



Highland Herald

Friday, Nov. 11, 2005 - Volume 45, No. 3

MONEY & Education

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Funding and Texas
Politics

Family Violence

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Center

MCC

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On the covers: Partial cast from the upcoming Ramayana Dance/Theater Production. Front (left to right): Amy Harvey, Cory Sharp, Willie Mellina, Addison Roush and Carolyn Wirtz. Back (left to right): Jany Gillespie, Stefan Peterson, Rebecca Tafline and Aaron McFarland. Digital image by Brent Losak.



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Coming Up ...

Nov. 14: Country Band at the Fine Arts Theater at 7:30 p.m.

Nov. 15 -16: American Cancer Society Smoking Workshop at the LTC from 10 -11 a.m.

Nov. 16: Basketball--Trinity Valley at MCC Highlanders at 7 p.m.

Nov. 16: MCC Student Government Meeting in the SC Conference Room 206 from 1- 2 p.m.

Nov. 16: Casa de Café and the publishing of "The Stone Circle" at the LTC from 10:20 to 12:25 a.m.

Nov. 17 -19: "The Ramayana" at the Ball Performing Arts Center 7:30 p.m.



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'Country Boy' Talks Politics

Author Examines Texas Education Reform

Brent Losak
Editor in Chief

Figuring out how to pay for Texas public schools has become a game of political hot-potato.

And the music would have stopped on Oct. 1 this year—the deadline set by 250th District Judge John Dietz when he branded the current funding system unconstitutional in Sept. 2004—with the searing spud still in the hands of the Texas Supreme Court, had Texas Attorney General Greg Abbott not requested another refrain from the band—by filing an appeal to Dietz' ruling.

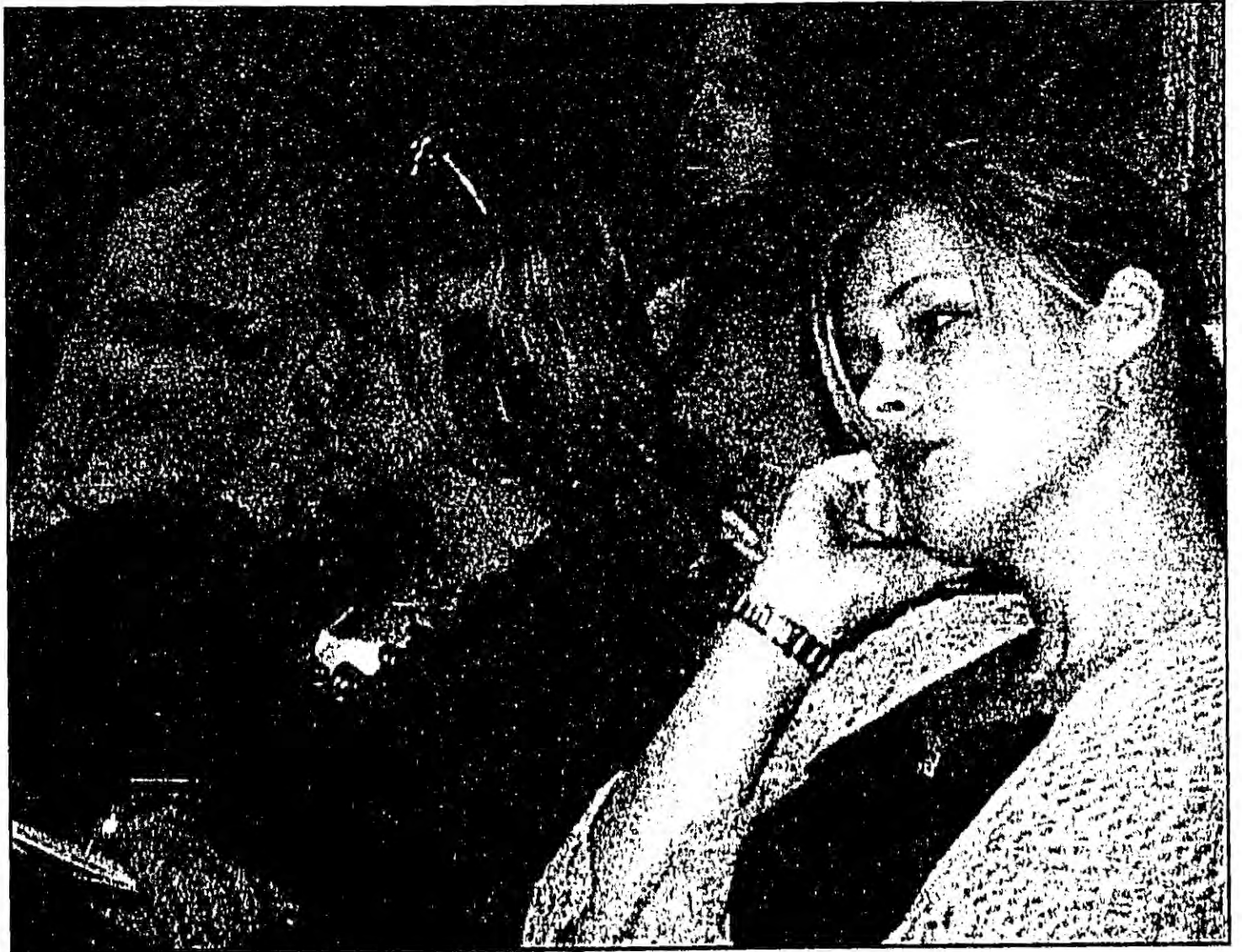
The Texas Legislature failed in its regular session and two subsequent special sessions to provide an alternative structure for the Texas public-school finance system, which has been operating under a plan popularly known as "Robin Hood" since 1993.

These issues were discussed in a lecture called "Texas Government and School Funding: Why Reform Failed," by Professor Earl Maxwell from San Antonio College on Oct. 18 at McLennan Community College's Conference Center.

Maxwell is the second speaker in a series of lectures hosted jointly by MCC's government and history departments, which began in the spring of 2005 with Dr. Steffen Schmidt, also known as "Dr. Politics," from Iowa State University.

Like Schmidt, Maxwell is a co-author of one of the textbooks used at MCC; in Maxwell's case, "Texas Politics Today," the best-selling government text in Texas.

See EDUCATION, Page 4



Government and history students listen to Professor Earl Maxwell at the MCC Conference center on Oct. 18.
Digital Images by Lauren McCutcheon



McLennan Community College student Michello Hamilton and Ariana Hernandez, Vice President of the Student Government Association, listen to Professor Earl Maxwell speak at the MCC Conference Center on Oct. 18, 2005.

Sound Bytes from the Q & A

Q: Why do you think an 8.25% sales tax is more accepted in Texas than a 2% state income tax, which would be much fairer to everybody?

A: Ignorance

Q: What is your opinion on the "Leave No Child Behind" Program?

A: My daughter teaches 2nd grade. She was an innovative teacher—she was always bringing in stuff and they would follow trails of history and Texas history. This has pretty well been stopped. She's kind of relegated now to teaching the questions that are going to be on the test, because there has been too much importance put on how a school district does ... and the funding that comes is dependent upon that ... I understand wanting to have these kinds of tests because teaching is a really strange profession in that you can work really really hard and really really do a good job teaching, or you can kind of be a mushroom or something in the classroom, and you get paid the same thing. I understand the concept. What they wanted to do was get some sort of standard where they could see what's going on in the classroom, and I applaud that idea—because teachers are really unequal in that, but I think they went too far and they made it too high-stakes—where people are cheating so that their kids can score higher.

Q: Why can't we look at the other states that are in the top half of all of this ranking that we've been talking about? Why can't we find out what they're doing right and try to follow some of it?

A: ... It's not an issue of not knowing... I think that, and I hate to be that cynical, but I think some of those policy decisions are made so that the children in the poor districts won't compete with them to get into A&M or UT... I hope I'm not right on that.

EDUCATION, from Page 3

There is no topical theme for the lecture series.

"Speakers are chosen based upon a combination of factors—availability, timeliness and opportunity," said government professor Mike Campenni, who has acted as facilitator for both events.

Thomson Learning/Wadsworth Publishers, the publishing company for both "Texas Politics Today" and "American Government and Politics Today" (co-authored by Schmidt), has picked up the bill for both speakers.

"We have no funds to pay for any of our departmental speakers. We depend upon the availability of speakers, our textbook publishers and just asking people to come," Campenni said. "Neither Schmidt nor Maxwell has cost MCC any money at all."

Thomson/Wadsworth normally pays for an author's transportation, hotel, and meal expenses when the author has been requested as a guest-lecturer, said Richard Colangelo, senior sales representative for Thomson/Wadsworth.

"As always, our goal is to supply the best service and value to the faculty and students who use our textbooks," Colangelo said. "It is also a unique opportunity for both students and faculty to meet the person who wrote the textbooks that they use and to ask them questions about their views on what is covered in the text as well as those that are not."

Maxwell began by talking about the drug war as an

'I can love the horse. I can agree that the saddle and bridle are legitimate and should be there. I can accept the way the rider became the rider—which is really important—but totally disagree with the way the horse is going.'

— Earl Maxwell

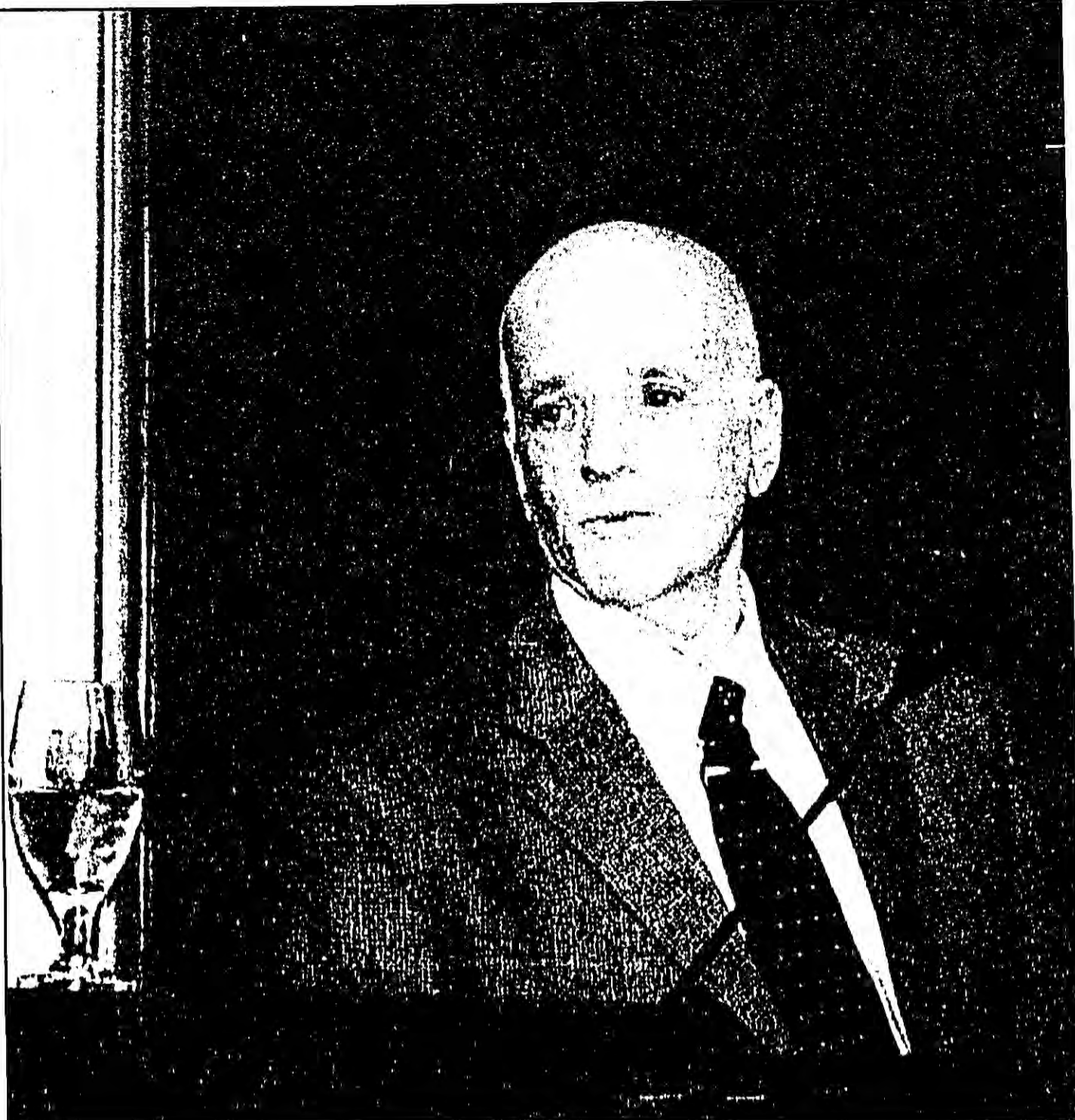
example of a divisive issue and noted that such issues are where the "government gets involved."

He then outlined a definition of America as being the "sum total" of its population, real estate and political, social and cultural systems. "It's the whole ball of wax," he said.

Maxwell talked about the way people interact with those they disagree with and used the metaphor of a horse, a bridle and saddle, and a rider to describe the relationship between the country, the government, and the people of the country, respectively.

"I can love the horse. I can agree that the saddle and bridle are legitimate and should be there. I can accept the way the rider became the rider—which is really important—but totally disagree with the way the horse is going," he said.

Maxwell suggested that because people have



Earl Maxwell discusses Texas education and the Legislature during his MCC lecture sponsored by Thomson Learning/Wadsworth Publishers

Digital Image by Lauren McCutcheon

different perspectives, neither side can usually claim to be absolutely right because they are simply seeing an issue from a different point of view.

"This has gotten me out of a lot of political arguments and religious arguments, because I can simply say to the person 'I see your point,'" Maxwell said, adding "I think that to an extent we've lost the ability to grant to a person that disagrees with us the legitimacy in their argument."

Maxwell then moved on to stress the importance of education.

"I believe that the education of its children is the most important function that a state government can perform, bar none," he said.

Next, Maxwell listed some of the uses of education. "We use it ... as a means of social and economic advancement. If you get a good education you can get a good job in a society where success is based on merit—a meritocracy.

"Education is to instill critical thinking ... and to teach also, I would hope ... a healthy skepticism about what they (students) are being taught," he said.

We also use education to develop patriotism, to introduce children to the political system through

student government and through government and history classes, Maxwell said.

Maxwell also noted that, particularly in rural communities, the school system serves as community entertainment through sports programs.

Maxwell went on to talk about money. He recounted his childhood education in Lovelady, Texas during the era of racial segregation.

Maxwell suggested that minority schools were systematically undereducated and that this was intentionally present in the way school districts were divided.

The state required the taxpayers of the districts to provide funds for schools through property taxes knowing that wealth was unequal from district to district, Maxwell said.

He later went on to compare today's public funding system to the pre-integration school systems, wherein sections of the population were given inadequate educations intentionally to keep them repressed.

Maxwell ended by expressing his hope that Texas would aim for something better than "mediocres," meaning the national average in funding provided per student.

"If we can do that, then I think Texas will be great," he said.

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Seminars Highlight Abuse Issues

Daniel Defoe
Staff Writer

On Oct. 20-21, the Family Abuse Center held seminars regarding family violence at the MCC Conference Center.

The topic for the Oct. 20 seminar was "Family Violence issues related to Law and Law Enforcement."

There were five speakers total, said Rachel Bettinger, Legal Advocate for the Family Abuse Center.

The first was Elma Gracias, who spoke about Emergency Protective Orders, Bettinger said.

"A protective order is a civil court order issued to prevent continuing acts of family violence," said a pamphlet distributed by the Office of the Attorney General of Texas.

"A protective order can prohibit a person from:

committing further acts of family violence, harassing or threatening the victim directly or communicating the threat indirectly through another person, going to or near a school or day-care center attended by a child protected under the order, or possessing a firearm," the pamphlet said.

The next speaker, Debbie Carter, discussed changes to the laws, protective orders, and what to do when a batterer is a police officer, Bettinger said.

Bob Flekner, whose daughter was killed by her estranged husband, told his daughter's story and played tape recordings of conversations between his daughter and her husband and also between Flekner and his daughter's husband after he had killed her.

At 1:00 p.m. Gary Reeves, the Director of the Criminal Justice Department at Hill College, spoke regarding interview techniques to use when interviewing a batterer or a victim, Bettinger said.

The last speaker, Detective John Combs from the Round Rock police Department, discussed techniques for investigating an incident of family violence, Bettinger said.

The topic for the Oct. 21 seminar was Family Violence and the Legal System.

The first three speakers from the Oct. 20 seminar will return to speak at the next seminar, said Bettinger.

For the afternoon seminar featured two new speakers Shareen Howard with "Friends of the Family," a domestic violence shelter that also runs a batterer intervention program, and Cindy Dyer, a Dallas county prosecutor.

Howard spoke regarding various programs, while Dyer discussed court cases regarding family violence.

Five guest speakers discussed legal enforcement issues relating to family abuse. Seminar topics included legal changes and court cases relating to abusive relationships.

Digital
Images
by Lauren
McCutcheon



KNOW SOMEONE SUFFERING FROM DOMESTIC VIOLENCE? PLEASE CALL THE FAMILY ABUSE CENTER AT 772-8999.

Carving Contest Results

Pumpkin carving contestants turned in their creations at 11:45 a.m., and the results are in!

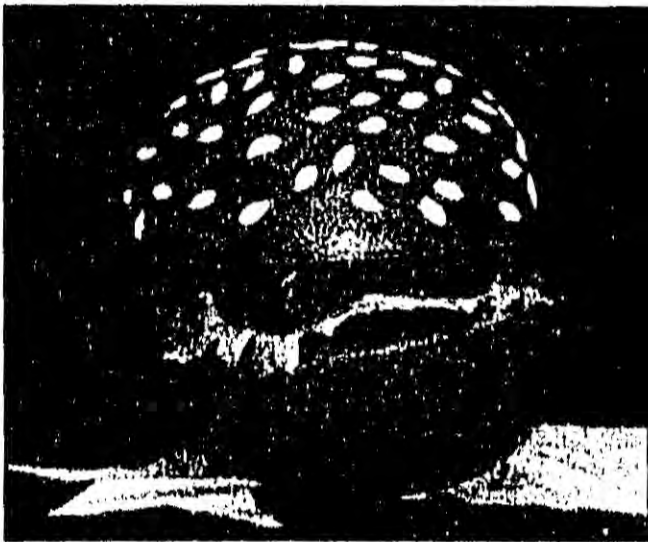
1st Place: "Pumpkin Eater" by Phi Theta Kappa represented by Terry Scranton

2nd Place: "Highlander" represented by Cheryl Lloyd

3rd Place: "Hamburger" by MCC bookstore represented by Jennifer Pawless & Lynn Anthony

Judges: Stacey Jones, Whitney Johnson and Instructor Ashley Cruseturner

Digital Images by Levi Barner



The MCC Bookstore team received honors at the carving contest for their "Pumpkin Hamburger".



Terry Scranton of Phi Theta Kappa grins with her first place "Pumpkin Eater". (Inset) Cheryl Lloyd takes home second place with the "Highlander".

Great Selection:

Jack Johnson, Sufjan Stevens, Bright Eyes, Muse, Coheed & Cambria, The Shins, Spoon, Broken Social Scene, The Mars Volta, Mates of State, Rilo Kiley, Switchfoot, Ted Leo & the Pharmacists, Fall Out Boy, Team Sleep, Iron & Wine, Fiery Furnaces, Copeland, Danger Doom, Ryan Adams, Dane Cook, The New Pornographers, The Thrills, Decemberists, The Postal Service, Death Cab For Cutie, Kaiser Chiefs, The Killers, Bloc Party, The Bravery, Joanna Newsom, Theivery Corporation, Beta Band, The Like, Ok Go, LCD soundsystem Sigur Ros, The Strokes

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MCC
Dance/
Theater

P R E S E N T S

The Ramayana

Brent Losak
Editor in Chief

The "Ramayana" or the "Journey of Rama" is an ancient Indian epic that weaves poetry, allegory and Hindu morality into a story that has endured for more than two millennia—first as an oral tradition and then as a written work.

On Nov. 17-19, the McLennan Community College Dance/Theater department will perform an interpretation of this classic at MCC's Ball Performing Arts Center.

Their version is "mixed and matched" from the many available written interpretations, said Jerry MacLauchlin, choreographer and theater instructor.

"Something like this hasn't been done here at MCC since 'Odyssey' in 1996, so it is a challenge to bring dance-theater back to the PAC stage," he said.

The hero of the story is Prince Rama of Ayodhya, whose wife Sita is kidnapped by the demon-king of Lanka, Ravana.

Rama then struggles to save Sita from her captor and return to his father's kingdom, from whence he has been banished for fourteen years, despite being the rightful heir to the throne.

"The entire show lasts about 84 to 86 minutes; no intermission. It moves very quickly, and costumes (by Kathleen Cochran) and scenery and lighting (by Michael Sullivan) have been designed to create the essence of Indian culture, and the mystery and intrigue that surround the tales of Rama," MacLauchlin said.

Rama is highly respected in Hindu culture, believed by many to be the ninth avatar, or incarnation of the deity Vishnu, just before the tenth incarnation, Krishna, to whom Hindus attribute the telling of the Bhagavad Gita, or the "Song of the Lord."

"In some respects, he would be what Jesus is to Christianity. He symbolized the noble virtues of mankind, and was willing to put his life on the line to fight evil," said sophomore Willie Mellina, who plays Rama. "I am grateful to get a chance to play the role of a character who is so important to so many people. It is very challenging and nonetheless humbling."

Dress rehearsals won't begin until the weekend before the production, MacLauchlin said, but the cast is already rehearsing at least three hours a day every weekday.

"It usually takes two to three hours of rehearsal for every minute of dance-theater on stage," he said. "I'm pushing the students to their absolute limits, and trying to keep them injury free."

However, several cast members have sustained injuries, including female lead Alexandra Egawa (Sita), who plans to be in the production

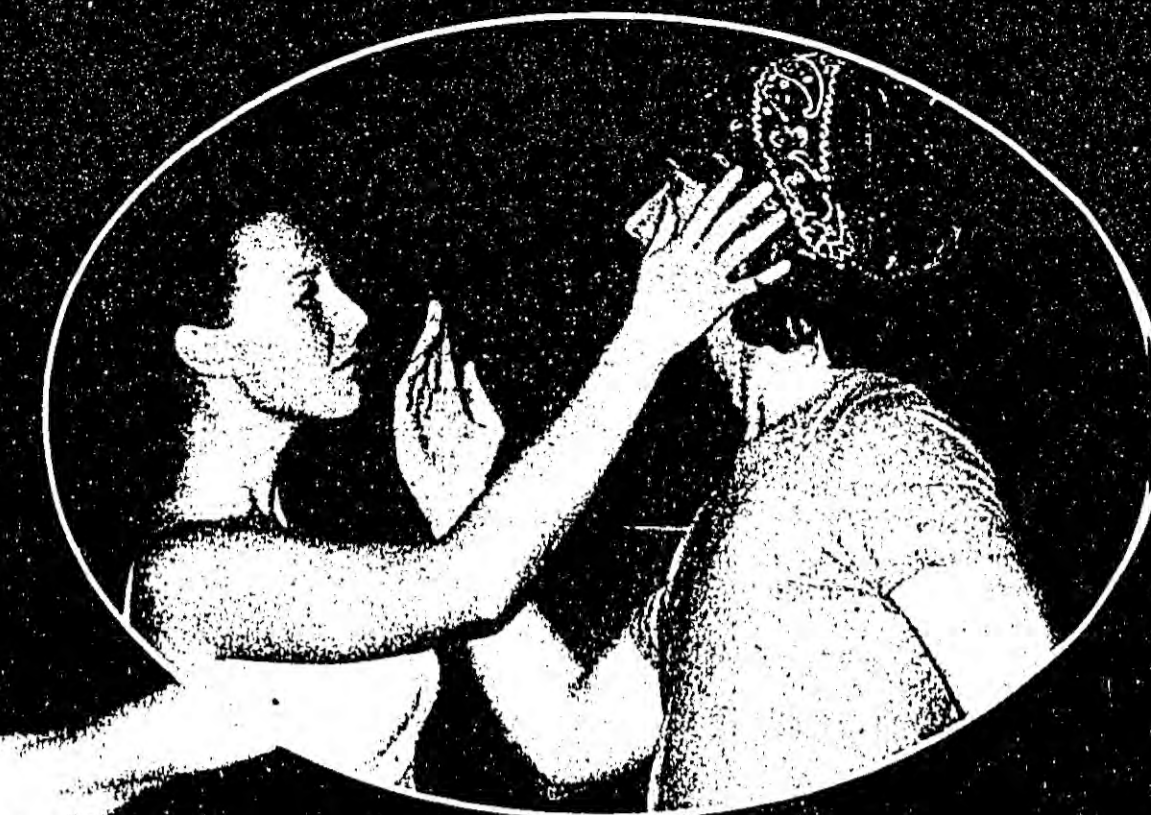
despite pulling a tendon in her right foot.

"I've put a lot of time and effort into it, and I really enjoy the role. A lot has been sacrificed so I could do this—and so I feel that it's something I need to follow

through with at all costs,"

Egawa said.

Digital Images By Brent Losak



The other members of the cast, especially those who are dance majors, would do the same if they were in her position, she said. "Everyone that's in the show has been really dedicated and worked really hard. It's going to be a beautiful show."

Anon McFarland (Laxmana, a brother of Rama) and Bobby Sands (Sugreeva, king of the monkey clan) gave some insight into their favorite scenes in the Ramayana:

"While Rama and Iax (Laxmana) try to find Sita, they run into a lady in the forest who lays out food every day in wait that Rama may come and she may honor him. It's short and simplistic, but it's a good break from all the organized pandemonium (which is my definition of 'acting') organized pandemonium on stage," McFarland said.

"My favorite scene is the 'banishment' scene. I become so intrigued in watching the story unfold in movement that I am completely captivated," Sands said. "It's especially because of Janay Gullepic, who plays the mother—the emotion that she portrays with her body and especially her face are simply moving."

Tickets are ten dollars for adults, eight dollars for seniors and non-MCC students. For more information, call the MCC Box Office at 292-8200 Mon through Fri between 1-5 p.m.



Middle East Meets the West

Kitty Clark
Staff Writer

The contrast between bold, Middle Eastern calligraphy strokes, free-forming, watercolored Western images and contemporary sculptures or paintings is exemplified in the Art Department's choice of exhibits for this semester.

One such show, titled "Art From Iran", lasted from Sep. 19 to Oct. 21 in the LTC Library Gallery.

Fatima Jawady, an art appreciation student, suggested it because, "we (the class) covered a chapter on Calligraphy and how important it is to traditional Middle Eastern art."

The exhibit featured watercolor pieces too, not typical of the region's traditional style.

"The exhibit showed a great contrast of style, the landscape pieces demonstrated contemporary, modern art, and the calligraphy stayed true to Middle Eastern tradition," she said.

Both artists featured in this show were Fatima's sisters, who are from Iran, and unavailable for comment.

A combination of pencil-drawn, water-colored and acrylic pieces titled "Western Art" by Angela Rice

'...an opportunity to see the variety and quality of work produced...'

-John Chatmas, Art Instructor

was on display in the Community Services Center Visual Arts Gallery from Oct. 10 to 28.

The show of 11 pieces, two of which sold, depicts western images in an "innovative and contemporary way to communicate the 'new' wild west," Rice said.

In her piece called "Tough as a Boot", Rice shows a cowgirl riding a horse with a "Slide and Gag" bridle, demonstrating the profound effect of modern invention in the equine and bovine industries, she said.

"Four-wheelers and other machines have kinda taken over the industry, but they can never replace

Digital Image by Kitty Clark



Digital Image by Kitty Clark

Josh Torres' "Day of the Dead" (above) is featured in the Student Art Exhibition. Courtney Woodliff's "Mouse" (right) stands tall at the Student Art Exhibition. Traditional Middle Eastern Art (left) on display at the "Art From Iran" exhibition.

solid hands and majestic horses," she said.

Rice chose watercolor for eight of her pieces because, "like the soul of a cowboy, the watercolor cannot be forced or too structured, it has to have the freedom to puddle and form as it chooses."

The third exhibition of the semester is limited to the instructors of the department, lasts from Oct. 31 to Dec. 2.

The exhibit "reveals an insight to their (art students) instructors' personality or ideas about art making," Downing said.

He submitted two pieces; one a drawing in pencil titled "P-Nutty" and a sculpture titled "Me."

Another art instructor, Gabriela Kolcavova, submitted a series of photographs titled "Beads on a String: Extended Portraits" intending to "combine individual pieces into visual 'sentences' about each subject," she said.

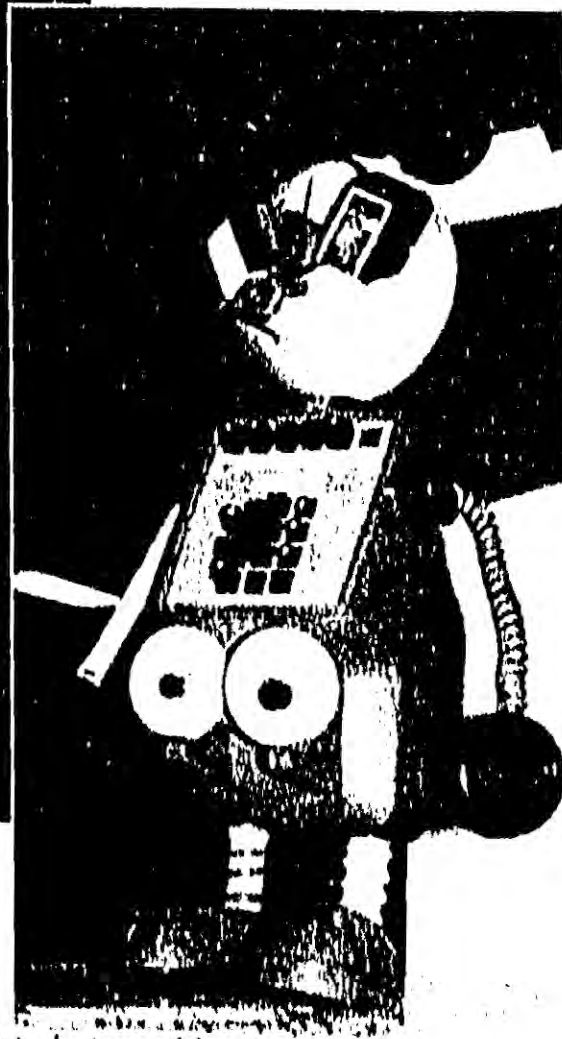
The last exhibition of the semester is reserved for art students, and will run from Nov. 7 to Dec. 2.

"Its purpose is to provide art students with an opportunity to exhibit their work, and to give them, along with the community, an opportunity to see the variety and quality of work produced in our studio classes," said John Chatmas, Art Instructor.

The department instructors will submit their students' best pieces from class to "give an overview of class study," Downing said.

The artists featured in this show have yet to be determined.

Digital Image by Kitty Clark



The Court Jester's Play



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MMMMMMM.

I'M GAME.



O-SAMA?
O-YEAH!

WILLIAMSON

Stone Circle Alum Offers Winner Funds

By Allen D. Fisher
Managing Editor

Casa de Café comes full circle on November 9, with the publishing of "The Stone Circle," a literary magazine with MCC student art judged and chosen to be published.

This year's top contributors will have a new twist, a prize of \$180 to those judged as best entries. The money has been donated to "The Stone Circle" by Melanie McCalmont.

McCalmont, now a graduate student at University of Wisconsin Madison, not only established this new prize but gave the "The Stone Circle" its name several years ago.

"This name comes from the Scottish/Celtic manner of using native materials to gather and enclose things which seems like what the purpose of the magazine will be," McCalmont said.

A contest to name the new publishing magazine by a committee formed of students from Sigma Kappa Delta, the newly formed English Honor Society.

McCalmont suggested The Stone Circle and her entry was anonymously chosen. The MCC Foundation is administering the new award to be called the "McCalmont Award for Creative Excellence in Photography."

"The Stone Circle" had more than 100 art entries from students, but only 40 will be chosen to be published.

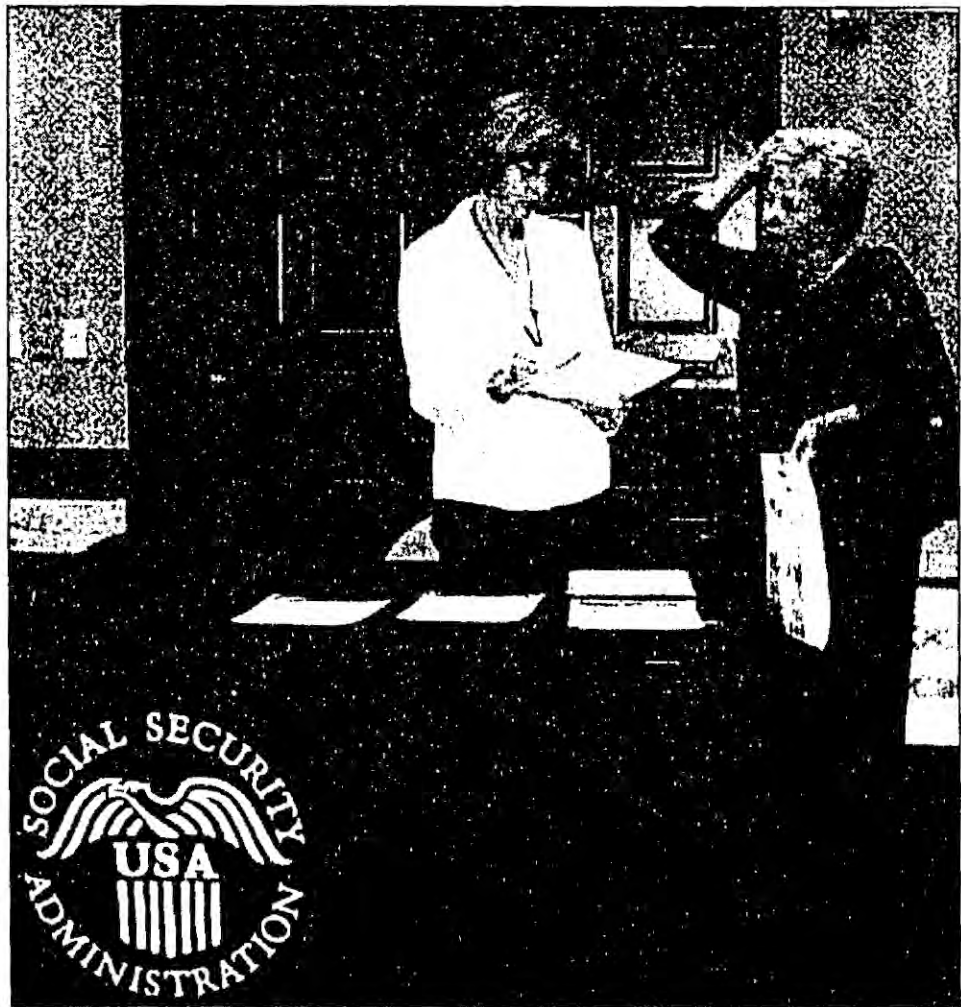
"This time we had a lot of entries, more than we have ever had. It was really tough to judge this time," said Jim McKeown, a MCC English Instructor, "Even the faculty readers said they had a really tough time doing it because there was a lot of good stuff."

Jim McKeown took over the planning of Casa de Café and "The Stone Circle" in 1999 along with the library staff.

Students turn in their writings with only a coversheet with their name. This art is given to the faculty to be judged, without the coversheet and without the names. The faculty judges the best from 4 to 1 points and the McKeown takes the top 15 or 16 scores and puts it in the magazine.

Gabriela Kolcavova, art instructor, John Chatmas, painting instructor, and Glen Downing, the art director for MCC, chose which visual arts were to be published.

About 60 entries that included paintings, photography and sculptures were offered, but only 25 were chosen.

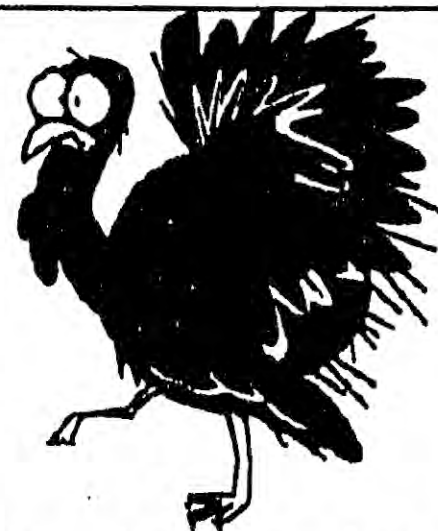


Fair Benefits

McLennan Community College faculty members had the opportunity to learn about topics such as retirement plans and smart shopping at the fifth annual Human Resource Benefits Fair at the Community Service Center on Oct. 27. The Fair was hosted by MCC's own Human Resource Department.

Digital Image by Carolyn Chambers

HOLIDAY MEAL VOLUNTEERS NEEDED



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Daniel Defoe
Staff Writer

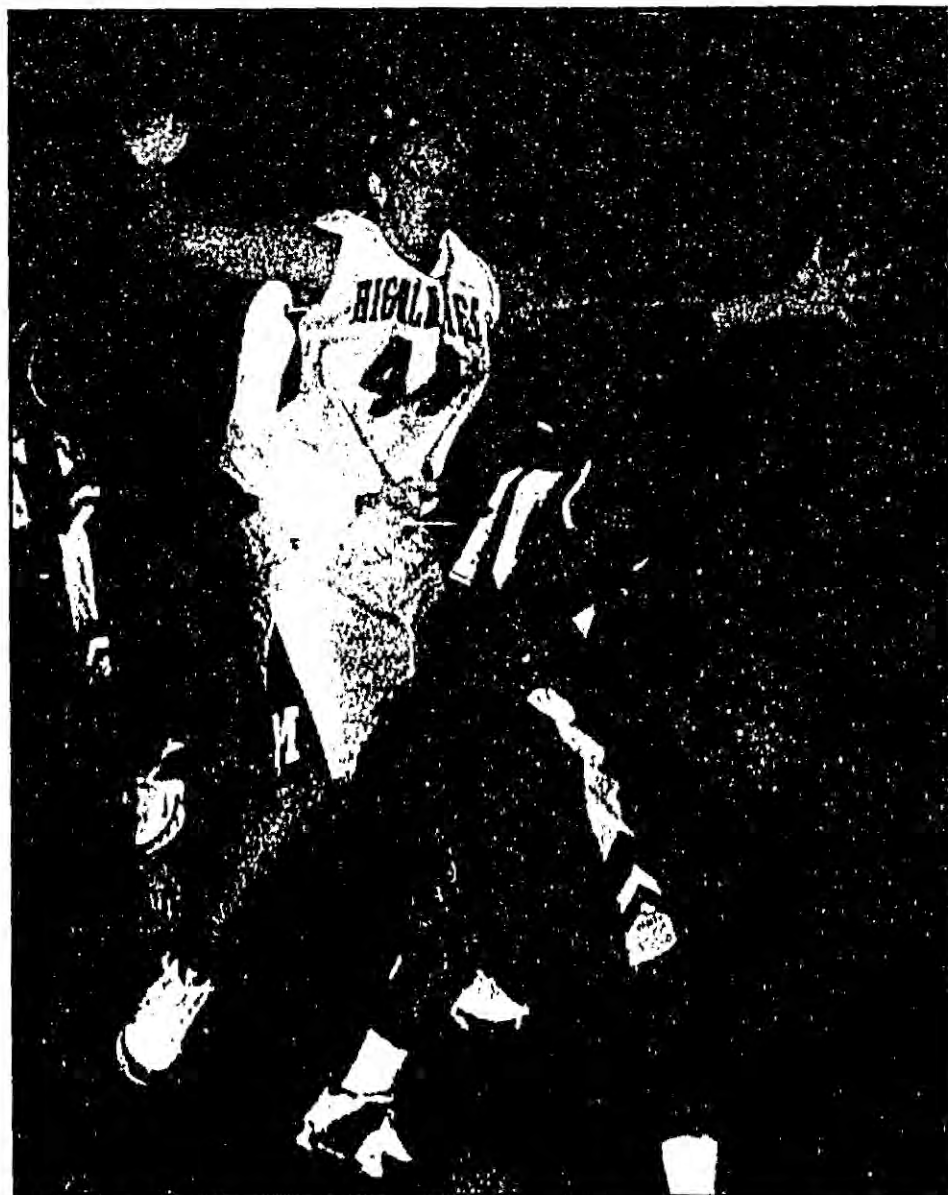
On November 4, the MCC Men's Basketball team defeated their opponent, the Richland Thunderducks 76-64.

"We were doing really well in the first half. We were winning forty to twenty at halftime," said Larren Silver, Assistant Coach for the MCC Men's Basketball team".

The Thunderducks scored the first nine points of the second period and eventually pulled to within five, 48-43, with 11:42 to play. MCC got the lead back up to 13, 58-45, on a three-pointer by Marvin Gentry with 8:27 remaining. Richland then went on a 16-7 run to close to within four, 65-61, with 1:35 left. MCC hit seven of 10 free throw attempts in the final 1:03 to seal the win, said MCC's Sports Information Specialist Kevin Tankersley.

"We got outscored in the second half forty-four to thirty-six. Their team played a little better and our guys weren't as intense in the second half. They still competed fairly well and we held out and won," Silver said.

"Jawan Bailey recorded nine blocked shots, which is really amazing, and Marvin Gentry had eighteen points," Silver said.



Rachel Whittle pressures a Blinn Lady Buc. In a 52-62 win at The Highlands gym on Nov. 4.

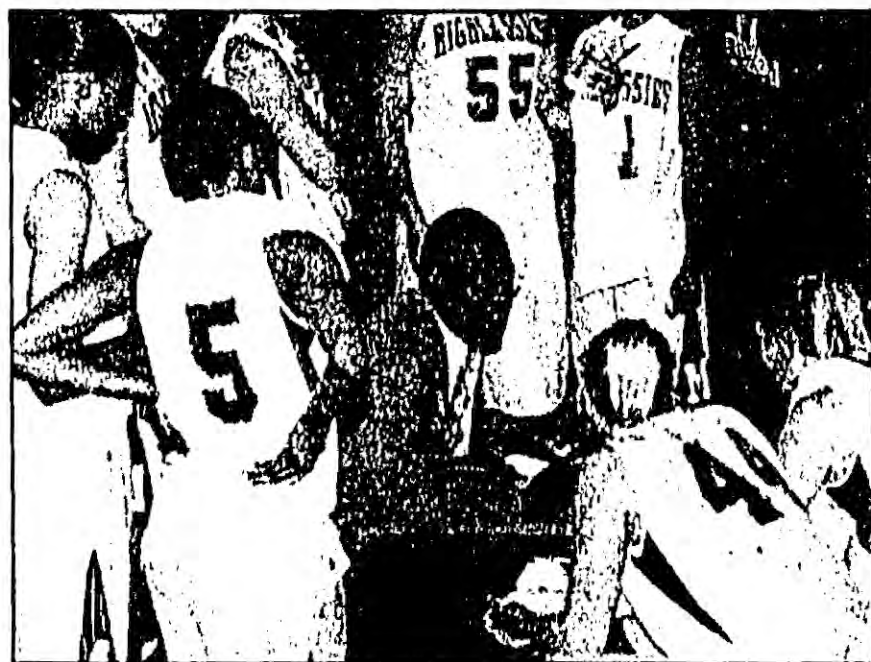
Digital Image by Eric Geoffrion

"The crowd was close to six hundred fans. The crowd was very vibrant," Silver.

"What we are going to work on is transition defense, which is retreating and defending. We are also working on rebounding," Silver said.

We also need to work on our free throw shooting, Silver said.

"Our sophomores have been providing good leadership and our Freshman are getting better every day," Silver said.



Coach Rhodes draws up a play during a timeout against Blinn.

Digital Image by Eric Geoffrion

'Lassies Win At Home

Daniel Defoe
Staff Writer

On November 4, The McLennan Community College Basketball team defeated their opponent, the Blinn Lady Bucs, 62-52.

The other team came in with a lot of confidence. It was a tight game, said MCC Women's Basketball Coach Ricky Rhodes.

At the end of the first half, MCC held a six point lead with 29 points to Blinn's 23, Rhodes said.

At the end of the second half, MCC had scored 33 more points while Blinn had made an additional 29, Rhodes said.

Tlana Perkins and Kim Cessna scored fourteen and eleven points respectively, said MCC's Sports Information Specialist Kevin Tankersley.

Vivian Nwosu made the most rebounds this game, with a total of six, and the team's only two blocks were made by Kim Cessna, Rhodes said.

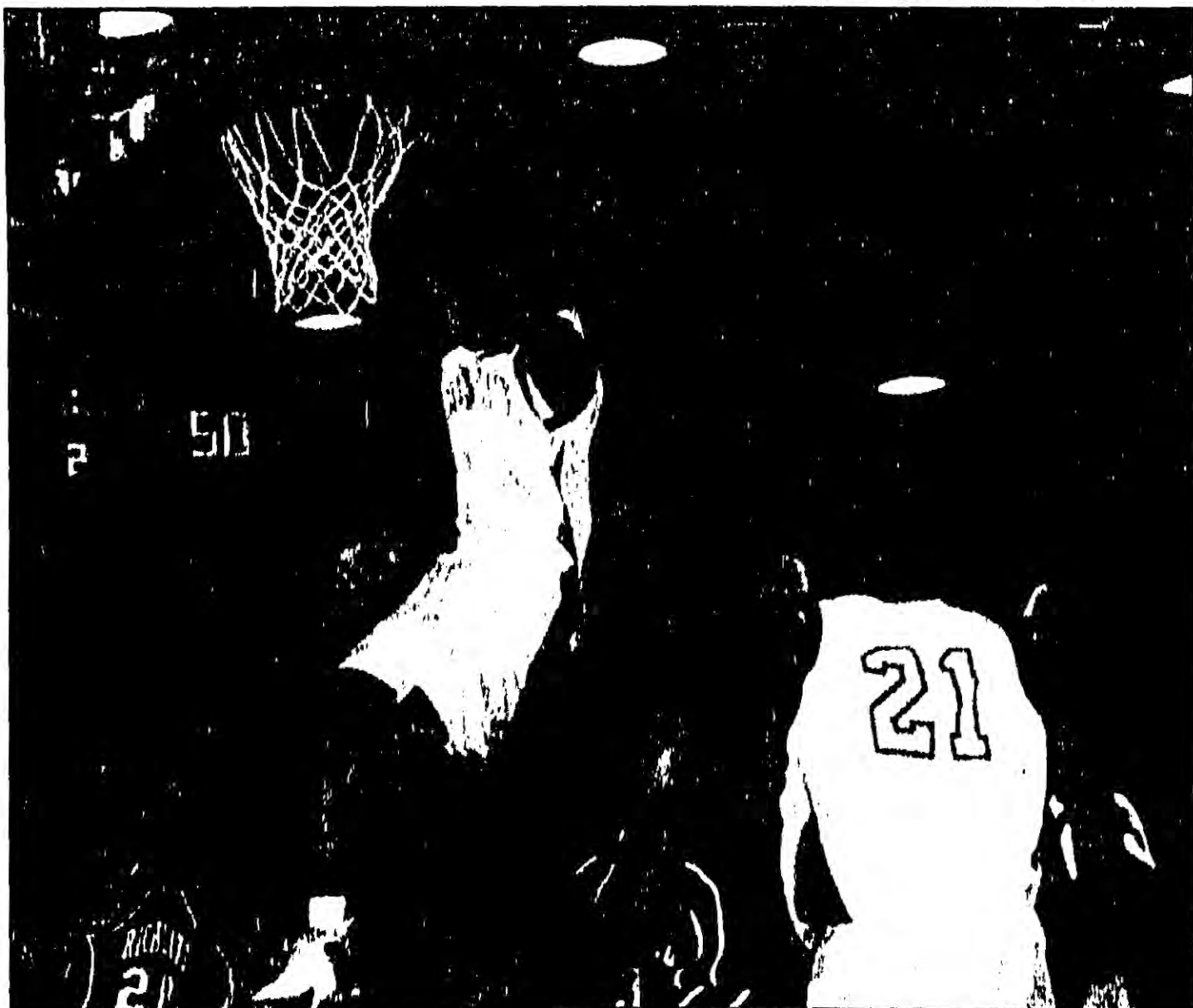
MCC made nine assists, six of which were made by Brandi Crouch, Rhodes said.

MCC had fewer turnovers totaling to 19 while Blinn had 24, however MCC made the most fouls this game with a total of 31 compared to Blinn's 21, Rhodes said.

Both MCC and Blinn had eight steals this game, Rhodes said.

Blinn Players Brandy Black, Eso Olokpa, and La'shae Woodward each scored ten points, Rhodes said.

The most rebounds for Blinn were made by Amaka Uzomah and the only blocks for Blinn were made by La'shae Woodward and Britney Minor, Rhodes said.



Jawan Bulley throws it down against the Richland Thunderducks in a 64-76 win at The Highlands gym on Nov. 4.

Digital Image by Eric Geoffrion

And Silence Sweeps the Astros....

Derek Kramolis
Staff writer

No life, no sounds, nobody in the stadium standing but Barbara Bush behind home plate . . . to let George get by her.

The Houston Astros should have stayed in Chicago for the rest of the World Series. A lethargic, spiritless crowd is what awaited them at Minute Maid Park for Game 3 of the Series, down 0-2.

Where are the real fans? At home.

With high ticket prices and wealthy band-wagon fans, it wasn't hard to figure out why the stands lacked the sense and enthusiasm the Astros deserved.

The people who showed up apparently had velcro attached to their seats. No matter what the situation, nobody knew what to do. Do I sit? Smile? Look for a camera?

If cell phones and magazines counted as cheers, the Astros would have been deafened. Those seemed to be the items the fans knew how to use.

"It was too cold. The roof being open really dampened the noise," said one lower-level seated fan.

I've never heard Yankee, Cardinal, or even White Sox fans say their stadiums, with no roofs, were the cause of their silence. Who am I kidding? There's no such thing as silence in those stadiums. Maybe it's their long histories that fill their stadiums with roars of cheers and boos, but I think it has something to do with the people who get the

seats.

"I've been an Astros fan since I was 12. I'm glad they're here (for the World Series), but being on the street kind of sucks," said Richard, a 34-year-old construction worker who listened to the game on a radio.

"I just can't afford tickets at the price they're at, and if I could, they'd all be bought up."

Tickets for seated sections of the ballpark started at \$125—if you were lucky. Those tickets didn't last very long. They were however for sale on Ebay and other sites for minimum prices of \$500 apiece.

A reporter for Houston Chronicle spoke with Joel Smith, 24, while he was pressed up against the glass into the west side of Minute Maid Park, where parts of the field were visible.

"From here it's almost the same," motioning to standing room-only ticket sections, \$45, just 10 feet away but inside the stadium. "This is standing room only but we didn't pay \$500."

Joel was a season ticket holder who couldn't afford his seats at the increased prices.

Lower level seating, \$185 for the fans who knew somebody, were being sold anywhere from \$3,000 to \$10,000 on various websites.

At a record of 15-30, earlier this season, the average Astros home game attendance was just over 20,000 in a 41,000-person capacity stadium. This is when the true fans were able to get a seat.

When the Astros came home for the Series, ignorant

people with nothing better to do than bump real fans out of their over-priced seats is what they found snapping for them.

To add insult to the Astros being swept, a Salt Lake City television station is reporting that a Houston attorney will sue the commissioner of Major League Baseball, claiming some of the fans got sick because the weather was too cold.

"Our argument is the prolonged exposure to people who were not prepared for that," said Houston attorney Lisa Sechelski.

This is what happens when people who don't know that game show up to the biggest show in the sport. Houston, or even Texas ends up becoming a joke for the nation.

Next time, assuming this fairy tale ride can happen again, the organization needs to call and ask what winning teams do to make their fans audible. Find a way to make the loyal fan capable of being there.

Fill the seats with the fans who know the game, and love the team. That's an element the Astros were missing. Did it cost them the series? No. But having home field advantage means having something the other team doesn't—it's the first World Series in Texas. The Astros organization didn't know fans could count for something other than dollar signs.

Game 4 was better for the fans, but by then it was too late. Progression counts, but they'll just have to use it "next time."



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