

ROUNDING UP CAMPUS NEWS SINCE 1900

THE BAYLOR LARIAT

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2006

Vaccine could curb food, smoking vices

By Analiz González Staff writer

Imagine a vaccine that would make obese people lose their appetite. Or make cigarettes taste bad to smokers.

In a few years, this may be a reality.

Studies being conducted in Switzerland and the United States may make it easier to end addictions.

The National Institute of Drug Abuse is the government group funding the study for the smoking addiction vaccine, called NicVax. The group is currently recruiting people for phase two of the trial for the vaccine, said Brian Marquis, NIDA program analyst in the public information branch.

He said cigarette smoking

is responsible for one in five deaths each year.

"Most smokers are aware (of this) and want to quit," Marquis said. "Only 3 percent of smokers who quit on their own are successful. Since the vast majority of people who want to quit will fail, the need for alternatives is urgent. (NicVax is) a safe and effective means of blocking nicotine."

The vaccine study to treat obesity is being tested by Cytos, a Swiss organization. The vaccine is called CYT009-GhQb.

According to a Cytos press release, the vaccine works by reducing appetite. The test will include 112 obese individuals and success will be measured by weight loss. The vaccine test has been successful on lab animals. Results for the human trial are

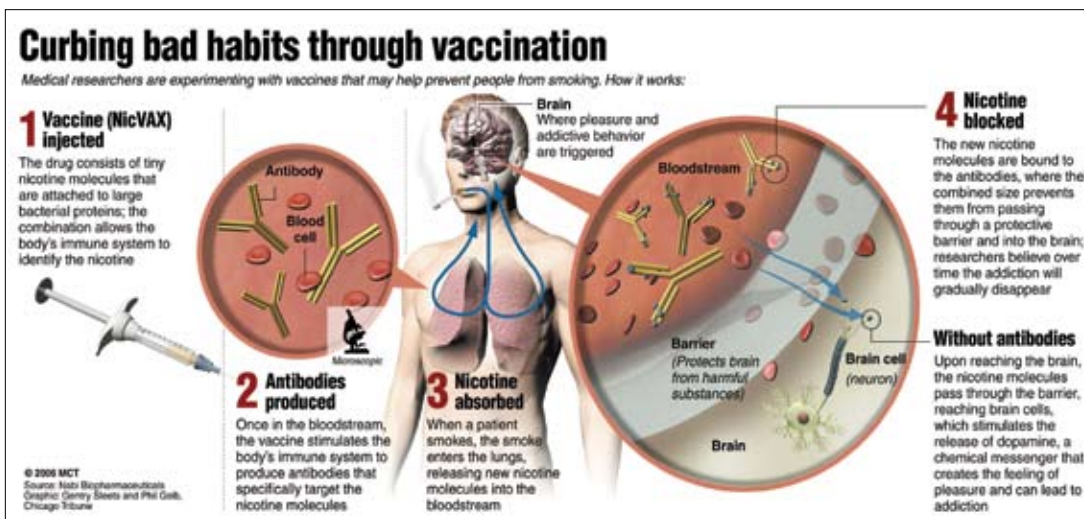
expected some time before the end of the year.

Eva I. Doyle, director of the health division at Baylor, called obesity a "huge issue for college-age people."

She said because childhood obesity is an issue in the United States, it is also an issue for college-age students because childhood habits often carry over to adulthood.

But Doyle still said any new concept, like a vaccine that would suppress appetite, should be approached with caution.

"I think we have to be careful about looking at vaccines and medications and other avenues of a quick fix," Doyle said. "When a physician is working with a person who is clinically obese, then those types of medications can help. We need to be



very careful about not forgetting that health is about day-to-day living, exercising regularly and all of those things that really

contribute to quality of life. "I hope that (the vaccines) would not become a substitute for smart thinking and daily

living. There are other appetite suppressants on the market that

Please see VACCINE, page 6

Thieves ransack 6 cars

Baylor police increase security in parking lots as result of break-ins

By Christine M. Tamer Staff writer

Six cars have been broken into on campus in the past two weeks, according to the Baylor Police Department.

"Our guys are really working hard to identify the folks who don't belong here," Baylor Police Chief Jim Doak said.

The thieves get "in and out very quickly," Doak said.

Half of the break-ins occurred across from Collins Residence Hall in Lot 1.

"We have been watching (the parking lots) like hawks the last few days," Doak said.

Three officers were added over the summer, bringing the number of officers to 24.

"We have applied them to working this type of situation," Doak said.

Last year 102 motor vehicles



Melea Burke/Lariat staff

Due to the increased number of car burglaries in the area, the Baylor Police Department is beefing up security in the Collins

Residence Hall parking lots. Six cars have been burglarized in the past two weeks.

were broken in to, according to the Baylor Police. However, Doak said he is encouraged by the fact that there have been fewer break-ins so far this year.

"We don't think this has been a trend," he said. "We had a series last year, but so far this year the num-

bers are down."

Doak said the thieves target in-dash stereos and rarely take anything else.

He recommends that students get a stereo face plate that can be removed or covered.

"It disguises it somewhat and has

been effective," Doak said.

Ricky Palmer, manager at Shades Custom Tint in Waco, offers several types of security systems to protect cars from break-ins.

"The Viper security systems

Please see THEFT, page 6

Going last stresses freshmen

Desired classes fill up early as underclassmen wait their turn

By Laura Frase Staff writer

When it comes time for freshmen to register, expect to see a waterfall of "Closed" markers sprinkling down the course listing page for many popular academic and human performance courses.

While most freshmen are given the luxury of choosing from more than 50 English 1304 sections and professors, the luxury ends there. Introduction courses such as psychology, chemistry or bowling reaching quota before freshman registration begins.

San Antonio freshman Erika Chapa was rejected by Bearweb over the summer when she tried to sign up for a psychology introduction course, but understands the class hierarchy.

"I'm kind of used to it because you just have to work your way up," Chapa said. "You don't get a lot of privileges, so when you become a senior, you appreciate the privileges of getting into whatever class you want."

Even though popular courses like psychology fill up quickly, basic courses that nearly all students need for their degree program are offered in larger numbers such as English 1304 and Religion 1310 or 1350, said Linda Johnson, academic advisement associate director.

"Beyond English and religion, student requirements vary specifically," Johnson said. "Say the BA student needs three sciences. There are a whole lot of choices they can select from."

Like many freshmen, Houston freshman Joanna Gerber said she tested out of courses before entering Baylor, leaving her ready to take on Calculus II.

Unfortunately, by the time orientation rolled around over the summer, Gerber said Calculus II was filled to the brim.

"It's kind of like you want to get into those classes, but you have to understand that you're a freshman, so upperclassmen get priority and that's just how it goes," Gerber said. "Once you become an upperclassmen, you'll get those privileges."

A sore spot among faculty and students alike

Please see CLASS, page 6

Population boom concentrated in suburbs

By Stephen Ohlemacher The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — America's population is on track to hit 300 million on early this morning, and it's causing a stir among environmentalists.

People in the United States are consuming more than ever, more food, more energy, more natural resources.

Open spaces are shrinking and

traffic in many areas is dreadful.

But some experts argue that population growth only partly explains America's growing consumption. Just as important, they say, is where people live, what they drive and how far they travel to work.

"The pattern of population growth is really the most crucial thing," said Michael Replogle, transportation director for Environmental Defense, a New York-based advocacy group.

"If the population grows in thriving existing communities, restoring the historic density of older communities, we can easily sustain that growth and create a more efficient economy without sacrificing the environment," Replogle said.

That has not been the American way. Instead, the country has fed its appetite for big houses, big yards, cul-de-sacs and strip malls. In a word: sprawl.

"Because the U.S. has become

a suburban nation, sprawl has become the most predominant form of land use," said Vicky Markham, director of the Center for Environment and Population, an advocacy group. "Sprawl is, by definition, more spread out. That of course requires more vehicles and more vehicle miles traveled."

America still has a lot of wide-open spaces, with about 84 people

Please see BOOM, page 6

Houston thunderstorms flood streets, kill 3

By Rasha Madkour The Associated Press

HOUSTON — Severe thunderstorms with torrential rains and tornadoes killed three people, ripped roofs off mobile homes and trapped rush-hour drivers in flooded, tangled freeways Monday as a powerful series of storms hit Southeast Texas.

Ten members of one family were injured, six critically, when their sport-utility vehicle skidded off rain-slicked Interstate 10 and hit a guardrail on their way home from a family gathering,

said Harris County emergency management spokeswoman Gloria Roemer.

The unidentified victims ranged in age from infants to adults in their mid-40s, and were hospitalized around the city.

Two women were found dead in a sport utility vehicle in floodwaters between 8 and 12 feet deep in Houston, and a body was also discovered in another submerged vehicle in Fort Bend County, a suburb southwest of the city.

A tow truck driver pulled the

SUV from a road feeding onto Interstate 45 in Houston and found the two bodies, said Police Lt. Tom Jennings. The victims were identified as Patricia Gutierrez, 36, and her daughter Melissa Rojas, 16, both of Houston.

They apparently drowned, he said.

No other information was immediately available about the death in the other submerged vehicle.

Houston Police Sgt. P.E. Ogden III, who was waiting at the scene where the mother-daugh-

ter victims were found, said the floodwaters exert such pressure on submerged cars, "Arnold Schwarzenegger couldn't get out."

As much as 10 inches of rain were reported in the Houston-Galveston area overnight, closing numerous roads and some public school systems. Fort Bend County roads were closed and widespread flooding was reported.

In Hitchcock, near the Gulf Coast, a tornado tore the roof

Please see STORM, page 6

A car sits abandoned in floodwaters Monday at the Travis HOV lane, near Allen's Landing in Houston following overnight rains. As much as 10 inches of rain fell in the Houston area, according to National Weather Service.



Associated Press

Hawaiians begin clean up after earthquake

By Jaymes Song
The Associated Press

KAILUA-KONA, Hawaii — A favorite pidgin expression in Hawaii — “Lucky you live Hawaii” — gained new meaning Monday as authorities quickly restored electricity and started to clear away boulders after the strongest earthquake to hit the islands in more than two decades.

Twenty-four hours after Sunday’s 6.7-magnitude quake, there were no reports of any deaths or serious injuries, and there were few signs of any major damage.

“It lets you know Mother Nature is doing her thing,” said Robin Eising, a teacher at Waikoloa Elementary School, which was closed for the day for inspection. “It was a wake-up call.”

Still, officials cautioned that they were still inspecting the

many bridges, roads, earthen dams, schools and other structures across the Big Island, the isle closest to the epicenter. There were no immediate estimates of the overall damage.

Utilities restored power to 97 percent of the state’s customers by early morning. That figure was expected to reach 99 percent by the end of the day. Nearly all of Oahu, the most populous island, with more than 800,000 of Hawaii’s 1.2 million residents, had been blacked out on Sunday.

The quake hit at 7:07 a.m., 10 miles north-northwest of Kailua-Kona, on the west coast of Hawaii Island, known as the Big Island. On Monday, the U.S. Geological Survey raised its measurement of the magnitude from a preliminary 6.6 to 6.7.

At least one stretch of road leading to a bridge near the epicenter collapsed, Civil Defense Agency spokesman Dave Curtis said. Several other roads on



The Associated Press

Rocks lay in a road in Big Island, Hawaii, after a 6.7-magnitude earthquake Sunday.

the Big Island were closed by mudslides, debris and boulders, but most were still passable, he said.

“If you’re going to have an earthquake, you couldn’t have had it at a better time — early in

the morning when people aren’t even out of their homes yet,” Curtis said. “I think people, under the circumstances, have remained very calm.”

John P. Lockwood, a former USGS volcanologist who is now

a private consultant, said another blessing was that the quake did not divert lava flows from Hawaii’s volcanos to populated areas. The lava flows safely into the sea.

Even so, “this brings to forefront the need for people to have 72 hours’ worth of supplies to keep them going” after a quake, said Kim Walz, a spokeswoman with the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

On Monday morning, the Honolulu airport was filled with passengers still waiting for a flight out.

Silas Garrett, a 52-year-old truck driver from Memphis, Tenn., had been there since 8 a.m. the previous morning. He said he and his five sisters slept on the floor using beach towels for blankets and purses as pillows.

“Every pound we gained on the cruise ship, we lost in the airport,” Garrett said. “The quake shook it off.”

BEAR BRIEFS

Small successes

Dr. Kevin Pinney, the Cornelia Marshall Smith Professor of the Year, will present his lecture on celebrating small successes at 4 p.m. today in D109 of the Baylor Sciences Building.

Joint choral concert

The Baylor Concert and A Capella Choir will perform a joint concert at 7:30 p.m. today in the Jones Concert Hall.

Food donations

Philanthropy Food Drive Collection will be accepting donations from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. today in Fountain Mall.

Last day to drop classes

Today is the last day to drop courses. Any class dropped after today will be recorded as a failure.

To submit a bear brief, e-mail Lariat@baylor.edu.

Blood spray patterns may hold hidden crime scene elements

Forensics course uses lab, mock scenes to give students hands-on experience

By Erin Pedigo
Reporter

A spattering of blood at a crime scene tells investigators a lot.

Max Courtney, a full-time forensic science lecturer, made sure his students learned that much can be interpreted from blood when he taught the Bloodstain Pattern and Analysis course, which was piloted last summer.

The class will be taught again in the spring.

The course teaches techniques of observing blood at a crime scene to try and find important clues about a crime. Sometimes blood patterns can reveal whether a killer was left-

handed or right-handed, and what instruments were used in the crime.

Courtney taught the lab-intensive class with a mock crime scene staged at the end of the course. Students had to interpret the patterns of bloodstains throughout the room to solve the staged crime.

Courtney used dog blood from a donor dog owned by a veterinarian he knew.

Dog blood is the best blood to use, Courtney said, because hardly any diseases cross the dog-human barrier, making it safe to use in experiments.

Courtney said he used no more than one fluid ounce of blood for the whole scene.

There were impact spatters on the back wall of the lab, bloody shoe prints heading toward the door and going away from it, and another set of footprints going out of the room through another door.

The door handle was bloody,

and a bloody towel was on the floor. The window latch had blood on it, too, and there were smeared stains on the floor, Courtney said.

Audrey Basse, a Dallas senior, said she enjoyed the mock crime scene because she can use what she learned.

Basse wants to work in the sociological or psychological aspects of criminology, she said.

She knows she’ll have to deal with people who bring preconceived notions into crime-solving, she said, and she wants the evidence to tell the story.

Investigators can interpret the amount of blood, the direction of the spatter and how large the victim and criminal was by analyzing the blood remaining at a crime scene, Courtney said.

It’s difficult to analyze blood patterns in a vacuum, and you need all the information you can before you can draw conclusions, he said.

This is Courtney’s second

year at Baylor, and he said he was asked to teach the bloodstain pattern course when he first came to Baylor.

His experience working on crime scene reconstruction in the past has helped him teach this class, he said.

“There is value in experience that is totally unrivaled by the value of education — there’s no way you can learn (bloodstain pattern and analysis) from reading textbooks,” he said.

The students in the class gain experience from the mock crime scene he stages toward the end of the class, and the entire course is good for critical thinking, he said.

Patricia Cowling, a San Antonio junior, said the large amount of lab work was beneficial.

After the course Cowling said she “felt a lot more knowledgeable about crime scene details. You know what you’re looking for. Plus, it was really cool,” she said.

Courtney learns along with his students, Basse said.

They went to the third floor of the Marrs McLean Science Building and dropped blood down when testing its terminal velocity, she said.

Basse described Courtney as a great mentor and as someone who answers students’ questions without second-guessing their knowledge.

“He treats students like colleagues,” she said.

Observing blood and the way it splattered or fell at a crime scene to get clues is not a new forensic practice, Courtney said.

Blood became important to forensic science when Austrian scientist Karl Landsteiner discovered the A, AB, and O blood types in 1909, Courtney said.

After the types were discovered, tests for fresh and dried blood at crime scenes were developed, he said.

In 1987, a British scientist,

Alec Jefferys, performed the first forensic DNA identification of blood, he said.

The bloodstain pattern analysis was first used in a criminal case in the 1954 case against Sam Sheppard, an Ohio osteopath who was accused and later acquitted of brutally murdering his wife, Courtney said.

Sheppard’s trial was made into a circus and it was determined that justice had not been served, he said.

Dr. Paul Kirk, a criminalist, established how the bloodstain was deposited at the scene and concluded that it was a matter of “wronghandedness.”

Courtney said the blood had landed in such a way that it looked like a left-handed person had killed the wife, but the killer actually was right-handed.

Kirk’s findings led to a reversed case and retrial, where Sheppard was acquitted.

This case inspired the movie and TV show *The Fugitive*.

For more information about Alpha Delta Pi and the contest, visit our Web site at: www3.baylor.edu/alpha_delta_pi



AΔΠ Great Lion Hunt All-University Treasure Hunt!



Clue 3 of 5 Clues:

Look for as many names of Baylor Campus buildings as possible in the word search below to help narrow your search for Alpie! If the building is listed, Alpie is not hiding there.

A P E R I A Q J J C E Z Q S Q S Q M N Z K R O D M C O M N A
U R G I L G Y Z K W S V I R I R Q T L R Q S V Z R X P Z E K
N C M G Z M J X X G U G M H W Y M B M U N Q Y W C N B R E T
I G N S R C W Z P N O A H N R C M X X L T T I U M J R X W L
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J O A Y Z N T R M A J P M Q D U V O O V I A M R M K D X W R
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Building List:

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Visit the ladies of Alpha Delta Pi in the SUB and the lobbies of the cafeterias this week - October 16-20 - for your last chance to buy a clue for one dollar which will help significantly in finding Alpie! Along with your clue you will receive a free gift for participating! All proceeds will be donated to Alpha Delta Pi's National Charity, the Ronald McDonald House.

Bears rack up season-best score in loss to Longhorns

By Will Parchman
Sports writer

The impossible turned into the improbable for the Baylor football team Saturday when the Bears took a 10-0 lead over the No. 6 Texas Longhorns going into the second quarter at Darrell K. Royal Memorial Stadium in Austin.

But the upset was not to be, and Texas scored 28 unanswered points to put the game out of reach before halftime.

Baylor fell to the University of Texas 63-31 Saturday night. Despite the fast start and the promising early offensive explosion, frustration permeated the Bears' game plan for the final 45 minutes of the contest.

"It just frustrates the heck out of you," head Coach Guy Morriss said. "When you go into a game and jump out as quick as we did, and things are rolling pretty good and then our old bug kind of jumps up and haunts us again."

On the Bears' first offensive play from scrimmage, quarterback Shawn Bell found a striding Trent Shelton for a



Texas running back Selvin Young, left, is stopped for a four-yard loss by Baylor defensive tackle Vincent Rhodes, right, during first-quarter action in their college football game Saturday in Austin. The Bears dropped the game 63-31 after taking a 10-point lead early in the first quarter.

Associated Press

67-yard touchdown off a well-sold play-action fake.

Bell connected with Shelton, running through the Longhorn double coverage, to put Baylor up 7-0 early in the first quarter.

Bell ended the game with a career-high 303 yards passing and two touchdowns.

Texas had held its opponents scoreless on opening drives in 22 consecu-

tive games, a streak that came to a sudden and somewhat unexpected halt Saturday.

Ryan Havens tacked on a field goal to close out Baylor's next drive, putting the Bears up 10 points and stunning a silent Texas crowd.

But the Longhorns struck back in grand fashion, scoring 28 points in the second quarter.

"We can't let one turnover get us

down," receiver Dominique Zeigler said of Bell's fumble on the Baylor 29-yard line starting the second quarter. "It started a snowball, just piling up. If you give them those turnovers, they're going to capitalize."

Three of Texas' four second-quarter touchdowns were direct results of Baylor turnovers.

"We really beat ourselves in the second quarter and lost the momentum," Morriss said. "We couldn't get off the field defensively and kept turning the ball over. That really killed us."

But the impact of this game could be more positive and far-reaching than the early returns showed.

Baylor's 31 offensive points in regulation were its most all season, and it came against the nation's seventh-ranked defense.

Before Saturday, the most points in a game Texas had given up this season was 24 to Ohio State.

Perhaps more impressive was the Bears' resolve during the opening drive of the third quarter.

Facing an 18-point deficit against the nation's No. 6 ranked team, Baylor

drove 80 yards in just under four minutes and scored on a reverse pass from Zeigler to Bell.

"I think we showed we can move the ball against a real good team out there," said walk-on receiver Thomas White, who was second on the team with six catches for a career-high 95 yards. "We just came up short, so there's a lot of work to be done."

Bell said Texas was about the toughest team Baylor will play all year.

"Texas had some good units out there, but at the same time we have to execute our offense," Bell said. "You have to execute your plays. We just didn't do that at times."

"You can't do that against a No. 6 team."

And even though this game was 30 points closer than Baylor's battle with Texas last year, Zeigler said positives are difficult to find after a tough Big 12 South loss.

"I don't believe in moral victories," Zeigler said. "There's not a whole lot you can take out of losses. We're just going to have to hold onto the ball next week and beat Kansas."

1-1 weekend keeps tournament hopes alive

By Brittany McGuire
Sports writer

After a 3-1 loss Friday night against No. 12 Oklahoma State University, the Baylor Lady Bears soccer team ended the home portion of its schedule on a high note with a crucial 2-1 win over the University of Oklahoma Sunday afternoon at Betty Lou Mays Soccer Field. The win will keep Baylor's Big 12 tournament aspirations alive.

The top eight teams in the conference will move on to the tournament. The Lady Bears haven't made it since 2001, but they're hanging tight in the standings, tied for sixth with the University of Nebraska and Oklahoma, each with three Big 12 wins.

Head Coach George Van Linder said he was proud of the way his team recovered from Friday's loss to Oklahoma State.

"As a coach, you couldn't get a better result," he said. "We were frustrated about the loss

and decided to take it out on Oklahoma."

The Lady Bears came out firing from the start of the game, grabbing an early lead within the second minute when freshman midfielder Betsy Kyle scored her first career goal. She took a cross from senior forward Missy McConnell and found the net with a shot over the Oklahoma keeper's head, giving Baylor a quick 1-0 lead.

"We grabbed the lead early and worked our butts off to try and keep it," Kyle said.

The Sooners weren't ready to call it a day. In the Baylor penalty box, Baylor freshman Lauren Weathers fouled Oklahoma forward Shana All in the seventh minute, giving All a chance to even the score with a successful penalty kick, tying the game 1-1. Weathers was issued a yellow card for the foul against All, one of five Baylor cautions in the game.

Determined to recover the lead, the Lady Bears attacked

the Sooners' goal, outshooting them 15-3 in the first half. In the 25th minute, senior forward Anna Schuch collected the ball off a corner kick from McConnell, crossed it to freshman midfielder Katie White, who nailed the shot from five yards out, pushing the Lady Bears' lead to 2-1. White also scored Baylor's lone goal in Friday's game, the first of her career.

Baylor took the lead into the second half, but Van Linder said at that point the win still wasn't a sure thing.

"Oklahoma's a strong second-half team," he said. "I was hoping we would be the same."

Although they didn't score any more goals, the Lady Bears continued to pound the Oklahoma goal with shots, recording another 10 shots for the second half, compared to the Sooners' four. With five minutes remaining, McConnell said the Sooners were hitting the team with all they had, but she was confident the team would come away with

the win. She was right.

"A lot of goals scored are in the first five minutes and the last five minutes, so I'm proud the team held them off," she said. "We've been concentrating on playing for the whole 90 minutes."

The Lady Bears will play their final three games on the road, starting this Friday against the University of Kansas. They will wrap up the final two games against the University of Colorado and Texas Tech University. Van Linder said the team is in a "must-win" situation if it wants to advance to the Big 12 tournament.

The game Sunday was the final one for seniors McConnell and Schuch. McConnell ended the game with two assists, while Schuch had one assist and led the team with seven shots.

"It's how I wanted to go out at home," McConnell said. "I think today shows we've moved on and we're ready to play our next game."



Melea Burke/Lariat staff

Baylor defender Amanda McGrath steals the ball from Oklahoma midfielder Lauren Harris in Baylor's 2-1 victory over the Sooners on Sunday. The Lady Bears (6-8-1, 3-4 in Big 12 play) dropped a game Friday to No. 12 Oklahoma.

Freshman wins first college tourney

By David Kaye
Reporter

Lenka Broosova has come a long way since leaving Slovakia in August, and not just geographically.

Broosova, a freshman on the women's tennis team, captured her first title at Baylor when she won the Racquet Club Collegiate Invitational at the Midland Racquet Club on Sunday.

The win didn't come easily. After fighting off a second-set comeback bid in the semi-finals, she waited through a rain delay that forced the finals to move indoors. When the match finally got under way, Broosova fought off another second-set comeback bid, then defeated the tournament's defending champion, Pepperdine's Sylvania Kosakowski.

"I knew Lenka was going to win the tournament when we read the Midland newspaper, and it said Kosakowski was poised to defend her title," head Coach Joey Scrivano said. "I

looked at Lenka, and I knew we won the match right there. She wasn't too happy with that, and she got very motivated."

After winning the first set of the semifinals 6-1, Broosova blew a 5-3 lead in the second before taking the final set 6-4.

"I lost concentration, and that's why I lost the second set," Broosova said. "I was just trying to finish the match and get home."

That experience proved helpful in the finals when, after winning the first set 6-3, Broosova again lost concentration in the second.

"The first set, I played exactly how coach told me to," Broosova said. "In the second set, I tried to win easily and I forgot about our game plan."

She lost 2-6 in the second set, but came back to win the third set 6-3 and take the championship.

"She played her best on big points and in pressure situations, and that's what you've got to do to win a tournament,"

Scrivano said.

Fellow freshman Jessica Zok lost to Kosakowski in the quarter finals after holding a 4-1 lead in the third set. A rain delay gave Kosakowski a chance to regroup, and Scrivano said that's what cost Zok the match.

"I think Jessica's going to learn from that loss, and she'll win that match nine out of 10 times," Scrivano said. "When we had that break, it gave Kosakowski a chance to get her legs back."

Even with the loss, Zok had a hand in Broosova's victory.

"We got to learn a lot more about Kosakowski because Jessica played her," Scrivano said. "Any time you're better prepared, good things are going to happen."

Broosova said the win gave her the confidence to compete on the collegiate level.

"I learned that I can play against anyone," she said. "I don't feel like I'm a freshman anymore. I feel like I've been here a few years."

DON'T MISS ...

Paskin Big Sing 2006

October 19 & 21 at 7 p.m.
October 20 at 6:30 & 10:30 p.m.

Featuring:

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Weak plotline, cute monsters hallmarks of 'Grudge 2'

Sequel shows grudge too early, too much to be truly frightening

By Paige Panter
Contributor

The *Grudge 2* has all the musts of a thriller: culminating violins, poor acting, attractive blondes in showers, creepy little kids, Sarah Michelle Gellar . . .

MOVIE REVIEW

but the element of fear collapses with the plot.

Gellar returns only for a cameo, but don't worry, her little

sister Aubrey (Amber Tamblyn, Joan of Arcadia) takes her place as the disturbed white girl alone in Tokyo fighting evil Asian forces.

While her sister stumbled into her involvement with the curse, Aubrey begs to get in on the creepy Japanese action responsible for the haunting and death of her sister. Yes, Gellar offs herself in one of the first scenes.

Wait, let me back up and clue you in on the few other story lines that are floating around.

Two pretty members of the high school elite (think *Mean Girls* in uniforms) initiate the less attractive new girl Allison (Arielle Kebbel) by bringing her

to "the most haunted house in Japan."

What the two didn't plan for was the actual presence of ghosts, or rather grudges.

Allison manages to bring the grudge back to her home in Chicago. Voilà, storyline three, which then divides into as many stories as there are apartments on her floor. The movie bounces back and forth between Tokyo and Chicago, although the events in Tokyo clearly take place before Allison returns home. On top of all that, it's unclear where Aubrey and her escapades with the good-looking journalist (Edison Chen) in tracking down the grudge fits in on the timeline.

In the midst of the plot confusion, the actual grudge isn't too frightening once you get beyond the first 15 minutes.

Writer and director Takashi Shimizu's first mistake is giving the grudge a physical form, which is a little Asian girl who, apart from her black-rimmed eyes and stringy, dark hair, is kind of cute in her blue latex body suit.

Unsurprisingly enough, reconciling an abstract idea with a physical form proves too difficult for Shimizu and ultimately is the film's fatal flaw. After seeing the evil little Asian girl repeatedly and for minutes at a time, I felt more like laughing at her than covering my eyes.

Because Shimizu fails to set the grudge within any reasonable boundaries, it becomes more of an absurd creature than a symbol of fear. It's unclear exactly what the grudge is besides the result of the cold-blooded murder of a mother and son.

Without going any further into the ever-deepening plot, the crazy Japanese mother stalks all who enter the house and then either pulls them into the grudge realm where they too get to be blue and scary, or she just kills them.

The grudge seems to be able to cause whatever reaction it wants in its victims. For some it's rage, for others, lactose intolerance.

There really aren't any limits to what the grudge can do.

Usually she just crawls out of nowhere, but she also has the ability to crawl out of photographs developing in darkrooms.

Other tendencies include growing an endless supply of hair, making cell phone calls and cuddling with girls in sleazy motels.

She can't talk, but she makes strange noises that sound a lot like a prolonged belch.

Besides the weak acting and fuzzy storylines, the underlying concept is too hard to follow. By the end of the movie, I felt more sorry for Shimizu than afraid of his ridiculous grudge.

Band molds fame from claymation

By Chris Riemenschneider
McClatchy Newspapers

As if it's just another acquired taste, Southern California hasn't yet caught on with TV on the Radio singer Tunde Adebimpe.

"It's beautiful and everything," the former claymation animator said by phone recently from a tour stop in Ponomo, Calif., "but I just don't get it."

Funny, a lot of people have said the same thing about TV on the Radio's music.

Whirring, frayed guitar parts, jagged and jumbled rhythms, splatter-like song structures and Adebimpe's haunting howl of a voice are just part of the unique makeup of the band.

Those components helped TV on the Radio's second disc, *Desperate Youth*, beat out discs by the Killers, Franz Ferdinand and even Wilco for the 2004 Shortlist Music Prize.

Last month, TVOTR issued its follow-up album, *Return to Cookie Mountain*, on Interscope Records after coming up on Chicago indie label Touch & Go. The new album is a little more accessible than *Desperate Youth*, but that had nothing to do with the switch in labels, the singer said.

The roots of TV on the Radio go back to 2000, when Adebimpe and producer/gui-

"There's a lot of carnage in my past."

Tunde Adebimpe
TV on the Radio vocalist

tarist David Sitek started painting and recording together in a loft in a communal-like loft in Brooklyn.

Their first disc, *OK Calculator*, was little more than a compilation of experimental tracks they made on a whim.

"We silk-screened the CD sleeves ourselves and left copies in coffeehouses and bookstores around Brooklyn with nothing more than an e-mail address on them," Adebimpe recalled.

The CD earned the duo a weekly gig at a nearby club, which is when they picked the name and made it a real band.

The band's experimental spirit is alive and well in many of the best tracks on *Return to Cookie Mountain*, including the hand-clapped chant "A Method" and the frantic first single "Wolf Like Me," which starts with a stalking beat and builds to Adebimpe's wild refrain, "We're howling forever."

"He's just a very personable, knowledgeable guy who has the weird added bonus feature of being David Bowie."

"He was there in the studio just trying to do his vocal part and working hard at it, and I'm next to him thinking, 'That's Ziggy Stardust.'"

That latter reference, to Jim Henson's 1986 sci-fi film starring Bowie, revealed Adebimpe's interest in sci-fi and animated art.

A Pittsburgh native who lived in Nigeria for three years as a child, Adebimpe, 31, studied film at New York University and worked as an animator. Among his best-known work: MTV's *Celebrity Death Match*.

"I was one of their 12 original animators," he said proudly. "I worked on Michael Jackson vs. Madonna, the Beastie Boys vs. Backstreet Boys. There's a lot of carnage in my past."

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