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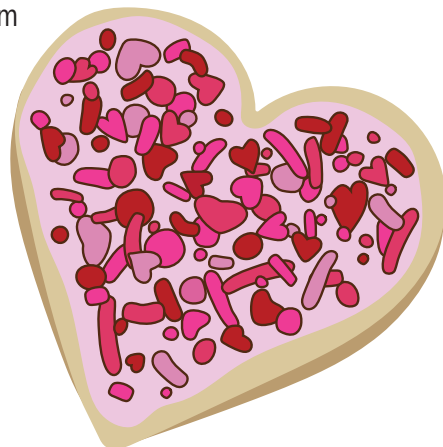
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SPORTS | Season-high not enough
Deharde leads the gymnastics team to season-best performance, but Aggies fall to No. 9 Broncos
see PAGE 5

STUDENT LIFE | Speed Debating
Society for Women in Philosophy organizes Valentine's debate event for Feb. 15
see PAGE 3

NEWS | Texting the police?
Now there's a new way for Cache County residents to contact emergency services
see PAGE 2

USU students rally together to support plastic bag ban

By Naomi Ward
NEWS SENIOR WRITER

Logan residents packed the city council chambers Tuesday night to express their opinions on the proposed plastic bag ban, filling all the available seats and overflowing into the lobby.

The ban, proposed by councilmember Herm Olsen, would prohibit Logan stores from distributing single-use plastic bags or otherwise receive a fine up to \$250 for the first violation. The fine would increase for multiple violations.

"It's time that we lead on this issue," Olsen said. "Waiting on the state legislature is a forever prospect. We can't solve all the problems in our community, but we can solve one of them."

Based on a raise of hands in response to a public commenter asking who had come to

support the ban, a majority of the residents in the room attended in support of the ordinance.

Several commenters argued for more sustainable alternatives, such as paper bags or reusable tote bags. One Logan resident carried an armful of tote bags with her to the podium, saying many of her bags cost less than \$2 or were given to her for free as promotion items. She gave each council member a tote bag her husband had sewn as a gift.

Common arguments in favor of the ban included concern for the environmental impact of plastic. Single-use plastic grocery bags are not biodegradable and commonly contribute to recycling contamination. Residents also argued that littered plastic bags or bags that are blown away from landfills create an eyesore in the community. A landfill

see "Plastic bags" PAGE 4



PHOTO BY **Megan Nielsen**
Logan residents filled City Hall and the atrium of City Hall to voice their opinions for the proposed plastic bag ban in Logan City, on last Tuesday, Feb. 5, in Logan, Utah.

Streak snapped Aggies lose at SDSU despite Merrill's 35

By Jason Walker
SPORTS SENIOR WRITER

"Most nights, we eliminate losing. We really didn't eliminate losing tonight."

Those words, coming from the mouth of Utah State's first-year head coach, Craig Smith, were probably the best way to sugar-coat his team's 68-63 road loss to San Diego State on Saturday that ended the Aggies' seven-game winning streak.

Sam Merrill had himself a spectacular scoring night, netting for 35 on 50 percent shooting overall and from deep. Outside of the 6-foot-5 junior, however, USU shot an abysmal 32 percent overall and 33 percent from 3-point range. The team's second-leading scorer, Abel Porter, finished with eight points.

USU head coach Craig Smith said the zone defense the Aztecs employed at the start of the game "got us disjointed," changing the Aggies from a team-oriented passing offense to one that had 12 turnovers and four assists at halftime while relying on one player for most of its points.

"To beat a team of this quality, whether it's San Diego State or Fresno State, or go right down the line, we can't play one-on-one basketball," Smith said.

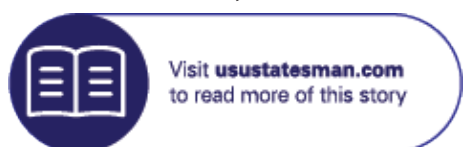


PHOTO COURTESY OF **David Pradel/The Daily**
Utah State Redshirt Freshman Forward Justin Bean attempts to block San Diego State Jalen McDaniels during playing at San Diego on Sat. urday, Feb. 9. The Aggies lost to the Aztecs, 63-68.

Mollie Murphy and Tim Cullen A Utah State Love Story



PHOTO COURTESY OF **MOLLIE MURPHY**

By Jordan Forest
STUDENT LIFE CONTRIBUTOR

Mollie Murphy and Tim Cullen, married assistant professors in the Communication Studies department, arrived to their interview shortly after taking their dogs on a walk. The simplicity and beauty of this personal time together, pets in tow, defines their relationship, which is built on friendship and time.

Though their degrees have the same label, Murphy and Cullen both have different concentrations in their respective studies. Murphy studies the rhetoric of social justice activists, while Cullen studies interpersonal relationships and health. Their studies and personal desires for education eventually brought Cullen and Murphy to pursue their Masters degrees at the University of Montana.

"You always say its because our desks were next to each other," Cullen said jokingly to Murphy. While in their Master's program, they got to know each other inside and outside of the classroom, spending a lot of time together in a group of students.

As they spent more time together, their relationship progressed. Murphy said, "I just remember going to the office and being kind of upset if he wasn't there. Or if we were going to some social event, wanting to hang out with him and starting to notice that I was pulled to him."

They were steady friends for about eight months before they started to date.

"We were just friends for a while, and then we just kinda slowly realized we had a lot in common and decided it'd be better if we dated," said Cullen.

One of the biggest things that brought the two together was their similar sense of humor.

"We always laugh at each other's jokes. Sometimes we're the only ones laughing. I think we're always laughing together. Always. That's probably the best part," said Cullen.

The two also described being drawn to aspects of depth in each other's character. Cullen said, "I liked that Mollie has strong ideas, really independent thinker. That's attractive to me. Someone who you can have an original conversation, who doesn't just say what reflects what you've been told your whole life."

Murphy said, "He's just really nice and caretaking. Actually, I taught about emotional intelligence today and you were my example of someone who's really in tune to other people's emotions."

Following their Master's degrees, Cullen and Murphy went on to the University of Georgia together and earned PhDs in Communication Studies.

As they have moved through their education and research, both have been strong motivators for each other.

"The academic job market is competitive," said Murphy. "But then it's even more competitive when you're a couple. Everyone said, 'If you're gonna get a job as a couple...you have to be a good candidate.' Once (Tim) started publishing things and teaching more stuff, I was like, 'I need to keep up.' That ended up working to both our favors."

The two have been able to inspire each other without letting that motivation become negative.

"It's like a balance between trying not to be comparative or com-

see "A Utah State Love Story" PAGE 4

Huntsman School wins national award

By Josh Wilkinson
NEWS CONTRIBUTOR

Utah State University’s Jon M. Huntsman School of Business was a recipient of a national award for their SEED, or Small Enterprise Education and Development, program.

Awarding USU with a first-place prize for Excellence in Co-Curricular Innovation, the United States Association for Small Business and Entrepreneurship, or USABE, is a national academic organization dedicated to entrepreneurship education. The Huntsman School’s Center for Entrepreneurship is the largest organization of its kind in the world, said Michael Glauser, executive director of the center.

“It helps us to raise our credibility as a Huntsman School of Business, and a center for entrepreneurship,” said Glauser, regarding the award. “It’s going to be really valuable for us.”

Glauser said the SEED program offers students the opportunity to practice entrepreneurial skills first hand, as well as make an impact as they are sent to various developing nations around the world.

“It’s like an old-fashioned apprenticeship,” said Glauser. “We take students from every major, and for one semester we teach them the skills of entrepreneurship and small business consulting skills, and second semester they go live somewhere in the world and teach those skills to individuals and families living in poverty.”

In the program, students teach and give mentorship to individuals and families to help them create small business. Marissa Barlow, a student who participated in the program last summer visited the Philippines as part of the program. Each week students would visit local high schools to practice teaching principles of entrepreneurship.

“We were doing a lot of teaching, but I feel like I was learning a lot as well through teaching these basic skills,” said Barlow.

Those that make the effort to attend classes offered by the program and come up with business ideas are given the opportunity to accept small loans offered by the program.

“The payback rate for all the loans that we’ve been involved with across all the countries is 98%” Glauser said. “The success rate is a lot higher than business here, but it’s like a one-person business or a three-person business.”

The program also allows for partnership opportunities between USU and a variety of programs local to regions,



PHOTO BY Utah State Today
Daniel Holland, USU associate professor of entrepreneurship and strategy; Michael Glauser, executive director of USU’s Center for Entrepreneurship; and Mark T. Schenkel, president of the United States Association for Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

including local schools, the Catholic church and other groups local to the areas.

USU also envisions greater involvement with students from schools other than USU, as the program continues to grow and experience greater levels of media attention.

“I would guess within a few years it will be half USU students and half non-USU students,” said Glauser.

The program also offers a stipend to students to help pay for the costs of participating.

Andy Thunell, program coordinator for the Center for Entrepreneurship, said “out of pocket, for full semester, three months abroad they might be \$500 to \$1000 for the whole

semester.”

Thunell added other international programs cost significantly more, around the market of \$7500 per semester. “It’s very affordable and it’s a transformative experience for the students”

Barlow saw the experience as a transformative opportunity. “The Philippines and the work I was able to do there changed my life. It was very eye-opening... I have never found any other opportunity like that. It was very impactful.”

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Emergency? Text the police

By Michaella Whitney
NEWS CONTRIBUTOR

The county-wide public safety dispatch center at the Logan City Police Department has recently implemented text-to-911 for Cache County residents. When a person texts 911, their message goes through the same technology as a phone call would. From there, a dispatch operator is then able to ask where they are and what type of emergency it is.

This method of communication is in its infancy in Utah. It’s part of a statewide program called “Next Generation 911 Rollout,” which is currently operating in Cache County Utah. Rich, Box Elder and Franklin counties will have this feature as soon as they get the technology to do so.

According to a Report to Congress explaining the cost and implementation of this new way of communication, the Next Generation 911 rollout “will lead to faster response and more lives and property saved— and will make both the public

and first responders themselves safer.”

The reasoning behind this additional way of contacting a 911 dispatcher through text is partly for those who are deaf or hard of hearing.

According to a press release from the Logan City Police Department, this is a scenario in which it is appropriate to text 911 instead of calling. It may also be necessary to text instead of call if the emergency is a kidnapping, active shooting or a domestic violence situation. Text-to-911 can still trace a person’s phone to locate where they are at.

However, Laurilee Tarbet, the 911 Operations Supervisor at the Logan City Police Department, encourages residents of Cache County to “call if you can and text if you can’t.”

Calling is still the best way to get ahold of a 911 dispatcher, but if circumstances would be more dangerous making a call, texting can still send help.

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FILE PHOTO BY Matt Halton
Cache County residents can now text 911 in emergencies. Calling is still the best way to get ahold of a 911 dispatcher, but if circumstances would be more dangerous making a call, texting can still send help.

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Black Lives Matter Utah leader speaks at USU

By Erick Graham Wood
STUDENT LIFE STAFF WRITER

Lex Scott, leader of Black Lives Matter Utah and the United Front Civil Rights Organization, spoke at Utah State University on Friday about the Black Lives Matter movement and her plans for this year. “I’m not going to sugarcoat it,” Scott said at the beginning of her presentation.

Scott was born in Denver and raised in Salt Lake City. Both she and her husband attended USU, as have as her parents.

Scott got involved with protesting after Mike Brown was killed by Darren Wilson in Ferguson, Missouri in an act of police brutality. “I was there in Ferguson and people would come and vandalize and loot and then leave and make our movement look bad,” Scott said. “My chapter of BLM is independent because it is a movement, not an organization, and I don’t need a certificate to validate my activism.”

In Salt Lake City, the Utah chapter of BLM has helped to publicize data from the police department about the individuals they stop and why they stop them.

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Lex Scott, leader of Black Lives Matter Utah, spoke to USU students on Friday, Feb. 15. The speech was sponsored by the Black Student Union.

PHOTO BY Chantelle McCall

Speed debating: Philosophers in Love

By Abigail Slade
STUDENT LIFE CONTRIBUTOR

Arina Pismenny, a philosophy professor involved with the Society for Women in Philosophy, finds Valentine’s Day a perfect excuse to organize a philosophy event.

As is typically the case, not everyone in SWIP shares the same perspective on the holiday. Maggie Mattinson asserted that Valentine’s Day is “a capitalistic mess,” while Megan Behan and Alex Bullock confessed their love for Valentine’s Day despite agreeing, to a certain extent, with Mattinson’s passionate stance.

Other SWIP members, like Emilia Clark, and Rachel Robison-Greene, also a professor of philosophy, were somewhere in the middle of the love-hate spectrum.

This diversity of opinions will make for some lively discussions at SWIP’s Valentine’s Day event on February 15.

Pismenny explained that the event, which is called Speed Debating: Philosophers in Love, will be modeled after speed dating. Participants will be able to have philosophical discussions about love. “So, for example, is love real? Is love a kind of madness? What is the difference between romantic love and friendship? Do soulmates exist? Is love gendered? Just to give a taste of some of the questions,” Pismenny said.

There will also be Valentine’s Day treats and chances to win prizes.

One key purpose of this event is to give life to the otherwise drab connotation of the phrase “philosophical discussion.” Members of SWIP want to help students know that it isn’t, in Bullock’s words, “just a bunch of dudes with beards arguing about stupid things.”

Instead, SWIP hopes that people will walk away from the event feeling as Behan does: that casual debate can be fun.

SWIP keeps its conversations focused on what interests students, making for dynamic debates on a regular basis. Love is a universally relevant topic, and Valentine’s Day serves as a

catalyst for discussion.

“[Love is] something that we are aware of every day, but we don’t necessarily reflect on it philosophically in a systematic way, in this critical way, so I think this will be a good opportunity to ask some of these questions,” said Pismenny.

Some topics up for debate will “cause you to be more introspective,” said Bullock. “It’s attrac-

you and your significant other coming to this and being like, ‘we have no idea what love is!’ And then you embark on a journey to discover love together,” she said.

Clark also felt that people shouldn’t be shy about having these kinds of conversations with their loved ones. “If our teachings about love are ruining your relationships,” she said, “then they are ruined to begin with. We’re saving you!”

“There’s no guarantees,” Pismenny said when asked what students might learn concerning love. “It might be that they find out that they have no idea, or they might find out that actually what they think is incoherent, or maybe that love is incoherent! Or maybe you’ll discover something about your romantic worldview that will reinforce your relationship and help you make a deeper connection with your loved one.”

With activities such as these, SWIP aims to instill a love of philosophy in those who participate.

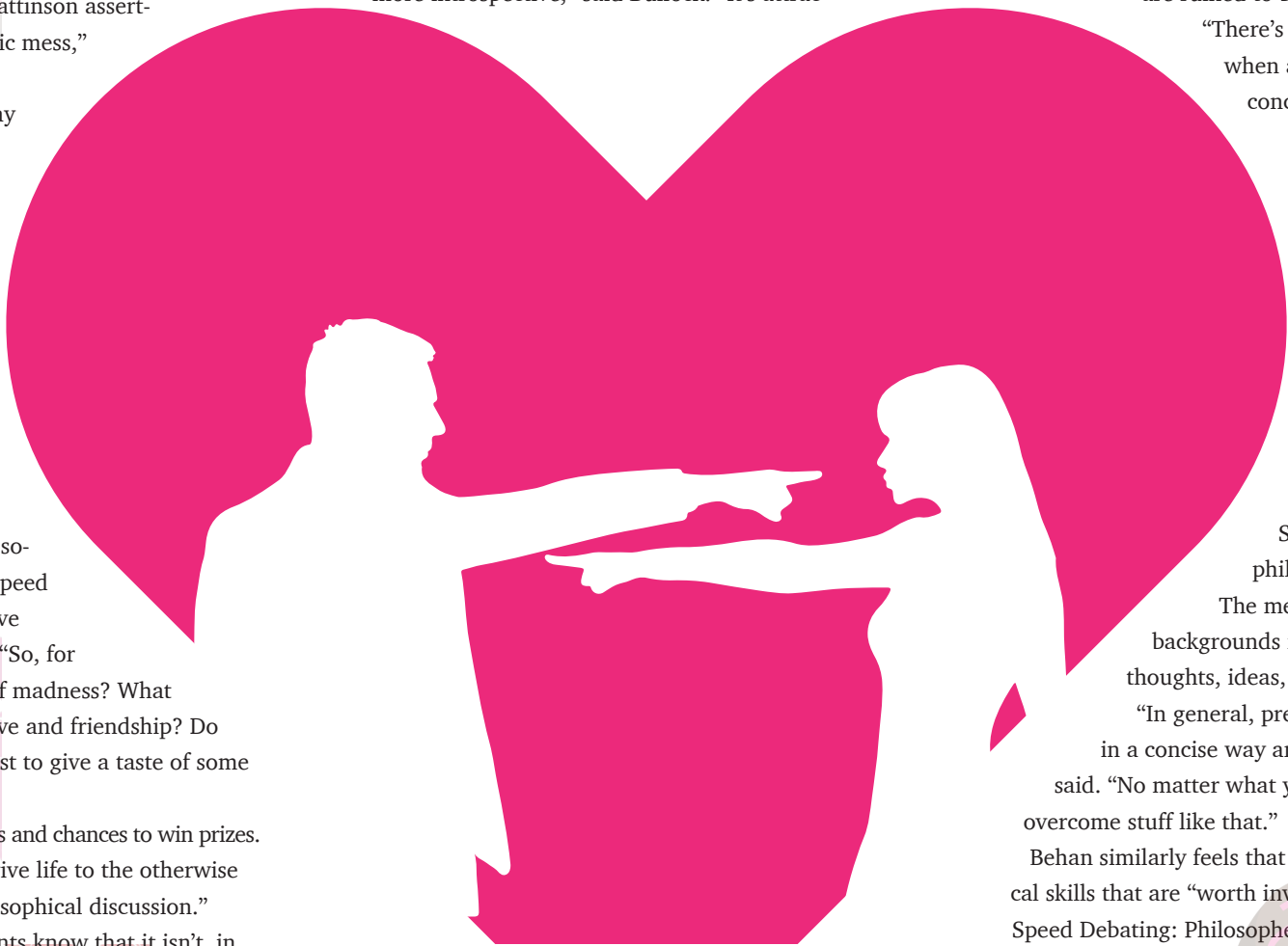
The members hope to help people of all backgrounds feel comfortable expressing their thoughts, ideas, and opinions.

“In general, presenting your ideas and doing that in a concise way and a confident way is hard,” Clark said. “No matter what your profession is, it’ll help you overcome stuff like that.”

Behan similarly feels that philosophy and debate are practical skills that are “worth investing in.”

Speed Debating: Philosophers in Love will be held Friday, February 15 at 4 p.m. in Old Main 304.

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GRAPHIC BY Taylor Hilton

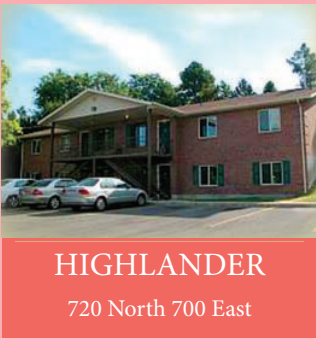
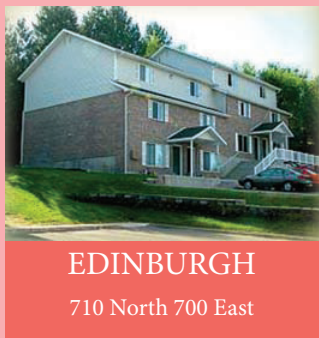
tive because it’s an opportunity for intellectual stimulation.”

Though event will be “date-appropriate,” Pismenny said a date is definitely not required.

However, Bullock feels that this is an ideal event for a date. “I don’t think there’s anything that could be more romantic than

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Seeking support and finding faith



By **Shelby Black**
STUDENT LIFE SENIOR WRITER

A new support group on campus is helping students improve their mental health by discussing their religious identities.

The faith distress group was created by Monique Frazier, a psychologist with Counseling and Psychological Services, and Bonnie Glass-Coffin, director of the Utah State University Interfaith Initiative. They saw the

GRAPHIC BY **Makalee Richardson**

need for students to have a place where they could discuss religion without any judgment.

“We spent some time talking about how we would cultivate a physical and emotional space where students felt comfortable sharing and being their authentic selves. Also where they could learn the tools for interacting respectfully with people who are different than themselves,” Glass-Coffin said.

For many students in college, it is common to experience new ideas and meet new people when moving away from home for the first time. This change can cause students to wonder why they believe the things they do.

“This is about recognizing in your college years that it is such a common time to be figuring various parts of your identity. Your spiritual identity is no exception,” Frazier said. “It is really normal to have identity issues around faith and spirituality that you are sorting out. That is why it is important to have a safe space to voice that. It is the most normal thing in the world, but it doesn’t always feel that way to people.”

The faith distress group creates a supportive environment for students suffering from

stress, anxiety, or depression that is related to their faith. Students who are not religious or who just want to discuss and listen to others are also welcome to come to the group.

The group stresses that it is not a place for students to belittle other religious traditions or be pressured to leave or stay in their faith of origin. It is a community without an agenda that provides support, acceptance, and safety as individuals journey on their own personal spiritual path.

“What we find is that as one begins to articulate why one feels and believe what one does, often times what happens is that their faith of origin gets stronger,” Glass-Coffin said. “This is a opportunity to learn how to bring your authentic self forward and not hide it in a way that can appreciate and respect someone that may have different views than you.”

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“Plastic bags” FROM PAGE 1

attendant stated that of the litter that is blown away and picked up by community service workers, the “vast majority” is plastic bags.

Robert Davies, a physics professor at Utah State University, referenced a decision the council had made in 2007 to invest in renewable energy over coal, a choice he called “courageous” and “visionary.”

“This is a chance for Logan to really shine and be a model,” Davies said to the council. “Lots of evidence shows that it can be done and done well. There are certainly reasons to modify [the ordinance], but no reason to abandon the effort.

“Council has made visionary decisions before. I encourage you to do it again.”

Several residents also expressed concern over the ban, particularly for small business owners and for the city’s right to enforce such a ban.

Julie Gortler, owner of a children’s clothing store called Little Sprouts Resale Boutique, said paper bags are expensive for businesses to provide instead of plastic bags, and that many of her customers need bags with handles so they can carry both their children and purchases to the car.

“I’m already working 60 hours a week with no paycheck,” Gortler

said. “I can’t even imagine adding a couple hundred more dollars for paper bags. They’re just not an option for me right now. I feel like we should have the freedom to choose.

Another resident argued the term “single-use” is inaccurate, since they can be used again and can be recycled. He also argued that creating a ban in only Logan will compel residents to take their business to stores outside of the city.

Other residents argue the timeline in the ordinance is not realistic, and that businesses would need more than a couple of months to implement a ban. The owner of Lee’s Marketplace said, “We love the community and want to make Cache Valley beautiful. We want to support Logan city and our landfills, but we need some time to do it.”

Councilmember Jeannie Simmonds said she was in favor of banning plastic bags, but also described herself as a “realist in terms of politics in Utah.”

Simmonds said a state-wide ban had been proposed in the past and was defeated in the state Senate. When it was proposed a second time, it never got out of committee. Another bill followed that would ban cities from being able to ban plastic bags, which Simmonds said went through the senate and was then defeated “in the last hour” by the house of representatives.

“Those people are back, and they do not want our communities to be able to make this type of legislation,” Simmonds said. “This year,

they have some backing from the petroleum industry. It’s going to be an interesting challenge. This is a conversation this state needs to have, and I encourage you to take this passion and speak to the state legislators.”

Councilmember Jess Bradfield expressed a strong disapproval of the ban, saying he believes the issues is important but not urgent, and that the city should trust citizens to make their own decisions.

“If this passes, we’re telling businesses that we don’t care about their opinion and we’re willing to gamble their money,” Bradfield said. “We should issue a challenge rather than mandate, and I trust businesses will rise to that challenge.”

The council agreed to have the environmental department explore the idea of a waste fee, in which businesses would pay a surcharge for plastic bags or charge customers for bags. The department will address broader county issues as well.

Council unanimously passed a motion to table the ordinance for six weeks until their second meeting in March, in which they may continue discussion and vote.

“Plastic is a huge problem” Olsen said. “This is just a small component of it. But how do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time. This is our first bite.”

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“A Utah State Love Story” FROM PAGE 1

petitive but pushing each other and celebrating any small accomplishment,” said Murphy.

As they have been together, their work has influenced one another’s. Cullen said, “The things I write about now definitely changed. Or how I even look at a study, because I’ll do survey research and statistics. I’ll start to think about, ‘Well, why am I seeing these results?’ or I try to explain that in the paper. I definitely see Mollie’s influence in my paper.”

“I see more of his influence in my teaching, I think,” said Murphy. “I find myself speaking to a lot of his research and that sort of stuff, and borrowing his stuff on mental health and the family.”

This mutual motivation led them to both get jobs on Utah State’s campus as professors in the Communications department. The two talked about their appreciation for Utah State and its students, as well as the opportunity to work together.

“I think the best thing about working together is we spend almost all day, every day together. That’s really nice,” said Cullen. “Like we just took our dogs for a walk and it’s 1:00 in the afternoon. We can just drive home, do that and come back. So we’re always together. I like that.”

Murphy and Cullen’s passion for USU extends to the city of Logan, Utah as well. One especially big part of that is their common love of the outdoors. “We’re always on the trails like Green Canyon or Bonneville. We are there like five times a week.” They regularly go out with their two bloodhounds, Roxy and Hannah, who are “all (they) talk about these days.”

The couple shared some of the most valuable things they have learned since being together.

“I do study relationships, so I think they’re important anyway,” said Cullen. “But I do think it’s a nice reminder how my quality of life is high, but it’s probably mostly because I enjoy my romantic partner and we’re around each other all the time...Picking the right person to spend all your time with can matter a lot.”

Murphy went on to say, “I’ve learned to be more empathetic, and I have a hard time getting out of my own head. But when you have a stable romantic partner—or even a stable friend, even if it’s not a romantic relationship—if you have somebody else to be thinking about, it’s more motivation to not be self-focused.”

When asked to share a snapshot of memory about the other person, Murphy turned to Cullen and mentioned moments of him with their nephews and their dogs.

“I think of pictures of you holding Brady’s hand and pulling Caleb in the wagon. You’ll totally be present with the kids. Or walking the dogs and pet them. Just very caring toward vulnerable things, like animals or kids. You always step in to help out with the kids and be with them and the dogs.”

Cullen shared a simple memory of Murphy as one of his favorites.

“A snapshot of you for me is when I made that stupid bean rub thing, remember that? I made this horrible meal and I was so mad. I just got so angry because it took so much time. The kitchen was a mess because of it, and it came out horrible and I was fuming. I was so mad. And I look over and she’s in tears laughing at me. And that alleviated it all, made me feel better. I was so mad

and I look over and she thinks its so funny. And I was like, ‘Okay, just think about it a little differently.’ That’s usually the best part of Mollie.”

Cullen and Murphy look forward to travelling together and are considering publishing something teaching-related together. For now, though, the two are learning how to relax and have more peaceful time together.

“You kind of have to relearn that after graduate school, have to learn how to relax a little bit, have more balance in life,” said Cullen. “So those are the goals these days. To just kind of exhale.”

This kind of exhalation will help Murphy and Cullen continue to enjoy the beauty of their relationship, built on one simple theme: together.

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CENTER for Women gender

PANEL DISCUSSION

"WOMEN SUPPORTING WOMEN: SUFFRAGE IN THE 21ST CENTURY"

Blair Imani

Author and activist. Founder and Executive Director of Equality for HER.

Dr. Christy Glass

Professor in Sociology. Specializes in gender inequality, race/ethnicity, and leadership.

Feminista Jones

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Dr. Ann Austin

Professor of Child Development. Specializes in birth to age 12. Founding Director of CFWG.

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PHOTO BY Megan Nielsen

Utah State sophomore Autumn DeHarde celebrates a routine with teammates during Friday night's meet against No. 9 Boise State. DeHarde won two event titles at the meet, earning the sixth beam title and fourth floor title of her career.

DeHarde's big night not enough as Aggies fall to No. 9 Boise State

By Jaden Johnson
SPORTS CONTENT MANAGER

The Utah State gymnastics team tied its season-high score of 194.975 Friday night at the Dee Glen Smith Spectrum, as the Aggies hosted No. 9 Boise State, falling to the Broncos 196.075-194.975.

Utah State's night was highlighted by the performance of Autumn DeHarde. The sophomore won her ninth and tenth career individual titles — an outright title on the floor with a score of 9.900, and a title on the beam which she shared with Boise State's Shani Remme with a score of 9.900.

"This whole week, we talked about doing what we do in practice," said Utah State second-year head coach Amy Smith. "That's what we see from Autumn, day in and day out, is flawless routines on beam and floor. She got the job done tonight." Still early into her second season as an Aggie, DeHarde has

already captured six beam titles and four floor titles. It was also her second beam title and second 9.900 score on beam in the past three meets, the previous one coming on Jan. 25 at BYU. "The first couple of meets of the season, I wasn't completely settled in," DeHarde said. "Tonight, I was more loose and I really had fun with it, and it paid off."

With the win, Boise State remained unbeaten, a perfect 7-0 on the season. The Broncos' performance was highlighted by a team score of 49.150, including a 9.925 performance by Remme. Remme, the two-time reigning Mountain Rim Gymnastics Conference Gymnast of the Year, also won her 20th career all-around title with a score of 39.525.

Utah State sophomore Leighton Varnadore had a big night as well, taking third in the all-around behind Remme and Boise State's Courtney McGregor. Varnadore's personal-best score of 9.875 on the beam helped her to an overall score of 39.225.

"It was super exciting. Getting a 39.200 was my goal and now I have to set a new goal," Varnadore said. "I feel like tonight was the first time I've shown what I'm capable of, which is super exciting. I can't wait for more."

USU's best rotation came on the floor, which has traditionally been the strong point of the Aggies. There, they scored a season-best 48.975 behind several strong individual performances. Along with DeHarde's title-capturing performance, senior Madison Ward-Sessions earned a 9.875 to take second, and Varnadore earned a 9.850 to tie for third place.

While the Aggies' score matched their season high which was set exactly one week prior, Smith believes they still have plenty of room to improve.

"We are still building and we keep talking about the team needing to show up and bring their best when their best is needed," Smith said. "That needs to be everybody, to where they are supporting each other. We saw brilliant performances tonight, and then we saw some not-so brilliant performances. We really need each gymnast, one through six, to show up and get it done for us to do what we are capable of doing."

The Aggies will be back on the mats on Feb. 17 when they travel to Morgantown, W.V. to participate in a quad team meet against West Virginia, Cornell and Pittsburgh. They then return home to host Alaska Anchorage Feb. 22 at 7 p.m.

 @jadenjohnson00



PHOTO BY Megan Nielsen

Aggie softball opens season 1-4 in weekend tournament

By Dalton Renshaw
SPORTS STAFF WRITER

Over the weekend, the Utah State softball team opened up its season, winning one of its first five games as part of the Titan Classic held in Fullerton, Calif.

In the Aggies' first two games of the Titan Classic, they fell 12-0 to Northwestern in the opener, and lost a close game 3-2 against Loyola Marymount in the second game of a double-header Friday night. Sophomore pitcher Delaney Hull started Utah State's first game and pitched 2.2 innings before she was pulled for freshman Chloe Nightingale, who made her first collegiate appearance on the day.

The Aggies pitching wasn't up to its normal standards, but the batting was also slow to get going, due to Northwestern holding the team to just one hit in the game coming off the bat of senior catcher Bailey Lewis.

Utah State played the second game of the double-header just a few hours later, this time faring better against Loyola Marymount. This game also featured a freshman pitcher for the Aggies, two in fact. Kapri Toone was the starter, making her first collegiate appearance as well, going three innings and giving up two earned runs.

Nightingale came in to pitch the last three innings, keeping the Aggies alive by not giving up any runs and striking out three. Unfortunately for Utah State, a late push in the sixth inning by the tune of two runs wasn't enough to overcome Loyola Marymount's three run lead.

Saturday started off strong for the Aggies with a 5-1 win over Pacific. This was a well-rounded performance from Utah State, seeing the offense grab seven hits including two home runs coming off the bats of junior outfielder Riley Plogger and sophomore third baseman Kennedy Hira. To accompany the good hitting, Hull rebounded from her loss the previous day to pitch

a one run complete game and grab her first win of the season. However, this would come as the Aggies lone win in the tournament.

The team's next outing was Saturday evening against the tournament hosts, Cal State Fullerton. It was another close loss for the Aggies, again by the score of 3-2 with both of the team's runs coming in the sixth inning, courtesy of a two-run shot from freshman Lexi Orozco to pull the Aggies within one.

USU head coach Steve Johnson elected to go with two freshmen on the mound in the contest for the second time in the tournament, with Nightingale getting the start. She pitched 4.1 innings and gave up all three of Fullerton's runs before Toone came in to pitch the final 1.2 innings.


After giving up seven runs to the Louisville Cardinals over the first two innings of Sunday's game, Utah State went on to score five of its own over the final five innings. But, it proved to be too late and the Aggies weren't able to pull

ahead, losing its fourth and final game of the tournament.

Hull started her third game of the tournament, but picked up her second loss, going an inning and a third and giving up seven. Toone was the Aggies' choice as reliever again in this game, and did well by pitching four and two-thirds scoreless innings along with five strikeouts. Utah State was able to get 10 hits off the Cardinals, its most in any game across the tournament.

Utah State is back on the field this weekend as part of the Littlewood Classic held in Tempe, Arizona. Similar to the Titan Classic, Utah State will play five games across three days including matchups with the No. 5 Florida Gators and No. 12 Arizona State.

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VS. WYOMING

WEDNESDAY | 7 PM

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

VS. AIR FORCE

SATURDAY | 2 PM



Column

New year, new Aggies

By Adam Larson
SPORTS STAFF WRITER

Editor's Note: To submit a response to this column, or submit a letter to the editor on a new topic, email your submission to opinion@usstatesman.com.

Though the Aggie men lost a close road game to San Diego State over the weekend, the past 10 days were still a success for the team after a blowout home win over UNLV and a nail-biting road victory against Fresno State.

The 2-1 stretch kept Utah State second in the Mountain West standings with an 18-6 record, and all but assured the team a bye in the first round of the conference tournament.

But the Aggies weren't supposed to be this good. The conference preseason rankings had them ninth out of the Mountain West's 11 teams.

So why are they this good?

More confidence in star-player Sam Merrill maybe? A big recruit in Portuguese big man Neemias Queta? A change of style? Spectrum Magic?

The answer is all of the above, and there's one common thread through all of those: new head coach Craig Smith.

The men's basketball program at Utah State changed its course this season after hiring Smith. The team seems to be

playing much different under Smith than the past few years; not just style-wise, but enthusiasm-wise as well.

But what makes Smith different from other head coaches?

Smith exhibits a love for coaching that is special — he genuinely loves leading the team and wants to get the most out of his players.

He also happens to coach a style of basketball that is very fun to play in, which makes the on-court product more enjoyable for the players and the fans.

Smith's system is run-and-gun with a lot of layups and 3-pointers, without much of the low-quality in-between shots. The game has evolved, and Smith's style fits it perfectly.

He fits this team perfectly.

Merrill was unleashed this year, instilled with confidence from his new coach. Merrill scored a career-high 37 points in the Aggies first game of the season. He is putting up just more than 20 points per game, a four-point increase from last season.

The Aggies are also pulling in seven more rebounds per game than last year's team, while its opponents are getting two less, turning a negative rebounding margin last year to a dominant 9.3 margin this year. Impact freshman Queta — who was recruited to Utah State by Smith — has played a big part in that performance, pulling in more than nine boards per game by himself. For context, last season's leading rebounder was Koby McEwen with five and a half rebounds per contest.

While overall attendance is down slightly this season — likely due to not playing BYU at home — student attendance appears to be up compared to the past few years and the fanbase is clearly excited.

Smith has been the primary cause of that

excitement. He often tweets for students to come to games, encouraging them to bring the Spectrum Magic back, and it's working.

Previous seasons saw some fan support after the team had won some games, but the fans have been excited for this team right from the beginning of the year, and the players have said how it's helped them play better. The only home loss for the Aggies this year was the heartbreaker against Fresno State, one of the best teams in the conference.

With seven games left in the season Utah State still has a lot of work left to do to remain at the top of the Mountain West, but two things seem clear: these Aggies are much better than expected, and coach Smith is making sure the excitement is here to stay.

Adam Larson is a junior studying broadcast journalism at Utah State. He enjoys watching and writing about anything basketball related.



Easy

5		7	9		3	8		
							3	
			5		6		9	7
8	5			4		1		
2			7		1			3
		6		5			2	4
7	1		6		4			
	6							
		2	8		5	6		9

TO PLAY: Complete the grid so that every row, column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. There is no guessing or math involved, just use logic to solve.

SOLUTION FOR 02/04/19:

Very Easy								
9	3	5	8	6	4	7	1	2
1	8	7	5	2	3	6	4	9
2	6	4	1	7	9	8	3	5
6	7	1	2	9	8	3	5	4
5	4	8	3	1	7	2	9	6
3	2	9	4	5	6	1	8	7
4	1	6	9	3	2	5	7	8
8	5	2	7	4	1	9	6	3
7	9	3	6	8	5	4	2	1

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<p>Holiday: 145th Anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's birth</p> <p>JTM & Jay Warren: We came to play Tour: Logan UT 7:00pm The Cache Venue 119 S Main Street</p> <p>Learn to Belly Dance with Shimmering Sands! 7:00pm Whittier Community Center 290 North 400 East Logan, UT</p> <p>National Broadway Tour Something Rotten! 7:30pm Ellen Eccles Theatre 43 S Main St Logan, UT</p>	<p>Parenting the Love and Logic Way® Cache County 6:30pm FCHD West 670 East 500 North Logan, UT</p> <p>SANITATION under FSMA & USDA Logan UT 8:00am Bridgerland Technical College (East Campus) 1301 N 600 W Logan, UT</p> <p>Spring STEM Fair 3:00pm Taggart Student Center 0175 Old Main Hill Logan, UT</p> <p>Mens Basketball: Wyoming at Utah State 7 pm Dee Glen Smith Spectrum Listen to the game live on Aggie Radio 92.3 FM-LP</p>	<p>Holiday: Valentine's Day</p> <p>Helicon West Open Mic Night 7:00pm Logan Library 255 North Main Street Logan, UT</p> <p>Jazz Night at Elite Hall 6:00pm Elite Hall 98 W. Main Logan, UT</p> <p>Water & Environmental Seminar Kerry Kelly "Community-engaged air quality measurements in the Salt Lake Valley." 4:30pm- 5:30pm Engineering room 221</p> <p>Paper and Clay National juried art exhibit 9am-5pm Tippetts and Eccles Galleries</p>	<p>AMSA Blood Drive 10:00am TSC International Lounge</p> <p>Fridays are for Lovers 7:00pm Why Sound 30 Federal Ave Logan, UT</p> <p>Valentines dinner and concert with Brenn Hill 6:30pm American West Heritage Center 4025 U.S. 89 Wellsville, UT</p> <p>True Blue Aggie Friday On Fridays, we wear Aggie Blue! Go to usu.edu/trueblue</p> <p>Red Cross Blood Drive 10 am- 4:30 pm TSC, International Lounge</p>	<p>Snowshoe Tour of the Preserve 8:30 am Swaner EcoCenter</p> <p>Mens Basketball: Utah State @ Air Force 2:00pm Listen to the game live on Aggie Radio 92.3 FM-LP</p> <p>VITA Free Tax Clinic Volunteer tax clinic open to the public. 9 am George S. Eccles Business Building</p> <p>Vagina Monologues The Vagina Monologues is an episodic play by Eve Ensler. 7:30 pm TSC, Auditorium</p> <p>Poetry and a Beverage Come perform, watch, or socialize at PoBev! 9 pm TSC Ballroom</p>	<p>Holiday: Presidents' Day USU will be closed in observance of Presidents' Day.</p> <p>Faith Distress Group This weekly drop-in group is an opportunity for students to get together in a safe environment to learn from and support each other. Each week we will discuss pertinent issues related to faith that cause stress. 1pm-2:30 pm TSC 310 B</p>

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