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THE GIRL NEXT DOOR
Student dancer shares her story
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RAPE CULTURE EXAMINED
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ABSCENCE IN THE TIME OF VALENTINE’S
ENT. 9

THE MOST LOYAL AND DEDICATED MINERS FAN
SPORTS 15
On male feminism

BY ANDRÉS RODRÍGUEZ
The Prospector

One of the things I remember most vividly after coming out was being asked by my father if I wanted to be a woman. He hardly gave me time to answer. He simply followed it with a more assertive question: “You aren’t dressing up as a girl, right?”

That was what he wanted to talk about. Not relationships, not safe sex. He was worried about me going full woman.

His worry wasn’t unfounded. Growing up, I wasn’t into sports. I loved to draw, dance, listen to music and act out scenes from movies. That immediately classified me as feminine. My soft features as a boy never helped either.

My masculinity was prized in my father’s eyes. He could overlook the fact that I couldn’t kick a ball to save my life, or the fact that I had just come out as gay, but he couldn’t have me going around dressed like a girl.

I was being told that masculinity was a gift from above. It was this very precious thing that afforded you not only better opportunities in life, but also your father’s respect. All I could think of though was, “What’s wrong with being a woman?”

A man who possesses feminine characteristics is immediately labeled as weak. A woman who possesses male characteristics is immediately labeled as strong. Of course, it’s a lie.

Of course, it’s a lie.

As a boy, I didn’t understand this. It’s clear now that I was being told that masculinity meant what we’re told. It’s what we’re told.

Feminism is a complicated movement. It’s a complicated state of being, of action and of reaction. I’ve realized I can’t fully grasp the breath of feminisms without letting go of some of the old machismo I inherited and by acknowledging that being a man affords me certain privileges.

I like to think of myself as a feminist, because I appreciate women and look that they are treated with equality and respect. But I’ve been met with bumps along the way. The upbringing taught me to be protective of women, but also to be wary of them, and the more I enter into the gay scene, the more I see feminism rejected.

I have come across terms like “straight-acting” and “no fems” very often among gay men. I’m baffled by not only how homophobic these comments can be, but by how misogynistic and insulting they are. They are in the same boat as at its most irrelevant and, although I understand these are personal preferences, they are also oppressive.

Yes, gay men and women are fighting a different fight, but I think there’s beauty in the overlaps. Feminism doesn’t exist by itself in the halls of the women’s-studies departments and the voices of the radical and outspoken. It’s in the actions of those who listen and attempt to understand and whiff against sexism and for equality.

Andrés Rodríguez may be reached at theprospectordaily@gmail.com.
Women’s studies researches rape on campus

BY JASMINE AGUILERA

Editor’s note: This is part one of a three-part series examining “rape culture” on campus and in the community.

The Women’s Studies Program is now conducting research on the issue of sexual assault on college campuses.

The Sexual Attitudes, Behaviors and Experiences Survey, originally begun at the Delta State University in Valdosta, Ga., and was an effort to change the campus’s policy. Since then, the surveys have been conducted twice and has turned its focus on UTep and the El Paso community.

Brenda Risch, Women’s Studies Program director, began conducting surveys of more than 1,000 college students in fall 2013 for SABES-three.

Risch said she believes that SABES-three is probably the biggest sample size of studies and experiences of Hispanic students in the nation.

“College populations who are Hispanic or Latino are very rarely surveyed about these issues,” Risch said. “And when they are, they are vastly in the minority.”

SABES-three, which is currently being conducted, differs from the former surveys by focusing more on issues of power and control in intimate relationships. The survey also asks what people think constitutes consent, what they classify as excessive force, if they feel in any way disempowered.

The findings of the surveys conducted at UTep are not published yet, as they are still being analyzed and researched, but Risch said there are parts of the survey that she wants to share.

SABES-three shows that college seniors are at a higher risk of becoming a victim of sexual assault because they are more resistant and can act out. “We assume that they are being proactive,” Risch said. “As the family—or the student’s spouse, partner or boyfriend—becomes more anxious about that person having the power of a college education they become more and more resistant and can act out.”

The research is being conducted in light of an initiative launched by President Barack Obama in January in light of an initiative launched by the White House report states that 38 percent of college campuses.

According to a 2010 study conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention—the same study cited by the White House—in one in five women has been sexually assaulted during her time in college. The CDC reports that 38 percent of women who are raped were between the ages of 18 and 24.

The White House report states that the college dynamic fuels the problem as many survivors are victims of “in-capacity of sexual assault” because they are sexually abused while drunk, under the influence of drugs, passed out, or otherwise incapacitated. “I want every man in America to feel some emotional pressure on how they’re supposed to behave and treat a woman. This starts before they go to college.”

The initiative aims to combat violence by providing funding for multidisciplinary sexual assault teams of prosecutors, health care providers and victim advocates, providing funding for sexual assault nurse examiners; and it includes new prosecutions for perpetrators who target LGBT, immigrant and Native American victims and those who live in low-income or subsidized housing.

On campus campuses specifically, the initiative plans to step up federal complaints that further obligate schools to prevent and respond to assaults.

Nancy Espauza, senior English and American literature major, said she believes we live in a “rape culture,” a term used to describe a society that tolerates or excuses rape.

“I think the fact that people are always talking about false accusations, even though it happens in very small amounts—I read somewhere that you are 300 times more likely to become a professional football player than he is falsely accused of rape—I think that’s a part of a rape culture,” she said. “The way that we believe that it’s a natural part of life and then we try to excuse it as much as we can.”

She said that as a woman, she is constantly thinking about her protection when she is outside or drinking alone. “I have protect myself or else I’m going to be blamed for (being assaulted),” Espauza said.

Risch said the most shocking thing she learned from the survey is that students who had been assaulted did not seek assistance.

“(Students) are not telling anyone,” she said. “A lot of that is out of fear of being shamed publicly or not being believed or having some sort of retribution.”

Students can turn to the UTep Student Health Center, the University Counseling Center, the UTep Police Department, or outside resources like the Sexual Trauma and Assault Response Services or the Center Against Family Violence.

UTES Police crime logs did not turn up any incidents of sexual assault on the campus in the last year, excluding the incidents involving David Monastere, the notorious “butt-grabber.”

Risch said this doesn’t mean students are not sexually assaulted, but because UTep is a commuter campus, most assaults happen when students are not on campus. Deven McCoy, senior drawing major, believes strongly that our society doesn’t understand the environment in which rape is acceptable.

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“The fact that we have politicians who, on numerous occasions, have normalized and even condoned rape speaks volumes of that,” he said. “Some even going as far as to say rape is a blessing in disguise.” There are even states where child visitation rights are granted to the rapist, and what this does is empower rapists and undermine the victim.”

McCoy said in order to change rape culture, blaming the victim has to stop. “It has nothing to do with whether or not the victim was intoxicated, or what they were wearing. Rapists are the sole reason rape occurs,” he said. “The fact of the matter is, we put our victims down rather than pull them up, which needs to stop immediately.”

Although SABES-two and three were not conducted to change specific policies at any particular campus, Risch hopes that the surveys and the work done by the Women’s Studies Program could change the issue of sexual assault for the better.

Through the surveys, she hopes to promote awareness, safety and further the discussion on what consent really means. “You know that folks don’t inter- vene always, even if they know they should,” Risch said. “But they are more likely to if they know they can and they are empowered to and it’s the right thing to do.”

The complete “Rape and Sexual Assault: A Renewed call to Action” report issued by the White House may be found at thenprospectordaily.com, along with links to resources for those who have survived a sexual assault.

Almost 50% of female survivors were raped before 18 and more than 25% of male victims were raped before 10

Minority women are more vulnerable to rape:

Women of color are more likely to be raped than their white counterparts. The majority of black women (22%) and Hispanic women (15%) who were raped as a result of a relationship, their former intimate partner, has been raped in his lifetime.

“If you think about it, it’s the same way talking about false accusations,” Risch said. “It has nothing to do with whether or not the victim was intoxicated, or what they were wearing. Rapists are the sole reason rape occurs,” he said. “The fact of the matter is, we put our victims down rather than pull them up, which needs to stop immediately.”

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51% of female victims were raped by a current or former intimate partner while 41% were raped by an acquaintance. Just 14% were raped by a complete stranger.

52% of male and boy victims were raped by an acquaintance. Only 15% of them were victims of a stranger.

98% of females & 93% of male victims report that their assailants were male.
The Sexual Health Report Card, a study conducted by Trojan, the condom company, ranked UTEP in the bottom 20 of 140 universities across the country. Ranked at 124 in the 2013 study, UTEP has not fared well in the past three years. In 2011 the university ranked 127 and improved at 120 in 2012.

Every year, Trojan conducts the study and collects information from university health centers in order to evaluate the sexual health resources and information that universities provide to students.

Some criteria are hours of operation, quality of sexual health information on the health centers’ website, contraceptive and condom availability, HIV and STI testing on site, lecture outreach programs, student peer groups, sexual assault programs and overall website usability and quality.

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Trojan ranked UTEP number 124 among universities nationwide in their annual sexual health report card. Business Manager at the UTEP Student Health Center, David Porras, said that he is proud of what the center offers to students. Porras said neither he nor anyone at the center were contacted in regards to the study. He doesn’t believe the ranking represents the quality of the Student Health Center.

“We are here for the students’ purpose, our philosophy is a healthy mind and a healthy body is a healthy Miner,” Porras said.

According to Porras, the Student Health Center is not associated with student peer groups and sexual assault programs—two of the 11 resources that conductors of the study search for. Porras also stated that as of this year, the Student Health Center will not be providing free condoms because Trojan is no longer providing them free to the university.

“We would love to provide as many free services as we could, but like everything else, we are on a budget,” Porras said. “But we do have very reasonable prices.”

Sperling’s Best Places, an independent research company based in Portland, Ore., conducted the study for Trojan.

President of Sperling’s Best Places, Burt Sperling, said that out of all the other studies they have conducted in the past, this was the study that they were proudest of.

“This study is providing information to the students and also how they can raise the level of awareness,” Sperling said.

Although Porras said that he was not contacted about this study, Sperling said that he contacted Porras via email as he does with every university. He said that many times it is confusion about the study that leads to a lack of response.

“We do everything we can to ensure that the health centers are contacted and informed about the study,” Sperling said.

Sperling said that if health center officials do not complete their two-page questionnaire, the researchers will take the survey and answer the questions as if they were the student and use the center’s website as a tool to conduct their ranking.

“We use web searches and look for universities and see if their health centers are on Facebook,” he said. “We also look to see if there are peer groups that provide students with information about sexual health.”

Sperling said student health center’s websites are the most important in regards to the ranking because it provides students with necessary information on sexual health. When looking at the UTEP Student Health Center website, it does provide information such as hours of operation and a list of the services the center provides for women and men, but fails to provide information regarding sexual health and resources, a significant factor in this ranking.

Junior pre-nursing major Sonia Chavez said she feels the Student Health Center does provide students with the necessary tools to be sexually healthy. “They frequently offer free HIV testing and other services at a fair price, and everything else needed for students to be safe and check themselves,” Chavez said. “It just takes self-sell for students to actually use the resources provided.”

Porras says that UTEP students are not hesitant to ask for help when it comes to sexual health. “They are open to information and we are here to provide them with it,” he said. “We have booklets in the waiting area and when we go to the different functions that we have here at the university, I always have booklets on sex—safe sex.”

For more information about the Trojan sexual Health Report Card and the list of universities ranked, visit theprospectordaily.com.
Sex industry course offers discussion on taboo subjects

By Maria Esquinca

In a small classroom, hands are being raised in the air and loud murmurs are echoing across the room.

On the wall you see the words “Porn and free speech” projected on the wall. This is just a normal day in Associate Professor Naomi Fertman’s Women and Work in the Sex Industry class.

“We’re really here to learn, to respect different points of view,” said Esther Zapata, junior public relations major.

The course is offered under the Women’s Studies Program and is taught by Fertman, who took over the course three years ago. It’s also offered online.

Fertman breaks the course down into three parts—pornography, prostitution and sex trafficking.

Through its content, the course pushes the boundaries by taking a comprehensive look into traditionally taboo subjects.

“It is really kind of an examination into the many ways of dealing with sex work, with prostitution and sex trafficking,” Fertman said. “I believe it’s a good site to meet new people.”

“Tinder” is an app that was created by USC grads Sean Rad and Justin Mateen. “Tinder” works synchronously with Facebook.

This app allows you to create a profile with pictures and not much else. You can “miss” or “hit” a match, with an “X” for “dislike” and a “heart” for “like.” Once you “heart” a match, the app takes you into a private chat room and you are free to interact with the other person.

“You want to keep talking about it. You want to make a change.”

-Memo Bayona, sophomore psychology major

was what is your perspective or your opinion towards prostitution and if we believe that it is a choice, Rivas said. “I remember the response that I wrote down… she later in the semester asked the same questions and my response was completely different.”

Despite the misconception that the course might mainly attract students to apply what they learn outside of the classroom, Fertman finds a way for her students to apply what they learn outside of the classroom.

“We are going to have an Immigration and Customs Enforcement agent talk to the students so that they can have some network and understanding of how the sources are affecting this community,” Fertman said. “So building that bridge between the academic and the real world, this course allows for that bridge to be built.”

Students said they leave the course with a fresh perspective.

“It’s a class that you go out of it and you’re still talking about it, you keep thinking and you go into research,” Bayona said. “You want to keep talking about it. You want to make a change.”

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The girl next door: student dancer shares her story

BY LORAIN WATTERS

Editor’s note: The student interviewed in this story asked to be named by her dancing name, "Mary." 

Red lights bounce off of velvet-covered walls, reflecting on mirrors and cascading down naked bodies, sweat and glitter mixing together. Upbeat synth-pop songs play loudly on the speakers, masking the clinking of shot glasses and the shouting of men. Mary, 22, a junior English and American literature major, is per- fectly hidden beneath denim jeans, a beige long-sleeved shirt and sneakers. Her glasses make her brown eyes bigger than they are because of her strong prescription. She’s as "blind as a bat," she said.

After quitting her job at Whataburger, Mary began working at Fox’s when she was 18. "The idea of it seemed to click, making that much money. I started waiting tables, taking it in, going out. She added. "After a while, they say. "They basically said you either start dancing or you have to leave. It was very rough and that’s how I started an exotic dancer. It’s a business. A girl’s a little business."

The exotic entertainment industry is grossed at $57 billion worldwide annually, according to crossculturalconnections.org. Lady Gaga and Beyoncé have both sung about the subject. "They fired me after that and now I'm in love with rock and roll," she said.

Women choose to work in the adult entertainment industry because they may earn an anywhere from $20,000 to $140,000 annually. Before the economy turned for the worst, Mary was making $400-500 a night, usually beginning work at 6 p.m. and leaving around 4 a.m., "She said. "After waiting tables, going in at 8 p.m. and making that much money. So I started working at Jaguar’s, then Dreams Cabaret, and then Dreams Cabaret was built and she became a manager, her cigarettes I have to stop and ask her if you said no, you said no. Our culture doesn’t see it that way—if women dress in a sexually provocative way or are in a certain location, you are somehow consented to other behavior."

Along with experiencing this abuse, Mary has also experienced men ask- ing for her to perform strange acts such as urinating in a cup or giving them her used tampons, paying her $1,000 in return. "When guys walk into a shop or a strip club, it’s a fantasy that they have and they take that fantasy with them to their relationships outside of the club," Mary said. "They go on ask- ing other girls to act like this and they get mad when the girls don’t want to. It is a world for men made by men."

After graduation, Mary said she does not plan on working at a regu- lar 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. day job, but if a good-paying teaching or secretarial position were to open up, she might leave her job as an exotic dancer.

Lorain Watters may be reached at lorainw@gmail.com.
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FEBRUARY 12TH - THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF LEADERSHIP

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Queer Leadership Conference
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Long-distance relationships are often colored with the stigma of negative outcomes. But every year while students study abroad they come back with culture shock, a high boost of confidence and sometimes with a taken heart.

UTEP alumna Lauren Ruiz didn’t see this coming. She met her boyfriend during her studies in France and is currently in a long-distance relationship with him.

“I met him a day after Valentine’s Day in Paris in front of the museum of Les Invalides and although it was not love at first sight, much to my surprise, this stranger turned out to be one of the most loving, caring and romantic people I had ever met,” Ruiz said.

Ruiz said that it’s not the distance that is the measure of a relationship, since any relationship with or without distance requires love, time, work and dedication.

“Any relationship, whether long distance or close, will always require work,” Ruiz said. “When you truly love somebody, distance will never be an issue. Although I do miss my boyfriend, the distance doesn’t stop us from being happy.”

Long-distance relationships have become more manageable thanks to apps like Skype, but the price for technology’s innovation can be quite expensive, according to Monica Ramos, a UTEP alumna who also met her Belgium boyfriend during her study abroad experience in 2011.

“Skype credits eat up fast with almost $10 every two weeks,” Ramos said. “We also send each other care packages often and eventually—the total amount spent added up quite fast.”

However, Ramos said that thanks to apps like “WhatsApp,” “FaceTime” and “Skype,” they are able to communicate much more frequently and be a part of each other’s lives, even with an eight-hour time difference.

Christopher Lee Diaz, owner and founder of Tapes Mixedplates, said he decided to start this business in 2013 because he found the national food touring company, for which he previously worked for, limited him.

“I decided it was better to develop a concept of my own,” Diaz said. “I really kept this idea going because I felt it was important to build strong ties with the local community and restaurants.”

“Tapes Mixedplates offers one-of-a-kind Valentine’s Day dinner, attendees must first reserve a space online at Tapes Mixedplates website, since this one night event has the capacity to only seat 30 people. Tickets are $70 and include transportation provided by L3 Coach, a local party bus company, along with a six to nine-course meal served by a secret chef. Participants will be picked up by L3 Coach and served champagne at a designated area. We will be transported to an undisclosed location, where we will start the night off with a cocktail hour and note this event is BYOB,” said Diaz.

Attendees will be transported back to the drop-off location.

“It sounds like it might be kind of fun if you’re into adventurous dates,” said Lesa Tillot, junior graphic design major. “Just the fact that you don’t know where you’re going is kinda scary, but other than that, it sounds interesting. I think it would make an interesting Valentine’s Day date.”

ALEXANDRA YERENA, senior art major, said that being a guest of the pop-up restaurant experience sounds like fun.

“I think it’s a really good deal because a limo alone is pretty expensive,” Yerena said. “I would love to go.”
QUESTION OF THE WEEK
What has been your worst date?

ARES ALARCON
Junior media advertising major
“We went out to eat and the conversation we were having wasn’t that great. Neither of us were into a date. I was just waiting for it to be over.”

CELENA CHAFFINO
Freshman biochemistry major
“My worst date was when my date and I went to the movies and got pizza and he made me pay for it. When we got back to his house he ditched me for his grandparents.”

CHAD CANDELARIA
Senior media advertising major
“At dinner, my card declined when we were on our Valentine’s Day date and the check was about $100. She ended up having to pay for it.”

KAMIE COFFEE
Sophomore pre-business major
“Going to see ‘The Hunger Games’ and having the guy I went with cry the whole movie.”

JOSH STOKES
Senior biochemistry major
“When I got my dates’ car towed and we had to go pick it up. Then her car broke down. That was our last date.”

MIREYA MEDINA
Freshman general studies major
“I found out some stuff about my boyfriend and I had to break up with him a day before Valentine’s Day.”

MARC NELSON
Freshman general studies major
“My worst date was freshman homecoming in high school. I met her on Facebook and when we went there was nothing for us to talk about since we only talked online. It was just a really awkward night.”

SELENA RAMIREZ
Freshman general studies major
“Some guy had invited me to have dinner and yet it turned out to be that I was the one that had to pay for it myself and for him. I had given him two big bears and his favorite chocolates, and in return I didn’t get anything.”
February 11, 2014

ABSENCE from page 4

“We also communicated via email, since my boyfriend is sort of old school. We would also send each other poems and our reflections through letters,” Ramos said. “But if it wasn’t for these outlets, I think it would have been impossible to catch up with one another. Honestly, I don’t know how they did it back in the day. I mean regular mail is exciting, but I would have died without the rest.”

After dating for two years, Ramos’ relationship didn’t become part of the 40 percent of the 14 million people in the U.S. who end a long distance relationship. They both now live in Belgium and this will mark their second Valentine’s Day together.

“Our Valentine’s Day will consist of cooking pasta together, which is one of our favorite plates, then maybe spend a relaxing night watching a movie or just walking through the city,” Ramos said. “Couples often times take for granted the little things that matter in a relationship, and rather focus on how much we have to spend in order to make this day special.”

Unlike Ramos, Ruiz will be waiting until May to see her boyfriend and she can’t wait to have Valentine’s Day every day for the three months that he will be in El Paso.

“I look forward to spending time with him and having actual dates, where we can talk in person, laugh, walk together, hold hands and live life,” Ruiz said.

Apart from all the obstacles that long-distance relationship couples face, Ruiz and Ramos agree that the time difference is something difficult to keep track of. There was only some allotted time to talk before either one of them had to go to school, but eventually it became part of their daily routine.

“I would stay up and Skype with him at 11:30 p.m., while he had to wake up at 7:30 a.m.,” Ruiz said. “Most of the times, I would end up going to bed at three in the morning, simply because we had much conversations that took my sleepiness away.”

In addition, Ramos said that not being able to physically share her day with him was hard to endure on a day-to-day basis.

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On Sundays we would log in to Skype and cook simultaneously and then eat together. I would have brunch while he would eat his dinner,” Ramos said. “Not being able to hug or cuddle, while watching a movie, was very difficult to endure, but because of all these obstacles it certainly strengthen our relationship. It made us fight for each other so much that it established a rock-solid base.”

Much like a relationship, friendships are also established and evolve while being abroad.

Isabel Molina, who studied for a semester in France last spring, said that although making new friends is an essential part of a study abroad experience, it’s a hard transition once they have to test their friendship.

“We became something more than friends, we became dependent on one another, we became a family known as ‘The Ragazzi’—a name that was given to us by an Italian woman,” Molina said.

Once the semester is over and everyone has traveled back to their home countries, Facebook and Skype are the only ways to remain in contact and talk about their adventures and memories.

“Never did I think family could be found on the other side of the world,” Molina said.

While the perks of having a long-distance relationship or friendship don’t always fall under that happily ever after category, the reward always shines through.

The time apart may strengthens communication, honesty and creativity that will serve as valuable factors in a relationship—creating a strong bond between each other, Ramos said.

“Just like any relationship, it requires time and effort to make it work. Distance relationships, however, require double the work, trust and much sacrifice. They are kind of like an unofficial marriage, like a test run or an experiment, since it requires commitment, understanding from both parties and not to mention much creativity to keep that spark going and make up for each other’s absence,” Ramos said.

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Ruiz added that being apart has encouraged them to talk and share their emotions a lot more, since long-distance relationships can’t afford confusions because of dead silence.

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Love is society's bait for consumerism

By Jose Soto

Shortly before
I began working on this column, I checked my bank account bal-
ance. Now, I sit here reading the
overwhelming hype for this holiday
has become the commercialization of love.

Tarry, it’s good for the economy, but it’s unfortunate for our values.

We are expected to shower our
loved ones with gifts and treats, a mere two months after Christmas, as if we didn’t have enough expenses already!

What matters worse, is that
certain items and purchases are
directly expected such as, flowers,
chocolates, candy and champagne.

But why?

Karen would do it for the holidays
in exchange for a heartbreak,
just jealous or some other reason
that I am single.

Last year, while I was in a previous
relationship, we were too early in our
involvement to go full throttle, having
only been together for some weeks.

We simply settled for drinks at a local
bar. That’s the extent of my experi-
ence with Valentine’s Day. The truth is,
I’ve never really had a Valentine and I’ll like to keep it that way.

That’s not to say I’m not a romantic
person or don’t believe in love. I sim-
ply believe that one does not need a specific day to express
love for others. When I’ve been lucky enough to be
involved with someone romantically, I’ve taken any opportunity to com-
 municate that ardor. There’s no need
for an allocated date for expressing
my love for anyone, and more impor-
tantly, I don’t believe in the capitalistic
notion that I must put my debit card
and show my love for my spe-
cial someone.

Instead of entailing that we make
ourselves worthy enough to be
loved by others, why don’t we
look back at our adolescence
and consider what it is all about in the
first place?

For my sister, it is the idea of compar-
ing something to everything that
loved one.

For my brother, it is the idea of compar-
ing something to everything that
loved one.

For me, it’s the feeling of love in the air
around this time of year. Or the antici-
pation of preparing something
amazing for that special someone.

Or is it the way that the love is dis-
played for everyone to see? I know
that this holiday can be annoying
and controversial to many, but it is
my second favorite holiday next to
Christmas.

Love is something so special and
so significant — that I for one am glad
that it got its own holiday. Now call
it what you will — a holiday that large
organizationscreated to make money
and capitalize on fools in love — but I
think that it doesn’t have to be about the
money spent, but the reason it is
celebrated.

Go back to your adolescence and
remember sitting in class with your
boyfriend/girlfriend or maybe even a
group of friends asked to be your val-
tenine. Then you would walk around
the school with those enormously
huge teddy bears or maybe the bou-
quet of flowers that were left at your
desk. You know that this was some-
thing that made you feel special and
important.

Now as a college student, not much
has changed. You still get that same
feeling when your valentine makes
you smile with that late night dinner
and that heartfelt gift that they made just
for you.

I commend those who take any op-
portunity to shower their loved ones
with signs of their affection. However,
we shouldn’t be around the calendar
to coordinate something with the
love between your sister or broth-
er. The Disney movie “Frozen” is
your secret crush — would get
the names on the cards and debating
down the night before and writing
and making their card to your loved
one. Then you would walk around
your friends.

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Track earns 7th place at Texas A&M Invitational

JAVIER CORTÉZ / THE PROSPECTOR

Despite solid efforts from some of its members, the UTEP women's track and field team finished seventh overall in the Texas A&M Invitational last weekend. The Miners swept both the men's and women's titles.

Junior Elfasha May continued his success by winning the 5,000-meter run. The win was May's first of the season. The Miners had great success, it was not enough to hold off powerhouse Texas A&M. The Aggies swept both the men's and women's invitational titles.

"Coaches are fairly pleased with the competition," head coach Mike Laaksonen said. "We competed against some talented teams and still had athletes make impressive marks. We still have one more meet before the conference championship, so our focus will be on getting a few individuals to perform better, but I think most of them will get there by the time it counts." At the end of the meet, there were many Miners who stood out amongst the many talented teams at College Station.

Sophomore Nickevea Wilson won the women's triple jump. Senior sprinter Jan Jackson finished second in the 60-meters with hurdles. Along with winning the men's distance medley, Bum won the men's one-mile race and senior Mark Jackson set a meet record in the men's long jump with 7.61 meters. In the past, the women's track and field team garnered more of the spotlight with four-time All-American Risper Kimaiyo, Olympic bronze medalists Blessing Okagbare and Oludamola Osayomi.

This year it's been the men's team that has taken that spotlight and run with it. Starting the season ranked 22nd in the country, the men now find themselves as 13th in the country and are being led by Rotich, who won the national title in the 2,000-meter steeplechase last year.

With the good results this past week at College Station, there is a buzz about UTEP track once again.

UTEP women's basketball team faces win derivative at Old Dominion, North Texas

By Javier Cortez

The Prospector

After a successful sixth-straight win on Feb. 3, the UTEP women's basketball team is on the road again to face the Old Dominion Monarchs and the North Texas Mean Green Eagles on Feb. 8 and Feb. 9.

After day one, the men's team met the competition, "head coach Mika Laaksonen, head coach.

"We think people notice us," senior sprinter Mark Jackson said. "In order for us to be a serious threat though, we're going to actually have to come with it at the national meet for people to actually open their eyes and notice that UTEP is there, which we are." Before the NCAA indoor championships, the Miners still have some work to do. This week the Miners will be heading to Albuquerque, N.M., for the Don Kirby Track and Field Elite Invitational. Once the Miners have finished the two-day competition, they will finish the month of February by heading into the Conference USA Indoor Championships at Birmingham, Ala.

"I really appreciate that we had these two games are crucial for us," Adams said. "We're very proud of our team, it was a great team win."
**WEEKEND SCORES**

**MEN’S BASKETBALL**
Feb. 6  
UTEP 58, East Carolina 47  
Feb. 8  
UTEP 63, Old Dominion 49

**WOMEN’S BASKETBALL**
Feb. 5  
Louisiana Tech 75, UTEP 85  
Feb. 8  
Florida International 62, UTEP 83

**WOMEN’S TENNIS**
Feb. 7  
UTEP 0, Arizona 5
Feb. 8  
UTEP 1, Grand Canyon 6  
Feb. 9  
UTEP 2, Sacramento State 5

**SOFTBALL**
Feb. 7  
UTEP 0, Nebraska 7  
UTEP 6, Saint Mary’s 2
Feb. 8  
UTEP 0, Florida State 8  
UTEP 10, Saint Mary’s 11
Feb. 9  
UTEP 6, New Mexico State 8

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The most loyal and dedicated Miners fan

BY LUIS BARRIO
The Prospector

Florida International’s women’s basketball team is being introduced in the starting lineups. As the PA announcer calls out each player’s name, everyone in the surrounding sections knows what follows.

“What?” is what longtime UTEP fan Patricia Flores, or Miss Pat as fans, coaches and players know, says with fervent fire when an opposing player is introduced.

During the women’s games, she is stationed right behind the Miners’ bench and although they’ve heard it many times, the Miners grim as she humorously heckles the visiting team.

“I love Miss Pat. She’s one of our biggest fans. She’s just a good person,” said senior guard Kelli Willingham.

UTEP is trying to score on the offensive end and they draw a personal foul. Miss Pat shouts, “You! You! You! You!” to reaffirm to the opposing players that they did indeed commit a foul.

Miss Pat and her husband have seen the Miners play since the 1980s. “I think just the team enthusiasm, even from years past up to now, they just fight and keep clawing,” Miss Pat said. “I love going to the games and acting crazy. That’s the best thing going in El Paso.”

It was about seven years ago when Miss Pat started attending every women’s basketball home game. Her unmatched enthusiasm has garnered her questions such as, “Which player is your daughter?” She always replies that she doesn’t have a daughter on the team.

When the Miners play away from home, Miss Pat will go on the road and cheer on the Miners if the opportunity presents itself. One night after a road game victory, Miss Pat got a call in her hotel room from one of head coach Keitha Adams’ assistant coaches. She said she was told on the phone: “You are the number one fan, keep it going.” Miss Pat said. “I want them to be here away from home and they have nobody.”

It is a tradition for the UTEP home crowd to stand at the beginning of the first half and the second half until the visiting team has scored its first field goal. As soon as the shot goes in, the sea of orange fans seat themselves into their chairs and proceed to watch the game.

The only ones that remain standing are the security staff, Paydirt Pete, the head coaches and Miss Pat. She stands the whole game until the final buzzer. Even the cheerleaders get to take a break and sit down once in a while. Even with a couple of bad knees and a bad hip, Miss Pat said she sees this as no legitimate excuse not to cheer on the Miners. “You don’t want them to be here away from home and they have nobody.”

Miss Pat tells her husband all the time that she believes the players are so talented that they can win every game. “I truly believe it,” she said. “This is why people like Miss Pat and take time to let her know that her spirit is a treat to watch. Her affable character blends with a relentless commitment to give the Miners every edge she can as a fan is something to respect.”

Miss Pat has won their last six conference games. They have won 11 of 12 games and are tied with Southern Miss in first place of conference.

“I’ll be going to the games as long as God says I can,” Miss Pat said.

Luis Barrio may be reached at theprospectordaily.sports@gmail.com.
Students react to baseball stadium opening delay

BY EDWIN DELGADO
The Prospector

MountainStar Sports Group recently announced their decision to postpone the opening day of the new downtown ballpark from April 11 to April 28, a decision that was not very well received among El Pasoans and students at UTEP.

“I was really excited for the season to start and now we’re going to have to wait another two weeks for it,” said Tomas Lopez, junior business administration major. “I’m a little disappointed on the delay, but I’m hoping that there will not be any more surprises.”

The opening home-series for the Chihuahuas will now be played at the Kino Sports Complex in Tucson, Ariz., and the new ballpark will be inaugurated on April 28 when the Chihuahuas host the Fresno Grizzlies.

According to the president of MountainStar Sports Group, Alan Ledford, the stadium will be completed by April 11, however some, “Public safety components, concession spaces and state-of-the-art amenities” may not be finalized by then.

“While there was a possibility that the home opener could be played on April 11, we want to ensure we can offer the quality ballpark experience that El Paso deserves,” Ledford said in a statement.

Fans who have already bought tickets for the opening series have the options of exchanging them, getting a refund or donating them to veterans.

The delay also caused some students to wonder if this was a good idea in the first place.

“This is exactly what I was afraid that could happen,” said Aline Diaz, sophomore education major. “Bringing the baseball team was a mistake. Now I wonder what the next issue with the team is going to be.”

Construction crews had a very narrow window of time to get the ballpark erected. On April 14, 2013, city hall was demolished to make room for the ballpark and it took more than a month to clean up the site, leaving the construction crews about 10 months to get the stadium ready.

“We have one chance to do opening day right and we owe it to the community to make sure that (the) first impression of every detail in the ballpark is unforgettable,” Ledford said. “This is as much about the whole ballpark experience as it is about playing baseball. April 28th will be worth the wait.”

With the change in scheduling, the Chihuahuas will now have an eight-game home stand to inaugurate their new ballpark when they face the Fresno Grizzlies from April 28 to May 1, followed by four games against the Sacramento River Cats from May 2-5.

“I don’t think the delay will make the team lose support,” Lopez said. “I’m sure most people in El Paso are as anxious as I am for the Chihuahuas’ season to begin.”