



CELEBRITIES AND POLITICAL POWER

BY DANNA STEWART

With the upcoming elections, we are faced with the reality of the power of celebrities to influence the thoughts and actions of Americans. Politicians and their public relations teams pull on celebrity television and movie stars that are viewed in positive aspects through the eyes of Americans to promote their campaigns. What gives the television and movie stars the power of celebrity? It's the fact that they are living the American dream. Doing what they want, when they want, having people recognize and praise them, making money, etc. This is something most Americans dream of, and when they see someone that has it, they feel there is something special about that person that got them their current social status. Thus,

if they have what it takes to make it big, they must have valuable opinions, which give them the celebrity power of endorsement. The more big names a campaign has linked to it, the more likely it is to gain the attention and support of the American public. This is something we can utilize for our fundraisers. The power of celebrity, even if it's a local writer or radio disc jockey, can go a long way. We, as Phi Theta Kappa members, need to take action to better our schools and communities. Any type of fundraiser we do will be more successful if we follow the lead of the electoral candidates and use the power of celebrity.

HOW TO GO ROCK CLIMBING FOR THE FIRST TIME

BY ESTHER KELLEY

As many of you are probably aware, Texas A&M University- Commerce has a rock climbing wall. Anyone with a valid student ID can climb here for free; this is a really great deal because at my last university you had to pay a special membership fee in order to climb at the rock wall and our rock wall is better than theirs was. If you do not have climbing shoes, the recreation center will let you rent them for free. Now I know that if you have never climbed before, the prospect of walking into a building and letting someone tie you to a rope so that you can climb 45 feet into the air and let go of your supports may sound frightening. However, you can ease your mind by asking one of the rock wall workers to teach you the knots that you need to know in order to climb safely and explain how all of the equipment works, and why it will protect you. Then you will know if someone has tied you to the rope incorrectly. The people at the rock wall are used to interacting with people of all skill levels and they will be able to direct you to a route that is suited for begin-

ners if you have never climbed before. If the idea of heights still scares you then you can try bouldering. This is a form of rock climbing that focuses more on skill than endurance and only goes up to 10 feet high. The goal with bouldering is not to get as high as you can, but master the techniques of climbing. If you think you might be interested in climbing outdoors, sometimes trips are available through the recreation center. Additionally, the university offers a Rock Climbing class taught by John Hill. If any of these options appeal to you then go to the rock wall to find out more information. The rock wall is open on Mon – Thurs from 12:00pm – 11:00pm; Fri-Sat from 2:00pm - 7:00pm; and Sunday from 3:00pm – 10:00pm. Information about the rock wall can be found at: http://www.tamu-commerce.edu/reccenter/outdoor_climbing_alpha/outdoor_climbing.asp. For more information on the rock climbing wall contact the Morris Recreation Center at (903) 458-3170 or contact John Hill at (903) 468-3174 or John_Hill@tamu-commerce.edu.

MARCH OF DIMES FOR BABIES

BY ALEXANDRA KRIETZSCH

March for Babies is a primary fundraising event aimed at raising money to improve the health of babies. It will be held Saturday, April 19th in Dallas. You should walk because premature birth touches half a million babies and their families every year, and babies born premature are more likely to die, or have lifelong disabilities. A hundred and twenty thousand babies are born with serious birth defects every year. The March of Dimes is here for all babies—those born healthy and those that

need help to survive and thrive. Some form family teams, which are made up of friends and family who have been affected by premature birth or birth defects. Other family teams walk in celebration of all babies. Each team helps give babies a healthy start. Get your company to form a team and demonstrate the concern for issues that affect employees and their children. It will also give employees a wonderful event they can participate in together. Check marchforbabies.org for more information.

GRADUATING WITH HONORS: EDUCATION STUDENTS

Why is it very few education majors at Texas A&M Commerce graduate with honors? It could be that many of them commute from the Metroplex and do not have time for it? Perhaps more education majors have outside families or jobs to juggle. Or perhaps most education majors do not know there is an honors program or its requirements.

To be eligible for the honors program, a candidate must have a 3.3 grade-point average. While graduating with honors is not complicated, it takes three semesters to complete and can be time consuming. Therefore, a potential honors candidate should consider starting the process for graduating with honors as soon as possible. Generally, to graduate with honors, the candidate must complete two honors courses. As the Education Department does not have honors courses in its curriculum, an education major can fulfill this requirement by completing additional coursework under two professors. Examples of this additional honors work may include extra books to study with an oral or written summary, or extra lesson plans and presentations assigned. This extra honors coursework is set forth in a "contract" between the candidate and the professor, which is then submitted to the honors program office with a syllabus attached. The courses with the additional honors work must be completed with an A or B grade.

RELAY FOR LIFE

BY JOHN R. LYNCH

On Friday night, April 4th, Colleges Against Cancer held their annual Relay for Life event in the field house. Due to the weather earlier in the week, the event was moved indoors. Approximately 48 teams lined the walls and held on site fundraising events, including Pi of Texas, while others walked around the track to raise money and awareness for cancer research. Pi of Texas members sold coffee, hair glitter, and made wallet size photos with Lucky, the college mascot, to earn money for the relay. According to Pi of Texas team captain Robyn Calhoun, the team had raised close to \$30.00 before midnight.

The candidate must then select an advisor to assist in drafting a thesis proposal. The thesis could be historical, research, observational, or another type of thesis. Once the thesis proposal is complete, the candidate will present it before a committee for approval.



There is no set length for the thesis. The final thesis must be bound and turned in before the end of the candidate's graduation semester.

The good news about the Honors Program is nobody will be penalized for trying. If a candidate decides not to complete the program, the transcript will display it as "in progress," not as "failed."

Those interested in more information on the honors program should contact Dr. Raymond Green. He is located in the Prairie Crossing Apartments #416 on campus and can be contacted at:

903-886-3054

Raymond_Green@tamu-commerce.edu

Of course, the honors program is not just for education students. Students in any department may participate in this wonderful opportunity. However, the information presented above may differ from department to department.

Although the event was moved indoors, it did not stop people from coming out and having a good time. There were teams selling food, decorations, and all kinds of knick-knacks to help raise money. Along with the on site fundraising, the band Dr. Doctor played for several hours to get the blood moving. After the Luminary ceremony, the DJ helped keep everyone entertained throughout the night.

The goal for this year's event was \$75,000. By the end of the event, they had close to \$70,000. It is not too late to donate if anyone is interested. Robyn Calhoun stated that the relay would still accept money up until August, but she would prefer any donations before the end of the semester.

HATS OFF TO PROFESSOR DR. BOGGS!!!

BY HOLLI BELT

After spending some time with Dr. Merry Boggs, one realizes the enormous amount of energy required to “fill all her hats”! Dr. Boggs has been involved in the field of education her entire professional life serving as a teacher, administrator, and university professor in Texas, Florida, and Cairo, Egypt. Her first experiences as a teacher included teaching kindergarten and first grade. She currently serves as assistant department chair and is a reading faculty member at Texas A & M University at Commerce.

Dr. Boggs volunteered and taught an 8th grade reading class a couple of years ago. In interviewing Dr. Boggs, she shared her passion about why she loves teaching so much. She shared that she believes strongly in developing a research agenda in the areas of action research and teacher career development. Her teaching agenda is as equally important which includes building strong relationships with students to support their needs inside and outside of the classroom. Some of the other “hats” that Dr. Boggs currently wears includes: teaching content area literacy for middle school and secondary students. She also teaches graduate reading courses and a doctoral children’s literature course. Since she wears all her hats so well, she also seems to balance working with and teaching the Rockwall Interns/Residents.

In addition to all this she manages to serve as the Vice-President of the TSRA – Texas State Reading Association. Dr. Boggs also serves as the new mentor advisor for the Educational Instructional Aides in the Texas Aides Exemption program at TAMU-Commerce. She

FORT WORTH ARTS FESTIVAL

BY ALEXANDRA KRIETZSCH

The Main Street Fort Worth Arts Festival hosts tens of thousands of people annually during the four-day visual arts, entertainment and culture event. Main Street showcases a nationally recognized fine art and fine craft juried art fair, savory food, live concerts, performance artists and street performers on the streets of downtown Fort Worth. It celebrates its 23rd year on April 17 - 20, 2008. The Festival is stretching nine blocks on Main Street from the Tarrant County Courthouse to the Fort Worth Convention Center. The Main Street Fort Worth Arts Festival, and its producer, Downtown Fort Worth Initiatives, Inc., is committed to helping young people grow in the world of art, and

has formed a support group with the help of other Instructional Aides to give support to Aides who have been in the program, just beginning in the program and are graduating out of the program. With Spring graduation 2008, the first Educational Aides Support Group will have their first teachers to graduate who have been in the support group. The support group is designed so that anyone who is in the Texas Educational Aides Exemption Program can have a “support group” either online, in person or in a group setting.

With all these “hats” she wears, she does take time to spend with her family. She has been married for 24 years to Diehl Boggs and they will celebrate their 25th anniversary on July 15th of this year. They have two children, Robert Boggs who is 20 years old and Cathy who is 19 years old.

To refresh her energy and creativity, she likes to travel, read and fish. She even has time occasionally to read one of her favorite authors, Jonathan Kellerman who writes adult fiction. Of course being a kindergarten teacher at heart, her favorite children’s author is Chris Van Allsburg.

Life has indeed been good to Dr. Merry Boggs who graduated with her Undergraduate from Auburn University, her Masters from Texas State University and her PhD from University of South Florida. She is an inspiration to all who meet her and there’s no mistake that her interest in you is genuine. Dr. Boggs has made her life all about helping others learn in their own modalities beginning with teaching in kindergarten and sharing her passion with other pre-service teachers who will become tomorrow’s teachers, leaders and administrators!

to encourage them to consider an art career that includes the commercial exhibition and sale of their work. To that end, they have partnered with XTO Energy and the Chesapeake Energy Corporation to bring two exciting programs to life, and to provide a resource to a number of youth in the Fort Worth area to experience the “business” of arts festivals. For more information just visit www.MainStreetArtsFest.org or call 817.336.2787.





THE DOLLAR BILL

BY DANNA STEWART

Oftentimes in our minds, we connect money with power. The movie National Treasure brings to our attention details that we tend to overlook in everyday life, such as the emblems printed on the one dollar bill: specifically the eye and the pyramid, which are part of the Great Seal of the United States. The Great Seal was first used on the one-dollar Federal Reserve note in 1935. According to The Department of State, the most accurate explanation of the pyramid is it's representation of strength and durability. Since the pyramid is unfinished, it suggests that the United States will continue to prosper. The "All-Seeing Eye" suggests the importance of a divine guidance in favor of the American cause. So, the one dollar bill and the emblems on it, which run through our hands on a daily basis, represent part of the Gods, Glory and Power theme of Phi Theta Kappa. The next time that you handle a dollar bill, think of the powerful statement reflected in the symbols on the back, and how you are contributing to the power and glory of the country you live in.