4-18-2017

The Prospector, April 18, 2017

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By Adrian Broaddus

Fernanda Lugo, senior biology major, Student’s Green Team President

From just participating in the 2014 Earth Week to directing the entire week of events, Lugo has developed a deep passion for becoming more eco-friendly. It started with gaining awareness toward sustainability, which led to Lugo leading forums on waste and consumerism.

“I noticed that a lot of people were interested in it and wanted to do more in it, but the only student organization for it was environmental advocates, and it was small and dying,” Lugo said. “We decided to do a big collaborative event for Earth Week in 2016, and we tried to educate and advocate, while still making it fun.”

An event that was a lot larger than imagined, Lugo saw a wide array of student interest and involvement in her inaugural Earth Week with the Student’s Green Team.

“The biggest improvement since the start has been student involvement,” Lugo said. “We’ve heard a lot of students, who saw it last year, and they asked how they can help this year and are really excited to help out. It’s cool and it’s a bit scary because it’s pretty much me designating where they can help.”

The school’s Green Team wants to not only advocate for eco-friendliness campus-wide, but also encourage other students to join them in practicing sustainability through volunteering, outreach and informing the student body. They have led different movements across campus.

They meet each Monday in the Classroom Building, room 004 at 2 p.m. to discuss eco-related topics through different guest speakers.

“We also just want to know people’s opinions and ideas—even if you don’t know anything about environmentalism,” Lugo said. “They haven’t promoted recycling in the dorms. Right now, there’s none. And then maybe promote different recycling stations during our move-in day.”

The biggest stereotype surrounding the local environmental push is the fact that El Paso is in a desert ecosystem, so there’s not much to do for the environment. Lugo, however, aims to dispel that preconceived notion.

“The biggest problem that we live in the desert. People aren’t aware that there is wildlife out there and it matters here,” she said. “We’re actually in a bio-diverse area here and it’s worthy to go see and go hiking in. ‘Thar’ll make you care about it more. That’s some of the myths we’re trying to dispel.”
Invest in change

BY CHRISTIAN VASQUEZ
The Prospector

The news is chaotic. It seems as though every day something terrible and important has happened, and you haven’t yet grasped the implications or tragedy before another takes its place. They’re exciting, no doubt, and each has its own importance in the world. Another bombing, an airline goes rogue or a press secretary makes a stupid blunder. Each of these issues in the past week received national attention. And deservedly so. Passengers shouldn’t be dragged covered in blood out of a seat they paid for, and it’s important to remember that Hitler did it. Questions and ways that people can help one of the greatest issues of our species. There is no reason to assume that the destruction of our environment is inevitable. People’s outrage changes the world every day. It only took one day for that ridiculous Pepsi commercial to be taken down, and that was just something annoying and benign. We live in a time where collectively we have a greater say in what happens because we are so connected to everything that happens. Collectively, climate change is a big problem, but it comes with a lot of easy solutions. So instead of focusing on the larger problems that paralyze participation and progress, let’s focus on looking for smaller solutions.

The larger problems are not ignored, but pushed to the back burner. And in the end we have pushed the largest and most complicated problem so far back that it has become as meaningless as talking about the weather. I’m talking about climate change. Don’t get me wrong, aside from those who blatantly ignore science, most people are aware of it. We know what the Paris Agreement is, which things to recycle and that we really should curb back emissions. But besides agreeing that something must be done, nothing is getting done. Which is a problem because not solving it affects everyone, and solving it affects everything we know. Our entire economic system is based on the fact that people need to continue to buy things. We need cars, we need phones and we need to eat. The production and transportation of basic necessities constitutes a problem for our world.

We know all of this, which is why we ignore it, and it’s not working because we think the problem is more complicated than it is, and nobody believes that the solutions to stopping the rising temperatures are feasible. But we are misinterpreting the problem for the solutions. Luckily, there is not one massive solution, but many smaller ones that can be implemented by everyday people. Just google “solutions climate change” and you are met with a plethora of sites, organizations and ways that people can help one of the greatest issues of our species. There is no reason to assume that the destruction of our environment is inevitable. People’s outrage changes the world every day. It only took one day for that ridiculous Pepsi commercial to be taken down, and that was just something annoying and benign. We live in a time where collectively we have a greater say in what happens because we are so connected to everything that happens. Collectively, climate change is a big problem, but it comes with a lot of easy solutions. So instead of focusing on the larger problems that paralyze participation and progress, let’s focus on looking for smaller solutions.

It’s not a culture of outrage at meaningless events on a day-to-day basis, it’s an outrage of events that have an obvious fix, and an end in sight. When people are angry at seemingly inconsequential things. I would slightly disagree, but it’s not a culture of outrage at meaningless events on a day-to-day basis, it’s an outrage of events that have an obvious fix, and an end in sight. When people are angry at seemingly inconsequential things. I would slightly disagree, but it’s not a culture of outrage at meaningless events on a day-to-day basis, it’s an outrage of events that have an obvious fix, and an end in sight.
Keeping Syrian and Middle Eastern cultures alive at UTEP

By Michaela Roman

Laylai Al-Sham will host their next concert at 7:30 p.m. on April 29, at the Fox Fine Arts Center recital hall. Admission is free.

The Prospector will host their next concert at 7:30 p.m. on East and other culturally themed events. Arabic Movie Night, Taste of the Middle International Food Fair, and have hosted now. They’ve participated in large cam-

tives here. “Aboud said. “At the beginning I would read every day what was going on over there, then I started to get bored with the same news, somebody is bombing, then these people get killed’ so I don’t want to hear about it anymore. If something big happens, you can see it on Facebook.” Aboud said he really wants the war in Syria to come to an end.

“I was very comfortable living in Syria. Everything was cheap and nice,” Aboud said. "I grew up there. I had my family and friends since elementary school, my whole life was there.”

Andrea Shahien Espinosa, assistant professor in the department of music, is the advisor for ASA and studied in Syria before teaching at UTEP. She is surprised at how receptive the local community has been to ASA.

“I think that getting to know each other through music, food and dance is a great way to not only know about someone’s whole background is different than your own, but also the commonalities between them.”

Aboud received his master’s degree this in Syria in 2011 and moved here in 2012. He says the media will either exaggerate news stories or create propaganda.

“With my accent, they think I’m from Russia or Germany, but they never guess Middle Eastern,” Issa said.

Issa received his master’s degree this in Syria in 2011 and moved here in 2012. He says the media will either exaggerate news stories or create propaganda.

“One of the main reasons I ended up here besides school. I heard about UTEP and I was looking at the programs and I love mechanical engineering, ” Aboud said. “It’s one of the best programs in Texas. I applied and I got accepted!”

Aboud said most people have the strong idea about Syria from the media. He says the media will either exaggerate news stories or create propaganda.

“They will hear something and it’s not going to be what I experienced here,” Aboud said. “At the beginning I would read every day what was going on over there, then I started to get bored with the same news, somebody is bombing, then these people get killed’ so I don’t want to hear about it anymore. If something big happens, you can see it on Facebook.” Aboud said he really wants the war in Syria to come to an end.

“I was very comfortable living in Syria. Everything was cheap and nice,” Aboud said. “I grew up there. I had my family and friends since elementary school, my whole life was there.”

“I didn’t have anyone to help me,” Issa said. “Our English wasn’t that good so we didn’t want to talk, but we decided we needed to talk even if it’s wrong”

ASA helps new students who speak, Ar- abic adjust to campus life by sometimes picking them up from the airport, helping them with housing, groceries and by helping them feel like they are not alone.

“The nice thing here is that we are in a mixed culture already here, the Hispanic culture, so we adapt to them more be- cause we find a lot of similarities and tra-
ditions like being family oriented and we have a lot of cousins,” Issa said.

Aboud studied mechanical engineer-
ing at Al-Baath University in Homs, Syria, where he was born and raised. He transferred because of the war that started in Syria in 2011 and moved here in 2012. Aboud received his master’s degree this past December and is now working on his doctorate.

His parents and little sister still live in Syria, but he has his aunt and other rela-
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Davis holds 16 patents for technology products. He has developed a desalination process that uses a combination of reverse osmosis and another process that separates calcium and sulfate, two components of gypsum, from the water.

Associate director for CIDS, Malelynda Cappelle, works with Davis in the engineering department, said Davis is one of the most dedicated person she knows. “Tom spends a lot of time in the laboratory developing and testing new technologies, ranging from finding new ways to desalinate water to figuring out new ways of detecting hardness and other species in water,” Cappelle said in an email interview. “He’s a very creative individual. I think he invents things when he is sleeping.”

Davis said El Paso is in an unusual position, where the Rio Grande is not flowing the city must get all its water from the ground, which is becoming salty.

“Our research center is involved in doing research to improve the desalination process so people can use and drink it,” Davis said. “We are trying to minimize salt that is going to the river and try to minimize the salt that is used by water softeners and possibly even recover that salt to use it over and over again.”

Davis earned his doctorate in chemical engineering from the University of South Carolina, and has been at UTEP for more than eight years after a conversation with UTEP President Diana Natalicio.

“She has a vision of educating the Hispanic community here and having people go out in the world and do good things,” Davis said. “She was the one who convinced me and it was worth it.”

Davis left his research at the University of South Carolina, a decision he said he does not regret.

“I was doing desalination research in a place where they really don’t need it. They got plenty of fresh water in South Carolina,” Davis said. “I’m happy I came to a city where the research would matter more than it would in a place where there is already plenty of fresh water.”

Davis said working in the laboratory and creating things is a big motivation in continuing the work he likes. “Teaching was satisfying,” Davis said. “I taught a thermodynamics class a couple of years ago, but it took a lot of time away from my research.”

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UTEP student brings e-waste recycling to campus

BY GREGG SANCHEZ

Nicole Eggert, a freshman international business major, is a member of the Lions Club International, a community service organization with more than 1.4 million members in over 200 countries around the world.

Eggert is part of the environmental committee for El Paso chapter of the LCI. In an effort to keep electronics out of landfills, Eggert said the idea of creating a resource so the community can recycle their electronics originated at this chapter and she decided to take the project to UTEP.

“UTEP doesn’t own a recycling plan, so I’m doing it as my honors project. This was a project which I was doing anyways,” said Eggert, who is also a member of the University Honors Program. “And so I started talking with my geography teacher of what I can do for my honors project. I mentioned it (the e-waste recycling project for LCI) and she was like, ‘well why don’t you just do that!’ So it was kind of like two for one.”

Tina Carrick, assistant professor of research in the department of geological sciences and main sponsor of Eggert’s project, knows Eggert from her introductory to physical geology class.

“She actually told me about this project of her interest, making people more aware of recycling in general, and it was specific to the case of the electronic recycling and so the idea is Nicole’s,” Carrick said. “This is something that she has a great passion for.”

The project’s goal is to tackle the fastest growing waste segment of the municipal solid waste stream: e-waste. It targets materials found in everyday electronics such as americium, plutonium, arsenic, lead and chromium. These materials are found in batteries, microchips, crystal displays, mobile phones, PVS, among others.

“Let’s say everybody in the school decides to throw away five electronics per person. So the landfill would eventually be full of electronics right? Once you get water running through that, all those chemicals are leaching out,” Eggert said. “Once it gets into your soil, it can contaminate your soil, it can contaminate your groundwater, through groundwater, you can contaminate your wells and eventually you can contaminate water. That’s the basic premise of why you don’t want to put it in the trash.”

Hazardous materials can damage human reproductive, respiratory and nervous systems, they can also cause damage in the brains and kidneys. Some toxins can poison people in high doses and others are associated with deficits in cognition, learning and even cancer.

Eggert said that when you’re throwing your electronics away you’re also wasting resources that can otherwise be saved, re-purposed and re-sold.

Among the items that can be recycled for this project are cellphones, batteries, computers, laptops, CD/DVDs, cameras, speakers, keyboards, projectors, cables, readers and headphones, among others.

Carrick offers extra credit to classmates who drop off their electronics.

“Almost anything can be recycled, the biggest factor of that is where you’re doing it. If you’re doing it with the city, I know their list is actually very short. Since I’m doing it at Bed Bug, whatever they take is what I take,” Eggert said.

The collection bin is located outside Carrick’s office in room 124 of the Geological Sciences Building. The project will be running until the end of the semester. Eggert said it is important to clear drives and bin cards before turning them in.

Eggert is currently trying to get the Student’s Green Teams involved in adopting the project for next semester since she plans to transfer to UT Austin.

“Today’s technology, everybody has cellphones and tablets and earphones and things like that that are harming nature, are very easy to bring in and drop off and prevent incorrect recycling,” Carrick said. “I think UTEP as a whole institution really should think about it (adopting the project). It’s a place where many of us come to on a daily basis so it’s very easy to bring something and to drop it off at the recycling bins.”

“To view the complete list of items that Eggert can accept, you can visit bedbug.org/recycle. Follow Grecia Sanchez on Twitter @grecias068.

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PLANTING PARTY

UTEP’s Student’s Green Team is partnering with other student organizations and departments to host a week of events starting with a planting party from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Wednesday, April 19, at Leech Grove. There will be live music at the party.

GEO-ECO SCIENCES FAIR

The Geology department will host a solar hotdog cooking contest, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Wednesday, April 19, at the Geology Lawn. There will be a drone technology exhibit at the event and other activities all students can participate in.

DINING WITH THE EARTH

Dining with the earth features a free meal and forum on sustainability, from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. on Wednesday, April 19, at the Tomás Rivera Conference Center. The discussion will be about UTEP’s plan to help the community go green including new Eco-Takeouts program. The dinner is free if you RSVP at minetrackerutep.edu/form/start/125122.

SUSTAINABILITY SYMPOSIUM

Students can meet local organization and learn about cutting-edge Green Research at UTEP, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Thursday, April 20, at Union Plaza.

INTERSECTIONAL ENVIRONMENTALISM

UTEP’s Young Democratic Socialists will host Inclusion in Advocacy: Environmental policy and Justice from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. on Thursday, April 20, in Liberal Arts room 326.

BANNER MAKING PARTY

Help prepare posters from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Thursday, April 21, for the March for Science event that plans to defend climate facts and policy.

What comes to mind when you think about Earth Day?

Claudia Hernandez, Nina Titovets / The Prospector

Cesar Valles, junior chemical engineering student
“I didn’t even know there was an Earth Day.”

Jeanette Mora, junior biomed major
“I think about recycling because we need to be cleaner on this day.”

Louren Cisneros, senior pathology major
“I think about Michael Jackson because he has a song about the Earth.”

Natalia Garcia, junior nursing major
“Earth Day means spending the day outside and appreciating nature.”

Orlando Barajas, sophomore music performance major
“Earth day shouldn’t be a thing because Earth should be taken care of every single day of the year.”

Miriam Fonseca, senior criminal justice major
“I think Earth is the most important place for us and we have to celebrate it.”

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10 simple ways you can help save the earth

By Eddie Velazquez

10. Insulation

On average, households lose about 20 percent of their heated and cooled air to the outside through the duct system. To avoid wasting energy, have your ducts inspected to ensure they’re sealed properly and insulated if necessary.

9. Cooling and heating

Programmable thermostats can save up to $150 a year on energy costs. Use a thermostat that can automatically turn off your cooling system when you are not home and turn back on when you arrive home.

8. Manage water use

Use low-flow faucets and shower heads to save on water bills and conserve water. Replacing the water in a water heater uses 90 percent of the energy used to wash clothes. Washing your clothes in cold water can also save you $63 per year.

7. Unplug everything

Save money and energy by unplugging electronics and appliances you’re not using. Leaving a computer on all day can cost about 21 cents per day, or about $75 per year. An easy way to follow this tip is by using multiple-outlet strips, which can turn everything off with the flip of a switch.

6. Eliminate water bottles

Use a water filter to purify tap water instead of buying bottled water. Not only is bottled water expensive, but it generates large amounts of container waste. Use a reusable water bottle, preferably aluminum rather than plastic.

5. Switch out bulbs

Switch to new and improved light bulbs. Reduce energy use from about a third to as much as 80 percent with energy-efficient halogen incandescent bulbs. Purchase new bulbs that contain more energy-efficient light sources.

4. Buy in bulk

Purchasing food from bulk bins can save money and packaging. Invest in high-quality, long-lasting products. You won’t have to replace items as frequently and this also means less waste.

3. Use less energy

By using the microwave, toaster or a crockpot grill rather than an oven, you’ll use less energy and avoid excess heat that increases room temperature. Placing lamps or TV sets near your room air-conditioning ducts can cause the air conditioner to run longer than necessary because the thermostat senses heat from the appliances. Set them apart and save energy.

2. Electronics

Recycle your cell phones and electronics. Donate or recycle them responsibly when the time comes. E-waste contains mercury and other toxicics and is a growing environmental problem.

1. Light conservation

During daylight hours rely on the natural lighting instead of turning on the lights around the house. Keeping the lights off can help you conserve energy and save on your electric bill.

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“DAMN.” continues Kendrick Lamar’s successful run

SPECIAL TO THE PROSPECTOR

“Too Pimp a Butterfly” rap idol Kendrick Lamar returned to scene on April 14 with “DAMN.” The new self-referential project sees Lamar fully embracing his legacy, as he candidly talks about what it is like to deal with it.

The album starts with “BLOOD,” a mood-setting track that will remind fans of shorter, more narrative driven tracks such as “Chapter Ten.” In it, Lamar narrates a parable about helping the different blind woman looking for something she lost. As he asks if he can be of help, the woman replies, “oh yes, you have lost something, you’ve lost your life,” ending with a gunshot that suggests Lamar’s death.

This track evokes a unique episode, and to an extent cinematic, feel that develops through the album and reaches an ecletic conclusion.

However, unlike previous works, “DAMN.” doesn’t address social issues directly. Instead, it tries to tell an interconnected personal narrative with powerful lyrics and religious symbols that allude collaterally to topics such as police brutality, racism and the current political climate in the United States.

Thematically, the 14-track LP seems to be a variety pack. In layers, Lamar talks about his hometown of Compton, California, the experiences that have made him, the price of success and how to deal with it, religion and even gender stereotypes. The album is nonetheless cohesive in its narrative, never losing focus on Lamar’s raps-to-riches story and how he relates that to what happens around him.

Musically, this album represents a step in a different direction from “To Pimp a Butterfly.” Lamar’s growth as an artist is evident, paired with fitting beat elements.

In “XXX.”, Lamar’s friend calls him for advice regarding the death of his son and he responds with police sirens in the background, “ain’t no black pow- er when your baby killed by a coward. I can’t even keep the peace, don’t you f**k with one of ours. It be murder in the street, it be bodies in the hour.”

“DNA.” is perhaps one of the album’s most impressive tracks, mixing in blunt lyrics about what being from Compton represents, a disc to talk those ‘90s heroes Ger- aldo Rivera and Lamar’s accent to fame, all with a sublime beat pinch fans of the rapper will love. Lamar boasts about overcoming the hard life that was set

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See DAMN. on page 10

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435 N. Mesa St. (Next to Wendy’s)
‘Anything Goes’ sails into the UTEP Dinner Theatre

STARRING

Jorge Blakey as Billy Crocker
Josy Mitchell as Hope Harcourt
Jared Berry as Lord Evelyn Oakleigh

“Anything Goes” will be at the UTEP Dinner Theatre April 21 to May 7. There will be both matinee dinner performances and no dinner matinee performances. The Dinner Theatre is bringing a musical about two opposites who fall in love on the SS. America. Stowaway Billy Crocker falls for engaged heiress Hope Harcourt. With the help of the crew he will try and win her over.

CLAUDIA HERNANDEZ / THE PROSPECTOR

Contact Josette at (915) 219-0543 josettepelatan@hotmail.com

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The 1975 make their way to El Paso

By Claudia Flores

The Prospector

On April 21, El Paso will host the British alternative pop-rock band, The 1975, at the Abraham Chavez Theater with their 35-day tour, “I Like It When You Sleep, for You Are So Beautiful Yet So Unaware of It.” Originally from Manchester, England, Matthew Healy (lead vocals and rhythm guitar) met Adam Hann (lead guitar), Ross MacDonald (bass) and George Daniel (drums) at Wilmslow High School in 2002. It was then that they started to play music together as teenagers. Before choosing the name The 1975, they considered names such as Talkhouse, The Slowdown, Big Sleep and Drive Like I Do. The inspiration behind their name came from a beat-poetry book by Jack Kerouac which Healy bought at a yard sale.

In 2012, the band had their first hit with the release of their first EP “Facedown,” and their single “The City.” They were later featured on Huw Stephens’ BBC Radio 1 Show. Toward the end of 2012, The 1975 were in the spotlight again as they released their second EP titled “Sex,” and by the following year, they released their third EP “Music for Cars,” where the EP’s single “Choclate” ranked no. 20 in the U.K.’s Top Singles Chart.

In 2013, they released their first full-length album “The 1975.” This was co-produced by Mike Crossing, a producer for the Arctic Monkeys and Foals. Their self-titled album hit no. 1 in the U.K.’s albums chart and it reached no. 20 in the U.S. 200 Billboard. Their most recent production, “I Like It When You Sleep, for You Are So Beautiful yet So Unaware Of It,” was released in May of 2016, which made this their second full-length studio album. Featuring their singles “Love Me” and “The Sound.”

With two nominations for the Brit Awards, one for Best British Group and Best British Album of the Year, The 1975 positioned their second album as no. 1 in the U.K and U.S charts. Promoting their second album with their “I Like It When You Sleep, For You Are So Beautiful Yet So Unaware Of It” tour, the tour opened with a series of concerts in Mexico and will continue on in the U. S. Tickets are still available at Ticketmaster.com or at the door the day of the event.

CHRIS TOMLIN

Contemporary Christian artist, Chris Tomlin will be at the Don Haskins Center on Wednesday, April 26. He will be making a stop as part of his “Worship Night in America” tour. Tickets are available at Ticketmaster.com or the UTEP Ticket Center.

PIERCE THE VEIL AND SUM 41

Rock band’s Pierce the Veil and Sum 41 are touring with Emarosa and Chapel and will be stopping in El Paso. They will be at TrickyFalls on Monday, April 24. Tickets can be purchased at Ticketfly.com or at the door the day of the event.

TWIN PEAKS

Twin Peaks, an indie, garage rock band will be at the Lowbrow Palace April 26. They are touring their last album, “Down in Heaven” which was released in 2016. Tickets can be purchased at Ticketfly.com or at the door the day of the concert.

AT THE DRIVE-IN

The punk band originally from El Paso, is returning home May 6 to perform at the El Paso County Coliseum. They will release their first album in 17 years on May 5. Tickets can be purchased at Ticketmaster.com or the County Coliseum Box Office.
EP Comic Con strikes back

BY LESLIE SARIÑANA

In his second year as EP Comic Con owner and director, Tony Stegner, hopes to bring a bigger convention than he did the previous year. He has made sure that there’s something for everyone. “You’re going to be able to see and do things you wouldn’t normally do. There will be gaming, cosplay and you can build your own cosplay stuff,” Stegner said.

The weekend will be filled with game tournaments, panels, cosplay, seminars and photo ops with some of the celebrity guests. EP Comic Con’s mission statement is, “Fly your nerd flag high!” and it certainly seems like they will.

Guests will include Alan Tudyk (Firefly, Rogue One), Lou Ferrigno (Hulk), Kevin Grevisieux (Underworld), Dina Meyer (Starship Troopers, SAW), Nicholas Brenden (Buffy the Vampire Slayer, Criminal Minds), and Martin Klebba (Pirates of the Caribbean, Scrubs).

Regarding future conventions, Stegner said, “My vision for the future of El Paso Comic Con is for it to grow outside the confines of the El Paso Convention Center. There is no reason why all the businesses in downtown El Paso can’t participate in this annual event.” They will have a costume contest, but anyone who wishes to participate must register online. Guidelines for the contest can be found on their website, elpaso-comicon.com. The contest will be held in the El Paso Convention Center on Saturday, April 22, at 8 p.m. Best show winner will receive a $500 cash prize.

EP Comic Con will run April 21 through April 23. They will also be hosting a pre-party on April 20 at Dave & Busters. Passes can be purchased through Ticketmaster or at the Plaza Theatre Box Office. Three-day passes are $60, Friday only is $15, Saturday only $30 and Sunday only $20.

Follow Leslie Sariñana on Twitter @theprsprospector
Miners will carry important momentum into C-USA championship

BY JEREMY CARRANCO

The UTEP men’s golf team is coming off a seventh-place finish out of 15 teams at the 71st Annual Western Intercollegiate Tournament in Santa Cruz, California. The Miners, who are No. 55 in the nation, shot 34-over par over the opening two days. After 54 holes of stroke play, only the top four teams will be seeded for the regional. With 44 athletes returning from last season, and plenty of new talent coming in, UTEP provided a look at what next year’s NCAA Tournament field will have in store.

Now that the Miners have put the finishing touches on their fall schedule, the focus is on the spring. The team hosts the 2017 Conference USA Championship in Texarkana, Arkansas, for a chance to claim the league’s automatic bid to the NCAA Tournament. The four-day championship will feature all 13 Conference USA squads and will be held at The Golf Club at Glendale, with 18 holes scheduled for the first three days. After 54 holes of stroke play, only the top four teams will be seeded and will conclude the championship on the fourth day with a match play playoff. Playing partners for the first day will be determined by a blind draw and for every succeeding round, team scores will determine pairings.

The projected starting team for the 2017 Conference USA tournament at the Golf Club at Glendale will be left-handeder Quardraiz Wadley, who finished fourth individually at the NCAA Regionals. Dreier was also named the 2015-16 Conference USA Golfer of the Year and became the fourth Miner to earn the honor. Dreier has also been successful in the classroom, having been named to the Conference USA Commissioner’s Honor Roll in each of his past three seasons (2014, 2015, 2016).

“Tremendous time and I value every-thing that has happened to me here,” Dreier said. “I feel like we have a really good chance to win conference and do a really good job in Texas.”

The Conference USA championship tournament will start on Sunday, April 23 with the action concluding on Wednesday, April 26.

Follow Jeremy Carranco on Twitter @J_Carranco20

Michael Reese/UTEP Athletics

To wrap up workouts before the summer begins for the UTEP football team, the Miners ended their spring season by hosting a football scrimmage on April 14 at the Sun Bowl. With 44 athletes returning from last season, and plenty of new talent coming in, UTEP provided a look at what next season’s team will have in store for their fans.

Coming off of a 4-8 (2-6 C-USA) overall record in the 2016-2017 season, the Miners are seeking improvement under fifth-year head coach Sean Kugler. It won’t be easy, as the orange and blue has lost some key talent, all-time leading rusher Aaron Jones departing, along with tight end Heryn Plinke, fullback Darin Laufla, safety Dashone Smith and many others. Kugler has reinforced his troops with 14 start-ers coming back and 22 newcomers—17 of them coming straight from high school and the other four are transferring to UTEP from other colleges.

Here are three main takeaways from the scrimmage that was held on Friday night:

The running back position for the Miners is a question mark and up for grabs.

After Jones hung up his Miners jersey for a shot at wearing an NFL jersey, the running back position is up for grabs.

He was the first modern day UTEP underclassmen player to declare for the NFL draft. Jones left a mark in UTEP’s history book by eclipsing the school’s all-time leading rushing record with 4,114 total career yards. He rushed for a single-season record during his junior season (1,773 yards) and ran for over 100 yards in 17 career games, also a school record.

Whoever steps up in Jones’ place has big shoes to fill since UTEP’s bread and butter was their rushing attack for the last three years.

The projected starting running back for the 2017 season, sophomore Quardraiz Wadley, is dealing with an injury, according to Kugler.

He sidestepped for the spring game and will need to get his shoulder re-evaluated as the severity of the injury is still unknown.

In order to cope with Wadley’s injury and the position of need, Kugler tested a number of backs in the spring scrimmage and even moved Walter Dove from wide receiver to full time running back.

As a result, Dove was named to the conference championship this year.

Junior Charles Corner, who was recently named the Conference USA Golfer of the Week for his outstanding performance in California, is also looking to carry his momentum into the Conference USA tournament. Corner shot 2-over 72 (69-71), with 12 birdies and finished just two strokes behind Dreier in the West-ern Intercollegiate. Of the 96 players in the tournament, only three shot under par, while Corner’s score was better than 89 of 96 players.

With 44 athletes returning from last season, and plenty of new talent coming in, UTEP provided a look at what next season’s team will have in store for their fans.

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Follow Jeremy Carranco on Twitter @J_Carranco20
Last season, Metz started seven games and played in 11. He improved drastically from his freshman season, as he completed 64.7 percent of his passes his sophomore season, which is good enough for the second best mark in single-season history for UTEP. Even though Metz did not start every game, he still threw for 14 touchdowns last year—the most by a Miners' quarterback since 2010.

The offense looks to be more pass heavy than seasons prior, if Friday's scrimmage was any indication.

"Ryan was solid moving the ball. In the red zone, he threw a nice fade down there for the score," Ryan has had an outstanding spring, he's a leader and works really hard," Kugler said. Metz added, "This whole spring is a whole new learning curve for me going forward. I need to be more demanding, that's something I need to be great at. I have to lead by example and be that coach on the field. Going forward, I feel like I have two Plink's this season with the group of tight ends." 

The defense showed up

"Even without three stars on the defensive side of the ball on Friday such as linebacker Alvin Jones, Dante Lavalliette and Devin Cockrell (all out for various reasons), UTEP's defense came out with something to prove. They bent at times by allowing the offense to move the ball, but stood tall on many occasions when the ball got close to the end zone."

Last season, UTEP had the least amount of sacks in C-USA with only 14. However, even against a well-tuned offensive line, UTEP’s defense forced the offense to look at 3rd and long many times during the scrimmage. The defensive line looked hungry, and only allowed 72 rushing yards all day on 26 carries.

"Both sides competed well. Both sides of the ball have shown some tremendous flashes, " Kugler said. "We accomplished a lot this spring. I really like this team. This is the group of guys we are going to move forward with, and I feel good about that.”

I have to lead by example and be that coach on the field.

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Ryan Metz, junior quarterback

Kugler said this team reminds him of the 2014 squad that went 7-6 and participated in the New Mexico Bowl game. He said they have a chip on their shoulders and are completely focused with zero distractions holding them back.

"Both sides competed well. Both sides of the ball have shown some tremendous flashes," Kugler said. "We really like this team. This is the group of guys we are going to move forward with, and I feel good about that.”