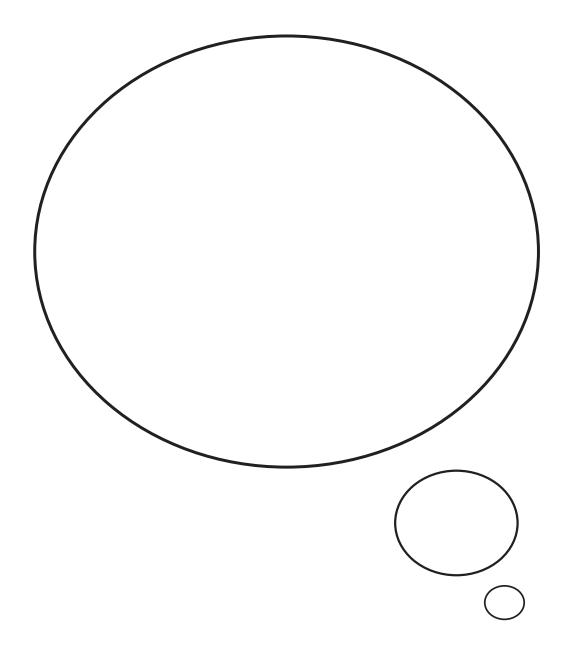


Feature

Finding Your Inner
Caveman to Get Healthy
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Campus Life

Extension in Pearland Opens Possibilities Pg. 39 BP Oil Spill:
What is being done and who it has affected



A mind is a terrible thing to waste.





Editor's Note

Dear readers,

As the very first editor of The Signal Relay magazine, I would like to make it clear that this publication should not be confused with The Signal, UHCL's student-produced newspaper. As a general news magazine and another extention to what is already provided at UHCL, it's our goal to bring additional insight to the stories.

For me, this fall 2010 semester has consisted of working for both publications simultaneously. While The Signal newspaper is fast-paced and challenging, creating the first issue of The Signal Relay has been a delicate learning process. Narrowing down story topics at the beginning of the semester left us focusing on 16 stories. Of those 16, each story had a central theme, the community-at-large.

The Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill was on the top of our list because it impacted more than just Gulf Coast residents. It affected the world's oceans. In our nine-page spread, we cover the oil spill aftermath and the return to normalcy of the Gulf Coast industry and wildlife.

Since I am a college student, I know how important it is to make a good first impression. A poor impression can leave people with a lack in substance as you will read in Audiences Starved for Murder by Chocolate .

Students, faculty and the rest of our close-knit community can read about ways to improve their quality of life in articles such as Living Primal, Tracking Graduation and Offering a Helping Hand to Neighbors.

The intention for our humble magazine is to grow. However, it is not the only thing new to UHCL. UHCL at Pearland describes the potential growth as the university is expanding to accomadate our exploding student body,

Please feel free to provide us with valuable feedback for the next staff of The Signal Relay so that we too may keep on improving and thus leave greater impacts on the community-at-large.

Many thanks and may you all enjoy our very first issue,



Carla Bradley Editor-in-Chief



OUR COVER



PHOTO COURTESY OF BP

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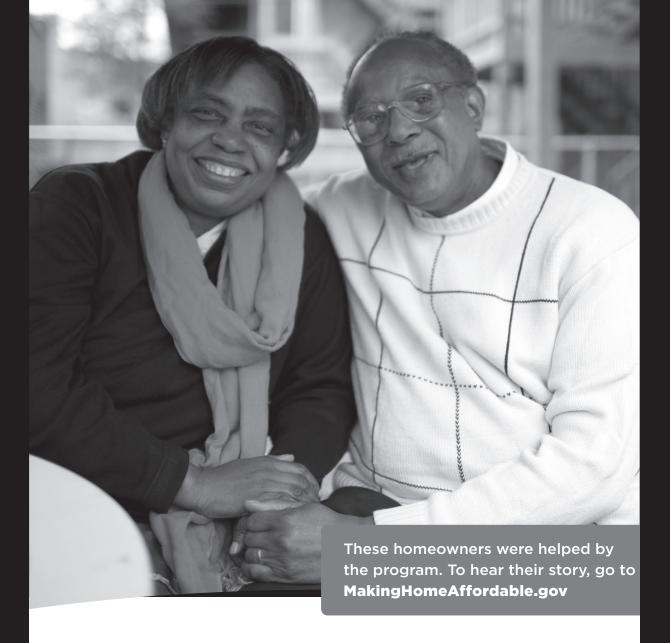
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The Signal Relay is a public forum and will print letters to the editor subject to the following: Letters must be no longer that 500 words. Where necessary, letters will be edited for grammar, spelling and style requirements. Letters must be signed 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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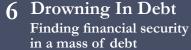






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Living Primal 37
Getting healthy, caveman style

Living Primal BP Wildlife

Click on title to watch video

http://www.youtube.com/thesignalnews



That 9 dollar lunch is worth more than you think. Like 19,000 dollars more.

Pack your own lunch instead of going out. \$6 saved a day x 5 days a week x 10 years x 6% interest = \$19,592. That could be money in your pocket. Small changes today. Big bucks tomorrow. Go to feedthepig.org for free savings tips.





Drowning in



By Ashley Smith

was 18 years old when I received my first credit card. Fresh out of high school, I used that piece of plastic to buy gas, lunch, clothes, etc., not realizing at the time how much debt the little stuff could accumulate. About that same time, I was awarded my first student loan. I felt like I won the lottery with the amount of financial aid that was given to me. I had never been exposed to that kind of cash flow, so I eagerly spent every penny.

Every semester would begin the same way. I would take the student loan refund, the amount of aid that was left over after costs, and save it so I could have a "cushion" when I graduated. However, every time that money would get spent on something I just had to have. I was like a crack addict, "fiening" for the next refund date, then ravaging through the money until it was gone. It wasn't long until I maxed out my credit card and began using a big chunk of my student loan refund to keep my head afloat with that bill.

When I lost my job, the debt that I accumulated came to the forefront. With no steady income and the loans depleted, I no longer had any money to pay even the minimum payment on my credit card bills. I stopped paying them, reverting back to adolescent behavior of "If I close my eyes and plug my ears, the bad thing will go away." It didn't. The calls began after two months of non-payment. My cell

phone began to ring every couple of hours, the caller ID displaying a foreign 1-888 number or an ominous blocked or unknown number. I dreaded answering the phone and ignored the calls. I just wanted them to leave me alone. I didn't have any money. Why couldn't they understand that?

After six months of ignored letters and unanswered phone calls, I knew I had to do something before I ended up in a padded cell listening to an imaginary phone ringing. I grudgingly answered one of the calls. After a shaky greeting I waited for the evil spawn of the credit company to berate my negligence and describe in excruciating detail the horrible punishments that would be handed down to me. The representative turned out to be a nice, understanding woman who listened to my situation and created a plan to help me get back on track. It turned out to be the best phone conversation I have ever had. I could feel the tightness in my shoulders begin to ease the minute I ended the call.

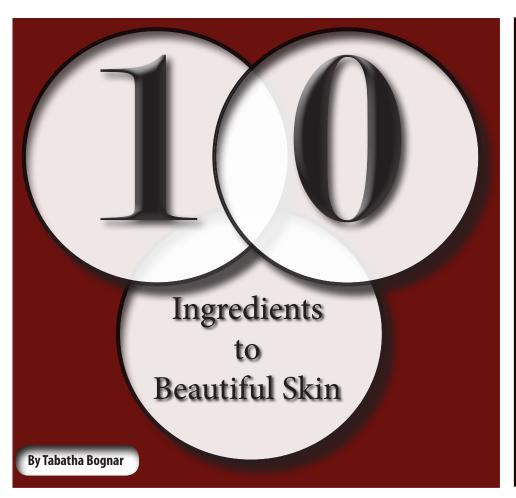
I am still in debt but slowly easing my way out of the hole. Along the way, I have learned a few key tricks to help alleviate debt. When accepting financial aid awards, avoid loans if at all possible. If loans are necessary, choose unsubsidized loans, which do not incur interest until repayment begins. Once the loans have been dispersed and the refund finds its way into the bank, save as much of



the money as possible. These savings allow a cushion after graduation to help pay back the debt.

When dealing with credit card debt, never send only the minimum payment. Pay off the balance in as few payments as possible. The most important thing I've learned through this whole ordeal is that credit cards and loans are not "free money." Any kind of credit needs to be taken seriously and used only when absolutely necessary. The debt that we incur today will have an impact on the future. It is up to the individual whether that impact is positive or negative.

Every action I have taken with my debt has been met with damaging consequences, but because of the mistakes made, I have gained more knowledge about how to control it. Debt plagues college students everyday. Though the situation may seem hopeless, I'm living proof that there is a way through the shame, fear and embarrassment.



Grape Seed Extract



Everyone wants to know the secret for youthful, radiant and supple skin. Well, this key ingredient helps with just that. Grape seed extract aids in improving the skin's elasticity and radiance and is also helpful in preventing fine lines and wrinkles containing high levels of antioxidants, this ingredient is powerful in protecting your skin cells from deteriorating.

Recommendation: Vinexpert Line by Caudalie Price: \$68-\$79



Caffeine

Whether it's from stress, lack of sleep or a night out on the town, dark and/or puffy eyes can become your worst enemy. Caffeine is an ingredient used in many eye creams today and is a great antioxidant. This ingredient increases the circulation in the blood vessels while diminishing the

appearance of dark shadows. Caffeine helps reduce skin inflammation and eliminates the appearance of puffiness under the eye. RE FABULOUS HIT Recommendation: Detox Eye Roller by First Aid Beauty

Price: \$24



Green Tea



Dimethylaminoethenol (DMAE)

Found in many Dr. Perricone products, this main active ingredient helps increase elasticity and firmness by regulating movement muscle within the skin. Derived from fish oil extract,



DMAE helps to reduce the appearance of age spots, making this a goto anti-aging ingredient. Recommendation: Face Finishing Moisturizer by Dr. Perricone

Price: \$65

This favored natural ingredient drastically reduces inflammation to the skin due to blemishes, allergic reactions and other stressors. Green tea is another antioxidant that not only

protects against free radicals but aids in wrinkles reducing and sagging skin as well.

Recommendation: Purifying Cleansing Gel by Boscia **Price: \$26**





Just like our bodies need water to survive, so does our skin. Hyaluronic acid occurs in the dermis layer (deepest layer) of the skin and holds up to 1000 times its weight in water. HA supports the production of collagen, which helps to plump and smooth out skin. Recommendation: Rexaline Line

Price: \$49



components within soy products will mimic plant estrogen, which provides extra protection against sunburn. The use of soy aids in rapidly slowing down the loss of skin elasticity and moisture. This natural



fresh.

SOY FACE

CREAM

ingredient also delays the process of decreased skin thickness.

Recommendation: Soy Facial Line by Fresh

Price: \$15-\$45



Sun Protection Factor (SPF)

Sun damage is the cause approximately percent of anti-aging conditions, which is why sunscreen filters should be listed as the most important ingredient in your skincare. When deciding which sunscreen filter to purchase it is important to look for UVB (Ultra Violet B)

as well as UVA (Ultra Violet A) protection.

Recommendation: Sheer City Block SPF 25 by Clinique

Price: \$24.50



Salicylic Acid



Often referred to as a beta hydroxy acid, salicylic acid deeply penetrates within the pores to control excess oil, unclog and purify the skin. This compound will also reduce the inflammation caused by blemishes. Like

alpha hydroxy acids, this active ingredient is meant to exfoliate the epidermis layer (outermost layer) of the skin.

Recommendation: Acne Complex Line by Murad

Price: \$18-\$60



Vitamin C

25 SPF

This water-soluble ingredient promotes collagen production within the skin, creating a plumper, more youthful look. Vitamin C is also great in improving sun damage done to the skin; not to mention,

it boosts your sunscreen to help protect against further damage and is an antioxidant as well.

> Recommendation: Environmental Shield Line by Murad

Price: \$26



Vitamin E

Just like vitamin C, vitamin E is a powerful antioxidant. Vitamin E not only helps to protect the skin against free radical damage, but it also specializes in protecting against age spots and scarring. Women who

have dryer skin types will benefit from using vitamin E because it also aids in boosting the skin's moisture. Recommendation: When Hope is Not Enough by Philosophy

Price: \$38

Offering a Helping Hand To Nellghbors

By Desiree Hutchinson

orking as a volunteer can be a very rewarding experience. The most common reason people decide to volunteer is to support a good cause. While donating time to charities and non-profit organizations, students can also gain valuable skills and experiences.

There are many local community opportunities available to volunteer or donate time. Big Brothers Big Sisters, Habitat for Humanity, and Bay Area Pet Adoptions represent three of these opportunities.

Big Brothers Big Sisters was founded in Philadelphia in 1904. For more than 100 years, Big Brothers Big Sisters has stood by their mission to help children reach their highest potential through positive mentoring relationships. The organization believes that these personal relationships have a huge impact on a child.

Big Brothers Big Sisters created mentoring programs to help build relationships between the "Big" and "Little" (the organization calls the adults "Bigs" and the children "Littles"). "Hang-out" meetings, such as going to the park, working on a hobby or playing video games help mentors and mentees build and share new experiences and activities.

The mentoring program helps the child come out of their shell and become more confident. By having a Big Brother or Big Sister listen, talk, and guide the "Littles," this helps the children through their everyday life experiences in school and relationships with friends and family. The requirements to join Big Brothers Big Sisters are easy and anyone can apply over the age of 17.

There are two ways to apply: online at www.gobighouston.org or by calling the customer service representative at 713-860-8205 to schedule an interview. Sparkle Anderson, the marketing manager for Big Brothers Big Sisters, explained that the biggest benefit people gain by donating their time is the impact they will make in a child's life.

"The Bigs get more out of the experience because they can see the change in the Littles just by donating their time they helped the child grow and develop," Anderson said. "To make sure the relationship between a Big and a Little is successful; the organization will match the adult and

child by their likes and dislikes and make sure the adult is no more than 10 mile radius from the child."

For students who do not think they have time to dedicate, the organization only asks for volunteers to give between four to six hours a month to mentor a child.

"The Bay Area location is in need of volunteers; there is a list of children that are in need of mentors," Anderson said.

If students still don't think they have the time to donate, there are also other ways to give back to this organization. For example, a person can sponsor a Big by making a donation to the organization; this information can be found on the organization's website or by calling the office.

Another local nonprofit organization, Bay Area Pet Adoptions/SPCA, shelters companion animals that have been rescued from animal control facilities and individuals until the animal is permanently adopted. Their mission is to place the animal with a qualified family whose lifestyle matches the animal. The organization has an adoption program that includes medical care and socialization skills that are very important for a successful adoption. Bay Area Pet Adoptions/SPCA also educates the community by providing programs that explain the responsibilities of owning a pet and the importance of having pets spayed and neutered. To get more information about volunteering go to their website of http://bayarea-petadoptions.org.

To become a volunteer, you must attend a one-hour volunteer orientation and you must be at least 18 years old. Volunteers ages 13 to 16 must be with a legal guardian. Bay Area Pet Adoptions/SPCA take their animals to PetSmart every Saturday to be placed for adoption. Since this is considered an offsite event, volunteers must be at least 21 years old.

If people do not have the time to volunteer to the organization, there are other ways to donate. The organization is always in need of animal supplies. Students can also work

from home by updating and maintaining spreadsheets, making phone calls and stuffing envelopes. The Bay Area Pet Adoptions/SPCA also accepts cash donations that go toward heartworm treatments, shelter needs or sponsoring a kennel. To find out more information about volunteering or what supplies are needed, visit the website or by calling (281) 339-2086.

"The overall experience of volunteering your time to a worthy cause and helping your community is one of the benefits you will gain," said Sarah Wright, the Bay Area Pet Adoptions/SPCA shelter manager. "The greatest benefit you will gain is helping save and enrich a person's life by adopting a pet and gaining a sense of fulfillment knowing you made a difference."

ing you made a difference." Visit their website www.bahf\.org or call 281-337-3590 Habitat for Humanity is always looking to get more information about the organization, volunteerfor volunteers to help remove low-qualing, or making a donation. ity housing and homelessness by Another popular way to help improve the local commubuilding suitable and affordnity is by participating in a charity run. Check out local able homes for community centers for information on charity runs, which families in raise money and awareness for various causes. Also look for a local running group; this is a great way to meet interesting people and help raise money for a great cause like "Chevron Houston Marathon's Run for a Reason" and 'Komen for the Cure." The benefits of volunteering in the community are being able to change lives, including your own, gaining a different outlook on life, and meeting interesting people with a similar perspective. Whether students are interested in saving animals or making a difference in a child's life, there are plenty of charities to choose from that are waiting for volunteers to help them make the community a better place.

need. Volunteers, donations, corporations and churches and civic groups come together to make it possible to build these homes for families that are in need of shelter. Volunteers over the age of 16 are allowed on the worksite with a "Minor" Waiver signed by their parents/guardians. Jackie Moran is part of the development team for Bay Area Habitat for Humanity. She explains the benefits from volunteering in Habitat for Humanity.

"The volunteers gain much from their service with Habitat, including a sense of fulfillment and purpose," said Moran. "They accomplish this through building something tangible with measurable levels of success, from framing to seeing the finished product."

AUDIENCE STARVED FOR MURDER BY CHOCOLATE

Bv Rose Pulido

s I sat with six complete strangers, I looked around the dining room at the characters dressed in 1950s costumes and discussed which one of them might be the attempted murderer. It was evident by my lack of concentration on fingering the culprit and my impulse to hold the kitchen hostage and demand more shrimp, that the only mystery of the evening was not who done it but why Murder by Chocolate was trying to cause death by starvation.

Murder by Chocolate is a mystery dinner theatre company that hosts an audience parshow ticipation Chabuca's Steaks & Rotisserie on Nasa Rd 1, in Webster, Texas. Guests were greeted by the production's host, a young man dressed in a '50s gangster costume, who didn't hesitate to break into a shimmy as he approached. We were then led into a family-style banquet room in which we were seated at a table with three other couples. Awkuntil my guest, a brave soul, broke the ice and offered a handshake in what set off a chain reaction of introductions.

Guests of Chabuca's can choose from three different menus that includes From the Grill, a basic steak house menu, Ribs to Redfish buffet, a compilation of steak and seafood, or The Rotisserie, which provides a Brazilianstyle dining experience. On the Murder by Chocolate website, guests are promised the Ribs to Redfish buffet, but my dining experience was clearly from The Rotisserie.

Murder by Chocolate protocol dictates that guests are to establish their drink order before attending the buffetstyle salad bar. After waiting more than 10 minutes for a

ed to get our salads

first. The salad provided many combinations of fresh vegetables, pasta and fruit. Caesar dressing proved extremely impressive with a thick and creamy consistency filled with bold spices

and flavor. Following the salad, a waitress placed a serving dish with two ice



Rose Pulido/The Signal Relay

Left: Host Ryan Burkhart stands next to Ma Fia. Right: A volunteer patron tries on a costume to participate in the dinner theater.

ward stares of silence and polite expressions prevailed

cream scoops of mashed potatoes on the table, which was

A chef carves pineapple for a guest, the only food offered in abundance.

expected to be shared between two couples.

The next dish, a sautéed vegetable medley consisting of carrots, zucchini and squash, did not arrive until approximately 10 minutes later. Again, the portions were not enough to be shared by two couples, but we managed in a bond for survival. The sautéed vegetables were quite delicious. They were crisp and had a hint of herbal seasoning.

Next, there was a rotation of chefs who entered the room in what seemed like 10-minute increments with large skewers of grilled chicken fajita, eye of round Montreal steak, pepper sirloin steak and pineapple. The chicken fajita and the Montreal steak were both equally delicious and sizzling right from the grill, but the portions were bite-sized. The pepper steak, still barely enough for two bites, was extremely spicy and too rare for my tastebuds.

Soon, another chef arrived with a serving dish of average-sized grilled shrimp and gave each patron exactly two. With two shrimp left on the serving dish, a minor Chabuca's infraction ensued when my guest and I chose to share one a piece. As a new serving dish of shrimp approached, we were determined to get our fair share and resorted to hiding the remains of the previous shrimp tail under the bloody pepper steak in a desperate attempt to receive two more. Unfortunately, the jig was up when the evidence was spotted. An executive decision was made by the server to allow both accomplices one additional shrimp.

Finally, the show began with a production of "Da Family's Rehearsal Dinner!" There were 12 character roles. The host played the main character, Mr. Ron. The other 11 roles were assigned to diners who volunteered at the beginning of dinner and were given a costume and script. The costumes and theme were based on a '50s murder mystery movie. Mr. Ron is marrying Ruby, but his mom, Ma Fia, doesn't approve of her. Ma Fia gets shot and the audience has to determine which of the shady characters, aka the guests, attempted to kill Mr. Ron's mother. The other characters were misleading because they all had a motive for wanting Ma Fia dead.

Once all the characters were introduced, there was an intermission for dessert. The wait staff brought around trays of cheesecake, which was served room temperature and gritty with beads of perspiration on them. In a second attempt to cheat the system, the halfeaten cheesecakes were quickly placed under a napkin



as a second sever arrived with chocolate brownie cheesecake. The heist paid off because the chocolate brownie cheesecake was the best part of the dining experience. It was nicely chilled, creamy and delicious. The rich chocolate sauce over the cheesecake combined perfectly with the sprinkled nuts.

The evening wrapped with each table receiving a character list where clues and motives could be written down and discussed. This was an attempt to provide a climax for the play; however, it created conflict at our table because we were supposed to come to a consensus on who the culprit might be, which we did not achieve. The host asked each table who they chose, and if they got it wrong, the accused would explain why by providing evidence or reminding the diners of clues they may have missed. The dining room applauded and laughed when the real attempted murderer was identified.

Although our shimmy-shaking host, Ryan Burkhart, appeared to be right at home and treated the guests as if they were family, the dining experience ultimately proved disappointing with diners resorting to manipulation for extra shrimp and a decent dessert. For the most part, the food served at Chabuca's was exceptional. However, the website promised all you can eat. For a starving college student, this experience was definitely not "all you can eat" and not worth the \$40 ticket price.



Big Pond

By Ashley Smith

he building stands, towering over those who walk by, but the lights have dimmed, and the popcorn is only a memory now that one of the last homes in Houston for independent films closed in August.

With the closing of the Angelika, the River Oaks Theater, built in 1939, with its three screens, is the last remaining consistent supporter for art house films in Houston.

That means fewer traditional options for independent, foreign and documentary distributors seeking a Houston screen for their fall releases. It leaves Houston art-film aficionados wondering when, or if, they will see many of this year's specialty releases.

"People who want the foreign pictures, the art-house films, the independent films that encourage them to think, need to have that option," said Nick Nicholson, president of the Houston Film Critics Society.

While smaller theaters struggle to stay in business, some new and unlikely players being thrown into the mix. AMC Theaters has relaunched its program, AMC Independent, which gives smaller films a chance to play at AMC's big multiplexes, including Studio 30 in South Houston and AMC First Colony 24 in Sugar Land.

Other big chains are following suit, including Cinemark theaters with the CineArts program, and Edwards Grand Palace and Edwards Marq*E filling the void the Angelika left.

Already a staple in the Austin film scene, the Houstonarea Alamo Drafthouse theaters are making a name for themselves as an exhibitor for smaller, offbeat films. Another alternative theater, Studio Movie Grill, has brought in smaller art-house films to entice audiences.

"I hope we'll win some of the Angelika audience, but we were doing that anyway," Studio Movie Grill's Director of Creative Affairs Lynne McQuacker said.

Though these bigger chain theaters have tried to fill the gap and compensate for the loss of an independent film venue, some patrons are not pleased about the lack of effort put into these programs. These chains only offer one or two screens and usually for only a short period of time, which can cause many audiences to miss out on a chance to broaden their horizons.

The Museum of Fine Arts in Houston is home to some the world's greatest photography, sculpture and paintings, but it also exhibits art through films, screening about 200 films a year. It is exploring the option of booking some of the films once intended for the Angelika.

"It's an opportunity for us and will enable Houston film

lovers to see some films on the big screen that wouldn't have happened," said Marian Luntz, film curator of the MFAH.

Rice Media Center, where the Rice Cinema program screens 100-150 films a year, is also hoping an opportunity can come in the wake of the Angelika's closure.

"The administration wants to fill some of that gap and to make a connection with independent cinema and the community," said Charles Dove, cinema director. "We are going to be showing at least one film that was scheduled to play at Angelika, a Paramount Vantage documentary called Waiting for Superman, about schools in New York."

Both Rice and the MFAH are in the inner southwest arts area of Houston, traditionally perceived as the prime area for art houses. Both also have heavily dedicated schedules for their auditoriums and are not set up to show extended commercial runs.

Pews, a new film, art and music project, began Oct. 14 in what used to be the Aurora Picture Show Theater, the 1920s church building at 800 Aurora St. in the Sunset Heights area of Houston. Cressandra Thibodeaux, the curator and live-in owner of the venue, plans to screen films two weekends a month, half of which will be "Latino indies." The Aurora Picture Show relocated to the Montrose area three years ago. They also take the show on the road to venues including Discovery Green and into classrooms to expose a new generation to art-house films.

The closing of the Angelika may have been a blow to the already small independent film community in Houston, but

patrons of these small art films can still find a place to see the newest releases if they just take the time to look. Maybe one day soon the cavernous. theater that sits in Bayou Place will once again turn on its lights and give smaller films an extended venue to be seen.



The owners of Bayou Place plan to open a new theater where the Angelika once stood.

Ticket to Tailgate

New Policy on Tailgating Recieves a Diference of Opinion From Fans.

By Jessica Casarez

"If I add up my

tailgating costs on food

and other preparations

for one season, it would

blow your socks off."

-Cathy Garcia, Houston Texans fan

n Sept. 26, mesquite barbeque roasted on fire pits next to coolers overflowing with Bub Lights and Coronas. Oversized flags, jerseys and apparel were everywhere. Fans crowded the Reliant Stadium parking lots, including fans who didn't actually have tickets to the

Houston Texans game. However, those fans were perfectly content with camping out and tailgating during the entire game versus the only other Texan NFL football team, the Dallas Cowboys.

Although it may be a step down from actually watching the game from inside the stadium, many fans feel tailgating is a step up from watching the game at home or at a bar. Many find cheering for

the home team much more enjoyable when it can be done in the parking lot amongst other fans. For football enthusiasts, tailgating has become an actual tradition in which they invest a lot of money. But this may diminish now that the Texans have implemented a new tailgating policy.

Rivalry between these two great Texas cities dates back to before the Texans were even a team back to the days of Houston Oilers.

Most of the encounters between Texans and Cowboys fans usually occur only during pre-season. Fans from both sides tend to exchange alot of trash-talking. No one knew what was to come nor what the outcome would have been when the Texans and Cowboys were scheduled to play each other Sept. 26.

It was a record attendance tailgating that Sunday. As the day progressed, fans became more irate with one another, especially the drunk ones. It didn't take long for team rivalry to break out into full-blown fights.

Effective immediately after the Texans versus Cowboys game, a new tailgating policy went into effect. The bottom line: tailgating will no longer be open to the general public as it has been since the Texans' first season in 2002. Now, tailgating is permissible only for to ticket holders. If ticketholders choose to invite friends to tailgate, they will be able to do so at \$10 per person and a maximum of 4 guests per ticket holder. In addition, ticket holders are held responsible for their invited tailgating guests' actions.

As soon as the new policy was posted on the

Texans'website, fans did not waste time sharing their views on Twitter and Facebook. Both Texans and Cowboys fans had mixed opinions on the policy.

"People that are going to the games need to have closer and faster access to parking," said Leslie Romero, a Tex-

> ans fan. Romero feels the policy is a great way to avoid having congested traffic on game days.

> Cathy Garcia, another Texans fan, had a difference of opinion.

"Look, I am all for regulations, but we Texans fans have earned the right to tailgate for free. If I add up my tailgating costs on food and other preparations for one season, it would blow your socks off," Garcia said. Garcia went on

to express that this new policy would dissuade her from tailgating as much.

Jason Sheridan, a Cowboys fan, likes the new policy.

"I feel that season ticket holders should be given more thought and not be thwarted by partygoers," Sheridan said. "I really don't think this will stop people from tailgating though."

For more information on the Houston Texans' new tailgating policy, visit www.houstontexans.com. ■



Jessica Casarez/The Signal Relay

Texan tailagters enthusiastically wait outside Reliant Stadium.

*Editor's Note: The final result of the game was a 27-13 win to the Dallas Cowboys.





The "It's Only Another Beer" Black and Tan

8 oz. pilsner lager

8 oz. stout lager

1 frosty mug

1 icy road

1 pick-up truck

1 10-hour day

1 tired worker

A few rounds with the guys

Mix ingredients. Add 1 totalled vehicle.

Never underestimate 'just a few.' Buzzed driving is drunk driving.







- 1. Realize that wildfires burn more than 4 million acres every year.
- 2. Cut along dotted line.
- 3. Repeat this phrase: "Only You Can Prevent Wildfires."

CET YOUR EMOKEY ON

9 out of 10 wildfires are caused by humans. 9 out of 10 wildfires can be prevented.

SMOKEYBEAR.COM









Industry

Fishing and Local Businesses
Affected by the Spill

By Alicia Alvarez

arlier this year the Deepwater Horizon oil rig exploded, killing 11 people. For three consecutive months, oil spilled into the Gulf of Mexico. The cities and the people living along the coast lost business and jobs were greatly impacted.

The businesses that made their living from fishing could not continue to operate due to fishing closures in Gulf waters. States that depended on tourism and visitors to their coastal cities saw a decrease in business from hotels and restaurants.

Media releases provided by a communications specialist for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries Services (NOAA), states that in early May, NOAA began to take measures in regards to seafood safety by prohibiting fishing in oil spill waters.

Before opening an affected area, NOAA collects samples of fish in the affected areas and conducts chemical analysis and sensory analysis to check for oil odors or oil flavors in the seafood. NOAA has prioritized areas in the federal waters in the Gulf and samples the areas in order of priority. In order for contaminated fish not to reach the marketplace, closing and testing fishing areas in the Gulf is still first priority. NOAA and the Food and Drug Administration work closely on sampling the seafood that comes from the fishing closure areas to make sure the seafood is free of oil and safe for consumption.

By the end of October, NOAA reopened 96 percent of the federal Gulf waters to recreational and commercial fishing. The Fisheries Service Southeast Regional Office website provides maps of the Gulf federal waters that are still closed and updates on testing of those areas.

The tourism industry was also impacted by the oil spill. Some coastal states were affected more than others. In Florida, the oil spill's impact on businesses along the coast was major. People who made reservations in coastal area hotels cancelled their trips. Beaches were closed due to



Cory J. Mendenhall/U.S. Coast Guard photo

GRAND ISLE, La. -- Contract workers retrieve a net that is designed to test sediment for oil and other pollutants in shrimping areas near Grand Isle, La. Aug. 15, 2010. The samples will be taken to a BP facility in Houma, La. to be tested and the results will then be made public.

the oil reaching the shores, causing a loss of revenue to the area businesses. News releases on Florida's website, VisitFlorida.com, explain how efforts of the community and the visitor's center, along with the Governor's Office have planned different events to show that the beaches are now clean. They want to make sure that people know there are no current effects of the oil spill on their shores. The news release publicizes how their local community is planning to host the "Great VISIT FLORIDA Beach Walk." In this event, Floridians walked along the beaches taking pictures of the area to show visitors and tourists the beautiful clean beaches along the Florida coast. The VisitFlorida. com website also posts a daily status of the condition of the beach and announces that the beach and shops are open.



Prentice Danner/U.S. Coast Guard photo

Here in Galveston, the situation was very different. While the threat of the oil spill reaching the shore existed, authorities kept watch on the beaches and shores of Galveston Island and along the Texas Coast. Galveston actually experienced an increase in tourism because when the spill first began, people were changing their vacation destination plans since the oil spill was affecting Louisiana, Alabama and Florida, said Rashelle Gaskins, public relations manager at the Galveston Island Convention and Visitors Bureau.

"We had people calling all the time saying 'You don't have oil, right? You guys are clean, and everything is open?" Gaskins said. "We said 'yes of course', so we actually gained a lot of tourists, a lot of interest, a lot of inquiries in June and it was very positive for us."

At one point, the media reported that tar balls had been found along the beach, which was a cause of concern for everyone following the news reports because it would have meant that there was a possibility that the oil had reached the beaches of Galveston.

"We had publications and media outlets from around the world covering those tar balls that hit Fourth of July weekend," Gaskins said. "That did hurt us."

The Galveston Island Convention and Visitors Bureau began a public relations campaign and advertising campaign in order to remind people that Galveston beaches were not impacted by the oil spill and, through the use of videos, showed that Galveston was fine. Gaskins said the advertising was for guests who might have been coming from the Mid-West toward the Louisiana and Florida coastal areas.

"[People] still wanted a drive market, somewhere they could drive to, not necessarily take a plane, so Galveston was a logical option for many people," Gaskins said.

Even though clean-up efforts have been successful, there are still concerns of long-term effects from the oil spill. One thing that may still be a concern is the safety of the seafood for consumption. People are concerned, that even if the oil that was visible on the surface has

GALVESTON, Texas - Petty Officer 1st Class Matt Fisher, leaning, and Petty Officer 1st Class James Huddleston, marine science technicians at Coast Guard Sector Galveston, inspect a potential tarball on Stewart Beach as beachgoers look July 11, 2010. State, local and federal officials have increased patrols along the Texas coast in response to reports of tarballs washing ashore.

been cleared, the contamination of seafood has already occurred. In an effort to assure consumers that seafood is safe, events have been planned by area businesses.

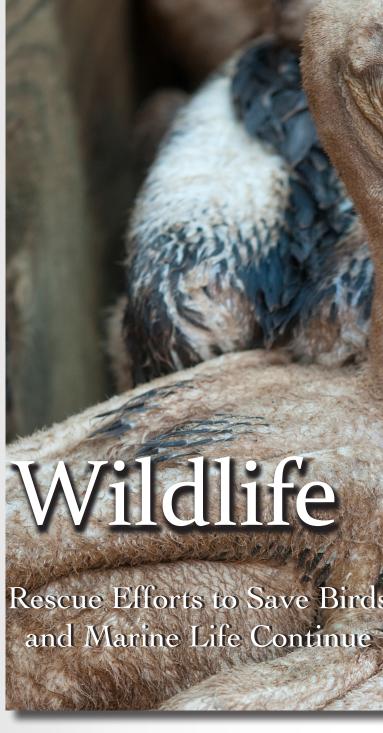
"We held the First Annual Galveston Shrimp Festival and that has assisted us as well in spreading the word that our seafood is safe," Gaskins said.

The Gulf Coast has been greatly impacted in so many ways by the oil spill. Even if the oil did not reach all of the coastal cities, the effects have been felt in one way or another. The clean-up efforts have been completed, but the recovery is not over. The coastal states that had the most impact are still recovering physically and financially. The apprehension about the long-term effects of oil spill still remains. Galveston, as well as other Texas coastal cities, have been fortunate since the oil never reached Texas.

"Having the clean-up from the Hurricane and then having the beach nourishment following right after and, thankfully, not being greatly impacted by the oil spill, Galveston is doing great and is definitely worth the visit," Gaskins said.







By Cameron Pallmer Marcus Austin

n April 20, 2010, one of the world's worst, avoidable disasters hit the Gulf Coast. British Petroleum made an error in routine safety checks. This error resulted in 4.9 million barrels, or 205.8 million gallons, of crude oil spilling into the Gulf of Mexico. This oil washed up on the Louisiana coast and eventually made its way into the local rivers, streams, lakes, and bayous, destroying every ecosystem in its path and killing the indigenous wild-life.

Animals from the endangered loggerhead turtle to the massive sperm whales have been affected by this pollutant. Birds have been the most affected animals in this disaster.

More than 8,000 birds have already perished, with several thousand still in need of rescue. Death is eminent without help. Their feathers become completely saturated in crude oil, which causes them to clump and makes the birds incapable of flying. Natural instinct causes the birds to ingest the crude oil in an attempt to remove it from their wings. Unfortunately this is a toxin resulting in death.

The sea turtles have been on the endangered species list for several decades. However, due to this new oil spill, five out of the seven species of sea turtles are facing possible extinction. The oil is not only on the surface of the water, but also thousands of feet below. Sea turtles are made to swim in toothpaste like substance, causing them extreme fatigue.



(Top Left) An oil-covered Northern Gannet struggles to fly approximately five miles outside of Perdido Bay, AL. June 13, 2010

(Bottom Left) A small one year old Hawksbill turtle is cleaned at the The Institute for Marine Mammal Studies in Gulfport, MS on June 5, 2010.

(Left) Baby Brown Pelicans (approximately two weeks old) are taken care of by members of the Tri State Bird Rescue and Research team in Fort Jackson, La. the Brown Pelicans were found In the Gulf of Mexico around Grand Isle June 7, 2010.

They also have to surface to breathe and thus are ingesting the oil. Plus the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) advises that sea turtle eggs contaminated with the smallest amount of oil will not hatch. Hundreds of sea turtle eggs are not hatching further threatening the species.

Marine mammals such as the dolphin and the sperm whale are affected in much the same way as the sea turtles. They too need to surface to breathe, are swimming in crude oil infested water and are being exposed to toxins released from the oil. Several dolphins have been found dead on the coast of Mississippi and Alabama.

Animals are not the only biological creatures affected by the oil spill. Plant life has also been suffering, especially those that form the shores and marshes of the Gulf Coast. The oil encrusted plants are unable to complete photosynthesis. Without oxygen and nutrients to sustain life, the plants are rapidly dying. This is causing a negative spiral affect because the animals are then unable to eat the plants or use them for proper breeding grounds.

Fear of changing wind patterns is another future concern for animals and their habitats. If the wind and current changes directions, the crude oil may end up in the Bahamas and even the Caribbean Islands. These islands are homes to thousands of species of animals including the already endangered coral reef. Andros, one of the islands in the Bahamas, has the third largest coral reef in the world.







⊕ в Р р.і.

Above: Rachel Newman with the International Bird Rescue Research Center checks a Pelican to see if it is healthy enough to be released. (Top Right) An oiled sea gull is cleaned at the Ft. Jackson Oiled Wildlife Rehabilitation Center in Ft. Jackson, La. (Right) Turtles examined by the Institute for Marine Mammal Studies in Gulfport, Miss. verify how well they are responding to treatment after being effected by the Horizon incident.

This reef is approximately 143 miles long. Coral reefs protect our shorelines and provide habitats for the thousand of species living in the area. If the oil reaches these reefs, destruction is inevitable.

Efforts have been made to clean up the oil spill as well as saving hundreds of animals from death. BP has assumed responsibility for the oil spill and has been the leading contributor in cleanup and animal rescue. They have contracted with Tri-State Bird Rescue and Research, and Wildlife Response Services to save those animals affected by the oil spill.

"Our main goal is oiled bird response; so a lot of times, in all the different states, we had local rehabilitators that we were working with as well," said Sarah Tegtmeier with Tristate Bird Rescue and Research."

"The wildlife response during this incident was tremendous," agrees Rhonda Murgatoyd, owner of Wildlife Response Services. "There are a lot of organizations and a lot of people who work in agencies that are involved in this response. There's no way I could name them all.

Murgatoyd credits the large number of respondents to the high number of birds saved and released back into the wild.

"The number of birds released was very high because we had so many people out in the field," Murgatoyd said. "They picked the birds up so quickly and got them into the rehab centers so fast that they really didn't have time to get sick. On a lot of responses, it takes sometimes longer for the rehabilitators to get to the animals; so, the animals oftentimes are sick by the time they come in. That wasn't the case in this one, at least early on and through the middle of the spill. We did get some more towards the end of

the spill that were coming in that were just kind of residual – we hadn't found them. It wasn't that they were hiding; they were just in places that we weren't finding them. You know, so it's sort of like an Easter egg hunt. You can't find them all."

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation is the frontline organization dealing with animal rescue. Their main goal is to preserve all wildlife. This organization rescues animals that have been injured by the oil spill. With thousands of volunteers searching for these animals, this organization nurses the sick and injured back to health and then releases the animals into a clean environment.

Other organizations are assisting with the cleanup, such as: The Department of the Interior, Mobile Bay Keeper, United States Coast Guard, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), along with thousands of volunteers and local residents. As of Oct. 31, 2010, 1246 birds, 14676 sea turtle hatchlings, along with the transportation of 278 turtle nests and 3 mammals have been saved and cleaned of oil.

Despite the best efforts for cleanup, the technology to ascend thousands of feet below the ocean's surface is unavailable. Thus, millions of gallons of crude oil still remain in the water. This leads scientists to wonder how many years, perhaps even decades, it will take for the oil to be completely eradicated from the Gulf.

The long term affects of this disaster is still unknown. NOAA has been leading the research in this department. NOAA's ship, the Thomas Jefferson, has been on site since day one sampling the water and oxygen. Their hopes are to gain knowledge as to how this disaster will affect us in the future.

Aftermath

Developing the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Task Force

By Rose Pulido

he British Petroleum Deepwater Horizon oil spill created the largest man-made natural disaster in the history of the U.S., causing billions of dollars in damage to the Gulf. After months of restoration efforts and research, President Obama issued an executive order establishing the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Task Force to restore the damage caused by the oil spill and to prepare a plan for future Gulf Coast disasters.

Navy Secretary Ray Mabus, former Mississippi governor, was appointed by the president in June to develop a long-term restoration plan. After approximately four months of research in the Gulf, he delivered a 130-page report to the president with suggestions and plans on how the restoration process should be executed.

In the five months since the Deepwater Horizon tragedy, many effective mechanisms have been put in place to respond to the environmental, economic and health impacts of the spill," Mabus said. "What has already been done cannot be lost, but rather must be built upon and expanded. To accomplish this, the report recommends leadership in overseeing the transition as well as the immediate establishment of a new Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restorations Task Force."

The Gulf Coast Fund is a nonprofit organization that supports projects that strengthen and amplify local organizing, social justice concerns and movement-building, and addresses the underlying causes that contributed to the disasters in the Gulf Coast. Barbara Nonas, communications director for the GCF, touches on the importance of Gulf Coast residents.

We feel it's really important that people from the Gulf are included in the process and their voices are heard," Nonas said. The government ignoring a lot of the



Cory Mendenhall/U.S. Coast Guard photo

GULF OF MEXICO - Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Janet Napolitano, Department of the Interior and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Lisa Jackson receive a brief from Rear Adm. Mary Landry, federal on scene coordinator for the Deepwater Horizon incident, as they conduct an aerial survey of the Gulf Coast, April 30, 2010.



Bill Colclough/U.S. Coast Guard photo

PANAMA CITY, Fla. - President Obama, accompanied by the Secretary of the U.S. Navy, Ray Mabus, commends assembled members of the Coast Guard Cutter Coho, Coast Guard Station Panama City and Coast Guard Aids to Navigation Team Panama City for their service to the country and for their response efforts to the Deepwater Horizon incident at the station, Aug. 14, 2010.





Bill Colclough/U.S. Coast Guard photo

Contractors scour Elmer's Island beach in Southern Louisiana. Thick oil began reaching the shore line on May 21, 2010.

© BP p.l.c.

problems on the Gulf Coast has been going on for a long time. It's too early to tell, but we all remain optimistic."

President Obama did not wait for a legislative response from Congress to implement the task force. He nominated Lisa Jackson, administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, as the Task Force Chair. Jackson is a New Orleans native and former commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. Obama appointed her administrator of the EPA in 2008.

"As you know, she is from the Gulf," said Janet Woodka, senior adviser of the EPA. "[She] grew up, [was] born, bread and raised in Louisiana and has very deep roots in the area and a strong professional as well as personal interest in the region."

Under the executive order, the task force chair is to select an executive director, who will supervise, direct and be accountable for the administration and operations of the task force. John H. Hankinson, Jr., chairman of

the Audubon of Florida Board of Directors, was recently nominated by Jackson to fill this position.

He has spent 30 years working on environmental issues in the private and public non-profit sectors," Woodka said. "He significantly oversaw the restoration and protection of the St. Johns river system in Florida, as well as working on a number of conservation and land banking initiatives. He also served, as many of you may know, as the Regional Administrator for EPA Region IV from 1994 to 2001. He will report directly to Administrator Jackson and will continue to coordinate all of these efforts."

The task force is also to have a representative from each of the five Gulf states nominated by the states' governors sometime in the near future. State representatives will stand on the official behalf of their state in task force meetings, contributions and decisions. There will also be a representative from governmental executive departments, agencies and offices. Through Natural Resource Damage

Assessment Trustee Councils, the executive offices will find opportunities to contribute to the current research and restoration efforts already in progress.

The Texas General Land Office is one of those councils that act as a steward to the Texas coast. The NRDA trustee councils technically create plans for restoration in damaged areas and ensures responsible parties cover the expenses so taxpayers are spared. The Texas General Land Office has been readily available and has provided assistance in the BP oil cleanup process to other Gulf states. Once a state representative is chosen from Texas to join in task force efforts, the Texas Land Office will comply with any possible needed assistance.

The General Land Office is a natural resource trustee agency," said Deputy Commissioner of Oil Prevention and Response Greg Pollock. "In so far as the restoration task force involves itself in the natural resource damage assessment process, the Land Office will absolutely be a part of that."

Trustee councils like the Texas General Land Office are dedicated to finding new resources and research information on preserving and restoring the Gulf. The Gulf has been a major target of previous devastating natural disasters such as Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Ike. The task force is designed to take what these trustee councils have

been working on and implement them at a federal level.

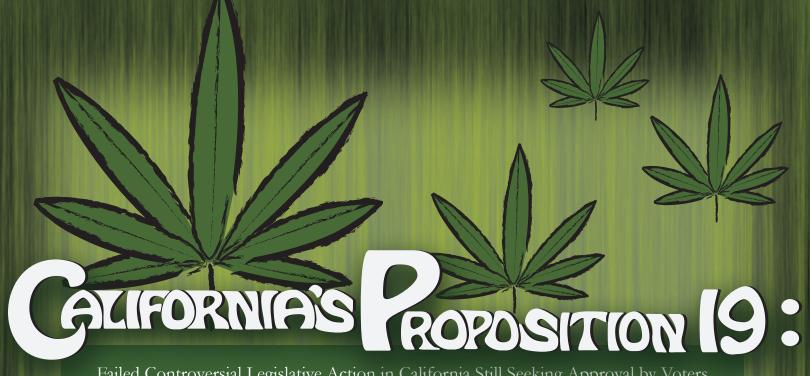
With the goal of a coordinated federal, state and local long-term recovery strategy, the Mabus report suggests the establishment of a congressionally mandated governance structure to oversee and implement sources of funding appropriated by Congress.

"Right now the task force is funded, out of all the respect of the agencies, EPA is making a substantial commitment of personnel resources as are all of the other federal partners," Woodka said. "I think that we are very hopeful and would appreciate Congress acting and actually passing legislation that would create a Gulf coast fund and create a Gulf coast restoration organization."

The task force has a deadline of one year from the issue date of the executive order with a prepared strategy and a proposal of a Gulf coast ecosystem restoration agenda, goals and development of how the task force intends on making changes and contributions to the current restoration efforts already in progress.

"We actually have to have something that is deliverable to the president that explains how this ecosystem moves forward," Woodka said. "That does not mean that there will not be projects and progress and results shown in that year but, rather, that within that year we need to have an outline of how we intend to move forward."





Failed Controversial Legislative Action in California Still Seeking Approval by Voters

By Tabatha Bognar

n November 2010, California citizens voted down Proposition 19, also known as the Regulate, Control and Tax Cannabis Act of 2010. Proposition 19 was written to decriminalize marijuana to a civil penalty and allow local government to issue and collect taxes on cannabis.

If it had passed, Proposition 19 intended to help aid the budget in California and redirect law enforcement to pursue more violent or dangerous crimes, as well as cut off funding to drug cartels. Fifty four percent of California citizens voted against Proposition 19, keeping the possession and cultivation of marijuana illegal under state and federal law.

Currently marijuana is illegal in California for recreational purposes but remains legal under medical rule. One concern cannabis farmers had with Proposition 19 was that if marijuana were legalized for recreational usage, supply and demand could both potentially increase, causing a drop in price.

If the cost of production drops, California growers could also see an increase in competition amongst other growers throughout the nation.

However detrimental Proposition 19 could have been for current California growers, California cannabis farmer Aaron Davis remains optimistic about future attempts to legalize marijuana.

"Yes, it would affect business; however, with an increase in growers there will also be more variety and growers can capitalize on that," Davis said.

Though many California locals are fighting to keep

things the way they have been, others, like Davis, say they will do their part to ensure people get out and vote to end restrictions on marijuana in 2012, when the ballot is re-introduced.

"Our country is changing rapidly and the government needs to change with it; if California legalized marijuana it would be a step into the right direction," Davis said.

The main reason Proposition 19 did not pass is because the majority of Californians had concerns with the "gaps" in the bill's language. Many speculated that if the restrictions were to be removed, marijuana would become more accessible for children to attain.

Also, monitoring marijuana would be more difficult than alcohol. The idea behind Proposition 19 was that by regulating cannabis and controlling it under new laws, it would be kept off the streets where it currently is readily available to children. The regulations that came with this ballot included marijuana must be sold by a licensed vendor, who would be responsible for checking ID's and violations would ideally emulate those put on alcohol. New testing would have to be performed to monitor those driving under the influence of marijuana.

Since 1937, marijuana possession and consumption has been illegal. The idea behind banning marijuana came as a way to strengthen the focus on anti-Mexican immigration and smuggling, when southern immigrants were stereotyped as marijuana smokers. The perception of marijuana users has changed since then,

considering that more than 83 million Americans have been recorded to have tried the substance at least once in their lifetime. In 1996, Proposition 215 passed in California, which removed all criminal penalties at the state level for those who possessed a "written recommendation" from their physician stating that the medical substance would benefit the user.

On January 11, 2010, residents of New Jersey added themselves to the list of states that have legal-

ized marijuana for medical purposes, making it state number 14. The legalization represents a considerable progression in the political aspect. The most signifi-

cant factor in this decision lies in the effects marijuana can have on users' health and on the U.S. economy.

Though no one claims marijuana is the cure for any illness, it has been known to provide relief from debilitating conditions such as seizures caused by Multiple Sclerosis, to the wasting syndrome of AIDS and even the loss of vision associated with glaucoma. It has also been found to help reduce pain and nausea related to migraines and the effects of chemotherapy on cancer patients, as well as to reduce anxiety.

According to the report "Marijuana Inc., Inside Americas Pot Industry", the marijuana market currently generates nearly \$1.5 billion annually in California alone.

Marijuana, considered the most profitable drug in the industry, is known to be economically beneficial.

In a report by Harvard economist Jeffery Miron, Miron estimated that the United States would improve its budget by about \$18 billion if marijuana were taxed and regulated like alcohol.

Miron's estimate included the amount saved from reducing law enforcement. The current cost of the war on marijuana has been estimated to have reached nearly \$42 billion of American taxpayer's money between law enforcement and lost tax revenue.

"Our country wastes billions of dollars every year trying to eradicate marijuana, and after decades of doing so, it's clear our policies have absolutely failed to reduce marijuana's use or availability," said Mike Meno, spokesman for the Marijuana Policy Project. Meno is one of many marijuana activists who regularly speak out to "advance the debate on the marijuana reform" in hopes of passing state medical marijuana laws across the nation.

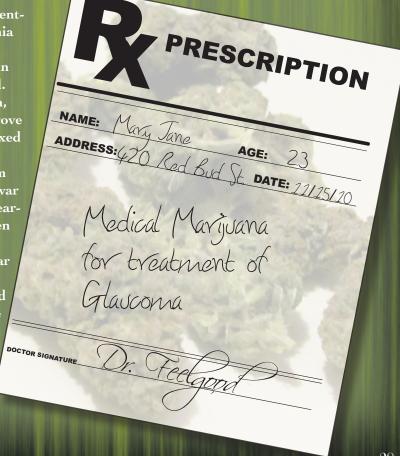
"The marijuana industry is literally a cash cow for law enforcement. Without the marijuana arrests and citations made, the police organizations will lose out on a large portion of their funding annually," Meno said.

The marijuana industry has grown over the years and now this market that used to only be seen as a criminal drug market is becoming legitimized in the medical world.

"Our country wastes billions of dollars every year trying to eradicate marijuana, and after decades of doing so, it's clear our policies have absolutely failed to reduce marijuana's use or availability."

- Mike Meno, spokesman for the Marijuana Policy Project

Those purchasing marijuana are now patients and those selling them the product are just aiding in their medical situations. It is unknown when a state like Texas would ever pass a ballot like Proposition 19, but a least a half-dozen other states are beginning to seriously consider taxing and regulating cannabis, including Oregon, Arizona and South Dakota. With this market in constant growth and its use increasing daily, it may be safe to say, the marijuana industry has gone mainstream.



HIOT FROM HERE NORTHERE

"hat song do you want me to play?" asks Juan Venado, aka John Doe, as he plucks at the violin on his shoulder.

He's in a local music shop with an old, faded sign out front. Attempting to strike a possible trade with the shop owner for a new violin in exchange for a new business sign. Juan makes a friendly business connection.

Juan, not his name for legal purposes, is a native-born Mexican who came to the United States with his parents at the age of three in the summer of 1990.

"I think I knew some [English] when I got here, but it wasn't anything substantial," Juan said.

He credits much of his ability to comprehend English to television. At a young age, Juan enjoyed learning and excelled in school.

"School was always easy," Juan said. "The Hispanic teachers really took my back because they didn't want the system to push me down because I am Hispanic, maybe because they had seen a lot of racism before ... I don't want to look at it like it was me against racism, but I felt that most of the time, that is what it was."

Juan meets the requirements for one of the most heated legislative bills in the United States that, if passed, would have granted immigrants the privilege to receive a permanent residency card: the Dream Act.

Living Undocumented in America

By Carla Bradley

Hypothetically, if the Dream Act were signed into law, qualifying applicants under the age of 35 living in America before the age of 16 who plan to enroll in a higher-educational institution or enlist in the Armed Forces would be given the opportunity to apply for financial assistance to further their education and eventually be eligible to receive a green card.

Like all undocumented immigrants, Juan does not qualify for financial assistance. This is one of many factors that determine whether many in his situation decide to pursue a college education or not. Juan's decision to go to college was always in his plans because his father and college-educated mother instilled their dream for his success at a young age.

"[Going to college] was always in the works for me," Juan said. "I was always told that 'you're going to do so much with your life ...' and it was always a given. It wasn't really a choice for me. It was also something I wanted to do. I knew I needed my education."

Juan graduated from San Jacinto College in 2009. Majoring in marketing with a focus on entrepreneurialship at a school in the UH system, Juan is currently on hiatus to earn enough money to pay off an emergency loan so he can continue his education. Since his legal status is marked as illegal immigrant and he does not have a social security number, Juan is unable to apply for financial assistance or scholarships.

Therefore, he is forced to pay out of pocket to follow through with his future goals.

"What's pushing me to go to college is knowing I can use what I gain in the marketing and entrepreneur industries," Juan said. "But going to school makes it harder for me to focus on my business ... without me, there is no business. I wanted to take some time to focus on my customers too. I'm taking the opportunity now that I have the chance to pay for college and am debating whether to take another semester off so that I can go back and invest in my business."

Since the age of 14, Juan has been a co-owner of a local business that specializes in making and installing business signs with his father. Juan felt he had enough experience to branch off and plans to continue using what he has acquired in his classes to build up his business more.

I want to take what [my dad's] done and take it so much further," Juan said. "All I can do is offer [my dad] support, advice and guide him, and he does the same for me.

On a regular school day, Juan would have gotten up early and gone to class, returned customer calls between classes, have lunch, go to work after school and try to fit homework in at some point. Juan tries not to let the idea of deportation enter his mind but it is a concern for

him.

"My fear is being deported to a place where I'll have no idea what to do or where to go," Juan said.

The number one action that could lead to his detainment and deportation is being

pulled

over, and he is very well aware of it. He owns a radar detector and knows he has to be even more well-behaved than any other driver on the road. Even so, he has been pulled over before.

"[Being pulled over] ended well, because I was let off with a warning," Juan said. "When I got pulled over, the police officer asked me why I didn't have a license. I was brutally honest with him. I told him my situation, and he responded by telling me that if he were in my shoes, he would be doing the same thing. I felt a great sense of validation from that."

Although Juan has been lucky enough not to be taken to jail because of his status, others in his position have not been as fortunate, as demonstrated by Arizona's SB 1070 legislative action titled the Support Our Law Enforcement and Safe Neighborhoods Act. Juan understands the risks he takes every time he turns the key in his car ignition. However, he thinks it's unfair how society and politics have labeled him a criminal.

"Why should I be treated different just because I'm not a citizen?" Juan asked. "Just because of my legal status, I'm not allowed many of the opportunities others get."

Juan is referring to several things. He wishes he could have used his training in the ROTC program at his high school but sees the hopelessness in that he would have needed a green card to be considered to fight for the country he loves and considers to be his real "home."

He is also referring to his inability to apply for grants and scholarships so he can continue his education. Regardless of his hardships, his parents remain optimistic and supportive.

"My parents think of it as a big status thing for me to be going to college, but I'm not able to look forward to a substantial reward since I won't be able to get a real job after I graduate as it stands now," Juan said.

"Not that I think it's pointless, don't get me wrong. I love school and learning, and I do believe it's absolutely essential to the proliferation of the world. I am

holding out hope that it'll all work out." ■

"My fear is being deported to a place where I'll have no idea what to do or where to go."

- Juan Venado aka John Doe



Blow out your candles Ariana!" The entire family screams as they watch the vibrant toddler close her eyes and inhale a deep breath. As she releases a powerful breath to defeat the four flames on her cake, there is no point in asking her what she wished for. Every person standing in the room knows that although Ariana was showered with presents offering the latest technology and trends, her wish remains unfilled. The only thing she wants is for her daddy to come home, pick her up and never let her go.

Unfortunately, her daddy is a soldier currently stationed in Iraq. While the family is gathered together in Pearland, TX, to celebrate Ariana's birthday, my brother is sitting on a hard mattress in an undersized trailer staring out his window. He should

really be asleep, but his mind and heart have traveled back eight hours and thousands of miles to be with his little girl.

"How many more birthdays will I miss? Will this ever get easier?" Depressed thoughts flood the mind of Sergeant Rafael Avila, Jr., more commonly known as AV. He knew the consequences of this job when he enlisted in the army nine years ago, but leaving his family has never been an easy task. As he settles on his bed to sleep, his eyes land on the picture by his bedside. "Happy 4th birthday princess. Daddy loves you."

AV joined the army when he was 21 years old. Like most of his family members, he hadn't finished high school and was holding odd jobs down in order to make a decent living. He married at a young age and his

wife at the time became pregnant with their first child. AV knew that his income would not be able to financially support a child. He bought into the messages of the commercials played on television that built up the army as a good career.

He signed up and within weeks he was setting off to boot camp. It did not take him long to seriously reconsider the decision he had made for it was about that time that he learned of his deployment orders to Iraq.

Nothing could have prepared AV for what he would experience in that foreign land. It was painful to be so far away from his family, and he even missed the birth of his son. Every single night that he slept in Iraq, he knew there was a possibility that he could be killed before the rising of the sun.

Nine years later, he finds himself

in almost the exact same situation. Several factors have changed though. After a failed marriage, he found love again with his beautiful bride Christina.

Out of the four years they have been married, the majority of their time together has been living out of suitcases as they travel from one place to another thanks to the military lifestyle.

"I was devastated to know I would be deploying again. This is my second time to Iraq but my third deployment to a foreign country," AV said.

Yet, the hardest thing for AV is "having to say goodbye to your loved ones and missing them like crazy!"

Although his days in Iraq are busy, filled with orders and executing missions, his thoughts are often on his family back home.

AV will gladly sacrifice sleep in order to wait to use the phone just to hear Christina's voice, Ariana's giggle or exchange some small talk with his stepson Gabriel.

There is so much more to these soldiers than what a person sees on a television screen. These men and women are doing an extremely honorable and brave sacrifice in order to preserve something the United States of America cherishes: our freedom.

AV knows his life is different than his siblings as my sister and I are able to spend our days and evenings in the comfort of our homes with our husbands. We are able to enjoy our marriages face to face rather than over the phone.

Yet he and Christina show one another unconditional support and love and dream of the day that they can live a normal life.

They have learned to adapt in order to see their marriage and family prosper. In the meantime, my brother remains proud to fight for a worthy cause.

"I made the decision to come to Iraq to fight for my country so that the American people have the luxury to go to the mall, play with their kids, go to softball games, etc.,"AV said. "I do it because I believe in the American flag and would give my life if need be just to continue having our flag soaring high on a flag pole."

While his intentions are pure, this does not mean it is an easy life. Depression and solitude visit him often, especially in the late hours. The thought of missing seeing his children experience something new for the first time breaks his heart.

When the sorrow becomes overwhelming, he dives into the scrapbook I gave him before his departure.

It is filled with so many pictures, memories and scriptures to give him hope to fight those ugly feelings of despair.

Christina also remains consistent in sending her husband letters and picture and anything else that will lift his spirits.

She loves her husband just as diligently as if he were right in front of her.

"He is very brave," Christina said.
"I am proud of him. It takes a very strong person to do that. He has to leave his family and be courageous.

It is scary and hard to leave your family at the same time."

I will never forget witnessing my brother board the bus as I bid him farewell in Ft. Hood. The stadium was filled with men and women dressed in their uniforms hugging and kissing their family mem-

My brother, who is usually a live comedian,

was brave for a long time. But as he hugged Ariana goodbye, he broke down.

The next thing I knew both he and his little girl were sobbing and clinging to one another with a tight grip.

Ariana is definitely a 'daddy's girl' and all she knew was that her daddy was getting ready to leave for a long time.

My family is anxiously awaiting September 2011 so we can welcome our hero back home. In the meantime, I take comfort in communicating with my brother via e-mail or short phone conversations.

I also find comfort in spending time with his children, knowing these are the faces keeping him strong in Iraq.

This young toddler has had a difficult time adapting to her daddy's departure, experiencing mood swings of her own.

"Ari, what is going to be the first thing you do when your daddy comes home?" I asked her.

"I am going to hug him. And I am NEVER going to let him go!" was her heartfelt reply.



Jessica Casarez/The Signal Relay

Sergeant Refael Avila Jr. spends quality dad time with daughter Ariana before shipping back to Iraq.



Bar-B-Q in Austin, Texas to see my heroes again for the first time in four years, Julian, Nikolai, Fab, Albert and Nick, more commonly known as The Strokes.

The New York based band is in Austin to perform at the Austin City Limits Festival and has been scheduled to play a pre-show at Stubb's Bar-B-Q.

It took alot of persuasion to get my mom to agree to let me go; I have never been outside the greater Houston area by myself before.

Outside Stubb's wooden fence and metal gate, I meet my southern Californian Facebook contact, Laura Browning, and start establishing a connection with Abby Broussard, from Louisiana, next to me in line. Abby agrees to do me the favor of looking after my things while I inform general manager of Stubb's, Tracy Overath, of my arrival and request permission to take photos.

A female representative, who mistrusts my intentions for the rest of the day, greets me and passes along my message. Overath meets me 10 minutes later and gives me permission to take photos of everything except the outside venue. By that time it's noon and a couple arrives, another Facebook acquaintance, Ilya Ross, and his girlfriend.

As I'm taking photos of everything in sight, I spot a Strokes crew member on a mixing board and ask if I can

STROKE D

A fan's journey to famous Texan landmark. Somewhere along the way, triumph turned into disappointment.

By Carla Bradley

take photographs of the stage after the band crew finishes setting up instruments. He kindly directs me to a band manager who grants permission. However, the previous female representative who has been watching me like a hawk spots me the moment I'm invited to stand inside by the dressing room doorway and rudely bum rushes me away, denying my request.

Defeated, I go back inside the restaurant to place an order for the Wednesday special, pulled pork in flour tortillas with a side of pico de gallo, a side dish (fried okra) and Stubb's famously delicious tangy barbecue sauce. Including a lemonade, my order costs \$10.72

To pass the time, I hear snippets of a sound check, involving constant "hey, hey heys" and one random "holla." Suddenly, music is being played and all of us in line grow silent.

Kara, Ilya's girlfriend, tries her luck and sneaks a peek the mysterious sound checkers. It's Nikolai the bassist and Nick the lead guitarist rocking out.

"I could die at this point."-Carla Bradley

We smile at her discovery and enjoy the small gift from our literal hot spots on the concrete sidewalk. Around 3 p.m., the band takes pity on us who have been in line for hours and sends out a man with several barbecue sandwiches and Frito corn chip bags. Sound check ends at 3:45 p.m.

We are allowed entrance at 6:45 p.m. after fierce repetitive announcements of "no photographs as per request of the band" is drilled into our heads. My bulky Nikon P90 digital camera and I get through the gates and score a front row spot in front of where Nikolai stands (downstage right).

The sky gets darker, leaving the blue concert stage lights to shine through Fab's clear colored drums, reminding me of Cinderella's glass slippers.

"Come on baby light my fire" escapes the mouths of everyone as we sing along to The Doors song blasting through the speakers.

At 9:12 p.m., the boys enter from the right side. Trying my hardest to keep the crowd behind me at bay, my personal space bubble is popped and I am pushed up against the metal barricade like a canned sardine. Albert the guitarist, Fab the drummer, Nick and Nikolai get in position and strike up their 2001 hit, "New York City Cops." Singer Julian, who is spotted wearing a black leg cast, his trademark leather jacket and sunglasses, is last to arrive on stage, like always.

I start to type out each song that plays on my phone and write down everything I experience at the same time. Doing so ruins my excitement because I am more focused on being a mediator to 650 global Strokes fans and a reporter instead of being a fan. The security guards see the distress I am in and ask me multiple times if I need to be pulled out from the crowd.

During "Hard to Explain," I direct my attention away from everything and focus on Nikolai, the "shy" bassist who is secretly the rockstar of the group. With notepad in hand, I wave it at him and mouth "I love you" to him several times. He notices me from behind his sunglasses and smiles at me. At his appropriate pause in the song, I keep going. He smiles wider, cups his hand to his ear and signals that he wants me to yell louder. His wish is my command. He's flattered.

I could die at this point.

He has no idea that he made getting thrashed around like a rugby

ball in the front row and suffering with heat exhaustion and dehydration worth going through up to that point.

"Stubb's, I'm loving it," Julian says in his classic drawl, enjoying the chaos his adoring fans are causing. "Loving it Austin. Thank you."

After a near-miss arm amputation by my hidden camera's strap wrapped around my arm, backwash through into in my face from someone's not quite empty water bottle during the wait for a four-song encore and a fan jumping on stage to sing with an unphased Julian, the show ends at approximately 10:15 p.m.

I took no photos. I collected no autographs. I did not get to meet my heroes after being loyal to them for five years... but as fate would have it, Laura did and Fab gave Ilya his drumstick before exiting offstage. I bid Laura farewell and wish her a great time at the ACL Festival. My friend and host for the night notices my heart shattering.

"Don't worry," I reassure her.
"Next time, it will happen. Next time."

*Editor's Note: Please visit www.youtube.com/thesignalnews for a complete photo slideshow.



Carla Bradley/The Signal Relay

As Austin heat index rises so does the number of anxious Strokes fans arriving in line ouside the gates at 4 p.m Oct. 6.

1 IN 6 AMERICANS STRUGGLES WITH HUNGER.

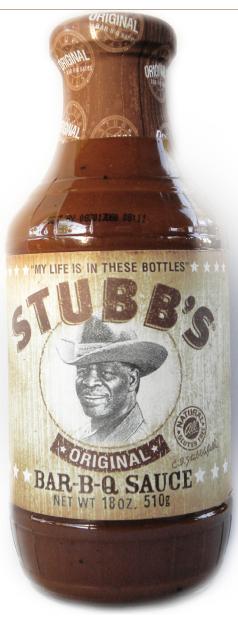




A Texas Landmark

History of Stubb's Bar-B-Q

By Carla Bradley



ive music, barbecue and a desire to one day "feed the world" have created one of the most beloved establishments in Austin and a long-considered tourist pit stop for all music lovers and music history aficionados: Stubb's Bar-B-Q.

During the late 1960s in Lubbock, Texas, Christopher B. "Stubb" Stubblefield would invite musicians like Willie Nelson, Jessie "Guitar" Taylor, B.B. King and others to play Sunday night jam sessions at his restaurant. The Lubbock establishment hit its peak in the 1970s. Unfortunately, financial difficulties forced Stubb to shut his restaurant down in the mid-1980s. Stubb reopened his restaurant in an old blues club called Antone's in Austin in 1985, but closed a year later. Stubb died a month before the current Austin location opened, at 801 Red River St. in 1995.

"Stubbs came to Austin because he was friends with many musicians like Joe Ely and Stevie Ray Vaughn," explained Rocky Stubbefield, grandson to the legendary owner of Stubb's. "Also, there actually was a second location in Lubbock. However it never became as popular as the first location."

As Austin began to grow into its nickname, the Live Music Capital of the World®, Stubb's inadvertently helped nurture it.

"Stubb's continues to offer that smalltown, friendly vibe that Austin is famous for," said Beth Krauss, media relations manager for the Austin Convention and Visitors Bureau.

For locals, Stubb's is a place that promotes gospel brunches and serves legendary barbecue sauce. For out-of-towners, Stubb's offers a unique opportunity to watch their favorite bands in an intimate outdoor setting.

Tracy Overath, general manager of Stubb's, said the venue hosts approximately 65 to 70 outdoor shows a year, whereas the indoor stage holds around 150 a year. Stubb's also becomes an anchor venue for the ultra-hip South by Southwest festival every spring and the famous Austin City Limits Festival every fall.

Not only is Stubb's known for its live music, it is famous for its barbecue, as well. C.B. Stubblefield once said, "I was born hungry; I want to feed the world."

In his honor, the Stubb's Legendary Kitchen organization created the Feed the World campaign in 2008. Volunteers go from shelter to shelter across the country, feeding and helping those who need a hand. FTW also gives away food at different barbecue festivals and events. For further information about the Feed the World campaign and the nearest tour stop, visit www.stubbsbbq.com/ftw.

"As far as what we are best known for, it would just depend on who you ask," Rocky Stubblefield said. "Some people love Stubb's for the food and some love Stubb's for the music. Stubb loved both and they are a great combination."



Top photo: Main bar

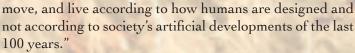
Middle photo: Small dining area Bottom photo: Outdoor venue

VING PRIMA HOW MINDING YOUR INNER CAVEMAN CAN HELP YOU GET INTO JHAPE **By Marcus Austin**

onsider the local ancient hunter-gatherers for a moment, the Karankawa. They were tall, muscular and graceful - often over 6 feet tall. They exerted themselves marching through muddy marshes, paddling dugout canoes and shooting reed arrows from bows that were as tall as they were. There were probably times they went hungry, but otherwise they ate whatever was in season. When they were not burning thousands of calories to find food, they would shoot their bows at a mark for fun. If they were still alive today, they might have done well in mixed martial arts. If the UHCL campus had been around when the Karankawa were here, the predator warning sign by the Arbor building might have had another entry beside the bobcat.

The sign is safe today because most of us tend to refrain from hunting and gathering on campus. Of course, that is not to say that you cannot mimic some of the healthy habits of your Paleolithic ancestors. "I follow a diet based on an under-

standing of evolutionary science," writes Mark Sisson, author of The Primal Blueprint, on his blog Mark's Daily Apple. "I think



Ben and Jen Kaufman, coaches at Clear Lake Crossfit, recommend focusing on what foods you can have, rather than what you cannot have.

'Real' food is at the heart of paleo nutrition. Foods such as grass-fed beef and other healthy meats, seafood, high quality healthy fats, and quality organic fruits and vegetables cost more than the standard diet to which

Americans are accustomed, but as Ben and Jen say, "Pay now or pay later."

To start with, Ben recommends breakfast, a meal many people skip.

"Have you ever had eggs and bacon with some fruit for breakfast?" Ben asked. "What about steak on a salad for lunch? An awesome steak and asparagus for dinner? String all of those together and you've had yourself a paleo

In addition to a healthy diet, exercise is also needed.

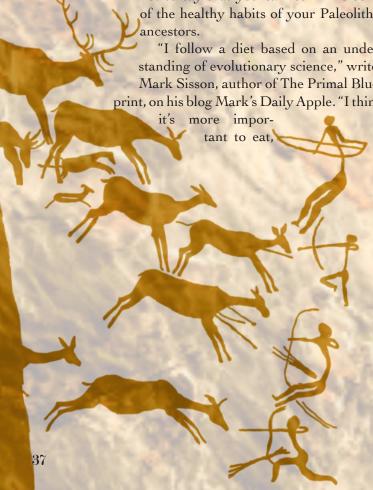
"The most shocking thing to us is that we have people who come into our gym who can't even squat their own body weight," Jen explains. "We are accustomed to comfort and luxury and not using the body as a tool."

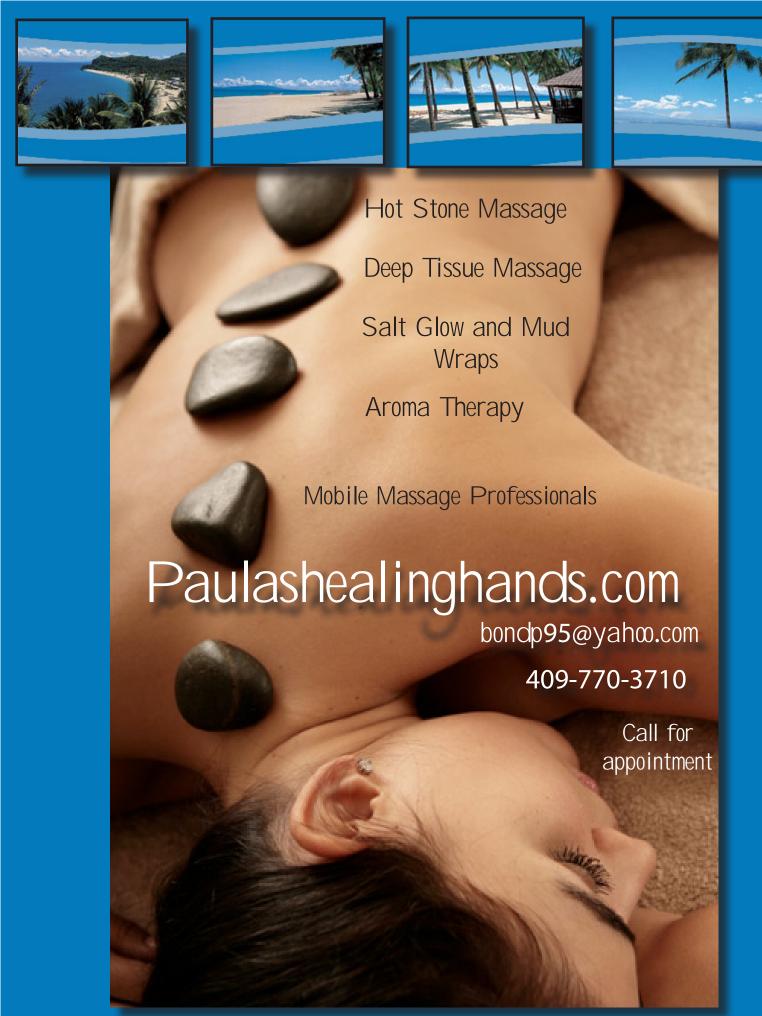
Body-weight exercises are a good place to start. Pushups, pull-ups and squats are three simple body-weight exercises that can be done anywhere. Sprinting is an excellent exercise and can be done in minimalist footwear or barefoot once one learns proper running technique.

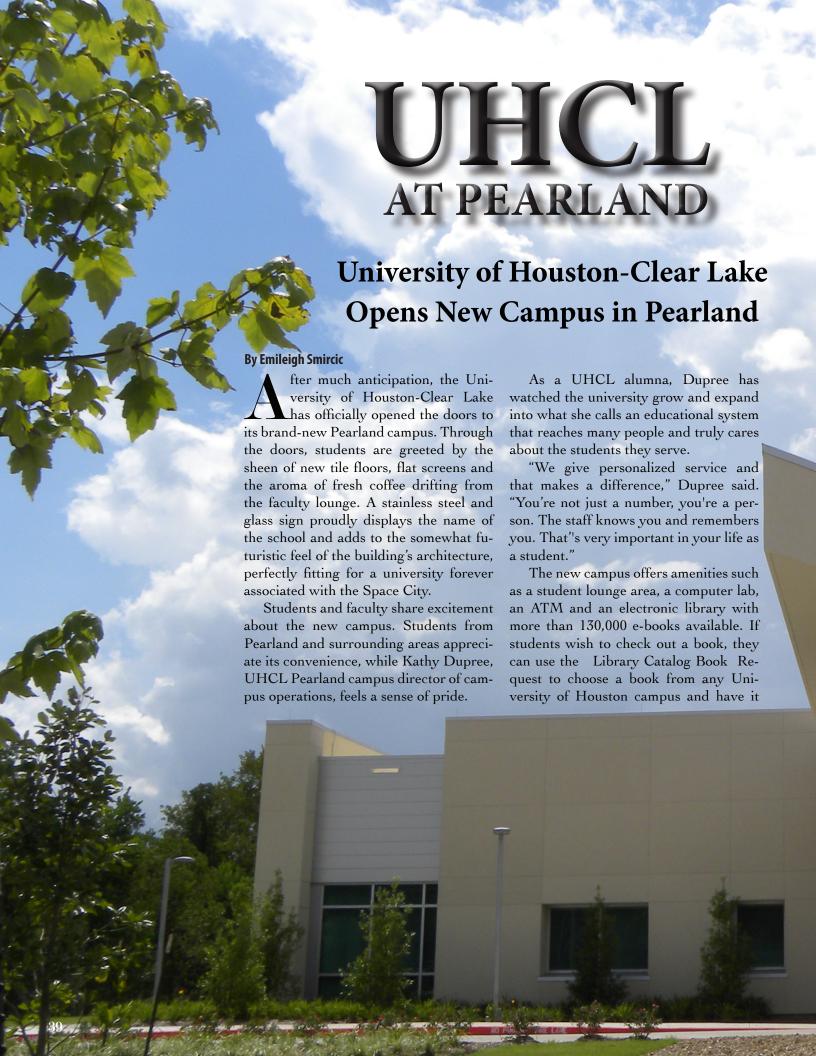
Whatever exercises you choose to do to keep – or find – your hunter-gatherer shape, just remember to "be moving a lot, move slow a lot and have brief moments of intense exercise," Ben said.

Finally, it is important to relax. Life today is full of constant stress, which affects the body negatively. Turn off the television, go move around and thrive during your time in this world. The world is a gym for a primal fitness enthusiast. Be creative.

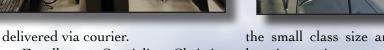
Every morning is a new day to wake up and learn from the past how to live a happier, healthier life. Hunter-gatherers knew how to play and relax. Thankfully, modern people have comfortable beds, and although all of the stars cannot often be seen through smog and light pollution, the sky is the same one humans have lived under for thousands of years.











Enrollment Specialist Christine Ford encounters students who are confused or curious about how the Pearland campus fits into the UH System. She explains to them that each campus (Clear Lake, Downtown, Victoria) is part of the University of Houston System. They are all under the same board of governance but operate as complete separate entities.

The Pearland campus provides a personalized education atmosphere. Both Jessica Cuello and Lauren Cross, education majors who attend classes here, strongly emphasize

the small class size and one-on-one learning environment as one of the campus' perks.

"From now on, I'll come to the Pearland Campus for as many classes as possible," Cross said.

For years, the University of Houston-Clear Lake has stood out as an institution at which smaller class size, forward thinking, and highly developed student-faculty relationships provide students with a profound, well-rounded educational experience; one that actually prepares them for their future in the work force. With the expansion of UHCL to the Pearland campus, the university has become an even more significant part of the UH System, so significant in fact, the new campus carries the name of three cities.



The UHCL-Pearland campus currently offers the following undergrad and graduate programs:

UNDERGRADUATE School of Business BS. Accounting

BS, Accounting BS, General Business

School of Human Sciences and Humanities BS, Behavioral Sciences-General BS, Criminology BS, Psychology

School of Education BS, Interdisciplinary Studies with EC-6 Generalist Certification

GRADUATE

School of Human Sciences and Humanities MA, Behavioral Sciences-General MA, Criminology

School of Education
MS, Counseling
MS, Educational Management

By Alicia Alvarez

veryone has events in his or her life that require changes in personal schedules as well as educational goals.

Achieving that goal of graduation could have been accomplished worryfree if a student had tracked progress to complete their degree using a Degree Progress Report.

All UHCL students are able to print a DPR to help them keep track of courses they have taken and how those courses are applied toward

meeting degree requirements.

It provides academic information regarding transfer credit and requirements met or not met.

"[Students] should also attention to grade-specific requirements such as minimum specific grades needed for certain courses," said Ann Hinojosa, academic adviser in the School of Human Science and Humanities.

It is recommended for students to meet with their academic adviser different times during their educational careers to keep up with changes in their degree requirements.

Although students are bound by the requirements that are listed at the time they sign their degree plan, there may be changes to the requirements that may benefit students.

"Advisers use the DPR for degree

plan preparation and for advising sessions." said Virdeen Munoz, academic adviser in the School of Education.

Students should remember to access their DPR any time they make changes. The benefit of reviewing the report is that "it is updated in real time, so as soon as a change happens it is reflected on the report," Munoz said.

If a student encounters any discrepancies on his or her report made," Hinojosa said.

The university is planning an upgrade to the application database system that is scheduled to go live March 2011.

"With this upgrade, students will see an enhanced Degree Progress Report system that is more userfriendly and easy to manage," said Yvette Bendeck, associate vice president for enrollment management.

Bendeck explained that students will be able to register by choosing

> classes from the DPR.

> The academic planner will allow students to start mapping what courses they want to register for classes

without having to do a class search that they normally would do. Students can then register for directly from the DPR.

The DPR is also used by each of the four schools within UHCL to determine their course scheduling.

Students can access their DPR online anytime by logging into their E-Services account.

More information about the DPR can be found at www.uhcl.edu/ records. Click on the Degree Progress Report for Students link.

By checking the DPR periodically and applying for graduation on time, students control of their educational career is just a click away.

"Faculty are getting used to the report and are beginning to use it more to advise students."

- Ann Hinojosa, HSH **Academic Advisor**

or has questions regarding the requirements, he or she should contact their academic adviser.

"Faculty are getting used to the report and are beginning to use it more to advise students," Hinojosa said.

Academic advisers recommend that students review their reports before the next registration period to determine what course requirements have not been met to assist in registering in the correct courses.

"[The DPR] will be a cooperative system between student - to pull and review the report, and advisors - to respond to student questions and to be sure updates and corrections are



Academic Records





www.uhcl.edu/records

Spring 2011

Open Registration for All Students

November 12, 2010
through January 14, 2011

Payment Deadline for Open Registration January 14, 2011 by 5:00pm

Late Registration for All Students January 15 – 25, 2011

Payment Deadline for Late Registration January 26, 2011 by 6:00pm

First Class Day for Spring 2011 Tuesday, January 18, 2011

University of Houston-Clear Lake Pearland Campus

New satellite campus, 1200 Pearland Parkway is our newest location for your convenience. Now, you'll be able to access exceptional academics, professionally active faculty and superb student services right in your own backyard. Complete your junior, senior and graduate courses at the UHCL Pearland Campus in high-demand disciplines such as business, education and psychology. And, as we grow, so will our program offerings.

