart when he left his Weimaraner” Morris said.

BAPA works with local pure bred organizations and quickly found a home for this dog.

The staff had many stories of how the animals came to the shelter.

The animal control officers found Chulla, a miniature Schnauzer, in Deer Park after Hurricane Ike. Kim Stevens, kennel technician, realized the Terrier-mix had a microchip. After scanning the chip, the shelter was able to make contact with Chulla’s family. Chulla will be joining her family this week.

Annie is a puppy that was brought to the shelter by some construction workers. It was soon discovered that the rest of her brothers and sisters were in a shelter in Galveston. Annie has a fractured femur on her hind leg. She needs immediate surgery that will cost \$300-500 by a veterinarian who does not specialize in that type of surgery or \$1200-1500 to have an orthopedic surgeon repair her femur. BAPA is looking for donations to help offset her surgery.

Kelly, a Black Mouth Cur, was found early one morning by the BAPA front gate. Kelly has a fractured pelvis and is also in need of surgery. The cost of her surgery is also \$1200-1500.

“Kelly and Annie are sweet dogs and looking for a home after their surgery,” said Corey Broach, a kennel technician at the shelter.

It takes many man hours to run this center. The kennels are cleaned and sanitized on a daily basis. Many of the animals have come to the shelter with illnesses such as heartworms; these treatments cost the center \$250 each.

The center takes dogs to PetSmart on 646 at I-45 every weekend to look for adoptive homes.

“The center is in need of volunteers to take the animals to PetSmart on the weekends and sit with them,” Morris said.

One of the buildings sustained major damage. Morris is trying to get grant money to repair the building; however, she needs to have a contractor give her an estimate for the repairs. She realizes that contractors are in short supply, but hopes someone will come in and give her a bid.

The center’s major fundraiser, Woofstock, will be held Nov. 8 at Clear Lake Park. Woofstock will showcase many events this year including: dog games, competitions, breed rescue groups and microchipping. This year they will celebrate military dogs. Families can bring their dog with them for the festivities. Admission is \$10 for individuals and \$25 for families.

For more information about BAPA, visit their Web site at www.bayareapetadoptions.org.



Karen Raney:The Signal

Top: Annie, a collie mix, held by Coery Broach, needs surgery on her broken femur. Left: Oscar, a Jack Russel Terrier mix, peeks out of his kennel for a quick nose snub.



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Tuesday, November 11th (Presentations)

Tuesday, November 18th (Voting)

SSCB Lecture Hall 1.100.03, 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

For more information contact the SGA Executive Council:

Patrick Cardenas – President
Steven Steiner – VP Committee Coordinator
Jessica Williams – VP Outreach & Communications
Connie LaFayette – VP Administration

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CAMPUS
CALENDAR

November 10
Speaker: Leading/Managing an Educational Institution, 11:30 a.m.-12:45 p.m., Bayou Forest Room
E-mail uhcltma@gmail.com to register or for more information.

November 11 – 13
UHCL Harvest Crafts Fair, 10 a.m.-8 p.m., Bayou Atrium II
Call 281-283-3035 or 281-283-3023 for information.

November 11
Veteran’s Day Celebration, 10:30 a.m.-noon, SSCB/Liberty Park
Call 281-283-2021 for information.

Workshop: NSLS: From Rock Bottom to Rock Solid, 6-7:30 p.m., SSCB 1.202.07
Call 281-283-2611 for information.

November 12
LGBT Support Group, 4-5 p.m., Location TBA

Workshop: How to Stay “Well” & Healthy During the Holidays, noon-1 p.m., SSCB 3.307
Call 281-283-2410 for information.

November 14
OPEN ENROLLMENT FOR SPRING 2009 BEGINS

Workshop: Resumes & Interviewing, 9-10 a.m., Bayou 2504
Call 281-283-2590 for information.

Cultural Arts Event:
Lucia y Valdemar’s Gitanerias Flamencos featuring Teo Morca, 8 p.m., Bayou Theater
Tickets w/UHCL ID: \$5 presale, \$7 at the door
Call 281-283-2560 for information.

November 15
F&SS Screening: Dark Knight, 7 p.m., SSCB Lecture Hall
Tickets: \$3.75 general admission
Call 281-283-2560 for information.

November 17
Workshop: IIE & Fulbright – Study Abroad Opportunities & Funding, 3 p.m., Bayou 1335
Call 281-283-2550 for information.

November 18
IISS presents Global Expo, noon-5 p.m., Bayou Atrium II
Call 281-283-2575 for information.

Workshop: Networking Strategies, 4-5 p.m., SSCB 3.308
Call 281-283-2590 for information.

November 19
Workshop: Salary Negotiation, 4-5 p.m., SSCB 3.308
Call 281-283-2590 for information.

November 20
Workshop: Networking Strategies, 10-11 a.m., Bayou 2504
Call 281-283-2590 for information.

Speaker: Foreign Services, 3 p.m., Bayou 1335
Call 281-283-2550 for information.

November 21
Workshop: Salary Negotiation, 10-11 a.m., Bayou 2104
Call 281-283-2590 for information.

2nd Annual Minority Speakers Day, 6-8 p.m., Bayou Garden Room
E-mail apisa.uhcl@gmail.com for information.

November 26 – 29
THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

FOR MORE UPCOMING EVENTS ON CAMPUS,VISIT WWW.UHCL.EDU.



Shay Davis
Fitness Zone

Recreational sports are important to the quality of life and communities. It has been long associated with benefits to health such as heart disease, diabetes and bowel cancer. It also helps decrease overweight and obesity numbers with regular physical activity among people and communities.

Recreational sports have been reported as changing lives. The activities create positive outcomes such as confidence, self-respect, self-esteem, trust, self reliance and leadership abilities.

“Over the last 15 years however, sports, outdoor pursuits and constructive leisure activities have been a well established feature of initiatives whose aim is to divert offenders and young people at risk away from crime” (Eastleigh, 2007). Therefore, participating in recreational activities can help young men and women stay away from crime and can become leaders.

Recreational sports provide challenges and adventures for individuals. In the economic aspect, promoting physical activity for employees makes good business sense. As for college students, recreational sports programs and activities are correlated with overall

The importance of recreational activities

college satisfaction and success. Students become more socially oriented than other students who don’t participated in recreational sports.

Other benefits of recreational sports include reduction of stress, improvement of happiness, build character, improve interaction with diverse sets of people, and contribute to time management.

Recreation is essential to the longevity of humans because it assists with lowering stress levels. Organized recreational activities can be found at local parks, YMCA’s, churches, and other community facilities. These types of programs are successful because they include recreation for the entire family.

Regular family activities can help everyone become more active and healthier. This gives both parents and children the opportunity to interact as a family and have fun together. In addition, some community facilities include senior citizen programming.

Indoor recreational programs can include martial arts, table tennis, racquetball, bowling, indoor swimming, indoor treadmills, indoor bicycling, arts and crafts, indoor skating, and more.

Outdoor recreational programs can include running, hiking, jump roping, canoeing, volleyball, basketball, football, Frisbee

tossing, swimming, amusement parks, bike riding, and much more.

Here at the University of Houston-Clear Lake, Fitness Zone is dedicated to implementing various recreational activities on and off campus. We offer programming such as Volleyball Game Day, Open Table Tennis Games, Tennis, Flag Football Game Day, March Madness Shootout, Basketball Tournament and more. These programs are offered throughout the summer, fall and spring semesters.

For more information on any of the programs, please contact the Fitness Zone at 281-283-2410 or check our Web site at www.uhcl.edu/fitnesszone. Suggestions of programs are always welcomed by e-mailing daviss@uhcl.edu.

Upcoming recreational programs offered by Fitness Zone:

- Open Table Tennis Games – November 5-7
- Tennis Game Day – November 13-14
- Basketball, Flag Football and more – Spring Semester



Tuesday, November 11, 2008
10:30 a.m. – noon

Student Services and Classroom Building/Liberty Park
Bayou Building if inclement weather

Program Highlights:

- Honor guard performed by Jr. ROTC of Clear Lake High School
- Photographic and story displays of veterans & their families
- Helicopter flyover by Army National Guard from Ellington Field
- Vintage military vehicles & equipment preserved by Bluebonnet Military Motor Pool
- Recognition of U.S. Army presented by 1st Battle Training Brigade, 75th BCT Division, U.S. Army Reserve
- And much more!

For more information, contact the UHCL Office of Alumni and Community Relations at 281-283-2024.

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Diwali: Festival of Lights



Jessica Williams:The Signal

Known as the festival of lights, Diwali is one of India’s biggest events. The lights represent hope and positive thinking as well as the victory of good over evil. Diwali is observed over a 5 day period, the third day being a New Year celebration. The Indian Students Association brought this event to the UHCL campus Nov. 1. The festivities, which included traditional Indian food, music, dancing, and an assortment of lights and decorations, was a home away from home for many of the UHCL Indian students. Renu Khator, chancellor of the UH System, is seen alongside Doyle Rodrigues, ISA’s SGA representative and graduate student majoring in computer science; Nupur Agarwal, ISA’s special events coordinator and graduate student majoring in management information systems, and Priya Pakhanavar, ISA’s president and graduate student majoring in management information systems. Khator lights the candle to signify the inauguration of the event.

Expansion: continued from page 1

authority. This is when university administrators will have meetings with faculty and staff to discuss when, how and if the inclusion of freshmen and sophomores should happen.

“We feel like planning authority is important for UH - Clear Lake to have options for the future,” Stockton said.

The earliest UHCL would begin accepting freshmen is fall 2011. If implemented, the plan would be to slowly integrate the university by accepting only 350 freshmen the first year. Gradually, UHCL would begin accepting sophomores, with no more than 1,000 underclassmen by the fifth year.

“Downward expansion is important to ensure UH-Clear Lake is able to respond to the educational needs of the Houston–Galveston region,” said President William Staples. “If planning authority is received, UHCL will invest in academic and academic support programs – as well as facilities and technology – to meet the needs of freshmen and sophomore students without compromising the educational quality offered by UHCL.”

With Houston’s population expected to grow by 1.3 million in the next 10 to 15 years, the university sees this as an opportunity to keep students in the area instead of traveling to other universities across the country. The Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education found the number of high school graduates in Texas is set to increase by 25 percent in the next 10 to 15 years.

“There’s a reason there’s only four,” LaFayette said referring to the fact UHCL is one of only four upper level universities left in the country. “It’s not in the best interest economically for the school or

for the community.”

At the meeting, faculty asked what plans were in place to accommodate the additional students, faculty and staff. An additional building to house more student support services, lab space and faculty offices is proposed with the expansion. A proposal, however, does not mean guaranteed funds for the building. Another plan of action for the first few years will be to offer the core classes during the day in the existing empty classrooms.

Beth Hentges, faculty senator, said some main concerns have been whether there will be enough new faculty to support teaching the freshmen and sophomore classes; enrollment criteria and how the university would decide who to admit; class and faculty space issues and how the university would define itself as a four-year institution.

The faculty senate has a subcommittee devoted to the downward expansion headed by Chloe Diepenbrock, past faculty senate president.

“We mainly want to be sure that they have a lot of input on how this is done if it is done,” Diepenbrock said. “We would be making an enormous and serious culture change.”

Diepenbrock felt the meeting was very successful in airing faculty concerns. Administrators assured the faculty that should the university go to a four-year institution, it would not go forward without faculty and staff input.

“The proposal is just seeking permission to have planning authority to consider downward expansion,” Biggers said. “I think considering the feasibility of going four years is the right thing to do for the future of UHCL.”

Diversity: continued from page 1

3.0 GPA and be a member of organizations and clubs, in order to be competitive for a career, graduate and professional school students must have a wow factor,” Penn urged.

Like Penn, who is also the adviser for the Black Students Association, Joyce Delores Taylor, president of the Black Students Association, is very passionate about bringing forth the good in people and revealing the explicitness of them individually.

As a leader, Taylor, who has attained three master’s degrees and is working on her Ph.D., has been a part of several student associations, including SGA, Alpha Phi Sigma and Student Alumni. She finds her passion in being a leader and bringing out leadership roles in others.

“We live our lives as role models for others,” is Taylor’s favorite quote by Rosa Parks.

African-Americans make up approximately 10 percent of UHCL’s student population. Among them, Brandon White, communication major, explains that certain perceptions toward African-Americans is the reason why some African-Americans can be intimidated from joining student groups.

Because of the perceptions, he explains, it can be challenging for some students to present or speak up in class.

“Don’t be afraid to make a fool of yourself; chances are you’re not. Give it a shot,” White expressed.

Penn also advocated the need to get involved and become socially interactive.

“I say to students, get out of the classroom, volunteer, intern, attend community lectures, social events and civic organization forums! Collect business cards and make those connections so when it comes time to part ways with UHCL there is a social network ready to receive you as the transition is made from student to a member of the workforce,” Penn explained.

Taylor encourages students to step outside their comfort zone and expressed the importance of showing the hidden part of an individual.

“The iceberg model, has 90 percent of the hidden part that needs to be revealed,” Taylor stated. “People have that hidden part that needs to be revealed including their values, their beliefs and what they can bring to the table.”

Aside from social networking, mentors play a major role in the education of African-American students.

“A lot of African-American young kids think that being a rapper or basketball player is their only means of succeeding, when in reality there are so many other opportunities out there,” White said.

Although resources have sky rocketed in means of financial assistance, finances can sometimes be a major factor for continuing an education as seen in many cases for African-Americans.

“Many students over-estimate the cost of higher education,” explained Anthony Jenkins, dean of students. “Since there are a large number of first generation students, many do not realize all the resources that are available to them. Whether they have difficulties completing the financial aid application or hesitant to take out student loans because they do not want to put later burdens on their families, students miss out on financial assistance.”

Jenkins focuses on what changes need to be made to overcome these obstacles and encourage higher education. He explains that, first of all, universities need to create an environment that welcomes the students.

“Colored students want to feel as if they are valued,” Jenkins expressed. “In changing the universities culture that will encourage and welcome students to the university.”

Reverse: continued from page 1

where their students continue their studies.

SJC extension centers provide GED, ESOL industry-specific software training and many educational opportunities. For more information contact the extension center at 281-998-6150.

“The reverse agreement allows students to a come a bit earlier and to take classes they may need as prerequisites that a community college may not offer,” said Carl Stockton, senior vice president for academic affairs and provost. “I think it’s a benefit to all the students, the community college and university.”

For more information about the reverse transfer agreement, contact the Office of Admissions at 281-283-2500.

Audit: continued from page 1

Yvette Bendeck, associate vice president for enrollment management, regarding the DPR system.

The process of implementing the DPRs began with committees that met on a regular basis over a year and a half to build an electronic version of the Candidate Plan of Study online. Transferred course work for each student must be manually entered into the system, which is a large project and students enrolled prior to fall 2008 may still see a “requirement not satisfied” message on their DPR next to transferred classes.

As of Nov. 3, the number of students entered into the DPR system with transfer of credits based on the fall 2004 catalog is 2,453, while 1,516 students’ transfer credits remain to be entered. Bendeck estimates it will take five months to complete.

“Students can track their upper level course work in the system even if their transfer credits are not in yet,” Bendeck said.

The DPRs are “a work in constant progress that will never stop,” said Ann Hinojosa, advising coordinator for Human Sciences and Humanities. “It is an enormous amount of work.”

Hinojosa recommends that students print out their reports and get familiar with them. Some students may find them difficult to read at first. For students who registered prior to fall 2008, she recommends going by the degree audit provided by their advisers.

“For students new this fall, the DPR will read like a dream,” Hinojosa said.

The automated reports are not designed to eliminate the need for academic advisers. Students should still meet with their adviser on a regular basis throughout their time at UHCL.

“DPRs will allow students to have more meaningful conversations with academic advisers,” said Connie LaFayette, Student Government Association vice president – administration. “They can talk more about actual planning of class choices and career goals.”

DPRs will be updated every semester based on the information that the Office of Admissions has. Students are urged to check their DPR periodically and should alert their adviser of any discrepancies. The adviser will work with admissions to update the students’ DPR.

“We realize it is an incomplete system that needs to be worked on,” Bendeck said.

Bendeck estimates the system will be fully operational, including undergraduate, graduate and post baccalaureate, by the end of spring 2010.

An informational page is available on the Academic Records Web site at http://prtl.uhcl.edu/portal/page/portal/AR/Degree_Progress_Report/For_Students.

Open lab sessions to assist in running and reading DPRs will take place Nov. 10 and 11, 4-5 p.m. in the Bayou Building, Room B1306.

Faith in Judiasm remains despite Holocaust

Katherine Antes
The Signal Staff

How does one go about explaining the existence of evil in a world created by God? Evil that is inconceivably cruel and horrifying? Evil of the magnitude demonstrated during “Shoah” – the Jewish term for Holocaust?

How can one possibly continue to maintain faith in a God who would allow the extermination of six million Jews; especially one considered to be all-powerful, all knowing, and all good? Why did it happen? Moving forward with such knowledge, why would Jews choose to acknowledge or continue their faith if God allowed such a tragedy to occur?

“What is the theological justification given for Jewish survival after the Holocaust?” asked Gregory Kaplan, assistant professor of Judaic studies at Rice University, during a lecture he presented at the University of Houston-Clear Lake Nov. 3.

Kaplan, who teaches on numerous aspects of Judaism including Jewish thought and philosophy, modern philosophy of religion, German-Jewish history, and the Holocaust and genocide, has written numerous articles, abstracts, and book reviews on this and related topics; he is frequently invited to talk on the subject. He recently completed a book manuscript that he is currently seeking a publisher for.

“My book is about two twentieth century German-Jewish theorists who questioned the value of Jews’ survival in a world that no longer admits the salvation promised by Judaism,” Kaplan said. “I was raised in an assimilated Jewish home in Los Angeles and was always perplexed by

“We must imagine a God whose personal relevance is eternal but whose knowledge, power and goodness are not beyond our questioning or even protesting.”

- Gregory Kaplan
Assistant Professor of Judaic Studies, Rice University



the choice that Jews make to remain Jewish even though it is a choice and not forced upon us.”

Kaplan presented four modern theological responses to the Holocaust and reasons why “Jews should remain Jewish because of and despite the Holocaust” during his presentation.

Kaplan was invited to speak by Barbara Hales, assistant professor of history, as part of the history program.

“To create synergy between UHCL and Rice University, we have created a tradition over the last three to four years of inviting speakers each fall to talk about the Holocaust,” Hales said. “The reason Kaplan’s coming is I met him at a talk at Rice last year; his specialty is Jewish history and philosophy.”

During World War II, between 1938 and 1945, it is estimated that between nine to eleven million people were killed; approximately six million were Jews. The “Final Solution” to the Jewish problem was Nazi Germany’s methodical, systematic removal of “the inferior race.”

“Of the six million Jews that were killed, two million of those were of

or under the age of 12,” Kaplan said. Questions that arise from this context, Kaplan explains, as well as all kinds of others, is “Why is there evil in a world that God has created?”

Kaplan described four competing responses to the question.

The first and most traditional response to the Holocaust, explained Kaplan, is broken down into two parts: retributive justice and free will. That is to say that evil things happen to people who deserve it through retribution by God, but also, that God gave man free will, which is sometimes abused.

The second, more theological response Kaplan presented is the radical argument of Richard Rubenstein which asserts that God is dead; that He was essentially missing in action during the Holocaust and does not, cannot, exist by virtue of the fact that the Holocaust even occurred. If He did exist, then certainly He would have stopped the killings.

The third response is that of Emil Fackenheim, which not only places God at the scene of the crime, but is a more religious view stating that Jews should

be reaffirmed in their faith in God in response to the Holocaust. It centers on the idea of a saving and commanding presence, meaning, Jews are obligated to remain Jewish because of the Holocaust, otherwise, the renunciation of Judaism would “grant Hitler a posthumous victory.” Fackenheim’s “614th Commandment,” or “voice at Auschwitz” as it is sometimes called, “commands Jews to embrace Judaism and raise their children as Jews,” Kaplan said. Otherwise, victory will belong to Hitler because he would have ultimately reached his goal – the annihilation of Jews. The saving presence refers to the creation of the State of Israel.

The final response Kaplan discussed was a multi-part explanation. He explained that some Jews responded to the Holocaust by believing that those killed must have chosen to cut God’s influence out of their life, a sort of variation of free will. It is a mysterious, beyond-man’s-comprehension belief that presents the idea of the “hiding of God’s face.” Meaning, Kaplan explained, that God recedes from view to leave mankind to its “own devices” to see what will happen. Some believe God often withdraws to allow the world to follow its own course; sometimes referred to as an “eclipse of God.” This would also mean that although God does exist, he might not be omnipotent.

“In sum,” Kaplan said, “the responses really are live, divergent views of how Jewish survival is or is not justified on the basis of the Holocaust. My own opinion is that we must imagine a God whose personal relevance is eternal but whose knowledge, power and goodness are not beyond our questioning or even protesting.”

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Tailgating: America’s Past-time



Jeffrey Meier: The Signal

Inflatable Texan player “Joe the Tailgater” hangs out with fanatics and tailgaters alike.

Jeffrey Meier
The Signal Staff

Sunday, for most Americans, is a day dedicated to worship, rest, and time spent with family; but for others, it is a day of football and tailgating.

After six years of college I have finally found my calling—tailgating. That’s right! There is nothing like sitting in a parking lot with your fellow Texans’ fans discussing the day’s agenda of barbecuing and football while popping open ice-cold beers.

“We like to come out early and throw some steaks on the grill before we go in to the game,” said Mike Y’barbo and his father Ray, who are dedicated Houston Texans’ fans. “It gives me a chance to catch up with my father.”

When you tailgate, it is important to arrive at the football stadium four to five hours before kick-off and find the right parking space to suit your mood and level of belligerence.

Here, you will find families and friends decked out in blue and white Texans’ jerseys with matching face paint and accessories. Fanatics will drive around on motorized beer coolers, war paint applied to the face, frazzled red and blue wigs on their heads, screaming hilarious and obnoxious cheers with a beer in one hand and a cigarette or chicken wing in the other.

“My wife and I come out to Reliant Stadium twice a year in a small group unless our company has a large tent,” said Texans’ fan Ron Hultquist. “We like to drink a couple of beers and eat before we take our seats.”

There are two types of tailgaters at Reliant Park, the extreme and the subtle (if there is such a thing). The subtle tailgater arrives hours before the game in a crowd of two or three dressed in the correct home team paraphernalia. They barbecue behind their vehicles and journey off an hour or so before the game starts to find their seats inside Reliant

Stadium, a football fan’s utopia.

Then there are the extreme tailgaters who show up at the stadium but do not attend the games. Instead they haul their 16-foot-long barbecue pit into Reliant Park accompanied by ice chests full of cold beer and ready-to-cook beef, pork, chicken and shrimp.

The extreme will have large flat-screen TV’s broadcasting games in high-definition video and audio thanks to HD antennas. They will stay long after the game ends into the early evening hours.

Going inside Reliant Stadium to watch the game is great fun, but it does not compare to the events held outside.

Nothing compares to walking around Reliant Park with a beverage in hand, listening to Led Zeppelin blaring from one end of the venue and Lupe Fiasco from the other end, with the Texans’ Cheerleaders doing a dance somewhere in between.

The atmosphere around the parking lot is laid back, filled with the smell of cooked meat, wood and every once in a while the smell of a Porta-Potty. The lines to the portable outhouses never seem to diminish but that is okay, because there is always someone in line who has an amusing restroom-related story to tell.

There is a great sense of community and camaraderie amongst the tailgaters. If your paper plate or cup is running low, someone will be there to fill it up. Even if you are not a football fan, they will still take you in. There’s nothing they love better than a new convert.

As Texans’ fans, we may not have the best team in the NFL, but we will convince you we do through our monster talent in the parking lot. For more tailgating information and guidelines, visit www.houstontexans.com under the “tailgating” link.

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