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Report: Utah has highest six-year graduation rate

► **By Madison Maners and Morgan Pratt**
staff writers

A national report released last Wednesday ranked Utah as the state with the highest number of college students enrolled at the six year mark in the nation, and USU is no exception.

It took an average of 5.39 years for a USU student to graduate in 2012 rather than the standard four years.

"If a student hasn't graduated within six years into their schools, they are most likely not going to graduate," said Michael Torrens, director for the USU Office of Analysis, Assessment and Accreditation.

Torrens said a higher graduation rate for USU is fairly typical when factoring in students who are members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and serve one-and-a-half and two-year missions.

"The main reason for graduation retention in Utah in general is because of the missionary phenomenon," said John Mortensen, assistant vice president for Enrollment, Service and Retention.

Mortensen said USU takes several measures to promote graduation retention such as offering classes to help plan for a career, offering career counseling sessions, using the Student Orientation, Advising and Registration program and by encouraging students to participate in campus activities.

"A big part of retention is students feeling a social connection with the university," Mortensen said. "Students who get involved with something are much more likely to graduate."

Mortensen said people at USU planning for religious or military service are encouraged to notify the university so it can keep track of transcripts and put a hold on any scholarships an individual may have. If not, students may lose out on unused scholarship money.

The state is helping to push students toward graduation through its 15 to Finish campaign, which encourages students to take on a full course load to help them graduate in four years.

Students at USU face challenges with completing their degrees in the expected four years without religious or military service. Kurt Kowal began his freshman year in 2010 and is hoping to graduate by 2016.

Kowal is not currently enrolled in any classes but is planning to study social work. He changed his major seven times while taking six credits per semester. The 25-year-old said he did not attend SOAR, and miscommunications while setting up appointments with advisers confused him.

"If there were more advisers, that'd be great. I had a hard time deciding what I wanted to do," Kowal said. "I didn't want to overload myself, but I should have been taking 12 credits per semester. I just took a lot more fun classes than I should have. Zumba is the best, and I will be taking that one again."

Now that he has taken some time away from school, Kowal said he misses homework and realizes that from this point forward, he will be enrolled in 20 credit semesters to graduate.

"I miss school and I want to grow up," he said. "The next two years will be the most efficient, but they're gonna suck."

Gowns get capped



Mikayla Kapp photo illustration

2014 GRADUATES purchased commencement robes from USU Surplus Sales at significantly lower prices before school officials decided to stop selling them last week during the graduation fair.

Surplus store discontinuing grad robe sales after students try to beat the system

► **By Danielle Manley**
assistant news editor

James Gardner hit the jackpot. He bought two caps and two gowns at USU Surplus for \$1 each on March 18.

The price of a bachelor's graduation package from the Campus Store can be more than \$40, which includes a cap, gown and tassel. The items were sold at the graduation fair March 18 and 19 outside the Campus Store in the Taggart Student Center.

The next day, Gardner's friend went to the surplus store to

get the same deal, but a sign on the door said the store was no longer selling caps and gowns.

Gardner couldn't believe it. He was told the day before that inventory for the items was high.

"On Thursday, I submitted a complaint on myVoice," he said. "I'm just confused why this would happen."

Gardner doesn't think a one-time use for a few hours on a Saturday morning merits a \$50 purchase.

"It's like a wedding dress," he said. "It's a one-time wear."

► See **ROBES**, Page 2

Budget increases on the table for next year

► **By Danielle Manley**
assistant news editor

Budget increases and decreases took up the majority of discussion time during the USU Student Association Executive Council meeting Tuesday.

Though the newly elected officers weren't present, the 2013-14 officers were asked to comment on their budget and if they would request more or less money.

The rough number for the entire budget for the group, proposed by Linda Zimmerman, Student Involvement and Leadership executive director, is \$928,000 with \$10,000 coming from student fees.

Proposed increases included \$1,300 for the Greek Council, \$2,400 for a new position under Public Relations and Marketing and \$3,000 for the President's Fund.

Kevin Webb, assistant director for Student Involvement, is the adviser for the Greek Council and asked for the increase. USU/SA President Doug Fiebia said the reason for the proposal is because the Greek Council spends most of its budget on Greek leadership weekend.

"That council doesn't really do a lot, especially activities-wise, because they don't have any money," said Matt Anderson, senator for the College of Humanities and Social Sciences and member of the Sigma Phi Epsilon fraternity. "It's not just for the Greeks, it's for the university as whole ... I think it's an investment in the university, not just an investment in Greeks."

Public Relations and Marketing director Casey Saxton and Matt Ditto, senator for the Emma Eccles Jones College of Education and Human Services, disagreed with the potential placement of the money.

"I think they have the means necessary to raise the money," Saxton said.

Ditto, who will be Student Advocate next year, said he'd rather see more money placed in the Academic Opportunity Fund.

Saxton said he wants to see an increase in the Public

► See **BUDGET**, Page 2

Ukraine conflict hits home at Utah State University

► **By David Berg**
staff writer

The effects of recent protests in Ukraine and the subsequent military action in the Crimean peninsula have reached across land and ocean into the lives of students at USU.

Josh Barton, a master's student in management informations systems, has family living in Kiev, Ukraine's capital. His father works for the U.S. Agency for International Development and is the current mission director for the agency in Ukraine.

"It's not so bad now that the protests are over," Barton said.

According to Barton, when violent protests were in full swing in February, his family had to stay indoors a majority of the time. His sister's school was canceled and only recently reopened.

"Voluntary evacuation was allowed," Barton said concerning other foreign families.

There is still some worry about safety; however, that worry has decreased greatly in the past few weeks.

"There are still a little less friendly feelings towards others," Barton said.

Anti-government protests began in Kiev on Nov. 21 when then-president Viktor Yanukovich announced the government was

going to abandon a deal that would strengthen ties to the European Union and was instead going to seek closer ties with Moscow.

The protests became more violent by the beginning of December. Protesters removed cobblestones from the streets to use as weapons against police. The police responded in equal violence, resulting in the deaths of many protestors.

The largest outcry against the violence occurred after government snipers shot down dozens of protesters on Feb. 20. By the end of the protests, 82 people had died.

According to Barton, the scene at Independence Square in Kiev is different now. The cobblestones have been replaced and the road-blocks are being carted away. Memorials are now set up in honor of the fallen.

The protests began to decrease when Yanukovich fled Kiev on Feb. 21. Within days, the interim government assigned presidential powers to Olexander Turchinov, the speaker for the Ukrainian parliament.

However, Ukraine is still not at peace. The transition in government brought an outcry in the Ukrainian peninsula of Crimea. Pro-Russian protesters took to the streets in the region on Feb. 23. On Feb. 27, masked gunmen seized government buildings in Crimea.

By March 1, pro-Russian troops occupied the region. On March



Photo courtesy Roy Gutman/MCT

UKRAINIAN RESERVISTS line up for photographers at a newly established base near the Russian border.

11, the regional parliament in Crimea voted to become independent of Ukraine. Five days later, a referendum was passed that annexed

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Comment
Join the conversation
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Nation & World

In brief

Egypt’s al-Sisi resigns

Field Marshal Abdul Fattah al-Sisi announced his resignation as Egypt’s military chief on Wednesday. The resignation allows al-Sisi to serve as president. Al-Sisi led the overthrowing of former Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi last July.

Al-Sisi is expected to win the presidential poll due to overall popularity and lack of serious competitors.

The resignation comes days after an Egyptian court’s decision to sentence 528 supporters of former president Mohamed Morsi to death, a decision the U.N. condemned on Wednesday.

24 dead, 176 missing in Washington mudslide

A 177-foot-high wall of mud descended on the Washington town of Oso on Saturday. Twenty-four people have died and 176 more are unaccounted for.

Search parties are still working to find the missing people and have not given up hope on finding some living victims. The slide also took out 30 homes and partially dammed a river.

Turkish prime minister: Don’t violate my airspace

Turkish forces shot down a Syrian military jet on Saturday. They said the jet was violating their airspace and had warned Syrian personnel.

Syria accused Turkey of “blatant aggression” against them, saying the plane was in its airspace at the time the plane was shot down.

Turkey’s Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan defended the actions, saying “If you violate my airspace, our slap after this will be hard,” he said.

Authorities: Flight 370 crashed in Indian Ocean

After disappearing on March 8, authorities believe they know the fate of Malaysia Airlines Flight 370. Based on new calculations, Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak said it is “beyond reasonable doubt” that the plane crashed in the southern Indian Ocean with no survivors.

122 objects believed to be from the missing plane have been located by a satellite.

Bin Laden’s son-in-law could face life in prison

Osama bin Laden’s son-in-law, Sulaiman Abu Ghaith, has been convicted of terrorism-related charges in a trial that took place in New York. He could face life in prison when he is sentenced in September.

Ghaith was captured in Jordan last year and brought to the U.S. to face trial. He was the highest-ranking al-Qaida member to face trial in America since the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

The three charges Ghaith was convicted of were conspiracy to kill Americans, conspiring to provide support to al-Qaida and providing support to al-Qaida.

► Compiled from staff and media reports

The policy of The Utah Statesman is to correct any error made as soon as possible. If you find something you would like clarified or find in error, please contact the editor at 797-1742, statesman@aggiemail.usu.edu or come in to TSC 311.

Wells: Adversity is part of life

Football coach speaks at business school leadership conference

► By Marissa Neeley
staff writer

USU head football coach Matt Wells spoke about leadership and adversity at the dean’s convocation as part of the Huntsman School of Business’ Partners in Business Conference on Tuesday. He also received the Professional Achievement Award.

“Adversity can come in the form of injuries,” Wells said. “I’ve been in programs where there was a death. We’ve got drama. Our job as a coach is to reduce that drama. Your job as a leader is to reduce that drama and get to the task at hand.”

Wells said to reduce the drama, first and foremost, the players have to trust the coach.

“You need to have a relationship,” he said. “If you don’t all your knowledge, all your degrees, all you learned goes out the window. You need to be a people person.”

One of the sayings of the building Wells works in is that the second floor couldn’t do it without the first floor. The first floor is the locker room — the players. Wells said none of the coaches could not do it without them, but the players couldn’t do it without them. There’s got to be a relationship,



Photo courtesy Nicole Traveller/ The Huntsman School of Business

USU FOOTBALL COACH MATT WELLS speaks before a group from the Huntsman School of Business, which awarded Wells the Professional Achievement Award.

and that’s where leaders come in; the ability to influence others, Wells said.

“You can’t win what you don’t produce,” Wells said. “Earn the right to be heard. That’s what I learned when I was a student at USU. Until you produce, shut your mouth. When that time comes, open up your mouth, because everyone will know you learned that right to be heard.”

Be humble as a leader. Serve others. Don’t become complacent when there’s success, he said.

“The minute we get comfortable, boom — something happens,” Wells said. “It’s adversity. They call it life. Deal with it. Great leaders are doers and are proactive.”

Wells said the three fundamental

philosophies in his program are trust, decision-making and core values.

“Trust is a two-way street,” he said. “Players need to trust the coaches. There is no ‘we’ or ‘us’ in our program. It’s the team.”

Having core values doesn’t guarantee success, but gives a chance for it. When players make a mistake, they aren’t kicked off the team because Wells believes in mercy, but two strikes and it’s “sayonara.” There are too many kids doing the right thing, Wells said.

“Each and every decision you make has a consequence. That is it. Good or bad,” he said.

Partners in Business’ sixth Leadership Conference also fea-

ture Sean Covey, the executive vice president of consulting firm FranklinCovey; John Richards, the head of operations for Google Fiber in Provo; a number of entrepreneurial executives, a marketing professor and researcher.

“The Leadership Conference is a special conference put on by Partners in Business and co-hosted by various organizations on campus and in the community, including the Alpha Tau Omega fraternity and the Entrepreneurship Club,” said Ryan Taylor, president of Alpha Tau Omega. “The theme of this year’s Leadership Conference is based around using innovation to lead in creative ways.”

Taylor, who served as a student host for Stan Prueitt, a performance consultant for the education department of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, looks forward most to learning about and networking with him and the other speakers.

“Despite the name ‘Partners in Business,’ a look at the list of speakers shows that the leaders who will be among us come from a variety of backgrounds and can offer great insight in many different disciplines,” Taylor said. “Furthermore, the conference is not aimed at business students. The conference, which attracts leaders from across the state at a hefty cost, is free for student registration on the Partners in Business website. Students from all majors will benefit from attending and learning from these leaders.”

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Budget

From Page 1

Relations fund instead to hire either a videographer or an assistant Public Relations and Marketing director.

“That’s a dream and there’s not necessarily money in the budget to do that,” Saxton said.

He said it would be a good idea to try it for a year and if it works, find money to fund the position for the future.

“I’ve seen what the PR office can do for all of us,” said College of Engineering senator Tucker Smith. “I had a ton of stuff for E-Week, and they couldn’t do all of it.”

Fiefia said it would be possible to fund

both positions.

Zimmerman and Fiefia proposed a \$3,000 increase to the President’s Fund. Because of uncertainty about the budget last year, the two decided to cut \$3,000 out of the fund. Zimmerman said it’s been hard without that money this year.

“I feel like that needs to go back into the president’s account,” she said. “We are literally counting pennies out of the account this year because of that cut.”

Zimmerman’s recommendation was passed by the Executive Council and members of the Academic Senate present. The proposal will be reviewed by the newly elected officers before being passed.

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Robes

From Page 1

Mike George is the risk manager for Risk Management Services and oversees the functions of the surplus store. He said the sale of the surplus caps and gowns was not intended to compete with the sale of new graduation items through the Campus Store.

He said he received a few concerned calls from multiple people on campus regarding the sale of old caps and gowns. He then decided to stop selling those items.

“We all agreed that was the right thing to do,” George said. “A lot of what is there is old and tattered.”

“It wasn’t intentional on either way,” George said. “We treated it like any other piece of surplus, whether it was a desk or a chair, and it just ended up the timing seemed to be unfortunate.”

According to the policy of the state of Utah, any items from USU intended to be discarded or thrown away go to the surplus store. The store holds

those items for two weeks, giving government agencies the first chance to make purchases. After those two weeks, the items are available for sale to the public.

“Unfortunately the two-week window ended at the same time, I guess, they were selling caps and gowns,” George said. “It was not intentional. At surplus, we didn’t even realize that they were selling caps and gowns or any of the arrangements.”

Maaren Cartwright, an employee at USU Public Relations and Marketing, said the situation was a misunderstanding between the surplus store and the Campus Store.

“It was bad timing to put them on sale last week,” she said.

Cartwright said the original intent of the old caps and gowns was for occasions like Halloween.

The surplus store obtained the large amount of graduation apparel because more than 10 years ago, the

university used a system of renting caps and gowns.

Cartwright said the cost of renting and dry cleaning is more expensive than a student purchasing a new cap and gown. She said the gowns were becoming old and dingy.

The old gowns sold at the surplus store are shiny and either black or blue. The approved gowns sold by the hired vendor, Jostens, are matte black.

Risa Smith, manager of clothing and gifts at the Campus Store, sits on the commencement committee. The group plans graduation committees and hires the outside vendors to sell graduation items.

The committee doesn’t decide what the approved cap and gown will look like. Smith said the decision is handed down from the President’s office.

But there is no official punishment for wearing a cap and gown not sold by Jostens. Smith said she’s seen stu-

dents wearing different color gowns before.

“It depends on the student, if they feel comfortable enough to wear something different than the majority of the students,” she said.

Cartwright said there’s no consequence from wearing a robe not approved by the President’s office, but the commencement committee wants graduates to look uniform.

“We’re not a police state,” Cartwright said. “We’re going to let people graduate. If they showed up in a blue gown, we might be a little distressed. If they’re a different color, we might try and find something they could wear.”

She said the main idea for graduation, though, is to celebrate the students and their accomplishments.

“It’s a joyous time. We’re excited for the graduates,” Cartwright said. “We want them to be there and be happy ... It should be an exciting time, not a time when graduates are worrying about what to wear.”

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‘Tarzan’ swings into Morgan Theatre

► **By Katie Whitmore**
staff writer

From the Disney screen to the Morgan Theatre stage, Tarzan is embarking on his high-flying adventure. In its final stage production of the year, the theatre arts department is bringing the jungle to Utah.

“Even though the musical is based on the animated feature film, it is a more mature treatment of the story,” said Kenneth Risch, director of the musical and department head for the theatre arts department. “In the musical, there is less emphasis placed on ‘cuteness’ and much more on Tarzan’s growth. It strongly emphasizes the theme of how we define family.”

The Morgan Theatre has undergone a ceiling replacement, allowing the theatre department to attempt a new type of challenge by sending the actors flying. Three of the actors traveled to Las Vegas in December to practice with the company Foy Flying, who supplied the university with the rigging that will send them swinging over the audience.

The department will be using “state-of-the-art” equipment that is similar to equipment used in Broadway productions, professional theaters and opera companies around the world.

“Once off the ground, the person who is flying has little control over where he goes,” said Michael Francis, a sophomore in acting who plays the part of Tarzan. “It’s all up to the two guys who are flying him to determine how it looks. They are just as engaged in the performance, and just as artistic, as we are, and we owe a lot to their hard work.”

Although some sort of resistance might be expected from actors being suspended above a stage by two technicians, this cast did not complain.

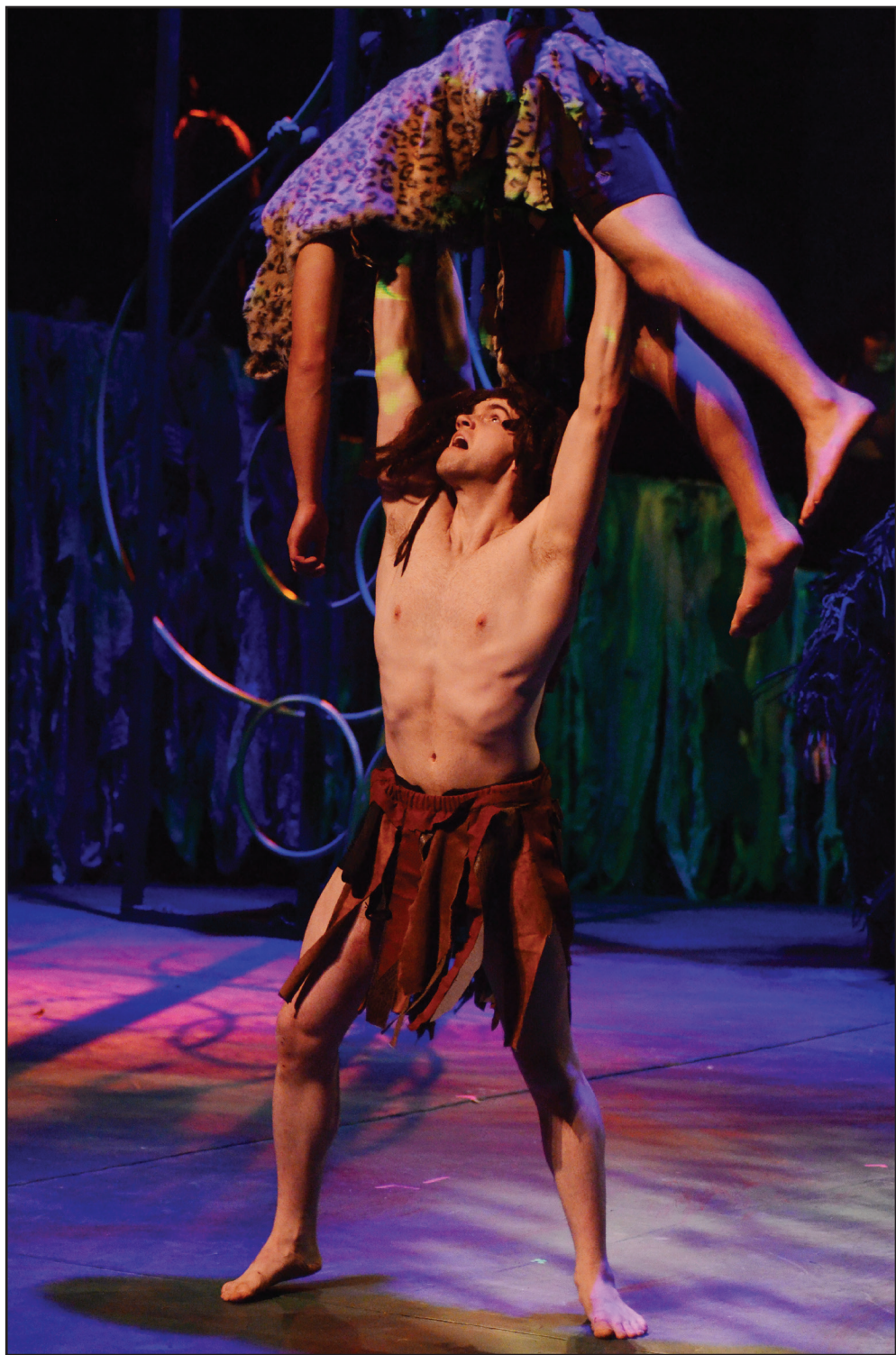
“This is an incredibly brave and fearless bunch of actors and crew,” Risch said. “When you attempt to do a show that involves the kind of aerial work we have choreographed with people who have never ‘flown’ or done aerial silk work before, you usually run into resistance from some who are understandably concerned about their safety and/or are afraid of heights; not so with this group. I am so proud of their willingness to try anything.”

Francis said he did not expect his role to require so much from him before he was cast.

“The role of Tarzan is far more intense than I had anticipated,” Francis said. “It’s easily the most demanding part that I’ve ever prepared for physically, musically and emotionally. It’s the theatrical equivalent of a crossfit routine.”

The theatre arts department is pulling out all of

► See **TARZAN**, Page 4



Ryan Costanzo photos

THE USU THEATRE ARTS DEPARTMENT PRESENTS ‘TARZAN’ this week. Michael Francis (above) and Sarah Boucher (left) play Tarzan and Jane.

Why I, the columnist, need you, the audience, to comment on my stuff

This was a difficult dilemma to explain; not so much because I don’t know how to respond, and certainly not because I’m never in a mood to argue — just ask my fiancée about our long-standing feud over whether or not “sparkles” is a color — but because in all honesty, I pretty much never get responses from anyone.

It’s not like I don’t open up the gates for it either. Each article on usstatesman.com has two comment options, and if that doesn’t tickle your fancy, both my email and my friggin’ Twitter handle are nestled peacefully under the bottom of this thing, and I make enough hard opinions about ev-



Steve Schwartzman

Just a few laughs

eryday household items to illicit some sort of emotional response from any of you academic passers-by.

You’d think at some point in time I’d hit the mark on the nose just enough to get at least a small slew of, “I never realized cabbage could go with that many side dishes. Good read,” or at the very

least, “Del Taco is quite underrated. You don’t know what you’re talking about.” But instead, silence.

Since the start of the school year, I’ve received just two emails in response to my columns. One was from Sean Altman, formerly dreadlocked member of Rockapella who gave me kudos for giving the

once-hallowed all-voice crew a nod, much to my ‘90s pop-culturist’s squealing. The second was from an unnamed bystander who simply said, “Hey Steev. Ur not funny. Dont quit ur dayjob. Hah.”

Of course with the latter comment, I don’t have a clue how to process their point or how they managed to misspell “haha,” but it somehow opened me up to something. If I’m right about this, it may finally get me the readership feedback I’ve been so craving, and if not, well, go ahead and comment angrily about it, and we’ll both win.

Feedback only comes to those who make it known that they want it.

That’s the crux of it. We as writers

need to make it known to you, the audience, that a well-thought-out comment is one of the largest bits of compensation we get for doing what we do, just short of a weekly stipend and free pretzels at basketball games.

Still not eager to go comment crazy? Perhaps a list of reasons why it helps the journalist to receive feedback will ease you in. I’ll give you just three.

First, it’s no fair that you get to do all the reading. We spend so much time at these power-fear-so-craving, and if not, well, go ahead and comment angrily about it, and we’ll both win.

never getting to be unspeakably annoyed. Your comments mean we are encouraged, even required, to read words and not type them, even if just for a moment. It doesn’t matter how malicious it comes off. It’s like a day off for our wrists, and that’s as close to any worker’s comp we may ever get.

Second, hearing your feedback and suggestions helps us improve as journalists and cultivate an environment where we can be a supportive voice and caring ambassador for student while ... yada yada yada, you get this one. It’s important, but not nearly as my last point.

Finally, and most importantly, we actually get to use our Twitter accounts. Do you have any idea what it feels like to claim yourself as a public media figure who has a representation that speaks to a throng of needful listeners, while in reality only 42

► See **FEEDBACK**, Page 4

Steve Schwartzman

“It’s no fair that you get to do all the reading.”

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Tarzan

From Page 3

the stops for this production, Risch said. The costume designer for the musical, Spencer Potter, worked with Nancy Hamblin, who designed the costumes for the production of Tarzan at Tuacahn Amphitheatre and Center for the Arts near St. George. Many costumes used by the actors at USU are on loan from Tuacahn.

Sarah Boucher, a senior majoring in vocal performance, plays the part of Jane Porter in the production.

“Since Jane doesn’t enter the story until later, I have loved being able to sit in the audience and watch the opening sequence,” Boucher said. “Within the first few minutes, so much happens. It is visually stunning and sets the audience up for the rest of the show. I don’t want to give it a way, but there is a shipwreck, flying gorillas, a murderous leopard and



Ryan Costanzo photo

THE FLIGHT CREW PROPELS ACTOR SYDNEY SMITH over the audience by using rigging in the ceiling.

lots of action.”

The cast has had plenty of time to get to know each other, with the first auditions taking place a year ago and full rehearsals starting in the beginning of January.

“The thing I love most about working with the other cast members is that we all have produced this collaborative attitude and work ethic to allow this show to be more meaningful and powerful than a fluffy disney show,” said Kyra Sorensen, a sophomore majoring in acting who plays Kala, Tarzan’s adopted ape mother. “Altogether and with the overall idea that Ken Risch, the director, has implemented, we have created an inspirational and relatable story for our audience; not to mention they are all a blast to spend time with and witness everyone’s talent and growth.”

The play opened Tuesday and will run every night at 7:30 through Saturday. There will be an additional matinee on Saturday at 2 p.m.

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Feedback

From Page 3

people ever see whenever you find a funny-looking can opener at Bed Bath and Beyond? The shame just stays with you. Be a friend and give us at the very least a half-notch up on our discursively objective self esteem.

That general view should sort things out. As for me? In my four years as a columnist for The Statesman, I’ve had one dream: to have a platform where I can answer your questions regardless of how relevant they are or how many times they reference “Buffy the Vampire Slayer.” I’d call it “Steve’s Mailbag.” It’d be like “Story Time with Barney,” but with less imagination and a lot more peanut butter and jelly.

So look, I don’t ask for much, but I’m pleading for this. I’m giving you two weeks. Comment at the bottom of this column, shoot me an email, tweet me 140 characters of your utmost desires or, heck, even contact me via my pager that I still have and two Wednesdays from now, it just may make the archival cut. Ask anything you want, seriously, as long as it isn’t about sparkles being a color — which it isn’t, because it simply isn’t and I’m not discussing this further.

Please. Let my collegiate writing career die in peace and make Steve’s Mailbag a reality. If you won’t do it for me, at least do it for my Twitter account.

— Steve Schwartzman is a senior finishing a degree in communication studies. With eight years of column writing and improvisational comedy under his belt, he lives to make you laugh. Send thoughts to steve.schwartzman@aggiemail.usu.edu or hit him up on Twitter @SESchwartzman.

‘Safe Haven’ novel better than movie, contains twists

I don’t normally bring up movies that were made about books, but I feel I have to in this case, because the movie was the reason I even decided to read another book by Nicholas Sparks. His books, though amazing, never fail to make me cry. Yes, it’s a romance. That is what I enjoy reading. But with Sparks, you never know what you’re going to be reading. He always has some plot twist that may or may not destroy the romance or other things.

Just a fair warning, however. If you have read or know about any of the other books I review, you know I tend to prefer lighthearted books, especially dystopian or fairy tale. I do love this book, but it’s dark compared to what else I read. It’s not extreme, but it is when compared to what else I’ve reviewed.

Books are naturally always better than the movies, and “Safe Haven” by Nicholas Sparks is no exception. The movie was fantastic, but there is always something extra you get from the book.

For me, the biggest extra you get in the book is seeing inside the antagonist’s head. You get to hear what he thinks and why he does what he did. While at times it is disturbing, it adds to the feelings you have for the protagonist. You also get to see inside the other protagonist, Katie, the love interest for the main protagonist. It helps you see more of the story and helps you decide your feelings for each character better.

The book stayed true to Nicholas Sparks and makes you cry, but you really feel for the characters. There is such a variety of people, but they all fit in. There’s likely someone who you can relate to, so it makes it easier for you to be in the story.



Gillian Ponce

Good reads

Sparks is good at describing his characters in a way that makes you remember what they look like, but it’s not overly done in the description, so you get bored a line or two into it.

The book flowed well. There were some flashbacks that wouldn’t have made much sense if the book wasn’t written well, but

they made sense and you were always able to tell when it was not the present time. The flow between points of view was smooth and almost effortless. Many books have a hard time switching points of view, but Sparks achieves it and makes it flow well.

The way he writes is almost flawless. There are no grammatical or spelling errors that distract from the book, and the way he writes helps send you away into the world he created. You can feel a certain love Sparks has for his characters, and it adds to the whole world in general.

For those of you who haven’t seen the movie, just know that it didn’t follow the book. While both are good, there were some very big differences. Some of the reasoning behind certain things was not the same. Some characters didn’t even play the same role from the book to the movie. Other characters didn’t even get their real name into the movie. While these things can be very annoying, the book is amazing, and I would definitely recommend reading it if you like mystery with a bit of romance.

— Gillian Ponce is a sophomore majoring in journalism. She was an editor for her high school newspaper and received a scholarship for an article she wrote. Send comments to gillian.ponce95@gmail.com.

“I love being in debt.”

— said no one ever

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MEN'S BASKETBALL

Another One

Kyle Davis becomes the latest Aggie basketball player to transfer



► **By Jeffrey Dahdah**
assistant sports editor

Kyle Davis is leaving the Utah State men's basketball team. The announcement came on Tuesday from head coach Stew Morrill after rumors involving Davis leaving surfaced last Thursday. "Kyle did a good job in his year

at Utah State," Morrill said. "We will work hard to fill the opening created by his departure."

Davis was the third player to announce his departure since the end of the season, joining center Jordan Stone and guard Danny Berger. With five seniors on last season's team — Sean Harris, Preston Medlin, Spencer

Butterfield, Tenale Roland and Jarred Shaw — the basketball team has lost eight players since March 13.

Davis led the team in blocks with 39 on the season after missing three games due to a knee injury. Davis was second on the team in rebounds with 7.6 per game and averaged 9.1 points

per game, making him fourth on the team in scoring.

Since graduating from Alta High School in Draper, Utah, Davis went on a mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and played the 2012-13 season at Southern Utah University. Wherever Davis goes to play next will be his third

team in three years.

With Davis leaving, there will be two players who saw more than 10 minutes per game for the Aggies in the 2013-14 season returning for the 2014-15 season. They are Jalen Moore, who averaged 17.5 minutes per game, and Marcel Davis, who averaged 17.

USU will reload with junior

college transfers and freshmen next season. The 2013-14 season was the Aggies' first in the Mountain West, and they finished 7-11 in conference and 18-14 overall.

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MEN'S SOCCER

Club soccer gears up for first-ever spring season

► **By Jeffrey Dahdah**
assistant sports editor

For the first time in the Utah State men's soccer team's history, the group is gearing up for a spring season. The team usually plays strictly in the fall, but it has assembled a five-game spring schedule.

"It should be a little different. We have a couple of players leaving and a couple of players coming out just to try it out," said Matt Cannon, a junior striker on the team and a co-captain. "It's easy to be positive about it."

The season will be a way to look at some new players and will focus on getting the players ready for the fall season.

"I would say 80 percent of the roster is the same," said senior defender and team captain Joseph Burt. "We are trying out players. There are about six new ones."

The team will take on the spring season without a coach. Former coach Sherri Dever stepped down after the past fall season.

"It's not as intimidating as it sounds. We do have a couple guys with a lot of experi-

ence on the field, so it'll be good for us," Cannon said. "It'll be interesting, and I'm excited to see how it goes."

As a result of not having a coach, captains Burt, Cannon and Andrew Knickerson will be taking on a larger role as players and partial coaches.

"It's pretty much us organizing practices and being player coaches throughout the game," Burt said.

As far as finding a coach for the future, Burt said the team is in the process of searching for one.

"It comes down to the cap-

tains to find a coach," Burt said. "It's kind of difficult to find someone to coach the team without much or any pay."

For Burt, this spring season is the last opportunity for him to play while wearing a USU jersey.

"It's weird. It's like a last hurrah," Burt said. "This is my fourth year playing, and each year it has gotten more fun and more competitive."

The team will open up its season on Saturday at 4 p.m. against BYU-Idaho, a team the Aggies have never played

before. The game will be broadcast on Aggie Radio.

Though the whole season is uncharted territory for the men's soccer team, the players are optimistic and plan to win.

"Expectations are really just to kind of figure out the team for next year, get a head start on regionals," Cannon said. "A win would be really good. I think that's what we expect. We have a good team."

— dahdahjm@gmail.com
Twitter: @dahdahUSU

Joseph Burt
senior captain

"This is my fourth year playing, and each year it has gotten more fun and more competitive."



THIS WEEK IN UTAH STATE ATHLETICS

**WOMEN'S TENNIS
VS. MONTANA STATE
MARCH 27 | 11 A.M.**

**WOMEN'S TENNIS
VS. AIR FORCE
MARCH 28 | 11 A.M.**

**WOMEN'S TENNIS
VS. NEW MEXICO
MARCH 30 | 10 A.M.**

**SPORTS ACADEMY OR
USU OUTDOOR COURTS
(WEATHER PERMITTING)**



GYMNASTICS

Flipping awesome

Aggies headed to Arkansas for regionals

► By Emily Duke
staff writer

The Utah State gymnastics team will compete at the NCAA Regional Championship for the first time since 2007, the NCAA announced Monday. USU was awarded a No. 5 seed and will compete at the regional championships at 3 p.m. on Saturday, April 5 in Fayetteville, Ark. The team will compete against Utah, UCLA, Arkansas, Arizona State and UC Davis.

The top 36 teams in the country qualify, and with their recent wins, the Aggies are currently ranked No. 32. Regional competitions are held at six different sites where the top teams, as well as the top individuals who compete for non-qualifying teams, will compete.

“I feel like the confidence for the girls is going to be through the roof,” said USU head coach Nadalie Walsh. “They know they can hold their own and go into that arena with those teams.”

The Aggies are getting ready to compete by going back to the basics.

“They had an awesome practice yesterday, and we just kind of took a step back and worked on skills individually instead of routines,” Walsh said. “I feel like we have to keep doing what we’ve been doing, and we don’t need to reinvent the wheel because what we have done has gotten us this far.”

Senior Paige Jones, who



Kylee Larsen photo

SOPHOMORE BREYANNA AUFLERO EMBRACES gymnastics coach Nadalie Walsh during a meet in the Dee Glen Smith Spectrum.

competed in individual all-around at the regional meet last season, is excited to be going with her entire team for the first time in her college career.

“It’s so nice to have that support and that potential to make it to nationals, because we certainly have that potential,” Jones said.

Walsh said competing as a

team will really be the difference-maker.

“The thing that will help even more for those girls who have been there is having their team there,” Walsh said. “Those girls are going to do better than they could have ever done on their own.”

Jones is one of three athletes on the team who have experience at the regional level. Jones competed at an individual level in all-around and placed 20th with a 35.400 and 11th with a 38.950 in 2012 and 2013, respectively. She also competed on floor and vault as a freshman in 2011.

Junior Sarah Landes has experience at the regional level, where she has twice competed in individual all-around, finishing 12th with a 38.325 in 2012 and 11th with a 39.325 last season. Sophomore Stefanie Daley was the third Aggie to compete in the 2013 regionals, where she finished 37 with a 9.550 on the beam.

“I am way more excited than I have been the last two years,” Landes said. “Going individually, it’s awesome, but having the team there has always been the goal.”

Jones has helped the team to relax by reminding them that it is just another meet, according to Walsh.

“I think just having that experience and being able to have that relaxation and carry it on to the team is good,” Jones said.

“I don’t think this meet is that different than any of the other meets, so everybody’s mindset is just going in and competing just like the other meets,” Landes added.

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State your case:

Should MLB’s Opening Day be a national holiday?

► By Calvin Makelky
staff writer

► By Kalen Taylor
staff writer

LAST WEEK’S WINNER

As much as we don’t like to admit it, there aren’t many things that are truly “American.” Hot dogs, cowboys, cars, even apple pie did not actually originate in America. One thing that did, however, is baseball.

Although the sport’s popularity has diminished because of football, 50 percent of people consider themselves baseball fans. Ask any baseball fan what their biggest day of the year is: It is undoubtedly Opening Day.

Opening Day is simply an American tradition, dating all the way back to 1876, and as many as 12

presidents have thrown out the first pitch on Opening Day. Similar to the first day of March Madness and the day after the Super Bowl, Opening Day causes many people to call in sick.

Making Opening Day a national holiday meets every requirement in mind. It’s an American tradition, most people observe it already and it makes us proud to be Americans. I can’t say the same for Columbus Day, which for many is more synonymous with words like “imperialism” and “colonization.”

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Twitter: @Makelky

NEW CHALLENGER

There are approximately 313.9 million people in the United States. Of those, there have been about 100,000 who have signed a petition to make Opening Day of Major League Baseball a holiday. Certainly 100,000 people don’t deserve to make a decision for the rest of us.

A little more than 9 million people per game watched the World Series last year. In 2012, Opening Day was watched by about 2 million people. Is it really reasonable to say we are more interested in the first game of

a 162-game season than the final? That’s comparable to watching preseason NFL games instead of the Super Bowl.

Ask me when Opening Day is. Seriously, ask. “When is Opening Day?” you say. I have no idea. So just for the reason that I, a sports writer, don’t know when Opening Day is, it shouldn’t be a holiday. Baseball isn’t that important to me, and I daresay it isn’t that important to the rest of America either.

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Glance

Aggie Schedules

Football

FRIDAY, APRIL 4
Scrimmage, 3:45 p.m., Romney Stadium
SATURDAY, APRIL 12
Blue and White game, 2:00 p.m., Romney Stadium

Softball

FRIDAY, MARCH 28
USU at Fresno State, 7 p.m., Fresno, Calif.
SATURDAY, MARCH 29
USU at Fresno State, 7 p.m., Fresno, Calif.

Gymnastics

SATURDAY, APRIL 5
USU at NCAA Regional Championships 3:00 p.m., Fayetteville, Ark.
FRIDAY, APRIL 18
USU at NCAA National Championships TBD, Birmingham, Ala.

Men’s Tennis

TUESDAY, MARCH 25
USU 5 Weber State 2 Ogden, Utah
SATURDAY, APRIL 5
USU at Boise State, 10 a.m., Boise, Idaho

Women’s Tennis

THURSDAY, MARCH 27
USU vs. Montana, 11 a.m., Sports Academy
FRIDAY, MARCH 28
USU vs. Air Force, 11 a.m., Sports Academy
SUNDAY, MARCH 30
USU vs. New Mexico, 10 a.m.,

Track and Field

MARCH 26-28
USU at Clyde Littlefield Texas Relays, All day, Austin, Texas
MARCH 28
USU at UVU Invitational, All day, Orem



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4. Competition winner will be awarded after performance

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April
3-5th

Aggiettes

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Tryouts	April 4 th	8:00 AM-2:00 PM
	April 5 th	8:00 AM until team is chosen

\$25.00 Registration Fee (cash or check)

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Tryouts - Female	April 4 th	12:30-6:00 PM
	April 5 th	10:00 AM until team is chosen
Tryouts - Male	April 4 th	3:30-6:00 PM
	April 5 th	10:00 AM until team is chosen



*All events are held in the Dee Glen Smith Spectrum unless otherwise noted

Parking worsens but officials shrug concerns

There are those who believe an op-ed column is simply a means through which a disgruntled individual can push their unhappiness onto their readers. Because I have taken on the mantle of weekly columnist this semester, I would argue that opinion pieces strive to use journalistic integrity while appealing a flair for the dramatic. In my weekly musings published here in The Statesman, I've tried to seek out the truth and give a voice to the voiceless. I've attempted to encourage lively discussion and ultimately sought to make you, my fellow Aggies, think about the world around you and examine it from a broader perspective.

But for the first time, I'm going to cash in on the opinion-writer stereotype and just vent a little bit.

I purchased a blue parking pass in August from USU's Parking and Transportation Department. I had planned to buy an Aggie Terrace pass as



Paul Christiansen

The Book of Paul

I have done in previous years, but I was informed those were sold out. While this would cause me to have to walk a bit further to my classes, I was assured there would be plenty of parking spaces in the designated lots. Boy, was that a crock.

When I was the features editor at The Statesman last fall, one of my writers worked on a story about student complaints with the parking services at USU. The piece reflected only the views of students and received criticism by those who thought the writer wasn't telling the whole story. No parking department officials were quoted in the article, but that's only because they refused.

When asked by this student journalist — and there's a heavy emphasis on the word "student," because that's who these officials really work for — to comment on and respond to any complaints, the head of the parking department refused because he wouldn't aid any "sensational journalism." When did it become sensational to give someone the opportunity to clear the air?

Since then, I've seen USU's parking situation get worse throughout the 2013-14 school year.

When school started in August, I allotted myself a 30-minute time frame to secure a parking spot before a class was scheduled to begin. As fall semester moved forward, I found I had to set aside more and more time. By December I had to arrive to campus at least 75 minutes before my classes were to begin.

I realize most people would say this is just a problem that comes with being a student at a growing university. That's just one of the prices a guy has to pay to get an education. And I'd agree if that was as ridiculous as these situations got.

Several times this spring I've arrived to campus at least an hour early to try to park, but I've been faced with completely full lots — including those for which my pass is designated and the lots, such as the TSC terraces and the Blue Premium lot to the east, which charge users \$1.75 per hour. This lack of parking is caused by events such as Tues-

day's Huntsman Partners In Business Leadership Conference.

Let me be clear: I'm not placing the blame on the Jon M. Huntsman School of Business or any other groups or organizations that hold day-long events that provide networking opportunities and additional education for USU students. I am pointing the finger at the parking department itself.

Yes, I read the fine print when I purchased my pass. I know I signed the agreement and acknowledged that "my parking privileges may be changed due to large university events," but I don't classify something I pay a hefty sum of money for as a privilege. That's a product, and if you can't meet the basics of supply and demand from your consumers, maybe you should be the ones checking out the Huntsman Business School. It could teach you a few things.

I wouldn't even mind so much if I was to receive a courtesy email to inform me of days when such major events are happening. Come on, parking department, I know you have the addresses of all those who purchase passes — I've received the online surveys and the warnings of what lots stu-

dents are and are not allowed in. Type up a quick 100-word notice of what major happening is going on and send it to your master list of recipients. It'd save us all a bunch of stress.

If you're like me, reader, then you must really want to further your higher education if you've gone through the motions and continue on. After all, I've been more than happy to pay an hourly parking rate even though I shelled out \$100 for a parking pass I rarely get to use — I'll take any approach that gets me to class on time, I guess.

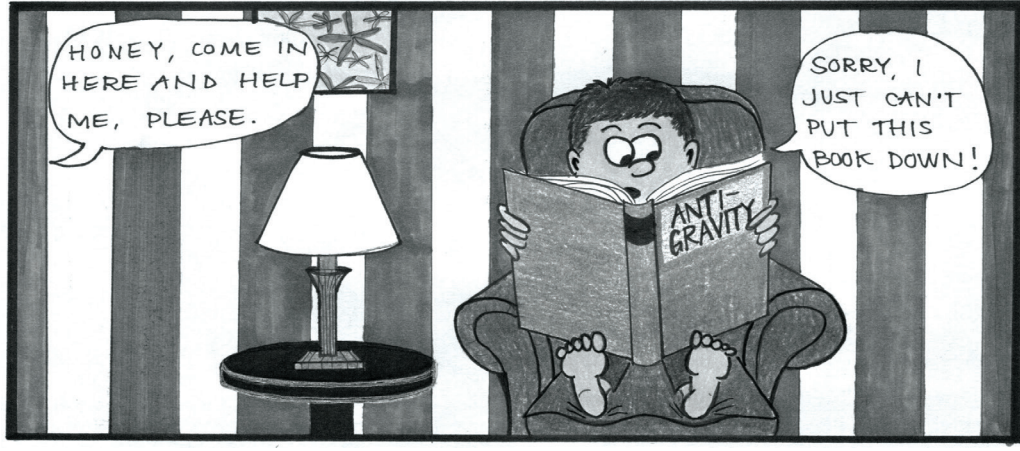
The next time you're circling around a full parking lot looking for an open spot — just like a starving vulture waiting for your prey to keel over so you can make a move — remember that some of your university officials don't think they have to answer to you. And if that gets your blood boiling like the midday sun, feel free to take to social media with #USUParkingFiasco. Let's keep them accountable.

— Paul is the former features editor of The Utah Statesman and is a senior majoring in print journalism. Send any comments to paul.r.christiansen@aggiemail.usu.edu.

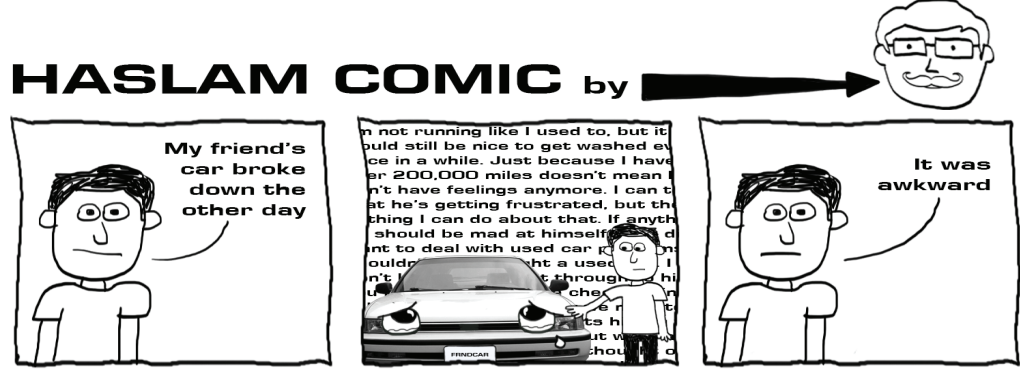
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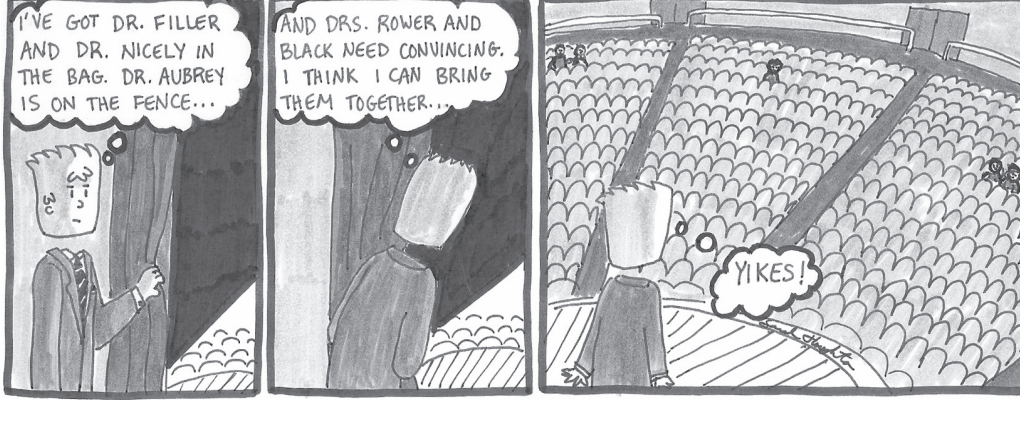
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All But Dead • abdcomics.com



Syria: What will remain?

Statistics can be numbing. News stories print every day with catastrophic numbers, and the meaning behind them is lost; they become just digits. However, try not to be jaded toward the following number: 140,041. That is the death toll from the Syrian Civil War, according to the Syrian Observatory for Civil Rights in mid-February.

Really think about what that means: 140,041 individuals have died in Syria in roughly the past two to three years. Soldiers, fathers, mothers, children; it is mass exodus, mass genocide, and it doesn't appear to be close to ending any time soon. But it needs to.

When the violence finally ends, what will be left? The country's infrastructure is a target to both government and rebel forces. Hospitals, schools and government buildings lie in heaps. Whoever is in control can't use them. In addition to the gross death toll, 9 million people have either sought refuge in other countries or are displaced within Syria. That's over 40 percent of the population. Who will the governing body that remains when the dust settles



Jeffrey Dahdah

The cardinal rule

even govern?

The fourth largest city in the country of Jordan is a Syrian refugee camp. Syrian refugees now make up a quarter of Lebanon's population.

What end is in sight? Rebel and government forces trade cities back and forth, taking more casualties every day. Bombs are set off in Lebanon to send a message to outside forces while Israel carries out pre-emptive security strikes on bordering military bases and Turkey shoots down Syrian planes that cross into its air space. Mediated peace talks stall and ceasefires end. It seems hopeless and futile. It seems like a dead end. Because of this,

we become numb to the true horror of the situation.

The situation is a display of gross irresponsibility of both the Syrian government and the rebels to the civilians. Neither side deserves to govern a country after releasing chemical weapons on citizens, dropping barrels of gasoline and nails at random and taking down hospitals just so the opposition can't use them.

There will be no winners by the time the Syrian Civil War ends. There will only be those to answer for the depletion of a population of a country. There will only be those who try to rebuild infrastructure without sufficient means. There will only be those with the blood of 140,000-plus and counting on their hands.

— Jeffrey Dahdah is a sophomore majoring in journalism. He has dual citizenship to the United States and to Jordan and is concerned with issues in the Middle East. If you have something you would like to say to him you can email him at dahdahjm@gmail.com or tweet him @dahdahUSU.

Letters to the editor

- All letters may be shortened, edited or rejected for reasons of good taste, redundancy or volume of similar letters.
- No anonymous letters will be published. Writers must sign all letters and include a phone number or e-mail address as well as a student identification

number (none of which is published). Letters will not be printed without this verification.

- Letters can be hand delivered or mailed to The Statesman in the TSC, Room 311, or can be emailed to: statesmaneditor@aggiemail.usu.edu.

The page

Opinions on this page (columns, letters) unless otherwise identified are **not** from Utah Statesman staff, but from a wide variety of members of the campus community who have strong opinions, just like you. This is an open forum. Want to write something? Contact: statesmaneditor@aggiemail.usu.edu.

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47/32
Thursday
Rain



54/38
Friday
Partly cloudy



62/40
Saturday
Overcast



51/30
Sunday
Chance of rain



58/36
Monday
Overcast

March 27

- More study in less time workshop, 10-11 a.m., TSC 315A
- Empty Bowls, 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., Natural Resources Building
- USU/SA Black and White Jazz Night, 7-9 p.m., Haight Alumni Center
- Tarzan the Musical, 7:30 p.m., Chase Fine Arts Center, Morgan Theatre

March 28

- Take a Seat, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., TSC Patio
- Women's Tennis vs. Air Force 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- ISOLS Conference speaker Dean Cardinale, 7-8 p.m., TSC Auditorium
- Tarzan the Musical, 7:30 p.m., Chase Fine Arts Center, Morgan Theatre

March 29

- Braveheart Charity 5K/10K, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m., campus
- Indoor Triathlon, 10 a.m., HPER building
- Tarzan the Musical Matinee Performance, 2 p.m., Chase Fine Arts Center, Morgan Theatre
- Tarzan the Musical, 7:30 p.m., Chase Fine Arts Center, Morgan Theatre
- Poetry and a Beverage, 9-11 p.m., TSC International Lounge

March 30

- Getting along with yourself, 1:30-3 p.m., TSC 310

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Emily Stone, a freshman majoring in art, was caught reading about UNICEF's water-saving app. "I think it's cool to have people put their phones down for a good cause."

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


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Invited Speakers

April 1 2014
8:30 am Brian McInerney, National Weather Service Hydrologist
Title: "2013 - 2014 Winter snowpack and 2014 spring runoff forecast"
9:00 am Alan Matheson, Senior Governmental Advisor to Utah Governor Gary R. Herbert
Title: "How can research help state water planning"
9:20 am Kevin Trenberth, Senior Climate Analysis Scientist at the National Center for Atmospheric Research
Title: "Climate change and water: From the globe to Utah"
10:00 am Kevin Werner, Hydrologist, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Title: "The science of National Weather Service streamflow and water supply forecasts"

April 2, 2014
8:30 am James Famiglietti, University of California
Title: "Water cycle change and the human fingerprint on the water landscape of the 21st Century"
9:10 am Collin Huxek Orr, Washington State University
Title: "Columbia River Basin: Linking interdisciplinary earth system modeling with collaborative stakeholder modeling"
9:50 am Jaimes Judas, University of Florida
Title: "Remote sensing and terrestrial water storage"
10:50 am Anne Corey, Ohio State University
Title: "Orographic influence on precipitation and its influences on chemical weathering in the Sierra de las Minas, Guatemala"
11:30 am Stan Gregory, Oregon State University
Title: "Building a guiding vision for river conservation and restoration through research and public participation"

Registration

Full Conference \$50.00
One-Day \$25.00
Students Free



water@usu

The movie "Last Call at the Oasis", a documentary about the world's water crisis, starring Erin Brockovich-Ellis will be shown April 1, 2014 at 7:00 pm at the Eccles Auditorium

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