

THE OAKLAND POST

OAKLAND UNIVERSITY'S INDEPENDENT STUDENT NEWSPAPER

December 7, 2009

Volume 36, Number 17



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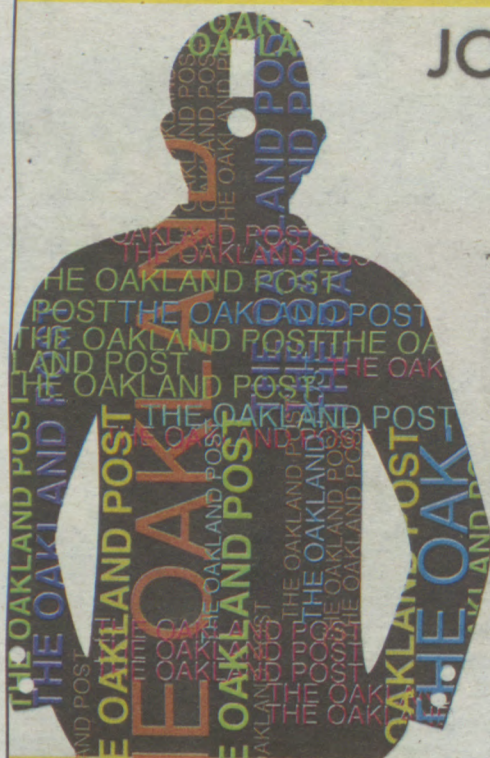
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This is the last issue of the fall semester. Thanks for being a part of this amazing journey!

We'll be back in print Jan. 6, until then, keep up on

oaklandpostonline.com

Cover illustration by JASON WILLIS/The Oakland Post

THE OAKLAND POST

OAKLAND UNIVERSITY'S INDEPENDENT STUDENT NEWSPAPER

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Perspectives

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December 7, 2009

STAFF EDITORIAL

Defining the opinion section

A local editorial page editor once said it's a good idea to occasionally remind readers about the differences in the types of opinion pieces in a newspaper.

This editor also said that even when the "OPINION" is atop the page in bold, black typeface, there's always somebody who gets upset, thinking that because there is opinion in a newspaper that the entire paper is biased.

You see this when people talk about the Detroit News and Free Press. The News is considered conservative, the Press is seen as liberal, because of their editorials.

The Oakland Post is unique — our opinion pages are called "Perspectives." There isn't a set of positions The Post takes on political issues. We are not the Democratic or Republican caucus. The Post has less reason to editorialize political issues that could classify it as left or right wing.

Our focus is on the Oakland University community: its students, faculty, alumni, administration and staff.

The editorial board does not set an agenda at the beginning of every year. But we do scrutinize every situation to decide what direction The Post should give to the OU community.

So when we editorialize on an issue on this page, we write about issues that

other news outlets are not paying attention to, or might not see the same way as we do.

Our editorials are always on this page. They are unsigned opinions by one of the editorial board members listed at right, all students and Post staff.

The editorial serves as our expert opinion on the topics the newsroom covers. We appeal to reason, try to look at all the facts, and often do reporting independent from what the reporter does for the related story. It is our policy to avoid having the reporter be a part of the editorial process, except to provide background information.

We do not criticize just because it makes for a snarky editorial. We attempt to always provide solutions to the ills we see, or suggestions on how to make a situation better. Sometimes there's a need to simply point out a situation that smells suspicious. Sometimes, we just want to explain something more thoroughly than could be done through outside sources in an article.

The staff editorial is the official stance of The Post. But there are other types of opinion pieces found in the Perspectives section that are not. For instance, cartoons, when we have them, are not representative of the staff or editorial board's views and opinions.

Neither are letters to the editor, which are sent in by readers usually in response to a previous column, staff editorial or news article. The mini-version of the letter to the editor is now the Facebook comment to the article link or a comment on the website.

Columns are opinion pieces by a single author, usually a reflection on a current issue somewhere in the world, usually relevant to student life. Columnists usually use data to back up their opinion, but sometimes it's just a thoughtful opinion with nothing to back it up but ideas and an argument.

Most of the opinion in this paper is found in Perspectives. But there are occasionally columns and reviews in more fitting sections. Like sports columns will go in the sports section, clearly labeled. And movie reviews will go in the Scene section, labeled as well.

The only other place you should find opinion in this newspaper is in Mouthing Off. Perhaps we take it for granted that most people realize that this section exists solely to satirize anything, from the strike to breast cancer.

The Post is proud to serve as a forum for the voices of the OU community, from funny-not-so-serious to a fresh perspective. Start a revolution, or just start a comment thread.

What do you think? Send your comments to The Oakland Post or stop in the office, 61 Oakland Center or by any of the methods below.

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Letter Policy:

Writers must provide full name, class rank, phone number and field of study. Please limit letters to 250 words or less. Letters may be edited for content, length and grammar.

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The Oakland Post corrects all errors of fact. If you know of an error, please e-mail oakpostmanaging@gmail.com or call (248) 370-2537. You can also write us at 61 Oakland Center Rochester, MI 48309.

Happy Holidays

from

The Oakland Post

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

— The First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States

Proud to drive a Toyota

Foreign cars aren't so foreign after all

Amanda Meade

assistant ads manager



My first vehicle was a '95 Chevrolet Beretta. It was white, had a spoiler on the back, and was maybe one of the coolest cars I had ever seen — although I was 18 and it was my first car. I bought it from a small local used car dealership for about \$3,000.

I drove that car for roughly a year and a half. Within that period of time it needed an entirely new engine, although in my case I was lucky, my dad had spent a little more money to buy a warranty and it was covered.

I ended up having to get rid of my Beretta because it needed so much work it would have cost me three times as much as I had originally paid for it.

My dad took me to the Toyota dealership where he had recently bought his Camry in Rochester, for they seemed to have some good deals on used cars. After test driving a Toyota Yaris I fell in love with it, only to find that my insurance payments would be astronomical with a brand new car.

After test driving another older Toyota, I finally found a tan colored '97 Camry with a very low amount of miles for its age. I thought it was so nice — leather seats and everything, and it just so happened to be the same color as my dad's Toyota Camry. I thought that was cool.

I was very excited about what good shape the car was in, and I had heard that Toyotas lasted quite a while.

Another aspect that excited me was that I took out my first loan for the car and was going to have to pay for it on my own — it felt like more of a grown up kind of thing, and that was important to me. I felt as though my Beretta was my teenage car, and gaining the responsibility of paying for something all on my own was me becoming more established as an adult.

So as proud as I am to have this beautiful new car that I've earned and am going to have to work very hard to keep, imagine the offense I take to constantly seeing "Out of a job yet? Keep buying foreign" bumper stickers, or even the much more offensive "F*** you and your foreign vehicle" sticker on the back of a half broken down

truck driving down Van Dyke.

The fact is, I've now had my Camry for two and one-half years. I've only had minimal, regular repairs that any older car would eventually need, and of course the self-inflicted front end repair after my small rear end accident.

I'm not here to bash American-made vehicles. The funny thing is, a lot of Toyota parts are now made in America.

My car actually says "American Edition" on the sides next to the front tires and I don't feel that others should constantly be shooting down "foreign" vehicles, without knowing more about where the cars are actually made.

"...imagine the offense I take to constantly seeing "Out of a job yet? Keep buying foreign" bumper stickers..."

According to www.toyota.com, the Toyota Motor Engineering and Manufacturing is headquartered in Erlanger, Kentucky. They are responsible for the engineering design and development, research and development and manufacturing activities in the U.S., Canada and Mexico.

The Toyota Technical Center is a division of TEMA, and is located right here in Ann Arbor. According to the site, there has been a recent expansion in York Township which has added an additional investment of \$187 million and will offer 400 more jobs in the state of Michigan in 2010.

I also spent time on www.ford.com, looking for the same information that Toyota offered regarding where their cars are made. I was unable to find anything. I've heard that much of American cars are also made in Mexico, yet I was unable to find any reliable information regarding that.

Once again, I really have nothing against people driving American-based vehicles. My boyfriend is now in his second Buick, this time a '90 Le Sabre. Granted, he doesn't have to drive nearly as much as I do, but that car still rocks it down the road and is incredibly reliable. I have also heard that these American companies are making now better cars, and that's great.

All I know for sure is that I love my Toyota Camry. I'm proud of it and I rest easy knowing that I could very realistically be driving that car for another ten years, and I might not ever drive another brand of vehicle.

Letter from the editor: looking back and looking forward

Colleen Miller [Editor-In-Chief]



We crossed picket lines to put out our "Welcome Back" issue. We worked tirelessly every Monday and Tuesday night and into Wednesday mornings. We met every Thursday to talk about what we could do better.

We went through this routine 17 times since May, and will do it 14 more times before next May. But this is not just a routine for the journalists, sales team, photographers, designers and editors at The Oakland Post. This is our strange, self-inflicted passion.

This very well might be the last actual print newspaper many of us ever work for. And it very well might be the best interpersonal experience I will ever have.

I say it in hundreds of e-mails to interested students who want to work for the paper: This is the best experience you could ask for at Oakland University.

To be honest, this is my only extracurricular experience outside of normal classes, parking, and an occasional free-

food snatch up. I really do encourage anybody who wants that little, or a lot of, something extra out of their college experience, to consider getting involved with us, or another student organization.

I acknowledge that our office can be intimidating, with writers and editors always running around interrupting conversations and having Chartwells' nacho cheese chugging contests. But we are all very open to show the curious around, and open to hearing your ideas.

We aren't some exclusive club and we certainly do not walk around with our heads in the clouds, although they may be buried in a story.

Because of the chaos that is the newsroom, The Post is launching a not-for-credit internship program in January, where interested students from any major or any experience level (even zero) can get their foot in the proverbial door.

To find out more, e-mail me at oakposteditor@gmail.com.



Read a letter to the editor in response to the December 2 staff editorial on the health care reform on oaklandpostonline.com. Submit your own letters and columns to oakpostmanaging@gmail.com.

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RUSSI WATCH

Keeping track of promises
and holding him accountable.

By KAY NGUYEN
Campus Editor

During an open forum with faculty Nov. 19, President Gary Russi entertained questions and concerns and proposed solutions to many of them.

The forum was so successful that the faculty postponed a vote of no confidence that was supposed to show dissatisfaction over Russi's work over the last decade at Oakland University.

"I'm going to do everything I can to address the issues that we've talked about," Russi said at the forum. "You will hold me accountable, as you should."

Because of this, The Oakland Post is following the progress of promises made by Russi.

Also holding him accountable is WXOU Radio general manager and host of "The Erik Anderson Program" Erik Anderson.

"I've been tracking the different promises and things that (Russi) made," Anderson said. "I attended the forum and want to make sure he stays true to

his word."

He has begun a weekly segment, also entitled "Russi Watch," that also keeps track of Russi's pledges. It airs every Monday at 11:30 a.m. on 88.3 FM.

Anderson started a blog, www.erikandersonprogram.com, in September that chronicled his attempts to get Russi onto his program.

"I wanted to hear from (Russi) for once and not his public representative," Anderson said of his quest. "He seems like a nice guy; we just never get to see that."

Russi is now slated to appear on Anderson's show on Jan. 11.

Russi will also be speaking with The Oakland Post Jan. 18.

Student body vice president Saman Waquad is currently trying to have a student open forum with Russi.

In the meantime, students can ask him questions through The Oakland Post by submitting questions at 61 Oakland Center or by emailing oakposteditor@gmail.com.

PROMISES MADE

- Ensuring that the process of shared governance is followed
- Scheduling regular meetings with the deans, department chairs and association (AAUP) leadership
- Opening access to Wilson Hall
- Annual campus-wide leadership meeting will be open
- Making the application to the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) and all medical school documents available in Kresge Library
- Arrange for the Vice President for Finance and Administration to begin meeting and gathering input from the Senate Budget Review Committee
- Working with the Provost and the Deans to improve the budget process
- Asking the Senate to assemble a committee to review the process of purchasing software and equipment
- Instructed the Director of University Diversity and Compliance to work with the LBGT+ ERG to develop a policy that shows the university supports them
- Donating \$100,000 to OU

PROGRESS MADE

Access to the executive office corridor has been opened. The hallway containing the president's office in Wilson Hall used to be protected by a security keypad. Access to the hallway is only available through the doors near the breezeway connecting Wilson and Oakland University Art Gallery.

Study survey was to see study facilities need

By MASUDUR RAHMAN
Senior Reporter

The study habits survey recently conducted by Oakland University Student Congress could possibly influence a decision to extend Kresge Library hours.

Jarrett Schlaff, student services director of OUSC, said the purpose of the survey was to see if there was a need for students to use the library or other campus facilities beyond the current available hours.

The survey, conducted online and in person, concluded on Tuesday, Nov. 27. It asked students when and where they study most on campus.

But it didn't ask whether students would like to see the Kresge hours extended, in fear of influencing the answers and invalidating the results of the survey in the eyes of the library administration.

"We didn't want to skew the data," Schlaff said.

If students knew the survey was looking to see if there was a need to extend library hours, they may have said they would use the library during the hypothetical extended hours even if they didn't plan on actually doing so, he said.

Schlaff said 478 students participated in the survey. The results of the survey will be released later.

He said the survey generally shows that there is a need for extended hours of campus facilities because students often study when those facilities are closed.

Schlaff said he is working on a proposal directed to the library administration to extend the library hours during certain times through future semesters, especially during and before finals. Details of the proposal will also be released after it is presented.

The library administration has not seen the survey results or proposal yet, but dean of the library, Julie Voelck, said she is interested in seeing them.

"I would also like to see the methodology of their data collection," Voelck said.

She said the increased library budget necessary to keep the library open 24 hours a day, due to the need to staff more employees, is not the only obstacle.

She said that because of the way the library is built makes it impossible to have it stay open 24/7 because of fire codes. The only way to keep the library open 24/7 would be build a new partitioned-off area adjacent to library, from which the main library can't be accessed, to keep accordance with fire code.

But this would be expensive, and the library does not have the plans for this currently.

She said extending the library hours based on survey results is a possibility, but that the library would need to see a strong student interest before deciding to pay the increased cost.

She said the library keeps track of how many people utilize the facility, and that it is typically underused during late hours.



JASON WILLIS/The Oakland Post

Unlike some other universities, OU's library is not open 24/7.

Kresge Library hours during finals week

December 7 Monday 7:30 a.m. - 2:00 a.m.

December 8 - 10 Tuesday - Thursday 7:30 a.m. - midnight

December 11 Friday 7:30 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.

December 12 Saturday 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

December 13 Sunday CLOSED

December 14 - 18 Monday - Friday 7:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

POLICE FILES

YEAR IN REVIEW

Missing person?: On Jan. 15, a parent of a female student contacted OUPD, fearing that her daughter was missing. The dispatcher notified the head resident on duty, who used his key to enter her dormitory. Nobody was in, and there was no sign of forced entry. The mother met with OUPD two days later and said she had not talked to her daughter in three days. The mother claimed she and her daughter talked daily, and that the break in communication was unusual behavior for her. The mother said she left several voice messages on her daughter's phone, none of which were returned. On Jan. 19, the mother called OUPD informing them that her daughter was on campus and safe.

Marijuana possession: On Feb. 2, OUPD was dispatched to 212 Van Wagoner Hall. A female resident said she had smoked marijuana in her room recently, and turned over 1/16 of an ounce of marijuana, two pipes, a bong, a marijuana grinder, a joint and some alcohol. She was given a citation for marijuana use.

Going 42 in a 15: On March 14, OUPD pulled over a vehicle traveling 42 mph by Vanderberg Hall, where the speed limit is 15 mph. The driver told OUPD he wasn't sure if his license was valid. The officer conducted a background check, and discovered that the driver had two prior convictions for Driving while License Suspended and two warrants in Canton. The driver was arrested and transported to Canton Police Department.

Domestic violence: On March 24, a student reported a possible domestic violence incident. The student said she had been pushed by a male student. The student said she had followed the male from Varner Hall to Hamlin Hall in order to discuss a disagreement they had earlier. She reported the male refused to talk about the matter. When the two arrived on the third floor of Hamlin, where the male lives, she obstructed his doorway, and he pushed her out of the way. She said after he pushed her out of the way, he grabbed her wrists and pressed her against a wall. She claimed to have a bruise above her right elbow. In a later interview, the male said that he had simply pushed her out of the way and entered the room, closing the door. The male student agreed not to have any more contact with the female student. No charges were filed.

Burnt popcorn: On Sept. 19, OUPD responded to a smoke alarm in a South Hamlin Hall room. A resident said she burned popcorn in her microwave. Auburn Hills Fire Department came and reported that there was no damage.

Urinating outdoors: On Oct. 6, an OUPD dispatcher reported witnessing on security camera a male urinating near the dome use as an indoor soccer facility. OUPD went the scene and made contact with the man. The man said that he needed to use the bathroom but did not urinate outside. OUPD copied his information and released him.

Stolen vehicle: On Oct. 27 around 1:10 a.m., a student reported her dark blue 2008 Toyota Corolla S, which was parked in P-5, had been stolen. The student said her car was parked in the lot since Oct. 25. She said she went to her car at one point on Oct. 26, and may have dropped her keys, but didn't realize the keys were missing until she discovered her car missing as well. The student drove around campus with a friend and still could not find the vehicle. Officers were unable to find the vehicle. Security cameras were not focused on the area where the vehicle was located at the time of theft, and there was no sign of breaking and entering. There were no suspects at the time of the police report.

Paper cut: On Nov. 12, OUPD was dispatched to Kresge Library to assist a student with a paper cut that wouldn't stop bleeding. Auburn Hills Fire Department arrived, provided medical care and a friend transported the student to Crittenton Hospital.

Suspicious driving: On Nov. 26, OUPD pulled over the driver of a car traveling east on Walton Blvd. near West Oakland Drive at 3 a.m. The car had been speeding, swerving and had a defective rear taillight. The officer smelled the strong odor of intoxicants when he approached the driver, who admitted that he was drinking a few hours earlier. The driver, who didn't have his license, was given sobriety tests, refused a PBT and was placed under arrest for suspicion of OWI. He was taken to Pontiac Osteopathic Hospital Medical Center for the blood draw and then transported to Oakland County Jail.

— Compiled by managing editor Katie Wolf from previous Oakland Post police files.

Campus Briefs

Trying to create an within-campus shuttle

Oakland University Student Congress is soon planning on proposing to the university administration to extend the use of the Bear Bus.

Currently, it is used only on the weekends to transport students from campus to the local Rochester area. The shuttle program was created by OUSC and paid for by the OU president's office and OU housing.

OUSC's student services committee will propose that the Bear Bus be used on weekdays during the peak hours of 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. to make continuous loops and transport students from distant parking lots to popular destinations on campus.

Brett McIsaac, member of the committee, said this would help during winter months, when using the free bike share program bikes would be unsafe.

The proposal states it will cost \$5,061.54 per semester to do this with one bus, and \$10,123.08 to do this with two buses.

— Senior Reporter Masudur Rahman

Trying to label buildings based on academic units

At its monthly meeting Dec. 3, the Oakland University senate passed a proposal to place the names of OU's academic units on campus buildings that house the administrative offices of the unit.

This would need to be approved by the OU board of trustees before it can be done.

The proposed labels would go on the following buildings: College of Arts and Sciences on Varner Hall, School of Education and Human Services on Pawley Hall, School of Engineering and Computer Science on Dodge Hall, School of Nursing on O'Dowd Hall, School of Business Administration on Elliot Hall and School of Health Sciences on Hannah Hall.

Frances Jackson, nursing associate professor and co-sponsor of the proposal, said this idea came from seeing the OU William Beaumont School of Medicine on the O'Dowd building where the medical school's administrative offices are located.

— Senior Reporter Masudur Rahman

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Actuarial major delayed

By MASUDUR RAHMAN
Senior Reporter

The addition of an actuarial science major is delayed a year due to minor discrepancies at an Oakland University senate meeting on Thursday, Dec. 3.

To be offered in the fall 2010 catalog, the proposal needed to pass at this senate meeting, because the deadline to be included in the catalog is Dec. 18.

Ron Sudol, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, said this means there will be a one-year minimum delay.

The actuarial science major, a collaboration of CAS and the school of business administration eight years in the making at OU, essentially assesses risk in finance and insurance. It's a very specialized field, which is why proposers only anticipated having three to five students in the first year.

If it passed, the proposal would have then gone to a meeting of OU's board of trustees, which needs to approve all majors.

But the majority of senate members voted to postpone the approval discussion to the Jan. 14 senate meeting.

The issue was not validity of the

major. It was passed by the university committee on undergraduate education and the planning review committee.

The issue was brought up by the budget review committee, who said two lines in the budget proposal didn't add up, and that the proposal didn't include a letter of support from the CAS dean.

Sudol said he thought it was redundant, as his own support should've been obvious because he was the sponsor of the proposal. He then offered his vocal support of the proposal.

David Garfinkle, professor of chemistry and a member of the budget review committee, said he didn't know if the committee would think this was enough to resolve the issue.

Julie Voelck, dean of the Kresge Library, said the budget seemed "strange," but didn't push the issue because of the low number of students.

Frances Jackson, nursing associate professor, said the senate should give the budget committee time to work on the issue.

"I don't think the question should be blown off," Jackson said.

Sudol said after the meeting that "the fuss being made over this program

is — as is typical in universities — in inverse proportion to its size and scope. It is so tiny that it will not register in any statistics whatsoever."

"It should have been possible for the senate to act," Sudol said.

Some at the meeting suggested ways of approving the proposal in time and still addressing the issues.

One was passing the major and putting it in the catalog, with the understanding that the issues would be addressed, and if they weren't, it would be pulled from the catalog. But this, and other suggestions, were shot down.

"We think we should be offering it because it would attract to OU the kind of high-achieving math students we would like to have more of," Sudol said of the importance of the major.

"With an aging population and new concepts in health care, actuarial science professionals will be in demand. We are always on the look out for opportunities to offer such programs for our students, especially, as in this case, when we can do so with our existing faculty, who are fully qualified. We have also made contacts so that the students will have internship opportunities."

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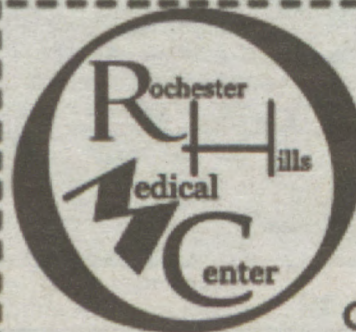
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SPOTLIGHT ON STUDENT ORGS

ethics bowl team

By KAY NGUYEN
Campus Editor

The Oakland University Ethics Bowl team found great success at the Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl regional competition this past weekend.

The team was able to secure three wins and stay undefeated throughout preliminary rounds.

They were able to enter the final face-off against the University of Wisconsin-Madison with a massive near-record 54 point differential.

They went on to lose the final round by three points. With the national competition around the corner, the team is ready for another shot at capturing a coveted title.

Forensics is described by club president Christopher Darin as "performance rhetoric, so it's more informative speeches, humorous or persuasive speech, or dramatic interpretation from a movie or something like that."

An Ethics Bowl competition, which has roots in academia and philosophy, requires skills in forensics but is more of a debate on ethical dilemmas.

Teams are assigned specific cases to work on during competitions. For example, the OU team tackled the issue of harvesting human organs without consent.

Darin said that while the thought process is similar to that of arguing a legal case, the focus is definitely on the ethical implications of a situation.

"There is a little bit of law to it, but it's mostly about ethics," he said. "While the law tries to emulate ethics, sometimes the law isn't ethical."

During a typical sparring, the first team will offer its argument and the second will offer a rebuttal. The presenting team then is able to refute. The order is then reversed for the second half of a round.

Darin said that the competition is all about presenting strong ethical arguments and a clear organization of thoughts.

Judges come from a myriad of backgrounds. Though most are philosophy instructors or have a legal background, many other professionals offer their time and expertise.

Arguments are scored based on how

adequately arguments are presented. Oakland University was able to attain a near-record point differential.

"It's basically a record of how badly we kicked the other team's ass," explained Darin.

Point differentials are added up to break ties and determines the following round's order. For example, there were three teams that had three wins and no losses just like OU.

"I'm just very grateful for not only the camaraderie of meeting three to five other people who I can talk with about real interesting topics, but also the ability to hone in on my communication and debate skills," Darin said.

The final topic of discussion was the ethics of psychologists using their own children for testing and research.

The team was complimented by the founder of Ethics Bowl, Dr. Robert Ladenson.

He said the OU team had a very unique debate style and was the first he had ever seen like it.

He said that he felt OU had a good chance at nationals.

The OU team was created by coach

Lisa Campbell, an OU communication professor. She teaches performance communication, which is like a forensics course.

Campbell's father died a few days before the competition. She said that her mother told her to continue supporting the team and to be there for the competition because she is so passionate about performance communication.

"I think (the prior events) largely related to our success, because at that point we really wanted to do it for (Campbell)," Darin said. "We were very proud to win her that trophy."

The auditorium was so crowded for the final round of competition between OU and Wisconsin-Madison that extra audience seating had to be brought in.

"It was a real exciting time because Oakland University has never been a big contender in Ethics Bowl before," Darin said.

Students interested in getting involved with the Ethics Bowl team can contact Darin at cldarin@oakland.edu or Lisa Campbell at llcampbe@oakland.edu.

- Staff intern Christy O'Shaughnessy contributed to this report

csa@oakland.edu
248-370-2400

Center for Student Activities

CSA

www.oakland.edu/csa

Interested in joining Oakland's Community Service Council ?

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Welcome Week
January 5-9th

Good luck on finals!

Got an event?

Submit it to the CSA Events Calendar @
www.oakland.edu/csa/events

NOMINATIONS NOW BEING ACCEPTED FOR THE FOLLOWING STUDENT AWARDS:

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Nominees for the 2010 Alfred G. and Matilda R. Wilson Awards must be graduating seniors in winter 2010 or have graduated in summer or fall 2009. The awards recognize one female and one male who have contributed as scholars, leaders and responsible citizens to the Oakland University community. Nominees must have a strong academic record of a 3.5 or higher GPA.

HUMAN RELATIONS AWARD

Nominees must be graduating in winter 2010 or have graduated in summer or fall 2009. The Human Relations Award recognizes a senior student who has made an outstanding contribution to inter-group understanding and conflict resolution in the Oakland University community. The major consideration of the award is the individual's service to the community. A minimum GPA of 2.5 is required.



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you (your stories
your words
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your health)

twenty years ago

THE WALL CAME DOWN

By Jennifer Wood, senior reporter

When traveling to East Germany in 1985, Oakland University German associate professor Christopher Clason had his luggage searched by gunpoint.

"We crossed the East German border in the train to Berlin ... the East German guards came onto the train to have a look before letting it pass on to Berlin ... and one of them poked through my luggage with the end of the barrel of his AK-47," said Clason.

Later in the trip he recalled having an East German policeman lower his rifle at him while Clason attempted to take a photo of a Soviet airline building.

Experiences like Clason's were not out of the ordinary for travel between East and West Germany prior to the fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989.

Tension between the two sides ran high, as East Berlin fought to remain communist and its Western counterpart worked to strengthen democracy.

Nov. 9, 2009 marked the 20th anniversary of the reunification of Germany and the start of the end of communism in Europe.

The wall, which was built in 1961, was originally constructed by the East German government in order to discourage young professionals from moving west where they would be able to earn higher wages under the Federal Republic of Germany.

Described to Eastern Germans as an "Anti-Fascist Protection Wall," the divide separated Eastern Communism and Western Democracy.

"It was a propaganda line that they were keeping fascists out," said Clason. "The East was bleeding young and professional people, you can't run a state like that."

By 1989, Clason said, Eastern Europe could no longer afford to oppress the citizens.

"The United States had exerted a great deal of pressure on the Soviet Union with the arms race, and the Soviets were not keeping up ... it was just too expensive," he said.

That pressure, along with events such as the opening of Hungary's border to East Germans and the Eastern Europe liberal movements, convinced Eastern German

officials to discuss laws that would allow travel between East and West Germany.

On Nov. 9, 1989, rumor had spread that travel would be permitted to either side of the wall, and when questioned when it would occur, government officials answered, "right away."

"Someone called the guards at one location on the Berlin Wall and said the border was now open ... with that little miscue, what had been brewing for months became the world as we know it today," Clason said.

Waterford landscaper, 79-year-old Heinz Hoffman, who grew up in Eastern Germany, remembers the days following the fall of the wall as being "jubilant."

"Everybody had relatives on both sides. The wall hurt everybody because they couldn't keep in contact with any of them," he said.

In the past 20 years, the transition has not been easy.

There are Eastern Germans who still feel life was better under communist rule, with universal health care and lower unemployment.

However, those in favor of reunification believe that the removal of the wall was a step in the right direction.

Krijn Faase, a German teacher at West Middle School in Rochester, grew up in West Germany, but had moved to the U.S. in 1984, before the wall came down.

"Germany is united but you still see differences even after 20 years. Unemployment is higher and salaries are lower in the East ... They are still trying to catch up," Faase said.

Problems aside, Faase believes the 20th anniversary is a huge milestone and reason to celebrate.

"There are still problems, but it unified Europe. It's safer and people are learning to tolerate people better. Overall, it's overwhelmingly positive," he said.



LIONEL CIRONNEAU/AP Photo
Berliners celebrate on top of the Berlin Wall as East Germans flood through the dismantled wall into West Berlin at Potsdamer Platz, Nov. 12, 1989.

Recalling the feeling of the fall from Romania

OU assistant professor of journalism Adina Schneeweis, was 9 years old and living in Communist Romania when the Berlin Wall came down 20 years ago.

"I went into my room and found some fabrics from my toys and dolls and I tied the national colors on my arm, because that's what the revolutionaries were doing on TV and I was just so proud," said Schneeweis, smiling.

Although young and hundreds of



Schneeweis

miles away from Berlin, Schneeweis was able to see the wave of changes that would eventually sweep across all of Europe following the fall of the wall.

Not only significant to the reunification of East and West Germany, the fall of the Berlin Wall began the unification of

Europe as a whole.

"We were all so proud. It was so exciting," said Schneeweis. "It felt like Romania did this too, we got rid of the dictator. It was really celebration and pride."

2009

year in review

From the controversial to the hopeful, 2009 brought us to different points in the spectrum of human emotion. During the economic hardships this year, saving graces in the form of a heroic airplane landing and a possible vaccine for a pandemic show us that hope is an answer to life's uncertainties. If the year has taught us anything, it is that we can't work alone and that even when night is at its darkest, dawn is sure to come.

Information compiled by The Oakland Post Staff

Dan Fenner, Colleen Miller, Kevin Romanchik, Dan Simons,
Annie Stodola, Alexis Tomrell, Jason Willis and Katie Wolf

Designed by Jason Willis

January

OU NEWS | OU sets up the "hardship fund" with \$250,000 in grants for students in need.

01.20 | Barack Obama is inaugurated as the 44th President of the United States. Joe Biden becomes Vice President and former first lady Hillary Clinton becomes Secretary of State.



Associated Press

01.15 | Jim Schwartz is named head coach of the Detroit Lions following their winless 2008 season.

01.29 | Illinois Governor Rod Blagojevich becomes the first state governor to be impeached and removed from office in over 20 years.

FASHION | In recent years' most affordable and comfortable trend, leggings rise from their '80s coffin, varying from bold prints and black leather to gold lamé.



Amazon.com

02.08 | blink-182 reunites at the Grammy Awards and announces dates for their summer tour.



Amazon.com

02.10 | Chris Brown is arrested for assaulting girlfriend Rihanna.

02.10 | An American and Russian satellite collide in space over Siberia, creating a large amount of potentially dangerous space debris.

02.16 | Richland County, S.C. Sheriff's Department announced record-breaking Olympic Gold Medalist Michael Phelps would not be prosecuted in connection with photos published of him allegedly smoking marijuana from a bong.

01.09 | Motown Records celebrates its 50th anniversary in Detroit.

01.16 | Circuit City announces the closing all of their 567 U.S. stores by March.



AP Photo/Steven Day

01.15 | Capt. Chesley "Sully" Sullenberger safely lands US Airways Flight 1549 in the Hudson River, saving all 155 aboard after the plane hit a bird shortly after takeoff and malfunctioned.

01.22 | White House announces Guantanamo Bay will shut down within a year.

01.28 | Three new buildings announced to be constructed on campus: Human Health Building which was originally supposed to have broken ground this year, and two others by 2014.



BOB KNOSKA/The Oakland Post

01.24 | Erik Kangas becomes the OU career leader in three pointers with 301.

02.07 | OU celebrates its first homecoming.

02.04 | Eric Pogue is named head coach of the men's soccer team following the retirement of longtime coach Gary Parsons. Pogue was later named Summit League Coach of the Year in November.

02.12 | After more than a month of opposition from residents, the Rochester City Council agreed to abandon the deer cull to help reduce deer-car accidents.

02.17 | Sports Illustrated reports that New York Yankee Alex Rodriguez tested positive for performance-enhancing anabolic steroids and testosterone.

February

facebook

Photo courtesy of www.facebook.com

02.04 | Facebook turns 5 years old.

March

02.18 | Kings of Leon win best international album at the Brit Awards for "Only By The Night." Singles include the hits "Use Somebody" and "Sex on Fire."



Amazon.com

02.27 | The Simpsons becomes the longest-running U.S. prime-time television series after Fox confirms two more seasons.

18

27



Amazon.com

02.22 | Break-out hit, "Slumdog Millionaire" wins Best Picture at the 81st Academy Awards.

2

3

03.03 | A threat to O'Dowd Hall and the Oakland Center led OUPD to evacuate the buildings, sending notification through the emergency text message alert system. The buildings were reopened two hours later, after police and canine units cleared the scene.



MASUDR RAHMAN/The Oakland Post

6

9

03.06 | DC Comic's "The Watchmen" is released in theaters.



Photo Courtesy of Warner Brothers

03.09 | President Obama signs an executive order overturning a Bush-era policy that limited federal tax dollars for embryonic stem cell research.

10

03.10 | A judge rules that the text messages from the Kwame Kilpatrick case be released and are subsequently published by the Free Press.

03.10 | Both OU men's and women's basketball teams suffer disappointing losses in the conference championship games in South Dakota.



JASON WILLIS/The Oakland Post

23

30

03.23 | The men's basketball team loses to Bradley University on a controversial last-second shot in the quarterfinals of the CollegeInsider.com Tournament.



JASON WILLIS/The Oakland Post

27



BROOKE HUG/The Oakland Post

03.27 | OU students elect two women, Kristin Dayag and Saman Waquad, into the two top executive positions in OUSC for the first time in OU's history.

Facebook hit 350 million users this year — more people use Facebook than there are people living in the United States.

03.11 | President Obama signs a \$410 billion spending package to help the U.S. economy.



BOB KNOSKA/The Oakland Post

03.14 | Outfielder Justin Wilson became OU's all-time leader in career hits (194) in a win over Dayton.

03.12 | Iraqi journalist Muntadhar al-Zaidi is sentenced to three years in prison for throwing shoes at then-United States President George W. Bush.



Amazon.com

FASHION |

The timeless trench re-emerges for spring and fall rains. Designers from the everyman's brand, Gap, to Britain's tailor, Burberry, jump on the classic trend.



JASON WILLIS/The Oakland Post

april

04.06 | Michigan State lost in the championship game to North Carolina at the Final Four, hosted at Ford Field in Detroit.



AP Photo/Amy Sancetta

04.12 | Three Somali pirates are killed in a sniper operation authorized by President Obama, freeing Captain Philips and ending a multi-day standoff between the United States Navy and the pirates.

04.15 | OU President Gary Russi announces the close of the five-year Capital Campaign, which raised \$111 million in donations for the university.

04.30 | Chrysler files for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection and announces plans for a partnership with Fiat.



Photo Courtesy of Randy Stern
Flickr Creative Commons

FASHION |

Leather jackets and heavy chains move off the bike and into everyday wardrobes, with girls pairing black and brown leather with subtle feminine touches.



Amazon.com

05.20 | The club hockey team announces that Jeremy Bachusz would take over as head coach after three seasons as an assistant with the Grizzlies.

05.25 | North Korea announces that it has conducted a second successful nuclear test in the province of North Hamgyong. The United Nations Security Council condemns the reported test.

05.07 | OU Second baseman Julie Owen is selected to the Summit League First Team after leading the conference with a .408 batting average.



BOB KNOSKA/
The Oakland Post

04.01 | OU's chapter of American Association of University Professors receive judgment in their favor after filing an Unfair Labor Practice lawsuit last November against OU following the split of the RCJ department, claiming lack of faculty input in the decision.

04.09 | Detroit Public Schools announce the closing of more than 20 schools at the end of the school year.

04.06 | A 6.3 magnitude earthquake hits near L'Aquila, Italy, killing close to 300 and injuring more than 1,500.



JASON WILLIST/The Oakland Post

04.17 | Oakland hosts the women's golf Summit League Tournament at the Katke-Cousins Golf Course and finished third in the standings.



Photo Courtesy of "Sarihuella"
Flickr Creative Commons

04.16 | Student Program Board brings the All American Rejects to Meadowbrook Music Festival. Tickets were just \$10 for OU students.



JASON WILLIST/The Oakland Post

04.26 | The United States declares a public health emergency over the outbreak of H1N1 swine influenza.

may

05.08 | Trekkies re-emerge with the big box office hit "Star Trek."



AP Photo/Paul Sancya

05.11 | An Iranian appellate court releases imprisoned American journalist Roxana Saberi, held in Iran since January.

05.24 | The Space Shuttle Atlantis lands at Edwards Air Force Base in California, United States, after completing the final servicing mission to the Hubble Space Telescope. (NASA)

05.29 | The episode of The Tonight Show Jay Leno as he airs. Conan O replaces Leno Monday, June

FASHION | Grunge comes back in a more form-fitting, presentable look for men and women with smart, plaid button-ups and checkered prints paired with denim or trousers.



Amazon.com

05.06 | Former Pistons player Dave Bing is elected as the mayor of Detroit. He later wins re-election to a full term in November.

FASHION | The big hair of the South reaches nationwide as Bumpits begin heightening hair. The anatomy of a trend: pageants and infomercials.





JASON WILLISThe Oakland Post

June

29

9 | The final
de of The
ht Show with
eno as host
Conan O'Brien
ces Leno on
day, June 1.



AP Photo/Evan Agostini



Amazon.com

06.05 | Regrettable nights are immortalized in "The Hangover," the top-grossing R-rated comedy of all time.

06.01 | General Motors files for bankruptcy under Chapter 11 of the U.S. Bankruptcy Code.

06.06 | The Palm Pre is launched.



Amazon.com

06.11 | Oakland pitcher Shane McCatty is selected by the Washington Nationals in the 34th round of the MLB Draft.

06.14 | The Los Angeles Lakers are crowned the 2009 NBA Champions by finishing off a five-game series against the Orlando Magic.

06.19 | Apple announces a new 3GS \$199 iPhone, and drops the price of the older iPhone to \$99.



Amazon.com

06.12 | The Pittsburgh Penguins defeat the Detroit Red Wings in Game 7 of the Stanley Cup Finals.



AP Photo/Jim McIsaac

06.25 | King of Pop Michael Jackson dies from a drug-induced cardiac arrest at the age of 50 in Los Angeles, the same day actress Farrah Fawcett dies from cancer.



AP Photo/Joel Ryan



Amazon.com

06.24 | Michael Bay's Transformers 2 is released in theaters in North America.

06.24 | FBI agents arrest dozens of Detroit residents as the result of a Medicare scam.



AP Photo/ Louis Lanzano

06.29 | Bernie Madoff is sentenced to 150 years in prison for investment fraud that cheated people out of billions of dollars, one of the largest Ponzi schemes ever.

07.01 | The official start of the \$3 billion "Cash for Clunkers" program has millions of Americans handing over their junk cars for cash rebates on environmentally friendly cars.

07.09 | John Kuester is named head coach of the Detroit Pistons following the firing of Michael Curry.

07.17 | Reports released indicates that Michigan's unemployment rate reaches over 15 percent, leading the nation.

07.25 | Harry Patch, the last surviving World War I veteran, dies aged 111.



Jason Bryant/PA Wire

07.26 | Alaska Governor Sarah Palin resigns, prompting several media outlets to question whether she is preparing for a presidential run in 2012.

07.24 | Afghan President Hamid Karzai, setting out his election manifesto, vows to make foreign troops sign a framework governing how they operate in a bid to limit civilians casualties.

07.20 | 40th Anniversary of the Apollo 11 moon landing mission.

07.15 | The sixth film in the Harry Potter series "The Half-Blood Prince" is released in theaters.



Amazon.com

07.15 | A traffic accident results in a tanker explosion on I-75, leaving an overpass bridge destroyed.



AP Photo/Carlos Osorio

This year saw the five billionth tweet on Twitter, in which a user responded to another tweet saying "Oh lord."

July

29

august

08.06 | Sonia Sotomayor is confirmed by the United States Senate as Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court, replacing David Souter.

OU NEWS | OU changes its slogan from "You can afford this" to "A smart investment."

08.26 | Jaycee Lee Dugard, kidnapped at age 11 in 1991, is recovered from her abductors, who imprisoned her for 18 years.

08.18 | Third Eye Blind releases "Ursa Major," their first studio album since 2003.



08.28 | Apple releases Mac OS X Snow Leopard.

08.31 | Whitney Houston makes a comeback with "I Look to You," her first studio album in seven years.

09.03 | OU's Bike Share Program launches with 34 bicycles to be shared by students on an honor system.

09.09 | US Rep. Joe Wilson, R-S.C., interrupts President Obama's health care speech to the Congress with an audible shout of "You lie!"

09.21 | Time Magazine launches its "Assignment Detroit" campaign to cover Detroit and its potential recovery from its current economic state.

09.26 | The OU Shuttle Service takes its first trip from campus to local spots, as far as downtown Rochester.

09.29 | A magnitude 8.3 earthquake triggers a tsunami near the Samoan Islands. Many communities and harbors in Samoa and American Samoa are destroyed, and at least 149 are killed.



Amazon.com

1



JASON WILLIS/The Oakland Post

08.01 | Meadow Brook's Concours d'Elegance celebrates its 30th anniversary of the annual car show.

08.13 | After being released from prison, Michael Vick signs a one-year contract with the Philadelphia Eagles.

08.19 | Seven car bombs are detonated in Baghdad, Iraq, killing at least 95, and wounding nearly 600.

08.19 | Bill introduced in Michigan state Senate that would allow Concealed Pistol License holders to carry their registered handguns in college dormitories and classrooms.



JASON WILLIS
The Oakland Post

september

6

09.09 | "The Beatles: Rock Band" releases, re-sparking Beatles mania. Their entire catalogue is rereleased.

09.08 | Jay-Z releases "The Blueprint 3," his 11th studio album.

09.06 | Zack Jones and Kelsey Carmean places first, respectively, in the men's and women's races at the Golden Grizzly Open.

09.15 | The Food and Drug Administration approves the new swine flu vaccine for use in the United States.

09.10 | Fall semester begins one week late due to a faculty strike (aka work stoppage or job action). Classes started when the faculty union and OU reached a tentative contract agreement.

22



Photo Courtesy of "Tara" Flickr Creative Commons

09.27 | Ten years after the final game is played in Tiger Stadium, it is completely demolished.

09.22 | The federal ban on flavored tobacco takes place.

09.22 | Oakland's volleyball team breaks the school record for single-season wins in the Division I era with nine. The team goes on to finish with a 17-10 record for the season.



JASON WILLIS/The Oakland Post

JASON WILLIS/The Oakland Post



JASON WILLIS/The Oakland Post



October

10.06 | The Detroit Tigers' season ends after the team lost a one game playoff to the Minnesota Twins.

10.06 | Thousands attempt to get \$3,000 stimulus checks at Cobo Arena. The funds run out quickly and a near-riot occurs.

10.08 | Michigan House Appropriations Committee considers a bill that would allow Michigan bars to remain open until 4 a.m. with purchase of a special permit.

10.10 | Micah Fialka-Feldman was honored by the Michigan chapter of the National Lawyers' Guild as one of two winners of the Champions of the Disabled award. Fialka-Feldman filed a lawsuit against OU in late 2008 for not being allowed to live on campus. The suit is still in the court system.



JASON WILLIS
The Oakland Post

10.22 | The two year project to upgrade Kresge Library comes to a close with a celebration.

10.22 | Microsoft releases Windows 7.

10.30 | Michigan budget passes without the Michigan Promise Scholarship.



Erin Trieb/Sipa Press

11.03 | Lady Gaga becomes the first artist in the history of Billboard's Pop Song chart to have four No. 1 songs from a debut album.



Amazon.com

11.20 | Vampires prove their staying power in the second installment of the "Twilight" series, "New Moon."

11.05 | Fort Hood military base becomes the scene of a mass shooting when army psychiatrist Maj. Nidal Malik Hasan opens fire, killing 12 and wounding 31.

11.13 | The men's soccer team loses to UMKC in the opening game of the Summit League Tournament. Oakland was the favorite to win the tournament having already won the regular season title.

11.23 | Built in 1975 for \$55.7 million, the Pontiac Silverdome is sold for \$583,000.

11.23 | A new publication, the Detroit Daily Press, prints its first issue. On Nov. 27 they announce they will be suspending publication until after Jan. 1, 2010.

11.28 | Point guard Johnathon Jones sets a new Summit League record with 627 career assists in a win over Central Arkansas at the O'Rena.

10.02 | Drew Barrymore releases her Michigan-made directorial debut about derby girls, "Whip It."

10.02 | The International Olympic Committee awards the 2016 Summer Olympics to Rio de Janeiro over Chicago.

10.20 | The WNBA announces that the Shock are moving from Detroit to Oklahoma.

10.09 | Shannon Coley sets a new women's soccer OU record with 17 saves in a 1-0 double overtime win at South Dakota State.

10.09 | President Obama wins the Nobel Peace Prize. While Obama stated that he was humbled to receive the award, the announcement was unexpected by his supporters and opponents alike.

November

10.01 | Late-night talk show host David Letterman announces that he had been the victim of an extortion attempt by someone threatening to reveal that he had sex with more than one of his female employees.

The most watched YouTube video of 2009 is Susan Boyle's performance on Britain's Got Talent, with over 80 million views.

11.05 | The House votes 403 - 12 for a bill to extend unemployment benefits, and a \$24 billion package that aims to help struggling businesses.

11.04 | The New York Yankees win the 2009 World Series in six games over the defending champions, the Philadelphia Phillies.



JASON WILLIS/The Oakland Post

11.02 | Ford announces a \$1 billion profit for the third quarter and expects to be solidly profitable by 2011.

11.19 | Adrienne Leone becomes the first OU volleyball player to be named to a All-Summit League First Team.



JASON WILLIS
The Oakland Post

11.27 | Tiger Woods is involved in a car accident near his home. The circumstances and rumors about the accident lead to a media frenzy.

11.19 | OU President Gary Russi outlines goals to appease faculty after two professors announce a plan to hold a vote of no confidence against him.

11.09 | Red Wings legend Steve Yzerman is inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame.

11.09 | World leaders mark the 20th anniversary of the Berlin Wall's fall, with the main celebrations taking place at the Brandenburg Gate.

OU NEWS | Fall 2009 graduates will be the last to walk at one ceremony. Starting winter 2010, commencement will be split up between Saturday and Sunday. The ceremony for graduate students will be held Sundays.

Oakland

METRO DETROIT

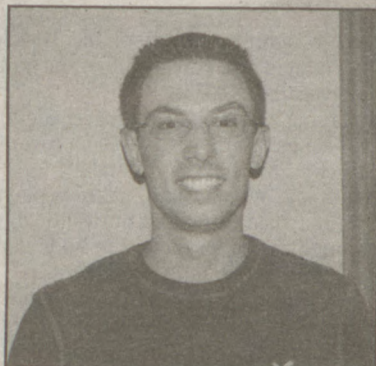
Fill out our online survey @
www.oaklandpostonline.com

Deadline is February 20, 2010!

PARTICIPATE IN THE SURVEY FOR
A SHOT AT SPECTACULAR PRIZES!

To be eligible you must be an OU student and cannot be
be a staff member of The Oakland Post. You must provide
your name, phone number, and e-mail to be automatically
entered in the drawing. One entry per person.

How do you study for final exams?



"I highlight the key points in chapters and reread them."

Dan Duffy
Junior, history



"I study in a coffee shop until 4 a.m."

Nick Adams
Junior, computer science



"I go over lecture notes, reread chapters and study in a group."

Sam Hyrns
Junior, international relations/Spanish

What are your plans following finals?



"To have a personal renaissance — completely revitalize my mind, body and spirit."

Luke Phillips
Sophomore, journalism



"I'm applying for a job in South Korea for February or March."

Liz Martinez
Senior, international relations

FUN STUFF TO DO DEC. 11

- Detroit Red Wings vs. Anaheim Ducks, Joe Louis Arena 7:30 p.m.
- Otto Vector and Love Meets Lust at Luna. \$2 "you call its." Royal Oak
- Mega '80s dance night at the Magic Bag. 8 p.m. Ferndale
- Comedian Dan Cummins at the Comedy Castle. 8 p.m. Royal Oak

The Scene

20

www.oaklandpostonline.com

December 7, 2009

Curiouser and curiouser!

By ALEXIS TOMRELL
Scene/Mix Editor

Alice is a burlesque dancer. The Mad Hatter is a suspension artist. The white rabbit is a punctual stripper. This is the evolution of "Alice in Wonderland," at least in the minds of the mad.

This peculiar adaptation of "Alice" comes from Theatre Bizarre, a Detroit troupe of performers, musicians and artists.

"Wonderland" is a live stage performance of Lewis Carroll's classic tale, "Alice in Wonderland." The nighttime event, which is loaded with sideshow interpretations of the original version, comes to Detroit's Hastings Street Ballroom New Year's Eve, Jan. 2 and Jan. 3.

The focal set piece is an open book containing moving illustration to guide the audience through the plot. The story is narrated from the background as actors perform on stage. The show even has its own soundtrack, with the "Wonderland" band playing numbers between scenes.

"Wonderland" is the creation of the twisted visionaries of Theatre Bizarre. The group is responsible for one of the most legendary Halloween parties in Detroit, known by the same name. Each Halloween "Bizarre" amazes attendees with some of the nation's most talented sideshow acts from fire breathers to suspension artists. The event is held across the street from the Michigan State Fairgrounds in the combined backyard behind a row of houses.

"Wonderland" first premiered in April at the Russell Industrial Center. "They decided to revive 'Wonderland' for another three shows because of how well it went the

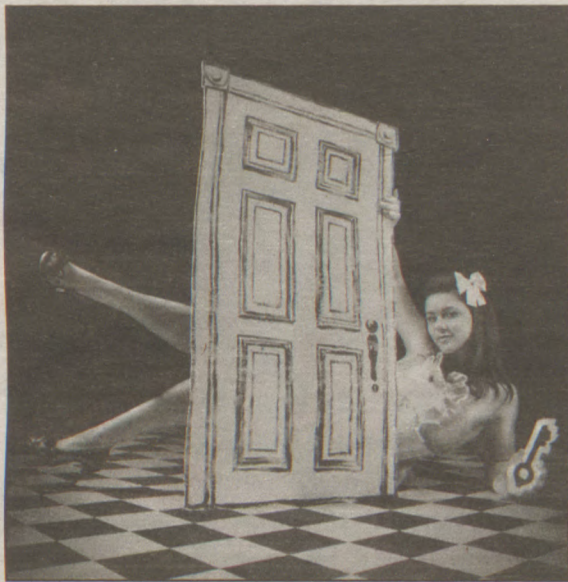


Photo courtesy of Trevor Long
Roxi Dlite plays Alice in the adaptation of "Alice in Wonderland."

first time. The people involved had such a great time that they wanted to build on the original show," said Michael Latcha, a guitarist in the "Wonderland" band and a music major at Oakland University. The band is made up of the Detroit musicians, Electric Sound Wave Experiment: Rabeah Ltief, vocals/guitar, Hussian Berro, keyboard, Pookie Grech, bass, and Latcha. They are accompanied by "Wonderland" composer, Drew Bardo

of Questions, Benny Johnson on saxophone, Dickson on violin, Spazzy on drums and Hayley Jane, the band's intriguing young vocalist.

"Along with playing '60s rock 'n' roll/psychedelic and bluesish original songs, there are also some covers of old jazz songs for Alice's final act," said Latcha.

In the adult fantasy "Wonderland," Alice is played by Roxi Dlite, a renowned Canadian burlesque dancer. After falling through the rabbit hole, she finds herself in a strange world inhabited by mad characters.

Between scenes, the white rabbit removes more and more clothing. The "mad hatter" hangs by hooks through his skin, as portrayed by international suspension artists, Pend Suspension. The Cheshire Cat slinks around stage hypnotizing Alice.

Roxi Dlite performs her notorious aerial pole show, twirling through acrobatic feats of eroticism.

2010's "Wonderland" will offer new twists. Before each show, there will be "eat me" hors d'oeuvres catered by Sarah Lachowshi, pre-entertainment by various Detroit artists and a midnight "drink me" toast right before showtime.

The show hopes to generate bigger crowds this time around. "This is something we can hopefully take across the country rather than just be a Detroit underground event," said Latcha.

Doors open at 9 p.m. on Dec. 31, Jan. 2 and Jan. 3. Tickets for the New Year's Eve show are \$60 for an individual and \$100 for a couple. The other nights, \$20 presale and \$25 at the door. All performances take place at the Hastings Street Ballroom located at 715 E. Milwaukee St. in Detroit.

myspace.com/wonderlanddetroit.

Bearable alternatives to holiday radio



VARIOUS ARTISTS: "IN THE CHRISTMAS GROOVE"

If one album were to suffice for the season, this would be it. With these '60s and '70s rarities, Christmas just got a whole lot more memorable. The funk and soul grooves on this album are consistent and upbeat, good to cook meals to and better to dance to.



TORI AMOS: "MIDWINTER GRACES"

This thoughtful new seasonal release contains original songs by Amos, with genre inspirations from big band to Celtic undertones. Amos's vocal persona is akin to a holiday angel, as she guides listeners through a less literal, supernal version of winter nights.



BOB DYLAN: "CHRISTMAS IN THE HEART"

The idea of this legendary folk crooner/'60s genius covering Christmas commercial schmooze is slightly confounding, but a couple songs into his new Christmas cover album, and Bob Dylan settles you in for a cold night of gruff blues in an up-north log cabin.



EBAN SCHLETTER: "EBAN SCHLETTER'S COSMIC CHRISTMAS"

This concept album is an odd bird, but give yourself time to warm up to it. This electronic orchestra of experimental sounds, including the theremin, and robotic voices is strange, yet familiar, weaving tradition inside a philosophical space odyssey.

Album art courtesy of Amazon.com



By KEVIN ROMANCHIK
Columnist

REVIEW OF THE YEAR'S TOP ALBUMS

Artists – Matisyahu, Jay-Z and Dave Matthews Band

Along with the great releases of 2009, there were also tours and new material from favorites of the past. Specifically, the return of punk rock kings blink-182, '90s alternative hit-makers Third Eye Blind, and Detroit's own Eminem. Critically acclaimed albums from Pearl Jam and The Fray also made headlines during the year.

Matisyahu's "Light," Jay-Z's "The Blueprint 3" and Dave Matthews Band "Big Whiskey and the GrooGrux King" were three releases in particular that hallmark the variety of music in 2009.

Hasidic-Jewish reggae artist Matisyahu released his third studio album "Light" and went into a different direction this time around. Previous albums like "Live at Stubbs" were strictly reggae, but "Light" is a successful attempt at testing waters of genres like rock, hip-hop and alternative.

"Darkness into Light" combines heavy guitar riffs with the vocal styling of conventional reggae while staying true to his trademark sound.

Even with songs that are outside his comfort zone, "One Day" is a return to Matisyahu's roots with booming melodies and catchy choruses. Overall, "Light" is a shining piece of art that pushes the limits of not only Matisyahu's talents but raises the bar for upcoming musicians.

Previously retired hip-hop artist Jay-Z returned with "The Blueprint 3," but this is no means a solo effort. "The Blueprint 3" showcases talents of established artists like

Kanye West, Pharrell and Alicia Keys while allowing emerging rappers like Kid Cudi and Young Money's Drake to stretch their legs on tracks such as "Already Home" and "Off That."

In "Empire State of Mind" Jay-Z reflects on the impact that his home of New York City had on him and others with a beat that perfectly embodies the big city spirit. While "The Blueprint 3" may not be his masterpiece, it certainly shows that Jay-Z won't be in the retirement home anytime soon.

In August of 2008, Dave Matthews Band suffered the loss of saxophonist LeRoi Moore during the early recording process, and their recent release "Big Whiskey and the GrooGrux King" shows that creating music is another way of both honoring and mourning the death of a friend.

With the opening instrumental of "Grux," a saxophone melody assumed to be Moore's accompanies Carter Beauford's drumming and Stefan Lessard's bass work perfectly. "Grux" is a perfect appetizer to the energetic, horn filled, "Shake Me Like a Monkey." Vocalist Dave Matthews emotionally says goodbye in the acoustic ballad "Baby Blue."

"Big Whiskey and the GrooGrux King" isn't a exactly a departure from Dave Matthews Band's traditional sound, but no one's complaining. As the saying goes, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it."

From releases of two famous musical talents and one rising favorite, 2009 had its share of comebacks and welcomes. Which artist will make its big debut in 2010? Will the coming year either be the beginning of a new age in music or the continuation of an already great generation of talent?

Only time will tell, so turn up the volume and ring in the New Year.

New zombies release in time for Christmas

"Left 4 Dead 2" promises thrills and kills

By AMANDA MEADE
Asst. Ads Manager

GAME REVIEW

The zombie apocalypse is upon us. Weapons of choice include an assault rifle, chainsaw and — a frying pan?

Thanks to the creators of "Left 4 Dead 2," beating zombies upside the head with a cooking instrument can be achieved, along with new melée weapons such as an axe, a nightstick and a ninja knife.

L4D2 continues the zombie massacre with five new campaigns, including Dead Center, where you navigate through a shopping center and Dark Carnival, which takes you and your team through different stages of a carnival.

The game features an entirely new cast: Rochelle, the girl of the group who dresses a la Depeche Mode; Nick, the well-dressed business man; Ellis, the random story telling redneck and Coach, the large chocolate loving character.

Also new to "L4D2" is a whole new way of playing. If desired, you can play any campaign in "realism" mode, which makes the zombie apocalypse feel just the way it should. Your teammates aren't lit in red when being attacked by a hunter or other special infected, their names don't light up so you can see where they are, and neither do items.

Along with the survival and versus modes of the first "Left 4 Dead," another mode is added — scavenge. The premise is similar to that of versus: eight players at a time play in teams of four against each other, four survivors and four infected.

Even further, new to "L4D2" are additions to the list of "special infected." The boomer, smoker, hunter, witch and the dreaded tank are now accompanied by the spitter, jockey and charger.

The spitter is a lovely female cartoon embodiment of pure trailer trash, complete with thong hanging out over her pants and no shirt — and she spits out pools of "spit-



Left 4 Dead 2 is available for XBOX 360 AND PC. It was released on Nov. 17 by Valve Corporation. Photo courtesy of Amazon.com

ter goo" which is completely made of acid, and if you are caught standing in the substance, it will really mess you up.

The jockey chases after the survivors and finds its way straddling the character's heads, attempting to drive the player around until a teammate helps shoot or kill them off. The charger also does exactly what the name promises, charging after survivors and slamming them into the ground many times until they are rescued by a fellow teammate.

The beauty of the first "Left 4 Dead" was the mindless fun of running around with a group of friends and killing lots and lots of zombies. "Left 4 Dead 2" continues in that tradition, except one factor is changed: the game is so damn hard.

The normal mode is almost impossible, and you're forced to play the game on easy like a noob just to enjoy playing it. Other than that, the game is quite amazing. The graphics are incredible, the new campaigns are awesome, and the ability to bash zombies in the head with frying pans and ninja swords is pretty damn sweet. It is definitely a great sequel worth checking out.

If you plan to play this game on Xbox Live or online on the computer, spend the few extra dollars and buy a microphone. Nothing is more annoying than trying to work as a team in these campaigns and not being able to communicate with your teammates.

MDOT makes salt restrictions

By MIKE SANDULA
Staff Reporter

There will be less salt used on Oakland County's roads this winter, but they're expected to be as safe as they've been in previous years.

The Road Commission for Oakland County will use 400 pounds of salt for every mile of two-lane highway. In the past, they used up to 800 pounds.

"We really don't think the salt reduction will have much of an impact," said Craig Bryson, public information officer for the RCOC.

The Michigan Department of Transportation has mandated that no more than 450 pounds be used for any two-lane mile on state highways.

The RCOC currently maintains 230 miles of state highways.

Bryson said the new mandate isn't an issue because new "pre-wetting" techniques allow less salt to be used.

"New studies suggest that beyond a certain point you're just wasting your salt," Bryson said.

In order for salt to be effective on roads, a chemical reaction must occur with the salt and the snow.

The reaction requires water and the roads don't always have enough pre-existing moisture.

"If you pre-wet it, the chemical reaction is already happening," Bryson said. The snowplows have "pre-wetting devices" on the back that spray saltwater on top of the rock salt as it's dispersed. This process, according to Bryson, requires less salt to do the same thing.

The bigger problem this year, Bryson said, is staff reductions.

"We've got 22 percent fewer snowplow drivers," Bryson said.

RCOC's fleet of snowplows is also aging. Bryson said there comes a point where maintaining a plow is more expensive than buying a new one, but they can't afford to buy new plows.

"There's not enough funding to adequately maintain our roads," Bryson said.

Bryson said drivers should be aware of conditions and drive appropriately.



Photo Courtesy of Bruce McDaniel

In spite of new restrictions on the amount of salt allowed to be used on two-lane highways, the road commission said roads in Oakland County will be as safe as in previous years.

Tax revenues falling, but not new businesses

By KATHY BARKS HOFFMAN
Associated Press Writer

LANSING — Michigan is facing the prospect of more cities in receivership and school districts running out of money as state and local tax revenues plummet in the year ahead, House Fiscal Agency director Mitch Bean warned Thursday.

Nevertheless, economic development guru David Hollister said Michigan's economy is bubbling with young entrepreneurs starting up information technology companies and ignoring problems at the state Capitol.

"It's not all doom and gloom," said Hollister, of the Prima Civitas Foundation. Despite a 15.1 percent unemployment rate and falling tax revenues, getting the state back on its feet "isn't a hopeless battle."

Bean and Hollister joined Michigan State University economics professor Charles Ballard to take a look at what lies ahead for Michigan at a forum sponsored by the Michigan League for Human Services.

Bean said the state is facing falling property tax values, jobs and per-capita income, all of which have driven down state and local tax revenues.

"Most people agree there's a coming crisis in local government," Bean said, with more cities facing receivership as they deal with smaller state revenue sharing payments and less property tax revenue from declining

home and commercial property values.

The state general fund has seen revenue drop from \$9.8 billion in fiscal 2000 to \$6.9 billion or less this fiscal year, which started Oct. 1.

That means billions less for local governments to spend on police and fire protection, higher education and services such as mental health care.

Medicaid and corrections now account for half of general fund spending, crowding out "a lot of other things," Bean said.

School aid revenue is expected to drop \$1 billion from two years ago, one reason school districts are now facing cuts of roughly \$300 to \$600 per student.

Ballard said Michigan could solve some of its budget woes by asking its wealthier citizens to pay higher income taxes through a graduated income tax.

The state's wealthiest 5 percent now have nearly as much income as the bottom 50 percent, mirroring a national trend.

With its 4.35 percent flat-rate tax, Michigan has one of the nation's highest tax rates on the working poor and one of the lowest on the wealthy, Ballard said.

Michigan voters would have to approve switching from a flat income tax to one graded according to income, and the issue faces opposition from business groups and others.

But a statewide poll last year showed more than half

of voters favor a graduated tax, said Ballard, who favors reducing or eliminating the state's main business tax and replacing it with the graduated income tax.

Hollister, a former Democratic state lawmaker and Lansing mayor, said he would support a graduated income tax and extending the sales tax to services if it Michigan would have enough money to support education, local governments and a social safety net.

But he noted that the young entrepreneurs he deals with are less concerned about tax policy than they are about creating and enlarging companies that deal with everything from information technology to alternative energy.

He said recent studies have shown the Lansing area has 350 information technology companies and that the region is second only to Hartford, Conn., in the size of its insurance and finance sector.

He expects Flint — devastated by the shrinking auto industry over the past decade — to be come a national model for urban renewal, and noted that Michigan's top research universities are pulling in millions in national grants to work on alternative energy and other growing areas.

"We have lots of folks working below the surface, day after day, being innovative, trying to transform and diversify this economy," Hollister said. "So don't get discouraged."

Local news briefs: Bandit in boxers

Source: The Associated Press

Police: Man made death threat after Xbox return rebuffed

TROY — Police say a man has been arrested who threatened to kill someone at a Detroit area shopping mall after he was told he couldn't return an Xbox gaming system without a receipt.

Police officers stormed into the GameStop store at Oakland Mall in the Detroit suburb of Troy on Wednesday, Dec. 2 and arrested the man after a store employee called 911.

Lt. Michael Lyczkowski said that the 43-year-old Detroit man went into the store at about 11 a.m. and began making threats after being told he couldn't return his Xbox.

Lyczkowski said the man did not have a firearm, but officers found a stun gun in his handbag. No injuries were reported.

The man remains in custody and could face charges for possession of a stun gun, a 4-year felony, and disorderly conduct.

Burglar who fled home in boxers, cap pleads guilty

ADRIAN — A man who broke into an Adrian home before fleeing in only his boxer shorts and a pink baseball cap has pleaded guilty.

Twenty-five-year-old Ronald Harris of Detroit faces up to 20 years in prison after pleading guilty Wednesday, Dec. 2 to first-degree home invasion in Lenawee County Circuit Court. He faces up to 20 years in prison.

Authorities said on Oct. 27 Harris broke into the home through a front window and removed valuables from the woman's bedroom.

Police said he was surprised by the home's residents and fled on foot wearing the woman's baseball cap and his boxer shorts. He was arrested a short distance away and told an officer his clothes were taken by several girls, whom he was chasing. His clothes were found nearby.

New film festival planned for Detroit in March

DETROIT — A former Detroit school that's been converted into a moviehouse will host a new film festival next year.

Organizers of the Detroit Independent Film Festival are seeking short films to be screened during the festival March 3 - 7. The deadline for entries is Dec. 30 and there's no fee to submit a film.

The festival is being held at the Burton Theatre, which opened this fall in the Cass Corridor neighborhood north of downtown.

Organizers hope the festival will help strengthen the state's filmmaking community. Michigan has been attracting more moviemakers since last year, when tax incentives that are among the nation's most generous took effect.

As part of the event, the Michigan Film Awards will be held March 6, the day before the Academy Awards.

Man's false 911 call fails to divert police

MOUNT CLEMENS — A Macomb County man was jailed after police said he tried to divert them by calling 911 to report a nonexistent crime while being chased in a stolen truck.

Sheriff Mark Hackel said 26-year-old Jesse Eden of Shelby Township is being held on \$100,000 bond after his arraignment Thursday on charges including filing a false police report and possession of stolen property.

Hackel said a deputy tried to stop Eden after he allegedly stole a bottle of liquor Monday from a store in Washington Township, about 30 miles north of Detroit. The sheriff said Eden drove off and called 911 to falsely report an armed robbery and shooting.

Hackel said the chase ended in Troy in Oakland County when the truck hit another vehicle and overturned. No serious injuries were reported.

Men face dogfighting charges

By ED WHITE
Associated Press Reporter

DETROIT — Federal authorities are seeking prison terms for three Michigan men who pleaded guilty to dogfighting crimes after 49 pit bulls were seized last summer.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Eaton Brown has also recommended that the men do community service after they are released, possibly with the Humane Society or another group that cares for animals.

"Dogfighting is not a sport; it is a cruel and heinous criminal offense," Brown said in a Nov. 25 filing in federal court in Detroit.

B. Jay Rodriguez of Adrian, Martin Phillips of Bad Axe and Joshua Gates of Blissfield will be sentenced this week sometime. The investigation by the U.S. Agriculture Department involved a confidential informant and secret video.

Brown recommended six months in custody for Rodriguez and Phillips, and a 13-month prison sentence for Gates who has prior convictions and was on state parole at the time of his arrest.

Gates' lawyer, Craig Tank, said Friday he would not object to the recommendation. Attorney Ronald Gold said he would seek probation for Phillips. Rodriguez' lawyer, Bernard Cohen, could not be reached; his voicemail was full.

In August, Gates pleaded guilty to conspiracy, selling or delivering dogs and exhibiting an animal. He said he was involved in fights in Lansing and Detroit. Rodriguez and Phillips pleaded guilty in September to transporting animals for fighting ventures.

Authorities in June seized at least 10 pit bulls from Gates' home, the majority bearing scars and "living outside chained to barrels with heavy collars and weighted leads," Brown said.

Investigators also found bloodstained plywood, carpet and sticks, which are used to force open a dog's jaw in the heat of battle, the prosecutor wrote.

The sentences likely won't be as harsh as the 23-month prison term given to NFL star Michael Vick, Brown said, but that case "involved a greater number of animals and a much more sadistic form of animal cruelty."

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NATO troops to bolster U.S. surge in Afghanistan

By ROBERT BURNS

Associated Press National Security Writer

BRUSSELS — NATO allies will bolster the American troop surge in Afghanistan by sending at least 7,000 soldiers of their own, officials said Friday in pledges that U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton described as crucial to turning the tide in the stalemated war.

The promised increase came as U.S. Marines and Afghan troops launched the first offensive since President Barack Obama announced a 30,000-troop American increase. The Marines and Afghan forces struck Taliban communications and supply lines Nov. 4 in an insurgent stronghold in southern Afghanistan.

In yet another war development, U.S. officials said the Obama administration may expand missile strikes on al-Qaida and the Taliban inside Pakistan and will focus on training Pakistan's forces in a

border area where militants have been aiding the Afghan insurgency.

In Washington, Pentagon spokesman Bryan Whitman said Friday's offensive was a continuation of operations, not a direct result of Obama's new war strategy. But he added the assault was "consistent with the strategy that the president laid out."

Hundreds of Marines were dropped by helicopter behind Taliban lines in the northern end of the Now Zad Valley of Helmand province, according to Marine spokesman Maj. William Pelletier.

In Brussels, Clinton told allied foreign ministers that it was essential that contributions to the war effort be provided as quickly as possible. She thanked Italy for its announcement to send an additional 1,000 troops and Britain for its pledge of another 500, but she said non-military assistance is equally important.

"The need for additional forces is urgent, but their presence will not be

indefinite," she told the North Atlantic Council, NATO's highest political group.

NATO Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen of Denmark told reporters at the organization's headquarters that still further NATO forces might be in the offing, suggesting there would be "more to come."

Also, Adm. James Stavridis, the top NATO and U.S. commander in Europe, said in an AP interview that he expects several thousand more non-U.S. troops might be added to the 7,000.

The transformation of Afghanistan's army and police is critical to fulfill Obama's intention to begin pulling out American units 18 months from now.

According to a copy of Clinton's remarks to the closed-door NATO meeting, she told the ministers that "the pace, size and scope of the drawdown will be predicated on the situation on the ground."

No one was saying a quick pullout.

Said Fogh Rasmussen: "Transition (to Afghan control) does not mean exit."

At least 150 Afghan troops joined about 1,000 Marines in Friday's offensive in Helmand province, said a spokesman for the Afghan governor there, Daood Ahmadi.

The new offensive aims to cut off the Taliban communication routes through Helmand and disrupt their supply lines, especially those providing explosives for the numerous lethal roadside bombs, or improvised explosive devices, that litter the area, known by Marines as "IED Alley."

In Washington, there has been growing discussion of a need to expand the use of airborne missile-equipped drones in volatile regions of Pakistan, Afghanistan's neighbor.

—Amir Shah in Kabul and Anne Flaherty, Pauline Jelinek and Lolita C. Baldor in Washington contributed to this report.

NIW BRIEFS

Source: Associated Press

12-4 | BANGLADESH — An overcrowded passenger boat capsized in northern Bangladesh after being hit by a small ferry, leaving at least 46 people dead, police said.

Rescuers recovered 46 bodies from the capsized boat in the Daira river in Kishoreganj district, local police Chief Anwar Hossain said. The area is 50 miles north of Dhaka. The bodies included 17 children and 22 women, he said. All the casualties were from the passenger boat, which was carrying more than 80 people. Some passengers managed to swim to safety, while several others were rescued by villagers, Hossain said.

The accident occurred a week after a triple-deck river ferry sank in southern Bangladesh, killing at least 83 people. Boat accidents, often blamed on overcrowding and lax rules, are common in Bangladesh.

12-4 | LONDON — Britain's military has closed a hotline that took reports of unidentified flying objects, or UFOs, after determining that the money is better spent in Afghanistan. The Ministry of Defense says that the phone service and an associated e-mail address were taken offline earlier this week, and said Friday that 50 years of UFO sightings had not revealed any evidence of alien life or threats to the U.K. It said that there was "no defense value in investigating UFO reports" and that the money could better be used funding operations in Afghanistan.

"None of the thousands of UFO sightings reported over the years have ever provided substantiated proof of the existence of extraterrestrials," a ministry spokesman said. "There is no defense value in investigating UFO reports." A Ministry of Defense statement indicates the military takes no position on the existence or nonexistence of UFOs but concluded that in 50 years none of the many reported UFO sightings turned out to be a national security threat.

12-4 | HONG KONG — The global economic crisis may be driving more people into forced labor and other forms of modern-day slavery, a senior U.S. official said. Harder economic conditions have had a "driving effect" as labor recruiters exploit the poor with false promises of better jobs, said Luis CdeBaca, the U.S. ambassador for human trafficking issues. Victims are often promised higher-paying jobs, only to find themselves deep in debt and virtual slaves working for little money in jobs such as domestic helpers or prostitutes.

In mainland China, forced labor — especially involving children — remains a major problem, according to a recent report by the U.S. State Department. Women have also been forced into sexual slavery and sold as brides, the report says. China's government does not fully meet international standards for fighting human trafficking, though it is making "significant efforts" to comply, the reports says. Chinese laws, for example, define trafficking in a limited way that doesn't automatically prohibit some forced labor or deem certain minors coerced into sex work to be victims.

12-4 | RICHMOND, Va. — A revised state report reveals that at least two officials with a crisis response team at Virginia Tech called their family members after the first shootings at a dorm and about 90 minutes before the all-campus alert was issued at 9:26 a.m. The president's office was locked down at 8:52 a.m. and two academic buildings were also shut down before the general alert. The revisions also concludes that university officials and police failed to look into signs about Seung-Hui Cho's mental state. Cho killed 32 people and injured several others before killing himself on April 16, 2007, in the deadliest mass shooting in modern U.S. history.

Gov. Timothy M. Kaine said the findings that some school officials called their own family members about the initial shootings in a dorm before an all-campus warning was issued were "inexcusable." Kaine said he is considering whether legislation requiring immediate notification procedures might be submitted to the General Assembly.

CSU bans guns on campus

By KRISTEN WYATT

Associated Press Writer

DENVER — Colorado State University joined most major colleges nationwide in forbidding concealed weapons on campus Friday, Nov. 4 in a decision that pitted faculty asking for a ban against students demanding the right to carry guns.

CSU has followed state law that allows people to carry guns, including concealed weapons with the right permit.

Officials said the gun ban will leave Utah campuses as the only ones where concealed weapons are allowed. Utah has a law allowing concealed weapons on state property, and a court has ruled there is no exception for colleges. Currently, 26 states ban concealed weapons on any school property and 23 states, including Colorado, allow individual campuses to decide for themselves.

Colorado State board members voted unanimously after a faculty group at the Fort Collins campus asked for a ban.

But many students opposed the ban, and the student government at the Fort Collins campus urged the board not to ban guns.

Senior Brady Allen, who lawfully carries a weapon on campus, told the board that fear of an accidental discharge from a concealed weapon was a silly reason to ban guns.

"You might as well ban everything that has a potential risk — cars, alcohol and sports," said Allen, a 25-year-old history student and a former Marine.

Colorado State's unusual gun policy stems from a 2003 Colorado law that made concealed weapons legislation statewide, not variable by county. After that, the University of Colorado in Boulder banned concealed weapons.

Gun rights activists sued, arguing CU couldn't change state law on campus.

When a judge sided with CU in April, upholding the gun ban, the faculty at Colorado State's Fort Collins campus proposed a ban there, too.

Now it's up both Colorado State presidents to write and enact gun bans on their campuses. The board's vote sets no timeline.

Returning to former glory

Oakland's club hockey team off to a strong start this season

By KYLE BAUER
Contributing Reporter

In every successful season, there is typically a defining moment for a team — a game that can redirect the course of a season and allow it to set sail. For the Oakland University club hockey team, that moment may have occurred on Friday, Nov. 20 at the Onyx Ice Arena.

Let's set the scene: The Grizzlies were taking on the third-ranked Liberty University Flames, in a game they were the underdog. With a minute and 10 seconds left in a game tied at three apiece, Jordan MacDonald attempted a cross-ice pass to Mike Simpson. The puck redirected off a Liberty defenseman, fooling the goalie, and slid into the back of the net. Oakland took the lead. As the clock hit zero, the Onyx erupted in roar of jubilation. OU won the game, and set the tone for another victory against the Flames the following evening, capping an improbable sweep and letting the country know that they had arrived.

Oakland currently sits at 15-4, ranked 13th in the American Collegiate Hockey Association coaches poll and eighth in the computer rankings. They have recently gone on a six-game winning streak.

This season has been a polar opposite from last year.

At the beginning of the 2008-09 season, Oakland entered ranked in the top five and were expected to compete for national championships, despite having a young team. In the midst of a lot of roster turnover, they had a hard time finding chemistry and they struggled all season long.

This season the Grizzlies opened up ranking 18th. There really wasn't anywhere for Oakland to move but up. New head coach Jeremy Bachusz enforced a rededication to conditioning, discipline and unity.

"We have all come in better shape. On the ice, everyone is accepting their role. We've got all the talent in the world ... we are playing as one," sophomore defenseman Jacob DeSano said.

Asking members of this Grizzlies team, many of them cite a newfound sense of family off the ice that has helped them considerably. The players say they've put aside their egos that allegedly plagued last year's roster. Senior captain Cody Austin said he doesn't look inward at his own leadership abilities but to the team as a whole.

"We have a lot of leaders on this team. It's not just the guys who wear the letters on their jerseys. They all make a big impact on the atmosphere right now," Austin said.

Freshmen Adam Novack has been one of this season's most welcome surprises, though his performance was not unexpected by everyone. Bachusz had confidence in the young newcomer.

"We knew Novack would contribute right away com-



Leading scorer Jordan MacDonald (above) has helped the Grizzlies to 103 goals in just 19 games this season versus just 48 goals against.

ing from juniors," he said.

Novack came from the Metro Jets, a program that has fed Oakland with a lot of its talent, including goalie Alex Pikunas and leading scorers Jordan MacDonald and Jesse Worrell.

Novack's presence has been on the first line with Kevin Kranker and MacDonald. Kranker has rebounded from what was seen as a sophomore campaign that fell below expectations.

MacDonald is leading the Grizzlies with 16 goals and 27 points. He lost around 30 pounds in the offseason and his teammates have taken notice of the improvements in his game this year.

"MacDonald is 10 times more confident and a lot faster. His ability to bear down helped him put the puck in the back of the net, where he struggled with that before," Kranker said of his linemate.

The Grizzlies' defense has also been much improved along with its goaltending. The ascension of first defensive pairing of Jacob DeSano and Jason Maltese has had a lot to do with the team's success.

"We've got seven solid defensemen. You can put any of us out there and we'll shut down anyone's top line,"

DeSano said.

Oakland will need strong defense and a continuation of their high-scoring top line to keep moving up in the ACHA rankings.

The Grizzlies have one of the toughest schedules in the country, and will play a pair of rematch games against Liberty in February. Also in February, the team will face perhaps its biggest test in a three game series against archrival Davenport University.

The ACHA takes a scheduling break for the majority of December, in light of the holidays. Oakland recognizes that they need to keep the momentum going through the break. For junior defenseman Dennis Capa, the formula to staying sharp is simple.

"We have to skate hard over break and stay in shape. We have to be ready," Capa said.

Oakland is a team that has seemingly become unified. Words like "confidence" and "family" are being spoken all around this team. The players appear to be buying into the team-first philosophy that Bachusz preaches.

The Grizzlies seem to be back on a course to where they are most comfortable and familiar — in the ACHA tournament, contending for national titles.

Pistons fans have reasons for hope

By KYLE BAUER

FEATURED COLUMNIST

The Detroit Pistons should be wearing teal jerseys again.

It's funny what a color can represent to a franchise. There is a lot of pride in a team's colors. In 2001, the Pistons turned back the clock, returning to the colors of their glory days. With the return of red, white and blue came perennial playoff runs and renewed excitement to Detroit.

These days, I suppose it would be appropriate for the Pistons to turn back the clock again to the late-1990s. They look a lot like the teams donning teal jerseys that ran out Eric Montross at center. Maybe it goes in 10-year increments.

While they look pathetic now, I'll cut them some slack. A team that goes on a seven game losing streak normally wouldn't be spared the criticism, but the Pistons are a team making a sound transition, and are not in a long rebuilding phase.

Unfortunately, the Pistons' plan of attack for the 2009-10 campaign has been marred by injuries. At one point Detroit suffered from four starters being injured. The impact of losing Tayshaun Prince, and especially Richard Hamilton, has buried this team.

The capabilities of Hamilton were best displayed in the Larry Brown era. Hamilton was often used off of screens and curls, wearing out his opponents, in their vain attempts to contain his speed.

Hamilton has shown what he is capable of offensively and that if the offense is run through him, he can average 20-plus points a night.

With new head coach John Kuester, Hamilton was looking at a more substantiated role. Flanking Ben Gordon, the two natural shooters were expected to feed off each other. Hamilton went down only a game into the season with a severely sprained ankle. We have yet to see what the Pistons are capable of offensively with Hamilton in the lineup.

On the other side of the ball, Tayshaun Prince is the team's best defender. While I think his defensive play is overrated at times league-wide, it still can't be discounted. Prince's ability was to defend the best opposing guard or small forward on the court. It isn't a recipe for success having his replacements, rookies Austin Daye and Jonas Jerebko, tasked with guarding the likes of LeBron James.

However, it's not an entirely bad thing that the Pistons have to rely on these two youngsters. Jerebko and Daye were expected to be project players when they were drafted.

Daye was expected to serve as Prince's understudy and take time to develop physically to be able to play in the NBA. In the long run, the Pistons will be better off having thrown Daye into the fire this season.

Jerebko has shown that as both a small or power forward, he can get to the basket and draw fouls. His strength will eventually be his ability to get in the post and step out and hit the 15-footer, similar to Antonio

McDyess. Just don't expect 10 rebounds a game.

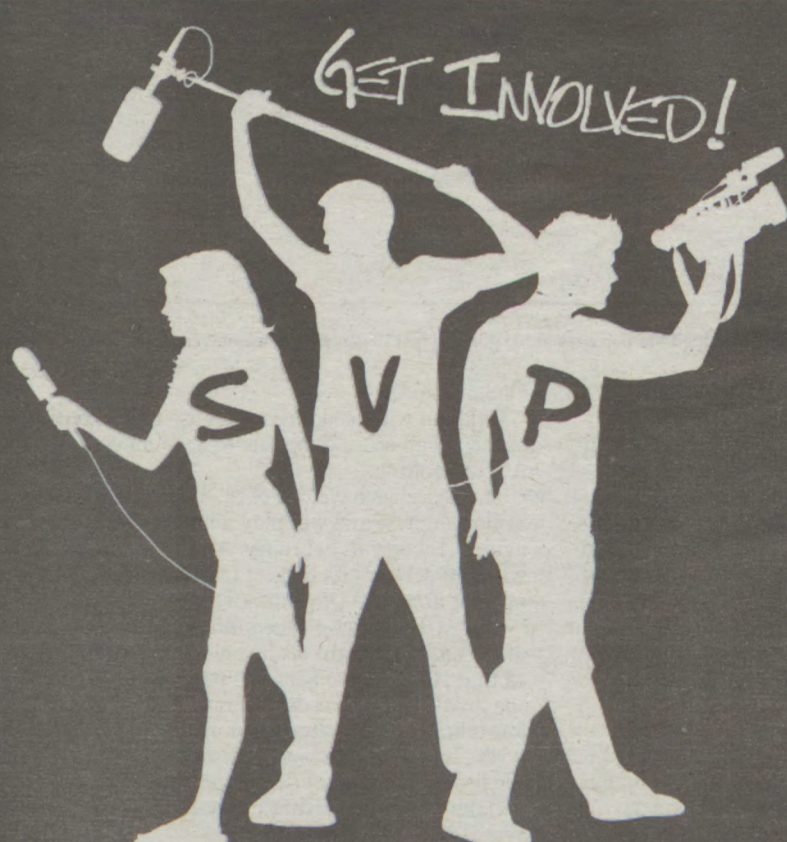
The contributions of these rookies are especially notable given the fact that you can almost count the Pistons' number of quality draft picks in the last decade on one hand.

There isn't a player in the game who has the ability to heat up like Gordon, but he too is suffering from an injury. When he is on, he can hit half-court shots blindfolded. Well, maybe not, but you get my point. An ankle injury is a tough one for a guard. The ability to cut, pivot and set for shoots are vital and very hard to do with a sore ankle. Once Gordon gets healthy and is combined with Hamilton, they will make for a very formidable backcourt.

Charlie Villanueva, Will Bynum and Rodney Stuckey have each had their own bright spots throughout the season as well. The Pistons will actually have pretty strong depth once everyone gets healthy.

Overall, fans can expect the Pistons to shed the teal gloss that they have been coated with and have a very strong second half of the season. I see Detroit sneaking into the playoffs, despite their low standing in the Eastern Conference right now. There are far more reasons for optimism now than there were a year ago. There is a core of youth that is getting valuable experience while the veterans deal with their various injuries.

The Pistons can only go up from this point and in time they will. Unlike last year's roster, consisting of several misfit toys, this season's team actually has a young nucleus of players to build around for the future.



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Golden Grizzlies

COMING ATTRACTIONS

GAME SCHEDULE FOR DEC. 7 - JAN. 5

MEN'S BASKETBALL

12/10 at Michigan State
12/13 vs. Green Bay 4:30 p.m.
12/17 at Seattle University
12/19 at Oregon
12/22 at Syracuse
12/28 vs. Alma 7 p.m.
12/31 vs. W. Illinois 1 p.m.
1/2 vs. IUPUI 5:30 p.m.

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

12/13 vs. Purdue 1:30 p.m.
12/17 vs. St. Louis University
6:30 p.m.
12/19 at Illinois
12/21 at Penn State
12/29 vs. Rochester College
4 p.m.
1/2 vs. IUPUI 2:30 p.m.
1/4 vs. W. Illinois 6:30 p.m.

CLUB HOCKEY

12/11 vs. Michigan State
8:40 p.m.
12/12 at Michigan State

TRACK & FIELD

12/17 Grand Valley State
Holiday Open

For more coverage of the men's and women's basketball teams, visit www.oaklandpostonline.com until our next issue, Jan. 6.

MOUTHING OFF

The views expressed in Mouthin' Off do not necessarily reflect the opinion of The Oakland Post

December 7, 2009

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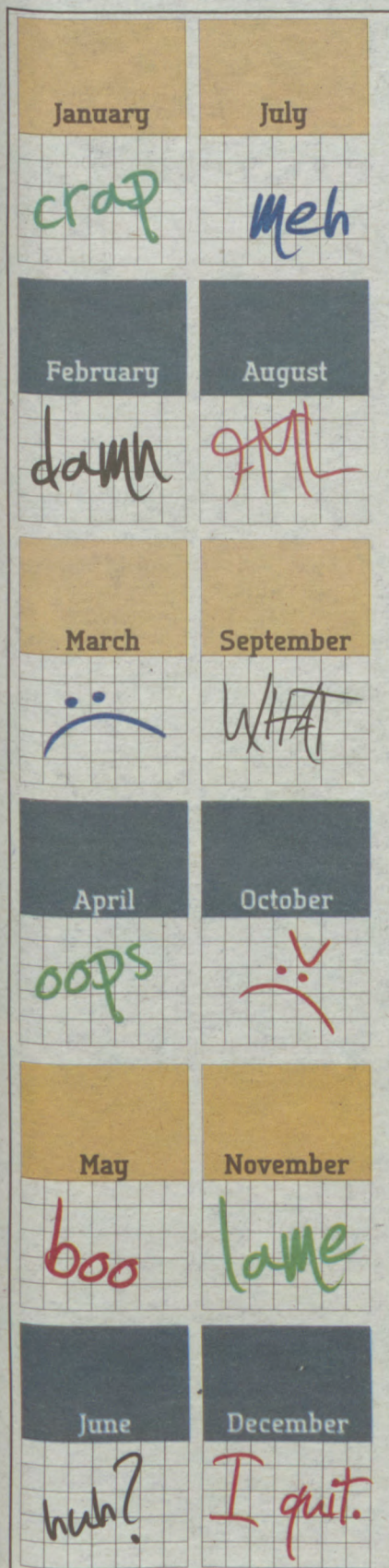


Illustration by JASON WILLIS/ The Oakland Post
This is why we removed markers from our office.

An '09 whine: WTF, MMIX

'Twas weeks before Christmas, and here at OU all the Posties were working on the Year in Review. '09 had its moments, but someone must scoff, a column best suited to run in Mouthin' Off.

Dear 2009,

Like every year, you started off cold and will end cold, but you filled that gap in between with nonsense, crap, and suck.

Right from the start, Chelsey "Sully" Sullenberger lands a damned plane in the Hudson River and saves the lives of all 155 people on board. Way to set the bar too high, 2009. Just over two weeks in and already nothing I can do in 2009 will be as badass.

On Jan. 20, Barack Obama was sworn in as president of the United States. I know a lot of conservatives who felt that this made 2009 suck, what with him being the anti-Christ socialist that he is. On the other, side however, this means that up until Jan. 20 Bush was still president. For a lot of liberals, just 20 days of Bush in 2009 was enough to ruin the rest of the year.

You know what used to be awesome? Pirates. Cutlasses and cannons, guns and pillaging, rum and plunder, and Keira Knightly in a corset. But in 2009 the "real" pirates off the coast of Somalia shattered everyone's idea that pirates were fun. They were not all Johnny Depp, but instead struggling third world criminals who sped up to freighters on tiny motor boats and took control with rifles. Well, they used to until they hijacked a U.S. vessel and took the captain hostage.

Then we sent in troops, sniped the pirates from a boat, and redundantly made it clear nothing anyone did this year would be as badass.

You know how we didn't need another thing to kill us? And then 2009, you decided to make swine flu a pandemic? Not only could I have died from a disease named after a pretty wussy animal, but then everyone started freaking out, dousing themselves in hand sanitizer and making bio-hazard suits

fashionable? Not cool, 2009.

I often wondered why our Sports editor Dan Fenner was such a grump this year, but I realized that sports in 2009 sucked for us. The OU men's basketball team missed their chance to enter the NCAA tournament this year in the last two seconds.

Then Michigan State made it all the way to the last game, had a chance to win the tournament in Detroit and jolt this depressed state back into being proud — but instead they got trounced on by the Tar Heels of North Carolina.

Then the Red Wings blew their shot at winning Stanley, at home, to Sidney "whiny little bastard" Crosby and the Pittsburgh Penguins.

Then the Tigers lost in 12 innings to the Minnesota Twins in a tie breaking game to win the American League central. Rick Porcello's good looks, according to You/Local editor Annie Stodola, were not enough to save them.

Then the Lions finally won a game, and jokers like me could no longer make fun of their losing streak. Sure, they still suck, but for a while, we were proud that we sucked more than anyone, and they blew it.

Death got greedy this year, 2009. Ted Kennedy, I can understand. Robert McNamara, yeah, he was old. Walter Cronkite? No, not cool Death. Michael Jackson I kind of figured was going to go out in some crazy fashion, and I'm still hearing crap about it. Love him or hate him, we were not able to avoid it. Farrah Fawcett AND Patrick Swayze, did you really need both of them? Death, did you figure if you took Billy Mays the next celebrity came absolutely free?

Bea Arthur. You took Dorthy Zbornak from us, you son of a bitch.

The top three movies of 2009 were Transformers 2: Revenge of the Fallen, Harry Potter and the Half-Blood

Prince, and Up. Six of the top 10 movies were sequels, thus proving that the creative well has dried and people are still willing to spend millions of dollars for the same things they've seen before. If something blows up and either Meghan Fox or Daniel Radcliffe is on screen, people will spend their paycheck to go see it.

Everyone felt the economic crunch this year. I'd write more about it, but to save money and ride the going green wave, I'm not allowed to search any information about it and have to turn off my computer every few minutes to save money on electricity.

There were a lot of things we did not need in 2009. Bernie Madoff, balloon boy, Blagojevich. Did Sarah Palin really need to come back into the news? North Korea was still a whacky semi-nuclear hell hole and Iran was enriching enough uranium to blow up the sun. Twice.

The economy was tanking, car companies crashing, and clunkers suddenly became a commodity. Susan Boyle gets famous, Tiger Woods gets his van smashed with his own clubs, and Leno gets a new show and still isn't that funny.

Kanye ruined the VMAs for Taylor Swift, Auto-tune ruined music as we know it, and "You can afford this" ruined Oakland's reputation as a prestigious school and made us the joke of Michigan colleges.

2009, I'm sorry to say that I really won't miss you. Hopefully 2010 will make up for your mistakes, but then again, I said that about you to 2008.

See you in hell,

Dan Simons
Mouthin' Off editor

P.S. When you see 2004 in hell, tell him to kiss my ass.

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