

THE Kentucky Kernel

Thursday, June 29, 2006

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Rondo heads to Boston

By Tim Wiseman
THE KENTUCKY KERNEL

In the first NBA Draft since the league instituted a 19-year-old minimum age rule, upperclassmen dominated the first round.

But the wait did not last too long for UK sophomore Rajon Rondo, who was taken off the board at the No. 21 spot by the Phoenix Suns last night.



Rondo

Later, Rondo was dealt to Boston. The Celtics acquired Rondo in exchange for the payment of veteran forward Brian Grant's remaining contract and a future first-round draft pick. Grant officially retired yesterday.

"(Rondo) is the best finisher in the draft," said Boston head coach Doc Rivers in an interview with ESPN Radio. "I think he's going to be a good defender at the point guard position in our league for a long time."

A former McDonald's High School All-American, Rondo led the Cats in points, steals, assists and rebounds last season. He also led the Southeastern Conference in assists.

While his per-game averages rose in almost every category his sophomore season, he continued to struggle with his jump shot, finishing with a shooting percentage of 48 percent.

"I think there's too much made of it," Tubby Smith said in March of Rondo's shooting. "His job is to distribute the ball, penetrate and find

See Draft on page 6

Lexington Green screens indie-film fare

By Kerstin Mitchell
THE KENTUCKY KERNEL

The future holds some big changes for Cinemark's Lexington Green Movies 8 theater.

Tomorrow, the commercial theater will become an art house, featuring independent films on all eight screens.

"We are proud to offer a greater variety of independent film choices to the moviegoers of Lexington," said Cinemark President Alan Stock in a press release. "An eight-screen art house will be a welcome addition to the Lexington market, and we hope that the public will support our efforts to bring the very best of independent film to the Lexington market."

The conversion from theater to art house comes on the heels of yesterday's grand opening of Cinemark's 16-screen theater at Fayette Mall.

"We're opening another first-run theater with your typical Hollywood offerings—'Superman Returns,' 'Pirates of the Caribbean,'" said Perrell Falk, Cinemark's vice president of marketing and communications.

Falk said Lexington Green's shift to art house offers Lexington "the luxury of an eight-screen theater and a wonderful selection of pure art." Of its 315 theaters, this is Cinemark's fourth art house.

Before Lexington Green's switch, the Kentucky Theatre on East Main Street was the only indie-film venue in the city.

"Lexington is growing and there are evidently more needs for more

See Indie on page 2

Art House Rock

What: Lexington Green Movies 8's opening day as an art house theater

When: Tomorrow

Where: 200 Lexington Green Circle

Films: 'Kinky Boots,' 'A Prairie Home Companion,' 'Thank You for Smoking' and 'Tristram Shandy; A Cock and Bull Story' and the Lexington premieres of 'Brick,' 'Keeping Up with the Steins,' 'On a Clear Day' and 'The Proposition'

"... I'll live with the emotional trauma whether he's in the world or not."

— Holly Dunn Pendleton, on the execution of the Railroad Killer, Angel Maturino Resendiz



Former UK student Holly Dunn Pendleton, the only known survivor of the Railroad Killer, is pictured here in 2002 at the Courtyard Marriott Hotel in Louisville. Pendleton often thinks about the attack that changed her life. Pendleton and her boyfriend, Chris Maier, were attacked by Angel Maturino Resendiz, known as the Railroad Killer, in August 1997. Maier died after being struck in the head by a 52-pound rock; Pendleton was stabbed, raped and beaten. More than two years later, Pendleton testified against Resendiz and he was found guilty of capital murder and sentenced to death. Resendiz was executed Tuesday in Huntsville, Texas.

MARK BOZLEY | KERNEL FILE PHOTO

Convicted murderer's death doesn't culminate in closure

Despite Tuesday's execution of the Railroad Killer, former UK student and victim combats memories

By Crystal Little
THE KENTUCKY KERNEL

Holly Dunn Pendleton doesn't feel vindicated.

Relieved, maybe — but not vindicated.

The former UK student is the only known survivor of an attack by the "Railroad Killer," Angel Maturino Resendiz.

Resendiz was executed Tuesday night in Huntsville, Texas, for the murder of Dr.

Claudia Benton seven and a half years ago. He was linked to at least 15 murders near railroad tracks around the country, including Pendleton's boyfriend, Chris Maier. The two were attacked during Labor Day weekend, on Aug. 29, 1997, near Norfolk Southern train tracks just off Waller Avenue.

After demanding money from the couple, Resendiz became angry when the two had

no cash on them — just debit and credit cards, Pendleton told The Kernel in a 2002 interview. Resendiz lifted a 52-pound rock and struck Maier in the head then stabbed Pendleton with an ice pick, raped her, and left her for dead.

When Pendleton came to at about 3 a.m., she walked 150 yards to a house, where Lexington resident Chad Goetz answered the door and called the police.

She spent five days in UK Hospital, recovering from a shattered jaw and eye socket and numerous cuts.

See Pendleton on page 2



Musicians Rhonda and Sparky Rucker (right) performed Appalachian American folk songs during a Freshman Summer Program presentation at the Martin Luther King Jr. Cultural Center yesterday.

BRAD LUTTBELL | STAFF

Spindletop facelift ill-received

UK's conceptual plan for alumni retirement center upsets Spindletop Club

STAFF REPORT

UK is in discussions to turn Spindletop Farm, a faculty, staff and alumni gathering place in northern Fayette County, into a 400-person retirement facility, the Lexington Herald-Leader reported last week.

The retirement community would house an assisted-living facility, a nursing home, a facility for people affected with dementia, and a clinic, according to a memo composed by a Spindletop Club member. It would also include patio homes and independent-living apartments.

A conceptual plan has those buildings going where the club's pools, tennis courts, picnic area, playground and snack bar are now. Members of the Spindletop Club are drawn from UK alumni, staff and faculty. The university bought the 1,000-acre Spindletop Farm in 1958, and the club has been operating as an alumni rendezvous since 1962.

Spindletop Hall, the farm's historic mansion, would undergo a \$9 million to \$12 million renovation.

But the plan is far from reality; there are several complications that haven't yet been addressed.

Among those is financing. UK spokesman Jay Blanton told the Herald-Leader that UK doesn't have the money to finance the renovation of the mansion.

The total cost of the retirement village community construction would be \$150 million, and UK President Lee Todd told the Herald-Leader that the new facility would accrue a \$9 million annual payroll.

There is also a zoning issue that wouldn't allow the construction of the patio homes, as Spindletop was zoned "Professional Office" in the 1970s. But that could be overlooked as a part of an entire project.

The plan has upset many of the club's members, who pay yearly dues that amount to about \$1 million for the current, recreationally-based facilities.

The club's members, and its governing body, the Spindletop Club board, are upset because the new facility would disrupt the scenery around the mansion, which is located in the middle of the 1,000-acre farm and across Ironworks Pike from the Kentucky Horse Park.

Another complication is that the retirement community would garner control of Spindletop from the club's board. The retirement community, in the development-stage plans, would sit on 84 acres, while the recreation facilities would sit on 52 acres, and be moved from their current location to make way for the retirement compound.

E-mail
news@kykernel.com

An Appalachian American folk music performance took place yesterday at the Martin Luther King Jr. Cultural Center in the Student Center. Duo Sparky and Rhonda Rucker entertained listeners with traditional folk music that included guitars, slide guitar and spoons. The event was presented by UK's Office for Multicultural and Academic Affairs and hosted by the UK Freshman Summer Program.

See more photos on page 2

Newsroom: 257-1915

APPALACHIAN AMERICAN FOLK MUSIC, CONT. FROM PAGE 1



BRAD LUTTRELL | STAFF
 Musician Sparky Rucker played guitar on a folk song sing-along during a Freshman Summer Program presentation at the Martin Luther King Jr. Cultural Center yesterday. Rucker played guitar, slide guitar and the spoons during the event.

... song and dance

not that same old ...



BRAD LUTTRELL | STAFF
 Rhonda Rucker plays harmonica on an old folk song during her performance with Sparky Rucker yesterday in the Martin Luther King Jr. Cultural Center.

Pendleton

Continued from page 1

About two years later, Resendiz surrendered on the bridge connecting Zaragosa, Mexico, with El Paso, Texas.

Two days after Pendleton graduated from UK, she flew to Houston to testify at Resendiz's trial. He was found guilty of capital murder and sentenced to death.

Since the attack almost nine years ago, Pendleton has devoted herself to raising awareness about sexual assault. She's spoken at Centre College in Danville and DePauw University in Greencastle, Ind. On June 20, she received a Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis Award for Outstanding Public Service for her advocacy work and her role in developing Holly's House, a child and adult advocacy center for victims of violent crimes in Evansville, Ind.

Though Pendleton has declined interviews during this time, she issued a statement to the press about Resendiz's

execution.

"I have to say that I guess it will be a relief when he's not in the world anymore," Pendleton said in the statement. "But I'll live with the emotional trauma whether he's in the world or not."

Pendleton also said she's tried to put the execution out of her mind. "It brings up emotional feelings I haven't felt in eight or nine years," she said.

But raising awareness and working with Holly's House have been instrumental to her healing process.

"The scars will never completely go away," Pendleton said, "but I have learned to live past the trauma and I have focused my energy toward helping others."

E-mail clittle@kykernel.com

For more information on Holly Dunn Pendleton, visit www.hollykdunn.com.

For more information about Holly's House, visit www.hollyshouse.org.

To contact the Bluegrass Rape Crisis Center, call 253-2511 or (800) 656-HOPE.

Indie

Continued from page 1

theaters," said Fred Mills, manager of the Kentucky Theatre.

AmStar's new 14-screen theater complex, located just south of Man O' War Boulevard on Nicholasville Road, and Fayette Mall's new 16-screen theater are within several miles of each other and Cinemark had to decide what would best fit their needs, Mills said.

But the Kentucky Theatre is not just an art house — it hosts independent films, local bands for the younger audience, and national and international acts, Mills said.

"We have a very loyal audience, especially with the university community," he said. "I think everything will be OK — we'll be OK."

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IN THEATERS THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA

Think your boss is a complete fool? Well, (s)he may be, but you haven't met magazine editor and perpetual (expletive deleted) Miranda Priestly. And soon after she's hired at the Runway magazine, hapless personal assistant Andy Sachs (Anne Hathaway) wishes she'd never met Miranda, either. Still, Meryl Streep's turn as an uber-you-know-what, played to eerie ice-queen perfection, makes this well worth the price of admission. Based on the chick-lit tome by the same name. At Cinemark Fayette Mall, Regal and Woodhill.

destroyed remains of Krypton. Clearly worth seeing. At Cinemark Fayette Mall, Regal and Woodhill.

a couple of cities in California going from Hollywood president to actual president would be pretty rad, if he could take the writers from "WW" and put them in his Cabinet. **Theaters TBA.**



PHOTO COURTESY OF 20TH CENTURY FOX
Anne Hathaway (left) and Meryl Streep star in the film adaptation of 'The Devil Wears Prada,' which hits theaters tomorrow.

SUPERMAN RETURNS

First of all, the list of people skipped over for the role of Superman reads like a roster of "Cosmo Girl!" cover boys. Josh Hartnett, Ashton Kutcher, Paul Walker and Jerry O'Connell were all in discussions for the role, and Jim "Jesus" Caviezel expressed an interest. Naturally, unknown Brandon Routh got the role of his life. In this episode of the series, the Man of Steel comes back to Earth to fight Lex Luthor (Kevin Spacey) and win back Lois Lane (Kate Bosworth) after a five-year absence spent visiting the

WHO KILLED THE ELECTRIC CAR?

This is director Chris Payne's curiosity-piquing documentary looking into the birth, life, and death of the idea of the electric automobile, and how forms of renewable energy are a part of the next generation. Narrated by Martin Sheen ("The West Wing") and also features Tom Hanks and Mel Gibson. Though it's only being played in New York and

current oil crisis, i.e., how the U.S. is starting wars over it and all, alternative energy sources is a topic that needs to be discussed, and movies are the perfect vehicle to get emotions flowing and protests started. Reviews suggest that the story is told from an unbiased point of view, but if you're going to make a movie, you probably have an opinion in there somewhere. Also, it makes the Sheen/Cole ticket in 2008 pretty appealing; Sheen

ON SHELVES FAILURE TO LAUNCH

In a triumph of creative moviemaking, 35-year-old Tripp (Matthew McConaughey) suspects his parents, Al and Sue (Terry Bradshaw and Kathy Bates) have set him up with his dream girl (Sarah Jessica Parker, who may have something here with starring in unwatchable chick crap. She should look into a TV series) to get him to move out of the house. Those factors combining into hilarity is as certain as enjoying a new Rascal Flatts song. The only saving grace this film may have is the presence of Rob Corddry (*The Daily Show*). Hopefully, Corddry's part will be bigger than it was in "Old School." Yeah, he was in "Old School." Rated PG-13 for language, partial nudity and sexual content (gulp... better not be Kathy Bates. I think I'd rather see Corddry's butt).

—Compiled by managing editor Chris Johnson, who doesn't really hate women, just the choices they make in regards to entertainment.

E-mail: johnson@kykernel.com

ONTAP | For the week of JUNE 29 - JULY 5

TONIGHT
Villebilities w/ South 75
9 p.m. The Dame. Tickets cost \$5.

John Berry and the Outliers
9 p.m. Southgate House, Newport. Free.

TOMORROW
Nickelback
7:30 p.m. U.S. Bank Arena, Cincinnati. Tickets cost \$39.50 to \$47.50.

The Apparitions w/ Scourge of the Sea and These United States
9 p.m. The Dame. Tickets cost \$5.

Hank III w/ Murder Junkies
9 p.m. Southgate House, Newport. Tickets cost \$15.

SATURDAY
Lucero w/ Murder By Death, Vedera and The Ladybirds
9 p.m. Headliner's Music Hall, Louisville. Tickets cost \$12.

SUNDAY
Chris Monce and The Lag
9 p.m. Southgate House, Newport. Free.

TUESDAY
The Lexington-Fayette Urban County Supergroup
9 p.m. The Dame. Tickets cost \$3.

WEDNESDAY
Parlour Boys w/ Modena Vox
9 p.m. The Dame. Tickets cost \$5.

COMING SOON
Nenny Chesney
7:30 p.m. July 6, Freedom Hall, Louisville. Tickets cost \$53.50 to \$63.50.

Candlebox w/ Skynyrd
8 p.m. July 8, Bogarts, Cincinnati. Tickets cost \$20 to \$22.

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PG

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Graduate School Dissertations

<p>Name: Young-Kai Goo Program: Public Science Dissertation Title: The Developing Countries Participation in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Explaining the Maldives, Indonesia, Timor, and Philippines Major Professor: Dr. Donald Gross Date: 07/28/2006 Time: 1:00 PM Place: 1645 POT</p>	<p>Name: Mark Allen Worth Program: Biochemistry Dissertation Title: Role of Actin Dynamics in Parainfluenza 1 Mediated Membrane Fusion Events Major Professor: Dr. Kevin B. Sage Date: 06/29/2006 Time: 12:00 A.M. Place: 202 BBSR</p>	<p>Name: Jeffrey Lynn Tates Program: Physiology Dissertation Title: The genetic regulation of the response of hemopoietic stem/progenitor cells to the cytotoxic agent hydroxyurea Major Professor: Dr. George Eckels Date: 07/07/2006 Time: 10:00 A.M. Place: MS 508</p>	<p>Name: Joseph Peter Medendorp Program: Pharmaceutical Sciences Dissertation Title: Chemometrics, Spectroscopy, and Sensors for Integrating Sensing and Processing: Advanced Process Analytical Technology Major Professor: Dr. James Paul Date: 06/29/2006 Time: 2:00 PM Place: 222 College of Pharmacy</p>
<p>Name: Rajeshwar Vallappa Gaji Program: Veterinary Science Dissertation Title: Identification of co-sucking elements controlling gene expression in <i>Salicetia morone</i> Major Professor: Dr. Barry Fitzgerald Date: 06/29/2006 Time: 1:00 PM Place: Dept. of Veterinary Science</p>	<p>Name: Abigail Mahabero Program: Geology Dissertation Title: Deepener Crustal Flow and Chemistry in the Basin-Belted Western Slope Basin, West Bengal, India Major Professor: Dr. Susan Rimmer Date: 07/03/2006 Time: 1:00 PM Place: 203 Stone Research Building</p>	<p>Name: Christopher Raymond Wood Program: Economics Dissertation Title: Compensating Workers for On-The-Job Injury and Illness Major Professor: Dr. William H. Royst Date: 06/28/2006 Time: 10:00 A.M. Place: MS 321</p>	<p>Name: Hongzhi Dai Program: Statistics Dissertation Title: Parametric Estimation and Management Tests in Welfare Models Major Professor: Dr. Arnold Stromberg Date: 06/23/2006 Time: 1:00 PM Place: PHS 833</p>
<p>Name: Steven Jay Program: Business Administration (PhD) Dissertation Title: An Investigation of Low-Literacy Consumers' Processing of Written Advertisements Major Professor: Dr. Mel M. Haskbart Date: 07/27/2006 Time: 2:00 PM Place: 604 Gates College BEE</p>	<p>Name: Yuhua Ding Escobedo Program: Plant Physiology Dissertation Title: Interaction of ABA, NCP and heat treatment on apple fruit ripening and quality after harvest and cold storage Major Professor: Dr. Arthur Hunt Date: 07/07/2006 Time: 10:00 A.M. Place: S 201</p>		

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IN OUR OPINION

Laud (don't lament) UK's Spindletop plans

When UK announced last week that it wants to put a 400-person retirement community on the university-owned Spindletop Farm in rural northern Fayette County, Spindletop Club members were outraged.

We fail to see how the loss of a glorified country club is really all that significant, especially since UK is willing to issue bonds to pay for the much-needed \$9 million to \$12 million renovation of Spindletop Hall.

The university's plans for this retirement community for UK faculty, staff and alumni will feature patio homes, apartments and other buildings. And, according to the patriarchs of Spindletop Hall, this would completely ruin the locale's aesthetics.

"I live in Chevy Chase," Trudy Sims, whose family has belonged to the club since the 70s, told the Lexington Herald-Leader last week. "I wouldn't drive 25 to 30 minutes to be surrounded by buildings."

"I feel like I'm going to be homeless," Stacy McGoodwin, a member of the club for 10 years, told the Herald-Leader.

Liz Croney, a UK alumna and mother of three children who has belonged to the club for 20 years, said that she and her fellow club members were "absolutely distraught, like a bomb has been dropped on us out of nowhere" in a Herald-Leader interview.

"It's like Vietnam," Croney said in reference to UK's plans. "They said, 'We have to destroy a village to save it.'"

You'll have to forgive this editorial board — we're still reeling at that horrific, classless use of metaphor. Renovating an elitist club and turning it into a retirement haven for UK faculty, staff and alumni is not — and never will be — in the same realm as razing Saigon.

To pretend otherwise is ludicrous. In fact, it's downright embarrassing.

Besides, all this fuss may result in absolutely nothing. As UK spokesman Jay Blanton said last week, the plans are in the extremely preliminary stages, insofar that zoning issues might put a complete halt on the project.

But despite the backlash, UK should forge ahead with its tentative plans — the retirement center would put 94 acres of the 1,000-acre farm, which UK bought in 1959 for \$850,000, to excellent use.

The university estimates that the retirement community would cost an estimated \$150 million but will need 200 employees and bring in an annual payroll of about \$9 million.

The project will create jobs and generate funds — this is an imperative investment and will also show that UK cares about its retired faculty, staff and alumni.

UK's Research Foundation should approve the retirement community.

Meanwhile, the Spindletop Club members who threatened to pull their membership and go somewhere else if UK goes ahead with this plan should do just that.

Senate was right to reject flag burning amendment

The United States Senate on Tuesday voted 66-34 to reject a Constitutional amendment that would prohibit the "physical desecration" of the American flag.

That the vote took place is neither alarming nor surprising. This amendment has been on the Congressional agenda practically every year since Republicans regained control of both houses in 1995.

What is alarming is that only one vote prevented the measure from being sent to the states, of which, three-fourths, or 38, would have to ratify the amendment before it went into effect.

While flag burning is certainly a reprehensible means of protest, it is just that — protest. The Supreme Court has never viewed speech as being confined to the spoken or written word.

The American flag is a symbol of the liberties under which all Americans live. To prohibit its desecration as a means of political speech would serve only to dilute the very freedoms for which the flag stands.

Kentucky's senior senator, Mitch McConnell (R-Louisville), can rightly claim to have been the deciding vote that kept the First Amendment intact.

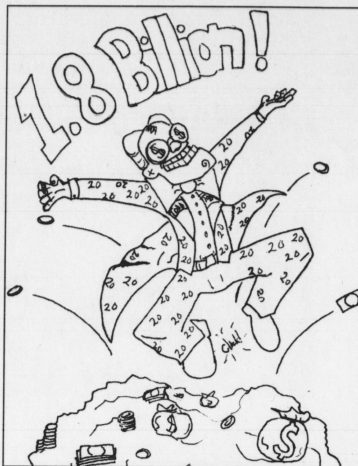
In a statement, McConnell said that he personally holds the flag dear, and views it as a "symbol of freedom."

According to the Cincinnati Enquirer, he added, "But behind it is something larger — the Constitution."

For weeks, Republicans pressured McConnell to vote in favor of the amendment, but the senator never wavered, and ended up casting his vote in favor of free speech and the First Amendment.

For that vote, months before he is slated to become his party's leader in the Senate, McConnell deserves the thanks of Kentuckians.

We do not honor the American flag by banning its desecration. The parchment which bears our Bill of Rights is far more valuable than the cloth that symbolizes that document.



TONY FISHER, THE KENTUCKY KERNEL

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Where are the conservatives?

When I was a teenager in the 1960s, dabbling in politics, my mom and dad led the Democratic Party. They'd had enough of street protests and flag burnings, and made for the shores of the party of Eisenhower and Nixon.

They'd seen Democrats try to solve all problems by throwing away money, but government, they reasoned, should conserve. They were conservatives.

They didn't like the idea of government being in debt, and were aghast at this new thing called a "trade deficit." The 1994 "Republican Revolution" would've especially thrilled them. Small government and welfare limits would've been right up their alley. But they were true conservatives. Yes, keep the government out of your pocketbook, but also out of unnecessary wars, your bedroom and your telephone records.

If they were alive today, they'd be appalled at the number of Republican members of Congress under investigation for corruption. They would have found the Republicans' trillion-dollar boondoggle in Iraq just as offensive as the useless Democrat-led agencies of their own day.

And the idea that a Republican president would move America from a surplus to this yawning, endless deficit would've made them furious. After all, isn't that what "tax and spend" Democrats did?

But Democratic spending was a drop in the bucket compared to current Republican pilfering. No wonder commentators like George Will have long claimed that Bush and the current Republican crop are not conservatives at all.

Me, I'm a flaming liberal, a bit

homeless in the current climate, but if my parents were alive, they'd feel just as adrift in today's "Party of Abe Lincoln."

LAWRENCE MINGS

A fix for voter turnout

I read in the paper that illegals might have voted in last month's elections, and oh, what an outcry.

But judging from the record low turnouts at the polls, I say let 'em. Someone's got to make electoral decisions for us, since apparently citizens don't want to.

Perhaps those who've crawled through mud and dodged vigilantes to get here will actually appreciate the privilege.

BILL CARLISLE

Rather didn't bow to power

Dan Rather leaves, and the profession he helped elevate chases him out with Enquirer-worthy snipes. What were the headlines last week? "Rather departs under cloud of scandal," "Dan Rather finally quits, having stayed too long."

Journalists have forgotten that before Rather and his generation, the media were a propaganda branch of government, a ventriloquist at the service of the party in power.

Rather and his cohorts made journalism a force to be reckoned with. They actually told people things that mattered.

They were arrogant, even haughty, because the government they went after had shamelessly abused power (kind of like today), and in order to take on those challenges, you have to be rather fat in the head. You certainly can't accuse

the press today of being fat in the head. I'd say submissive would be an apt description.

And perhaps that's the reason for all the nasty remarks as Rather fades. Today, radio, TV news and print journalism exist as a Bush administration mouthpiece.

Now that the last giant of the profession has departed, the media can properly return to sniveling for a seat at the table.

CHARLES SUMNERIAN

Blame Bush for pump prices

High gas prices are not the fault of environmental regulations, as suggested recently by GOP lawmakers. Nor are they a Democrat-created smokescreen to divert attention from a "strong" economy.

These comments are not surprising. America's oil sector has been the primary donor to Republicans since 2000. In fact, you'll not find a single Democrat among the top 20 recipients of big oil contributions.

By contrast, defense-industry contributions are more evenly split between the parties. This is noteworthy — follow the campaign dollars, and you'll see the entire Republican majority was paid for largely by oil industry contributions.

So what will bring gas prices down? In 2002, Bush's senior economic adviser claimed that invading Iraq would bring relief at the pump. Conservative commentator Steve Forbes said once we invade Iran, we'll see lower gas prices. These suggestions won't bring down gas prices. Our gas woes are the result of one-party rule, and will not abate until we send the Republicans packing. They have fleeced us, and it's time for them to go.

GARY ELLIS

Car companies should take the high road, help solve oil crisis

You do know that the real reason we went to war in Iraq was for the oil, right? It wasn't the weapons of mass destruction or to save thousands from an oppressive dictator. It was oil — the black gold that Americans eagerly crave to make their lives as comfortable as possible.



Megan Vazmina
KENTUCKY KERNEL

The truth was that Iraq had oil and we needed it. I don't subscribe to this theory (surprise) — the idea that Iraq was based on the need for oil — but there are many Americans still unsure of the need to invade Iraq. And as the years have passed with no sign of the weapons of mass destruction and the continual loss of American lives people are becoming wary of the war.

It's easy to spot those who didn't vote for President Bush — just look for the Kerry bumper stickers or the anti-Bush stickers on the back of a Cadillac Escalade or Hummer. These people don't like Bush and the job he's doing, and they are

proudly declaring such on their gas-guzzling vehicles.

We have reached a point in which our nation needs to become self-sustaining, and needs to reduce its oil-consumption.

The current conflict with Iran only goes to further prove that our nation cannot afford to be blackmailed by the Middle Eastern countries that are the promised land of energy. Drilling in our own country, Alaska for example, will temporarily relieve some of the need to import — but it is only temporary. It's time for a radical change, a change that requires the cooperation of every single American and most especially, the government.

In his State of the Union address, Bush spoke of researching alternate forms of energy, finding new ways to power automobiles and he is right. But I have yet to see an ethanol-run car or even the harvesting of corn in the Midwest to work on forming a new fuel. I'm completely fed up with the government, the administration and everyone promising new solutions to our problems and never delivering. Anyone remember Social Security? Where did that go?

As far as I am concerned, there needs

to be some form of a Manhattan Project in order to solve this problem.

If in the span of less than 10 years, our nation can produce a nuclear weapon, why could we not find alternate energy? Gather the best scientists in the necessary fields and stick them a room until they find the answer.

That way we can put all the sanctions we want on Iran without facing the consequences and the United States can stand strong as an economic power against China, the fastest growing economy. For all too soon, there will not only be a struggle for the United States to get the oil it needs, but also to compete with the Chinese as they industrialize and crave it for themselves.

Yet it does little good to make new cars that run on bubbles or whatever scientists create to operate vehicles, because Americans are obsessed with SUVs. The bigger, the better — and though SUV sales are dropping marginally it is not enough.

The gas mileage of such vehicles is pitiful and will only hurt any progress that is made. I'm not condemning anyone who owns an SUV because I drive a minivan and trust me, it isn't much better, but

what I am trying to get across is the need to companies to stop producing them.

For once, companies should take a good look at the world around them, the crisis of oil, and instead of worrying about profit and the demands of the public, make a decision to cease the production of vehicles that do not meet certain miles-per-gallon standards.

Instead look to the future and manufacture hybrids. Because hybrids are the future, and soon SUVs will be the past, so corporations need to jump start hybrid productions and help the country, not hinder it from the advancement it so needs.

In conclusion, I thought I would do the unthinkable and quote an infamous celebrity who finds slightly more wrong with SUVs than just their gas-guzzling.

"Initially they were developed to give one the ability to drive in the middle of nowhere where there are no roads ... (what) are all these yuppies doing inside them charging down a crowded street in Manhattan?"

Well put, Mr. Michael Moore!

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