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Red Dirt Journal



Oklahoma Institute for Diversity in Journalism

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screenshot of Wikipedia

INCREDIBLE SOURCE: Wikipedia is a web-based encyclopedia written and edited by its readers. Many scholars question the veracity of its information.

Questioning Wikipedia

Professors, bosses discourage people from relying solely on encyclopedia

ASHLY MENDEZ
Red Dirt Journal

For 132 days, John Seigenthaler, founder of the First Amendment Center in Nashville, did not realize he had been linked on Wikipedia to the slayings of President John F. Kennedy and his brother, Robert, for whom Seigenthaler had worked.

Seigenthaler, 82, a longtime journalist, contacted Jimmy Wales, founder of the free online encyclopedia to which virtually anyone can post and for students is a quick and easy source of information. At times, the information has been false.

Wales offered little help when Seigenthaler asked who had written about him. In November 2005, Seigenthaler wrote in USA today that he asked Wales, "Do you ... have any way to know who wrote that?" Wales's response was "No, we don't."

In a telephone interview June 17, Seigenthaler said, "Jimmy Wales founded it but does not control it. If I were to teach a class, I would say not to use Wikipedia. It's not a reliable source."

Since Wikipedia essentially allows anyone to log on and post information, true or not, schools discourage its use. "You can't look at Wikipedia and not be impressed," Seigenthaler said, "but you have to look closely."

In interviews at the University of Oklahoma, teachers acknowledged that reading Wikipedia is a good way to begin research but said they tell students to avoid it as a source.

"Teachers and students are told to use library databases for research instead of Wikipedia," said Cherith Ferguson, an OU graduate who assists advisers in the English Department. Nevertheless, she added, "About 15 percent of students still use Wikipedia."

Because they procrastinate and are lazy, Ferguson said, some students still cite Wikipedia as a source despite having to incur a grade deduction.

At OU, more than 250 databases are available to students, said Sarah Robbins, web services coordinator and public information officer for OU Libraries. These

include the respected Encyclopedia Britannica, which began publishing its first edition in 1768 and, she said, a new website called Discover, intended to welcome visitors to the "Front Door of the University."

Hospitals and medical schools also discourage using Wikipedia. Anna Mendez, a medical student at Texas Tech Anita Thigpen Perry School of Nursing, said students are told repeatedly not to use it. When researching life-threatening diseases, injuries and illnesses, incorrect Wikipedia information can be dangerous, she said.

Seigenthaler's quest to clear his name eventually led to Brian Chase, 38, who worked at a Nashville delivery company and said he posted the false information while trying to play a trick on a co-worker, the Associated Press reported a month after Seigenthaler's article appeared.

Wikipedia, which relies on hundreds of volunteers to edit and remove errors, then began requiring users to register before posting articles. But the system has not always discouraged potential troublemakers.

"The real threat is how do you regulate something like that, and you really can't," Seigenthaler said.

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3-D TVs look to fill living rooms

Initial sticker price may curb demand but more offerings may spur adoption

ALEX MAXWELL
Red Dirt Journal

A dark, scintillating black screen reflects sporadic wisps of color from nearby television sets displayed in the electronics department at Sears in Norman. Suddenly, magic!

Colors from all spectrums rush together to form images that contrast sharply with the background. Only through special glasses can the feeling of being deeply enthralled and involved in the action be seen. Without the glasses, no magic happens, just blurry chaos and confusion because human eyes cannot distinguish the dual off-center images that produce depth and glamor.

The next step in home entertainment is on the market. Three-dimensional, high-definition television (3-D HDTV) is making its way to America's living rooms.

3-D movies have been on and off the silver screen for nearly a century. Their popularity increased in the 1950s "as a way to adapt to television spectatorship, which was really on the rise, so films actually went for a number of innovations to try and contrast film with television really distinctively," said Katrina Boyd, professor of comparative literature and film studies at the University of Oklahoma.

"It's always come in little waves, and I would say that it never really caught on as something that would be super widespread ... I think one of the reasons it didn't really endure initially is that it would be used as a kind of flashy thing," she said. 3-D's success, she said "depends on how well the technology is integrated into the type of storytelling."

During boom periods of the '50s and '80s, new generations of audiences have been horrified and astonished. In the '50s, titles such as "Creature from the Black Lagoon," "Dial M for Murder" and many science-fiction and horror films offered quirky 3-D gimmicks and cheap thrills. In the '80s, renewed interest sprouted with hit films such as "Jaws 3-D" and "A Nightmare on



photo by Alex Maxwell

SEEING IS BELIEVING: Sears Electronic Salesman Kyle Warmack gazes upon the 3-D television while wearing a set of \$149.99 Samsung issued 3-D glasses.

Elm Street 3: Dream Warrior."

These maintained the iconic traditions of inexpensive adventure and twin images coordinated by blue and red glasses. The impact of 3-D movies on American pop culture left an image of Hollywood action and bustle, although storylines were often incoherent.

"It all kind of started with 'Avatar' being such good 3-D and made so much money," said Scott Hodgson, professor of Broadcasting and Media Arts at OU. "They look as it as, hey, is this a possibility for doing more 3-D, and in effect, a lot of 2-D movies have converted their stuff into 3-D to say, hey, can we make more money in a 3-D realm? But the question is: if it works nice in a theater, will it work nice at home?"

Released last year, "Avatar," has paved the way for recent 3-D films such as "Shrek Forever After," "Alice in Wonderland" and

"Toy Story 3."

"There's an interest as seeing it, but the cost of 3-D technology is actually really high and as far demand goes, there isn't much," said Kyle Warmack, a Sears electronics salesman. "I don't think it's worth it because just like any technological feed, it always gets rushed out, and this is rushed out."

Warmack's department stocks Samsung 3-D sets priced between \$2,000 and \$7,000, depending on the size and model. Samsung's lone sale model includes viewing glasses and the Blu-ray movie "Monsters vs Aliens." Extra glasses cost \$149.99 a pair or \$350 for two plus the movie. Watching that movie requires a \$349.99 Blu-ray 3-D player, according to Sears.com.

The Samsung model also includes 2-D, which Warmack described as "not good. If you have something that's shot in 2-D, and

you try and make it 3-D, it's not going to be 3-D. It's going to not look great. The only thing to this date that really has been shot with 3-D cameras is 'Avatar.' Everything else has been shot with 2-D, and 2-D to 3-D you can't do that."

Hodgson said when major manufacturers introduce new technology, "the first level is always more expensive." He noted that people seeking to be on the forefront of technology are always willing to pay a little extra. "The more units they sell, the cheaper it is to produce them," Hodgson said.

In time, he said, 3-D may be "really good. Sports might be one of those things that creates it."

The only available 3-D programming is the 3-D "Monsters vs Aliens" movie and an ESPN 3-D channel featuring soccer's World Cup tournament.

Cobell Suit settlement delayed

Lawsuit claims U.S. mishandled funds earmarked for Native Americans

MIRANDA SANCHEZ
Red Dirt Journal

Nearly 50,000 Oklahoma Indians would be eligible to receive a minimum of \$1,000 from the federal government if a multi-billion dollar lawsuit settlement is passed by the U.S. Senate, said Oklahoma Congressman Tom Cole.

Another 450,000 Individual Indian Money account holders across the country also would receive the payout. That's almost 20 percent of the three million American Indians living in the U.S., according to the 2000 Census.

On June 16, the Senate once again postponed voting on the settlement for the third time this year. July 9 is now the deadline for the Senate to overcome this last hurdle to the settlement of the lawsuit that was first filed in 1996 by Elouise Cobell, a member of the Blackfeet Nation who lives in Montana.

Cole, an enrolled member of the Chickasaw Nation, said he has been a strong supporter of settling the Cobell case. However, since the settlement was attached to the American Jobs and Closing Tax Loopholes Act of 2010, or HR 4213, he voted against it when it passed the U.S. House of Representatives.

"It spends too much," said Cole. "There is an extra \$200 billion in addition to the settlement. It should have been considered individually. [The Cobell lawsuit settlement] has become a part of a catch-all spending bill."

The American Jobs and Closing Tax Loopholes Act of 2010 includes business tax relief, pension relief, trade provisions, unemployment insurance, a veterans concurrent receipt, national housing trust fund, closing foreign tax loopholes, federal Medicaid matching rate, and lastly, the Cobell settlement, according to the bill's summary.

The greater part of the Indian account holders have inherited their accounts from their family members, sometimes from uncles or aunts, but the majority are inher-



photo by Mark Wilson/Getty Images North America

AWAITING JUDGMENT: Elouise Cobell watches as Interior Secretary Ken Salazar testifies during a December 2009 Senate Indian Affairs Committee hearing in Washington, D.C.

ited from parents or grandparents, said a former Bureau of Indian Affairs employee who asked not to be identified.

The older generation of account holders are the ones who have received the fewest payments and least information from the government, she said.

Ruth White Skunk, a Cheyenne Nation member, understands the frustration of account holders.

"My 86-year-old mother had a grandmother that did not have a probate hearing when she passed away," White Skunk said. "And that was years and years ago. What happened to her land and the money in her account and her mineral rights?"

The addition of the Cobell settlement to HR 4213 has disappointed the Indian account holders.

"The U.S. government keeps stonewalling the efforts to get the settlement passed, and jumbling it with other bills isn't helping," said White Skunk, who's in her 60s.

Time has been a concerning factor for many Indian account holders.

"I'd like them to agree to the settlement soon because some people that are being fought for are dying before they can get their justice," White Skunk said.

Bill McAllister, spokesman for the lead plaintiff Elouise Cobell, is another in sup-

port of ending the case. He sees the government's offer of \$3.4 billion as the best arrangement that can be reached.

"Critics are ignorant of the case and the last few years of the case," McAllister said. "Originally we were offered \$455.6 million. Now we have an offer of more than a billion for the settlement."

Though the lawsuit is 14 years old, its origin dates back to the Dawes Act of 1887 that divided the American Indian reservation lands into individual plots.

The case itself began with Cobell who filed a lawsuit against the federal government in 1996 because of the government's inability to account for the American Indian trust funds. The Dawes Act placed the government in charge of the funds. Cobell is the great granddaughter of Mountain Chief, a legendary Indian leader. She was also a founder of the Blackfeet National Bank.

"The government was to manage those lands, which set in motion a whole series of actions that have created a convoluted and corrupt system," said McAllister, who has been following the case since it began in 1996 when he was working for the Washington Post. "The government was supposed to take the money that was leased from these Indian lands and put it in ac-

counts for those Indians."

However, since the act was put into place, the government has failed to keep track of the accounts and misplaced records that had potential to fix their system, McAllister said.

"Elouise heard stories about the problems with the trust system and was determined to try and resolve them," McAllister said. "So in the '90s, she sued the government over it."

Cobell, herself now 63, has put a great deal of personal effort into keeping the American Indian population informed on the case, White Skunk said.

"We were given an e-mail address to correspond with Ms. Cobell. She said she'd try to answer as many as possible and I read online that many questions were actually responded to that have been helpful regarding our accounts," White Skunk said.

Not only has Cobell helped others, but also she has received a helping hand herself, from the current administration. McAllister credits the Obama administration with bringing the case so close to the end.

"The Clinton administration and the Bush administration showed no inclination to settle the case," said McAllister. "The Obama administration has been the most helpful. They've been trying to get this pushed through."

Although there has been praise for the Obama administration, some are still frustrated with the time it's taken to get the settlement passed.

"This is a settlement the Obama Administration negotiated," Cole said. "I'm not critical of [Interior Secretary Ken] Salazar or the president. They did a good job and have solved the problem. All Congress has to do is write the check. The failure of that is astonishing to me."

If the U.S. Senate passes the bill on July 9, Individual Indian Money account holders will still have to apply to receive compensation. Cobell and McAllister have plans to circulate information to the account holders through advertisements.

Nevertheless there are still those that are skeptical that the bill will survive.

"The treaties made by the government were supposed to take care of us as long as the grass grows and the river flows, but we usually are forgotten," White Skunk said. "So I don't think it will pass. I have a feeling it will be another 14 years."



photo by Shannon Reyher

READY TO CHASE: VORTEX2 trucks are lined up after 6 weeks of storm tracking. Researchers working at the Cooperative Institute for Mesoscale Meteorological Studies will spend most of their time in one of these truck during the 6-week tornado season.

High-tech tornado spotting

New technology broadens the gap between amateur, professional chasers

SHANNON REYHER
Red Dirt Journal

Daphne Thompson, Don Burgess and Kiel Ortega say it's a matter of "Do what we say, not what we do."

The three trained, experienced storm chasers say thrill-seekers can put not only themselves but also the experts in danger and can interrupt the flow of information to the public at critical times.

Their actions also can limit the amount of needed information that scientists collect during severe storms, the experts said.

"They're not getting any scientific data, just doing it for the thrill," said Burgess. "They speed and drive recklessly, and they don't do things they should do."

"And there are so many of them that it gets hard to do the scientific part. Our

worst day was May 19. There were so many amateurs out there that we couldn't do completely the science part," said Burgess, a research scientist for the Cooperative Institute for Mesoscale Meteorological Studies in Norman.

Burgess, 63, has been studying tornadoes and severe storms since he was a student at The University of Oklahoma in 1970.

He thinks the future of storm chasing will include the widespread use of unmanned air vehicles and reliable tornado warnings based on forecasts, not waiting on spotters to see the twister.

Burgess said issuing a warning 45 minutes before the storm spawns a tornado would give large gatherings of people, such as businesses, sporting events, hospitals and nursing homes, time to prepare.

As for the thrill-seekers, Burgess said,

"I'm hoping the reality TV fad will fade and maybe some of the craziness will go away."

Thompson and Ortega agreed with Burgess' concerns about the untrained adrenaline-junkies pushing to get close to tornadoes.

"Thrill-seeking tornado chasers get way too close to the dangerous parts of storms," said Thompson. "Sometimes that is the tornado, and sometimes it is large hail. If they are driving recklessly, they are a danger to anyone on the road. However, they are more apt to be a danger to themselves."

Most weekends in May and June—the prime months for tornado activity in Oklahoma—Thompson and her husband, Richard, pack up their two boys in their Honda Odyssey and chase storms. Daphne and Richard Thompson are meteorologists for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

"Anyone who goes out there is an amateur, whether they have a degree or not," said Daphne Thompson. "I don't consider

myself an amateur since I have been chasing for 20 years. I don't consider myself a professional chaser, either. It is just a hobby for me."

Ortega started chasing tornadoes when he was 16, but he had participated in a storm spotter class.

Now, Ortega is a research associate for the Cooperative Institute for Mesoscale Meteorological Studies. He spent six weeks in May and June looking for tornadoes as part of VORTEX2, the largest-ever research project to explore how, when and why tornadoes form. Scientists traveled a 900-mile area spread over seven states.

In addition to the four tornadoes Ortega saw, he also witnessed some reckless driving by other people trying to get a glimpse of twisters.

"The problem is when they don't obey traffic laws," said Ortega. "My job is to sit in the passenger seat telling (the driver) that we need to go over there, watch for bad spots (in the road) and for those who run red lights."

Cafeterias serve up healthier fare



NUTRITION À LA CARTE:

Campers scoop up nutritional foods from the salad bar at the Couch Cafeteria on the University of Oklahoma campus. Couch has a variety of food options to choose from for the 50,000 campers that sweep through OU each Summer.

photo by Trey Mitchell

Public schools aim to improve menus to prime students on healthy eating

AN-NAM TRAN
Red Dirt Journal

With childhood obesity on the rise, school meals are changing. Schools in Norman and Oklahoma City are joining districts across the nation to ensure healthy, nutritious food is being served.

According to the website for Sodexo, which runs the food service for Norman Public Schools, their aim is to “serve young guests healthy, balanced and imaginative meals.”

Cindy Stanbrough, the director of the

Norman Child Nutrition Department for Sodexo, said elementary schools are sending out promotions and fliers about healthy eating to middle and elementary schools in Norman.

“Elementary schools now have vegetable and fruit gardens that were funded by donations and grants,” said Stanbrough.

She said Norman Public Schools supports Alliance for a Healthier Generation. According to their website, the organization was founded by the American Heart Association and the Clinton Foundation to promote healthy eating and lifestyles for children in their homes, schools and communities.

Another school meal program, Chartwells, is the provider for Wilson Elementary in Oklahoma City. Chartwells’ mission is: “Nourishing students is not only our business; it is our commitment to the communities in which we serve.”

Judy Young, food service assistant at

Wilson, said Chartwells provides a menu for each day.

“Chartwells is concerned about the sugar children take in everyday, so they look at everything. The food products have low sugar content, more protein and high fiber content.”

Young said the menu has improved since last year. Chocolate milk and whole milk have been removed from the selection of milk. The only milk that is served is 1 percent and 2 percent. Also, tater tots and french fries are baked and vegetables are steamed.

She said students were not too fond about the new menu. But in time, they grew accustomed to it.

“The menu changed from last year and it was totally different,” she said. “I think what we are serving is giving the children an idea on what is nutritious and what to eat at home, instead of eating fast food all the time.”

To her surprise, students love the chef salad, which contains iceberg lettuce, egg, cheese, a meat product, carrots and tomato.

Local schools are not acting alone. Federal lawmakers worked together to pass the Child Nutrition Reauthorization in 2010. President Obama asked for an additional \$1 billion per year for the next ten years to fund child nutrition programs, but the bill includes only \$450 million per year for ten years to fund those programs.

The money will expand after school meal programs to the remaining 37 states, increase federal reimbursement rates for schools who serve more nutritious food during lunch, and redesign the free and reduce meals program qualifications.

Michelle Obama spoke out about the bill. “Our kids don’t decide whether they’ll learn about healthy eating or nutrition at school. They don’t make those decisions. If we make the decisions, then we can decide to solve this problem,” she said.

Recession alters homeless rates

More families find refuge on streets, shelters in fallout of mortgage crisis

AARON VALLES
Red Dirt Journal

“The face of homelessness is changing,” reflecting national trends that defy stereotypes, said Heidi Brandes, marketing and communications director of The Salvation Army in Oklahoma City, where many of the area’s homeless find food and temporary shelter.

“We think of homeless people as the guy with a bottle sitting under a bridge,” she said. “Nowadays, close to half of the homeless are people who had homes; they are children; they are working families.”

A survey conducted by the Homeless Alliance in 2010 found that about 1,000 people are homeless in Oklahoma City. Each one has a different story, whether it is from being one paycheck away from making a mortgage payment to people without resources.

“People with disabilities and mental illness are common among the homeless community,” Brandes said. “A great deal of the street homeless, about 80 percent of them, are mentally ill in some way and have no access to medication; so that continues that cycle of homelessness.”

In the past five years, families with children have become the fastest-growing population of homeless, the survey reported.

“When you think about homeless, a lot of people think of middle-aged minority males,” Brandes said.

In Oklahoma City this isn’t the case. Forty-four percent of homeless are white, the survey reported. Thirty-eight percent are black, four percent are Native American, six percent are Hispanic and four percent are Asian.

Julie Richardson of Norman has been homeless for a year. She works for The Salvation Army and has three children who were taken away from her by authorities.

“When they took my kids, my heart skipped a beat, and I just wanted to hurt whoever took them.” Richardson said.

“A lot of people - families included - don’t choose to be homeless,” she said. “Right



photo by Aaron Valles

A PLACE TO CALL HOME: Tony Weryack is a homeless man who lives on the streets in downtown Oklahoma City. Weryack has been homeless for five years and is diabetic and anemic. A survey conducted by the Homeless Alliance in 2010 found that about 1,000 people are homeless in Oklahoma City.

now, we are in an economic crisis and it is hard to find a job.”

The total number of Oklahoma City homeless has decreased from 1,415 in 2008 to 1,081 this year.

According to a press release from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, a recent study shows that there was a nearly five-fold increase in the rate of houses overcrowding, suggesting that many families are doubling up.

A National Homeless Assessment Report shows that homeless families are increasing. But in Oklahoma, the number of both families and chronically homeless individuals has decreased.

Tony Weryack has been homeless for five years. He is diabetic, anemic, has a broken hand, and is missing some toes. He doesn’t have a family to support him. Weryack said he was going through his disability monthly payment and had just seen his doctor; however, he has to wait three months. His doctor told him he could qualify for his disability - but waiting even a few months can

be crucial out on the street.

Weryack said homeless people are not always treated well.

“I had some brand new Nikes, and I was sleeping on the concrete, and it was winter and somebody stole my shoes,” Weryack said. “I got up and I didn’t have no shoes. All I had on was socks.”

Weryack, whose daily hangout is at the corner of Sheridan and Western in downtown Oklahoma City said passersby are usually not friendly.

“Some people make rude comments like ‘Get a job’ and stuff like that, and I am like ‘You don’t know my situation, you don’t know my medical issues, I can’t work,’” he said. “If I could work, I would work.”

There are still some nice people out here, though, Weryack said. He often sleeps under bridges and overpasses.

Shelters like The Salvation Army and Food and Shelter for Friends in Norman help any person that is in a bad economic situation. People in need of a place to stay can go there any time. There is no compli-

cated process.

The Salvation Army provides resident shelters, utility assistance, clothing and a social service office, which provides people in need with groceries.

The Salvation Army has a public feeding program where they feed anywhere from 80 to 200 people every day, Brandes said. They also have a Warm for Winter program where they give out coats for those who need them. They also have five senior citizen centers in the Oklahoma City metro area. Kids are also on The Salvation Army’s mind. They have a Boys and Girls club in southside Oklahoma City.

However, people can’t hang out at the shelter all day. Men have to be out of the shelter at seven thirty in the morning, and are allowed back in at four in the afternoon, but this is not always the case. For example, when there are severe weather conditions, the doors are open.

“I have a feeling that until the recession eases up a bit, we are going to see much more of it,” said Brandes.

Oil spill concerns seafood sellers

Local grocers, restaurateurs buy fish, shrimp from outside spill area

WES TOMLIN

Red Dirt Journal

Due to the recent oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico by the British Petroleum company, now known as BP, local seafood restaurants are having to change more than the price of fish.

Restaurants like GoGo Sushi Express and Express in Moore, Okla., are having minor problems because of the oil spill. The prices of shrimp, especially gulf shrimp, have gone up since the incident.

Although restaurants such as the Moore sushi grill get a few questions about the safety of the seafood they serve, customers are still coming faithfully, employee Lisa Nguyen said.

Nguyen said the restaurant does get some of its seafood from the gulf but only from areas allowed to remain open.

"We only use fresh fish," said Nguyen. "Most of it comes from sources outside the Gulf of Mexico."

Other stores like Homeland have stopped buying seafood from the gulf. Pam Lone, a meat cutter at a Homeland store in Norman, said the store has stopped receiving any seafood products from the Gulf of Mexico.

"There is a lot of shrimp that we normally carry that we are out of, [like] gulf shrimp," Lone said.

Lone said that Homeland has not lost or gained customers because of media reports about the oil spill.

According to a federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA) spokeswoman, the FDA has just started testing for long term effects and it is too early to say if there is anything to be worried about.

"It's just premature to tell if the fish going as far as restaurants will be a problem or not- we just started testing," she said.

The spokeswoman confirmed that the FDA has not found any type of contamination in the seafood coming out of the gulf at this point. The main contaminated areas have been closed off from fishing.

These efforts do not seem to be enough



photo by Miranda Sanchez

CAUGHT IN THE MIDDLE: The price of seafood products sold at GoGo Sushi Express and Grill in Moore, Okla., have increased because of the BP oil spill.

to keep people from catching possibly infected fish. The Christian Science Monitor reported that a small "shrimping" boat was found leaving the gulf after catching fish in a restricted fishing area. Before the boat reached land, the Coast Guard stopped it and confiscated thousands of pounds of shrimp aboard the boat.

These sort of incidents have caused people to question the safety of seafood.

According to the FDA's website, the best way to avoid anything contaminated getting into the market is to close off the waters used for harvesting that are most infested with oil.

As for the protecting restaurants from buying and selling contaminated food, the FDA says:

"More than 3,000 state, local and tribal agencies have primary responsibility to regulate the retail food and food service industries in the United States. They are

responsible for the inspection and oversight of over 1 million food establishments - restaurants and grocery stores, as well as vending machines, cafeterias, and other outlets in health-care facilities, schools, and correctional facilities."

Peter Muriana, a food microbiologist at Oklahoma State University, has similar beliefs on the safety of the seafood out in the market now.

Muriana said the consumer might be able to detect infected fish. Infected fish will look slimy, has an bad odor, and has a bad taste.

There are still those like Anna Cruse who doubt the actual safety of the fish and seafood on the market.

Cruse is an assistant professor in the geology department at Oklahoma State University. Her specialty is sedimentary geochemistry, organic geochemistry, and oceanography.

Cruse believes that there is a certain risk involved in eating seafood now and also for generations to come. She believes that there is no way for a consumer to know if the seafood they have just been served is contaminated with crude oil or not.

"That's the problem. There is no way to tell if it doesn't taste any different, it doesn't smell feel, smell, or even look any different to us [the normal consumer]. Unfortunately we would probably enjoy it, eat it and think it tasted good," she said.

Cruse has her own theory on what will happen. Sea organisms at the bottom of the food chain will be contaminated first. And as fish get eaten and the contamination works its way up the food chain, it will be easier for consumers to get infected.

She believes the possible effects from eating contaminated seafood would be major, but not seen until 10 to 15 years after consumption.

Norman named 'Fair Trade Town'

Business owners, consumers drove campaign to earn national honor

BECCA SMITH
Red Dirt Journal

Norman recently became the 17th "Fair Trade Town" in the country, something local business owners hope will create more support for local producers and bring awareness to issues like ethical trade practices.

Richard Haas, the manager of The Earth Natural Foods and Garden, said fair trade focuses on keeping money in the local economy to support farmers and other local companies.

"There's obviously still a demand for a lot of these products that are produced in developing nations, and I think it gives people an opportunity to vote with their dollar and to choose companies that are promoting fair wages and fair compensation for producers," he said.

Although there are only 17 towns in the United States that are recognized as Fair Trade Towns, Haas said he thinks this trend is growing and is becoming more important to consumers.

"People are becoming aware that for food and goods to be so cheap, somewhere in the line, someone is suffering the cost of those really cheap goods and people are realizing that they have to watch their budget but be a consumer with a conscience," he said.

Products such as coffee, tea and chocolate seem to be the focus of many fair trade efforts.

Jason Skeel, manager of Cafe Plaid, said the US takes advantage of the poor economic situations of the farmers in most of the coffee-producing countries.

"It's because coffee is produced in nations with weak governments that are poor, and bigger, stronger governments like ours can go to these countries and these growers and bully them," Skeel said. "They are willing to give up their product for essentially nothing, which is what our government is willing to pay them. I think that this situation has created a bigger disparity in the coffee industry - it's been exploited worse than most industries - and that's why



FARE IS FAIR: Jenelle Fauchier works behind the counter at Norman coffee shop Cafe Plaid, which offers a variety of fair trade and organic coffee and teas. *photo by Becca Smith*

there's a big push for fair trade in that industry."

Mayor Cindy Rosenthal said an activist group, Norman Fair Trade, brought the fair trade movement to her attention two years ago.

"I was approached by a local group of people who were interested in and encouraging Norman to become a Fair Trade Town," she said. "The Human Rights Commission in Norman worked with the group to craft a resolution and policy that came forward."

The mayor also said because OU brings international influence to its student body, fair trade is a good fit for the Norman community.

OU also creates an environment that is concerned about international issues.

"Having the university here allows more people to be engaged in current events and social issues, which increases the level of awareness by student organizations trying to bring more focus and attention to these issues," Haas said.

For some companies around Norman, including Cafe Plaid, it was essential to

adopt fair trade practices quickly.

"With our location and our customer base, it was almost a necessity for us to change. If we hadn't changed, we would have lost business to other places," Skeel said.

Many residents of Norman are concerned about the prices of fair trade products, but Skeel said costs will decrease over time.

"The more we support this, the more patient we are, the more products we will see in our communities that will drive the price down quite a bit. So you're going to find higher quality at not that much higher of a price," he said.

Rosenthal said it's easy for residents to learn how to support fair trade companies.

"They can learn about which local businesses do offer fair trade, be cognizant of those businesses and patronize them," she said. "They can look at their own buying habits and make those choices when appropriate for them."

Skeel said individuals can research online and attend Norman Fair Trade meetings to learn about the movement.



photo by Becca Smith

COFFEE TRADE: Coffee is a common fair trade commodity. The fair trade movement aims to help farmers in developing countries obtain better trading conditions and promote sustainability.

Henry holsters 'open-carry' bill

Bill's advocates say openly displaying guns deters crime, governor disagrees

TREY MITCHELL
Red Dirt Journal

Oklahoma Gov. Brad Henry recently vetoed House Bill 3354, which was an act relating to the licensing of unconcealed handguns, commonly known as the "open-carry" bill. He sited concerns about endangerment of citizens.

"House Bill 3354 does nothing to enhance Second Amendment protections and could ultimately endanger public citizens and law enforcement officers," according to a veto statement released by Gov. Henry. "There is no compelling safety reason or Second Amendment argument to expand the existing statute."

The bill was sponsored by State Representative Rex Duncan, R-Sand Springs, who said it would enhance individual safety.

"A visible handgun is a sign—is a notice to anybody that sees it, that person chooses not to be a victim," he said.

The second Amendment is the Constitutional right of the people to keep and bear arms, and Duncan said he was prepared to stand up for Oklahoma's constitutional rights and safety.

"I do believe that the concealed-carry and an open-carry statute does enhance the safety of the people," he said.

Duncan said his intentions were to allow individuals to be less of a target to criminals.

"Criminals are cowards and they prey on people who look vulnerable," Duncan said.

Duncan said the Governor's decision reflected his choice about Oklahomans.

"Instead of listening to what clearly people wanted based on the vote of the House and the Senate, his veto was based on his personal preferences versus what the majority of the people voted for."

But other members of the house said they viewed the veto as just.

"I believe in Murphy's Law, 'Anything that can happen, will happen,' said Rep. Wallace Collins, D-Norman. "It would make it much easier for people to grab your



photo by Trey Mitchell

RIGHT TO BARE ARMS: A Magnum Research .45 caliber revolver sits on display at Gun World on South Sunnyslane Road in Del City, Okla.

gun and use it. Some people want to go back to the age of the cowboys, but I have full encouragement in my law enforcement. Having guns more accessible is dangerous when people get angry. Like having road rage, yet in this case, gun rage."

One legislature even stated the fear of voting against the bill as a factor of not being re-elected.

"Some members of the house were afraid of the National Rifles Association, and were afraid they wouldn't get re-elected," Rep. Jerry McPeak, D-Warner said.

James Morrison, owner of Kairos Service, LLC, a gun shop in Newcastle, Okla., said he was concerned about the effects on the lives of Oklahomans.

"I'm afraid that people are going to be out there and they are going to have their weapon taken away from them and used on them," he said. "There are so many things that can happen when you go to an open-carry [law] and I agree that it's going to cut down on crime, but at the same time, it makes law enforcement's job a little bit

harder."

Police officers like Jennifer Newell said it might put officers at greater risk.

"We don't always have time to interview somebody if they're the good guy or the bad guy, and so that could change through education as part of the conceal carry license," she said.

To officer Newell the bill is neither safe nor dangerous, but it increases pressure on the law enforcement officers.

"I don't necessarily think it will make Oklahoma any safer. I don't want to say it will make Oklahoma more dangerous. It's just going to change how police officers do their jobs."

Morrison said adding more education training can help open-carry laws if it were reintroduced in the legislature.

"I think that if we're going to pass an open-carry [law], you should have a self-defense badge that you could carry right there with it," Morrison said. "so that law enforcement would be able to glance and say 'OK', he's got his little license badge

right there, he's good to go."

The vetoed open-carry bill is one of many handgun bills introduced in the Oklahoma legislature. Duncan, who is running for District Attorney of Osage and Pawnee County, said he expects that others will have similar bills introduced next session.

"Instead of making our streets safer, HB 3354 could ultimately make them more hazardous," according to the veto statement released by Gov. Henry. "The legislation could also damage Oklahoma's image as a safe, friendly state with a great quality of life, making it less attractive to new business and industry and negatively impacting future prosperity."

Future prosperity Morrison said will only be aided if there were extra requirements added to training.

"Oklahoma is a big Second Amendment state. There's kids from eight to nine years old on up, who are handling firearms, but they understand the safety aspect of it. But when it comes to carrying it on a holster on you, [it's] a total different ball game."

School prepares future farriers

Graduates can earn \$60,000 each year with skills they've learned in Purcell

ASHLEY ROBINSON
Red Dirt Journal

Horses need shoes for many reasons. Most often they are used to provide traction or correct a horse's walk.

Sometimes shoes can even be used for training purposes "for horses that are learning how to slide," said Paul David Wallace, a student at the Oklahoma Horseshoeing School, a trade school near Purcell.

Reining horses, in particular, a rider must learn how to come to an abrupt halt by having the horse slide.

Among Oklahoma's many trade schools, the horseshoeing school, located on a large acreage directly off Interstate-35, has gone relatively unnoticed by the general public for the many years of its existence.

But for those in the equine trade, "it is the most respected horseshoeing school in the nation and is internationally known," said the school's manager Maggie Parker. It is known for its intensely hands-on curriculum.

Personifying this hands-on experience, owner and director Jack Roth can often be seen "in the barn, teaching (the trade), which he has been doing for over 40 years," Parker said.

Roth is also a veterinarian.

International students, as well as those from around the country, travel to Purcell, roughly 30 miles south of Oklahoma City, to learn the art of horseshoe-making from certified instructors such as Bill Caywood. His experience began at age 12 when, he said, he began "pulling shoes and finishing feet."

In the trade, "finishing feet" entails filing off the rough edges of the metal horseshoes.

The school, which has students in the barn shoeing horses on their first day of instruction, shoes seven to 17 horses for the public each day, Parker said. Such teaching techniques immediately familiarize students with the environment of a farrier, which is the formal title of a man or woman who shoes horses for a living.



photo by Wes Tomlin

IF THE SHOE FITS: A student at the Oklahoma Horseshoeing School positions the angle of his hammer as he flattens the bottom of a horseshoe.

Horseshoeing is an occupation that is in demand. Oklahoma is home to 326,000 horses, according to the website USHorse.biz. Many horses need to have their shoes removed and reset about every six weeks, Wallace said, so well educated farriers are a must. Periodically the shoes have to be replaced, which is an even bigger job.

Parker said the school graduates about 300 students annually. All graduates were guided in one of three curriculum options offered at the school.

There's the two-week basic course, the eight-week advanced course, and the 12-week advanced-plus curriculum.

The short course is geared mainly toward hobbyists who want to care for their own horses. "They teach you how to do the basic trimming and nail a shoe on (to a horse's

hoof)," Parker said.

The advanced course is "for people that want to do this to make a living," she said. In the eight-week course, students learn blacksmithing, which is needed to mold a metal shoe to fit the shape of the hoof. They also learn how to make different types of shoes.

In the 12-week course, students learn almost exactly the same things as the eight-week course. In addition, they get four weeks of training in equine dental work, and more experience, Parker said.

Students apply to the Oklahoma Horseshoeing School for a variety of reasons. Some want to make a career out of shoeing because it pays approximately \$60,000 a year. "(It gives) them a way to improve themselves and to provide for their family

better," Caywood said.

Others who take the basic course simply want to have the ability to shoe their own horses.

Wallace, who is enrolled in the advanced course, looks at his experience from a different angle.

"I want to go to vet school after I finish my undergrad," he said. "All the stuff you learn here will help you not only when you're applying to vet school, but also show the admissions people that you know what you're doing, and that you're committed to learning stuff." Wallace said it is also a good way to make money to pay for college.

"It's pretty strenuous," Wallace admitted. "It's a lot of uncomfortable positions that you're not used to...you just have to build up to it."

Law red-lights human trafficking

Interstate junctions increase possibility in Oklahoma of slave prostitution

JORDAN VANZANT
Red Dirt Journal

At only age 11, Harriet ran away from home and began her life with a 32-year-old man who abused her sexually and manipulated her into being a prostitute. By age 13, she was a drug addict with several sexually transmitted diseases.

Harriet was arrested for prostitution, but officials made no attempt to find her pimp. Harriet was convicted. Her lawyers have appealed on grounds that she wasn't old enough to consent to sex.

But if Harriet had been in Oklahoma, her story would have been different. In Oklahoma, anyone forced into prostitution would be protected from arrest by the state's 2008 human trafficking laws. Anyone forced into sexual acts or unpaid labor must be given aid by authorities and cannot be detained.

State lawmakers in June strengthened the penalties for human trafficking. Senate Bill 956 doubled the jail time and fines if the victim is under age 18.

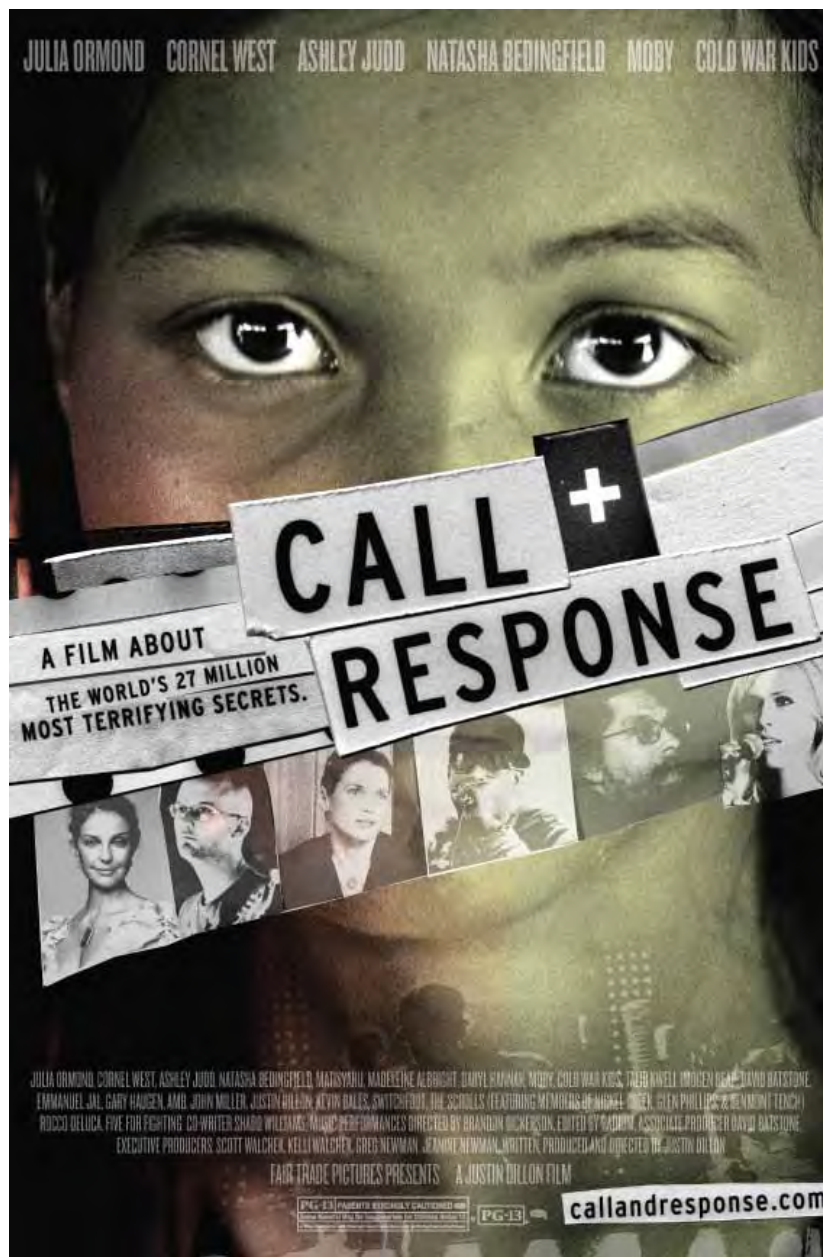
Oklahoma law previously doubled the penalties only if the victim was under age 15. The new law took effect when Gov. Brad Henry signed it May 28.

Harriet's story was among several examples of human trafficking spotlighted in the 2010 Trafficking In Persons Report. According to the report, she was one of 12.3 million victims of human trafficking worldwide last year.

The 2010 Trafficking In Persons Report, which must be compiled annually under the federal Trafficking Victims Protection Act, was the first time U.S. officials have acknowledged that human trafficking occurs within the United States.

"Now that we have seen that trafficking exists in our own country, we can start making more direct efforts to abolish it here," said Mark Elam, director of Oklahomans Against Trafficking Humans.

Because three major interstates intersect in Oklahoma, it is considered an ideal location for forced prostitution, which is considered a form of human trafficking.



movie poster provided by callandresponse.com

CALLING OUT: "CALL+RESPONSE" is a documentary that explains the global issue of human trafficking.

Elam said Americans unwittingly contribute to the problem of forced labor by demanding lower prices for products.

"They may not think about it, but the clothes they buy and the products they use had to be made somewhere to get the low cost, and it is more than likely that it was made in a sweatshop by several of these

victims," he said.

Another contributor to human trafficking, Elam said, is a weak family structure.

"There are about 300,000 runaways that get caught in human trafficking. About 75 percent of them engage in what is known as 'survival sex,' where a runaway will be promised a job (such as prostitution) for

food or something of that nature, and a trafficker will manipulate them into thinking it's the only way they can survive on the streets," Elam said.

Under Oklahoma law, the term human trafficking "refers to modern-day slavery that includes . . . extreme exploitation and the denial of freedom or liberty of an individual." Forced labor can occur in "households, agricultural fields, sweatshops, and any other workplace."

Sexual exploitation includes "all forms of forced commercial sexual activity such as forced sexually explicit performances, forced prostitution, forced participation in the production of pornography, forced performance in strip clubs, and forced exotic dancing or display."

Under Oklahoma law, victims of human trafficking cannot be jailed or otherwise "detained in facilities inappropriate to their status as crime victims."

Instead, they must "receive prompt medical care, mental health care, food, and other assistance, as necessary." They also must "be housed in an appropriate shelter as soon as practicable."

Elam said Oklahoma has no established refuge centers for victims.

But All Things New, an outreach ministry in Oklahoma City, is seeking donations to build such a shelter, according to its May newsletter. The organization's founder, Linda Caswell, did not respond to an e-mail request for an interview and no phone number was available.

Elam's coalition, OATH, sees diverse needs in the victims that it encounters.

"The needs of trafficking victims are so vast and diverse, that a coalition like ours is the networking of over 100 different agencies that can provide for the specific needs of victims that have been taken out of the system," he said.

Victims seeking to escape their situations can go to authorities, who can partner with the coalition to find an agency that can get the victim out of the trafficking system and into a place that can begin to restore any physical and mental damage to the victim.

As for what the public can do to help, Elam said, "Facebook or Twitter[ing] friends for awareness, participating in a fundraiser, starting a student club, hosting an event like a human trafficking movie night or a fair trade day -- all of these are good ways to get involved."



photo by Aaron Valles

BODY ART: Sam Bayouth, owner of Blue Koi Tattoos in Norman, uses this equipment to create tattoos for his customers. Though state law prohibits anyone under 18 from getting one, Bayouth says teenagers will often find a way to get one.

Tattoo trend tantalizes teens

Teenagers often find ways to circumvent laws meant to protect them, artist says

TIERRA HURLEY
Red Dirt Journal

They are everywhere. Athletes have them, musicians have them, and even moms have them. What is this fad that teens are getting into? Tattoos!

On November 1, 2006, Oklahoma became the last state in the country to finally pass a law allowing only people who are 18 years and older to get a tattoo without parental consent. The law also made home tattooing illegal.

But some question if this law really helps. "Kids are going to get tattooed regardless," said Sam Bayouth, owner of the tattoo shop Blue Koi Tattoo. "I think they should lower the age limit with parents consent, because if the kid's wanting a tattoo, they're going to find a way to get one, whether it's in somebody's house or in a shop. You might get a bad tattoo; but what's worse is that

you might end up with hepatitis or something because the guy doesn't know what he's doing when it comes to blood-borne pathogens."

One reason why tattoos have become such a growing trend is because they have become more and more appealing to youth. A survey in 2004 conducted by the American Academy of Dermatology showed that 16 percent of people 18-50 got their first tattoos before they were 18.

While many may just want a tattoo for designing, others put meaning behind their body art. "My first tattoo is going to be like a graveyard setting, and I'm going to have on a tombstone that says 'Rest in Peace' with my great-grandma's name on it," said 18-year-old Mathew Huguez. "I'm going to have clouds above it and God's hands reaching out to it."

The attitudes toward tattoos play a major factor in the way people choose their

tattoo. "Tattoos are pointless if you do not get it for a good reason. If it doesn't mean anything to you, I don't think you should get it," said 16-year-old Johnny Chansombatt. Temika Berry decided to get a tattoo of her ex-boyfriend, Wendell, on her upper left chest. "I don't regret it, because I care about him and I was in love with him," she said.

Most of the United States have somewhat strict rules about teenagers getting tattoos, but other countries such as Canada might not.

Teen pop singer Justin Bieber, 16, got a tattoo at a Toronto shop that makes their own rules: Those under 25 may not get tattoos on their necks or hands, and the staff will only allow people under 18 to get tattoos if they have parental consent or as a memorial to a family member.

Although tattoos may look appealing to the human eye, there are health factors customers should consider. Hepatitis B and C, AIDS/HIV, tetanus, syphilis, and tuberculosis are some of the known communicable diseases people risk if the tattoo is not treated with proper care or the

equipment is not sterilized. Though state and local laws mandate tattoo parlors must make sure their equipment is sanitary, practitioners say these laws are not strictly enforced.

Commercial tattoos could be the leading distributor of Hepatitis C, say Dr. Bob Haley and Dr. Paul Fischer of the University of Texas Southwestern Medical School. It was also discovered that people who get tattoos in a commercial tattoo parlor are nine times more likely to get Hepatitis C.

Like any other trending topic, tattoos have evolved over the centuries.

According to Tattoo Arts in America, in the 1960s, tattoos were an anti-social activity that few participated in. All that changed at the beginning of the 1970s. The culture changed and it became a trendy fashion statement that was influenced by rock bands such as the Rolling Stones.

Whatever the motivations, those who have been through the process say that others should think about all the issues involved before deciding.

"If you are going to get a tattoo, be smart about it," Huguez said.



iStockphoto

HEAD OF THE CLASS:

Freshmen often discover what major they will choose while taking classes during their first two or three semesters in college.

Making a major choice

Selecting the right degree to study may be hardest part of freshman year

NICOLE FORTÉ

Red Dirt Journal

Emily Copeland is enrolled for freshman classes at OU this fall but has no idea which major she will choose.

"It is very scary to think about," said the 18-year-old from Dallas.

But she is not alone. About 30 to 40 percent of all U.S. freshmen start college undecided about a major, according to a 2006 study by The University of Missouri-St. Louis.

Even after they do choose, the average college student changes majors three to four times up until their junior year, said Janel Russell, an academic adviser at The University of Oklahoma.

Choosing a major is not the only worry for incoming freshmen. Making friends, earning good grades and living away from home could be scary for some of the more reserved students.

OU sophomore Jennifer Gauthier said she was bashful as a first-year undergraduate.

"But college taught me not to be shy," said the 18-year-old from Blanchard, Okla.

Like other freshmen, Gauthier said selecting a major was difficult.

"But my advisers really helped me out, and I had my family to support me," she said.

To help freshmen choose a major, Russell tries to tie students' interests and high school activities to classes at The University of Oklahoma.

Russell said students also can take specialized tests and courses that explain majors. Most of the courses last for a semester and might count as elective credits.

Students also need to dig into all their courses to discover what interests them most, said Russell, who is the director of advising for OU's University College.

In the Gaylord College of Journalism and

Mass Communication, every student must take the introduction to mass communication course.

"My enrollment in there is usually about 300," said professor Ray Chavez.

In the course, students explore all the majors offered by the college.

Passion for the subject is a key to succeeding in a major, said Melanie Adams, an academic adviser for the Gaylord College.

"If a student does not have a passion for something, then they are less likely to be successful with their degree," Adams said.

But even after students choose a major, most will change it.

"It is common that students will change their major from time to time; sometimes to a related major, and sometimes not," said Russell.

Regardless of which major students will eventually choose, they need to have a plan of action.

For example, college students need to plan their study habits. Students recommend finding a secluded place such as the library.

"I won't study in my actual dorm room,

but if I just go to the library in a nice and quiet environment, I can study better that way," said 18-year-old Matt Henton of Bartlesville, Okla., who will be a freshman at the University of Central Oklahoma in Edmond this fall.

Getting a tutor also can help college students with studying and staying on task.

"Me and my friends are all getting a tutor when we get to college to help us do well in our classes," said Emily Turner, an 18-year-old from Tahlequah, Okla., who will be attending Oklahoma State University.

Copeland said she's worried about "being on my own and having to push myself to study."

Keeping up with class work and taking time to manage everything is the key to easing stress, Adams said.

"Students need to establish themselves once they get to college," she said. "Make college your home."

"Sometimes, you can get a little lost out here (in college). It's a big world once you get here," she said.

Spending time on campus, getting to know people, finding an activity, and developing a support system is how a college can turn into a home for a student, Adams said.

"They need a support system, but in the end, they have to make the decisions during their journey, and they usually make the right ones," she said.

Oklahoma, Texas stay in Big 12

Historical rivalries between programs kept conference from dissolving

MATT HENTON

Red Dirt Journal

When the Cities of the Big 12 Marketing Cooperation met two weeks ago in Ames, Iowa, to discuss a marketing strategy, most everyone thought it was a futile effort.

Colorado's representative did not even bother to show up, while Nebraska's delegate thought it was a waste of time.

"We all thought the Big 12 was dead," Stephen Koranda, Executive Director of Norman Convention & Visitors Bureau said.

Although Colorado did bolt to the Pac-10 Conference last week and Nebraska opted for the Big 10 Conference the next day, miraculously, the Big 12 is still alive today, due in large part to some last-minute negotiations with its television partners and a desire for the two Oklahoma schools and three Texas schools to preserve their storied athletic ties.

"With the departures of Colorado and Nebraska," Dan Beebe, the Big 12 Commissioner said, "We worked hard with our current media partners to request and get a commitment that they would not diminish our rights. That was extremely helpful that it provided the same revenue source but with two less institutions to distribute it to."

It's estimated that Texas, Oklahoma and Texas A&M will split between \$35 million to \$40 million in television revenue that would have gone to Nebraska and Colorado had they remained in the conference.

In addition, Texas and Oklahoma are expected to supplement their earnings by establishing their own television networks.

In the end, politics and in-state alliances also had a lot to do with saving the Big 12, reports indicate.

After Nebraska announced it would join the Big 10, it was widely speculated that the Longhorns would take OU, Oklahoma State, Texas A&M and Texas Tech with them to the Pac-10.

However, when Texas A&M officials indicated they were more inclined to go to



photo by Hillary Nickles

LONG LIVE THE RIVALRY: With the past possibility of the Big 12 being pronounced "dead," many students feared that the rivalries between traditional powerhouses were at stake. Among the top rivalries that students wanted to make sure stayed was the Red River Rivalry between Texas and Oklahoma.

the Southeastern Conference, the desire among key Texas elected officials and alumni to preserve the Longhorn-Aggie rivalry, coupled with the dollars, won out over the promises of increased revenue and greater academic standing from the Pac 10.

Likewise, OU did not want to be a part of any conference that did not include Oklahoma State, which, according to published reports, led OU to turn down an invitation from the SEC.

"The decision to stay in the Big 12 represents a consensus position which resulted from a collaborative effort with our colleagues in the conference," OU President David L. Boren and Athletic Director Joe Castiglione said in a joint statement. "We value the strong working relationship that has been reaffirmed during this process among the conference members. We intend to work very hard to make the conference as lasting and dynamic as possible."

As Kansas state, Kansas, Baylor, Iowa State and Missouri (also known as the "Desperate of Unwanted Five") were left

out in the dust because no conference showed specific interest in recruiting them, fans were soon relieved when reports proved that they were still solidified in the conference.

Nobody was as relieved as the basketball crowd that the Big 12 is still in business.

"Yes it is good for basketball," said Chris Merriewether, a former guard on Kansas State's men's basketball team. "The Big 12 sent seven teams to the NCAA tournament this past year, and Colorado and Nebraska were not in there. Therefore, the conference will be tougher. I do think that the conference win percentage will go down because Colorado and Nebraska were considered easy wins for conference teams."

Although Nebraska's departure could end its long-time rivalry with OU, Nick Rose, an OU freshman, said he isn't unhappy that the Cornhuskers are leaving.

"They weren't really a big part of the conference," he said. "I mean Nebraska was but they've kind of fallen off, and I believe in them leaving, it could allow other

teams to come in like TCU, other competitive teams and maybe bring something new to the conference."

Judging from the response she got, Latasha Littleton, a manager at Gameday Authentic on Campus Corner, said OU fans were upset by predictions of the Big 12's demise, which led to a run on Big 12 merchandise.

"With all of the fans that have come in, everyone is pretty upset about it (the end of the Big 12)," said Littleton.

Many students have even been researching this topic and have offered their views on the matter.

"I think there has always been a sense of pride with the Big 12," said Resen Praytor, a freshman at OU. "We do well in bowl games and national championships, so maybe they wanted to stay for that feeling."

With the chaos that happened over the proposed realignment, there is only one thing for sure.

"Now we just continue to focus on Texas like we normally do," Koranda said.



KICKING BACK: Students watched the Brazil and North Korea World Cup match at the International Program Center in Hester Hall at the University of Oklahoma. The International Program Center hosted watch parties throughout the week.

photo by Bruce Jacobs

Sooners catch World Cup fever

International soccer tournament draws unlikely fans in college football country

BRUCE JACOBS
Red Dirt Journal

Soccer made inroads into football country this summer.

On the University of Oklahoma intramural fields, hundreds of soccer campers drilled all day.

Inside the International Programs Center in Hester Hall, students have been showing up daily to watch 2010 FIFA World Cup matches on two large flat screens and a projector.

And at least one Norman sporting goods store clerk said World Cup jerseys, especially the one from Brazil, were selling well.

Franz Zenteno, an international studies major, caught World Cup fever in spite of the fact that his home country, Peru, didn't

qualify for the World Cup, where national teams play against each other every four years.

As he watched Brazil defeat North Korea at a watch party in Hester Hall, Zenteno said one reason soccer has world-wide appeal is because it basically represents everyone.

"Everyone can agree. Everyone can be together. Everyone can participate. It's like wonderful," he said.

It's not that different from being a Sooner football fan, said Ryan Bowling, the development officer at the OU International Programs Center, who was studying in Europe when the last World Cup was played.

"The fanaticism and true fan culture of global football versus American football in a state like Oklahoma is very comparable," he said. "You have a party atmosphere,

with people celebrating in their team colors. Food comes central to that celebration, as well as family, and teams create both friendships and rivalries."

Gbemi Aderemi, a economics major from Nigeria, said all that is separating the average American sports fan from truly appreciating the World Cup is a better understanding of the game.

"You've got to be open minded about the game first and foremost," he said. "It's not so much about the results. Like it could be a 5-to-4 game and no one would enjoy it, whereas it could be a 0-to-0 game and it can just be an adrenaline rush."

Unlike American football, Aderemi said domination isn't the only thing that matters.

"It's more about thinking, about tactical awareness and positioning," he said.

Soccer also is the most popular sport around the world because it's the first sport most children learn about, he said.

Zenteno said he is pulling for Argentina because they play with passion, but he also

had praise for the U.S. team.

"They are a beautiful team," he said. "You cannot joke with America. I was really impressed when they tied England, which is one of the top teams."

OU's international contingent of about 1,900 students isn't the only group following the World Cup, according to Ronda Martin, staff assistant at the OU School Of International and Area Studies.

When she invited her son Mavrick, last season's captain of the Noble High School basketball team, and a group of his friends to hang out at the watch party to show him there are other things besides football, basketball and team roping, he told her they were already holding their own watch party.

"I couldn't imagine them even wanting to watch it," she said. "They are all football and basketball players from Noble, all farm boys. I thought I would be introducing them to soccer, but then Mavrick started rattling off names of soccer players, like Ronaldo from Brazil."

Participant profiles



KENZIE CLARK

Kenzie Clark is an 18-year-old graduate of Jenks High School. She will attend the University of Oklahoma, majoring in film and video production. Her favorite movie is "Breakfast at Tiffany's" with Audrey Hepburn. Clark spends most of her time watching movies, which she considers "research" for her career. She wants to work in the movie industry after finishing college. In high school, she produced documentaries for the school's website and for OETA's "Behind the Lens with Oklahoma's Future Filmmakers." During OJD's broadcast week, Clark served as the anchor and video editor for her team. Clark also loves owls, dressing up, and OPI nail polish, according to her Facebook page. She likes music, but not country. "I might be from Oklahoma, but I'm not a country girl," Clark said.

— by Shannon Reyher

NICOLE FORTÉ

Nicole Forté is an ambitious 16-year-old who was born in Virginia and raised in Sand Springs, Okla. The junior at Charles Page High School works on the yearbook, participates in the National Honor Society and Student Council, and plays varsity volleyball. In her spare time, she likes to read books, especially the Twilight Saga. "I fell in love with the books, and that fueled my interest in the movies," said Forté. She has a small Twilight memorabilia collection, consisting of some posters, a calendar, and a plastic cup, but in no way wishes to be considered a stereotypical "Twilight nerd." In her wildest dream, she would be "the head producer of E News, and the editor-in-chief of Glamour magazine." She's on the right track with plans to attend either NYU or Columbia University with a major in journalism and a minor in pre-law.

— by Jordan Vanzant



MATT HENTON

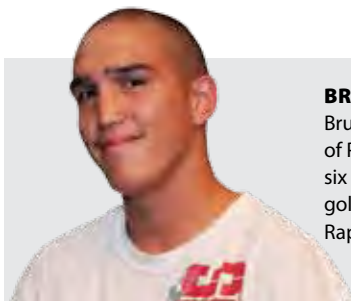
Born and raised in Bartlesville, Okla., Matt Henton, 18, is described by many of his friends as a musical mastermind. In high school, he was brass section leader of the band, where he played trumpet, baritone and French horn. But Henton also developed a passion for journalism after he joined the school newspaper. "I love writing more than music because it gives me a chance to give a voice to the voiceless," Henton said. Many of his photos and stories were published online by Tulsa's Channel 2, and he was named Oklahoma High School Journalist of the Year 2010. A recent graduate of Bartlesville High School, Henton plans to major in journalism at the University of Central Oklahoma in Edmond and play in the band.

— by Hillary Nickels

TIERRA HURLEY

Tierra Hurley has faced many challenges: living overseas, studying German and carrying handbags "bigger than me" (she's not quite five feet tall). However, this 17-year-old says that's nothing compared to learning how to drive. She recently obtained her license after practicing with her permit for nearly a year, learning how to park, and even crashing into a fire hydrant. Born in Columbus, Ga., she moved with her family for two-and-a-half years to Wiesbaden, Germany, where her father served in the U.S. Army. She now lives in Lawton with her mother, Tish; her father, Terry; and an older brother named Terrence. This MacArthur High School senior plans to attend University of Oklahoma or Cameron University and major in business administration or social work.

— by Becca Smith



BRUCE JACOBS

Bruce Jacobs was introduced to a cornucopia of diversity from the day he was born in Pine Ridge, S.D., on Sept. 30, 1991. In addition to being part of the Oglala Sioux Tribe of Pine Ridge, Jacobs also is of Spanish, Irish and German descent. He said having such a rainbow of influences has made him more open-minded toward others. Jacobs has six tattoos. His first tattoo was obtained during his freshman year. He also is a Mixed Martial Arts fighter and has a passion for working on cars, including "his love," a 2000 gold Mustang. Having recently graduated from Pine Ridge High School, where he ranked second in his class, Jacobs plans to attend the Western Dakota Technical Institute in Rapid City, S.D., where he expects to enhance his skills by majoring in auto collision repair.

— by Matt Henton

ALEX MAXWELL

Alex Maxwell, 17 years old, will be a senior at Westmoore High School in Oklahoma City. He enjoys reading, playing video games and collecting post cards. He is also an outstanding cook. He makes his own pizzas and has his own vegetable garden. Alex is editor of his high school newspaper, the "Jagwire," and is a member of the yearbook committee. He loves to listen to music by Bob Dylan, Jack White and Led Zeppelin. His inspiration for writing came from his older sisters Meagan and Kimber, who both have an interest in journalism and writing. After high school, Alex plans on attending Pepperdine University in Malibu, Calif.

— by Amanda Turner





ASHLY MENDEZ

Bound for the University of Oklahoma, Ashly Mendez, 18, has a plethora of talent and passions. A graduate of Arlington (Texas) High School, she is actively engaged in sleeping, and not only listens to music but also plays the clarinet and films her own movies and videos. Since her father gave her a camera at age 14, Ashly says she has been driven to become a successful talk-show director or cinema photographer. "I want to impact someone else's life and motivate them through videos, whether it be movies, reporting or shows," she says. She started filming her older sister Elizabeth's high school softball games and has moved on to producing end-of-year banquet and graduation videos. "I just want to inspire people," she says.

— by Alex Maxwell

TREY MITCHELL

Trey DeVante Mitchell may not be following the family tradition by joining the army, but this aspiring politician will surely serve his country. Mitchell was born on April 3, 1993. His motto in life is, "Life is a puzzle. You may not have all of the pieces, but you still have to solve it." An up-coming senior at MacArthur High School in Lawton, Okla., Mitchell is the student body vice-president, National Honor Society president, chairperson for the Lawton Teen Council, and a member of Leadership and HOBY. He plans to study pre-law at Oklahoma State University in Stillwater and then attend OU for graduate school. His role model is an Oklahoma House of Representatives member from Lawton, T.W. Shannon. Be on the look out for Mitchell in the 2032 presidential election.

— by Anna Tran



HILLARY NICKELS

Hillary Nickels has demonstrated a growing passion for helping others, starting with her older brother, who has cerebral palsy. "He's basically my inspiration for going into O.T. (occupational therapy)," said Nickels, who will attend the University of Oklahoma in the fall. Nickels, 18, said she has been going to medical appointments with her brother, Hunter, ever since she can remember, and began helping take care of him when she was a sixth grader. Her desire to help others eventually led her to donate her hair to "Locks of Love," a program that makes wigs for children with cancer. Hillary tried donating blood once, but she fainted because of her fear of needles. Nickels, who has lived in the same house all her life, also enjoys photography, painting and playing the piano in her free time.

— by Bruce Jacobs

ERIN PEDEN

Erin Peden, 18, is a recent graduate of Westmoore High School in Oklahoma City where she was involved in yearbook, newspaper, photography and various other clubs and organizations. Although her love for writing is strong, Peden also has a passion for music. She has played the oboe for six years and has made both all-region and all-state band. Peden plans on going to Oklahoma City Community College for a year before attending the University of Oklahoma where she will be involved in music and journalism. Peden said she participated in OJD this year because she believed it would help her become a better and more confident writer. She has learned that being around people who care about something as much as she does can be a fun and rewarding experience..

— By Erin Peden



SHANNON REYHER

Shannon Reyher is a energetic 16-year-old who loves to swim and plays volleyball for Southmoore High School in Moore, Okla. The junior is the general editor of the school's newspaper, Sabercat Legend. In her spare time, she loves to read, write, and draw sketches of people and still life. Reyher likes any music on the radio except for hard rock. Among her favorite artists are Pink and Def Leppard. Reyher also admits to having a crush on actor/rapper Will Smith, sometimes having "Men in Black" film festivals by herself. The oldest of five children, Reyher said her family encourages her to achieve her dreams. Some of those dreams are to graduate from The University of Oklahoma with a journalism degree and a minor in criminal justice. "I attended OJD because I've always wanted to be in a field where I can write and tell stories," Reyher said.

—by Nicole Forté

ASHLEY ROBINSON

Twilight fan Ashley "Blondie" Robinson, 17, attends Southmoore High School in Moore, Okla. Robinson uses her skill in journalism to promote one of her greatest passions: music. "I do a lot of work on the local music scene by taking pictures and interviewing them," Robinson said. To date she has interviewed Hush Hush Commotion, Hold 'Em High, and the rapper P.O.L.O. Her respect for all genres of music cram her iPod with over 500 songs, including her favorite band Capital Lights, and a variety of alternative and rap music. She plans on making her dream possible by majoring in journalism either at the University of Oklahoma or the University of Missouri. Her spark for journalism began in her sixth-grade yearbook class, which led to her involvement in yearbook and newspaper in high school.

— By Miranda Sanchez



MIRANDA SANCHEZ

Miranda Sanchez, 17, comes from a whole family of twins. Her family consists of two sets of fraternal twins. The first set are Sanchez and her sister. Though they may look alike, they have different interests. Sanchez said she likes English and history while her twin likes science and math. The other set are her younger brother and sister, who are 12. Sanchez's favorite trip was when she with her family went to Japan for her 16th birthday. "I played exotic video games while I was there," Sanchez said, "including a high tech version of Resident Evil." She likes to play many video games, including Xbox Live, which she thinks is unusual for a girl. Sanchez attends Boswell High School in Fort Worth, Texas, where she is the editor of the school's newspaper and yearbook. She is also the clarinet section leader and vice president of the school band.

— By Wes Tomlin



BECCA SMITH

Becca Smith's biggest inspiration is her late uncle, Mark. The two never met, but she feels as if they did when she looks at his photography. "When I saw his photo albums, I felt as if he told his life story through photos," she said, "and he inspired me to do the same." She attended OIDJ to take advantage of the equipment and to learn from experienced journalists. At home in Richardson, Texas, Smith participates in Tom's Club, which donates one pair of shoes to kids in Uganda for every pair purchased. The 15-year-old sophomore at Bishop Lynch High School plays first base for the softball team and participates in the mock trial team. She is also a Bishop Lynch Ambassador, showing newcomers where everything is located. In her free time, Smith enjoys editing videos and shopping.

— by Aaron Valles

SYDNEY STAVINOHA

Sydney Stavinoha a 17-year-old from Sugar Land, Texas, will receive her aviation license this Christmas. She takes flight lessons at her local airport and loves the thrill of flying. A senior at Kempner High School, she is student body president, editor-in-chief of the school's yearbook for the second year, and a member of the National Honor Society. Stavinoha is a lefty but also a self-confessed germaphobe. She wants to earn a journalism degree from The University of Oklahoma. "I love taking pictures, making videos, creating slideshows and meeting new people," said Stavinoha. At OIDJ, she learned more about filming, how to read the teleprompter, and the steps to make a newscast.

— Nicole Forte



WES TOMLIN

Wes Tomlin, 15, is a dedicated student at Harding Charter Preparatory School in Oklahoma City. He was prompted to apply for the OIDJ program by his journalism teacher, Mrs. Kelli Taylor. She is his favorite teacher, he said, "because she breaks away from the usual." Born and raised in Oklahoma City, Tomlin grew up the youngest of five children. He has a mixed heritage, being of an American Indian and African American ethnic background. Tomlin said he enjoys listening to alternative and classical music in his spare time. Interested in journalistic writing, Tomlin aspires to one day be accepted into an Ivy League school such as Harvard and to graduate with a major in international business or computer science, as well as a minor in journalism.

— by Ashley Robinson

AN-NAM TRAN

An-Nam "Anna" Tran was born to a Vietnamese family in Oklahoma City on Nov. 23, 1993. She describes herself as dorky, random and passionate for the Indianapolis Colts. She will be attending Putnam City as a junior transferring from Dove Science Academy. Tran applied to OIDJ because she wanted to learn from the best. She volunteers in her community with the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma, Infant Crisis Center, Youth Leadership OKC, and is involved with a program with The Oklahoman. She plans on studying journalism at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Tran has been inspired by broadcast journalist Tim Russert, who grew up in a small town and made it to primetime news. Get ready. Get set. Anna Tran is ready to pick up where Mr. Russert left off.

—by Trey Mitchell



EMILY TURNER

Emily Turner, 18, is a graduate of Sequoyah High School in Tahlequah, Okla., where she was editor of the Native Times newspaper and involved in the Drama Club, the American Indian Science and Engineering Society, and the debate and academic teams. She plans to major in journalism and political science at Oklahoma State University, with a minor in Native American studies. Emily grew up in Tahlequah, headquarters of the Cherokee Nation, where she began to love writing around age 14. She believes that if she can "tell the truth about politics to the public, then maybe more people would get involved in government decisions." She says she wants to make a difference in society.

— by Ashly Mendez

AARON VALLES

Aaron Valles attends Pathways Middle College, where things are a bit different. For one thing, this new alternative school for grades 8-12 offers no electives or activities. Students only take core subjects chosen for them, such as geography, algebra, biology, and English. The 15-year-old sophomore says he looks forward to English class, but dreads biology. Valles was born in Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua, Mexico, and lived there for five years but calls Oklahoma City home. One day, he desires to become either a journalist or pursue his love for cars and become a car mechanic. Although he says he can be shy at first, he came to OIDJ to learn more about journalism and to meet new people. His family consists of his mom, dad, an older sister, Lizzy (and her poodle, Angel), and his black lab named Rex.

— By Tierra Hurley



JORDAN VANZANT

Jordan Vanzant, 17, attends Southmoore High School in Moore, Okla. The senior is a member of the school newspaper, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Student Council, and manager for the track team. She also is a founding member of the school's Link Crew, a program in which upper-classmen advise ninth-graders. When she is not involved in her school activities, she listens to all genres of music, but especially scream-o. She has a passion for journalism and hopes OIDJ will help her decide whether to pursue it as a career. "My goal in life is to change the culture of America for the better, and I think I will accomplish it," said Vanzant. She does not know how but knows she will. She believes that through journalism, she could inspire people to change their lives and cause a chain reaction inspiring others.

— by Shannon Reyher



photo by Hillary Nickels

ON TOP OF THE WORLD: Sunny Golloway, the Sooners baseball coach, thanks fans for coming out to greet the team upon its return from Virginia, where OU defeated the University of Virginia to advance to the College World Series.

Hitting its stride

OU's baseball team to appear in first World Series since 1995

HILLARY NICKELS
Red Dirt Journal

After a 15-year absence from the College World Series, it's no wonder the University of Oklahoma baseball team and its fans have had trouble containing their excitement.

Patti Herren, whose son Kaleb plays outfield and pitches for the Sooners, got a real taste of it minutes after OU beat the nation's top-ranked team, the University of Virginia, 11-0, in the deciding game of a Super Regional to earn a trip to legendary Rosenblatt Stadium in Omaha, Neb., the site of the CWS.

"He (Kaleb) called, and he screamed and said, 'Dad, we're going to Omaha,'" Patti Herren said as she waited for the team to arrive on the OU campus. "It's a dream come true for him."

She said earning a spot in the eight-team tournament also is a great opportunity for Coach Sunny

Golloway, who was an assistant coach on the Sooners' 1994 national championship team.

"Now, hopefully, with him as the head coach, we go all the way," she said. "I mean we have a rich baseball program here, and we just need a boost. A national championship right now would just be awesome."

Long-time Sooner baseball fan Kal Zitterkob also was among about 100 fans greeting the Sooners, who went to Charlottesville, Va., as heavy underdogs and dropped their first game in the best-of-three series before bouncing back to win the next two games.

"I think we'll win it all," he said. Golloway said he wasn't expecting as big a welcome as the Sooners got when they stepped off the bus.

"We're really taken back by you guys being here," he said. "I can only imagine (what it will be like) when we get back from Omaha after winning the national championship."

The Sooners appear to have gotten hot at the right time, having won 14 of their last 16 games, led by Cody Reine, who has hit five of his 10 home runs in the tournament.

"One of the things that we told our guys after we lost our first game, 5-4, was that we really did feel like it was still going to be a one-game series," Golloway said. "That if we could get that first game, we could really set them back and do what we believe we can do."

In congratulating the team, Joe Castiglione, OU's athletic director, also acknowledged the Sooners' rich baseball tradition.

"The players that were here laid a foundation for you and that brought you here; you are leading the way," he said.

While OU will be making its first CWA appearance since 1995, it will be its 10th overall.

"I really believe we've got one more dog pile in us," Golloway said, a reference to a baseball tradition that calls for members of the tournament champion to pile on top of each other after the last out.

OIDJ Participants

Kenzie Clark	Shannon Reyher
Nicole Forté	Ashley Robinson
Matt Henton	Miranda Sanchez
Tierra Hurley	Becca Smith
Bruce Jacobs	Sydney Stavinoha
Alex Maxwell	Wes Tomlin
Ashly Mendez	An-Nam Tran
Trey Mitchell	Emily Turner
Hillary Nickels	Aaron Valles
Erin Peden	Jordan Vanzant

Administrators

Ray Chávez, OIDJ director
Sue Hinton, OIDJ co-director
Christal Johnson, administrative assistant

Faculty & Staff

Mike Boettcher	Christopher Krug
Graham Brewer	Claire Lee
Emily Calhoun	Tom Lindley
Bob Dickey	Tim Meier
Bill Elsen	Alex Page
Ken Fischer	Justin Poirot
Monica Flippin-Wynn	Bryan Pollard
Lynn Franklin	Joey Senat
Emily Gray	Alex Shumate
Craig Henry	Frank Simpson
Mick Hinton	Phill Todd
Kathy Johnson	Stephen Whiting

Contributors

Ethics and Excellence in Journalism Foundation
Dow Jones News Fund
Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communication
Coca-Cola Company
KWTU Channel 9
Native American Journalists Association
The Oklahoman
The Norman Transcript
Oklahoma City National Memorial and Museum

About OIDJ

The annual high school journalism workshop is scheduled every June on the OU campus (specific dates will vary). Students wishing to be considered for participation should notify the Oklahoma Institute for Diversity in Journalism. Updated application forms and information on the 2011 workshop will be available during the spring 2011 semester. However, contact the director so you can be placed on the OIDJ mailing list.

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