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USAF tanker contest not over yet

Brian Asbury

Advertising Manager

In one corner, the leader in American Aviation, the incumbent Boeing. The challenger is Northrop Grumman, whom, according to the spread, is a large underdog. The competition – the U.S. Air Force KC-45 tanker contract.

In an astonishing move late last month, the U.S. Air Force chose the underdog, Northrop-Grumman, for the \$35 billion tanker contract over the forefront in American aviation, Boeing. Northrop will use the French made Airbus A330 as the platform for the KC-45, which is the planned replacement for the 1950's Boeing made KC-135 tanker. Boeing's bidding platform was the 767. Aviation Week reports that Boeing's own arrogance led to their defeat saying they

"knew more than the customer."

To date, Chicago-based Boeing has been the only manufacturer of Air Force tankers. Northrop-Grumman is partnered with the European Aeronautic Defence and Space Company (EADS) which owns Airbus.

The contract calls for up to 179 tanker aircraft including four test aircraft with the fifth off the line to be the first to go into service. The Air Force posted a request for proposal in January 2007 stipulating key parameters including air refueling capability, air lift capabilities and the ability to be in-flight refueled. Lt. Gen. Donald Hoffman stated in a press release "The Air Force aerial tanker is essential to all Air force and Joint global operations." "Tankers put the 'Global' in Global Power," he said. Vice Chief of Staff of the Air Force Gen. Duncan McNabb said at the

announcement "The tanker is the number one procurement priority for is right now."

In a gamble to enter the American military market, EADS had already built the \$100 million state-of-the-art refueling boom prior to the announcement. It paid off. The Air Force says the Northrop platform was overall the better choice, with a larger fuel capacity, payload/troop capacity, longer range and more fuel efficiency. Gen. Arthur Lichte, Commander of the Air Combat Command stated in a DOD briefing, "from my perspective, I can sum it up in one word – more. More passengers, more cargo, more fuel to offload,

Please see "TANKER," page A10

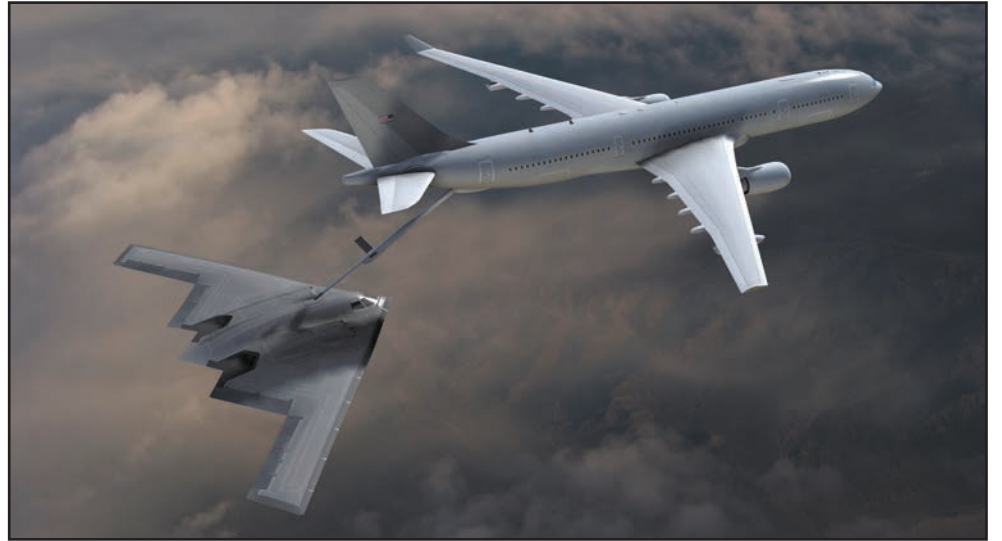


IMAGE COURTESY NORTHROP GRUMMAN

AN ARTIST'S RENDITION OF Northrop Grumman's winning tanker design. The design is based of the Airbus A330 airframe and will be assembled in Alabama. Boeing is disputing the contract award, filing an official complaint with the GAO.

Two alumni die in separate incidents

1st Lt. Alex Prezioso killed in T-34 crash over Milton Florida

At approximately 3:45 p.m. on Friday, March 14 a T-34 Turbomotor crashed into Chandler Mountain in St. Clair County, Ala. The Flight was a training flight out of Whiting Field Naval Air Station in Milton, Fla., piloted by Marine Corps student 1st Lt. Alex Prezioso, a 2006 Embry-Riddle graduate from New Jersey, and instructor Major David Yaggy. Both were members of Training Squadron 6.

A CH-47 Chinook was reported flying over the crash site about an hour after the crash.

When something like this happens, it hits very close to home," Whiting Field Public Information Officer Lori Aprilliano said. "We are a small base, and we are like one big family." "Alex was a good friend and an outstanding pilot. Our country is a lesser place without him," stated Charles Buckley, a friend of Prezioso.

Prezioso was posthumously promoted to 1st Lt and awarded his Wings of Gold.

The cause of the crash is still unknown and is still under investigation. Witnesses reported a heavy fog at the time of the crash. This is the second T-34 crash this year.

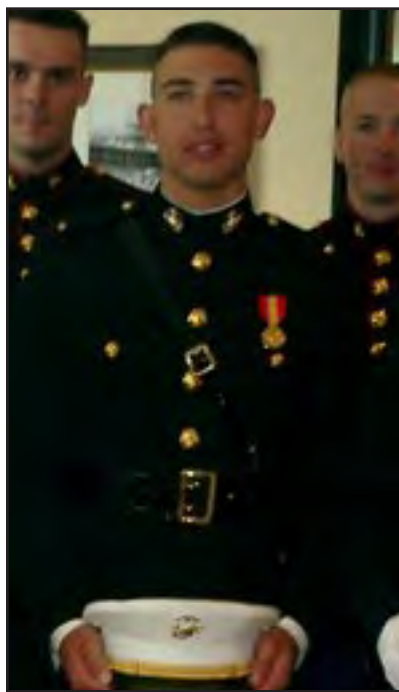


PHOTO COURTESY BRETT MICHAUD

PREZIOSO GRADUATED IN 2006 and joined Training Squadron 6 last August. The cause of the crash is still unknown.

Santa Barbara airline crash claims life of Denis Ferreira

Denis Ferreira (DB '03), along with 45 others on board, died on Feb. 21 when there ATR-42-300 aircraft crashed into a Venezuelan mountainside. Ferreira was the co-pilot of the Santa Barbara airlines flight destined for Caracas, from Merida Venezuela.

The flight was reported missing 30 minutes after take off, after the flight failed to make any radio contacts with air-traffic controllers. Flight 518 was the last flight of the day from an airport known to be difficult because of its proximity to the mountain range. The flight data recorders were recovered from the wreckage but no official cause for the accident has been identified.

Ferreira graduated from Embry-Riddle in 2003 with a degree in Aeronautical Science and minor in Business Administration.

"Denis was a very gregarious and fun loving person who had an incredible amount of friends that loved and cherished his friendship. He was always a key part in any gathering where he shared his love of flying. During his years as a student at Embry Riddle he dedicated all his time in the pursuit of his dream of becoming and airline pilot which he achieved. He will be greatly missed by his family, friends and co-workers," said Ferreira's family, Raul Isalina, Mayerlin, and Jimmy.



PHOTO COURTESY THE FERREIRA FAMILY

DENIS FERREIRA GRADUATED FROM ERAU in 2003 with a B.S. in A.S. He was killed when his aircraft crashed into a Venezuelan mountainside.

Into the night sky



MELANIE PUGH/AVION

ENDEAVOUR AND ITS CARGO, the Japanese Kibo logistics module and Canadian Dextre remote manipulator arm, lift off from Pad 39A at Kennedy Space Center on March 11. The launch took place at 2:28 a.m., and only seconds later the shuttle passed out of site into a cloud layer a few thousand feet over the pad. For more information about the mission, see Space Tech on page A9.

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Sports, A3

Baseball takes home big wins over break

It is time for Hillary to pack her bags

Opinions, A6

Endeavor connects Kibo and Dextre to ISS

Space Technology A9

Bear attacks and frostbite can't stop dreams

Andrew Zaback
Staff Reporter

March 12, 2008 was more than just a regular Wednesday for the students of Embry-Riddle. Other than the T-3 day mark before spring break, a world renowned explorer and photographer ate lunch and spoke with the community of Daytona Beach. Helen Thayer visited campus to share her adventures to the magnetic north pole.

Thayer began to plan and perform research on her trip at the beginning of 1986. In order to train herself to live in the arctic, she lived with a tribe of Inuit. At the village, she learned crucial survival skills for Arctic living.

One of the most important ideas Thayer picked up while

living with the Inuit was not a fact for living but a companion. A companion named Charlie, a Canadian Eskimo Husky that Thayer met not but three days before she departed base camp for the magnetic north. She decided that the dog, unnamed at first introduction would be an invaluable tool for Arctic survival.

Thayer could not have been more right in her decision. Forty-eight hours after she departed base camp, the explorer met her first polar bear. Instantly, crucial skills of avoiding a bear attack kicked in. Always keep eye contact with the bear and make no sudden movements to appear hostile. Common sense, but what really saved Thayer in her quest to the North Pole was in fact, Charlie. The hound had been trained by the Inuit to keep polar bears out of the vil-

lage and did a spectacular job at scaring the polar bear away.

As the third day arrived, Thayer began to second guess herself but she pushed forward. Despite giant ice formations, dangerously thin ice and hostile polar bears she was determined to meet her goal.

At one point in her journey, a polar bear crunched in the snow just outside the tent. Fueled by adrenaline, she jumped out of her tent and released the hound. Charlie quickly bit the bear's rear leg, attempting to drag it away. The bear finally shook the dog off its leg and darted away with Charlie close behind.

This was a giant risk for Thayer, however, as she was warned that if she let her dog loose he might never come back. Several hours went by after the polar bear incident

with no sign of Charlie. A few minutes later, a black speck appeared on the silent horizon. The speck in the distance was Charlie, and Thayer could continue her hike.

After 30 days of battling the elements, Helen Thayer, a 50-year-old woman, made a successful trip to the magnetic north pole. After surviving through multiple attacks by bears, nine frost bitten fingers and terrible storms, she trekked 364 miles in a single month.

In addition to successfully completing this goal, Thayer has spearheaded many research and educational projects. Adventure Classroom is an interactive learning experience for students interested in all corners of the globe and enduring cultures. Thayer uses her solo expeditions, as well as with her husband Bill to teach

students of all age about life all over the world.

Thayer has also been on research expeditions with her husband. In the summer of 1994, the couple gained the trust of a wild pack of wolves. Once again, Charlie was the hero as he took the role of the alpha male of the couple. Since this was the case, the pack began to trust the three allowing them to live within feet of the den. Extensive notes were taken during the six months they lived with the wolves that led to many scientific breakthroughs.

Future plans for the adventurous couple include travelling to Bolivia, Alaska and the Andes Mountains to document enduring cultures. Thayer believes it is important to educate people about cultures that are slowly vanishing due to western influ-

ences.

In the latter part of her presentation, Helen Thayer held a question and answer session that posed some interesting ideas. One of the audience members asked Thayer "If there were no physical or financial limits, what would it be?" She replied with an appropriate response for this particular university with a touch of humor. "I would really like to walk on the moon but reality has to come into play and I don't think I will be invited."

Finally, one of the greatest explorers of the 20th century according to National Geographic was closed her speech with one inspiring idea: "Age is no barrier to our dreams." Helen Thayer is living proof as a healthy woman not yet at the end of her youth.

Xi Man 2008



MELANIE PUGH/AVION

JON MENTO DRESSES AS Marilyn Monroe for the lip-syching portion of Xi Man 2008. Mento showed off his skills with a pairs dance routine, a rendition of the "Men in Black" theme song, and by raising money with philanthropy events throughout the week. Money raised from the event went to the Children's Advocacy Center.

Kurtz earns shutout, men make record 9-2 in tennis

Press Release
ERAU Sports Info.

The eighth-ranked Embry-Riddle women's tennis team battled strong winds to earn their fourth win against a nationally ranked opponent, downing No. 22 Oklahoma Christian 8-1, Wednesday at the Crotty Tennis Complex. ERAU is now 8-3 on the year, while the OCU falls to 7-2.

The Eagles suffered an early setback as the ninth-ranked OCU duo of Jennifer Le and Gabriela Nastasa topped fourth-ranked Natasa Zoricic and Hana Im 8-3 at No. 1 doubles. But the Eagles got wins at the remaining doubles positions as Natalie Anaya and Lindsey Kurtz downed Vanessa Chenouard and Leila Keihani 8-2 and Marga Rico Jimenez and Sara Abraul defeated Callie Draelos and Piper Johnson 8-2.

Kurtz earned her first shutout of the season with a 6-0, 6-0 win over Chenouard at the No. 4 singles spot. Abraul followed with a 6-3, 6-2 win over Johnson at No. 6 and Rico Jimenez clinched the team victory at the No. 5 spot, topping Draelos 6-2, 6-0.

No. 17 Zoricic won easily at the No. 1 position, defeating 18th-ranked Le 6-1, 6-1. No. 21 Im downed No. 20 Nastasa 6-1, 6-2 and Anaya closed out the scoring with a 6-4, 6-4 victory over Keihani at the third position.

Battling very windy conditions, the third-ranked Embry-Riddle men's tennis team recorded its seventh shutout of the season with a 9-0 decision against Oklahoma Christian, Wednesday at the Crotty Tennis Complex. The victory improves ERAU's record to 9-2 on the year, while Oklahoma Christian falls to 5-4.

Jan Hoekzema and Istvan Bolgar were the first to win their doubles match as they defeated Kyle Tefft and Ryan Stephenson 8-1. Mislav Hizak

and Konstantin Lazarov downed Justin DeBruin and Derek Viljoen 8-2 at the No. 1 spot and Carlos Bes Comeras and Tomoaki Yasuda topped Esteban Flores and Adalid Martinez 8-2 at No. 3 to give ERAU a 3-0 lead heading into singles play.

The first singles match off the court was at the top spot as 16th-ranked Bes Comeras notched a win in his first match at No. 1 singles with a 6-2, 6-1 upset of No. 8 Flores.

Hoekzema moved up a spot to No. 3 three for the third time

this season and was engaged in a three-set battle for the third time in four matches. But unlike his previous two three-setters, Hoekzema ground out a 7-6 (8-6), 4-6, 6-0 win against DeBruin to score the clincher.

Luke Maricic bested Viljoen 6-0, 6-2 at No. 5, Yasuda won his match 6-3, 6-0 against Martinez at No. 3 and Bolgar defeated Stephenson 6-2, 6-1 at No. 6. Lazarov, who played the longest singles match of the day, closed out the win with a 6-4, 2-6, 7-5 win against Tefft at No. 2.



MELANIE PUGH/AVION

LINDSEY KURTZ EARNS HER first shutout of the season against Oklahoma Christian. Jan Hoekzema and Istvan Bolgar were the first to win their doubles and help move the Eagles to 9-2 in the season with their seventh shutout.



By students, for students.

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Baseball goes 8-2 over spring break

Highlights

- ❑ Jordan Roberts struck out a career high 12 batters against Thomas
- ❑ The Eagles chalked up 15 runs in game one against Shawnee State, spurring the 10 run rule.
- ❑ In game two, the Eagles came back from 8-0 down in the fifth to win 10-9.
- ❑ Alex Guzman stole the show going 5-7 with four runs and three RBI.

Press Release

ERAU Sports Info.

THOMASVILLE, Ga. - Senior hurler, Jordan Roberts struck out a career high twelve batters in the second game of the Eagles doubleheader against regional opponent, the Thomas University NightHawks to shut-out the home team 4-0. This came after the Eagles suffered a game one loss, 8-3.

In game one the NightHawks jumped ahead in the second inning, 2-0 on the first of five home runs that left the Varnedoe Stadium on the day.

The Eagles responded back in the top of the third when

Colin Gray knocked in Kyle Albright and Saul Meza, to tie the game. Eric Ogden hit his second home run of the season, to put the Eagles up by one in the top of the fifth.

Home-field advantage paid off for the NightHawks in the bottom of the fifth inning, as they were able to tally five runs, three of which came off the third home run in the game. TU tallied one more run in the sixth to cap the game at 8-3.

GAME TWO

Roberts struck out a career high 12 batters in seven innings, averaging 1.71 strikeouts per inning. He struck-out the side in three separate innings, all while allowing only three hits

and walking two. It was his third shut-out of the year, his fourth complete game and his fifth win.

Billy Hootman and Aaron Tea aided Roberts by each hitting solo home runs over the left field fence. The jack was Hootman's second of the season, he tallied two runs in the game. Tea hit his first long bomb of the year and went 2-for-3 in the game. The Eagles tallied two additional runs in the seventh to win the game 4-0.

The Blue and Gold will continue on the road on Tuesday as they will travel to St. Augustine to face off against rival Flagler. The game will begin at 6 p.m.



PITCHER JORDAN ROBERTS CAPPED a 4-0 Eagle win with a career high 12 strikeouts. Roberts pitched a complete game, striking out the side three times.

Women's golf places second at home

Ren Xun Kwok

Staff Reporter

While most of the students started their spring break weekend, the ERAU golf team stayed back to host the Eagles Invitational at the Pelican Bay Country Club on the 15th and 16th of March. Using their skills and with the home course advantage, Tara Allen took the top spot in the individual standings, leading the Lady Eagles to a second place team finish in a tough field.

The men's golf top two team finishers concluded the tournament with Juan Sarmiento in the lead with 234 and Don Sciotto, two strokes behind Sarmiento. Matt Profit, Hunter Jenkins and Brett Verner competed individually and posted a three round total of 238, 239 and 255 respectively.

With this second place finish, the Lady Eagles ensures that their fourth spot in the NAIA national rankings remains unchallenged, and just eight points behind Berry College, who is tied for second place. With one more home game before the Regional Championships, the Lady Eagles looks to mount a strong chal-

lenge on Oklahoma City for the top spot in the NAIA women's golf ranking.

The Eagles Invitational took place on the north course of the country club. With its narrow fairways that were unforgiving, bunkers and canals that protected the greens and pin placements rewarding accurate approaches, the Lady Eagles had to battle horrid wind conditions in the first day and ended the first round in third place, seven shots behind Berry college. Despite the result of day one, the Lady Eagles were not discouraged and bounced back on the second day of the invitational.

Allen began the second day five strokes behind the leader. Despite starting off the second day tied for the fifth, she played a magnificent second round with her well placed drives, perfect approaches and a splendid short game to end the day with the lowest overall personal score of 72 even and won the tournament by three strokes. Allen posted a personal, two-day total of 23 pars and four birdies. Fellow teammates Albane Flamant and Autumn Gee were tied for second spot amongst the Lady Eagles with a similar two-day

score of 163. Overall, the Lady Eagles shared top spot with Berry College with 11 birdies each, and lead the pack with 91 pars in the two-day invitational.

The Lady Eagles' final home game will take place this weekend, the 29th and 30th of March at Daytona Beach Golf Club for the "Bash at the Beach." The Lady Eagles hopes that they can put another home course advantage to good use with the support of students and faculty members. After this final home

game, the golf team will head out to Lake Wales, Fla., for the Regional Championships in April.

Daytona Beach Golf Club is located at 600 Wilder Blvd., half a mile north from Beville Road and Ridgewood Avenue

Complete results for the Eagles Invitational as follows:

Tara Allen 79-72, 151
Albane Flamant 78-85, 163
Autumn Gee 85-78, 163
Jocelyn Dunn 87-83, 170
Deah Ruebel 84-89, 173

Other Results

Track opened up their outdoor season with the Spike's Classic. Many Eagles set personal bests including the 4x100 relay team of Alexis Williams, Nathalie Hildingsson, Keshia Richardson and Toshiba Cobb who set a school record of 48 minutes

15 seconds. Robert Peterson set a personal best in the 400m with a time of 49.70.

National Indoor Champion Beth McCubbin provisionally qualified for outdoor Nationals under the 'B' standard with a time of 2:16.46.

Upcoming Sporting Events

Baseball

Mar. 25 vs. Flagler at St. Augustine, Fla. 7 p.m.

Mar. 28 vs Warner Southern at Daytona Beach, Fla. 6 p.m.

Mar. 29 vs. Warner Southern (DH) at Daytona Beach, Fla. 1 p.m.

Men's Golf

Mar. 27-30 Marine Corps Invitational at Camp Lejune, N.C. TBA

Women's Golf

Mar. 29-30 Bash at the Beach at Daytona Beach, Fla. TBA

Men's and Women's Tennis

Mar. 28 vs. Vanguard at Daytona Beach, Fla. 3 p.m.

Track and Field

Mar. 27-29 FSU Relays at Tallahassee, Fla. All Day

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Afghans looking for opium trade solution

Molly Moore

The Washington Post

TARIN KOT, Afghanistan — On a recent cold spring day, just as the first small sprouts of poppies began pushing out of the southern Afghanistan earth, the members of Uruzgan province's poppy eradication council gathered around a wood stove in the governor's compound here for their first meeting.

"We should encourage people to eliminate poppies voluntarily," offered one official. "Ministers will go to the radio stations and tell them to stop. Mullahs should go to the mosques and tell people it's forbidden by Islam."

Mohammad Mawlawi, a mullah with a curly black beard extending down the length of his chest, exploded in anger.

"The people won't listen to us if we go to the mosque and say it's against our culture," he insisted. "No one wants to stop because the government has done nothing for us. They say, 'We have no choice, we have to make a living to support our families.'"

"The people won't stop!" he repeated, waving his lime-green prayer beads for emphasis.

In the last six years, the international community has set aside hundreds of millions of dollars for Afghan poppy eradication, built a state-of-the-art maximum-security facility for drug traffickers outside Kabul and dispatched hundreds of troops to try to persuade farmers to plant wheat, fruit trees and saffron instead of poppies.

The result of those efforts: Last year Afghanistan produced 90 percent of the world's opium and its derivative, heroin — more than at any time in the country's history. The only major drug traf-

fickers held in the new prison wing were allowed to escape. And a special international fund for motivating Afghan leaders to eradicate poppies has barely been touched, according to international officials involved in Afghan anti-drug efforts.

While 13 provinces in the north and central parts of Afghanistan were poppy-free last year, the number of acres under cultivation nationwide increased 17 percent, according to a U.N. survey. More than three-quarters of the poppy crop is cultivated in areas outside government control, primarily in five southern provinces.

The war against poppies has been undercut by disagreements among NATO allies and Afghan officials over how to stop cultivation, corrupt Afghan officials and inefficient reconstruction efforts, according to U.S., U.N., NATO and Afghan officials involved in the anti-drug effort.

Most militaries are loath to engage in eradication efforts because of the danger to soldiers and the risk of angering the very farmers whose support they are trying to win. Many poor farmers have managed to survive only by selling their crops to the Taliban, the extremist militia that has used profits from the drug trade to fund its resurgence.

"If you support eradication one day, you can't tell the people the next day we're here for you," said Lt. Col. Tjerk Hogeveen, commander of the Dutch combat troops in Uruzgan. "They won't believe you're here to help them if you're destroying their only source of income. If we want to win them over, supporting eradication without alternatives is the wrong symbol."

The United States has pushed aggressively for aerial spraying, similar to years-long programs

in Colombia.

Afghan President Hamid Karzai and officials from many European countries argued vigorously against spraying, saying it would kill other crops and poison the land. The United States recently backed down — reluctantly — under increasing pres-



PHOTO COURTESY THE WASHINGTON POST

sure from Karzai, who in turn is facing an upcoming election and domestic criticism that he is subservient to Washington.

"We're not going to start spraying," said Tom Schweich, the U.S. State Department's coordinator for counternarcotics and justice reform in Afghanistan. "Karzai said he didn't want to, that it looked heavy-handed."

Schweich said U.S. officials continue to disagree with Karzai and many NATO allies.

"Spray by air, there are fewer people who die, but it appears more heavy-handed," Schweich said. "Go in manually" on the ground "and it appears less heavy-handed, but there are more deaths."

The sporadic attempts at forced

eradication across Afghanistan have largely failed because of inadequate law enforcement efforts and the corruption that is rife among police and government agencies.

"Eradication is very costly," Antonio Maria Costa, director of the U.N. Office on Drugs

and Crime, said in a telephone interview from Vienna, Austria. "An enormous amount of money is spent with very little accomplished."

Afghan and NATO officials said that this year they are shifting tactics, focusing on eradicating the poppy fields of large farmers, rather than those of impoverished farmers with small plots who are often indebted to drug traffickers, the Taliban or larger landowners. But attempts to convict and imprison major drug traffickers have also largely failed, officials said.

A year and a half ago, Costa inaugurated a \$4.4 million maximum-security wing at the Pul-i-Charki prison outside Kabul. Funded by Britain and other

European countries, the wing was designed to hold major drug traffickers.

"I said then the weak link was the front door," Costa said. "No more than two or three months later, four drug traffickers ran away through the main door."

He said now "the vast majority of inmates are individuals who were foot soldiers, not anyone with senior responsibility."

Few provinces have a worse track record on poppies than impoverished Uruzgan in south-central Afghanistan, where the Helmand River valley provides one of the region's key drug-trafficking routes.

As the Uruzgan poppy eradication council met around the wood stove, one official passed around copies of notebooks that are being distributed to schoolchildren. The title read, "If we don't destroy the poppies, the poppies will destroy us." Evil-looking cartoon poppies are shown strangling a child, a young woman and a gaunt drug addict as an armed soldier, a woman wielding a Koran and a farmer with a sickle try to protect them.

Debate around the wood stove was not nearly as clear-cut.

"The law says no one should grow poppies," began Gov. Assadullah Hamdam, who has held his post since last fall. "If they do, they are criminals. They destroy our country."

He said he is concerned about the increasing number of addicts in his province, now estimated at 4,500, including significant numbers of women and children. An internal U.N. report found that Uruzgan has only 25 doctors serving a population of 320,000 and that no drug treatment service exists. Until this meeting, the province had no awareness campaign on the dangers of drug

use. One local official suggested that farmers wouldn't stop growing poppies without money or other compensation from the government.

But because Uruzgan did not meet the poppy eradication quota set by the government, the province will receive nothing this year from the Afghan Counter Narcotics Trust Fund. Donor nations have contributed tens of millions of dollars to provide provinces with incentives to eradicate poppies and provide alternate livelihoods for farmers.

The governor looked irritated. "Our government doesn't have enough money to pay every farmer to stop poppy cultivation," he told the officials gathered around him. "If you pay, they'll constantly ask for more. ... It's against Afghanistan's rules if they grow poppies, they'll be punished. We can't promise to help them. Even if we can't help them, they should stop."

Privately, in an interview, Hamdam said he believes it will take a decade more to end poppy production in his province.

"We don't know what to do," the governor said during the meeting with local officials. "There are places we can't even go. How will we get to those areas that are not even under the control of the government?"

No one offered an answer. As Hamdam glanced around the conference room, some ministers had closed their eyes and appeared to be dozing.

The governor was exasperated. "We will do what we can, we will do our best," he said.

He paused. And if that fails, he said, "we will pray to God to wash out the poppy fields, to bring cold weather and snow, or floods."

Tibetan protests reflect poorly on Olympic sponsors

Maureen Fan

The Washington Post

BEIJING — Chinese officials' harsh response to protests in Tibet has brought a fresh wave of accusations that corporate sponsors of the Beijing Olympics are partners with a government that ignores basic human rights.

Amid a widening crackdown in the remote Himalayan province, human rights organizations have renewed demands that Coca-Cola, Visa, General Electric and other international companies explain their dealings with the Communist government as it prepares to host the Summer Games.

Many of those companies have invested millions of dollars in enterprises associated with the Olympics, traditionally a venue for both mass marketing and political protest. But China's poor human rights record poses a special challenge for companies seeking to capitalize on a worldwide audience while maintaining reputations as good global citizens.

Sponsors are talking privately to Olympic organizers, turning to PR companies for more help and meeting with each other in an effort to plot strategy, according to activists and advisers. No companies are considering pulling out yet, but many know that this is just the beginning of a concentrated push by a variety of interest groups.

The companies are "at the table; they're able to use quiet diplomacy to send messages of the importance of being responsible global citizens," said one Beijing-based public relations adviser to sponsors, who spoke on condition of anonymity so he could speak freely.

"In their interactions with the government, they would talk through issues and share some of the challenges," the adviser said. "There are officials inside the government that are genuinely interested in understanding what the world thinks and how images and messages are communicated around the world."

Video and photos of the crackdown have made it past Chinese government censors, reinvigorating the pressure on the Games' financial backers.

"The role of the sponsors in subsidizing this event, while monks are being shot, is not going to look very good," said Sophie Richardson, the Asia advocacy director of Human Rights Watch. Major companies have the ability to "get the ear" of the Chinese leadership, she said.

"What's at stake is much more than the tens of millions of dollars these sponsors have bet on the Games. It's their future business with China," said Damien

Ryan, a Hong Kong-based media relations adviser for Olympic sponsors. "Officials here read between the lines, and that's why sponsors are thinking carefully about their response."

Dream for Darfur, an activist group, said it put out a statement to sponsors Monday, after the Tibet uprising, saying that public

“*The role of the sponsors in subsidizing this event, while monks are being shot is not going to look very good.*”

-SOPHIE RICHARDSON

relations issues surrounding the Olympics had grown and that they were eager to discuss what action might be taken. While there was no immediate response, three companies later agreed to meet with the group Friday and two companies agreed to meet next week.

"They're concerned. I think they wish this would all go away," said Jill Savitt, the group's executive director.

"The Chinese government's lack of experience in dealing with international opinion is obvious," said Guan Kai, a sociologist in Beijing. The government "didn't expect so many foreign activ-

“*The Chinese government's lack of experience in dealing with international opinion is obvious.*”

-GUAN KAI

ists would take advantage of the Olympics to advance their own agendas," Guan said.

The Games are being framed by many China observers as the country's arrival on the world stage. The Olympics are expected to attract an estimated 500,000 tourists and 4 billion television viewers.

Corporate sponsors are walking a fine line, trying to appear sensitive while arguing that the Games should not be politicized. "The Coca-Cola company is

expressing deep concern for the situation on the ground in Tibet. We know that all parties involved hope for a peaceful resolution," the company said in a statement.

"While it would be an inappropriate role for sponsors to comment on the political situation of individual nations, as the longest standing sponsor of the Olympic movement, we firmly believe that the Olympics are a force for good."

Like Coca-Cola, South Korea's Samsung Electronics is a sponsor of the torch relay, which will include a stop on Mount Everest. Activists say they plan to disrupt the relay in cities inside and outside China.

"We just go with the flow," said a Beijing-based spokesman for Samsung who identified himself only by his surname, Zou. "I believe the government can ensure the success of the Beijing Olympic Games. And I haven't heard that any group will protest in Tibet or anything like this. We are not so concerned about this."

Some sponsors are reviewing their media strategies and considering scaling back the number of news conferences they will host, Ryan said. They are also likely to reduce the number of company spokesmen and shift focus to one-on-one interviews that they feel they can better control.

"Media and public relations is only a small part of a sponsorship deal, but it's the riskiest element," he said. Sponsors do not want their executives or endorsed athletes facing a barrage of questions about whether they agree with China's human rights record.

"Sponsors used to be able to go out there and engage the media and get maybe one or two tough questions. But the days of flashy smiles, corporate suits and great statements are over," Ryan said. "The risks have increased in the last two weeks because of the Tibet uprising and unrest."

French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner this week floated the prospect of boycotting the Games' opening ceremony because of China's response to the protests, saying the idea may be discussed at a meeting of European Union foreign ministers in Slovenia next week. But he backed away from the statement later, telling French media that it was "unrealistic."

Meanwhile, the Associated Press reported that China has banned international broadcasters, including NBC, from taking live shots of Tiananmen Square, the site of a bloody 1989 crackdown on democracy protesters.

Dream for Darfur, which has rated the sponsors of the Beijing Olympics and "failed" 13 of the 19 companies for their lack of response, said it was also leaning toward a boycott of the opening

ceremony. It does not advocate a boycott of the Games.

"That companies are responding and agreeing to meet with us

ists with the Tibetan movement have lent an urgency. For those sponsors who wanted to engage by just talking, they now feel

loss for what to do." Staff writer Jason Ukman in Washington contributed to this report.

Nuclear stockpile reductions

Geraldine Baum

The Washington Post

PARIS -- President Nicolas Sarkozy announced Friday that he would reduce France's stockpile of nuclear warheads but said the country still needs a robust program to deter such potential enemies as Iran from ever striking.

In his first major speech about France's nuclear capabilities since being elected in May, Sarkozy, who is facing increased budget constraints, said the cuts would leave France with almost 300 warheads.

"Iran is increasing the range of its missiles while serious doubts are raised regarding its nuclear program," Sarkozy said. "It is the security of Europe which is at stake. This is why we care about our nuclear deterrence. It is strictly defensive."

France's warheads are designed to be launched from submarines or airplanes. Sarkozy said the nation's airborne weaponry would be cut by one-third.

By specifying that number he was breaking with a tradition of secrecy surrounding warheads. He urged other nuclear powers to be similarly transparent and encouraged the United States

“*Iran is increasing the range of its missiles while serious doubts are raised regarding its nuclear program.*”

-PRESIDENT SARKOZY

and China to commit to a treaty banning tests of nuclear weapons.

Sarkozy spoke in the northeastern port of Cherbourg to workers building "Le Terrible,"

the fourth of France's latest generation of nuclear-powered and armed submarines. It is expected to be launched in 2010 and carry new M51 nuclear missiles with multiple warheads and a longer range than current missiles, according to news wires.

Bruno Tertrais, a defense expert at the Paris-based Foundation for Strategic Research, said that France has cut in half its nuclear stock pile since it was at its peak in the early 1990s.

"The way the French answer the famous question of 'How much is enough?' is usually very restrictive," Tertrais said. "They have no weapons in reserve which is a big difference with the United States. That is why Sarkozy was able to say the ideal number is everything we have."

Tertrais also said the nation's budget is a large factor when a French president considers the nation's military firepower. Sarkozy talked about taking charge of a country "in the red for 25 years" and needing to reform the defense budget.

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Hillary should throw in the towel

It has been a rollercoaster week in politics. Reverends, speeches, passports and endorsements have played for and against both candidates in the Democratic primary, but one candidate, more now than ever, has risen to the top in an unmistakable way.

The events of last week, namely the splashing of Reverend Jeremiah Wright's incendiary remarks around the news networks posed challenges for Barack Obama like no other previous event in this campaign. Wright's sermons were screaming for sound bites: cursing the United States, blaming the government for AIDS and all kinds of out-of-left-field remarks, most snipped from 20-30 minute sermons, were all gift-wrapped candidate bombs for the 24-hour news cycle.

The Reverend's remarks instantly hit Sen. Obama's poll numbers and likely did some

irreversible damage to many people on the fence with the candidate. So what do you do to address these concerns? Reject? Denounce? Reject and denounce? Skirt the issue and do damage control? No, Sen. Obama decided to confront the issue head on and moved the discussion to its likely foundation, race in America. He accomplished this feat by delivering easily the best speech of his, or any of this year's candidacies, and possibly one of historic proportions.

Sen. Obama's speech was not one made for applause breaks, but one made to invoke thought. If you have not seen his speech, I encourage you to watch it, all 37 minutes of it, on YouTube or any other video outlet. Sen. Obama was calm and composed, and spoke in a manner that alienated few and emboldened many. He was able to reject the Reverend's comments, but at the

same time, not rebuke his connection to, and the heritage of, his church and faith. His speech was not tailored for sound bites; it was tailored for intelligent civilized discourse.

"But what we know — what we have seen — is that America can change. That is true the genius of this nation. What we have already achieved gives us hope — the audacity to hope — for what we can and must achieve tomorrow," said Obama.

With this speech, the recent endorsement of the influential governor of New Mexico, and former President Clinton administration member, Bill Richardson, and Sen. Obama's overwhelming lead in pledged delegates, it is safe to say the nomination should be his. Nothing short of a true miracle would allow Sen. Clinton to make up the difference in pledged, those decided by voters in primaries and caucuses,

delegates.

Sen. Clinton is a smart woman. She should then be able to realize that her only route to winning the nomination would be absolute party suicide. Not only has the democratic party failed the people in Michigan and Florida, though some of blame rests on the states themselves, a brokered convention or a whole jump of super-delegates to Clinton (the only two ways she can win) would be an unmistakably idiotic move.

This election will be historic,

but whether it is because of the candidates or the implosion of a party is yet to be seen. It is time for the party to get behind the candidate who is the clear front-runner, someone who this week

has proven he is not scared of divisive issues, someone, who has motivated a new generation to get involved politics, someone named Barack Obama.

~Chris Tezak



Student Forum

Avion asks: "What is the approximate airspeed of an unladen swallow?"

-Compiled by Matt Goldberg and Brandon Boekelman



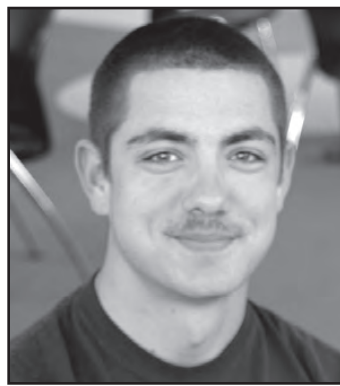
Rafael Mudafort
Sophomore
Aerospace Engineering

"What's a swallow?"



John Bananni
Senior
Aerospace Engineering

"God only knows."



Mike Ristom
Junior
Aeronautics

"Do you want it in knots or miles per hour?"



Abigail Soley
Freshman
Aerospace Engineering

"What is a swallow?"



Jeff Simmons
Freshman
Aeronautical Science

"Depends if it is an European or African swallow."



Jon Mento
Junior
Air Traffic Management

"The speed it takes for Larry to get to the pyramid line."

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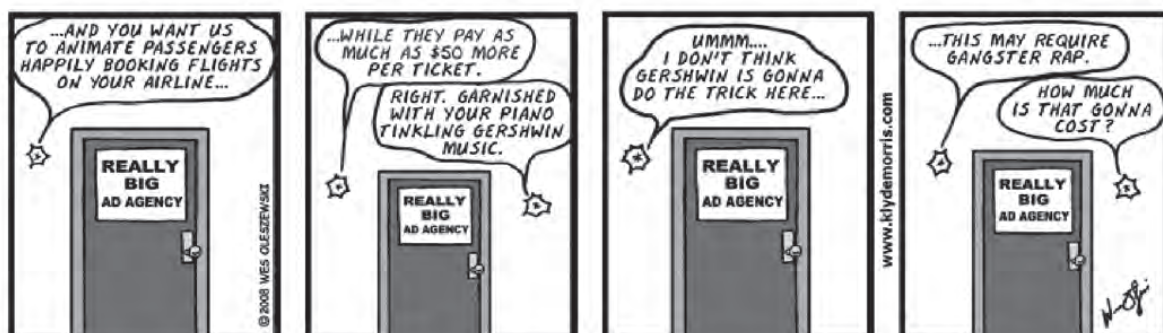
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2			4	9		5		8



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RIGHT. GARNISHED WITH YOUR PIANO TINKLING GERSHWIN MUSIC.

UMMM... I DON'T THINK GERSHWIN IS GONNA DO THE TRICK HERE...


...THIS MAY REQUIRE GANGSTER RAP.

HOW MUCH IS THAT GONNA COST?

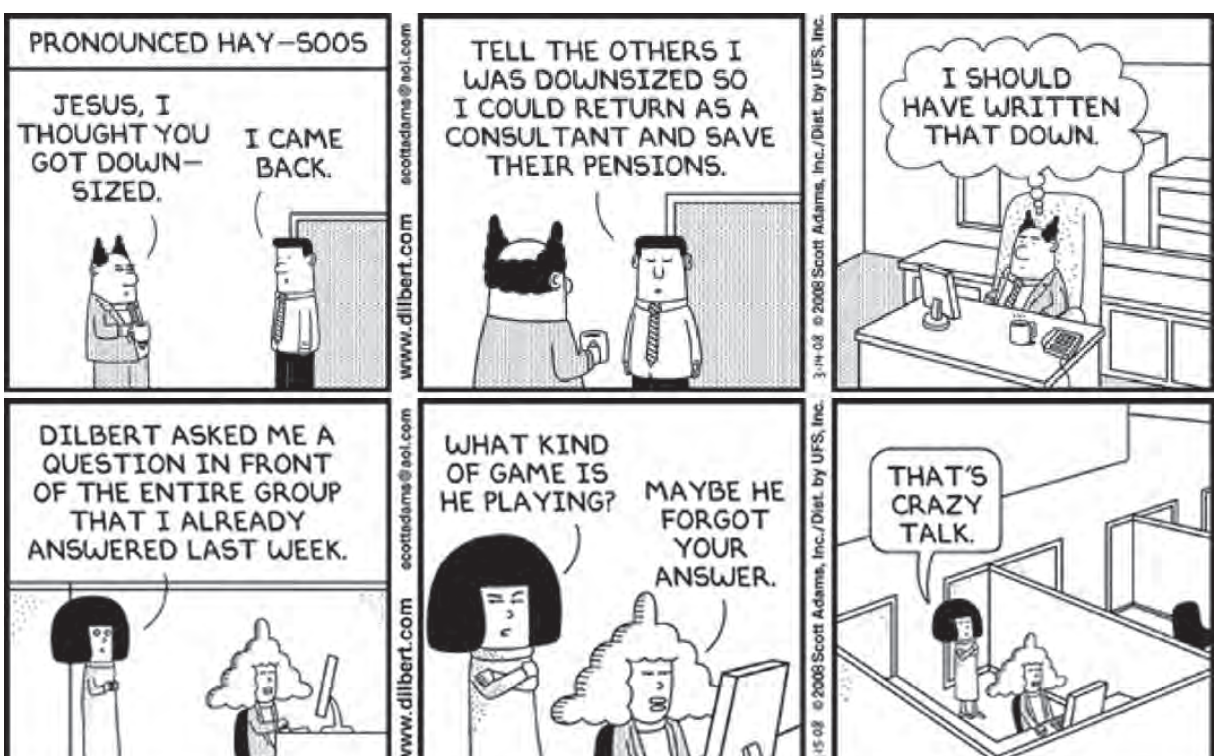
SIMPLE

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

DILBERT



BY SCOTT ADAMS



PRONOUNCED HAY-SOOS

JESUS, I THOUGHT YOU GOT DOWN-SIZED.

I CAME BACK.

TELL THE OTHERS I WAS DOWNSIZED SO I COULD RETURN AS A CONSULTANT AND SAVE THEIR PENSIONS.

I SHOULD HAVE WRITTEN THAT DOWN.

DILBERT ASKED ME A QUESTION IN FRONT OF THE ENTIRE GROUP THAT I ALREADY ANSWERED LAST WEEK.

WHAT KIND OF GAME IS HE PLAYING?

MAYBE HE FORGOT YOUR ANSWER.

THAT'S CRAZY TALK.

INTERMEDIATE

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



Frazz

By Jeff Mallett



I GUESS I CAN ACCEPT THAT I DON'T GET PAID FOR DOING ALL THIS.

3RD-GRADE WORKSHEETS PROBABLY AREN'T HARD ENOUGH TO JUSTIFY A CHECK.

OH, WELL. I JUST HAVE TO MAKE IT TO COLLEGE.

THEN I WON'T BE WORKING FOR FREE.

NO... NO, YOU WON'T.

YOU HAVE TO PAY TO GO TO COLLEGE?

OH, YES.

HOW MUCH?

IT DEPENDS. \$30,000 WOULD BE A GREAT DEAL. A \$100K BACHELOR'S IS NOT UNCOMMON.

WOW.

FOR \$40 I COULD GET AN OHIO STATE NECKTIE TO WEAR TO INTERVIEWS.

I'D GET A GEDGETOWN ONE. THEN THEY WON'T JUST THINK YOU'RE A FOOTBALL FAN.

One Saturday Morning

ACROSS

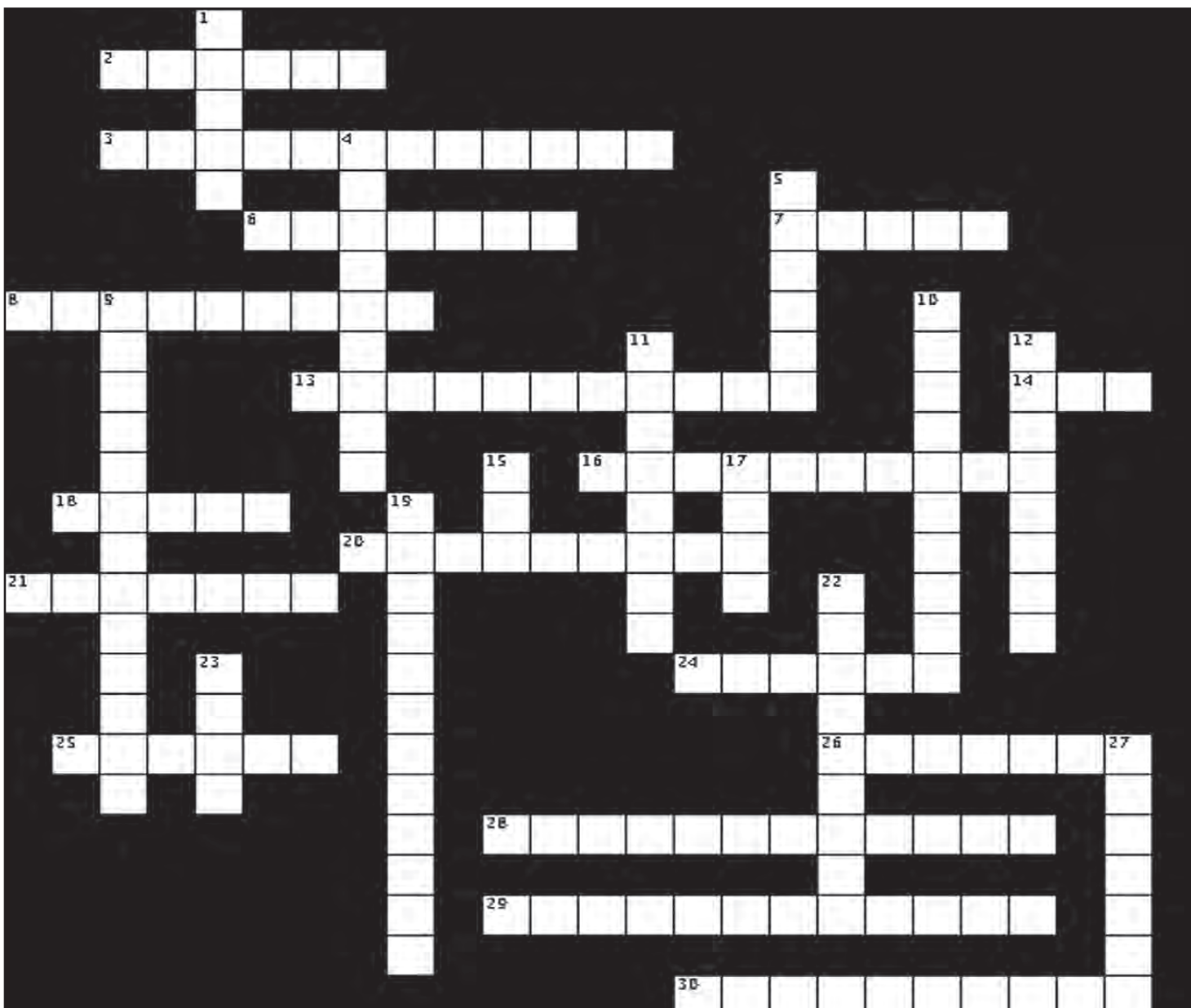
- 2 Co-hosted the show with Bugs Bunny
- 3 Optimus Prime
- 6 George, Jane, Judy and Elroy
- 7 These furry Star Wars characters got their own cartoon
- 8 Life is like a hurricane...
- 13 Don't say his name three times
- 14 Gordo Shumway's name that he was given on Earth, also the name of his show
- 16 Cats and company have fun, playing pranks on everyone
- 18 All-American Hero
- 20 Stanley Burrell had a pair of magical dance shoes

- 21 Nine of these live with a human brother and sister, Billy and Bonnie Wagner
- 24 Have tubes coming out of their heads so they can move across water easily
- 25 T.J. Detweiler and the gang
- 26 Wild bobcat who became a cop
- 28 Skeeter, Scooter's twin sister, was in this cartoon
- 29 Who are you going to call?
- 30 Tiny people that live in the walls of human houses.

DOWN

- 1 Lived on Eternia and battled Skeletor
- 4 "Hey Hey Hey"
- 5 Paul Reubens and Tim Burton made a movie before

- he got his own cartoon
- 9 Earth, Fire, Wind, Water and Heart
- 10 Special juice allowed them to bounce
- 11 Faster than a speeding bullet
- 12 Loved lasagna
- 15 Cartoon about a rockstar and her band, the Holograms
- 17 Splinter was their leader (abv.)
- 19 When in trouble, call D.W.
- 22 Insignia on its belly that represents its duty and personality
- 23 Led by Professor Charles Xavier
- 27 Helped Rainbow Bright and the Color Kids



Submit your completed crossword to our office in SC 110. CONTEST IS ONLY OPEN TO STUDENTS! All correct entries will be entered to win the prize of the week. Entries are due Friday by 5 p.m. Winner will be announced in next week's issue. Good luck!

Last Issue
"Nick, Nick, Nick..."
JAMES RIEDER



W E A M A N D A B Y N E S T
S D I L R O C K O Z I
P N H I U I M
O L M E C R V I G U M B Y
N G E R V I T J I M M Y
E B O B A L L T H A T U F
O B L I U N F A B U L O U S
C H A R I S S A S P E T E
A L C A R U K E L R R L
K A G A F R R L
Z T H O R N B E R R Y S R T
A R N O L D A L A N A W A N N A
N O T A A N A W A N N A
E G U T S M

HOUSING / ROOMMATES

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HOUSING / ROOMMATES

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3/3 1/2 bath home for sale
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Montana Condo for lease
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Looking for a roommate
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Endeavour delivers Kibo & Dextre



PHOTO COURTESY NASA
ASTRONAUT ROBERT BEHNKEN SPACEWALKS outside the Space Shuttle Endeavour and International Space Station (ISS) last week on the third of a record-tying five spacewalks during the mission. During Endeavour's record docked time to the ISS, the crew installed the first pressurized module of the Japanese Kibo laboratory and the Canadian Dextre robotic manipulator.

Bob Scheid
 Chief Copy Editor

After a successful launch on March 11, the shuttle Endeavour successfully rendezvoused with the International Space Station (ISS) and has executed all five planned spacewalks to connect the Japanese Kibo science module and Canadian Dextre robotic arm to the station. As of press time Sunday, the shuttle was still on time for undocking from the station Monday, with all major objectives of the mission completed.

The Dextre remote manipulator system was successfully unloaded from Endeavour's cargo bay on March 18; the robot had problems at first in powering up, but later passed all the preliminary tests given to it before being anchored to the station. Moving the Dextre arm from the shuttle to the station involved Endeavour's Canadarm remote manipulator handing off the robot to the ISS' Canadarm2; all three systems were designed and built by Canada, and the resulting maneuver was called the

"Canadian handshake in space" by the Canadian Space Agency.

Japan's Kibo experiment module, the smaller of the two pressurized sections in the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency's Kibo laboratory, was attached March 14 during the mission's first spacewalk, and Japanese astronaut Takao Doi and Expedition 16 commander Peggy Whitson entered the module for the first time at 10:30 a.m. EDT the next day.

All told, the five spacewalks on the mission totaled 33 hours 28 minutes of extravehicular activity, according to Spaceflightnow.com.

The shuttle is due to undock from the ISS at 7:56 p.m. EDT Monday before returning to Kennedy Space Center's runway at 7:04 p.m. on Wednesday, March 26.

In the meantime, the European Space Agency's Automated Transfer Vehicle (ATV) is lining up for a series of practice approaches to the station. The 33-foot Jules Verne, launched from French Guyana on March 9, has been holding station about

1,240 miles from the ISS while the Endeavour completes her mission; on Thursday, March 27, it will begin an automated rendezvous with the station, arriving two days later.

An automated approach will be flown in three stages, culminating with the docking on April 3. The first "demonstration day" on March 29 will involve Jules Verne closing from 22 miles to just over two miles of the station, where commands from the ISS will be relayed to test the emergency stop and escape routines of the ship before returning it to its holding position 20 miles away. The second demonstration, on March 31, will bring it to within 35 feet of the station before again retreating.

The ATV carries more than seven tons of cargo and equipment, including a quarter ton of drinking water, half a ton of food, breathing gasses and another 1,700 pounds of fuel for the space station. In the next years, especially after the shuttle program is retired, the ATV will be critical in ferrying supplies to the station about once every 17 months.

KSC may get new launch pad

Bob Scheid
 Chief Copy Editor

NASA is considering two sites on Kennedy Space Center (KSC) grounds for a new commercial launch facility. The two proposed locations for the facility include grounds on the coast about 1.5 miles south of Pad 39A, which has been used for decades to launch manned vehicles like the Apollo missions and the space shuttle, and a site to the west of Mosquito Lagoon, about 7.5 miles from Complex 39.

The NASA website states that the complex would provide a vertical launch platform, propellant storage and rocket testing facilities for liquid-fueled commercial rockets. The proposal states that the liftoff thrust of the rockets would be less than

2 million pounds, about that produced by a Delta 4 Heavy launch vehicle; small solid rocket strap-on boosters would also be allowed. The complex would have two pads, one for use with vertically integrated rockets and one for horizontally integrated vehicles. The pads would share fuelling and some other facilities within the fenced perimeter of about 200 acres, compared to the 7,500 acres already developed on KSC land.

NASA predicts a wide variety of payloads to be launched from the facility, ranging from the space agency's commercial transportation service to the International Space Station and commercial telecommunications satellites to future commercial manned rockets traveling to orbit and beyond.

The addition of another com-

mercial launch complex could increase national commercial investment in space and create a number of new jobs, helping to offset part of the cuts expected at the termination of the space shuttle program within a few years.

Because the Kennedy Space Center and Cape Canaveral Air Force Station are built on the Merrit Island National Wildlife Refuge, an extensive Environmental Assessment of the effects of such a launch complex is to be undertaken in the next several months. The NASA definition of environmental effects extends well beyond the flora and fauna of the area, however. The assessment will also consider the physical components of the affected area, such as air and water pollution, as well as human relationships, covering everything

from the safety of commercial aviation and local populations to the aesthetics of the area.

Scoping of this assessment began a few weeks ago, with some information about affected species at both locations, rail and utility services to the sites and proximity to civilian populations. A formal draft is expected to be released in July, followed by several weeks of public review and comment. The final draft is due in September.

Because of the early phase of the project, an analysis of the impact to commercial and general aviation flight operations in central Florida is not yet complete; however, Mario Busacca of the Environmental Program Office at NASA does not believe it will pose any different regulation to the area than other similar complexes.

Upcoming Cape launches

The dates of shuttle missions beyond STS-124 this May are facing likely delays due to ongoing efforts to upgrade the orange external fuel tanks that take them to orbit. STS-125, the anticipated Hubble servicing flight, requires two tanks to be ready at the same time, as there will be a shuttle on the other pad as well in case a rescue mission is needed. Currently, STS-125 is targeted for Aug. 28, STS-126 for Oct. 16 and STS-119 on Dec. 4 to end the year. The plan may include launching 126 before 125.



April 14
 Atlas 5
 ICO mobile commsat
 Launch window:
 4:12 - 5:12 p.m. EDT

May 16
 Delta 2
 NASA's GLAST
 Gamma-ray telescope
 Launch window:
 11:45 a.m. - 1:40 p.m. EDT

May 25
 Space Shuttle Discovery
 STS-124
 Japan's main Kibo lab
 Launch time 7:26 p.m. EDT
 +/- 5 min. window

June 30
 Delta 2
 Next GPS sat.
 GPS 2R-20M
 Launch window:
 TBD

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Boeing fights for KC-45

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Another key parameter Air Force officials requested was the ability to refuel both Air Force and Navy/Marine Corps aircraft on the same flight. Current tankers must be configured prior to takeoff to accommodate one or the other.

The A330 is the only modern mid-size long haul freighter on the market today. The A330-200F is capable of hauling 50,000 pounds more than the KC-135 which is built on the Boeing 707 platform, first purchased by the Air Force in 1954.

On March 11, Boeing delivered their formal protest to the KC-45 selection. Boeing claims that the criteria for the KC-45 was changed late in the game to favor the A330 platform. The Air Force says that the competition was a transparent process where both sides were clear on the result. Prior to the announcement, Boeing made comments assessing the process as fair but now calls questions that assertion. Mark McGraw, Vice

President of the Boeing Tanker Programs, said "Our analysis of the data presented by the Air Force shows that this competition was seriously flawed and resulted in the selection of the wrong airplane for the war fighter," in a statement.

Norman Dicks, Representative from Washington accused the Air Force of "bait and switch tactics." Air Force Secretary Michael Wynne told senators that the Boeing plan was "a little more risky" and "The Northrop Grumman airplane was clearly a better performer." Dicks said changes after the request for proposal were made "to advantage Airbus so they could compete." Boeing officials noted these changes favored a larger aircraft rather than the medium range aircraft. This is why Boeing proposed the 767 and were "discouraged" from proposing the larger, more modern 777. The use of a larger aircraft for the KC-45 that could also be used for cargo is also a concern for the future of Boeing's C-17 program.

"We really have to wake up the country," said Washington Senator Patty Murray. "We are at risk of losing a major part of our aerospace industry to the Europeans forever." Boeing

employs more than 74,000 in the State of Washington. Boeing says that up to 44,000 U.S. jobs would be created or sustained had the contract been awarded to them, voicing concerns of losing American jobs to the Europeans. Northrop Grumman countered saying that production plants will be moved to Mobile, Ala., as well as Melbourne, Fla. and other U.S. locations across 49 states creating 48,000 jobs.

Boeing's chairman and CEO Jim McNerney said in a statement that Boeing "found serious flaws in the process that we believe warrant appeal." The Government Accounting Office now has 100 days to respond to the appeal. Even with the backing of several Washington State Congressmen, Boeing's chances of an overturn are slight. Over the past year, of the 1,411 protests filed, the GAO only sided with 27 percent.

A similar contract was awarded to Boeing in 2003 but was annulled in 2005 under allegations of procurement fraud by Boeing. Boeing paid a \$615 million settlement to the U.S. government for the incident and two Boeing executives were given prison sentences.

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Crime institute warns of enhanced threat of aircraft theft

~By Mary Grady

Officials in Mexico have cracked down on aerial drug trafficking, says Bob Collins of the Aviation Crime Prevention Institute, and this has created a need for criminals to quickly steal more airplanes to replace those that are seized. Collins said the threat to King Airls, Caravans and Cessna cabin-class twins has intensified, and interest in Cessna single-engine models is likely to continue. "ACPI does not send this kind of information lightly," said Collins. "The threat is real." He suggested that pilots should take extra care to be sure their aircraft are secure.

response to a report published by the FAA last month that raises concerns about the way those rules are being implemented. Lawrence said now is the time for EAA to "articulate a definitive position," while the aviation community awaits the FAA's next move -- a draft proposal of its new guidelines, which is expected to be released in the next month or two. Lawrence said the FAA should not prevent paid professionals from helping to construct an experimental aircraft, as long as the amateur personally carries out a majority of the work. He also said that aircraft eligible for amateur-built status should not be limited by complexity, power, size, or performance. EAA urges the FAA to "preserve the amateur-building movement and the constructive environment that exists today," Lawrence said.

in which a Boeing 737 and an Embraer regional jet did not have adequate separation while on approach to Chicago's Midway Airport. But the FAA says the current training regime is an improvement over old methods.

Don't Ask, Do Tell -- When Gender Doesn't Matter

~By Meredith Saini

Squadron Leader Sue Jones commanded all air movements out of Basra in southern Iraq last year for a six-month stint that began in June -- she also served earlier in her career with the Royal Air Force as a married man and father of two. "These are medical matters of personal privacy; we will not comment on individual cases," a Ministry of Defense spokesman told the Telegraph.co.uk. Now remarried to a man, Jones told the Telegraph, "Following a heart to heart with my then wife six years ago, I decided to personally fund a sex change." The Sea King helicopter pilot says she's received full support from her colleagues in the RAF, never suffering any abuse and being judged only on her ability to do the job. "I am a determined, focused professional individual," she said, "who simply wants to get on with my life and do the job I love."

Controller union blames separation errors on poor training; FAA says training OK

~By Meredith Saini

The National Air Traffic Controllers Association (NATCA) is blaming poor controller training practices for a March 13 incident

EAA reacts to FAA action on '51-Percent Rule'

~By Mary Grady

"FAA should not attempt to change the experimental amateur-built rules," says Earl Lawrence, EAA's vice president of industry and regulatory affairs, in a

Aircraft of the Week

McDonnell Douglas F-15 Eagle



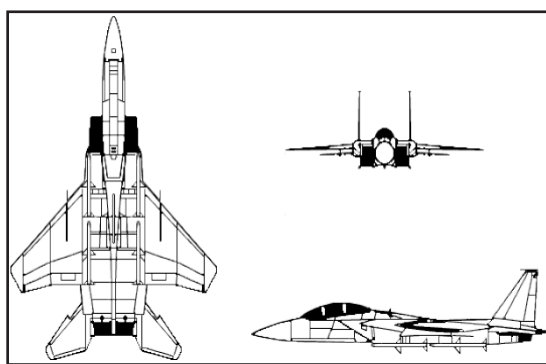
PHOTO COURTESY U.S. AIR FORCE

Factoid

- **Manufacturer:** McDonnell Douglas Corp.
- **Armament:** 1 x M-61A1 20mm cannon, 4 x AIM-9L/M Sidewinders, 4 x AIM-7F/M Sparrow air-to-air missiles or 8 x AIM-120 AMRAAMS
- **Service:** U.S. Air Force, Israeli Air Force, Japan Air Self-Defence Force, Royal Saudi Air Force
- **Top Speed:** 1,875 mph (Mach 2.5+)
- **Range:** 3,450 mi.
- **Crew:** F-15A/C - one; F-15B/D/E - two

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~U.S. Air Force



Delta Launches 777-200



MATT SMITH/AVION

ON MARCH 8, DELTA inaugurated service with its new Flagship aircraft -- the Boeing 777-200LR. The first revenue flight was from Atlanta to Los Angeles and back to Atlanta. The aircraft will be primarily used on Delta's Ultra Long Haul routes such as New York-JFK to Bombay, India. N701DN carries a special sticker on the nose that reads "The Delta Spirit -- Dedicated to all Delta Employees Worldwide -- March 6, 2008." It is seen here climbing out of LAX bound for ATL as Delta 101 on its second revenue flight.

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