Group petitions Office of the President

Campaign for Human Dignity asks that sexual orientation be added to nondiscrimination clause

By MADELINE BUCKLEY
News Editor

Members of the Campaign for Human Dignity presented the Office of the President a petition asking that sexual orientation be added to the University's nondiscrimination clause Wednesday.

Currently, the clause states the University does not discriminate based on "race/ethnicity, color, national origin, sex, disability, veteran status or age."

Group members and students gathered outside Main Building to present a unified front, according to sophomore Mary Dewey, chair of the campaign.

Dewey said the group garnered over 2,300 student signatures supporting the aims of the petition.

"We wanted to show solidarity," said sophomore Bridget Flores, president of the Progressive Student Alliance.

"We wanted to show that this is something a lot of students care about." The group took similar action last spring and received about the same amount of signatures but did not get a response from the administration. However, this time, Flores said Jenkins has agreed to a meeting on March 30.

Add to the University's nondiscrimination clause...

College tuition increases

By ASHLEY CHARNLEY
Saint Mary's Editor

The Saint Mary's Board of Trustees approved a 5 percent increase in tuition and a 3 percent increase in room and board costs for the 2009-2010 school year Tuesday.

This will make the average cost $38,822, including tuition and room and board fees, according to the College's press release.

The rise in tuition is a result of the Board evaluating "economic conditions, our current pricing structure and our peer institutions," Daniel Meyer, vice president for Enrollment Management, said.

Due to the College's costs in employee health care, energy and services, in addition to facility depreciation costs, the Board decided on this tuition increase, Meyer said.

According to Meyer, the Board considered the impact this increase would have on families who are already struggling to keep up with costs in the current state of the economy.

"The Board was concerned about the impact any tuition increase will have on families. But they also believe firmly in maintaining the quality of education we provide and determined that this modest increase is necessary to maintain the education we provide," Meyer said.

Saint Mary's tuition increased due to increased costs in employee health care, energy and services.

Students oppose abortion-rights bill

By AARON STEINER
News Writer

In the early stages of the presidential campaign, then-candidate Barack Obama made headlines when he told a pro-choice group that "the first thing" he'd do as president was sign a controversial abortion bill that opponents call a radical attack on the pro-life movement.

Responding to a question regarding how he would preserve reproductive rights in a speech given to the Planned Parenthood Action Fund on July 17, 2007, Obama said, "The first thing I'd do, as president, is sign the Freedom of Choice Act (FOCA). That's the first thing that I'd do."

The legislation makes the Supreme Court's Roe v. Wade decision federal law, and allows a woman to "terminate a pregnancy prior to fetal viability, or terminate a pregnancy after viability when necessary to protect her life or her health," among other provisions.

While the bill has not been signed, or even reached the floor of Congress for debate during the current session, pro-life advocates have latched onto action since Obama's election, and members of the Notre Dame community have joined the campaigns to prevent the passage of the legislation.

Chief among the opposition to the bill at Notre Dame is the University's student Right to Life club, which has organized a postcard campaign as part of a national effort.

Cycling club to host race this weekend

By JENN METZ
News Writer

This weekend, the Notre Dame Cycling Club — the "Cyclin' Irish" — will be hosting its first ever race in South Bend.

The races — a road race Saturday and a criterium, a short course bike race, Sunday will take place near campus; the first race, on country roads Northwest of Notre Dame, will begin at 10 a.m. Saturday.

Cyclists will compete in four divisions for men, categories A-D, and two divisions for women, A-B. Each category's race increases in distance.

Whereas cyclists complete a few number of long-distance laps in the road race, the criterium is a "more technical, shorter course," senior Andy Steves said. "It's much more spectator-friendly. We'd love to have a lot of people there," he said.

The criterium's reputation for crashes and "blood and guts" might also make the race more interesting for spectators, Steves, who has competed for Notre Dame since his freshman year, said.

Steves, a senior who has been riding since his senior year in high school, said he became interested in cycling because his grandfather competed in the Ironman.

The club competes in the Midwest Collegiate Cycling Conference, traveling to schools...
INSIDE COLUMN

NCAA: Day One

No matter what the Super Bowl may claim, the best sports day of the year is really two days. Today and tomorrow. The first round of the NCAA Tournament. Even though Notre Dame didn’t get invited to this year’s Big Dance, my fridge is stacked and I have enough snacks on hand to last me all 12 hours of college basketball goodness. I know Douglas Farmer did a March Madness rundown yesterday, but let’s take a look at the most interesting games of Day One.

Fantasy Sports Editor

♦ 12:20 p.m.
(9) Butler vs. (8) LSU — Ah, the classic 9/8 matchup to open up the tournament. Bulldogs against Tigers. Midmajor vs. weak major. There’s a legitimate chance the Horizon League was almost as good as the SEC this year, and Butler’s loss in the conference tournament hurt them more than it should have. Pick: Butler

♦ 2:30 p.m.
(12) Northern Iowa vs. (5) Purdue — All the pieces are in place for the textbook 12/5 upset. The Panthers have come excruciatingly close to pulling a first-round shocker before, losing by five or less each year between 2004 and 2009. All double-digit seeds. Purdue is good, no doubt, but it remains to be seen how the Big Ten stacks up in the tournament. Pick: Northern Iowa

♦ 5:00 p.m.
(13) Mississippi State vs. (4) Washington — Two schools coming out of week conferences — even President Obama said the Pac-10 was down this year. Both teams, though, are coming in red-hot. The Bulldogs are only here because of their run through the SEC tournament, and the Huskies have only lost three games in the past two months. Expect the Bulldogs to make it interesting, but come up just short. Pick: Washington

♦ 9:55 p.m.
(12) VCU vs. (6) UCLA — Even President Barack “Chalk” Obama picked this upset (if you don’t get that last joke, go check out Obama’s picks on ESPN). VCU upset Duke in the first round two years ago, and the Rams might have another one in them this year. The Bruins have to travel across the country, and a sluggish start will cost them. Pick: VCU

♦ 9:15 p.m.
(12) Western Kentucky vs. (5) Illinois — The last game of the day is one of the more interesting upsets. The Hilltoppers return almost the entire lineup from a team that stunned fifth-seeded Drake in the first round last year on a buzzer-beating Ty Rogers three-pointer and advanced to the Sweet Sixteen. And, when in doubt, just remember, the Big Ten is terrible. Pick: Western Kentucky

And that, ladies and gentlemen, is your TV viewing schedule for today’s slate. Remember, all the games are on CBS. Games are also available streaming on CBS’s Web site, but I’d never endorse neglecting the academics and watching games during class.

The views expressed in the Inside Column are those of the author and not necessarily those of The Observer. Contact Sam Werner at swerner@nd.edu

CORRECTIONS

The Observer regrets itself as a professional publication and strives for the highest standards of journalism at all times. We do, however, recognize that we will make mistakes. If we have made a mistake, please contact us at 631-4541 so we can correct our error.

QUESTION OF THE DAY: WHAT’S THE WORST THING ABOUT THE DAY AFTER ST. PATRICK’S DAY?

Carolyn Hersh
Junior
Welsh Fam

“Living near my roommate.”

Mayra del Rio
Junior
Welsh Fam

“Everything.”

Sue Daily
Junior
PB.

“$30 a.m. Spanish class.”

Chris Vanderhurst
Senior
Off campus

“Having to wait until p.m. to drink acceptably.”

Mark Lyons
Junior
Off campus

“St. Patrick’s Day’s coming up!”

The Notre Dame softball team mobs Christine Lux at the plate after her three-run home run to put the Irish up 15-0 in their game against Toledo Wednesday.

OFFBEAT

Women allegedly punches, bites her son’s principal

PROVIDENCE, R.I. — A Rhode Island woman faces charges after allegedly punching and biting her 11-year-old son’s school principal after being told the boy was being suspended. The lecture will be given in 200 McKenna Hall and is open to the public. It is part of the Institute for Latino Studies’ lecture series titled “Caribbean Flights: From the First Colonial Cities in America to Metropolis U.S.A.”

A lecture entitled “The USA and the EU: Two Modern Forms of Empire?” will take place in the C-103 Hesburgh Library for International Studies today at 12:30 p.m. Lunch will be available after the lecture.

The Arabic Club will be hosting “Arabic Cultural Night” Friday at 7:30 p.m. in the Jordan Auditorium in Mendoza Business College. The event will feature performances of numerous traditions, including poetry, skits and Lebanese dance.

Rachel Storm will be performing a concert at 2 p.m. on Saturday in the DeBartolo Performing Arts Center. Purchase tickets online, visit or call the ticket office at 574-631-2800.

Halftime is performing with the U.S.C. a cappella group SoCal VoCals Saturday at 4 p.m. in the Hesburgh Library Auditorium. Tickets are $3.

To submit information to be included in this section of The Observer, e-mail detailed information about an event to obnews@nd.edu.

In Brief

Efrén Rivera Ramos, professor of law at the University of Puerto Rico, will deliver a lecture titled “Territorial, Citizenship, and Rights: The Challenges of Overcoming American Colonialism in Puerto Rico” today at 4 p.m. The lecture will be given in 200 McKenna Hall and is open to the public. It is part of the Institute for Latino Studies’ lecture series titled “Caribbean Flights: From the First Colonial Cities in America to Metropolis U.S.A.”

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MBA fellowships offered

By LIZ O’DONNELL
News Writer

The University will offer eight fellowships, ranging from $10,000 to $20,000, to students entering the Executive MBA (EMBA) program this year.

Barry Van Dyck, the director of degree programs in Executive education, said he will open doors for highly qualified applicants who may have trouble financing their education.

“We always have highly qualified applicants to the EMBA program where funding is a challenge,” Van Dyck said. “Our purpose with these fellowships is to provide services to students.”

The fellowships will be awarded based on a combination of merit and need and will function similar to undergraduates awards of the same type.

The awarding of these fellowships has been a few years in the making, Van Dyck said.

“The program is funded by contributions from alumni into the John Cardinal O’Hara Society and by the J.A. Bernal Fellowship awards,” he said. “We have had the idea for this program for a little while and now have enough saved to put it into place.”

Alumni of the program have donated money to the John Cardinal O’Hara society for this purpose.

In order for a candidate to be considered for one of the fellowships, one must submit a completed application to the EMBA program and then apply for the scholarship.

Winners will be notified anytime between their acceptance into the EMBA program and the first day of class.

When considering applicants for the program, we are looking for them to have a variety of assets,” Van Dyck said. “We want candidates who are experienced, performed well as undergraduates, and who are need based. Basically, similar criteria to what is looked at when applying for scholarships as an undergrad.”

After the fellowships are awarded, an allotted amount of the total award will be distributed at the start of each progress.

Recipients of the award must maintain a cumulative 3.25 grade point average to remain eligible for the fellowship.

The EMBA program has locations in Chicago, Cincinnati and South Bend.

Early application to the program is encouraged. The deadline for the Class of 2011 applications for the South Bend and Cincinnati locations is June 1 and Nov. 1 for the Chicago location.

The average student in the EMBA program is 36 years of age and works full time. Van Dyck also said many enrolled in the program have families.

“It takes a great deal of discipline to complete this program,” said Van Dyck. “Not only do these people have full time jobs and families to attend to, but they are also full time students as well.”

Van Dyck said he predicts the biggest pool of applicants will come from the South Bend and Chicago locations, the program’s two largest sites.

The EMBA program has been around for almost 30 years, graduating its first class at the South Bend site in 1984.

According to its Web site, Notre Dame Executive Education provides leaders in the executive and management ranks the opportunity to develop and strengthen their leadership abilities and business acumen skills through both degree and non-degree programs.

Contact Liz O’Donnell at lodonnell@nd.edu

 Speakers discuss role of religion in development

By LIZ LEBEBRE
News Writer

Decisions made toward global development must be informed by a religious understanding of human nature, Scott Appleby, the director of the Joan B. Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, said in a Wednesday morning lecture on the Impact of Religion on Development.

“Development is a far broader and richer category than mere economic and material progress,” said Appleby. “A cultural and spiritual dimension must be a basis for informing decisions about development.”

The Ford Family Program in Human Development Studies and Solidarity presented the second part of its lecture series on “Religion and Development” Wednesday evening.

The discussion also featured theology professor Fr. Paul Kollman, who explored the ways in which religion influences that challenge of global development.

Appleby began his portion of the lecture by explaining the term “theological anthropology,” which is the view that religious should have an anthropological view of what constitutes human nature.

Appleby said for development to succeed, there needs to be a correct understanding of human nature.

“Both comprehends the whole human person,” Appleby said. “Religion sees a fundamental orientation to each person as a child of God.”

Appleby made this point in reference to Roman Catholicism, which holds that the view of the human in relation to God, rather than seeing each person as an end in development, is of primary importance.

In addition, Appleby discussed the ethical orientation of religion to development. He responded to an audience member who asked the question, “How ought we think about development ethically?”

Kollman echoed Appleby’s comments and drew on his own experiences of development while living in Eastern Africa.

“Religion and development is more complex than it initially seems,” Kollman stated. “There is no unitary way they interact.

Kollman emphasized how religion is internally contested both from the perspective of religions question different aspects of development.

Religions can reinforce development priorities in theory and practice, and religion can also compete with and challenge those priorities,” Kollman said.

The next part of the “Discussing Religion and Development” series will take place April 1. The event will center on the topic of “Science, Technology, and Development” and will feature Ann McDonnell, professor of biology, and Steve Silliman, professor of engineering.

Contact Liz Lebebrel at clebebrel@nd.edu

LDS starts interviews

By LAURA MCCRYSTAL
News Writer

Loyal Daughters and Sons, the annual organization promoting gender relations at Notre Dame, does not show again until November, but the writers for the 2009 show have already begun conducting interviews and collecting stories for the production.

Saoirse Murphy and Kevin Stein, who are both juniors and former cast members of the show, are the writers for the 2009 production.

“Content-wise, we are looking for experiences and opinions in the sphere of the following topics: sexual assault, eating disorders, human sexuality, chastity and healthy relationships,” Murphy said.

Stein said the show is entirely based on real experiences of students and that the writers are currently looking for students who would like to share their thoughts or stories on relevant issues.

“We have conducted a few interviews already, but anticipate many more to come in,” he said. “We are definitely still looking for students to interview, so anyone should come in and talk to us, even if they don’t necessarily think their story or experience is worth hearing. Everyone has something worthwhile to offer.”

After the writers listen to stories from students this semester, they will spend the summer transforming the collected interviews into scenes that preserve the truth behind the experiences, Murphy said.

“All of the stories we tell are based on testimony from members of the community here,” he said. “While we may change some minor facts and names, we do not change anything about the experience.

Approximately half of the 2009 show will be based on the interviews, while the other half will be come from previous productions of the show, Stein said.

The Department of Film, Television, and Theatre will help the writers refine the scenes into a final script, which will be finished by the end of the summer. Auditions and casting for the show will take place in September for the November show.

Stein said he became involved with Loyal Daughters and Sons because of an opportunity to make a difference.

“We are giving voice to the students’ thoughts and experiences,” he said. “It is important to help make these stories work to make open space and in order to be passed on sexually.

In addition to generating conversations, Murphy also said the show is a context for a stronger, healthier community.

“I really hope that people take advantage of this opportunity,” Murphy said. “Because it’s just not some other event at Notre Dame. It requires the participation of the community to survive and be suc-
Tuition

continued from page 1

quality of education at Saint Mary's, "Meyer said. In a letter to students' families, Saint Mary's President Carol Ann Mooney informed parents that she "recognizes the many family curricula and cultures will increase in the future," she said. "There is a need to improve the art of thinking independently together, and the need to work for social justice to become fully human."

A more complete understanding of diversity is important because "the more perspectives that are brought to bear, the better the preparation for your future," according to College President Carol Ann Mooney.

Dr. Jennifer Fluri, faculty member at Dartmouth's women's studies department, introduced the topic of "everyday leaders." Fluri discussed how important it is to critique world leaders. She said that if one has access to the conventional wisdom about what groups of people are accepted according to political structures and cultural norms.

"It is important to reevaluate what a leader is not," Fluri said. "Leadership is not about destructive and abusive power.

In such a circumstance, she said it is necessary for individuals to understand the concept of reciprocity "uncommon acts" to overcome society's power structures.

"If you redefine the prefix "un" it is typically considered negative."

"We reconsider the un," she said. "It presents an alternative to the status quo, moments that require and inspire new thinking."

In daily life, both leaders and followers are ready for a change and strive for equality through collective action. Fluri said. She explained that effective leaders are able to articulate the needs of their people, rather than trying to impose goals that are out of touch with social problems.

"It is important to remain open to conventional wisdom and to reach across the margins of understanding," Fluri said.

Fluri urged people to rethink the Golden Rule. Rather than "do unto others as you would have them do unto you," Fluri said it is better to "do or do not unto others as they would have you or do not unto them."

Contact Emily Daish at edaish@ saintmarys.edu

Raid

continued from page 1

"Everybody was delighted to see us," Hinder said. "The professors were smiling, the Huddle workers were cheering us on." But Hitler conceded that NSDP reacted negatively to the parade. "We were spreading merriment on NT, but the main difference is that is only accessible to students from students. Rodts said the number is down from the last survey student government conducted, so the survey will remain open until Friday to receive more input."

Contact Madeline Buckley at mbuckley@nd.edu

Student Senate

Senate discusses iTunes U

By MADELINE BUCKLEY

New Editor

Manager for academic technologists Paul Turner presented at Wednesday's Student Senate meeting about iTunes U — an offshoot of Apple's iTunes that publishes materials from top universities — to distribute campus lectures, sporting events and more for free online.

Turner said many prominent universities such as Vanderbilt, Duke and Stanford publish content on iTunes U.

Student government has been working with the administration to create a Notre Dame iTunes U site. Although there is no official launch date for the site, Turner said the University has a contract with Apple and material lined up to be published. There is already a Web site, itunes.nd.edu, but the links will not be activated until everything is finalized with the Office of the Provost and the Office of Public Affairs.

"iTunes U works like the iTunes store, but the main difference is that we have complete control over brand, content and descriptions," Turner said. "It's our content, our brand."

Turner said the University chose to have a branch of iTunes U available to the public and a branch that is only accessible to students and faculty. The bulk of the material will be in the private sector of the site, he said.

"In my mind, the private site is the students' site," he said. "It will be a faculty site, but I want students to have a major impact on what the site looks like and what goes out there." The site will feature two buttons, one accessible to the public and one that will require a Notre Dame ID for access, he said.

"We're going to be up to facilitate to post lecture materials if they choose," Turner said. "Our job is to make it easy for those faculty members to record that content," he said.

Turner said the material in iTunes U will be organized by College, subject matter, semester and topic to make it easier for people to navigate. He said students will have the option of subscribing to topics that interest them.

"You can subscribe to individual Colleges, like Business or Arts and Letters, or even individual sections within the College," he said. Student Senator Lauren Carnagin asked Turner how students would go about posting content on iTunes U.

Turner said this is a process his team is still examining. "There's got to be some level of review. The question is, what's that level and who does it," he said. "We really don't want to be in the content-policing business, but we are worried about copyright infringement."

The University's contract with Apple states that all material published on iTunes U must adhere to copyright laws, Turner said.

In other Student Senate news:

- Student body vice president Grant Schmidt announced both of the last Lectures, delivered by Professors James McKenna and Carl Ackerman, are available online at the student government Web site.
- Student Outreach Committee chair Sarah Rodts said the student survey, set to close Wednesday, garnered about 3,500 responses from students. Rodts said the number is down from the last survey student government conducted, so the survey will remain open until Friday to receive more input.

Contact Madeline Buckley at mbuckley@ud.edu

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Fame & Fortune

RILEY PRIZE

in ART HISTORY & CRITICISM

Current Notre Dame undergraduate and graduate students are invited to submit essays on any topic in the history of art or art criticism for consideration in the competition. CASH PRIZES

Rules governing the competition are available in the Art Department Office, 306 Riley Hall.

Due in the Art Department Office by 5:00 pm, Monday, March 23.
INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Incestuous father pleads guilty

STEVENSON, Austria - Josef Fritzl abruptly pleaded guilty to all of the charges against him Wednesday - a surprising twist amid disclosures that the daughter he imprisoned for 24 years in a dungeon where she bore him seven children secretly sat in on his trial.

Adding intrigue to a case that has drawn worldwide attention, Fritzl calmly acknowledged his guilt, including to homicide, and said his change of heart came after hearing his daughter's heart-wrenching videotaped testimony.

"I declare myself guilty to the charges in the indictment," Fritzl, 73, told a panel of judges, referring to what he called "my sick world.

Filipino woman alters testimony

MANILA, Philippines - A Filipino woman whose accusations of rape led to the high-profile conviction of a U.S. Marine has altered her testimony, saying in an affidavit that she may have led him to believe she was not virgin.

The case strained U.S.-Philippine military relations and became a rallying point for anti-American protesters who have called for the scrapping of a pact that allows U.S. troops to train Filipino soldiers.

Smith's accuser submitted a five-page affidavit to an appeals court Tuesday saying she now doubts her own version of events.

NATIONAL NEWS

Dreyfuss calls attention to battlefields

WASHINGTON - Oscar-winner Richard Dreyfuss visited the nation's capital on Wednesday to call attention to the most endangered Civil War battlefields.

The actor joined the Civil War Preservation Trust as the group, although its annual report on 10 battlefields that it says are deteriorating due to neglect, land development and other threats.

At a news conference, Dreyfuss said his interests in preserving Civil War battlefields grew out of his love for history and the significance of the war.

Suspect of N.C. family slaying dead

GREENSBORO, N.C. - A Wake County sheriff's deputy wanted in the slaying of four North Carolina family members shot himself to death after a six-hour manhunt.

Authorities said the surviving husband and father of the slain family may face charges of trafficking drugs, although he is not implicated in the deaths of his wife and three children.

Authorities named the suspect as Chiew Chan Saeang, 37. They said he killed himself and his girlfriend, Yer Yang, 40, after sheriff's deputies spotted their BMW 325 and gave chase late Tuesday on an interstate highway in Utah. The car crashed and caught fire and investigators found them dead.

LOCAL NEWS

Sen. Lugar on all-time voting list

INDIANAPOLIS - Sen. Dick Lugar has cast his 12,000th vote, moving him to 13th in Senate voting history.

Lugar, the longest serving U.S. Senator in Indiana history, cast the vote Wednesday during debate on a bill governs public transportation.

The six-term senator voted against a motion to table an amendment that would have directed purchases from willing sellers instead of eminent domain. The motion was defeated 65-33.

Shuttle crew commences construction

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. - The astronauts aboard the linked space shuttle and space station began their high-priority task Thursday, a two-day job that will culminate with the installation of the solar wings at the orbiting outpost.

They cranked up the robot arm on the station's external cargo bay and used it to latch onto the 45-foot-long, 31,080-pound framework structure that flew up aboard shuttle Discovery. The framework, which holds the folded-up wings, was then hoisted out of the shuttle payload bay.

Discovery's robot arm assisted with the work.

The $300 million girder - which has a radiator along with the solar wings - is the last major American-made piece of the space station. And the pair of wings are the station's last.

The new wings will bring the 10-year-old space station to full power, which is critical for boosting science research and allowing the crew to double to six.

In between chores, station skipper Mike Fincke, shuttle commander Lee Archambault and the two former science teachers on board, Joseph Acaba and Richard Arnold II, shared their space experiences with Channel One, a newscast for teenagers.

Arnold and Acaba, who are making the first double educator-astronaut flight, fielded the food and toilet questions. Arnold held up a bag of candy - 'never go anywhere without a little bit of chocolate' - pulled a piece out and let it float. Acaba grabbed and ate it.

As for using the bathroom in orbit, Acaba said it's like camping but takes more effort, and stressed the importance of a good seal on the commode. "The last thing we want to do is have our commander seeing something floating around the cabin," Acaba said.

IRAQ

War ends in sight, Iraq's future shaky

Violence down, but still prevalent; power struggles abundant among sects

Associated Press

BAGHDAD - Six years after the U.S. invaded Iraq, the end of the American's costly mission appears likely in the future of this tortured country is much less clear.

With violence down sharply, most Iraqis feel more secure than at nearly any time since the war began March 20, 2003 - March 19 in the United States.

But violence still continues at levels that most other countries would find alarming. Last week, suicide bombers killed a total of 60 people in two separate attacks in the Baghdad area, and an American soldier was fatally injured Monday on a combat mission in the south.

Fighting still rages in Mosul and other areas of the north, and between Shiites and Sunnis.

In March, the U.S. and its allies launched the invasion with the goal of toppling Saddam Hussein.

In this March 10, 2009 photo, eight-year-old Hiba Mohammed is being treated in a Baghdad hospital after an attack in Abu Ghraib, Baghdad.

In this March 10, 2009 photo, eight-year-old Hiba Mohammed is being treated in a Baghdad hospital after an attack in Abu Ghraib, Baghdad.

Missing Saddam in the opening moments of the conflict set the tone for what became a war of missions and disappointments before the tide turned in 2007.

The war was launched to deny Saddam weapons of mass destruction and when events proved he had none, the goal shifted - to establish a Western-style democracy in the heart of the Middle East. That goal was only partially achieved.

Now, the U.S. hopes that it can leave without the country disintegrating into chaos. The Americans hope Iraq will be strong enough to fend off interference by neighboring countries - notably Iran - and protect itself from a resurgent al-Qaeda.

Prospects for a reasonably stable Iraq are certainly brighter than they were before the U.S. troop surge of 2007, when car bombs shook Baghdad daily and gangs of Sunni and Shiite gunmen ruled the streets.

Violence is down 90 per cent since early 2007. In February, the U.S. military recorded 367 attacks nationwide, compared with 1,286 for the same month last year, according to Lt. Col. Brian Tribus, a U.S. spokesman.

Shuttle crew commences construction

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. - The astronauts aboard the linked space shuttle and space station began their high-priority task Thursday, a two-day job that will culminate with the installation of the solar wings at the orbiting outpost.

They cranked up the robot arm on the station's external cargo bay and used it to latch onto the 45-foot-long, 31,080-pound framework structure that flew up aboard shuttle Discovery. The framework, which holds the folded-up wings, was then hoisted out of the shuttle payload bay.

Discovery's robot arm assisted with the work.

The $300 million girder - which has a radiator along with the solar wings - is the last major American-made piece of the space station. And the pair of wings are the station's last.

The new wings will bring the 10-year-old space station to full power, which is critical for boosting science research and allowing the crew to double to six.

In between chores, station skipper Mike Fincke, shuttle commander Lee Archambault and the two former science teachers on board, Joseph Acaba and Richard Arnold II, shared their space experiences with Channel One, a newscast for teenagers.

Arnold and Acaba, who are making the first double educator-astronaut flight, fielded the food and toilet questions. Arnold held up a bag of candy - 'never go anywhere without a little bit of chocolate' - pulled a piece out and let it float. Acaba grabbed and ate it.

As for using the bathroom in orbit, Acaba said it's like camping but takes more effort, and stressed the importance of a good seal on the commode. "The last thing we want to do is have our commander seeing something floating around the cabin," Acaba said.

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Shuttle crew commences construction
Cycling continued from page 1

in Michigan, Ohio and Indiana to race.

Steve's, who will race in the Men's B, is set to complete a 50-
mile road race Saturday and a 40-
mile mountain bike ride Sunday. He has eight individual victories under his
spandex belt, and traveled to Nationals his sophomore year. He is one of the dozen or so seri-
ously dedicated to the sport. He
has ample time to train during
evening hours. "I ride pretty much
everyday," he said. "This weekend is
finally happening." Romero said.

In addition to supporters who
mail their own cards, Right to Life, as well as some individual dorms, will fund the cost of postage, according to Romero and Brett
Perkins, director of Catholic Peer
Ministry for Campus Ministry.

"Our mission is one of solidarity
with the voiceless and unprivileged,
both women and unborn children," Perkins said. The post-
cards convey a message to officials
that FOCA "is a poor piece of legis-
lation, is deeply an offensive to life
and does not promote the well
being of women, let alone their
unborn children."

Angela Rozi, Campus Ministry
commissioner for Cushman Hall,
said that her dorm was provided
cards and was excited to participate in the event.

"It's kind of like the Tour de France,
but 10 days shorter," she said. "That's the best race going on in the country — hopefully, Notre Dame will be there." Romero said that Right to Life supporters are aware of the legislation, but was unsure how other students knew about FOCA.

"My general impression is that people have heard of it. The extent to which people are aware of the details — people aren't as aware of that," she said.

Daly said some people argue the
case is an effort to pass through con-
gress, due to the many controversial provisions it includes, but Daly said there is value in voicing opposition to the bill, "testing [legislators] know that people are against it, despite the seeming impracticality of its passage."

Romero said the response from Wednesday's postcard drive was mostly positive.

"A surprising amount of students already know what FOCA was well
informed of it," Romero said.

Perkins agreed that he believes
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President Barack Obama said Wednesday no one in his administration created the bubble that led to the multibillion-dollar loss at giant AIG, including the much-maligned executive bonuses, but that "the buck stops with me" to fix the problems.

Standing on the White House lawn Wednesday, Obama told reporters that AIG's "problems are purely a result of our government permitting the bad behavior of a few for years and years," and that the solution was clear: "We have got to be in danger over the handling of the books, through the misrepresentation of assets.

He said he and his economic team have begun discussions with leading congressional players to fast-track legislation creating another regulatory entity to govern the dissolution of large financial institutions such as AIG, which if merely liquidated could reverberate disastrously through the financial system.

"I don't want to quell anger. I think people are rights, and I am angry," the president said. "What I want us to do is not to give up in a constructive way." Obama urged Congress to pass legislation to govern large financial entities such as AIG, which are split among federal agencies.

The president told reporters that Geithner's job would be reassigned, and that the government was intent on bringing Madoff to justice as they try to figure out what his company owed tens of billions of dollars in the recent salmonella outbreak, is urging lawmakers to overhaul the nation's food safety system. Kellogg Co. chief executive David Mackay wants food safety placed under a new leader in the Health and Human Services Department. He also called for new requirements that all food companies have written food safety plans, annual federal inspections of facilities that make high-risk foods, and other reforms.

Mackay's strong endorsement of major changes could boost President Barack Obama's efforts to overhaul the system. Last week Obama launched a special review of food safety programs, which are split among seven departments and agencies, and rely in some cases on decades-old laws. Critics say more funding is needed for inspections and basic research.

The Federal Reserve announced Wednesday that it will buy $750 billion, bringing its total purchases to $1.25 trillion. In addition, the Fed said a $1 trillion package is putting a floor under mortgage rates, driving down their price, fell to 2.50 percent from 3.01 percent last Tuesday. Any broadening of the program would likely push the global economy into recession.

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TIANANMEN — Even 20 years later, the images linger in the mind of former soldier Zhang Shijun. Today, he has become one of the few to publicly voice regrets, in bearing witness about his role in the military crackdown on the square in Beijing’s southwestern edge in June 1989. There, they camped on what became their home for weeks since he posted an open letter and began his quest to find out the details of the crackdown.

"I feel like my spirit is stuck there on the night of June 3," Zhang, 40, said in an interview at his home in the dusty northern city of Tengzhou, referring to the date in 1989 when the final assault began.

Zhang’s turbulent memories have gained a global audience among China’s dissident community in the weeks since he posted an open letter online to the Communist Party leader, President Hu Jintao. In it, he relates some of what he saw when he posted on the night of June 3-4, along with an account of the prosecution he underwent after asking for an early discharge, and his belief that China must eventually clear its collective conscience of the tragic events.

"The responsibility can’t just lie on the military," Zhang said. "It’s really the responsibility of all China’s leaders.

Zhang was just 18 when he joined the 54th army — a claim impossible to independently confirm. He was part of the 54th army’s 162nd Motorized Infantry Division based in the central city of Shijiazhuang, then stationed in Long View, in northwest China, before his unit was dispatched to the southern Chinese city of Guangzhou to fight against students in the spring of 1989.

He said he knew of no civilians killed in the final assault. "I feel like my spirit is stuck there on the night of June 3," Zhang, 40, said in an interview at his home in the dusty northern city of Tengzhou, referring to the date in 1989 when the final assault began.

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WASHINGTON — Under intense pressure from the Obama administration and Congress, the head of bailed-out insurance giant AIG declared Wednesday that some executives at the firm's subsidiaries are "on notice," and he disclosed the administration's plans to give Congress the power to create a new agency to govern the institutions such as AIG.

Obama sought anew to quell a storm of controversy, noting that it was "already stepped forward and returned 100 percent," he added.

Majority Leader Steny Hoyer, D-Md., said the House bill would be voted on under rules requiring a two-thirds majority.

Lawmakers were in no mood to wait. He was already seeking legislation to tax on bonuses that have been paid out in the past five days.

"I think that's the bill the president signed, which protected the AIG bonuses and others, was written behind closed doors by Democratic leaders of the House and Senate. There was no transparency," said Sen. Charles Grassley, R-Iowa, the senior Republican on the Senate Finance Committee.

On Wednesday, Sen. Christopher Dodd, D-Conn., the chairman of the Senate Banking Committee, acknowledged that his staff agreed to dilute an executive compensation provision that would have applied retroactively to recipients of federal bailout funds. Mortgage giants Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac are covered by the provision.

Liddy said that on Tuesday, he had "asked those who have received excess of $100,000 or more to return at least half of those payments." Some have already stepped forward and returned 100 percent," he added.

But he did not respond directly when asked whether he would, and finally said "it would be our intent" to do so.

Cuomo swiftly issued a statement saying Liddy's pledge was "simply too little, too late. Rather than take half-measures, AIG should immediately turn over the list, which we have subpoenaed, of who got what and when."

Separately, a New York state judge ordered Bank of America Corp. to disclose information about bonuses given to employees at Merrill Lynch & Co. before the bank bought the brokerage company. Cuomo, who has been seeking the bank over release of the information, said the decision "will now lift the cloud of secrecy surrounding the $3.6 billion in government financial aid."
The Observer • NEWS
Thursday, March 19, 2009

Fed to pump funds into housing market

Associated Press

NEW YORK — The Federal Reserve kept Wall Street's big rally for another day, but it did not make the Treasury market a huge boost as well.

Both markets surged Wednesday after the Fed said it would pump more than $1 trillion into the economy to help revitalize the moribund housing market, which includes buying up to $300 billion of long-term government bonds during the next six months.

Investors expect the move to drive down borrowing costs for everything from mortgages to credit cards. The Dow Jones industrial average reversed early losses to end up 91 points and the yield on the benchmark 10-year Treasury note plunged, indicating strong demand for the note.

But the dollar also fell sharply as investors worried the government's actions would eventually fan inflation.

The Fed's move, analysts said, is likely to produce an immediate drop in mortgage rates, of 0.25 to 0.5 percentage point. The central bank also made clear it would be able to purchase the majority of new mortgage-backed securities for at least the rest of the year, possibly longer.

That's good news for those borrowers with good incomes and healthy credit scores who are able to qualify for a loan. But dramatically tighter lending standards have already led to 150,000 foreclosures for many borrowers to qualify.

Still, it was a plus for the housing industry, which many analysts believe must recover in order for the overall economy to prosper again. Homebuilder and financial company stocks shot higher on the news, which came a day after the Commerce Department reported better-than-expected housing starts numbers for February.

The stronger magnitude of the Fed's proposal "indicates they have a lot of weepiness still in the arson," said Bruce McCain, chief investment strategist at Key Private Bank in Cleveland.

The Fed said it would build on a plan to buy mortgage-backed securities announced last Wednesday. The Fed said it would buy up to $300 billion of mortgage-backed securities for at least the rest of the year, and possibly longer.

The Fed's announcement accompanied its decision to keep interest rates at historically low levels. Chairman Ben Bernanke has said in recent weeks that the recession could end this year if the credit and financial markets can be stabilized. Bernanke and other officials have said they would deploy whatever tools necessary to revive the economy.

"They are certainly, assertively doing everything they can call the 'big bazooka,' " said David Darst, chief investment strategist of Morgan Stanley's Global Wealth Management Group.

The Dow Jones industrial average rose 91.95 points, to 7,486.58.

Still, borrowing indicators also jumped. The Standard & Poor's 500 index added 16.23 points, or 2.1 percent, to 794.35, and the S&P 500 of smaller companies jumped 14.04, or 1.28 percent, to 1,137.82.

More than four stocks rose for every one that fell on the New York Stock Exchange, where 1.9 billion changes, or 1.9 billion shares traded Tuesday.


Stocks have risen for six out of the last seven days. Since the market rally began last week, the Dow has jumped 14.4 percent, the S&P 500 has risen 14.4 percent. Those are the types of gains that would normally make for a market top in the short run.

Government bond prices surged. The yield on the benchmark 10-year Treasury note, which moves opposite its price, tumbled to 2.50 percent from 3.01 percent late Tuesday. The yield on the three-month T-bill, considered one of the safest investments, slipped to 0.20 percent from 0.22 percent late Tuesday.

The dollar fell against other major currencies. Gold prices also slid as demand for safe haven holdings fell.

For both the stock and bond markets, the Fed's announcement was a welcome surprise, many analysts said.

"It was the Fed making the right call," said a bank analyst.

For the stock market, central banks have offered various measures to stoke demand for risk assets. The Fed's decision indicates they would do whatever was necessary to revive the economy.

"It is another way to push interest rates lower by essentially adding a huge amount of assets to the system," said a bank analyst.

The market had traded lower as worries grew about the stability of the financial system. The Fed is using this tool in with very strong actions to get the administration haven't materialized, and here is the Fed moving into housing market

The South Korean Foreign Ministry confirmed Wednesday's attack and said the convoy was also carrying relatives of the victims of Sunday's attack. They were in the country to recover the bodies of those killed in that attack and were headed to the airport for a flight to return to South Korea when the bomber struck.

Yemen, an impoverished country in the southwestern corner of the Arabian Peninsula, is Osama bin Laden's ancestral homeland and has long been a center of militant activity.

A Yemeni security official said South Korea's ambassador to the country was also in the convoy hit Wednesday, but in Sana, the Foreign Ministry said the ambassador was safe.

The bomber walked into the road between two of the vehicles and blew himself up as the convoy was traveling to the airport outside the capital, Sana, the Yemeni official said. He spoke on condition of anonymity because he is not authorized to speak to the press.

The blast shattered the windows of the vehicles.

Yemeni authorities said al-Qaeda was behind Sunday's suicide bombing near the ancient fortress city of Shibam and that 12 suspects were arrested.

Associated Press

YEMEN

Bomber strikes South Korean officials

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Associated Press

NEW YORK — Natasha Richardson, a gifted and precocious heiress to acting royalty whose career highlights included the film "Paity Hearst" and a Tony-winning performance in a stage revival of "Cabaret," died Wednesday at age 45 after suffering a head injury during a beginners' ski lesson.

Alan Niven, the Los Angeles-based publicist for Richardson's husband Liam Neeson, confirmed her death in a written statement:

"Liam Neeson, his sons (Micheal, 13, and 12-year-old Daniel), and the entire family are shocked and devastated by the tragic death of their beloved Natasha," the statement said. "They are profoundly grateful for the support, love and prayers of everyone, and ask for privacy during this very difficult time."

The statement did not give details on the cause of death for Richardson, who suffered a head injury and fell on a beginner's trail during a private ski lesson at the luxury Mont Tremblant ski resort in Quebec. Seemingly fine after the fall, about an hour later she collapsed into a car with darkened windows coming and going.

Vanessa Redgrave, Richardson's mother, arrived in a car with darkened windows and was taken through a garage when she arrived at the Lenox Hill Hospital on Manhattan's Upper East Side about 5 p.m. Wednesday. An hour earlier, Richardson's sister, Joely, arrived alone and was swarmed by the media as she entered through the back of the hospital.

It was a sudden and horrifying loss for her family and friends, for the film and theater communities, for her many fans and for both her native and adoptive countries. Descended from at least three generations of actors, Richardson was a proper Londoner who came to love the noise of New York, an elegant blonde with large, lively eyes, a bright smile and a hearty laugh.

If she never quite attained the acting heights of her Academy Award-winning mother, she still had enjoyed a long and worthy career. As an actress, Richardson was equally adept at passion and restraint, able to portray besieged women both confessional (Tennessee Williams' "Blanche DuBois") and confined (the concubine in the Futurist horror of "The Handmaid's Tale")

Like other family members, she divided her time between stage and screen. On Broadway, she won a Tony for her performance as Sally Bowles in a 1996 revival of "Cabaret." She also appeared in New York and production of Patrick Marber's "Closer" (1999) as well as 2003 revival of Tennessee Williams' "A Streetcar Named Desire," in which she played Blanche opposite John C. Reilly's Stanley Kowalski.

She met Neeson when they made their Broadway debuts in 1993, co-starring in "Anna Christie." Eugene O'Neill's drama about a former prostitute and the sailor who falls in love with her.

"The astonishing Natasha Richardson... might prove to be the performance of the season as Anna, turning a heroine who has long been portrayed (and reviled) as a whore with a heart of gold into a tough, ruthlessly unsentimental sponge of O'Neill's tragic understanding of life," The New York Times critic Frank Rich wrote. "Miss Richardson, seeming more like a youthful incarnation of her mother, Vanessa Redgrave, than she has before, is riveting from her first entrance through a saloon doorway's ethereal shaft of golden light."

"Her most notable film roles came earlier in her career. Richardson played the title character in Paul Schrader's "Paity Hearst," a 1988 biopic about the kidnapped heiress for which the actress became so immersed that even between scenes she was in a blindfold, the better to identify with her real-life counterpart. "Natasha Richardson... has been handed a big unwritten role in producing the movie, and she fills it," wrote The New Yorker's Pauline Kael. "We feel the experience, and what we feel is - she retreats into being a hidden observer."

"If she never quite attained the acting heights of her Academy Award-winning mother, she still had enjoyed a long and worthy career. As an actress, Richardson was equally adept at passion and restraint, able to portray besieged women both confessional (Tennessee Williams' "Blanche DuBois") and confined (the concubine in the Futurist horror of "The Handmaid's Tale")."
Actor saves man falling off subway platform

Associated Press
NEW YORK — An actor on a busy subway platform jumped onto subway tracks to rescue a man who tumbled off a platform as a train approached.

"I just thought the guy fell down there and I needed to get him out of there," said Chad Lindsey, 33.

The rescue happened Monday at busy Pennsylvania Station, where Lindsey was waiting for a train as he headed to a theater downtown. He said he saw a man who appeared drunk come very close to the platform, rock back and forth, then pitch headlong onto the tracks.

The man struck his head on the rail and began bleeding profusely, Lindsey said. He said he jumped down to the tracks and tried to revive the man. When he didn't respond, Lindsey lifted him under the arms and hoisted him onto the platform, with the help of others standing on the platform.

The rescue, first reported in The New York Times, lasted about 30 seconds, bringing Lindsey some instant — and overwhelming — publicity.

"I'm an actor. I've spent most of my life trying to get attention and I do something that's no-brainer, and now I have more than I needed," he said Wednesday.

Lindsey stars in an off-Broadway musical, "Kaspar." He said the role prepared him well for the emergency because he's required in the play to repeatedly lift a character who can't walk. He said he could see the light of the train approaching and about 15 seconds later — after the man was saved on the platform — the cars arrived in the station. Someone had already called 911. After giving police a quick report, Lindsey boarded the train, where passengers greeted him with applause.

Lindsey said he didn't know if his newfound fame would boost his career.

"I really wasn't thinking about that at the time. I really wasn't thinking about it at all even afterward," said Lindsey, who also works as a proofreader. "I sort of just did it and thought afterward, 'Well, that's just a pain, now I'm all dirty and bloody.'"

The injured man was treated at a hospital and released. The rescue was reminiscent of another subway hero, Wesley Autrey, who in 2007 jumped on top of a man who had fallen onto the tracks after having a seizure. The train passed over the two of them.

Autrey, a construction worker, was awarded the city's highest civilian honor and invited to President George W. Bush's State of the Union address.

Harbor porpoise evades rescuers

Associated Press
LITTLE EGG HARBOR TOWNSHIP, N.J. — Bobbing up and down in a placid lagoon, the young harbor porpoise faced off against a dozen people, four boats, two nets and hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of equipment, all closing in on it Wednesday morning.

Everyone feared it needed to be rescued.

It glided below the surface, heading straight for a 20-foot-wide net stretched between two boats. Its capture seemed inevitable.

At the last minute, it dove deep, darting through a 2-foot gap between the muddy lagoon bottom and the edge of the net, heading back out to deeper water.

"This is a healthy animal that doesn't need to be picked up," said Bob Schoelkopf, co-director of the Marine Mammal Stranding Center. His group had joined with the Marine Mammal & Sea Turtle Rescue Program from Riverhead, N.Y., to try to capture the animal.

"Because of how easily it evaded us, we've determined it is not in any trouble at this time," Schoelkopf said.

The story started about a week and a half ago when the porpoise was first spotted in lagoons in Little Egg Harbor Township and Tuckerton, about 20 miles north of Atlantic City.

There was reason for concern: It was a young animal, and had become separated from its pod, Schoelkopf said.

It's unusual, though not unheard of, for porpoises to inhabit lagoons, Schoelkopf said. It has happened in coastal communities outside Atlantic City, as well as on Long Island, N.Y.

The plan was to sidle up to the porpoise, either in a large aluminum rescue boat or in one of three inflatable speedboat rafts, and toss a large net over the animal.

They would bring it to shore in a padded sling, weight it on a 15-foot-tall scale suspended on a steel tripod, and take blood tests to see if the animal was sick or injured.

But the porpoise had other ideas. "He seems very playful," said Ron Baker, who has watched the porpoise in the lagoon behind his house for about 10 days. "I think he found the area to his liking, and he probably wants to spend some time here."

That's exactly what Schoelkopf plans to let it do. The 3-foot-long porpoise weighs about 40 or 50 pounds, and looks to be in good health.

Schoelkopf said porpoises follow schools of herring and mackerel up the East Coast at this time of year, and noted the lagoons provide abundant food. When the porpoise runs of food or tires of the area, it will probably leave on its own.

Phishing scams look real, but don't be fooled. They're an attempt to steal your identity.

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MEXICO

Mexican tariffs take effect on U.S. products

Associated Press

MEXICO CITY — U.S. officials are assessing the cost of new Mexican tariffs that take effect Thursday in retaliation for a U.S. decision to cancel a cross-border program that gave Mexican truckers access to their northern neighbor’s highways.

The tariffs affect about $2.4 billion in annual trade and 89 U.S. products, ranging from fruit and wine to washing machines, according to the Mexican government. Assistant Economy Secretary Beatriz Leycegui warned the list could grow unless there is progress toward resolving the trucking dispute.

The U.S. was required under the North American Free Trade Agreement to grant Mexican trucks full access to its highways by January 2000, but domestic opposition led U.S. legislators to delay the opening until a pilot program allowing some trucks was instituted in 2007.

The U.S. ended that program last week — a move that Mexican Economy Secretary Gerardo Ruiz Mateos called “wrong, protectionist and a clear violation” of NAFTA. The 1994 agreement allows Mexico to introduce retaliatory tariffs equal to the amount of trade lost by the truck ban.

Many U.S. officials and exporters responded with concern.

“In good times, an economy naturally needs more open markets, not higher tariffs,” said Nayyera Haq, a USDA spokeswoman. “We have alerted all the industry associations that represent these producers, the state regional groups and agriculture trade advisory groups so that we can continue to work with them as we assess the effects the tariffs will have on the markets,” said Nayyera Haq, a USDA spokeswoman.

Mexican officials appear to have targeted products from states represented by lawmakers who are influential in Congress or have some kind of voice on trade issues.

For example, sunflower seeds, which appear on the tariff list, are produced in North Dakota — the home state of Sen. Byron Dorgan, who authored the language that ended spending on the Mexican trucks pilot program.

“In these challenging economic times, we need more open markets, not higher tariffs,” said Brian Black, a Texas Agriculture Department spokesman. “We are asking President Obama and his Mexican counterpart to resolve this issue as soon as possible.”

Mexican is Texas’ No. 1 trading partner — and the second biggest buyer of U.S. exports.

In one of the last and largest NAFTA-related disputes, the U.S. has long delayed granting Mexican trucks access to its roads. Mexico brought the case before a dispute-resolution panel, which ruled in its favor in 2001.

But the Teamsters union, U.S. consumer groups and independent insurers have warned that Mexican trucks are unsafe and lobbied Congress to keep them out. Many unions also voiced fears that U.S. drivers would lose work if lower-paid Mexican truckers could carry goods across the United States.

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Lent and getting over myself

My mom casually asked me, "How's your Lent going?" Like, in the same tone she would ask, "How are the Irish doing?" I wonder, does she ask my younger brother how his Lent is going, or is this a question reserved for her son the priest? How's my Lent going? How do you answer that?

Funny what I learned while I listened to myself answering my mother. The only way I could think to evaluate my Lent was whether I had faithfully refrained from eating chocolate. "Pretty good so far," I answered. I guess I could have determined if I had eaten meat on any Friday's, but being an Italian pasta-lover, this isn't a particularly difficult practice for me, and so hardly a helpful measure of the successfulness of my Lent. With that quick Lenten-scan, I was ready to move on, allow my mother some time to recite her litany of grandchildren stories. A few days later, however, I found myself bugged by our conversation, or more specifically, by my evaluation of Lent. Is that all there is to Lent? A contest to check my self-restraint? I'm all for an annual self-examination, but at the end of the day, if the only person I have thought of during Lent is myself, have I really entered into Lent?

With this question in mind, I was preparing the readings for Mass last week, and unsuspectingly had my world rocked by the first reading. It was from Isaiah, and he wasn't happy:

Is it only for ... lying on sackcloth and ashes? Is that the kind of fast I have chosen, says the Lord? It is only for ... lying on sackcloth and ashes? Is there the chains of injustice and unites the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter — when you see the naked, to clothe him, and not to turn away?

I re-read the passage in semi-panic, but could find no reference to chocolate. Maybe some biblical commentary or perhaps a new translation would reveal that this passage was, in its proper historical context, about giving up chocolate, but the chances seemed bleak. At some point, I was going to have to wrestle with the hard fact of Lenten fasting is not meant to end in mere self-reflection, self-evaluation, or self-anything-else. It is meant to end in othemic and in the Other. It is meant to end in love of neighbor and love of God. It is meant to end in hunger — for peace and justice. It is meant to end in Christ's constant teaching to "lose our life that we may find it."

Isaiah's poignant words are meant to awaken and arouse us, to challenge and unsettle in this Lent. They call us to refocus our hearts on what truly sets us free and brings us real joy — giving ourselves away in love to God and others, struggling for true and lasting justice, which alone brings true and lasting freedom and peace.

Our individual Lenten self-denials are excellent little ways to deny ourselves, to lose ourselves, to remind us to lose our lives in love of God and service of others, so that we might find Life. This is the promise of Jesus' teaching, and this is the example of Jesus' death and resurrection — the moment of losing ourselves is the moment of gaining Life.

How's my Lent going? I'm not sure anymore. But I know that if I am the only person who shows up in my answer, I haven't reached the heart of Lent yet.

This week's column is written by Fr. Lou DelFra, CSC, Director of Campus Ministry Bible Studies and ACE Chaplain. He can be reached at delfra.2@nd.edu.

The views expressed in this article are those of the author and not necessarily those of The Observer.
Trinity College runs on trimesters. Spring Break is three weeks, and we're in the middle of it.

Spring Break last year, for some of us, was 10 days overseas. In some ways, we're still in the middle of that one too.

Some of you have just gotten back from the same trip. If you're anything like me, music and bread are, for some time, going to sound and taste like they never have done before. You may be a little too, in forming any coherent responses.

This, after a while, was mine.

I only recently started to like shoes, so my collection, though it fills the floor of my closet, could still be called limited. Most of mine are brown or black: one pair is silver. But there are girls who've been building their accessory portfolios much longer, who have a double layer of shoes on their closet floors, maybe one pair of heels and one of flats to match every sweater.

The only way for a war against the drug cartels to be successfully waged is a part of everyday business to the brutal cartels. Significant financial cost and life will stop at nothing to protect their lucrative efforts. Unfortunately, that is but a drop in the bucket, and our government officials know it. Drug cartels are committing far more money than $400 million to secure their profitable trade, and they will stop at nothing to protect their business. Significant financial cost and innocent human lives are merely expendable commodities that are just part of everyday business to the brutal drug lords who command the cartels.

The only way for a war against the drug cartels to be successfully waged is with a legitimate commitment from the United States. Mexico can do its best to fight the cartels within their borders, but without a more significant commitment of American tactical and financial support, their efforts will prove futile. Ultimately, American sacrifices (those in border towns and states) will pay the price when the rampant, unbridled violence pours over our borders.

The situation has grown so severe that Texas and Arizona are already discussing the idea of putting the National Guard along the border to help keep the violence out. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Department of Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano have both announced plans for upcoming visits to Mexico to discuss the crisis with leaders there and to see the aftermath of the violence. It is imperative that Secretaries Clinton and Napolitano use their visits as a starting point for a meaningful, legitimate working relationship between our two countries, a relationship that is absolutely critical to the security of our nation.

Combating Mexican drug violence requires effort from both sides of the border.

The Observer
Most people on campus have heard of Taylor Swift. Swift’s two albums have gone multi-platinum. She was also the biggest-selling American artist of 2008. Time Magazine described her as “one of pop’s finest songwriters, country’s foremost pragmatist, and a role model more in touch with her inner life than most adults.” Her hit music video, “Love Story,” is an Internet sensation (and the inspiration for a certain romantic on-campus proposal). But most college students don’t realize that this talented 19-year-old is younger than most of us. And even though she is famous, Taylor Swift is very easy to relate to. Let me tell you why.

After researching Taylor for this column, I came to one conclusion: she is adorable. If you want proof, read her MySpace journal entries, or check out the cute home videos she has posted, which are also on MySpace. The journal entries are funny, well-written and interesting. They have titles like, “While I was in L.A., my mom re-arranged my bathroom” and “Putting off packing by listening to Shania Twain.” Unfortunately, this blog entry is no longer available. The videos, too, reveal her sarcastic sense of humor.

In short, Taylor Swift is an incredibly genuine and down-to-earth person — qualities that really come through in her albums.

For starters, Taylor Swift writes all of her own music. All of it. How many pop artists can say that? A few songs on her two albums are co-written, including a soulful collaboration with Colbie Caillat on her second album, “Fearless” that’s worth checking out. None of her songs are entirely written by someone else. What’s more, every one of Taylor Swift’s songs is based on her own life — really. She also doesn’t hesitate to use the actual names of friends and ex-boyfriends.

Taylor Swift has brought a lot of drama. For instance, Taylor wrote the hit song “Teardrops on My Guitar” about a boy named Drew who she crushed on in high school. As the song says, he had a girlfriend at the time and never dated Taylor. But in one interview, Taylor Swift revealed that he showed up on her driveway — single — after the release of her first album. Unfortunately, their reunion didn’t work out. Too much time had passed, and they had grown apart. It’s still a crazy story, isn’t it?

A cute story surrounds the fourth track on “Fearless,” called “Hey Stephen.” The song is about singer Stephen Barker Liles of the Nashville band Love and Theft. The band toured with Taylor last summer, and she developed a crush on Liles. But problems began when she planned to write a song about him. Liles was reportedly quite surprised when the album came out.

The lyrics include such lines as, “Hey Stephen, I could give you 50 reasons Why should you be the one you choose? All those other girls are beautiful! But would they write a song for you?”

No word yet on a developing romance between the two, but Liles did say in a past interview that, “I think everyone would agree she’s a total sweetheart and anyone would be lucky to go out with her.” Stay tuned.

And, of course, Taylor’s breakout single — 2006’s “Tim McGraw” — has its own story. She wrote this heart-trending tune in math class during her freshman year. Yes, of high school. This kind of story makes me wish that I had used my high school math classes more productive — to write hit songs, for instance.

Other proof of Taylor Swift’s adorableness? She encodes secret messages into her albums, which are fun to unravel. For instance, track three on “Fearless,” “Pigpen,” is a literal take on her freshman year. Its secret message? “I cried while recording this.”

How’s that for honesty?”

I could go on and on about how amazing this young star is, but I’ll wrap it up in Taylor’s own words. Here’s an excerpt from her recent interview with Philadelphia Magazine:

PM: When did you realize that you weren’t just successful — you were a humongous street-fightin’ deal?

Taylor: Um, I never came to that realization, actually. My biggest pet peeve is people who feel they’re entitled to success and fame. I haven’t reached the point where I’m like, “Hey, man, I’ve made it.” And I hope I never do get to that point.

We hope she doesn’t either. Taylor; stay just the way you are — adorable.

**Lillian Civantos**

Scene Writer

Contact Lillian Civantos at lcviantos@ad.edu

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**Fearless**

Taylor Swift

Label: Big Machine Records

Recommended Tracks: “Hey Stephen,” “You Belong With Me” and “Fearless”
Hathaway Shines In Rachel Getting Married

By ADRIANA PRATT
Senior Writer
Warning: For those of you who consider yourselves faint of heart, stay away from "Rachel Getting Married".

If you’re uncomfortable with the repercussions of a psychological journey that will not only take you through emotional highs and lows, but will also have you sympathizing with opposing characters while hating them for their emotional incomprenhension, skip clear.

On the other hand, for those of you who want to see a kick-butt performance by Oscar nominee Anne Hathaway, or are drawn to a movie that feels so true and real you’ll forget you’re watching a film — and aren’t actually a member of the complicated but lovable Buchman family — then waste no time in renting this newly released film.

Home from rehab for the weekend, recovering addict and semi-psychotic Kym (Hathaway) travels back to her roots to witness the wedding of her sister Rachel (Rosemarie DeWitt) and fiancé Sidney (Tunde Adebimpe). Kym dives back into the eccentric family — then waste no time in renting this newly released film.

Director Jonathan Demme explores the rocky period in many marriages when husbands or wives start to question their happiness in his Irish film, "Eden." What happens when 10 years into your marriage, you discover an intense unhappiness lurking beneath the surface, one that leads you to believe maybe you are not really in love with your spouse? As Reeds Farrel (Elison Walsh) clings to the thinning threads holding her marriage together, her questioning husband (Aidan Kelly) pulls further away, breaking the bonds they once had.

"Rachel’s inner jealousy for the amount of attention paid to her prodigal sister mirrors common themes of sibling rivalry and sisterly drama."
Pierce scores 36 in Celtics' overtime win at home

Wallace scores 25 points and 12 rebounds in win over Kings; Nets win over Knicks after a four-game losing streak

Associated Press

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**NCAA Basketball USA Today/ESPN Coach's Poll**

**team** | **points**
--- | ---
1 North Carolina | 756
2 Texas | 726
3 Georgia | 649
4 Arizona St. | 638
5 LSU | 626
6 Cal St. Fullerton | 610
7 Miami (Fla.) | 600
8 Texas A&M | 596
9 Georgia Tech | 596
10 Cincinnati | 589
11 Oklahoma St. | 586
12 N.C. State | 577
13 UC Irvine | 570
14 Virginia | 567
15 (III.) | 564
16 Tennessee | 560
17 Butler | 553
18 Wisconsin | 545
19 Penn St. | 535
20 California | 529
21 Ole Miss | 525
22 Mississippi St. | 520
23 Texas Tech | 516
24 Florida St. | 506
25 Florida | 499

**NCAA Women's Lacrosse Division I Top 20**

**team** | **points**
--- | ---
1 Northwestern | 400
2 Maryland | 365
3 Duke | 335
4 Virginia | 329
5 Penn | 325
6 Syracuse | 310
7 Princeton | 295
8 Georgetown | 289
9 North Carolina | 282
10 Notre Dame | 289
11 Boston | 286
12 New Hampshire | 278
13 Cornell | 274
14 Penn St. | 269
15 James Madison | 262
16 Boston U. | 255
17 Penn State | 250
18 Ohio St. | 219
19 Ohio | 204
20 Loyola (Md.) | 197

**NCAA Men's Volleyball Division I-H Top 15**

**team** | **points**
--- | ---
1 UC Irvine | 239
2 Cal St. Northridge | 219
3 Pepperdine | 210
4 Southern California | 187
5 Long Beach St. | 169
6 Stanford | 153
7 Penn St. | 144
8 BYU | 133
9 UC San Diego | 118
10 UCLA | 114
11 Canada | 82
12 UC Santa Barbara | 82
13 Hawaii | 43
14 Loyola (Ca.) | 42
15 Loyola (Ma.) | 16

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**Mackey wins 3rd consecutive Iditarod**

Lance Mackey sits with his lead dogs Larry, right, and Maple after crossing the finish line to win his third consecutive Iditarod Wednesday. Mackey is only the third musher in history to accomplish the feat.

**In Brief**

Blazers center Oden to return against Pacers

INDIANAPOLIS — Greg Oden will finally play in his hometown as a pro.

The 7-foot center is set to return to the Portland Trail Blazers' lineup Wednesday against the Indiana Pacers after sitting out for more than a month with a bone chip in his left knee, coach Nate McMillan said.

The top pick in the 2007 draft and former Lawrence North High School star sat out last season after microfracture surgery on his right knee, so he missed the Trail Blazers' visit to Indiana last season.

Oden was hurt in a collision during a game at Golden State before sittng out for more than a month with a bone chip in his left knee, coach Nate McMillan said.

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**Cubs retire number of Jenkins, Maddux**

MESA, Ariz. — The Chicago Cubs will retire the No. 31 worn by both Ferguson Jenkins and Greg Maddux.

They two star right-handed pitchers will be honored at a ceremony May 3 before a game against Florida at Wrigley Field.

It will be the fifth number retired by the Cubs, joining No. 14 (Ernie Banks), No. 26 (Billy Williams), No. 10 (Ron Santo) and No. 23 (Ryan Sandberg).

Jenkins, elected to the Hall of Fame in 1991, and Maddux, who won 355 games before retiring in December, are the first pitchers in Cubs history to have their numbers retired.

Jenkins retired before the 1984 season. When Maddux broke in with the Cubs two years later, he was given No. 31.

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**New jobs, rumors keeping Andreotti busy**

INDIANAPOLIS — Michael Andretti's jobs keep getting more complex.

He's already the co-owner of the only four-car team in the IndyCar Series. Promoting two races this season, he will be on Danica Patrick's radio when the Indy Racing League season opens and he will spend the next several months, perhaps longer, answering those incessant questions about the future of Patrick at Andretti Green Racing.

"I think we all know what we need to do with Danica, she knows what she needs to do, and we're hoping that she's going to be here for a long time," Andretti said Wednesday. "She hasn't expressed anything to us that would lead us to believe she doesn't want to be here."

That's unlikely to satisfy a racing community abuzz with speculation now that the Illinois native is entering the final year of her contract.

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**Associated Press**

Mackey wins 3rd consecutive Iditarod

NOME, Alaska — Make it three Iditarods in a row for Lance Mackey.

The musher from Fairbanks won the 1,100-mile trek across the Alaska wilderness Wednesday in the world's most famous sled dog race. And it wasn't even close.

Mackey slapped hands with fans along Nome's Front Street. About a block from the finish line, he raised both arms in victory and rode that way into the chalet at 11:38 a.m., hours ahead of his nearest competitors in the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race.

Immediately after winning, he gave treats to his dogs, calling them the "real heroes."]("This never gets old," he said at the finish line as he hugged two of his dogs.


"We are so proud of you, Lance, and we're considering this the greatest team in Iditarod history," Palin said.

She also told the 38-year-old Mackey, a throat cancer survivor, "You continue to give all of us hope, the adversity that you have overcome, the challenges you've met, believe me, it resonates across our nation and across our world."

Mackey commended his "little superstar Maple," a 3-year-old female who was in the lead for much of the last part of the race. He hauled her and 9-year-old Larry, one of his traditional lead dogs, onto the stage with him.

Mackey became the third musher in the race's 37-year history to win in three consecutive years, joining Susan Butcher (1986-88) and Doug Swingley (1999-01).

He finished six hours ahead of the second and third-place mushers, Sebastian Schnuelle of Canada and John Baker of Kotzebue.

He increased his lead along the wind-swept western coast of Alaska.
THURSDAY, MARCH 19TH

10 PM  Irish Idol Finals
Midnight St. Paddy’s Day Party ft. Chicken Jackson

FRIDAY, MARCH 20TH

10 PM  Bayside w/ special guest Dear Noel
Midnight Salsa Nightclub ft. DJ Del Rio

SATURDAY, MARCH 21ST

10 PM  Taalam Acey
Midnight Hip-Hop Nightclub ft. DJ SoCo
Mitchell looking to lead No. 8 Tigers far in the NCAA tournament

Associated Press

GREENSBORO, N.C. Tasmin Mitchell took a feed from Chris Thomas in which he helped lead No. 7 Georgia Tech into the NCAA tournament every year for two decades.

"The sky's the limit for us, especially if we made it to the Final Four, so that thinking is there," Mitchell said. "That's over with. We've got to try to get back where we were. The two years after that, you know, we kind of really, really dropped the ball. We really proved to teams that, OK, LSU is not the same as 2006.

But this senior class, much like the ones of the past couple seasons, either.

"We talked about being inexperienced, but between (Howard and Veasley), they played seven NCAA tournament games, so guys understand what this is all about," Butler coach Brad Stevens said.

The senior-dominated Tigers, meanwhile, start four fourth-year players — but only two of them, Mitchell and guard Garrett Temple, logged significant minutes on LSU's most recent NCAA tournament team.

Those 2006 Tigers advanced to the national semifinals before struggling enough during the 2007-08 season that followed that coach John Brady was fired midway through last season. It didn't help that Mitchell played just three games that year before taking medical redshirt and having surgery to repair a stress fracture in his left shin.

"Me and Garrett sit back and talk about it all the time — remember it was like this, remember that game," Mitchell said. "That's over with. We've got to try to get back where we were. The two years after that, you know, we kind of really, really dropped the ball. We really proved to teams that, OK, LSU is not the same as 2006.

But this senior class, much like the ones of the past couple seasons, either.

Under Southeastern Conference coach of the year Trent Johnson, LSU won the league's regular-season title by going 13-3. But they slipped into a late-season swoon that included losses in three of four games and probably was responsible for their drop to a No. 8 seed.

To regain their swagger, they'll need to find a way to handle a Butler team that built its reputation as one of the nation's most dangerous mid-majors by taking down several teams from RSC conferences.

Since 2000, the Bulldogs have knocked Maryland, Mississippi State, Louisville and Wake Forest out of the tournament. Last year, they took Tennessee to overtime in the first round.

"It's in the perception of what people think we should do, is the main thing," for­ward Matt Howard said. "We know we have the tools. We have the guys to do it. We might not necessarily be as talented as we were in the past, but we have the tools to do it."

An emotional Boone delivered the news flanked by general manager Ed Wade and manager Ceil Cooper and said it was purely a medical decision.

"It definitely hits home, but I'm doing well with it," Boone said. "I'm fairly educated on it now. I have a strong faith and a great family and friends and teammates. I really am doing well and I'm ready to tackle this thing. I'm going to let it be a process for me and get on with life."

Wade said a local doctor who did the team physicals and team physician Dr. Jim Cooper said. "And anything he needs we're going to be there to help him out."}

Boone expects to set a date for the procedure later this week.

"As a baseball family we're here to support Aaron, as you can see by all the teammates and front office personnel we have here," Cooper said. "And anything he needs we're going to be there to help him out."
Northern Iowa ready to go against Purdue

Panthers looking to score big against fifth-seeded Boilermakers in NCAA opening round

Associated Press

PORTLAND, Ore. — Ben Jacobson isn’t going to sell his Northern Iowa team on any delusions for a first-round upset of Purdue. That means no inspirational talk of Cinderellas, bracket-busters or Hoosiers.

“That isn’t a card, if you will, that I’ll play with our guys,” the coach said. “Our guys know what they’re about. They know what they’re made of. They don’t need me to tell them what they’re up against.”

The 12th-seeded Panthers (23-10) will go into Thursday’s game against the fifth-seeded Boilermakers (25-7) with nothing to lose.

Northern Iowa failed to make even the NIT the past two seasons, and was picked to finish sixth in the Missouri Valley Conference. The Panthers met that expectation by starting the season 6-8, before hitting a skid and finishing 13-20. Then the Panthers took off on an 11-game winning streak. The Panthers (23-10) will go into Thursday’s game against the fifth-seeded Boilermakers (25-7) looking to score big against Purdue.

Since 2001, No. 12 seeds have defied No. 5 seeds in 13 of 32 games.

“I think it just shows the parity that we’ve had the past three years,” said Purdue coach Matt Painter, “that there’s not a whole lot of difference between the five and the 12.”

The 12th-ranked Boilermakers defeated Ohio State 65-61 on Sunday to claim the Big Ten Conference championship and earn the automatic berth.

The conference tournament title was a boost for Purdue, which lost three of its final four regular-season games. The Boilermakers even held a special meeting to address concerns.

“We were definitely struggling coming into that weekend,” for­ward Robbie Hummel said. “We were about it, you know?” He said Buckeyes coach Jim Foster, whose team was 10th in the most recent Associated Press rankings.

“We’re about to find out.”

Ohio State (27-5) is the No. 3 seed in the Berkeley region and gets to open at home, though in a different arena than it’s used to, in Columbus on Saturday against Sacred Heart. But Stanford, the sec­ond-ranked team in the latest AP poll, looms in a potential third-round game a few miles from the Cardinal’s campus.

Nobody else from the Big Ten is considered much of a threat.

Hummel missed several games this season with a hairline fracture in his lower back, but now he returned to full strength in time for the conference tournament, where he averaged 16.0 points and 9.3 rebounds.

He was named the tourney’s most outstanding player.

He is one of Purdue’s three super sophomores along with JaJuan Johnson and E’Twaun Moore. None of the seniors started.

Toward the end of the regular season, the Boilermakers lost focus, the players said. But the meeting helped them regain it just in time.

“We were playing a little sloppy sometimes, playing a little out of control,” Moore said. “So we needed to focus, tighten it down, play basic fundamental basketball and just do the basic necessary things to win.”

NCAA Men’s Basketball

Northern Iowa ready to go against Purdue

Welcome to campus Graduating students

Still looking for that perfect place to live next year? Look no further!

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Thursday, March 19, 2009

NCAA Women’s Basketball

Big Ten looks to impress NCAA

Teams hope to show that conference is still in the running for the title

Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS — Ohio State was the only Big Ten women’s team consistently ranked in the national polls this season, one clear sign that this league has been lagging behind the country’s other power conferences.

The strength of the middle of the pack, however, made enough of an impression on the NCAA tournament selection committee to warrant five teams chosen for the field.

So how good, or bad, is the Big Ten these days?

“The tournament is a litmus test,” said Buckeyes coach Jim Foster, whose team was 10th in the most recent Associated Press rankings.

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“We were playing a little sloppy sometimes, playing a little out of control,” Moore said. “So we needed to focus, tighten it down, play basic fundamental basketball and just do the basic necessary things to win.”
Van Gundy said, “I think that there’s a lot of things that we still need to improve on, our guys come out and play for the most part. I think in terms of that, we’re about as consistent as any team in the league.”

Charlie Villanueva had 17 points for the Bucks, who are desperately clinging to the final playoff spot in the Eastern Conference and were coming off a home victory over Boston.

Milwaukee fell to 2-3 on its critical and challenging six-game homestand that ends against Portland on Saturday afternoon.

“I think there’s a lesson learned here for us,” Bucks coach Scott Skiles said. “Most sports events are over before they even start, based on the mind-set of the teams that are playing and the players that are playing in it.”

Skiles said the Magic are a great team, but added, “We didn’t compete at all. It’s very disappointing and we need to learn something from this loss.”

Howard went after the Bucks early and often after taking only eight shots in Orlando’s loss at Cleveland on Tuesday. He scored 18 points in the first quarter on his way to 28 for the game. He added 12 rebounds, and had seven assists, falling three shy of a triple-double.

“Coming off of yesterday, no hangover, great energy,” Magic coach Stan Van Gundy said. “Went up and down the court, played great defense — and Dwight was tremendous.”

Reda Turkoglu also came close to a triple-double with 14 points, 10 rebounds and seven assists for Orlando, 8-2 in its last 10 games.

Van Gundy had some nit-picking to do, but wasn’t surprised with the overall effort.

“It’s really hard to argue with our competitiveness,”
NHL
Hurricanes take down Devils
Blue jackets take down the Blackhawks by one in overtime

Associated Press

RALEIGH, N.C. — The New Jersey Devils can be excused for this lackluster effort against the Hurricanes.

The Hurricanes, who had four days off since returning from a winless three-game road trip, pounced on New Jersey. Anton Babchuk scored twice, Eric Staal got a team-high 34th goal and for all the right reasons, won a season-high six in a row at home.

Staal and New Jersey played without Brodeur, who set the wins record Tuesday night by besting Montreal 4-3 in 12 minutes 23 seconds. Thursday night Brodeur missed a start in 10 games since returning from injury and goalie Mike Flermke.

Kevin Weekes made 28 saves in place of Brodeur.

"It's been a week where it's been just a very emotional week, and for all the right reasons," Devils coach Brent Sutter said. "We'll regroup and get back at it. We knew what to expect from a club that's been down for four days waiting for us."

The Devils, who had been like nothing because what he gave up three power-play goals in a 4-3 loss to Carolina Thursday night. The Hurricanes have won 11 of 13 games.

The Hurricanes, with 81 points, moved into a tie with Washington at second place in the Eastern Conference — the Devils came into the night sixth in the East, allowed three man-advantage goals in a game as a small step.

Expectedly mean a lot to us. We've had an incredible run these last 11 years now," he said. "I'm hesitant to put the temptation of NBA riches."

"I've never won anything for Gonzaga, who play later Thursday. Gonzaga has won 18 of 19 tournament games as a small step.

"The confidence is a little bit of the flow going against us. But it's going to get win and that feeling a little more confident at critical times of the game," Babchuk said. "It's great. I'm pretty happy.

Babchuk carried the puck up the right wing on a 2-on-1 advantage late in the game, a pass that tumbled to the high slot where Vermette beat defensive man Brian Campbell to the puck and chipped it past Cristobal Huet for his first game-winner in more than a year.

How valuable an addition he's been to the Blue Jackets' first stretch run? He's scored points in five of his six games with Columbus.

Associated Press

PORTLAND, Ore. — When Jeremy Pargo turned down two opportunities to enter the NBA last year as a junior, it was because of what he begins Thursday: A senior year run through the NCAA tournament.

"Oh, definitely. This tournament is unbelievable. I haven't experienced the NBA, but there's nothing like this," the streaky point guard said Wednesday in Gonzaga's locker room before a practice for a first-round game against 13th-seeded Akron.

"When you're in this kind of race, everybody checks every box in a one-in-a while," Dorsett said. "No one really pays too much attention. You've just got to worry about yourself and make sure you're getting the two points.

Brockie aggressive style stopped 24 shots to improve to 29-17-3.

"The teams traded goals right up until the final buzzer. The Hurricanes did well to score in the first period, and Brian Gionta scored with 2:17 left in the third, Sergei Samsonov made it 4-3 with 7:46 left in the third, and Patrick Kane and Jonathan Toews each had a goal and an assist, and Dave Bolland scored twice.

"When it's a one-and-done tournament, it's part of it," Bouldin said. "We just can't take any game for granted. I think the last two years taught me that."
There is an appointed time for everything, and a time for every affair under the heavens.

A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to uproot the plant.

A TIME TO WRITE

What is your Story?

A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to tear down, and a time to build.

A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance.

A time to scatter stones, and a time to gather them; a time to embrace, and a time to be far from embraces.

A time to seek, and a time to lose; a time to find, and a time to cast away.

A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to be born, and a time of peace.

A time to hate, and a time to love; a time to war, and a time of peace.

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MFA Candidate in Creative Writing

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GOLF

Woods to play in the Australian Masters

Associated Press

MELBOURNE, Australia — Tiger Woods will play at the Australian Masters in November, his first tournament appearance Down Under since 1998.

A government spokesman confirmed premier John Brumby's comments in a Melbourne newspaper that Woods would play in the event at Kingston Heath, scheduled for Nov. 12-15.

A news conference was planned in Melbourne later Thursday.

"We are delighted Tiger Woods has chosen to come to Melbourne, further cementing our position as the major events capital of the world," Brumby told the Herald Sun newspaper.

Melbourne also hosts the Australian Open, the first of four majors each year on the international tennis circuit, and the season-opening Formula One Grand Prix.

Brumby predicted the visit by the world's top golfer would earn Victoria state $19 million in economic benefits, which would offset Woods' $4.54 million appearance fee.

Woods has recently returned from an eight-month layoff following season-ending knee surgery last year after winning the U.S. Open, his 14th career major.

Stuart Appleby, among the Australians who regularly compete against Woods on the PGA Tour, said it was a coup for golf Down Under, even in the economic climate.

"It will be great for the game and bring out a lot of people who haven't seen him before — in person, not on a video game," Appleby told The Associated Press. "There's a lot of people hurting in Australia, and they might look negatively that one guy is paid ($4.54 million) just to turn up. The common man won't understand the business model because the government is paying for it. They might not see the money he brings in."

But he predicted huge galleries for Woods at Kingston Heath.

"He not been down here since the Presidents Cup," Appleby said. "He's been to Asia multiple times. He's been to Europe multiple times. I think it's good that he's bringing his game to Australia."

Woods, who was not immediately available for comment, is very selective about his appearances outside of the United States.
It's not too late... 
TO LIVE IN ONE OF THE BEST CRIBS IN TOWN NEXT SEMESTER

The Core Council for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, & Questioning Students Seeks New Undergrad Student Members For 2009-2010

We welcome "allies" and gay, lesbian, bi-sexual or questioning students.

Applications are available on the Core Council Web Site:
http://corecouncil.nd.edu
or can be picked up from:
The Office of Student Affairs
316 Main Building
Sam to 5pm Monday-Friday

Completed Applications are due Friday, March 20 by 5pm in the Office of Student Affairs
Attn: Sr. Sue Dunn, OP

Your participation in this Council will:
• Assist with identifying the ongoing needs of gay, lesbian, bi-sexual or questioning students
• Assist in implementing campus-wide educational programming on gay and lesbian issues

Please visit our web site for more information:
http://corecouncil.nd.edu

Taft, Ohio which will be complete this summer.

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MEN'S NIT
Second-half surge helps Baylor past C'Town

Va. Tech edges Duquesne; Creighton tops BGSU

Associated Press

WACO, Texas -- Lace-Darius Dunn and Kevin Oguga each scored 20 points and Curtis Jerrells added 19 to lead Baylor to a 74-72 win over Georgetown in the first round of the National Invitation Tournament on Wednesday night.

The Bears (21-14) got their first postseason victory since 1950.

Jerrells put Baylor ahead 74-69 with a pair of free throws with eight seconds remaining.

But DaJun Summers hit a 3-pointer for Georgetown (16-15) with four seconds left, and Twenty Carter missed the front end of a one-and-one opportunity for the Bears.

Summers, who led the Hoyas with 19 points, grabbed the rebound and launched a shot at the buzzer that fell short.

Jerrells' layup tied the game at 67 with just under five minutes remaining. He followed with a steal, and Carter's 3-pointer gave the Bears the lead for good less than 30 seconds later.

Behind 72-69, Georgetown's Chris Wright attempted a 3-pointer from the left side with 11 seconds left. Jerrells partially blocked the shot and Dunn pulled down the rebound for the Bears. He nailed the clinching free throws in the final seconds.

Georgetown's Jeff Allen added 12 points and Austin Freeman 11 for Georgetown.

Trailing 44-34 at halftime, Baylor opened the second half on a 13-2 run and took a 47-44 lead with 16 1/2 minutes left to play.

Dunn ignited the comeback with 11 points, but he missed three 3-pointers.

Georgetown shot 76 percent from the floor in the first half, connecting on 16 of 21 attempts.

Baylor plays Virginia Tech, a 116-106 double overtime winner over Duquesne, in the next round of the NIT.

Virginia Tech 116, Duquesne 108 (2 OT)

A.J. Vassallo scored 33 points and the Hokies scored on their first five possessions in the second overtime to overcome a huge night from Duquesne's Aoron Jackson and win their first-round NIT game Wednesday night.

Jackson scored a career-high 46 points, but it wasn't enough to keep the Hokies (19-14) from advancing to the second round, where they will host Baylor.

Duquesne (22-13), making its first postseason appearance since the 1994 NIT, closed out its best season since the 1971 team went 21-4.

Jeff Allen added 23 points for Virginia Tech, which led by six with under a minute to go in the first overtime. But the Dukes rallied and tied the game at 94 on Jackson's layup with less than 2 seconds left.

In the second overtime, Vassallo scored 10 points and the Hokies made all 10 of their free throws to put the game away.

Jackson, a senior from Hartford, Conn., paced the Dukes with a career-high 46 points. He hit 15-of-25 from the floor, including 8-of-13 from beyond the 3-point arc. He also hit 8-of-9 from the free-throw line and had four assists.

His performance was the fourth-best single-game performance in Duquesne history.

The Hokies led by 13 with seven minutes to go in regulation, but the Dukes used a 17-4 run to the game, and took a 78-76 lead after Mequon Bolden hit the first of two free throws with 7 1/2 seconds remaining.

But Vassallo hit a floater in the lane with 13.1 seconds to go to tie the game at 78.

On the final possession of regulation, Duquesne's Eric Evans drove into the lane. But his contested layup came up short, sending the game into overtime.

Creighton 73, Bowling Green 71

P'Allen Stinnett scored 18 points, including two big free throws in the final minute, and Creighton came from behind to defeat Bowling Green in the first round of the NIT Wednesday night.

The Bluejays (27-7) will host Kentucky (21-13) in a second-round game Monday.

Creighton, which trailed by 14 points in the first half and by 8 with 3 1/2 minutes left, went ahead 69-67 with 4:41 to play on Booker Woodfox's 3-pointer.

Nate Miller put the Falcons (19-14) ahead again briefly, but Justin Carter's 3-pointer with 1:46 left gave the Bluejays the lead for good.

Stinnett hit two free throws with 35 seconds to make it a 3-point game. Miller's fast-break layup got Bowling Green within 72-71, but he missed an inside shot that would have given the Falcons the lead with 19 seconds to play.

Woodfox made a free throw for the final margin.

Carter added 14 points, Antoine Young 12 and Woodfox 10 for the Bluejays.

Miller scored 22 points, Darryl Clements had 19 points and eight rebounds, and Brian Moten added 12 points for Bowling Green.

Creighton, the Missouri Valley Conference regular-season co-champion, had hoped to receive an at-large bid in the NCAA tournament after winning 10 of its last 11 games. An ugly loss to Illinois State in the Missouri Valley Conference tournament semifinals, combined with upset losses in other tournament play, left the Bluejays short.

The Bluejays missed their first 11-3-point shots and the Falcons led for more than 32 minutes before Creighton rallied.

Bowling Green, which won the Mid-American Conference regular-season title, had a chance to win or at least tie the game, but Clements' 23-footer bounced off the rim, and Scott Thomas' tip try was off the mark at the buzzer.

The Bluejays will be playing a Kentucky team that is in the NIT for the first time in three decades. The Wildcats missed the NCAA tournament for the first time in 18 years.

They advanced to the second round of the NIT with a 70-60 win over UNLV on Tuesday.
NCAA
continued from page 32
going to be awesome," Maxwell said. "All of the best collegiate swimmers will be here and they are all going to be racing very fast. It’s going to be great to swim against them and have every person in the pool want to be at a high level of competition."

Maxwell is competing in the 100- and 200-yard breaststroke events. She currently holds the second-best times in the nation in both of these events.

Both Miller and Maxwell are making their second appearance at the national championships, but Stitt is participating for the first time. After being named the 2009 Big East Diver of the Year, hopes are high for Stitt’s coming performance in Texas. She will be competing in the 50-, 100- and three-meter diving events.

"The competition will be really tough, especially competing against girls who I watched on TV this summer competing for the Olympics, but it’s also so inspiring to watch them dive," Maxwell said. "I’m a little intimidated, but watching them makes me want to be able to dive as well as them and it makes me want to be better." Miller is competing in the 50- and 100-yard freestyle events and recently Miller broke her personal-best time. She said "I don’t play down to any opponent."

The Irish in the fourth inning, inning.

"In preparation for my swims I have just been trying to maintain my stroke and make sure that I am keeping the technical aspect of my swimming where it should be," Maxwell said.

Beside the technique and stroke maintenance, there is one other driving force that comes into play during the intense competition that these girls will face.

"While consistency and technique are things every diver focuses on, I’ve learned the huge difference that confidence in my diving makes," Stitt said.

Contact Molly Sammon at
smoomn@nd.edu

Toledo
continued from page 32
baseman Christine Lux paced the Irish in the fourth inning, inning.

"Everybody being relaxed led to good hitting," sophomore pitcher Jody Valdivia, who earned the complete-game victory in Game 2, said. "Everyone knew what they needed to work on, and they went up with a relaxed approach and hit the ball."

In the third inning, the Rockets switched pitchers, but the Irish were still able to show their offensive dominance by scoring four runs in the third inning. Hits from Miller and fellow Freshmen catcher Kristina Wright and center fielder Alex Malandozn, and sophomore shortstop Sadie Pitcher each helped bring Notre Dame to within 7-0 of the last out of the third inning.

It was more of the same for the Irish, who scored six more times before holding the Rockets scoreless for a 1-5, five-inning victory by the eight-run mercy rule.

With both offenses slow to

start in the second game, the Rockets put on a home run to left to give her team a 1-0 lead. That was short-lived, however, as Notre Dame plated nine runs in the bottom of the fourth, finishing off Toledo 9-1.

"Toledo coming out and challenging us and by hitting a home run made three worthy opponents," Valdivia said. "They held with us longer in the second game."

Jody Valdivia
Irish sophomore

"Everyone should work on taking the mentality we used today and take it to the Big East teams. We don’t play down to any opponent."

Jody Valdivia
Irish sophomore

"Everyone knew what they needed to work on, and they went up with a relaxed approach and hit the ball."

Jody Valdivia
Irish sophomore

Lux hit her second home run of the day to start the Notre Dame offensive onslaught. A single drive down the first base line from sophomore left fielder B r i a n a J o r g e n s b e r g brought in the Irish for the tie to take the lead. A single up the middle from Malandoz led up the bases, and a triple from senior designated hitter Beth Nordway cleared them and brought the score to 6-1. Nordway came home on a single from junior third base-

man Heather Johnson, and senior second baseman Linda Kohan drove home two more with a double to left. Valdivia made quick work of the Rockets in the fifth to secure the victory in Notre Dame’s last non-conference matchup before it starts Big East play against St. John’s Sunday.

Everyone should work on taking the mentality we used today and take it to the Big East teams. "We don’t play down to any opponent."

Contact Molly Sammon at
smoomn@nd.edu

Nations
continued from page 32
still, the level of competition Notre Dame will face will be the stiffest of the season, with a large and deep pool of competitors to wade through.

"We’re aware of our primary rivals. Penn State and Ohio State, but there’s a very strong team in Columbus," Bednarski said. "The pool is strong. I think it will really come down to the last minute of the competition on Sunday with everyone being so strong. By the end, the psychology of the team will be much more important."

The men’s bouts will begin Thursday and conclude with the medal round Friday afternoon. Senior second baseman Linda Kohan drove home two more with a double to left. Valdivia made quick work of the Rockets in the fifth to secure the victory in Notre Dame’s last non-conference matchup before it starts Big East play against St. John’s Sunday. Everyone should work on taking the mentality we used today and take it to the Big East teams. "We don’t play down to any opponent."

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Avery Zuck and All-American Bascy Nyan, competing for the sabre division, round out the men’s team.

On the women’s side, the Irish send a deep and experienced lineup to the Saturday bouts. Sophomore All-American Ewa Nelip and freshman Courtney Hurley will fence in the epee division, while sophomore All-American Hayley Reese and senior All-American Andrea Nett represent the foil contingent.

Not, like Kostka, is making her fourth visit to the NCAAs. Sophomore All-Americans Sarah Berrmann and Ellen Hassett will compete in sabre, with Berrmann looking to defend her 2008 national title. The tournament will be held at the Penn State Multi-Sports Facility in State College, Penn. Last season, Notre Dame placed second in the NCAA Championships. The Irish have claimed titles from 2006 to 2009, in 1994, 2003 and 2005.

Contact Michael Blasco at
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Albuquerque as Gary is the only Lobo to start every game this season, averaging 8.1 points per game and 2.2 rebounds per game.

Gary, though, isn’t the player Notre Dame most needs to account for Thursday. That distinction falls to senior forward Daniel Faris, a 6-foot-9-inch, 245-pound load who notched a career-best 28 points and 13 rebounds in New Mexico’s 83-71 win over Nebraska in the first round. Faris is averaging 11.5 points per game and 6.2 rebounds per game on the season.

Responsibility for Faris will likely fall primarily on the shoulders of Harangody. The junior forward played a leading role in the Irish win over Valparaiso.

Sherry said. "We started off really hot in conference play," Brey said. "It’s trying to get our energy back, it’s more of a mental session, shoot a little bit, stretch out and have the same energy for Thursday night. If you’re fortunate enough to win on Thursday, then you get some time off.”

Contact Greg Arbogast at garbogast@nd.edu

Contact Michael Bryan at mbryan@nd.edu

For more on ND and SMC Sports, check out The Casual Observer at observersportsblog.wordpress.com
Belles split doubleheader

By MEAGHAN VESELIK
Sports Writer

Saint Mary’s started slow but came back to split a doubleheader with Manchester Wednesday after junior Ashley Peterson was named Division III Regional Player of the Week.

Manchester took the lead in the top of the first with three runs and held Saint Mary’s (12-2) off the board until the bottom of the fourth. Senior Cathy Kurczak was first at bat for the Belles, leading off with a walk. Three batters later, Kurczak scored on Peterson’s single to left-center field, cutting the Spartans’ deficit to 3-1.

The Spartans responded with four runs in the top of the fifth, widening their lead to 7-2. Peterson scored from second on a sacrifice fly to right field. The Spartans managed to get one runner on second in the top half of the seventh but weren’t able to score again. The Belles defeated the Spartans 5-4.

“Weren’t able to score again to make a full comeback over the Spartans and lost 7-5,” Belles coach Erin Sullivan said. “We played down to our competition and they capitalized on our errors early in the game. We lacked a sense of urgency to make up for the runs we gave up in the first inning but it kind of went out of our running out of time. I told my team we would have won had we had nine innings to play, but we only got seven.”

Freshman pitcher Monica Palicki moved her record to 5-2, allowing nine hits and only three earned runs in the loss. Peterson, Rashid and senior Ashley Fusaro each went 2-4 in the first game.

“The sense of urgency to make up for the runs we gave up in the first inning, which resulted in a tie, but not for long,” Sullivan said. “That was a learning experience for us to make sure we play our game and not be defeated by the competition.”

The Belles will have a full week off and will return to the consolation finals and look for a strong showing over spring break at the Blue Gray National Classic in Montgomery, Ala., today — a tournament Irish coach Bobby Bayliss said is one of country’s most prestigious.

“There will be no easy matches and we will be challenged every time we play.”

Bobby Bayliss
Irish coach

Irish head to Alabama for Blue Gray Classic

By KATE GRABAREK
Sports Writer

After 10 days off, No. 26 Notre Dame will be challenged at the Blue Gray National Classic in Montgomery, Ala., today — a tournament Irish coach Bobby Bayliss said is one of country’s most prestigious.

“All of the teams are nationally ranked,” Bayliss said. “There will be no easy matches and we will be challenged every time we play.”

The Irish will open play against No. 48 Mississippi State at 4 p.m. today. With a win, Notre Dame would advance to play either No. 22 Boise State or No. 41 Oklahoma Friday afternoon.

Despite having to juggle their lineup due to injuries to several usual starters, the Irish enjoyed a strong showing over spring break at the Coastal Pacific Doubles Tournament in La Jolla, Calif.

The new combination of freshman Casey Watt and senior Santiago Montoya was particularly impressive, Bayliss said.

“Because of a couple of minor injuries we were not able to play all of our regular combinations,” Bayliss said. “But Santiago Montoya and Casey Watt reached the consolation finals and looked pretty good together. They brought interesting chemistry to the table — Santiago’s touch and feel at the net coupled with Casey’s ability to dominate on serve returns and from the back of the court.”

Bayliss said he will continue to search for the right doubles combinations, especially at the bottom of the young but talented Irish lineup.

As expected, senior Brett Helgeson has been a force at the top of the lineup already this season. Helgeson is currently ranked No. 21 in the nation in singles, and he and his doubles partner, sophomore Tyler Davis, are also ranked No. 21.

Sophomore Stephen Havens moved up in the lineup this season with the graduation of Sheeva Parbhu and Andrew Roth from last season, and has played consistently at No. 2 doubles with Watt.

Sophomore Dan Stahl also moved up in the lineup this season and has been a force for the Irish.

“Dan has surprised everyone with his ability to move from No. 6 last year to No. 3 this year,” Bayliss said.

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Crossword

Across
1 "Blumdog
2 "Trigger"
3 "A Beatle"
4 "A Paper"
5 "An Apple"
6 "Red and Green"
7 "Fruit of the Season"
8 "A Grp."
9 "A Brand"
10 "An "Apple"
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13 "A Spice"
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Forbiddn Doughnut

So you’re not going to your classes today?
No, Games are on.

What about lunch and dinner?

Do you want to make out?
Only if you stay in this chair and you don’t block my view.

Michael Mikuska

Jumble

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each word, to form four ordinary words.

Answer here:

HENRI ARNOLD MIKE ARGIRION

Jumble

TFIIS SCRABBLEI WORD GAME
by Mike Argirion and Jeff Knurek

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Pat Gartland

THE OBSERVER

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The Observer
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Sports

BASEBALL

Hitting their stride

Offense impressive as Irish win fifth straight

By MICHAEL BRYAN
Senior Staff Writer

Notre Dame won its fifth straight and the ninth game in its last 11 Wednesday, rolling Valparaiso 10-4 at Frank Eck Stadium. Freshman southpaw Steve Sabatino received a no-decision but had a solid start for the Irish (12-9), giving up two runs over 5 1-3 innings. Sabatino struck out four and had three batters (1-10) scoreless until the sixth inning. Freshman reliever Ryan Richter picked up the first win of his career after pitching two innings and giving up no earned runs. The Irish struck first in the bottom of the opening frame, scoring two quick runs off of Valparaiso freshman Tyler DeJong. After consecutive singles by junior outfielders David Mills and A.J. Pollock, junior first baseman Casey Martin opened the scoring with an RBI single. Senior shortstop Jeremy Barnes then ripped an RBI double into the left-center gap, playing Pollock and giving Notre Dame an early 2-0 lead. Sophomore third baseman Greg Sherry said Notre Dame's situational hitting was a big advantage. "We work on situational hitting all the time in practice," Sherry said. "That's the great part about our lineup, everyone on top to bottom just wants to hit the ball and get on base. Sacrifice fly, getting on base, bunt fly, triple, sacrifice fly, or getting the big hit." Sabatino dominated the game played on St. Patrick's Day. "I think our crowd really helped us tonight, and it'll be better because there will be even more people Thursday," Irish coach Mike Brey said the day after the game. "We're excited to be out here." Notre Dame are 13-3 at home for Notre Dame this season. "They want to keep playing, they want to keep playing. We're just excited to be out here." New Mexico, however, won't feel quite as left out of its element traveling to Indiana for Thursday's game. The Lobos are coached by Steve Alford, who was Mr. Basketball for the state of Indiana in 1983. Alford then went on to an All-America career at Indiana that included a national championship in 1987.

Softball

Squad overwhelms Toledo

ND holds Rockets to one run over two games in dominating sweep

By MOLLY SAMMON
Sports Writer

Notre Dame needed only five innings in each game of its doubleheader against Toledo Wednesday, as the Irish swept the Rockets with 15-0 and 9-1 victories in their first pair of games at Melissa Cook Stadium. Notre Dame (10-10) senior Brittny Bargar held Toledo (2-12) to just one hit in the first game, and the Irish jumped on the Rockets from the get-go with four runs in the bottom of the first inning, which was capped by a home run from freshman right fielder Dari Miller. Junior first

FENCING

Team sends 12 fencers to NCAA competition

By MICHAEL BLASCO
Senior Staff Writer

Twelve Notre Dame fencers will compete for a chance at a national title this weekend at the NCAA Fencing Championships in State College, Penn. The No. 1 Irish, alongside rivals No. 2 Penn State and No. 4 Ohio State, qualify six fencers from both the male and female teams. The event caps a roasting sea- son in which the Notre Dame squads combined for a 63-2 record. Both the men's and women's teams have held at least a share of the top spot in the USFCA Coaches' throughout the season. This year marks the seventh time the Irish have qualified 12 fencers for the NCAA Championships, a key step toward a national title. Since 2000, teams sending 12 fencers to the NCAAs have claimed eight of nine titles, and in 2005, Notre Dame took home the title with only 11 entrants.

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