

12-15-2003

Arbiter, December 15

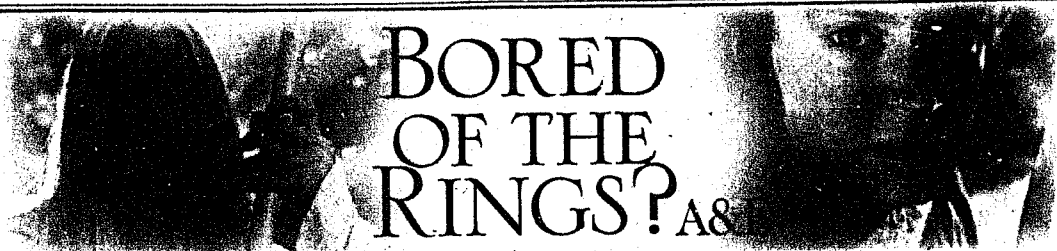
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The Arbiter

MONDAY
DECEMBER 15, 2003

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VOLUME 16 ISSUE 33

'WE GOT HIM'

Saddam captured, Osama bin Laden still at large

"We've come to this moment through patience and resolve and focused action, and that is our strategy moving forward,"

-President Bush



BY WILLIAM BRANIGAN AND
BRADLEY GRAHAM
The Washington Post

Former Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein was captured Saturday night near his hometown by U.S. soldiers who found him hiding, haggard and disheveled, in a hole in the ground in a small, rural compound, U.S. officials announced Sunday.

Wearing a bushy beard streaked with gray, Saddam was taken into custody without resistance near a farmhouse in the village of Ad Dawr, about nine miles south of Tikrit, during a raid by about 600 soldiers. He had eluded a manhunt for eight months since a U.S.-led invasion drove him from power.

U.S. officials said Saddam was talkative and cooperative after his capture, and seemed resigned to his fate.

"Ladies and gentlemen, we got him," L. Paul Bremer, the U.S. administrator in Iraq, said today at a Baghdad news conference announcing the capture. "This is a great day in Iraq's history. ... The tyrant is now a prisoner."

Iraqi reporters at the news



BAGHDAD, IRAQ — Coalition Commander Gen. Ricardo Sanchez, left, and L. Paul Bremer, U.S. Administrator in Iraq, are backed by photos of Saddam Hussein as they report his capture on Sunday. The photo on the left is a historic photo of Hussein and at right is from his capture.

conference cheered the announcement, and some sobbed with joy. Celebrations also broke out in the streets of the Iraqi capital, as people fired guns into the air.

Bremer called on Iraqis still loyal to Saddam to give up their insurgency against the U.S.-led coalition and allied Iraqis.

"Let them now come forward in a spirit of reconciliation and hope, lay down their arms, and join you, their fellow citizens, in the task of building the new Iraq," he said.

News of the capture was immediately hailed by a number

of leaders around the world, including Prime Minister Tony Blair of Britain, the main U.S. ally in the war in Iraq. He said that Iraq's Muslims were "Saddam's victims" and today "are the beneficiaries of his demise."

White House spokesman Scott McClellan said President Bush believes this is "very good news" for the Iraqi people, who "can finally be assured that Saddam Hussein will not be coming back." Bush was scheduled to address the nation today at noon EST.

Providing details of the

capture, Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez, the top U.S. general in Iraq, told the news conference that no shots were fired and no one was injured in the raid. It occurred about 8:30 p.m. Saturday local time (12:30 p.m. EST) and was conducted by troops from the 4th Infantry Division and Special Operations units, backed by armor and helicopters.

Sanchez showed a videotape of a bearded Saddam, after his detention, being examined by a U.S. military doctor, who probed his head for any injuries and held his mouth

open with a tongue depressor. Additional footage showed Saddam after his beard had been shaved off, leaving him with his familiar mustache.

Sanchez said troops acted after receiving "human intelligence" that Saddam was possibly at one of two locations. After searches of both locations failed to turn up Saddam, U.S. forces began scouring other places in the area and came upon Saddam hiding in what Sanchez called a six-to-eight-foot-deep "spider hole" that had been camouflaged with bricks and dirt. The sol-



KRT PHOTO COURTESY US ARMY

Former Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein is shown in this U.S. Army photo after he was captured near Tikrit, Iraq, on Sunday. The photo below is after his beard was shaved by the military.

diers saw the hole, investigated and found him inside, Sanchez said.

"Saddam Hussein was found hiding at the bottom of the hole," Sanchez said.

The hiding place was found in what Sanchez described as "a small walled compound with a metal lean-to structure (and) a mud hut." The narrow hole was equipped with a crude ventilation system that included a small fan. He said the hole had enough space for a person to lie down.

Sanchez said that since his capture, Saddam "has been talkative" with U.S. authorities and was "being cooperative." He described him as "a tired man, a man resigned to his fate." But he said Saddam was in "good health."

See Saddam page 2

Professor's novel named 'Best Book' by L.A. Times

Elise Blackwell's debut novel Hunger has been named a Best Book of 2003 by the Los Angeles Times. Of the 1,500 titles noted and reviewed during the year, the Times listed only about 40 fiction books as notable, including translations and books of poetry. Blackwell is a professor of fiction writing in the MFA program for creative writing at Boise State University.

Set in 1942 Leningrad, Hunger (Little, Brown, 2003) centers on a scientist working to preserve rare specimens of seed, grains and tubers. Despite having vowed to protect - the specimens for future generations, he nibbles at them to save himself from starvation as the Nazis close off the food supply to the city. Those who keep the pledge, including his wife, die of starvation and the scientist is left to face his own cowardice.

The Times' Mark Rozzo said this about Hunger, "... Blackwell craftily weaves history and botany through this utterly devourable narrative; it reminds us of those de-

See Campus Shorts page 4

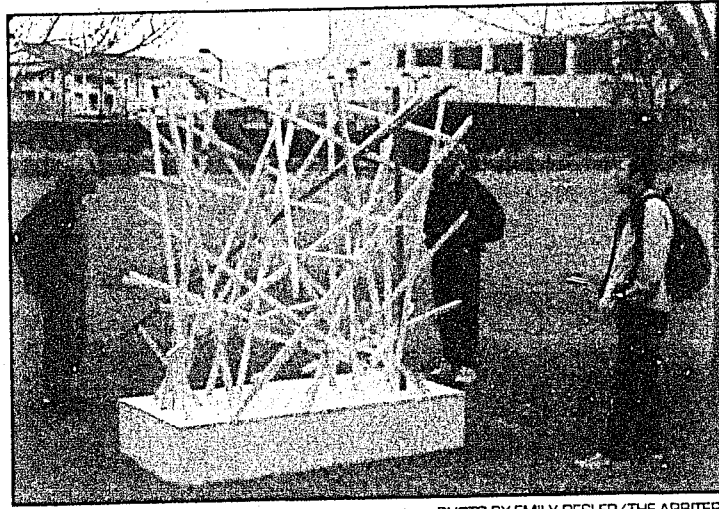


PHOTO BY EMILY DESLER/THE ARBITER

Students Mike Easterbrook, Mike Hagler, and Mike Myers admire the statue outside the SUB titled "BSU Diversity?" designed by Alan Estes.

'BSU Diversity?'

BY MONICA PRICE
News Reporter
The Arbiter

A public art sculpture representing the diversity of Boise State's student population was erected last Thursday near the SUB patio. The installation will be up until Dec. 18. The wooden sculpture is designed to represent the minority demographic of Boise State University. "It kind of surprised me that it was only 10 percent," said the designer Alan Estes.

Estes said Boise State isn't immune to racism. "Hopefully they [students] won't think 10 percent minority is a bad thing." Estes didn't make a direct statement with the piece dubbed "BSU Diversity?," he

only hoped to bring the subject up for discussion. "It's up to them to decide what to do the that information." Estes admitted he'd like to see more diversity on campus.

The sculpture is reminiscent of a tornado. 50 slender rectangles of wood are arranged haphazardly on a large rectangular base, while five brown sticks represent the minority population of BSU. Beige sticks overwhelm the sculpture both visually and physically.

Building the sculpture was a group effort. "I haven't has any trouble getting volunteers," Estes said. The entire class of Art 305 helped build the sculpture. It was the final project of the semester.

See Diversity page 3

BSU staff member honored with human rights award

BY BRANDON BECKHAM
News Reporter
The Arbiter

As part of the worldwide human rights struggle, Wanda Lynn Riley, Boise State administrative staff member and campus adviser for Boise State's Black Student Alliance, was honored Dec. 10 with the 12th annual Idaho Human Rights Award.

The awards ceremony, sponsored by Voices of Faith and Human Rights and the Idaho Human Rights Education Center, was part of a celebration highlighting International Human Rights Day.

The worldwide event was established in 1948 when the United Nations adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, a response to the many atrocities committed against people during World War II.

Riley was one of six Idahoans honored during a service at the Idaho Historical Museum in Julia Davis Park. The prestigious award is given in recognition of those whose efforts are dedicated to the human rights cause. Mary Daley, organizer for Voices of Faith, said that Riley is an extraordinary person who quickly became involved in serving the Idaho community after moving to Boise in 1997.

"Wanda Riley is rapidly becoming a powerful and well-known voice for human rights throughout our state; she has helped us all grow closer together," Daley said.

In addition to her services at Boise State, Riley began as an office secretary at the Idaho Black History Museum. She was quickly chosen to serve on the Board of Directors for the museum and was soon elected to serve as its president.

Riley has continually played a key leadership role in organizing events for Dr. Martin Luther King Day, International Human Rights Day, the Soul Food Extravaganza as well as the Juneteenth celebration here in Boise. Riley has also played various roles in planning a variety of human rights events on campus.

Riley said that each person in the community has the responsibility to care for others and that she is simply fulfilling that responsibility by doing something she believes in. "I am greatly humbled as well as honored by this award," Riley said.

Weekly KBSU radio host Reverend Jesus Camacho was also honored Wednesday evening, recognized for his service to the Hispanic community of Idaho.

"Reverend Camacho has truly given us a hope, a love and compassion for one another," said Chj E Shenam Westin, who presented Camacho during the service.

Boise State graduate Kelly Buckland, now the executive director of the Idaho State Independent Living Council, was honored for his extensive efforts on behalf of peoples with disabilities.

Carol Wilson, who presented Buckland with the award, said, "Kelly has gone from the local, to state, to the national level as an activist and leader for those with disabilities."

Azam Houle, a community member who has been active in developing extensive multicultural literature and diversity education for Idaho, was also honored as part of the service as was Jon Brown, current board president for Planned Parenthood of Idaho. Boise Artist Liz Wolf was recognized for the inspiration and effort she provided to the Anne Frank Memorial.



JASON KAUFFMAN
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NEWS

MONDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2003

PAGE 2

Bush says Saddam's capture marks 'hopeful day'

BY DANA MILBANK
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON--President Bush greeted the capture of Saddam Hussein with a spare, three-minute televised address to the nation announcing that "a hopeful day has arrived."

The capture of the former Iraqi leader provides an immediate and major boost to the U.S. occupation policy and to Bush's foreign policy and to his reelection prospects. But the White House, as it has during other moments of triumph, saw no reason to spin the good news. Bush furrowed his brow and did not smile once as he delivered the best news he has had in months.

"The capture of Saddam Hussein does not mean the end of violence in Iraq," the president, wearing a dark suit and tie, read from a

teleprompter in the Cabinet Room just after noon. "We still face terrorists who would rather go on killing the innocent than accept the rise of liberty in the heart of the Middle East. Such men are a direct threat to the American people, and they will be defeated."

Appearing with an American flag over his right shoulder and a presidential flag over his left, Bush delivered a three-part message: thanking the troops, declaring American solidarity of purpose with Iraqis, and cautioning Americans that much remains to be done. Criticized for being too rosy in his May 1 speech declaring victory in the Battle of Iraq, Bush resisted celebration Sunday.

"We've come to this moment through patience and resolve and focused action, and that is our strategy mov-

ing forward," he said. "The war on terror is a different kind of war, waged capture by capture, cell by cell, and victory by victory."

To Iraqis, Bush said in remarks that would quickly be translated into Arabic and broadcast to the Middle East: "The goals of our coalition are the same as your goals -- sovereignty for your country, dignity for your great culture, and for every Iraqi citizen, the opportunity for a better life. In the history of Iraq, a dark and painful era is over. A hopeful day has arrived. All Iraqis can now come together and reject violence and build a new Iraq."

Bush began with a brief repetition of the details already known to those Americans glued to their televisions: Hussein was found Saturday in a bloodless raid of a farmhouse near Tikrit, and now "will face the justice he denied to millions."



"The capture of this man was crucial to the rise of a free Iraq,"

-President Bush

"The capture of this man was crucial to the rise of a free Iraq," Bush said. "It marks the end of the road for him, and for all who bullied and killed in his name. For the Baathist holdouts largely responsible for the current violence, there will be no return to the corrupt power and privilege they once held. For the vast majority of Iraqi citizens who wish to live as free men and women, this event brings further assurance that the torture chambers and the secret police are gone forever."

Saddam

from page 1

Leaders of the Iraqi Governing Council said they expected U.S. authorities to turn Saddam over to a special Iraqi tribunal whose formation was recently announced. The Iraqi leaders said they wanted to try Saddam for crimes against humanity during his three-decade rule.

But U.S. officials said they had not yet determined what would be done with the deposed Iraqi leader. Meanwhile, they said, he was being held by U.S. forces at an undisclosed location.

Two Iraqis were captured with Saddam, but their identities were not immediately disclosed.

Also found with Saddam were two AK-47 assault rifles and a pistol, as well as \$750,000 in U.S. \$100 bills, Sanchez said. A white-and-orange taxi was parked nearby.

Sanchez said U.S. forces launched "Operation Red Dawn" to capture Saddam after receiving information Saturday morning that he was hiding at one of the two locations, dubbed Wolverine I and Wolverine II. The U.S. troops began their assault on the locations at about 8 p.m. Saturday.

He said that "a combination of human intelligence tips, exceptional intelligence analytical efforts and detainee interrogations" had led to the raid.

Military officials in Baghdad, speaking on condition of anonymity, said one or more captured fighters loyal to Saddam gave American-led forces the first vital clues under interrogation. Electronic and photographic surveillance narrowed the search area. By 10:50 a.m. (2:50 a.m. EST) Saturday, according to Sanchez, intelligence analysts pinpointed two homes near Saddam's hometown of Tikrit north of Baghdad.

U.S. forces had searched for Saddam and other senior members of his deposed government in Ad Dawr before. In May, a force of 500 soldiers from the 4th Infantry Division, backed by howitzers, AH-64 Apache helicopters and armed boats on the nearby Tigris River, rounded up dozens of men, including

an Iraqi general who had disguised himself as a shepherd.

The capture provided an enormous boost to the Bush administration's efforts to stabilize Iraq, removing a critical factor that had continued to motivate a deadly insurgency against the U.S.-led occupation. But Sanchez said Saddam's detention would not end the attacks on U.S. and allied forces.

Word of the capture came just hours after the latest major attack, with a suspected suicide car bomber killing at least 17 people and wounding 33 at an Iraqi police station in the restive town of Khaldiya, west of Baghdad.

Celebratory gunfire filled the air over Baghdad as soon as the news of Saddam's capture broke on local radio, about 90 minutes before Bremer made the official announcement. The gunfire drove some in the Iraqi capital indoors for safety, while others danced in the streets. The former Iraqi president was not popular in Baghdad, but there was also some anxiety about the reaction of Saddam loyalists.

U.S. authorities had received numerous tips about possible hiding places for Saddam and had suspected that they were close to nabbing him on a few occasions. Saddam's two sons, Uday and Qusay, were found in July in a house in Tikrit and died in a firefight with U.S. troops.

From his hideouts, Saddam had taunted U.S. authorities, issuing periodic audio tapes urging resistance to the American-led occupation. To spearhead the search for him, the Pentagon established a group of Special Operations forces known as Task Force 121. In recent months, U.S. forces have focused on hunting down mid-level former Iraqi officers and mid-ranking onetime Baath Party operatives in hopes they could provide intelligence that might lead to Saddam.

Although frustrated by the length of time it was taking to find Saddam, U.S. commanders had repeatedly expressed confidence they would eventually find the former Iraqi leader. At the same time, they said that Saddam's capture would not by itself end the insurgency that has swelled during the past few months.

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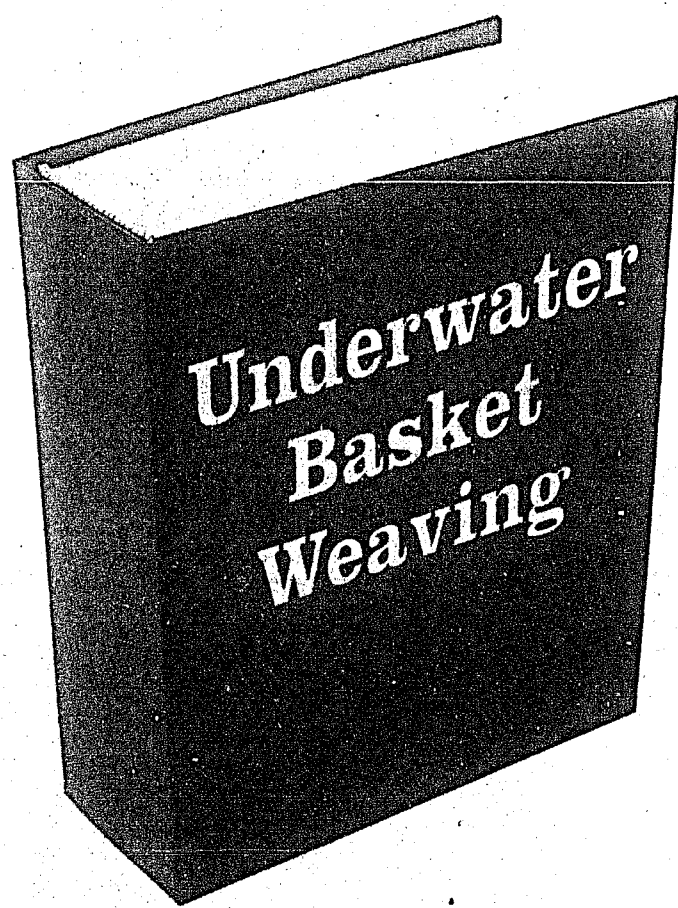
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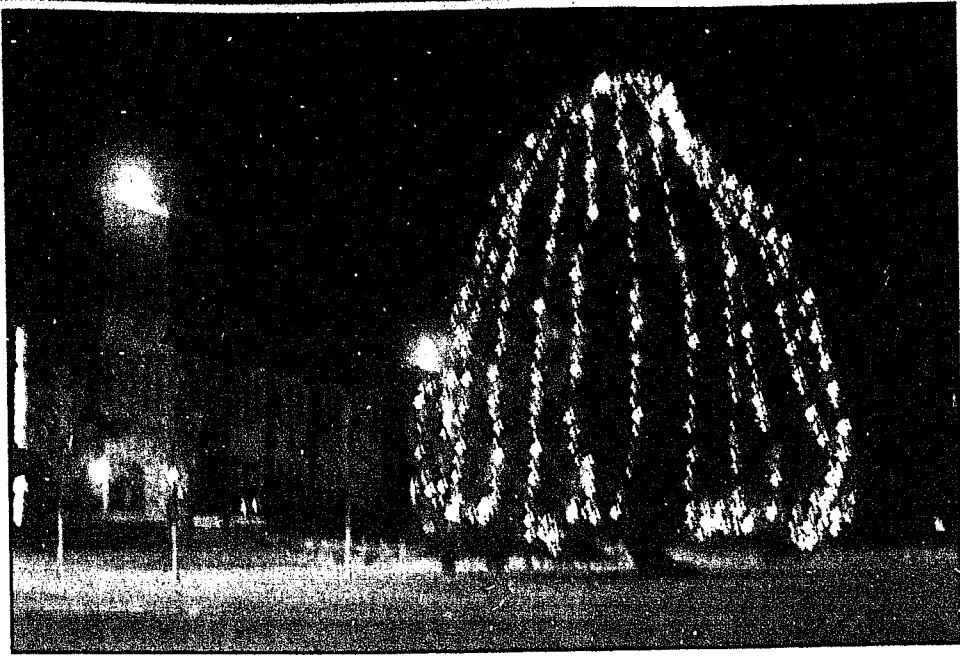
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O Christmas tree!

The Yuletide tradition of evergreens

BY BRANDON BECKHAM
News Reporter
The Arbiter

For many Americans, the Christmas season calls to mind a variety of images. One of those many images that seem to have become inseparable from the Yuletide tradition is the evergreen tree that adorns so many of our homes.

The popularity of the Christmas tree in America dates back to the 1800's. However, the real significance of the evergreen dates back even further, to the early first and second centuries.

In these times, people were not so much interested in trees for their decorative value but rather for the life that they had within them. Many of the primitive tribes in Europe re-

vered nature and saw the evergreen as a way to bring the world of nature indoors.

Decorations and lighting began to be associated with the evergreen through the traditions of the Druids and Romans. The Druids hung mixed fruits from tree branches, while the Romans adorned their trees with candles during their annual Saturnalia festival.

It was not until the 16th century that trees became associated with the Christmas holiday. Early church leaders initially forbade the use of evergreen in nativity celebrations, considering the use of evergreens to be a replication of pagan festivities.

The first historical reference to the Christmas tree can be traced to 1604 in Strassburg,

Germany. It is believed that the popularity of decorating evergreens during the holiday quickly spread throughout the nation, becoming a central part of Germany's Christmas traditions.

The idea of the Christmas tree was eventually carried to other countries, and by the 19th century, it had reached Finland, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, England and France.

The first decorated trees in the United States are credited as having been set up by homesick German soldiers who had been hired by King George III to fight in the American Revolution. The tradition did not become popular with a great deal many Americans until the 1840's, and, in some parts of New England, until as late as the 1860's.

Diversity

from page 1

"I hope people can see the lacking of minorities," visual art student Sary Anderson said. "We are seriously lacking in the sense that our student body is majorly white." Anderson hopes the sculpture will make people think about the compo-

sition of the student body.

Anderson hasn't had much experience working on collaborative art. "I'd do it again...I especially like that shared sense of a finished piece,"

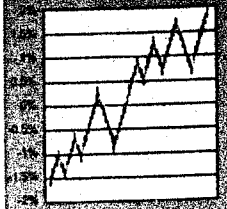
Each semester the class does a public art project students have to research a site on campus and present their proposal to the class, instructor Kirsten Furlong said.

Lab fees from the fall 2003 basic design class fund the project. Students who chipped in to the build the sculpture include Sary Anderson, Beth Bricker, Jen Doherty, Jon Ekburg, Alan Estes, Nicole Gerrard, Lynn Hezeltine, Kailyn Lamb, Michael La Rocco, Kristen Mance, Cora McCarthy, Krista Monroe and Peggy Pittman.

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An icon that has become inseparable from the Yuletide tradition is the evergreen tree that adorns our homes.

PHOTO BY KRISTA ADAMS/
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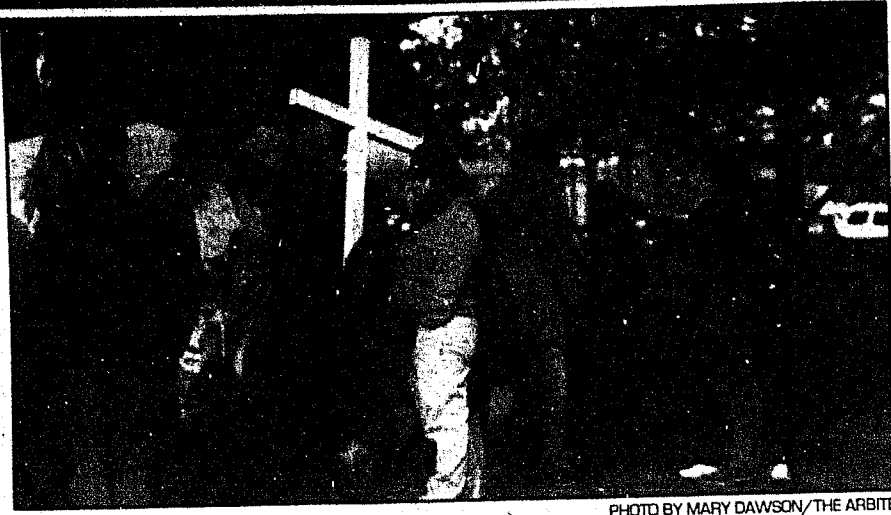


PHOTO BY MARY DAWSON/THE ARBITER

Christians from several area churches gathered Sunday in support of the Ten Commandments memorial in Julia Davis Park. The demonstration prompted a right-wing Christian organization to attempt to place a religious anti-gay statue in the park, citing the Ten Commandments memorial as legal precedent.

Campus Shorts

from page 1

licious genre crossings equally full of fancy and fact, plot and digression that the wonderful Italian writer Aldo Buzzo has elevated to a new literary art form. Hunger is a compact embarrassment of riches."

BSU hosts bowl tailgate parties

Everyone is invited to join in tailgate festivities for the Fort Worth Bowl and the Humanitarian Bowl. The parties will begin a half hour prior to each game at the Boise State University Student Union Brava stage. There will be free food and prize giveaways and the game will be shown on the big screen. The Fort Worth Bowl will begin at 5:30 p.m.

Dec. 23, and will be broadcast from Amon G. Carter Stadium. The Humanitarian Bowl will begin at 10 a.m., Jan. 3, aired from Bronco Stadium. The tailgate parties are sponsored by Student Activities. Call 426-1223 for more information.

Chicago comedy act comes to Boise State

Second City, the Chicago-based touring company, is bringing its act to Boise State University for a night of sketch, musical and improv comedy. The show will begin at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 20 in the Special Events Center. Tickets are \$3 for Boise State students, faculty and staff and \$5 general, available through Select-a-Seat. Tickets at the door will be \$5 for Boise State students, faculty and staff and \$10 for general admission.

Counseling Services reaches out ... to everyone

BY RYAN GORRINGE
News Reporter
The Arbitrator

Located on the sixth floor of the education building, Counseling Services is currently made up of 25 employees, including six licensed psychologists, counseling interns, paraprofessionals as well as administrative and clerical support.

"Counseling Services [at BSU] provides more outreach programs than most universities," Nicholson said. This is significant because, statistically speaking, BSU is often on the low end of national averages.

The International Association of Counseling Services first accredited BSU Counseling Services in 1979. Since then, Counseling Services has seen a great deal of growth, although they are still "significantly understaffed," according to Nicholson. Counseling Services provides one counselor per 2,500 students, while the recommended norm for an accredited program is one per 1,700. "The Center has seen tremendous growth, shifting from purely clinical, individual counseling to including preventative and outreach programs," said Jim Nicholson, director of counseling services for the past 20 years.

Among the many services provided is individual counseling. About 3,000 hours of individual or couples counseling takes place each year, Nicholson said. A licensed professional is on-call nine hours a day for students requiring immediate attention.

Other services include a program called "Don't cancel that class," where an employee of Counseling Services gives a presentation about the

services available when a professor is unable to hold a regularly scheduled class due to illness or other reasons.

In 1999, BSU participated in the Wechsler studies provided by Harvard University about binge drinking. The studies revealed that 26 percent of BSU students participate in "high-risk" drinking behavior. "High-risk" is defined as having four to five drinks in one setting. Even though BSU ranked low compared to the national average of 44 percent, Counseling Services decided to take proactive measures to provide services to those in need.

In addition, Counseling Services constantly looks for new ways to expand and collaborate, Nicholson said. "One very unusual aspect of Counseling Services is a tight relationship with nearly everyone," he said, "This provides a win-win situation for both parties."

Counseling Services has collaborated with the Counseling Department for new classes and intern opportunities, and more recently with the Idaho Suicide Hotline, the SUB and REC center.

"It has been a good ride, and we feel very good about what we've accomplished," Nicholson said with regard to Counseling Services' past 20 years. Recently grouped with the Health and Wellness center, Counseling Services has combined their efforts to provide over 100 workshops and a full spectrum of services to BSU students. With so many programs offered through collaborative efforts, Nicholson assures "there is still a heavy focus on the individual."

For more information, contact Health, Wellness and Counseling at 426-1601.

Campus Crime

Dec. 2, 9 a.m.
A vehicle parked in the Chaffee Hall Lot was broken into sometime over night. There are no suspects.

Dec. 4, 10 a.m.
A forgery occurred at a food service venue on campus.

Dec. 5, 8 p.m.
A burglary occurred at Chaffee Hall when a room was left unlocked and unoccupied.

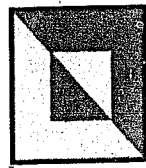
Dec. 6, 11:45 a.m.
An unknown suspect vandalized a vehicle parked in the general parking lot by the parking garage sometime during the morning.

Dec. 9, 7:45 p.m.
A backpack was stolen from the Kinesiology Annex.

Dec. 10, 1 a.m.
A BB gun was used to shoot out a window of a car parked on the street near the University Park Apartments. The broken BB gun was left at the scene.

Dec. 11, 10 a.m.
A theft report was filed by the Chemistry Department.

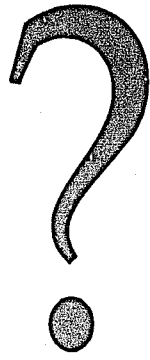
Dec. 12, 3 p.m.
Three license plates were reported stolen over the past couple of days from the parking lot surrounding Chaffee Hall.



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Information Age May Spell End of Two-Party System

BY EVERETT EHRLICH
Special to The Washington Post
LAT - WP News Service

Back in 1937, an economist named Ronald Coase realized something that helped explain the rise of modern corporations--and which just might explain the coming decline of the American two-party political system.

Coase's insight was this: The cost of gathering information determines the size of organizations.

It sounds abstract, but in the past it meant that complex tasks undertaken on vast scales required organizational behemoths. This was as true for the Democratic and Republican parties as it was for General Motors. Choosing and marketing candidates isn't so different from designing, manufacturing and selling automobiles.

But the Internet has changed all that in one crucial respect that wouldn't surprise Coase one bit. To an economist, the "trick" of the Internet is that it drives the cost of information down to virtually zero. So according to Coase's theory, smaller information-gathering costs mean smaller organizations. And that's why the Internet has made it easier for small folks, whether small firms or dark-horse candidates such as Howard Dean, to take on the big ones.

For all Dean's talk about wanting to represent the truly "Democratic wing of the Democratic Party," the paradox is that he is a third-party candidate using modern technology to achieve a takeover of the Democratic Party. Other candidates--Joe Lieberman, John Kerry, John Edwards--are competing to take control of the party's fund-raising, organizational and media assets. But Dean isn't interested in taking control of those depreciating assets. He's creating his own party, his own lists, his own money, his own organization. What he wants is the Democratic brand name and legacy, its last remaining asset of value, as part of his marketing strategy. Perhaps that's why former vice president Al Gore's endorsement of Dean last week felt so strange--less like the traditional benediction of a fellow member of the party "club" than a senior executive welcoming the successful leveraged buyout specialist. And if Dean can do it this time around, so can others in future campaigns.

To understand it all better, let's go back to Coase and the world of business. Say you want to buy an appliance, or a vacation. You know there are some bargains out there, but it takes time and energy to find them. That's what economists call the "transaction cost" of a purchase. This cost of acquiring information is everywhere: the time it takes to call a friend or to learn something in a newspaper. Or the time and resources it takes a company to find out where to find parts and to make sure they show up at an assembly line on time.

Back when it cost a great deal to learn and know things--when transaction costs were very high--big corporations had to solve the problem of coordinating information, such as what customers wanted to buy, what parts were being produced and shipped, how to make sure prices covered costs, and so on. The advent of mass production and similar "process" technologies let firms produce and sell things--cars, steel, oil, chemicals, food--on a much larger scale, so there was suddenly much more information to coordinate.

Companies solved this problem by creating massive bureaucratic pyramids; Alfred Sloane, chairman of General Motors, was famous for creating the multidivisional firm. The job of these internal hierarchies is to gather, validate and store the information the company needed to coordinate all its activities. That's what "middle managers" in marketing, accounting and so on manage--information.

Now, however, with internal communications networks and the speed of the Internet, you don't need a horde of people in a big pyramid to handle all that information. Firms have become "flatter" and "faster," and the "networked" or "virtual" company has come into being--groups of firms that use shared networks to behave as if they were part of the same company. A generation ago, GM made all its own parts and IBM all its own chips. Not today. Now, specialized companies use networks to coordinate their activities with GM and IBM, and supply the needed components.

So the end result of the Internet revolution on companies has been exactly what Coase's theory predicted: Cheap information has allowed firms to shrink. Size is now less of an advantage in organizations, and that means more competition in the global marketplace. For companies, it's either reorganize or die. That's what Coase, who won the 1991 Nobel Prize in economics, was talking about.

Coase's ideas are no less true for political organizations, as Dean's success shows. He's the first candidate to use the Internet effectively as a political organizing device.

To put it in perspective, think about how political parties started. They began as a way of bringing like-minded people together to wield politi-

cal influence, in the best and worst senses of the term. And they were a reflection of transaction costs, because that kind of large-scale, social organization was the most effective way to process political information.

Consider, for example, the first "modern" political campaign--the Whig campaign for William Henry Harrison in 1840. Apart from some success as an Indian killer, Harrison had minimal credentials, but the Whigs figured out how to use the tremendous organizational apparatus of their party to promote him. They fabricated the image of Harrison as the "log cabin and hard cider" candidate, despite his more patrician roots, and used the party organization to enforce discipline around the fabrication--to get everyone to say the same thing at the same time. In America's first political mass media stunt, they constructed a 10-foot-high ball of twine, wood and tin, covered it with Whig political slogans, and rolled it first from Cleveland to Columbus and then from town to town across the country (hence the expression "Keep the ball rolling").

It seems quaint now, but then it was an act of genius, because it capitalized on the Whigs' brilliant use of their party's primary asset--the ability to coordinate information on a national scale. They got the entire party on message and then managed the activities of community supporters around the country to pull off the ball stunt. It was a kind of primitive analog blog. But in 1840, only a well-organized political organization could have done it.

No longer. Now anyone with a Web site and a server, a satellite transponder and about \$100 million can have--in a matter of months--much of what the political parties have taken generations to build. Technology, of course, has changed politics before. Television changed the two parties, for example, but it didn't make the parties obsolete. In fact, in the day of Richard M. Nixon and John F. Kennedy, television strengthened the two-party duopoly (the economist's term for a shared monopoly), as only those two parties had the resources to use it competitively.

But the Internet doesn't reinforce the parties--instead, it questions their very rationale. You don't need a political party to keep the ball rolling--you can have a virtual party do it just as easily.

And that's what Howard Dean has done. Nor is Dean alone. The same forces make the evangelical right a powerful force in the Republican Party. With its TV stations, membership lists and money, it's a party waiting to happen. When Republicans of more moderate stripes express concerns about the evangelicals "taking a walk" on the party, they're recognizing that underlying reality.

The ability to have "virtual political parties" is the greatest challenge the two parties have ever faced. There are strategies available to them, of course--deft positioning allows them to pre-empt competitors, as it does in every industry, and they can use the same technology, although Internet culture doesn't seem readily amenable to either Democrat.com or Republican.com. Being a Democrat or a Republican isn't enough of an advantage anymore--there are simply too many other places where people can get political information and find political bedfellows in an age of low information costs.

The real question is whether--really, how--the two parties, like any other waning duopoly, will use non-market means to preserve their fading power--by, for example, keeping third-party candidates out of televised debates, making it harder for other parties to get public funding or closing off "open" primaries that invite marauding forms of political organization.

But the challenge is unavoidable, and the future is coming on fast. Here are some predictions: First, if Dean loses the nomination, he'll preserve his organizational advantage and re-emerge as a third-party force four years from now. He has done with technology what Ross Perot couldn't do with money alone. Second, the evangelical right will become a separate political party in the near future, and will hold its own conventions and primaries. Like the Conservative Party in New York state, it will usually endorse Republican candidates. But evangelicals will use their inherent party-ness to make the Republican candidate stand in front of them and give a separate acceptance speech. And finally, in the next six or eight presidential elections, a third-party candidate will win the presidency. Issues--most likely the coming fiscal debacle and the inescapable abrogation of promises made on Social Security and Medicare--will give the third-party candidate an opening. But technology will give him, or her, the means.

Sooner or later, it's going to happen. And all because of what an economist named Ronald Coase understood 70 years ago.

Everett Ehrlich is senior vice president and director of research for the Committee for Economic Development. He was undersecretary of commerce for economic affairs under President Bill Clinton.

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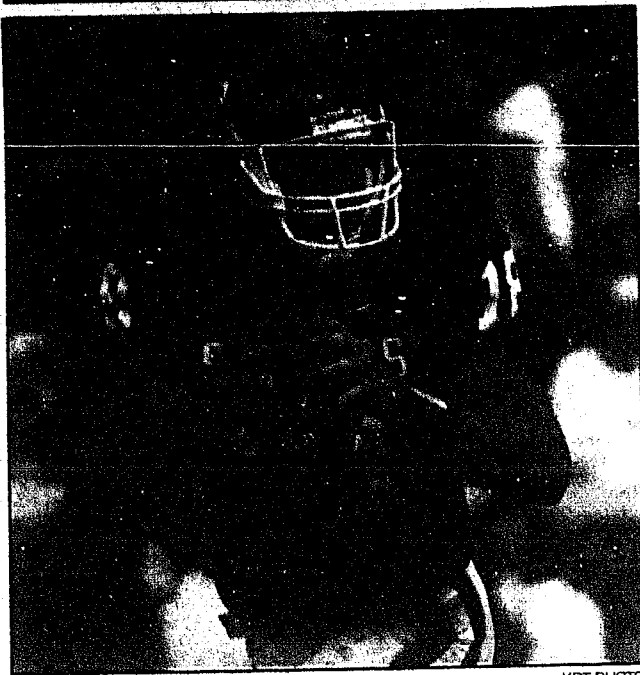
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KRT PHOTO

Heisman winner Jason White dropping back to pass during his campaign season. White is the fourth straight Quarterback to win the top honor.

Oklahoma slinger Jason White wins Heisman Trophy

BY KEVIN TATUM
Knight Ridder Newspapers
(KRT)

NEW YORK — Oklahoma quarterback Jason White was named the 2003 winner of the Heisman Trophy on Saturday night in a relatively close victory over Pittsburgh wide receiver Larry Fitzgerald.

White will complete his college career when the Sooners play Louisiana State in the Sugar Bowl on Jan. 4 with at least a share of the national title at stake.

"It's an honor to accept this," White said after his name was called at the awards ceremony at the Yale Club of New York City. "I never thought I'd have a chance to win it."

The Heisman, which is annually awarded to college football's most outstanding player, was voted on by 870 members of the media, 51 former Heisman winners, and one selected fan.

White won by 128 points over Fitzgerald.

This is the fourth straight year that a quarterback won. White follows Carson Palmer (2002), Eric Crouch (2001), and Chris Weinke (2000).

A sturdy 6-foot-3 and 221 pounds, White led the country in pass efficiency by connecting on 265 of 414 pass attempts, and produced one of the best statistical seasons in the history of college football with 3,744 yards passing, 40 touchdowns, and only eight interceptions.

The three other Heisman finalists were Fitzgerald (Pittsburgh), quarterback Eli Manning (Mississippi), and tailback Chris Perry (Michigan), who were also present at the ceremony.

The spectacular Fitzgerald, who was seeking to become the first sophomore to claim college football's most prestigious award, would have joined Johnny Rodgers of Nebraska (1972), Tim Brown of Notre Dame ('87), and Desmond Howard ('91) of Michigan as

the only wide receivers to win the Heisman since its inception in 1935.

Fitzgerald, who attended Valley Forge Military Academy for one year, set an NCAA record this fall with touchdown catches in 18 straight games going back to last season. This season, he caught 87 passes for 1,595 yards and 22 touchdowns.

Manning followed his father, Archie, and brother, Peyton, as outstanding college quarterbacks. Many observers view the 6-5, 218-pound Manning as the top quarterback available in the next year's NFL draft.

Manning completed 253 of 410 pass attempts for 3,341 yards, 27 touchdowns and nine interceptions during his senior season.

Perry, the 6-1, 228-pound tailback who many considered to be the most complete player in the nation at his position, rushed for 1,589 yards on 315 carries, with 17 touchdowns.

The senior also had 42 pass receptions for 366 yards and a pair of touchdowns.

White, who developed his work ethic while growing up in a farming community about 20 miles from Oklahoma City, overcame two season-ending knee injuries before taking over the starting job for Oklahoma this year.

The Sooners were 11-0 when they fell to Kansas State, 35-7 in the Big 12 title game. In that contest, White did not throw for a touchdown for the first time this season, and was intercepted twice while going 27 for 50 for 298 yards as Oklahoma's bid for a perfect season was thwarted.

Whether White's chances of winning the Heisman were compromised by that outing remained to be seen until Saturday night.

Now that this year's Heisman watch is over, the question that remains is what kind of pro White will turn out to be.

Boise State coaches: Some stay, many will go

BY ABBY VAUGHAN
Special to the Arbiter

Throughout the past 10 years, the Boise State Broncos have changed conferences three times and have gradually grown successful in each sport. But for some reason, winning coaches leave their successful programs behind. The Boise community is left wondering: why can't we keep a winning coach on campus?

Moving from the Big Sky conference, to Big West and now to the WAC, Boise State seems to be behind. There remains one very important reason why coaches are leaving this university -- money.

Out of the 10 teams in the WAC, Boise State ranks ninth, second to last in the amount of money in the athletic budget. Boise State Athletic Director Gene Bleymaier said that our school is very young and very new to Division I-A athletics, adding that our number of alumni is slim and the population itself is a smaller number in comparison to the schools we compete against.

Other teams in the WAC, such as Rice and Southern Methodist are privately funded schools with a huge alumni base. It is easier for those schools to purchase new facilities with donors who have deep pockets.

"We are a state funded institution and provide our coaches with the resources available," Bleymaier said.

Three years ago, the Boise State football team took off on a mad dash to the Humanitarian Bowl under head coach Dirk Koetter, who, after three years, left the Broncos and headed to sunny Arizona State University.

Bleymaier said Koetter was a very driven man who wanted to win an NCAA national championship and then a Super Bowl, and he just couldn't reach those goals coaching at Boise State.

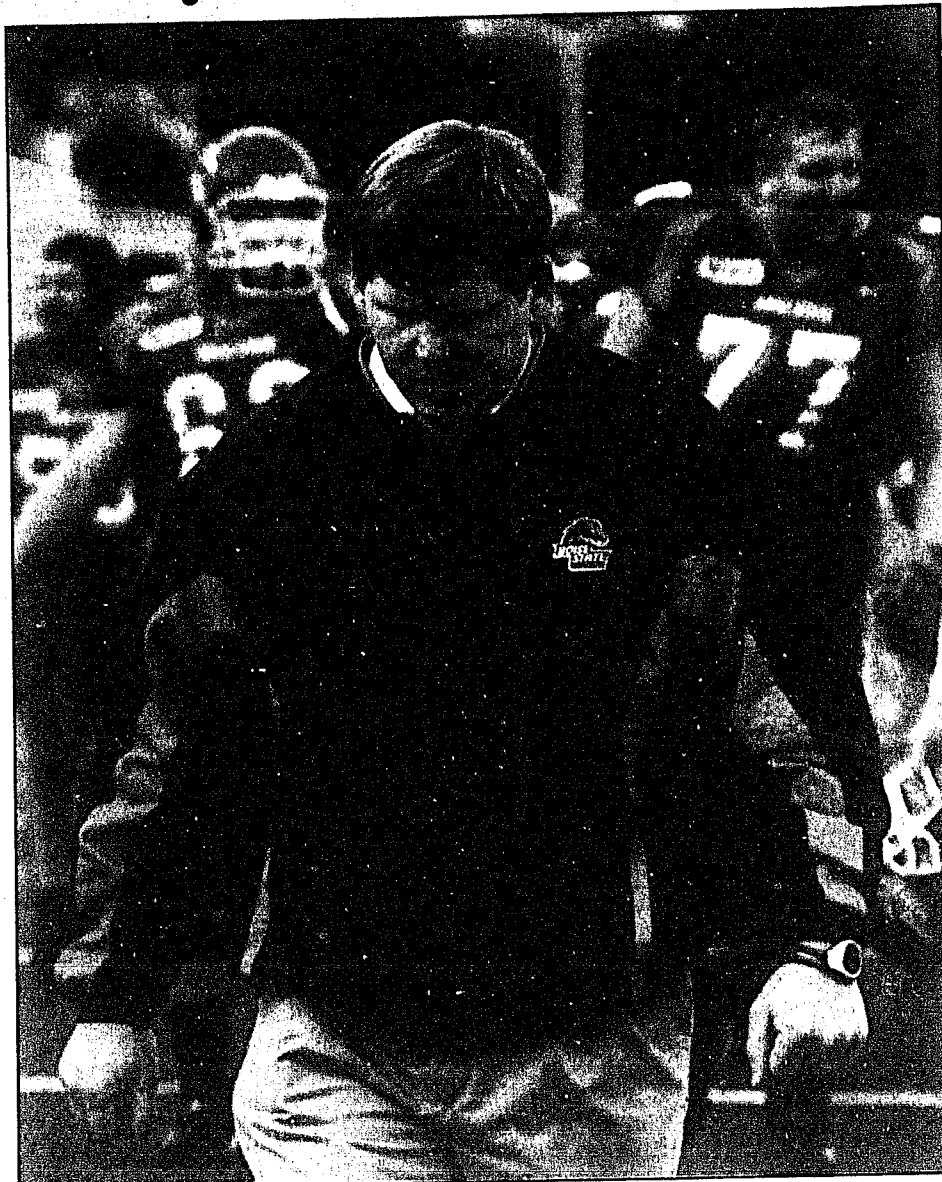
Leaving for bigger hopes and dreams seems like a wise decision, but fans have to ask, is it just about the almighty dollar?

Bigger institutions lead to larger athletic programs, bigger recruiting budgets, newer and larger facilities, resulting in bigger salaries and alumni with bigger pocketbooks. So is leaving really about the hopes and dreams for success? Or is it about the money, or a combination of both?

Andy Bennett, assistant strength and conditioning coach at Boise State, explained his decision-making process as a quantitative analysis.

"Reason number one is money," Bennett explains. "Low budgets make it hard to complete many of the coaches' goals. From recruiting, to travel, to facilities, money plays a factor when you are trying to compete with schools that have significantly larger budgets."

Bennett was recently of-



ARBITER FILE PHOTOS

Speculation surrounds head football coach Dan Hawkins. Many fear he'll be somewhere other than Boise State, after 2003. Head gymnastics coach Sam Sandmire (left) has turned down bigger pay and a bigger school (Stanford) in order to remain in Bronco blue.



sition at the Stanford University, but turned it down.

"I love Boise State. I love the people I work with, I love the outdoor life, and I love the community of Boise," Sandmire said.

The offer to leave Boise State for Stanford was worth twice as much as what the university was paying Sandmire at the time. Bleymaier and Sandmire sat down and talked it out, generating a plan of improvement. Bleymaier decided things would have to change in order to keep Sandmire, a vital member of Bronco athletics.

So that is what he did. Instead of five full scholarships, next year's gymnastics team would receive eight, then nine, and then 10 scholarships. Today, the Bronco gymnastics program has come a long way, receiving 12 full scholarships.

Sandmire wanted a full-time assistant coach, and she wanted to fly to competitions further than a few hours away. Gradually, she received everything she asked for. Now, her squad returns as conference champions with high hopes for this upcoming season.

People in general can understand that in order to be a

successful coach in the very intense Division-I competition, a coach has to do what he or she thinks is the best for their career and for their family.

If they don't win, they aren't just demoted. Coaches are fired. Without paying their dues by moving up the coaching ladder at smaller programs, head coaches are relegated to the ranks of assistants.

Athletes understand because they have been through coaching changes their entire competitive careers. Junior Bronco football player Drew Kishpaugh can empathize with his counterparts.

Boise State has lost its fair share of good coaches, but some of the greats are still on campus. These are people you might see on a daily basis. You might pass them on your way to the Student Union, or on your way to classes.

It might be about the money. But for some, Boise exists as the middle ground. Pockets aren't as deep, and the pressure isn't as high as it is in bigger programs and institutions, and as Sandmire says, "you can still treat your kids like people first, students second, and athletes third."

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Danger for fans on the field

BY TODD GABRIEL
Special to the Arbitrator

It is hard not to notice all of the people on the sidelines of a football game. Obviously you would expect to see players, coaches, trainers and people from the media. But who are all of those other people on the sidelines?

Who are those people who roam the outskirts of the field without a uniform, or even an apparent reason for being there? They are fans who have received sideline passes (for one reason or another) through the university athletic department.

Of course, the issue of fans on the sideline or fans on the field after the game may not even be an issue. That is until this year, when a Nebraska football player punched and subsequently knocked out a Missouri Tiger fan after what was called an "embarrassing defeat." Incidents like that makes one wonder who is more at risk by fan involvement after the conclusion of a game: the players or the fans.

These incidents are also the reason why the NCAA creates rules that govern the number of sideline passes available and the number of security personnel required for each football game.

According to Herb Criner, associate athletic director of operations, Boise State University supplies adequate security to ensure both fans and players safety.

"We use about 45 security people for our games, (and) about 70 people to surround the track as the clock runs down to the end of game," Criner said.

According to Coach Dan

Hawkins, the NCAA allows the university to provide 60 sideline passes. That number includes everyone who isn't a player or coach. However, while the NCAA sets the number of sideline passes available, it is up to the conference and university to enforce the rule.

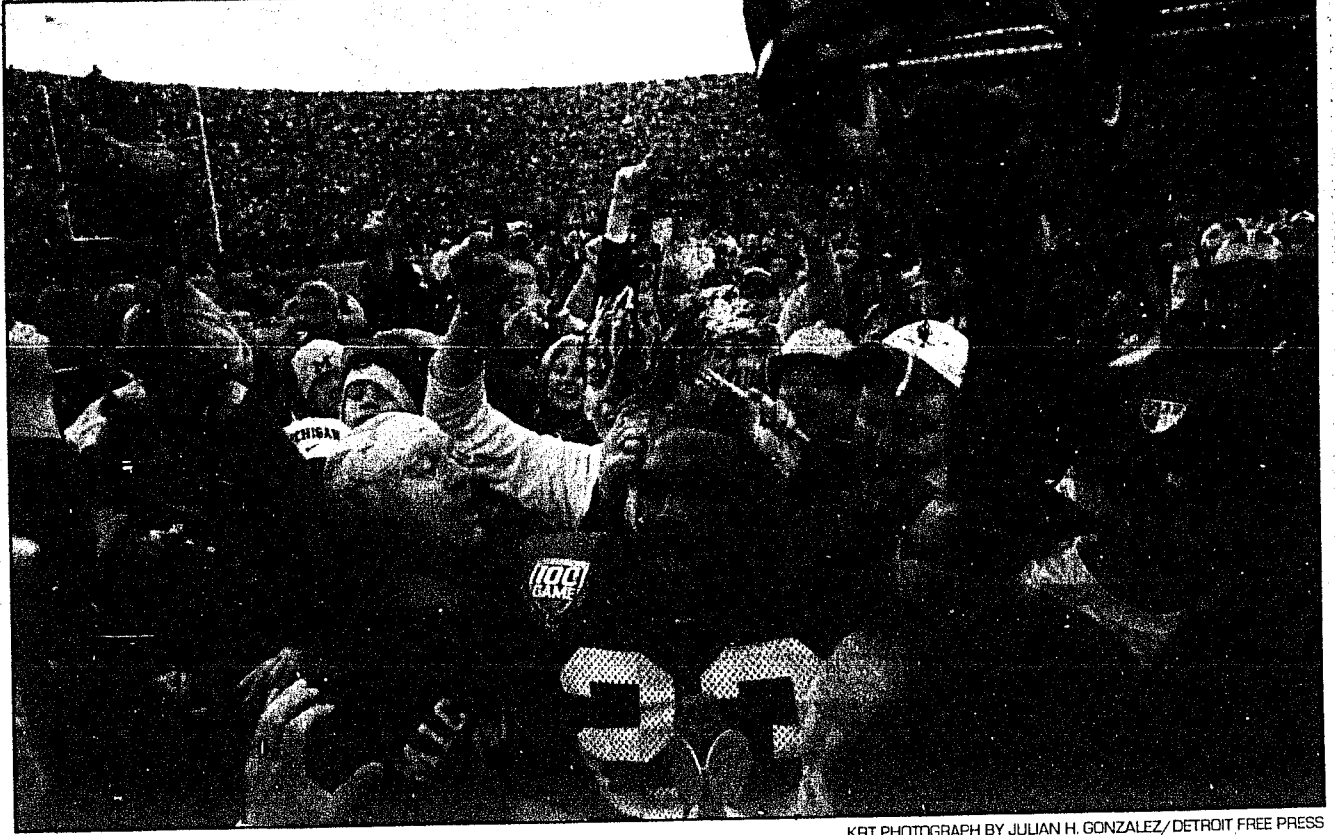
It is also up to the university to keep fans off of the playing field after the game has concluded. However, all too often we see excited fans storm past security and on the field to celebrate with their team. Seems harmless, right?

But in the case of the Missouri fan, the outcome wasn't so. Storming past security, only to get punched in the face by a player from the opposing team was his ill fate. The hit flooded national television airwaves.

"All it takes is one ugly thing to happen," Hawkins said.

As disturbing as that incident was, it did prompt other schools to act responsibly. For example: Virginia Tech installed "break away" goal posts to discourage fans from rushing the field to tear them down. As the game clock winds down, security officials lower the goal posts to the ground.

Storming the field is not limited to fans who want to



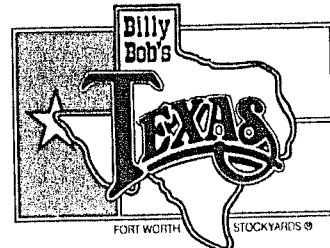
KRT PHOTOGRAPH BY JULIAN H. GONZALEZ/DETROIT FREE PRESS

University of Michigan RB Chris Perry (23) is mobbed by fans as he holds up a rose and his helmet after their 35-21 win over Ohio State University at Michigan Stadium

celebrate. Some schools, like Fresno State University, have rowdy fans that have been known to throw things on the field. In fact, Hawaii head coach June Jones has a framed screwdriver hanging on his office wall that was thrown at him during a game at Fresno State.

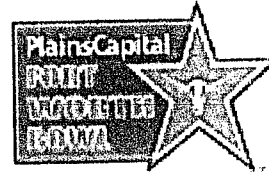
"Fresno State fans are pretty brutal. They throw things at you, and try and climb the fence to get at you," said David Mikell, running back for Boise State University.

According to Hawkins, he and his staff coach their players on ignoring the fans at Fresno State and to keep their helmets on at all times.



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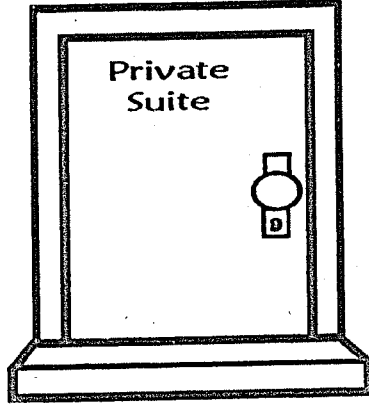
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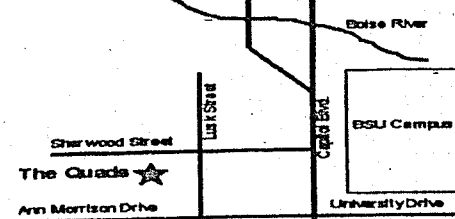
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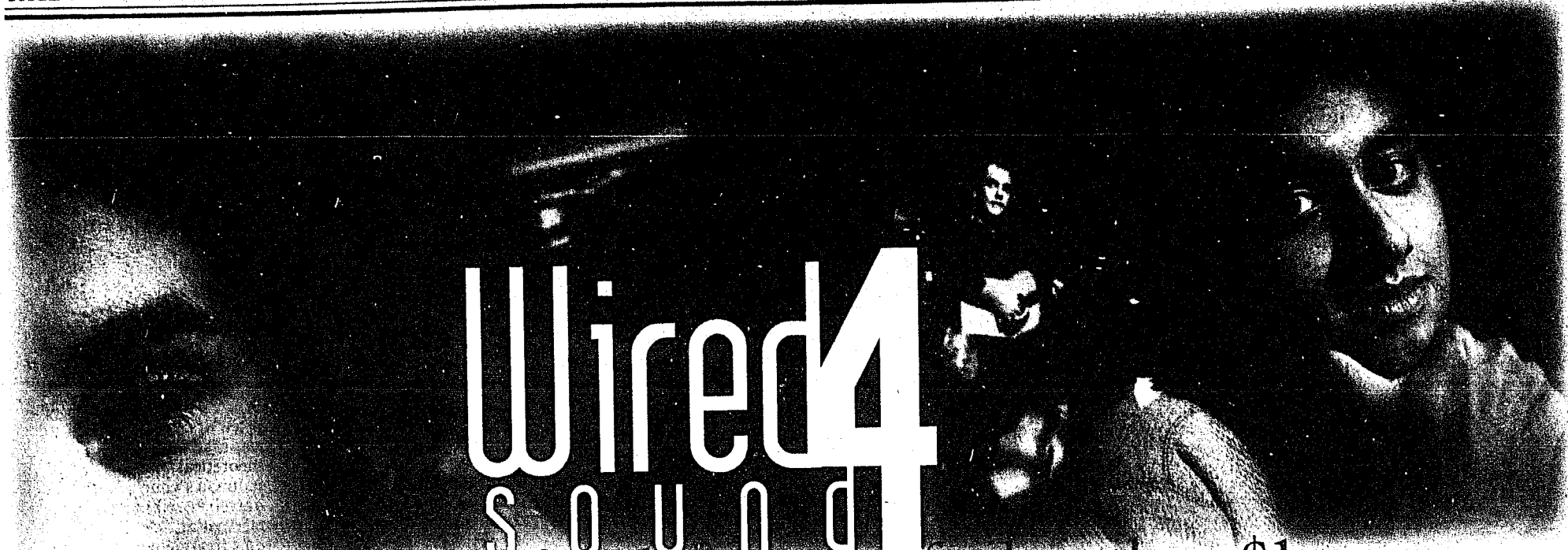
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Wired4 SOUND

Sites offer freedom, songs for less than \$1

BY HEATHER NEWMAN
Knight Ridder Newspapers
(KRT)

If you were among the millions of people who illegally downloaded music on the Internet because you liked the convenience of getting just the songs you wanted without ever leaving your living room, then it's time to open your wallet: You don't have an excuse for stealing songs anymore.

In the past couple months, five pay-for-play Web sites offering legal deals on thousands of songs have opened for business, with whopping catalogs and respectable sales. Yes, you'll pay for the music you want. But the price is reasonable, and the selection is good — and getting better.

The Detroit Free Press tested the five major services: Napster 2.0, iTunes Music Store, MusicMatch Downloads, Rhapsody and BuyMusic.com. We downloaded tracks and albums to see just how they worked and how easy they were to use.

Q: What's new about these services?

A: The size of their catalogs, for one thing. Most offer the complete works of the five largest record labels plus hundreds of independents.

The freedom you get with the songs you buy, for another. Even a year ago, you could buy a song, but not be able to copy it to a CD or take it with you in a portable music player. That's changed.

Q: How do they compare to free file-swapping programs, like the old Napster?

A: Most are more like traditional stores than the peer-to-peer networks that have supported Americans' digital music habits so far. You shop for the singles or albums you want, push a button to buy them and you're in business. Well, sort of.

Napster 2.0, which is not run by the same folks who created the original file-swapping service, has made more of an attempt to give its store a file-swapping feel, with the ability to look into other members' playlists and see what they're buying.

Q: Why should I pay for music instead of downloading it for free?

A: Yes, most of the profits are still going to the record labels, which ticked off many of their best

customers when it started harassing them about downloading.

Many of you wrote that you had turned to file-swapping programs because there were no legitimate options for getting the music you wanted, and that you were sick of being forced to buy complete CDs to get the one good song on them.

Well, now it's time to put your money where your mouths were.

I know there are still songs you want that aren't on these sites. But there are half a million songs you want that are here, ready to be paid for and downloaded. If your true objection was to the price-gouging you felt was going on — and your inability to buy just the song you wanted — then you should have signed up already. Otherwise, let's face it: You just wanted songs for free — and I don't have a lot of sympathy for that.

Q: Why download music instead of buying it at a store?

A: This is a tricky one. Stores still, in many cases, offer better advice. Jewel cases wrapped in plastic still make better gifts. Some stores offer deep collections of rare music you can't find easily or legitimately online. And CDs still have higher audio quality than most online music file formats.

But digital music is available without leaving the house, you can buy just what you want, and the selection of mainstream music available online is a lot better than your average retail outlet.

Q: How do I get the songs I want?

A: You can sample all but one of the services we profiled without paying a monthly fee, so if you're a heavy music shopper, go ahead and sign up for all five. You can compare prices between the services and see which has the artists you really care about.

The process typically goes something like this: Sign up. Download software. Cruise the catalog. Listen to samples. Buy what you want. Copy it to CD or to a portable player.

Rhapsody is the only one with a different model. For a \$9.95 monthly fee, you can stream unlimited full-length songs whenever you like, even queuing up an afternoon of your favorite U2 songs in a particular order.

The only way to download music from Rhapsody is to make a single copy on audio CD, where each song will cost 79 cents. But Rhapsody says they will soon be adding a more traditional store.

Q: How easy are the new services to use?

A: That depends. BuyMusic.com is the easiest,

with no software to download and a series of instructional videos online that show you exactly how to do the things you want (buy music, copy songs to a CD, etc.). But none of them requires a degree in rocket science.

MusicMatch Downloads was the hardest to get up and running, thanks in part to the host of windows that open every time you run the program — and the fact that the Downloads window, at least for us, showed up the size of a matchstick, hiding the service until we realized it had to be manually dragged out larger on the desktop.

The hardest part of the process is making MP3s if you have a music player that won't handle Windows Media Audio files. WMA files are used by all but one of the services (Apple uses its own AAC format). To make a WMA file into an MP3 file, we usually had to copy the songs to a CD, then rip them back off the CD onto our hard drive in MP3 format.

Q: How much does it cost?

A: There are minor differences, but it all pretty much boils down to a buck a song or \$10 an album. BuyMusic.com offers some tracks at 79 cents each, but most are 99 cents, just like the others. Apple's audio books range from \$3 to \$35. Tracks on Rhapsody cost 79 cents, but there's that \$9.95 monthly fee.

Q: What equipment do I need to use these services?

A: You'll need a PC with Internet access, preferably fast access if you plan on downloading a lot of multi-megabyte files. You'll need speakers and a sound card (or built-in sound capabilities) in your PC to play the tunes on your desktop. You'll need a CD-RW drive to burn CDs. And you'll need a portable music player to take tunes on the road when they're not on disc.

Q: How does the music sound?

A: For playing on your car stereo or your average boom box, it'll sound about like you're used to.

But because music files are compressed when they're posted online — it makes the file sizes smaller, so they're easier to download — they aren't as high-quality as a standard CD, and they certainly can't touch the higher fidelity in advanced audio formats like DVD-Audio or SACD. For casual use, however, they're absolutely dandy.

Downloading in 10 steps

If you want to buy songs online and listen to them, here's how it works in 10 (mostly) easy steps:

Step 1: Visit a site that sells digital music files.

Step 2: Download and install their software, if necessary.

Step 3: Shop.

Step 4: Decide whether to buy a single or an album.

Step 5: Click the Buy button to download the songs.

Step 6: If you want to listen to the music on your PC, fire up the software that came with the site and hit play. Or open Windows Media Player, Real Player or the music program of your choice and tell it where you put the downloaded files. You're ready to rock 'n' roll; skip to Step 10.

Step 7: If you want an audio CD, use the site's software to make one — or use a commercial music software program if the site doesn't have its own software. Use the instructions built into the software. Head to Step 10.

Step 8: If you want to use a portable player and the files are in a format your player can handle, use the site's software or the program that came with your player to load the tunes. Skip to Step 10.

Step 9: If you want MP3 files because that's what your portable player likes, but the service you chose uses Windows Media Audio (WMA) or Advanced Audio Coding (AAC) files like these four sites do, you've got an additional, irritating step. Make an audio CD, then use a music software program like Windows Media Player or MusicMatch Jukebox to rip the tracks back off to your hard drive as MP3 files. Now you can do what you want with them.

Step 10: Listen and enjoy.

Togetherhness is the only joke in 'Stuck on You'

By Glenn Lovell
Knight Ridder Newspapers
(KRT)

What do you look for in a new movie by Bobby and Peter Farrelly, the brother farceurs who have done for toilets and hair gel what the silent masters did for banana peels? I'll take a wild stab and guess that it's not lump-in-the-throat histrionics or periodic reminders that special-needs people are special and complete in their own way.

But that's basically what you get in the brothers' sticky sweet "Stuck on You," starring Matt Damon and Greg Kinnear as conjoined twins who never seem to know what each other is up to.

That's not only the big joke here, it's the only joke. Everything else is played either low-key or straight-faced in what has to be a Farrelly first:

an almost completely unfunny comedy that comes off as an apology for all the tasteless, scatological stuff that came before in "Dumb and Dumber" and "There's Something About Mary."

Thrown in helter-skelter to shore up this mirthless mess are guest appearances by Cher and Meryl Streep, who look equally uncomfortable as the boys' comic foils, and the usual inside-Hollywood zingers (half of which have Robert Evans as the punch line).

As you're listening for belly laughs or even chuckles that never come, ask yourself this: Did some do-gooder group finally get to the Farrellys and force them to mend their wicked, wicked ways? Do these guys, despite reports to the contrary, really have hearts and souls?

Based on what's on display here, it would appear so, darn

it! And there's nothing worse than a clown who, like a rehabilitated drunk, takes a vow of sobriety and demands that the whole world join him on the wagon.

Damon and Kinnear, who obviously have way too much spare time on their hands, play Bob and Walt Tenor who, though joined at the hip, are the very popular and efficient short-order cooks at the Quikkee Burger in Martha's Vineyard. To outside eyes they're unfortunate "freaks," worthy only of stares and put-downs. But to the locals who have followed their unconventional heroics in ice hockey and football — Walt passed to Bob for the winning touchdown in the Big Game — they're much-loved town characters.

Unfortunately, the brothers, besides looking different, have very different career paths. The shy, introverted Damon wants

to remain a hometown boy. Walt, on the other hand, aspires to the limelight. Already, he's a hit in a community theater production of "Tru," the one-man show that takes on a new meaning with Bob sweating profusely just beyond the spotlight.

Walt is persuasive enough to talk Bob into following him to Hollywood. (The guilt trip helps: Walt is aging faster and needs to strike now because Bob has most of their shared liver.) While making the rounds in Tinsel Town (and narrowly avoiding work as a porno novelty act) the boys happen upon a disgruntled Cher playing — who else? — a disgruntled Cher looking to get out of a bad TV series by signing a hopeless co-star.

To show what a good sport she can be, Cher plays on what's left of her image by yelling at her agent, "I'm a (blan-

kety-blank) Oscar winner!" and by appearing in bed with her latest boy toy (a wisely uncredited Frankie Muniz).

Before you can blurt out "Hey, isn't this Mel Brooks' 'The Producers!,'" the TV series is a hit and Walt is on the fast track to stardom. Complicating matters: his shady, out-of-it agent (Seymour Cassel) and Bob's courtship of a longtime e-mail buddy (Wen Yann Shih) who doesn't know he's already attached.

When the brothers are outed as the ultimate team (like the Farrellys?), they embrace their uniqueness and become local folk heroes. Can a visit to "The Tonight Show" with Jay Leno show be far off?

Think of the most obvious

"Stuck on You"

★1/2

Rated: PG-13 (for slight profanity, sexual situations)

Cast: Matt Damon, Greg Kinnear, Cher

Writer-directors: Bobby and Peter Farrelly

Running Time: 2 hours

sight gags involving two guys in one body who are always out of sync, and then play them over and over again for a punishing two hours. And when you're done with that, tack on a touchy-feely epilogue in which the boys — surrounded by real-life special-needs people — realize that being separate and "normal" may not be all it's cut out to be. The combination, both lax and lachrymose, is guaranteed to make you nostalgic for the Farrellys' most tasteless assaults. "Stuck on You" gives togetherhness a bad name.

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BOREALIS 'RINGS'?

HOLLYWOOD'S GOT ANOTHER LUSH LITERARY FANTASY TO SHARE

BY BOB THOMPSON
The Washington Post
LAT-WP News Service

Now that "The Lord of the Rings" has proven it can be done, now that we know that a three-part, nine-hour plunge into a multilayered fantasy world dreamed up by a one-time Oxford academic can become not just box office manna but also an International Cultural Happening, it's time to ask the inevitable question: When's the next epic three-part fantasy dreamed up by a one-time Oxford academic going to hit the big screen?

The answer: maybe in 2005, more likely in 2006.

The heir apparent is Philip Pullman's "His Dark Materials" trilogy. It's not the catchiest title, perhaps--most readers are more familiar with the books' individual titles, especially "The Golden Compass"--but it shows how high the author has set his sights: He borrowed it from Milton's "Paradise Lost." And although Pullman fans will tell you that their man's work is entirely original and un-Tolkienesque, one of the things he clearly shares with the creator of Middle-earth is ambition.

Executives at New Line and Scholastic Entertainment, who joined forces last year on the Pullman project, have plenty of ambition, too, though they're careful to play down the "Rings" comparison.

"I want to make it clear that we're not expecting the first movie to gross \$860 million worldwide," says Mark Ordesky, executive vice president and chief operating officer of New Line Productions, who watched in astonishment as his company's first Tolkien adaptation did just that. To tag "His Dark Materials" as "Lord of the Rings" revisited would be a disservice to Pullman, he says. It's the kind of thing only some "Hollywood huckster" would do.

But he does think the project has potential, right? "It has huge potential," Ordesky says.

As for Pullman, he's keeping his distance. He turned down an offer to write the screenplay--the job went to celebrated playwright Tom Stoppard--because after spending seven years writing the 1,300-page trilogy, "the last thing I want to do is take it apart and put it together again," he says. Still, he's happy to talk to the adapters, and he was pleased to hear that the New Line people were involved. He's not much of a Tolkien fan, but he admired what they did with the first "Rings" film.

Philip Pullman makes his home a couple of miles outside Oxford, where he taught in a middle school and then in a teacher-training college for many years. He moved out of the city after grinning fans began showing up at his door with stacks of books for him to sign. There are 6.5 million copies of "The Golden Compass," "The Subtle Knife" and "The Amber Spyglass" in print, not counting those translated into 37 foreign languages.

All this because, a decade or so ago, Pullman had a vision of a 12-year-old girl overhearing some grown-up talk she

wasn't meant to hear.

Lyra Belacqua--half-wild, fearless and endlessly resourceful--is one of the most compelling preadolescents in English literature. Known also as Lyra Silvertongue for her ability to spin mesmerizing falsehoods, she inhabits a world that appears to overlap with ours while being distinct in disorienting ways. She's a bit like a female version of Kipling's Anglo-Indian charmer Kim, though Pullman thinks she derives in part from pen-and-ink drawings of a French girl in a story he read as a boy: "a tough-looking character wearing a big black leather jacket and a short skirt."

The talk Lyra overhears among the scholars at Oxford's Jordan College, where she has been running free in the absence of her ambitious parents, involves a mysterious substance called Dust. Associated somehow with the Aurora Borealis, it is linked as well to the transition from childhood to adulthood, and the study of it appears to threaten the authority of the all-powerful established church. Before either Lyra or the reader can begin to figure all this out, however, one of her friends is kidnapped, and she finds herself headed for the Arctic, along with a band of fen-dwelling "gyptians," to rescue him and other missing children. Along the way, she learns to read a truth-telling

instrument called an alethiometer and acquires a new identity: a girl with a preordained mission, a child about whom "the witches have talked... for centuries past."

The richness of the story that Pullman created around his initial vision is, like any fully realized alternative universe, impossible to convey by simply listing characters and plot elements. One of his most striking inventions--"the best idea I've ever had, really," he says--is the notion that humans in Lyra's world are accompanied everywhere by "daemons," individual soul mates in animal form without whom they are not whole. At first, he wasn't sure the idea would work; if daemons came off as "talking pets," they'd only clutter up the story. Then he saw that he could use his characters' relationships with their daemons to bring psychological insights to life.

All of this appeals to would-be filmmakers. Who wouldn't be attracted to a thrilling adventure story stocked with wonderfully drawn scenes, heart-tugging characters and a spicy stew of intellectual themes to be digested--or not--as the audience desires? Especially when you throw in the cosmic rebel Lord Asriel and his lethal paramour, Mrs. Coulter. And a knife that cuts through air to reveal parallel worlds. And 12-year-old Will Parry, a male lead almost as compelling as Lyra, whom she

meets in the second book. And an armored bear.

"If you had asked me what totally sold me on making this movie," says New Line Productions President Toby Emmerich, "it was two words: Iorek Byrnison."

Pullman, who readily acknowledges his many borrowings, says this particular beast came straight out of his own imagination. "It was the phrase first, 'the armored bear,'" he says, and then he had to make something of it. Helped along by polar lore gleaned from "Arctic Dreams," a "wonderful, wonderful" non-fiction book by Barry Lopez, he came up with the notion of great white bears with metal-working skills who fight in armor, like ursine knights, and of one such creature in particular, the deposed bear king Iorek Byrnison. Iorek bounds onstage halfway through "The Golden Compass"--that's him on the cover of the best-known American edition, with Lyra on his back--and by sheer force of personality achieves instant star billing.

When those films are made, they'll owe their existence in no small part to Deborah Forte, the president of Scholastic Entertainment, who read "The Golden Compass" in manuscript form (it was published in the U.K. as "Northern Lights" in 1995) and promptly went after the movie rights. "I said, wherever this book is going, I want to go with

it," recalls Forte, who is to produce the film project. She had a moment of wanting to make a movie right away, but after the second volume appeared, she knew she had to wait to see where the story was going. New Line sought her out after "The Amber Spyglass" won the Whitbread Book of the Year prize in 2001, and together they agreed to ask Stoppard to write an initial screenplay.

"I thought he had the most wonderful imagination," Stoppard says of his reaction to reading Pullman, which he did before agreeing to take on the adaptation. The trilogy's narrative architecture gave him some trouble, as might be expected with what he calls "a wild toboggan ride" of a story in which time is a bit elastic. But he found Pullman generous and "not at all defensive" when consulted, which made him less nervous about making changes.

Stoppard has completed a screenplay based on "The Golden Compass"--it took

three drafts, he says, and he was asked to lose some of the theoretical physics behind Pullman's concept of parallel universes, which he'd found fascinating--and has started on a treatment of the next two books. Among other changes, he brings Will into the story at the end of the first film and he introduces a major villain, Father MacPhail, much earlier than Pullman did.

New Line's Emmerich says he's happy with Stoppard's work, but adds, "I would be really shocked if a director said, 'Yup, I want to shoot this screenplay as is.' I've never seen it happen." He and Forte have done "a global list" of directors, but neither will say where the hiring process stands. They don't know yet whether "His Dark Materials" will end up as two movies or three, though Emmerich says the most likely scenario would be to shoot the first one and then, assuming it succeeds, shoot a second and third film simultaneously.

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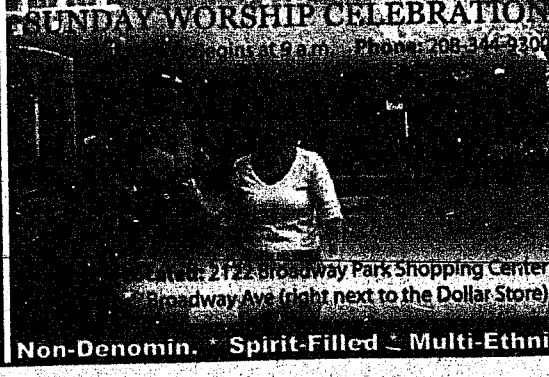
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