

Critically acclaimed
Informant worthy of the
praise.

See Page 6

September 30, 2009

The Weekly Student Newspaper of Rhodes College

Memphis walking toward a cure

By Alex Yu
Staff Writer

Twenty-six years ago, a race began in the Mid-South Memphis area to support a cause. The cause was breast cancer research and support. Breast cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer among U.S. women besides skin cancer, and kills an expected 40,000 women per year.

The Susan G. Komen for the Cure Foundation began in 1982 because of a promise, the promise to end breast cancer forever. Nancy G. Brinker made this promise to her sister Susan, who had been fighting the disease with her heart, body, and soul. Susan spent her time in treatment thinking of ways to make life better for other women fighting breast cancer, rather than focusing on her own situation. Her concern and compassion moved her sister Nancy to make this promise to her, which she has kept.

The Susan G. Komen for the Cure is the global leader of the breast cancer movement, and has invested more than \$1 billion dollars since the founding. The Memphis-MidSouth Affiliate of the Susan G. Komen for the Cure raises funds to support a variety of programs across the surrounding counties. In 2007, the Memphis-MidSouth Affiliate contributed over \$434,000 to provide services including free mammograms, clinical breast exams, and breast self-exam instruction to women in the community.

This year, the 26th annual race will begin on Oct. 31, 2009, at 8:30 a.m., and Rhodes students are invited to attend and support the cause. In 2008, Rhodes helped raise over \$3,000, and hopes to beat that record this year. To sign up online for the race, go to raceforthecurememphis.org and select the "pledge" option on the left side menu to search for the Rhodes

team. You can also contact Nina Guo (guoni@rhodes.edu), who is the team captain for Rhodes, for more information. If you wish to attend, sign up by Oct. 1 in order to receive a discount, and be on the lookout for the Rhodes Race for the Cure Team shirt.

This is a great opportunity for Rhodes students to get involved with the community and many students think that the race is a good idea. Freshman Rene Sanchez says, "I think that the cause is honorable and moving; moving in the story behind the founding. The foundation has a lot of support nationally because of all of the money raised and the attention it has. Unfortunately I will not be able to attend because of my schedule, but I do support it. I save the pink labels from the yogurt cans and mail them in."

Sophomore David Siu says, "I think it's awesome that Rhodes has it's own team for the race! It's very encouraging to see Rhodes students getting involved with community outreach and being so proactive about such important causes."

Sophomore Alex Petraglia says, "I haven't officially signed up, but I plan to either walk or run in the race. I believe that the race not only is beneficial in its attempt to both raise money and awareness for breast cancer, but the race itself is one step in fighting the obesity epidemic in the United States. With Memphis being the 11th fattest city according to Men's Fitness Magazine, the race for the cure attempts to find a cure for breast cancer as well as providing exercise as a vehicle to solve the obesity epidemic."

Remember to sign up before or by Oct. 1 to receive a discount. Come and support your team and this great cause. Help keep the promise to Susan G. Komen to end breast cancer forever.

Students shed light on domestic violence

By Jasmine Gilstrap
Staff Writer

Domestic violence accounts for 16 percent of violence incidents and has more repeat victims than any other crime. In order to address the statistic, Rhodes Women's Services has planned multiple events to take place in October, Domestic Violence Awareness Month, DVA Month.

The series of events kicks off Oct. 1 with the sell of ribbons in the Rat to raise awareness about DVA Month. The proceeds of the sells will go towards Women's Services V-Day events, a day in correspondence with the global movement to stop violence against women and girls. Although the V-Day events don't take place until the spring, Women Services encourages stu-

dents to get involved throughout the year, including the month set aside to remember those affected by domestic violence.

"People should get involved with domestic violence awareness month because this is bigger than all of us," said Courtney Waters, Women Services Kinney Coordinator. "We are trying to raise awareness and support for an issue that has the potential to affect us all."

Opportunities to become involved in the community are included in the events Women Services has scheduled for students. One volunteer opportunity Women's Services has planned is making decorations for the YWCA women's shelter which

Violence, continued on Page 5

Kinney Program kicks off year of service with awareness week

By Patrick Harris

The Kinney Program, Rhodes' campus-wide organization for student service and social action, commenced its activities this week with the Kinney Awareness Week!, a series of planned opportunities for student involvement from Sept. 28 through Oct. 3. Over 83% of the Rhodes student body participates in some form of volunteerism, and the Awareness Week offers a glimpse of the varied ways to do so.

The Kinney Program service events this week cover a wide variety of opportunities intended to draw attention to the gamut of activities encompassed by the organization. Events range from a Family Shelter Fun Day to a Burrito Fundraiser benefiting the arts. An international focus is also present in the line-



The Sou'Wester/ NeNe Bafford

The Kinney Program placed a giant hand in between the library and Middle Ground to gain the attention of students.

up, with the Refugee Empower-

ment Program taking place on Monday. Dealing on the plight of displaced persons, the session is billed by the Kinney Program as "multilingual and multinational." The week's schedule also includes time for reflection in which students are encouraged to assess how a service opportunity has affected them and how they may wish to serve in the future.

The Kinney Programs promotes student involvement at whatever level of service an individual may desire, from a sustained long-term commitment to a project to a "one-time plunge" for a particular event. Students interested in becoming part of Kinney Program activities are urged to contact a coordinator to ask about options for serving in and around the Memphis community.

Hispanic Heritage Month 2009

October 2

Dinner & Salsa Dancing
Location: Rumba Room,
303 S Main St.
Time: 7pm
Free to Rhodes students;
must arrive by 7:30 pm

students who sign up with CODA)
CODA Tickets on sale to students Thursday, October 22, faculty and staff Monday, October 26th

October 12

*Film and Discussion:
Afrocubanism, Nation and Satire in contemporary Cuba*
Satire in Latin American
Film: *Guatanamera* (1995)
Location: Barrett 051
Time: 6 pm

November 3

Dia de los Muertos/Day of the Dead
Location: Barrett 051
Time: 5 pm
The exhibit of *altares* will start in the morning.

November 1

Ballet Hispanico
Location: Buckman Performing and Fine Arts Centre, 60 Perkins Ext.
Time: 8 pm (transportation will be provided to

Co-Sponsored by Modern Languages and Literatures, HOLA, and the office of Multicultural Affairs. For more information please contact Sabrina Brown, Assistant Director of Multicultural Affairs at browns@rhodes.edu or 901.843.3529.

Parents' weekend reconciliation

By Jake Groves
Staff Writer

Last weekend was Parent/Family Weekend, an event designed to encourage parents to visit their children and experience the Rhodes environment. I used to see this event as being for “kids who miss their mommies and daddies,” but, after this weekend, I found that I was mistaken.

Growing up, my parents forged my independence from an early age by practicing noninterference in their parenting. At childhood soccer games, for example, I was one of the few children who didn't have a parent on the sideline rooting me on and yelling at the ref when he made a questionable call. I may have felt a twinge of sadness when, after scoring a goal, I would look to a sideline full of strangers in foldout chairs cheering on our team, but no mom or dad. This is not to say that my parents did not love me enough, but rather that they didn't show the same amount of public support as others.

Now, some ten years later, I find myself again looking to the sidelines and being disappointed with the multitude of unfamiliar faces. Kids' parents come up for much the same reasons as when they went to their children's soccer games: to show their support and hope that it spurs their children on to success. Maybe this is why Rhodes serves barbecue on Friday in the Rat, has a blues band playing in the lair, and provides other activities to entice parents' involvement: it is because Rhodes recognizes how encouraging parental presence can be.

Perhaps my judgment of Parent/Family Weekend as being for “kids who miss their mommies and daddies” was premature, as it does not reflect my findings in a cursory four-student poll I conducted on Sunday. Michael Pluta, a junior and local Memphian, for example, likes “having parents around so when I get wild and crazy I have more of an audience.” Michael also cherishes the opportunity Parent/Family Weekend brings to blackmail his peers.

On a slightly less mischievous note, Mary Godfrey, a sophomore and member of the Chi Omega sorority, confessed that Parent/Family Weekend is a burden, but she likes reaping the benefits of her parents' good will. In short, it is “stressful having [my parents] around, but they brought my kitten.”

Adventuresome sophomore Jared Swenson, active member in the Pi Kappa Alpha fraternity, enjoys two aspects of Parent/Family Weekend: free meals, and seeing dads “fratting” at parties. Jared's fraternity brother, Laney Mills, expresses a similar penchant for Parent/Family Weekend, commenting that he likes to eat and spend time with his parents and those of his friends.

In conclusion, Parent/Family Weekend was a success. Parents got to bond with their kids in a new environment, and for many, it brought a much needed taste of home. Parent-less students enjoyed the company of their friends' guardians. For me, it transformed my preconceived notion of Parent/Family Weekend as being for “kids who miss their mommies and daddies” into a time to enjoy the ironic liveliness that parents bring to campus.

Libyan dictator's tirade stuns the United Nations General Assembly

By R.S. Mills McArthur

Since Libya's flag is nothing but a solid green rectangle, I didn't expect much creativity from Muammar Qaddafi's speech. However, the Libyan dictator's speech to the General Assembly of the United Nations on Wednesday, Sep. 23, surprised me. In it, Qaddafi bashed the structure of the Security Council. He offered a solution to the Israel-Palestine conflict. He called for an investigation into the assassination of JFK. He suggested the UN headquarters be moved to Libya. He wondered if the swine flu originated as a biological weapon. He expressed his desire that Obama remain president forever.

The speech, which the New York Times described as a “rambling diatribe” (whatever that means), went on for 96 minutes despite being scheduled for only 15. Even the translator gave up with 20 minutes left and a replacement had to step in.

The most fascinating revelation to be taken from this speech is quite simple: apparently, Qaddafi is completely insane. A crazy dictator given a microphone to address the other 191 nations of the world is always captivating. But Qaddafi's speech signifies something deeper; it came at an interesting juncture in Libya's history. Qaddafi has ruled Libya for forty years. Though Americans presently see Afghanistan or Iran as the greatest threat to national security, there was a time in Qaddafi's long reign when Libya occupied such a position. In modern years, however, the nation has undergone a role reversal, all based on the whims of a man seeking a favorable position in history. Qaddafi spoke to the UN as a man concerned about his

historical legacy; in fact, Qaddafi has been concerned about legacy all along. But his methods for chasing a favorable legacy have changed, switching between two basic approaches.

Approach Number One: revolution and terrorism.

When he came to power in 1969, Qaddafi closed American military bases in Libya and shut himself off from the world (the brilliant flag design didn't come around until 1977). He established a system of government unique to Libya, dictatorship in practice but direct democracy in theory. In an age when the Cold War pitted the philosophies of Communism and Capitalism against each other, Qaddafi's system offered a “third path” which he termed “Jamahiriya.” Trying to disseminate this new form of government, Libya eagerly backed revolutions across the globe, developing a reputation in the 1970s and 1980s as a sponsor of terrorist organizations. Under Ronald Reagan, US-Libyan animosity grew so strong that the United States carried out a series of air strikes throughout Libya in 1986, but Libya did not relent; indeed, the most famous act of Libyan terrorism, the Lockerbie bombing, came in 1988 (until 9/11, it was the act responsible for the most American deaths in any single terrorist attack).

At some point Qaddafi decided violent terrorism wasn't the most effective way to generate a positive legacy, and so he ushered in Approach Number Two, the current approach: makes friends with the United States.

Perhaps due to economic sanctions imposed by the UN, Libya underwent a fun-

damental change in foreign policy in the twenty-first century. Giving up on their weapons of mass destruction program in 2003 symbolized Libya's reconciliation with the West. With oil as Libya's chief export, Western nations clamored to reinstate trade with the North African nation.

Libya was often cited as one of President Bush's few clear victories in the war on terror; Libya even offered compensation for the Lockerbie bombing, furthering the effort to improve the nation's international image. The modern Qaddafi tries to portray himself as a positive influence on international affairs, enthusiastically putting forth his opinion on everything from the Israel-Palestine situation, to the genocide in Sudan, and even the theory of Pan-Africanism.

All of this brings us back to Qaddafi's speech. The United Nations offered him the perfect platform to advance his new positive image as an international broker of peace. Given the media presence at the UN—Qaddafi's speech was sandwiched between those of Barack Obama and Mahmoud Ahmadinejad—it might be surprising that Qaddafi let his speech go the radical conspiracy theorist route, rather than the peaceful negotiator route. But perhaps we underestimate him.

Qaddafi is a man trying to carve out a legacy. The radical—oh, all right—insane edge to his speech made it clear that he isn't letting anyone else define the man he wants people to remember. That is admirable. And just imagine if it turns out that the swine flu did originate as a biological weapon.

THE SOU'WESTER

Editor-In-Chief
Ralph MacDonald

Co-Editor
Lee Bryant

Layout Editor
Monica Gehrig

Opinion Editor
Anna Meyrrose

News Editor
NeNe Bafford

A&E Editor
Cristina Iskander

Sports Editor
Andrew Mullins-Williams

Copy Editor
Lilly Rice

Editorial Assistant
Amaryllis Lyle

Business Manager
Effie Du

How to Reach Our Authors and Us

As the official newspaper of Rhodes College, *The Sou'wester* is produced entirely by students on staff. It functions independently of faculty and administration. The newspaper is published weekly throughout the fall and spring semesters, except during exam periods and breaks.

The Sou'wester is a member of the Student Media Board, a consortium that includes the editors of all student media outlets, class representatives, and at-large representatives from the student body.

All staff editorials published in *The Sou'wester* represent the majority opinion of the Editorial Board composed of section editors and executive editors. Opinions expressed in opinion columns and letters-to-the-editor do not necessarily reflect the opinions of *The Sou'wester* Editorial Board. Letters-to-the-editor are encouraged, but cannot exceed 350 words; all letters must be signed and will be edited for clarity.

Reaching *The Sou'wester*

Phone: (901) 843-3402

Fax: (901) 843-3409

E-mail: thesouwester@gmail.com

Address: Rhodes Box 3010

The Sou'wester

2000 North Parkway

Memphis, TN 38112-1690


ASSOCIATED
COLLEGIATE
PRESS

Fist-bump with Dalai Lama sparks controversy

By Anna Meyerrose
Opinion Editor

Last week, His Holiness the Dalai Lama made his much-anticipated visit to Memphis. The Dalai Lama is a Tibetan spiritual leader who exercises a great deal of influence over multiple sects of Buddhism. The current Dalai Lama (the 14th) is the first to travel to the West; in traveling abroad, he seeks to both spread Buddhist teachings and also to encourage interfaith peace. More specifically, His Holiness was in Memphis to receive the National Civil Rights Museum's Freedom Award.

At this historic visit, Shelby County Mayor, A.C. Wharton, and Memphis Mayor Pro Tem, Myron Lowery, were both present to welcome the Dalai Lama to Memphis. Lowery, in an attempt at good-natured humor and a show of southern hospitality, decided to "fist-bump" His Holiness. Before the day was through, reporters had already begun to question Lowery's decision; some labeled it as "disrespectful," asking the Mayor Pro Tem why he had decided to do such a thing. In response to all of these criticisms, Lowery fully and whole-heartedly stood by his choice, defending his decision to the end.

"It seemed like a good idea at the time. And with hindsight being 20/20; it still does," says Lowery, in an editorial he wrote for CNN in response to criticisms.

Furthermore, in his article, Lowery asserted that the Dalai Lama took no offense to such a gesture.

"I had been told by his representatives that the Dalai Lama had a wonderful sense of humor, and would enjoy the exchange," says Lowery in his CNN article. "Indeed, he did. His Holiness laughed, returned the gesture, and gave me his blessings".

The Mayor Pro Tem went on to affirm that this gesture was not at all evidence that he does not respect and admire the Dalai

Lama and his promotion of peace and harmony amongst all peoples.

"Wednesday, as I sat and watched His Holiness accept an award from the National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis, the gravity of the moment was in no way lost on me," Lowery writes to CNN. "An international crusader for peace was here on the hallowed ground where the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. took his last breath."

This entire story received national recognition, predominantly through references to it by comedians such as Conan O'Brien and Jay Leno. Over a week later, many are still debating the consequences of this for Memphis' national image. Closer to home, others still worry about the effects that this will have on Memphians who are already displeased with the current state of their city.

Critics need to sort out their priorities. Is Memphis that willing to forget former Memphis Mayor Willie Herenton's political legacy? During his close to 18-year occupation of the mayoral position, Herenton faced numerous allegations of illegal activities, albeit none of these were ever substantiated. Nevertheless, the mere existence of such allegations sullied the city's image and damaged its reputation. Furthermore, during his time in office, Herenton failed to unify the city racially and, at a more personal level, he managed to father a child out of wedlock. His recent vacillations over whether or not he would resign as mayor, along with his subsequent plans to run in the special mayoral election (from which he eventually withdrew), further discredited the Memphis City government on the national level.

All of this is to say that Memphis' national image was a problem long before Mayor Pro Tem Myron Lowery "fist-bumped" the Dalai Lama this past week. Herenton has done more than his



A.C. Wharton and Myron Lowery welcome the Dalai Lama to Memphis.

fair share of tarnishing Memphis' image in the past 18 years; it is interesting that this is a fact that seems to be so easily disregarded by so many. Furthermore, in light of the fact that the special mayoral elections are now under way, we should be worrying more about the direction in which our city will be taken than concerning ourselves over such trivial matters. It should be remembered by all that, at the very least, Lowery has yet to face allegations, much unlike his predecessor. In short, Lowery's greeting to the Dalai Lama, which was perhaps unorthodox, is simply not that big of a deal.

Leadership on war in Afghanistan much needed

By Patrick Harris
Staff Writer

Last week, General Stanley McChrystal's report on the war in Afghanistan was made public, and it makes for grim reading. McChrystal acknowledges that the international military effort has been plagued up to this point by failures both of resourcing and of strategy, allowing the Taliban to become ascendant in a conflict that has now lasted nearly eight years. The report therefore recommends significant increases of troop levels in tandem with a strategy refocused on securing the Afghan population and winning their support against the enemy, the heart of any successful counterinsurgency. Simultaneously, voices ranging from Vice President Joe Biden to conservative columnist George Will are urging President Obama to cut America's losses and reduce our role in Afghanistan to targeted strikes against terrorists. An astute observer would ask: haven't we seen this before?

Democrats in Congress frame their opposition in these terms: that Afghanistan is a land so totally savage and anarchic that no possibility of nation-building remains, that further troops will only inflame nationalist sentiment and result in intensified resistance, that our real enemy is Al Qaeda rather than the Taliban, and that the latter can be effectively combated with a reduced military footprint limited to Special Forces and air power. The statements issued in favor of downgrading the war effort are effectively carbon copies of the objections lodged against the 2007 troop "surge" in Iraq. None of them are any more true than Senator Harry Reid's contemptible characterization of the Iraq War as "lost." The defeatists among America's chattering class have learned nothing since then, evidentially attributing the success of the change of strategy there to a fluke.

Critics of the war are quick to point out that Afghanistan is not Iraq; indeed, it is not. The situation in Iraq was far worse prior to the dramatic improvements in security there in 2007 and 2008. Hundreds of civilians were dying a day. The country was experiencing a fratricidal sectarian conflict bordering on open civil war in conjunction with an anti-American insurgency and murderous terrorist attacks bent on stoking the chaos. By contrast, the violence in Afghanistan is of a much lower intensity.

The conflict more closely resembles a classical insurgency rather than a multi-sided sectarian free-for-all, with a clearly identifiable enemy in the form of the Taliban and related groups. Unlike in Iraq, active hostility towards Western troops is almost exclusively limited to one group, the Pashtuns, who are the ethnic powerbase of the Taliban. This parochial character of the insurgency limits its ability to spread its control throughout the country. Attitudes

"The statements issued in favor of downgrading the war effort are effectively carbon copies of the objections lodged against the 2007 troop "surge" in Iraq."

towards the American mission are much more positive among the Afghan people than was ever the case with Iraqis; while most Afghans are not enamored of foreign occupation, the thought of a triumphant return to power for the Taliban is worse.

Yet the military and political situation in the country remains dangerous and deteriorating, as General McChrystal's report goes to great lengths to demonstrate. The Taliban operates unchecked in large areas of Afghanistan and has begun to undermine the legitimacy of the national government. Stemming and reversing the tide of the insurgency will require the same change in methodology that saved the United States from outright defeat in Iraq; that is, a shift of priorities from force protection and killing insurgents to protecting the Afghan population. Like the insurgents and terrorists in Iraq, the Taliban extends its reach by fear, and

can only be defeated by extending physical and psychological security to Afghans. The same principles of counterinsurgency that have worked in Iraq can also be successful in Afghanistan with the right commitment of resources and resolve.

Afghanistan is plagued by corruption and deprivation and will not become a flowering democracy overnight, but nobody actually promotes this as the goal of the international effort. The war will be a success when the Afghans are capable of taking responsibility for their own security. Progress has already been made towards this end, with the Afghan National Army becoming increasingly capable. But a modicum of security is a precondition for further political and economic progress, something that politicians have continually failed to understand, wailing about "benchmarks" for progress in Iraq even as they opposed the troop deployments that would enable their fulfillment. Effective counterinsurgency will require patience that today is not much in evidence in Washington, yet it has been proven to work in the past.

Some critics argue that all this is simply too costly and time-consuming and that the United States should give up the struggle with the Taliban in favor of a limited war of drone strikes, intelligence-gathering and Special Forces missions against terrorists. Such a strategy is dubious even on its own terms (witness the apparent inability of the United States to prevent Somalia from becoming a terrorist playground), but it also fails to give full weight to the disastrous consequences that would attend an American withdrawal. An Afghanistan once more in Islamist hands would destabilize nuclear-armed Pakistan, with potentially grave geopolitical implications; it would be a humanitarian disaster on an enormous scale. Most importantly, America's failure to meet her obligations to the Afghan people would be a moral disgrace that would wound American self-respect and galvanize jihadists around the globe.

President Obama has said that the Afghan war is one we must win. He's right. General McChrystal's has laid out what is necessary to win. The only question is whether the President will make good on his words and have the audacity to hope for victory, and to choose it.

Student Voice

What is the sexiest thing a man or woman can wear?



“Beret.”
- Jenni Frierson, 2011



“Turtleneck.”
- Ryan Landry, 2013



“Shorts on a guy are gross.”
- Lucy Kellison, 2013

“Crocs.”
- Laura Mulholland, 2013



“Jeans with two feet gashes.”
- Trevor Wylie, 2013

Calendar of Events: October 1-7

October 1
Astronomy Exhibit
Location: RT Second Floor Lobby
Time: 8:00am-5:00pm

Internship Orientation for Spring 2010
Location: Orgill
Time: 4:30pm-5:30pm

Patrick DeGuira Lecture
Location: Blount/Buckman Lobby
Time: 7:00pm-8:30pm

October 2
Astronomy Exhibit
Location: RT Second Floor Lobby
Time: 8:00am-5:00pm

Rhodes Radio Harvest Fest
Location: East Village Lodge Patio
Time: 6:00pm-10:00pm
Dinner and Salsa Dancing (Hispanic Heritage Month)
Location: Rumba Room
303 S Main St
Time: 7:00pm-11:30pm

October 3
The Big Diehl: Free Memphis Roller Derby
Location: Off Campus
Time: 6:00pm-9:30

Kappa Alpha "Roadhouse" event
Location: Kappa Alpha House
Time: 8:00pm-1:00am

October 4
Taiji Pushing Hands Workshop
Location: BCLC Activity Room
Time: 2:00pm-5:00pm

October 5
Astronomy Exhibit
Location: RT Second Floor Lobby
Time: 8:00am-5:00pm

Internship Orientation for Spring 2010
Location: Orgill
Time: 4:30pm-5:30pm

Refugee Empowerment Program Tutoring Info Session

Location: Buckman 110
Time: 8:00pm-9:30pm

October 6
Astronomy Exhibit
Location: RT Second Floor Lobby
Time: 8:00am-5:00pm

Internship Orientation for Spring 2010
Location: Orgill
Time: 4:30pm-5:30pm

Poetry and Fiction Reading
Location: Fisher Garden
Time: 4:30-8:00pm

October 7
Astronomy Exhibit
Location: RT Second Floor Lobby
Time: 8:00am-5:00pm

Internship Orientation for Spring 2010
Location: Orgill
Time: 4:30pm-5:30pm

Jazz in the Lair
Location: Lynx Lair
Time: 7:30pm-9:00pm

Advocates of the homeless

By Anna Meyerrose
Opinion Editor

One of the many defining characteristics of Rhodes students is their willingness to get involved with community volunteering programs, particularly those located in the Memphis area. Many of these services opportunities are found through the Kinney Program; one such program is in connection with a nearby Door of Hope house.

Door of Hope is a non-profit organization located just several blocks from Rhodes on Bellevue. This group was first envisioned in 2003 when several Midtown churches began to notice more and more homeless people walking through the streets. Many resources were pooled so that this organization was finally able to become a reality.

The principal goal of this group is to provide a comfortable, warm, and welcoming environment for the homeless, nearly homeless (those who find shelter on a night to night basis), and low-income individuals in Memphis. Volunteers go to the shelter and, simply enough, cook and eat

a meal with the Door of Hope guests, chatting with and getting to know them.

Along with just providing a meal and a welcoming environment for low-income individuals, Door of Hope also hopes to help instill their guests with the most basic of life skills. On their website, Door of Hope of Memphis asserts: "Normal human relationships are destroyed" when people become homeless. "In a nutshell, we at Door of Hope do whatever is within our ability to help guests reintegrate into our community," says the website.

Since this program is set apart from others by its emphasis on volunteer/participant interaction, Door of Hope is in most need of volunteers to come and have meals with its guests. However, they also accept both in-kind donations (for guests newly placed in apartments) as well as financial donations.

At Rhodes, student volunteers that participate regularly in the Door of Hope program can be identified as "Advocates for the Homeless". Generally, this group goes to the Door of Hope

house on Mondays.

"Typically, we will play board games or spades and subsequently share a meal while just getting to know the people we are sitting and eating with, learning about their lives, their setbacks, and their goals for the future," says Andrew Millis, one of the Co-coordinators of Advocates for the Homeless group at Rhodes.

In helping out those less fortunate than themselves, it seems that Rhodes students, as volunteers at the Door of Hope house, also benefit from the interaction inherent in this program.

It is really a great mutual exchange of information, and creates friendships with people that you would otherwise never have an opportunity to meet, a quality which separates it from say, a soup kitchen, says Millis. "I can't tell you how often I will be driving around Memphis and see somebody I consider a friend sitting on the side of the road, and I can't help but wonder what bystanders think when I offer this person a ride to the closest bus stop or soup kitchen".

CAMPUS SAFETY

September 20 – 27

- 09/20
 9:40 am: Report of an alarm in Stewart Hall; campus safety and maintenance notified;
 4:54 pm: Report of a trouble alarm in Stewart Hall and White Hall social room; maintenance notified and is aware of these problems.
- 09/21
 3:05 am: Complaint of a beeping smoke detector in Robinson Hall; work order sent.
 4:00 am: Complaint of a beeping smoke detector in Stewart Hall; work order sent.
 1:40 pm: Disoriented elderly white male found in front of the Evergreen church; paramedics notified and transported subject for observation.
 2:45 pm: Trouble alarm Stewart Hall; maintenance notified and responded to this location.
 4:32 pm: Fire alarm Robb/White/Ellet; maintenance notified and responded to this location.
 8:57 pm: Fire alarm Williford Hall; problem was a dirty smoke detector; maintenance notified.
- 09/22
 8:39 pm: Fire alarm Bellingrath; campus safety responded.
- 09/23
 7:56 am: Various buildings checked for alarm system.
 3:17 pm: Fire alarm Bellingrath.
 11:20 pm: Students observed acting suspiciously at Charles Place gate; further investigation revealed drug paraphernalia and marijuana possession.
- 09/24
 5:16 am: Trouble alarm in Stewart Hall
- 09/25
 Nothing unusual to report.
- 09/26
 12:00 am: Report of party and noise complaint on University; report filed.
 1:49 am: Report of a hit-and-run/DUI; report filed concerning this incident.
- 09/27
 5:00 am: Student reported for an AV, intoxication.

The Interview Corner

By Jerica Sands and Isaiah Sawnsen

The purpose of this interview is to acquaint the student body at Rhodes with its faculty and staff as well as establish a connection with the Memphis community. We have not included any commentary in these interviews, because we want the interviewees to speak for themselves. The opinions expressed in these interviews do not necessarily reflect our own.

This week, the team met with Officer Brian Ogle. Officer Ogle sat with us for dinner and coffee.

My name is Brian Ogle, I'm thirty-six years old and I'm from the Memphis, Tennessee area. I've worked at Campus Safety since April 2008. During the school week, I come in; verify the buildings I'm locking down, just general patrol of the campus and the outer streets. Sargeant Taiani likes to call me "Mr. Microsoft." I seem to be a little more fluent with the computers and the software programs than some of the other officers. Often I get called on to type out our reports and things of that nature...

My childhood was an interesting childhood. I was born in Cherrypoint, North Carolina, son of a twenty-year marine corps vet. I eventually made my way to Millington, Tennessee, at the naval base. I lived there most of my life. I had a mother who suffered from manic depression, had a brother who drowned at 14. Then my mother passed when I was 17, and at 16 I was diagnosed with Swimmer's Ear. That infection got so bad that I became deaf in my left ear. So I think that those life experiences allowed me to see some things that prepared me for encounters later in life that I may be able to impact others for a greater cause...

Uh, as a child growing up, my dad being one of my heroes, thought I was gonna be in the military. As I got older, I ventured off into the wrong crowd and was known as the proverbial bad boy at school. Hard to believe. Anyway, with that I dropped out of high school in January of 1991. I passed my GED in February of '91. I wanted to go into the police academy, but being totally deaf in my left ear prevented me from passing the physical and from going into the military or the police department. So, I wound up here at Rhodes College as a Campus Safety officer...

I think probably the biggest lesson I've learned is unconditional love. In '99 I had to set my five-year-old daughter down and explain to her that Daddy made some bad choices and Mommy wanted Daddy to leave. We were on the brink of divorce. I recall my five-year-old daughter climbing down off the couch, she put her arms around my neck and said, "Daddy, I will always love you." That was such a life-changing experience because I understood to its fullest capacity the unconditional love that the Bible professes God has for us...

I am a firm believer in "things could always be worse." I believe attitude is the precursor to everything. I've learned to have a positive attitude. The scripture that comes to mind every time I get up out of the bed is that the Bible says, "This is the day that the lord has made. I will rejoice and be glad in it." Good or bad, whatever comes in the day, it's the day that god has allowed in your life. What if I go in with a negative attitude, I've been defeated already. That's my opinion...

My greatest achievement beyond a shadow of a doubt is being an excellent dad. Not a perfect dad, but an excellent dad...

In the future, I see myself being here at Rhodes College for a while and continuing to watch my kids mature and grow and become successes. My passion, what I'd like to see unfold, what I believe will unfold in due time, is getting involved in some sort of lay ministry or one-on-one counseling with troubled teens and young adults...

I would like to be remembered as a faithful disciple of Jesus Christ. Not just to speak it, but to share it. I think that's what's wrong with the church today. Many people profess to be Christians, or profess to be spiritual, whether it be Protestant or whether it be Catholic or whether it be whatever denomination. But it's all lip service, it's not living it. I don't believe that there is a perfect person, so will I be perfect in my faith? Probably not. But if people can see my heart, then I've been successful.

Violence, continued from Page 1

will be held in Barret 051 on Saturday, Oct. 3, from 10:30 A.M. until 12:30 P.M. Women's Services is also asking for donations of jeans in all sizes to the center as a part of the organization's "Be Comfortable in Your Own Jeans" campaign. Donations for jeans can be placed in the boxes outside RA doors.

Though remembrance of those who have witnessed and experienced domestic violence is the primary goal of DVA Month, empowering and meeting the needs of women is the purpose of Women's Services. As a sentiment of this belief, the organization will host two events to evoke empowerment. These events are a Sex and the City with Cosmopolitans Night with CHEERS, being held Thursday, Oct. 1, at 6:00 P.M. in Rhea Lounge, and a Dove Real Beauty Day during which students

will be watching some of the Dove Beauty transformations and having discussions with Chenobia Webster about healthy body images.

"I am most excited about the Dove Real Beauty Day because it is a chance for all of us women here to feel good about ourselves," said Waters. "I don't know of another forum we have that allows us to talk about how we feel about ourselves and why. It's an event that we need here at Rhodes."

The events of DVA Month are not the only way to join the movement towards stopping domestic violence. Students can become involved with V-day, the YWCA women's shelter, The Moriah House, and several other places that help those affected by domestic violence. For more information on ways get involved or to attend any of the events, contact Courtney Waters at watcs@rhodes.edu.

Sudoku

Use numbers 1 through 9 to complete the grid below. Make sure that each 3x3 box, row and column has the numbers 1 through 9 only once.

		6	3	4				7
	2					1		
	3		2					
			7					8
	8	1				5	9	
6					1			
					9		7	
		2					6	
3				2	8	4		

(c) Daily Sudoku Ltd 2009. All rights reserved.

Clanjamfry brings Scottish heritage to Memphis

By Jake Groves
Staff Writer

The annual Clanjamfry (pronounced “clan-JAM-free”) was held at Evergreen Presbyterian Church over the past weekend, celebrating the congregation’s Scottish heritage through music, games, and worship.

Although there was a reception held on Friday for sponsors, the festival really got going Saturday morning. Around the Evergreen Presbyterian lawn arose many tents, each presenting a unique aspect of the Scottish tradition. The vendors touted Scottish weapons, glassware, and foods, which together provided an informative glimpse at Scottish culture. Also, a man guided several sheep around the church using his two sheep-dogs. At one point, the sheep even escaped the fences set up around Evergreen’s campus and caused a traffic jam as the shepherd and his dogs attempted to corral them back within the fences.

Over the duration of the day, various troupes performed traditional Scottish music and dance. Amongst the performers were the Sallymacs, a local group, and Legacy from Jackson, MS. In between sets, dancers performed traditional Scottish steps that pleased the crowds. Throughout all three days, one could hear the bagpipes and

drums of the Wolf River Pipes and Drums crew bellowing above the murmur of the crowds. The grand finale, though, was Brian McNeill, a pre-eminent performer of traditional Scottish music, giving an



Dancers wearing their family tartans exhibit traditional Scottish dancing for onlookers at the Clanjamfry festival.

eclectic and inspiring concert within Evergreen Church. McNeill’s unique blend of storytelling and tunes entertained and excited a sizable audience for a few hours on Saturday night and provided a nice

end to the day’s festivities.

A special church service, dubbed “Kirkin’ of the Tartans” (“kirk” is Scottish for church and “tartan” roughly means clan), focused on the Christian tradition inher-

the film “Braveheart” to help convey this message. Along with this, the service provided a last chance to enjoy Wolf River Pipes and Drums and reflect on all that had occurred that weekend.

The Rhodes community played a significant role in organizing the event. CODA (Center for Outreach in the Development of the Arts) helped book Brian McNeill, and several members of the Rhodes student/faculty body sing in the Evergreen Choir.

The Rhodes community also partook in the fun activities offered on Saturday. Sophomore Paul Bender-Samuel confessed a little surprise at learning of the incredible depth of Scottish culture and how proud Scottish Memphians were of their heritage. His favorite part of the festival was the unique Scottish sporting events displayed at Clanjamfry, and he spent most of his Saturday testing his ability at these. Also, the event coincided with Parent/Family Weekend and provided a nice activity for students and their guests to enjoy.

Although this year’s Clanjamfry has reached its conclusion, the Scottish spirit continues to live on. Rhodes looks forward to next year’s rendition of Clanjamfry.

ited from John Knox and John Calvin. The sermon, given by Dr. Ken Letterman, recognized what a Scottish heritage means religiously, and also pointed out how everybody has a little Scot in them, quoting

The Informant! an unexpected psychological comedy

By Ferdinand Doumic

Stephen Soderbergh is a smart film director. He likes to work on smart topics with a smart aesthetic. In *The Informant!*, we are introduced to Mark Whitacre (played by Matt Damon), a man who seems very much alone and vulnerable, but brilliant. An executive in a food-processing firm, he risks his career in order to denounce the corruption of his employers. But Mark is a more complex character than what he shows, and his actions suddenly become less altruistic than they seemed at first.

The political topic is quickly abandoned for the psychological complexity of the character. Mark is not a bad guy, nor a good guy; he is just out of place. All of us have met this kind of man at least once in the past: definitely intelligent (and aware of it), and yet socially awkward. Mark is the kind of guy you do not understand, no matter how hard you try.

Well, by watching *The Informant!*, you have the opportunity to be in this man’s head for 2 hours. And yet, don’t expect to understand him any better after that. Indeed, Soderbergh depicts with irony this ambiguous character, but he does not try to resolve his paradoxical attitudes. Mark remains an obscure character from the beginning to the end. That is precisely what makes this movie a very strange and interesting comedy.

You will laugh, first because Mark is a totally ridiculous character, but also because he has a wild imagination. Nothing is more enjoyable than laughing at his excessive smartness. For that, Soderbergh cleverly introduces a voice-over corresponding to Mark’s thoughts, creating an intimate relationship between the protagonist and the audience. One then begins to experience the duality of the character. At one moment he is engaging, right after he seems unbearable. It is hard to tell what our feelings are toward this confusing man.

His duality is also expressed physically. The handsome Matt Damon, and the one who packed on 40 pounds in order to perform the role, are both present. Recently, at the Toronto Film Festival, George Clooney told him that he would help him to become one of the sexiest actors of the world again. Damon replied jokingly that he was more preoccupied by the Oscars he may get. Indeed he states in an interview that Mark is one of the characters he has most enjoyed creating. As Soderbergh claims, a great movie is made of good characters more than a good topic.

The Informant! has received mixed reviews from the critics. To be sure, some ele-

ments of the film, such as the music, which does not correspond to the 90s (and is not creative either), are awkwardly integrated. Soderbergh gives the movie a 70s atmosphere, even though it is set in the 90s. But besides those little mistakes, the movie is truly compelling. This is the story of a marginal man, facing an evolving world where he stands at the center. This is not another *Ocean* with action and weapons, nor is it a political protest—it is simply a comedy, but a clever one at that. If you go see it, expect no more, or less.



Photo courtesy of Warner Bros. Pictures

Matt Damon gives a memorable performance as the complex Mark Whitacre in Stephen Soderbergh’s *The Informant!*

Glee struggles to hit the right notes

Cristina Iskander,

Arts and Entertainment Co-Editor

It feels like for the last several Wednesdays, as the time nears 9:00 p.m., my Facebook homepage is scattered with statuses echoing a quip from that evening's *Glee* episode or exclaiming "So and So is GLEEful!" However, as the credits roll on the new Fox comedy, I am not left feeling gleeful. Instead, I am left feeling...confused. The reality is that if anyone should love *Glee*, it's me. I've programmed my cell phone to ring a different Broadway tune whenever my friends call, I can name drop more working New York stage actors than pop stars, and in high school, I would have fit in more with the Gleeks than with the Cheerios. Regardless, instead of feeling empowered as the band of misfits joins together and sings, I feel unfulfilled, desiring something more.

Glee isn't without its strengths. The show boasts an impressive pedigree. Creator Ryan Murphy is the mastermind behind innovative television endeavors *Nip-Tuck* and the gone-too-soon *Popular*, and he's assembled a cast of impressive Broadway star wattage like *Spring Awakening*'s Lea Michele and *Hairspray*'s original Link Larkin Matthew Morrison, as well as comedic genius Jane Lynch, who can make anything (even complete drivel like *Another Cinderella Story* or *Two and a Half Men*) more enjoyable. The heightened reality of the characters (cheerleaders dry clean their uniforms in a foreign country?) provides a welcome escape

for viewers and the storylines hit familiar notes, touching on issues like social status, unrequited love, loneliness, alienation, and confidence. Been there, felt that.

However, the show's attempts to address these issues have felt uneven. For example, two storylines dominated the September 16th episode, "Acafellas." The first, involving a character's decision to come out, was subtly played, while the other, focusing on various characters gaining confidence, felt heavy handed and reminiscent of something found on the Hallmark Channel. Additionally, the first few episodes have, for the most part, only spotlighted Rachel (Lea Michele), Finn (Cory Monteith), and Will (Matthew Morrison), while other characters like Tina (Jenna Ushkowitz) and Artie (Kevin McHale) have remained underdeveloped. What, beyond the fact that one is an Asian punk with a stutter and the other is in a wheelchair, do we know about these characters? They haven't undergone any development since the pilot episode.

Glee has managed to attract several guest stars including Debra Monk, Victor Garber, John Lloyd Young, and Josh Groban. These stars have felt misused and underutilized. All of them are wonderful singers, yet only one, John Lloyd Young, was featured in a musical number, and a short one at that. Why bother hiring musically gifted guests if it isn't going to be capitalized upon? Kristin Chenoweth, the original Galinda in Broadway's *Wicked* and Ol-

ive from *Pushing Daisies*, another series noted for its heightened, absurdist reality, guest stars at the end of September. Hopefully, *Glee* will take advantage of her beautiful soprano voice.

As a show incorporating musical numbers into its plot on a consistent basis, *Glee* is treading on unfamiliar territory. *Cop Rock* and *Viva Laughlin* previously attempted this feat and both failed (and one had Hugh Jackman in it!). Some musical numbers like the uplifting "Don't Stop Believin'" and the irreverent "Gold Digger" have soared, while others, such as "Take a Bow," filmed like a pseudo-music video, have felt disjointed. It is early in the series' season and the prime time for experimentation, but the show's musical direction needs to be established soon.

The most recent episode, "Preggers," which featured a campy football team dance performance to Beyonce's addictive "Single Ladies" anthem, a tender moment between father and son, and some good old, fashioned conflict in the form of a love triangle, was a vast improvement upon "Acafellas" and "Showmance," but can the show maintain a delicate balance between camp and true-to-life situations?

Admittedly, despite its flaws, *Glee*, is a wholly original concept and is not without promise. On the show, chorus director Will hopes that his Glee Club can live up to its potential and soar; I have the same hopes for this show.

THIS WEEK IN ENTERTAINMENT

New Movie Releases:

10/2/09

The Invention of Lying, Capitalism: A Love Story, Whip It, Zombieland

Television Highlights (9/30-10/6):

Glee

Wednesday, 8 pm, FOX. Kristin Chenoweth guest stars. The Glee Club covers Queen.

Modern Family

Wednesday, 8 pm, ABC. Hilarious new comedy starring Julie Bowen.

Vampire Diaries

Thursday, 7 pm, The CW.

Parks and Recreation

Thursday, 7:30 pm, NBC. Louis C.K. guest stars.

The Office

Thursday, 8 pm, NBC.

Smallville

Friday, 7 pm, The CW.

Dollhouse

Friday, 8 pm, FOX.

The Simpsons,

Sunday, 7 pm, FOX.

The Cleveland Show

Sunday, 7:30 pm, FOX.

Desperate Housewives

Sunday, 8 pm, ABC. Drea de Matteo stars as Wisteria Lane's mysterious new neighbor.

Mad Men

Sunday, 9 pm, AMC.

House, Monday

7 pm, FOX. James Earl Jones guest stars.

Gossip Girl

Monday, 8 pm, The CW. Hilary Duff and Tyra Banks guest star.

Castle

Monday, 9 pm, ABC.

90210

Tuesday, 7 pm, The CW.

Melrose Place

Tuesday, 8 pm, The CW.

Dreams, jobs, and futures on the *Line*

By Cristina Iskander,

Arts and Entertainment Co-editor

Pulitzer Prize and Tony winning musical *A Chorus Line* has long been considered Michael Bennett's ode to theatre performers. However, as I sat in the theatre Sunday night, listening to seventeen potential dancers vying for eight spots in a musical's ensemble sing "Who am I anyway? Am I my resume?" it became evident that the show is about far more than Broadway dancers. It's an examination of the steps and sacrifices we make to achieve our goals, the experiences that shape who we are and what we want, and our struggle to exist in an environment that often sends us mixed messages about whether we should stand out or adhere to the status quo. As a senior contemplating my future come May 2010, I couldn't help but see some strong comparisons between my steps and the dancers'. The show takes place in the context of the 70s, but remains startlingly relevant in 2009.

In *A Chorus Line*, director-choreographer Zach (Michael Gruber) holds auditions for spots "on the line" in his newest musical. He needs background players to support and complement his leading lady. As a result, he explains he doesn't "want anyone that catches his eye," but in order to choose amongst the finalists, he somehow deems it necessary to learn more about the dancers' backgrounds, requesting that they delve into their pasts and expose their fears, desires, and the reasons why they chose to become a performer. Themes (and personalities) emerge. It's a cruel paradox that these dancers must attempt to stand out to get a job that requires them to fade into the background, dance uniformly, and sing the praises of the "one singular sensation" that they are not, and perhaps never will be.

Zach, in the midst of his own existential crisis, asks the dancers what they would do if and when they couldn't dance. His question isn't just posed at the dancers; it's to all of us. When do we revise or give up on our dreams? How easy or necessary is it for us to settle? How do we move from one dream to the next? In "What I Did For Love," one of the show's most well known tunes, the dancers conclude that living without regret is more important than achieving success. While touching, the song seems forced and out of place.

Much of Zach's concern is directed at Cassie (Robyn Hurder), his former lover and protégée, who following a failed attempt at a career in Los Angeles, has returned to New York, desperate for a job. Hurder, best known for her turn as one-dimensional Marty in Broadway's recent *Grease* revival, is a revelation as Cassie, who is heartbreakingly eager to please. Zach is frustrated by her request to join the chorus, arguing that she is capable of so much more and that she doesn't "dance like anyone else". She insists that she is tired of striving for flashier, more important roles; she simply wants to do what loves—dance—regardless of the capacity. Fellow dancers on the line—former drag queen Paul (Joey Dudding), plastic surgery proponent Val (Mindy Dougherty), seductive Sheila (Emily Fletcher) and the fiery Diana (Rebecca Riker)—are equally compelling.

The ending of *Chorus Line* is a misstep. SPOILER ALERT: It doesn't feel genuine when Cassie makes the cut. It's no wonder either. Bennett, who based this show on real dancers, didn't intend for the Cassie character to make the cut, but this idea was scrapped after preview audiences responded negatively. Producers ousted the more honest, realistic ending, opting for the more pleasing, commercial ending. While the show is interesting and this touring production is well done, that choice is a huge reason that *Chorus Line* never fully succeeds. It asks many questions, but it's too afraid to answer them honestly.



Photo courtesy of Broadwayworld.com

Cassie's dance number "Music in the Mirror" is the climax of *A Chorus Line*.

United Football League breaks ground Top 10 shakedown

By Gordon Chadwick

The United Football League opens up its inaugural season on October 8 in Las Vegas. The first game will feature the Las Vegas Locomotives and the California Redwoods. A quick glance at the rosters reveals a few names NFL fans might recognize. These include Peter Warrick and Mike McMahon on the California Redwoods, J.P. Losman and Az-Zahir Hakim on the Locomotives, Brooks Bollinger and Tatum Bell on the Florida Tuskers, and Koren Robinson and Craphonso Thorpe on the New York Sentinels. Reading the rosters is like taking a trip down washed-up-memory-lane.

This isn't the first time an alternative football league has tried to establish itself in recent years. The short lived XFL and the longer lasting Arena Football League have also tried to carve out niches of their own. Each of those leagues featured a style of football that differed from the traditional NFL game. But, the only two rule changes that stand to alter the UFL's game are the inclusion of college style overtime and the elimination of the intentional grounding penalty. You have to wonder why the new league would want hinder teams' ability to get a sack, one of the more exciting things in football.

Perhaps the new league wants to encourage offense?

There are only four teams scheduled to play this season and the league can only be successful if it is able to lure new owners for next season. To try and prove the league's viability, teams will play home games in secondary locations as well as their traditional home. The league will try to find smaller football markets where there is still room for it to fit into. Most of the cities that are targeted for future franchises, such as Omaha, Salt Lake City and Portland, are not NFL cities. Also, to avoid competing with the NFL and NCAA, games will be played on Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays.

There has been some speculation as to what could happen with the UFL in the coming years. Some have suggested that the league is looking to benefit from problems that might surface when the NFL's contract with the Player's Union runs out. Another rumor suggests that the league wants to become a sort



Photo courtesy of UFL.com

UFL to open the season on October 8, 2009.

of minor league for the NFL and in fact, the teams have already unofficially aligned themselves with NFL divisions under the UFL's waiver wire system. Unfortunately, the UFL games will not be carried on major networks, but only the Versus Network and HDNet.

It's clear that the UFL will face an uphill battle to stay alive, but hopefully the new league can make it. After all, who couldn't use more Obafemi Ayanbadejo in their lives?

By Andrew Mullins Williams
Sports Editor

Football fans, fasten your seat belts, because you're going to be in for a wild ride.

Over the weekend, we saw four teams in the AP top ten lose. Nearly half of the preseason top ten is no longer there, and outside of the top three, (Florida, Texas and Alabama), the entire top-25 looks to be in for a rumble every weekend.

What on earth is going on?

What we are starting to see across college football is a lot more discrepancy between the traditional elite teams and the middle of the pack. In fact, the gap between the BCS conferences and Mid-Majors are starting close as well. The non-BCS conferences currently have four teams in the top 25 and have plenty of signature wins on the resume. Usually only one non-BCS team makes a BCS caliber bowl game, but there is a possibility this year (although unlikely) that there could be two worthy teams.

For the time being it seems like the top-25 gets shaken every weekend. Two weekends ago USC lost to Washington, last weekend Cal lost to Oregon, Mississippi lost to South Carolina and Penn St lost to Iowa. Stanford and Michigan are now on top in the Pac-10 and Big-10. Stanford and Michigan!

While we expected USC to choke against someone, all of the other teams stumbling so early is truly unsettling.

I don't even want to get into what I think about the Pre-Season poll, but until they figure out a better way to rate teams, it will be around. Regardless of the fact, it is clear that some teams were not worthy of the ranking bestowed upon them at the beginning of the year.

However, who is?

To be honest, not many people expect these over achieving teams to be on top of their league come bowl season, but who is to say they won't? At the rate that teams are flopping this year, anything can happen. Even Florida, Alabama, and Texas are not safe. Florida showed that it has a mortal QB, Texas has been a slow starting team, and Alabama has not played anyone in a true road game. The SEC is tough and upsets will always happen, but the level playing field in the Pac-10 and Big-10 will cause issues for those selecting the rankings every week.

If the top teams in the Pac-10, the Big 10 and SEC keep losing. It is not improbable that a team like Virginia Tech could sneak up on some people. Lucky for Texas and Florida, they have the week off to sit back and watch the chaos that is the Top-10. Unless we want to see two, or even three, loss teams in BCS bowls this year, traditional power schools better get their act together and start playing to their abilities. Otherwise we could be watching Notre Dame get blown out again at the end of the year.

And no one wants to see that.

USA holds its own destiny in CONCACAF

By Andrew Mullins Williams
Sports Editor

Coming up on October 10, the final round of qualifying for the CONCACAF region will commence. Usually by this time, the top teams are resting their top players and looking ahead towards the World Cup.

This is not most years.

As it stands right now, the top four teams are separated by four points and no one has secured a spot to South Africa. The United States is on top of the group with 16 points, followed by Mexico with 15. Honduras has 13 and Costa Rica 12. Lucky for the United States, they have played well enough to do no worse than fourth place in the group. Mexico is in the same position. While highly unlikely, it is possible that Guatemala could win its next two games, while Honduras and Costa Rica both lose. This would catapult Guatemala into the World Cup at the expense of one of the other countries. However, for that to happen, Mexico would have to lose at home to Guatemala, and that seems very unlikely.

Even so, the United States plays Honduras in San Pedro Sula on Oct. 10 and then has Costa Rica at home on Oct. 14. A victory assures them a place in the world cup. Two losses and they might have to face the fifth place team in South America. Most years the CONCACAF fourth place team usually beats the South American fifth place team to earn one of the final spots in the World Cup. However, this year that team (as it stands right now) is Argentina. That means that if the United States was to lose twice and get fourth place, they would have to play a two game series against Argentina—with the final game being played in Argentina.

No easy task.

However, due to the political unrest in Honduras it is possible that the game would be played on a neutral site. This would be tremendously advantageous to the United States because Honduras is undefeated at home and the United States has not won there in a long time.

As it stands, the United States is in control of their own destiny, but a slip or two could cause them to ruin it. Both Honduras and Costa Rica are coming off losses and are hungry for a win. There are four (maybe five teams) that have a shot at the World Cup in our region. There are only three automatic spots. So if you're excited to watch great soccer, this coming match day is not one to miss.

Let the best team win.



Photo courtesy of Getty images

Team USA celebrates victory over Spain.