

THE Kentucky Kernel

Thursday, December 8, 2005

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UK takes top 20 plan to higher ed council

Council on Postsecondary Education reviews plan, discusses impact of tuition hikes on students

By Darliah Shala
THE KENTUCKY KERNEL

UK officials presented President Lee Todd's Top 20 Business Plan to the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education yesterday afternoon, drawing approval from council members.

"I think it's a bold vision. I think it's a great road map," said council chairman Ronald Greenberg. "There are challenges with it galore, but you need the vision."

Angela Martin, UK's vice presi-

dent of planning, budget and policy analysis and Connie Ray, vice president for research, planning and effectiveness, presented the same business plan that Todd presented to the campus on Monday. The UK Board of Trustees will vote on the plan Tuesday.

"We focused on making sure we got the story across," Martin said. "The plan is achievable."

"UK has been very thoughtful in this."

Tuition fund policy was another topic that came up, bringing presi-

dents from Western Kentucky University, University of Louisville and other state institutions into the discussion. The university presidents brought up concerns about affordability versus managing cost and quality of a university education, but council members were adamant that a quality education, now and in the future, is attainable.

"It's a very complicated situation and there's a lot of factors involved in making sure that all of our students ... have the option of being involved," said council member Dan Flanagan on students' ability to get a university education.

"It's just going to be difficult but as a member of the council I'm very

committed to making sure that it remains affordable."

Prior to 2001, the council's method for determining what a reasonable cost for a university education was calculating nominal tuition and fees to a certain percentage bracket of the state's per capita income.

After 2001, universities had more control over tuition and fees, said Ryan Quarles, student representative to the council and UK agricultural economics and diplomacy grad student. Now the council is encouraging universities to turn to a model of funding where nominal tuition amounts are based off the median family income.

"We don't want price to deter them from participating in postsecondary education," said council member Mark Wattier.

The issue of funding bled over into the discussion of how UK will achieve its state-mandated goal of being a top-20 university by 2020, which was laid out in House Bill 1 of 1997.

Greenberg said the goal of boosting UK into the top 20 was one the council considered worth pouring funds into.

"We recognize UK's unique position and have pumped several hundred million extra dollars (into UK) and we hope to move forward."

See Plan on page 2

Ky. Dems predict tighter budget

Say costs could mean higher tuition for college students

By Sean Rose
THE KENTUCKY KERNEL

During a forum at Henry Clay High School last night state legislators said college students will be paying higher tuition if Kentucky's economic problems continue.



Scorsone

"If we don't come up with more money you're going to see more cost shifting to the students," said State Senator Ernesto Scorsone.

Scorsone and State Representative Kathy Stein, both Democrats serving in Fayette County, spoke on issues to expect in the upcoming session of the general assembly, took questions and criticized the current administration in a forum sponsored by the Central Kentucky chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union.



Stein

"This governor got elected because he was going to clean up government," Scorsone said. "It's clear that he hasn't. He's muddied it up and gummed it up even more."

Stein also criticized some legislatures, saying they make bills because of "knee jerk reactions to what is popular" to gain political power.

She gave an example of a proposed study of how much it costs to educate children of illegal aliens, saying the study was meant to encourage negative views toward illegal immigrants.

"What was that bill designed to do?" Stein said. "Was it designed to make us feel good ... or was it designed to make us

See Legislature on page 2

Focused on finals

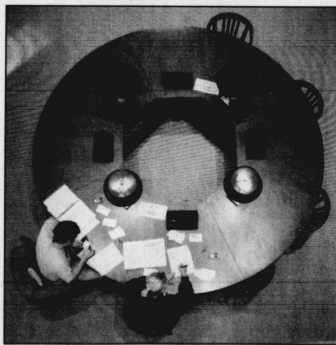


Top: Brittany Ratliff, a psychology freshman, roams through the periodicals of the William T. Young Library yesterday.

HILLY SCHIFFER | STAFF

Right: Steve Benoit, a psychology freshman, and Stephanie Schell, a nursing freshman, study together yesterday for their upcoming finals.

BRAD LUTTRELL | STAFF



Dead Week doesn't live up to its name, especially with Finals Week looming ahead for UK's student population. Deadlines hang over the heads of students and with only a few days until the dreaded final examinations, projects and papers are due, those students are making use of every spare moment to prepare in hopes they'll make the grade.

Take a break from the studying with these tips for relieving stress during finals **COLUMN, PAGE 4**

World Equestrian Games

Predictions of event's potential payoff vary

By Tim Wiseman
THE KENTUCKY KERNEL

Lexington hopes its latest bet on horses pays off.

With this week's announcement that Lexington would host an international horse competition, organizers are predicting a major payoff, but some are skeptical of such an economic impact for Lexington and UK.

On Tuesday in Bahrain, the Federation Equestre Internationale announced the Ken-

tucky Horse Park would host the 2010 World Equestrian Games — the first time the games will be held outside of Europe. And in 2010, it will be first time the event's seven competitions will be held in one venue.

The Kentucky Horse Park has estimated selling 300,000 tickets over the course of the two-week event and predicts a \$100 million economic windfall for the area.

"This is a chance of a lifetime, a once-in-a-lifetime oppor-

tunity," said Chris Gilligan of the Kentucky Commerce Cabinet. "The \$100 million (estimate) might be conservative."

Gilligan pointed to next year's games in Aachen, Germany whose organizers are expecting to sell more than 500,000 tickets and predicting a total economic surge of \$275 million, as an example of the games' potential impact.

"What are we going to get out of this?" Gilligan said. "Hundreds of millions of dollars

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Students give 'motivation' to struggling local youths

By James Davidson
THE KENTUCKY KERNEL

It takes a village to raise a child and Lexington is no different.

Operation Motivation, a program designed to connect with Lexington's inner city youth through tutoring and mentoring, is entering its second year.

The program teaches children the importance of higher education and the need to do well academically. It was also put in place to improve the children's social skills and test scores, said LaShala Porter, vice president and community service chair of the Black Student Union and head of Operation Motivation.

Last year, 25 students who were in the mentoring program were in danger

of failing their academic grade. With the help of about a dozen UK students, all 25 children were promoted to the next grade.

Porter, a UK psychology junior, expects the same type of success this year but there are not as many UK students wanting to help as in the past. "Last year we had 10 to 13 tutors come out each week," Porter said. "This year we have had four solid tutors come to help, which is really sad."

"Operation Motivation needs more support from students in general...not necessarily from the university, just students."

Porter said students are role models for the community and it's important

See Tutor on page 2

NEWS BRIEFS

Schwarzenegger hospitalized for rapid heartbeat

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger spent a few hours in a Sacramento, Calif., hospital Tuesday night after complaining of a rapid heartbeat, his office said yesterday.

Spokeswoman Margita Thompson said Schwarzenegger, 58, had the stomach flu Tuesday and "consequently he experienced a rapid heartbeat. His personal doctor recommended he have it checked."

Thompson said the governor went to the University of California-Davis Medical Center in Sacramento about midnight, where physicians said his heart rate was normal. She said he was observed for a few hours and released. He was back in his office yesterday.

Schwarzenegger had open-heart surgery in 1997 to repair a congenital defect known as bicuspid aortic valve, in which the valve has only two leaflets that open and close rather than the normal three. As a consequence, the valves tend to

wear out more rapidly than normal.

Schwarzenegger's aortic valve was replaced with the pulmonary valve from the right ventricle of the heart. The pulmonary valve was then replaced with a valve from a cadaver. His repaired aortic valve began bleeding within a day, however, and it too was replaced with a valve from a cadaver.

Gunmen kill police officers, free insurgent

KIRKUK, Iraq — More than a dozen gunmen staged a brazen dawn raid on a hospital in the volatile northern oil city of Kirkuk, killing several police officers and freeing an injured insurgent being held there.

The attack on the Jomhouriya hospital in downtown Kirkuk, about 150 miles north of Baghdad, began around 5 a.m. and involved gunmen who arrived in three vehicles, said Salem Jalal, head of hospital security.

"The hospital came under strong attack from 20 armed men. They were wearing police uniforms and holding police badges. The operation was well planned," Jalal said.

Several of the attackers infiltrated the hospital and killed the police officers guarding Youssef Ali, who was recovering from injuries suffered about a week ago while planting a roadside bomb, police said.

Ali's father, Mohammed Ali, was one of several men arrested in Kirkuk in late November for allegedly plotting to kill one of the judges involved in the ongoing trial of former President Saddam Hussein and seven co-defendants, police said.

U.S. envoy cited as source in CIA-detainee case

BERLIN — Germany's former interior minister was told by a U.S. diplomat in 2004 that the CIA may have mistakenly abducted and de-

tained a German citizen suspected of being linked to al-Qaida, the German government announced yesterday.

The minister, Otto Schily, was informed in May 2004 by then U.S. Ambassador Daniel Coats that Khaled Masri, a car dealer of Lebanese descent, claimed he had been in U.S. custody for five months, the Interior Ministry statement said. In an interview with a German weekly to be published today, Schily indicated he was visited by Coats after Masri had been released. Schily told Die Zeit that he asked the U.S. for an explanation, but "unfortunately this did not happen in an adequate manner."

In its statement, the Interior Ministry said "Schily assured Coats the information would remain strictly confidential."

What Schily knew about the Masri case has been at the center of a political debate here about whether the former government under then-Chancellor Gerhard

Schroeder was aware of secret U.S. detention centers in Europe and the use of CIA planes to transport suspected militants through German air space.

The nation's opposition liberal parties have called for a debate in Parliament next week on the matter.

UK professor earns fellowship

James A. Francis, an associate professor and director of the Classics division at UK, has been offered a National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship for the next year.

The fellowship, worth \$40,000, will help Francis work on his project "People as Pictures: Visualities of Text and Image in the Second through Fourth Centuries, C.E." The project's goal is to complete a book exploring imagery during the transition from classical to late antiquity.

COMPILED FROM STAFF AND WIRE REPORTS

Legislature

Continued from page 1

feel bad and resent them?"

The legislators said tax increases are wrongly viewed in negative way because of partisan issues and not obtaining more money would mean trouble for state programs.

"If we don't raise revenue, we are sealing the fate of health care and education in the commonwealth," Scorsone said.

The two also said because of the state's economic woes, resisting legalizing casino gambling would be difficult to pass up.

"I think it's going to be very, very hard to say no to the casinos," Scorsone said.

Both legislators disapproved of casinos, saying they're an economic system that would weigh on the back of the poor and elderly.

Local retail worker and member of the local ACLU board Merry Jones said she came to the forum to help her understand issues that would affect her.

"It's helpful for me to hear up close and personal information," Jones said. "I think it's really vital for us to realize the importance of politics at the state level and how in many ways that affects our personal lives even more than in the national level."

Wes Wright, who works for the Kentucky Fairness Alliance, which focuses on equal rights for gays and lesbians, said this and similar forums were important for the public.

"Any time you can get progressive, fair-minded people in a room exchanging ideas, it's valuable," Wright said.

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Plan

Continued from page 1

Despite the funds UK has received, Greenberg said it would not fully meet the need.

"To reach those goals is going to require an increase in tuition," Greenberg said, adding that even with the increases, the council is making moves to ensure attending UK or any other state research institution won't be out of reach. "Today it's affordable. I think those changes are going to keep it affordable."

Greenberg also said the increase in prices will be worth it in terms of a better education.

"It should translate to better quality," he said. "I think you're getting great value for the increases they (the council members) are proposing."

The debate is not a new one.

"Tuition policy is never cut and dried because affordability is a big deal," said Thomas Layzell, president of the council. "You've got to always look at that. You've got to craft your tuition policy."

He also said it's a balancing game with all factors involved.

"You're looking at tuition, financial aid and appropriations. You're looking at access, affordability and quality," Layzell said. "You've got to deal with them all at the same time."

Despite the debates and questions, all parties seemed to agree on one thing.

"Higher education is the best investment anyone could make," Martin said.

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Tutor

Continued from page 1

for them to give back to stay connected as individuals.

"Just dedicating consistent time each week with the kids shows them someone cares enough about them to take time out of their day for them and not be paid for it," Porter said, adding that she feels she is giving back. "God blesses me in all I do and I want to share my blessings with others."

She said she wants each child to get the help they may not receive during regular school hours or at home.

"This is why it is so important that more students come out and support us because the kids perform much better with one-on-one tutoring rather than two students per tutor. They are able to focus on what they need to do," said Porter.

The youth in the program do want to learn to better themselves; they just need the motivation to do so.

"I enjoy the program because you all help me," said Richard Martin, a seventh grader at Bryan Station Middle School, of Diana Anosike, a civil engineering sophomore and tutor, en-

joys working with the students in the program.

"I get personal fulfillment out of it," she said. "I used to struggle, and I (wished) that I had someone there to help me. I like to see people succeed, especially minority students."


Although geared toward inner city youth, this program offers mentoring to any student in middle and elementary school who feel they need help.

Operation Motivation takes place Tuesdays and Thursdays. On Tuesdays, it is held at Bryan Station Middle School, off Wickland Drive near Bryan Station Road, from 4 to 6 p.m. Thursday's tutoring sessions are at Northern Elementary, off Rookwood Parkway also near Bryan Station Road, from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.

Porter said that in order for this program to continue to be a great success and a contributor to Lexington's community, it needs the help of students. Education is the key to success in this society, Porter said, and it's not about making herself or her organization look good.

"I'm not doing this for publicity or to make myself or Black Student Union look better, for me it's always been about the kids," she said.

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KENTUCKY COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE SYSTEM

Horses

Continued from page 1

lars, thousands of new jobs and great publicity for Lexington — you can't buy that kind of publicity."

He said UK students could have a great opportunity to be part of the event, as hundreds of volunteers will be necessary.

UK economics professor Ken Troske said any predictions at this point are probably just guesses.

"I don't think anybody knows," said Troske, who is also the director for UK's Center for Business and Economic Research. "They're trying to put the best spin on it possible."

He explained that the Kentucky Derby has been shown to have an economic impact of \$60 million each year for Louisville, and he has trouble seeing this international

event — which includes competitions such as show jumping and dressage — doing more than that.

The key he said is drawing people who would not be coming to Kentucky and spending money anyway. Organizers of the Lexington games hope for thousands to travel from Europe, but Troske said that might be too much to expect.

"You get economic impact when you draw people who wouldn't come here otherwise," he said. "It's a crap shoot as to how many people will actually come over here (from abroad)."

Even though he said publicly financed stadiums and major events often don't live up to the hype, he thought the economic risk in this case was slight.

"It's kind of hit or miss on a lot of these events," he said. "I am sure these guys have studied this — they're smart people."

"In some sense, it's not that risky."

Larissa Kern, UK student and president of the school's equestrian club team, hoped the games could spotlight her team and its efforts to become a club sport.

She met with UK associate athletic Micki King last night to discuss the possibility of equestrian becoming a varsity sport at UK.

The process is still in its early stages, Kern said, as UK must evaluate the logistics of facilities and equipment necessary for making equestrian a varsity sport. She said the club plans to meet with Athletic Director Mitch Barnhart soon.

Still, she said she is encouraged about the possible impact of the international games in Lexington.

"I think this is fabulous," she said. "I do think it will help our case as far as focusing on what we have — Lexington is clearly the horse capital of the world."

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\$100 million

Estimated revenue from Lexington's 2010 World Equestrian Games

\$275 million

Predicted revenue from 2006 World Equestrian Games in Germany

\$60 million

Estimated yearly revenue from the Kentucky Derby



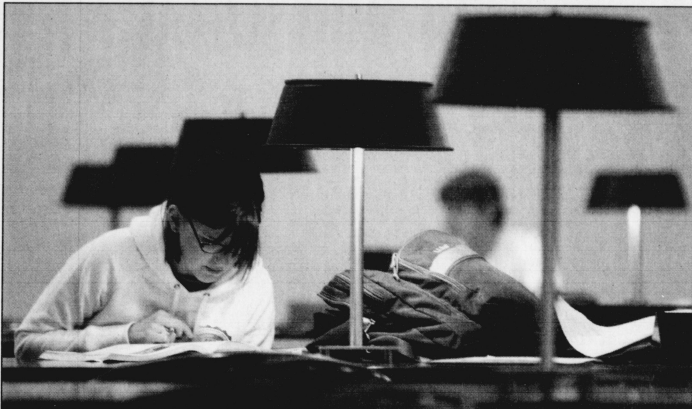
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CRAM SESSION



As Dead Week rolls on, Emily Solomon, a nursing sophomore, prepares for finals yesterday in William T. Young Library.

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Salvation Army brings cheer to those in need

By Brandt Fuller
THE KENTUCKY KERNEL

The Salvation Army is helping the children of both Fayette and Jessamine Counties have a special Christmas this year.

Beginning on Nov. 18 and running through Sunday, volunteers have been set up at the Fayette Mall running the Angel Tree program.

The purpose of the Angel Tree is to provide new toys and clothing to children across central Kentucky whose parents may not be able to purchase this season for various reasons.

"It is a very personal way to affect the life of a child this Christmas," said Deborah Ashcraft, area coordinator of the Salvation Army of Central Kentucky. "It is almost like you are personally adopting a child for the holidays."

Currently, there are about 3,100 children on the Angel Tree ranging from infants to 17-year-olds. Ashcraft expects to help 5,000 before the holidays are over.

"We would love to see every child adopted because children are truly our angels," Ashcraft said.

Until Sunday, the Salvation Army will have a table set up in front of the entrance to Dillard's at the Fayette Mall. Here, there are tags for every one of the almost 3,100 children. The tags are a wish list provided by the parent or guardian of the child, and serve as a guide to help you know what to look for when shopping. The number of items bought is left up to those who



FYI

If you would like to make a financial contribution, you may do so by sending or dropping off a check care of the Salvation Army Angel Tree to:

The Salvation Army Christmas Distribution Center
1126 Russell Cave Road
Lexington, Ky. 40505

"adopt" the children. After Sunday, the Salvation Army will be accepting financial donations to purchase gifts for those left and for any child that did not apply for the tree in time.

"We want to help all those in need, including those that didn't apply in time for whatever circumstance," Ashcraft said. "A child's father who lost his job in November should not be excluded."

The Angel Tree will come to a close when all the gifts will be handed out on December 19, 20 and 21 at the Distribution Center.

Along with picking up the gifts, the parents and

guardians will also be able to pick up food from the Mountain of Love program and gift cards for perishable items such as meat, milk, butter and eggs so their families may be able to enjoy a traditional Christmas dinner.

Gifts must be returned to either the volunteers at the mall or to the Salvation Army's Christmas Distribution Center at 1126 Russell Cave Road in Lexington no later than noon on Sunday.

The mall will be open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 10 p.m., and on Sunday from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. The Distribution Center will be open Monday through Friday from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m., Saturday from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., and Sunday from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m.

The Angel Tree is just one of several programs this holiday season. In addition to the Angel Tree and the Mountain of Love, the Salvation Army will be serving lunch at noon on Christmas Day for anyone who would like to stop in.

Everything the Salvation Army does is community based, meaning it receives no funds from the national organization. As a result, they rely heavily on donations and contributions from the community in which they are involved.

To help make the lives of those in need this holiday season better, call the Salvation Army at 859-312-0934.

E-mail
features@kykernel.com

WHAT'S THE DEAL? | Demystifying campus trends

Study break tips from the pros

Have you ever gotten so stressed out and you wound up breaking something or going through some extreme rage? Well, if you have, you might want to seek help.

Final exams week has historically presented some of the most stressed times during the college years.

oftentimes making our youthful age advance a lot quicker than anyone would like. Whether you are an undergrad, or enrolled in a law school, cramming for these last exams creates insanity within our minds which severely begs for relief.

I went around and asked some fellow students what they do to relieve stress during the school year, particularly at this time. I'll admit I was quite surprised by some of the activities or ideas the students gave, and some of them are far too inappropriate to mention in a college newspaper (imagine that). But for the most part, everyone has a unique way of chilling out and taking a break from studying.

If you find yourself getting ready to explode because of school, or you will just flat out vomit if you read one more page from your Microbiology book (pretending you are smart enough to have one), seek some of the following ideas to help momentarily get away from it all.

Between the students' ideas I encountered and my own, I think there is something for everyone out there to try. Obviously the freshmen are new to the college scene and may not have developed ways in which to obtain peace during these times yet. Let me share with

everyone what some of our upperclassmen had to say about it all.

The first, and most obvious, stress reliever named was working out or playing sports. Having your head stuck in a book all day can cause your eyes to go crossed and your brain to possibly lose common sense. By getting up and pumping your heart through exercise, you may be able to prevent such trauma and could gain the energy you need to last. I suggest using your free membership to the Johnson Center (located on campus, you lazy-ass), and start working out for Spring Break or whatever it is you envision when pushing up that whopping 20-pound dumbbell. If the weather allowed for more snow, this relieving act could also take place outdoors in the form of sledding or building a Frosty look-a-like.

I remember the first time I reluctantly joined the Facebook this past summer and somehow got sucked into it quick. I don't know how it does it, but apparently, checking the Facebook is the next best stress relieving/study break activity. You see it in the library and just about anywhere you find a computer, but students all over campus are on this thing like white on rice. What was once that annoying AIM sound you used to hear everywhere, now has turned into the quiet keypad noise of someone checking walls and poking people (whatever the hell that means).

An idea I didn't hear so much, but thought it important enough to mention is job searching. It's never too early to be looking for a summer job or career for

that matter. Take a minute to set your books down and think about what you would like to do for your next job. Get online and search for job openings and descriptions through the campus Cyber-Cat or Monster.com. Many of us have desires and aspirations of getting away for a month or two to experience life outside Lexington, but few of us actually take the time or effort to see that it happens.

The summer is the one time full-time students have the opportunity of gaining the work experience they will need for the following years to come. Use your time wisely.

There are all kinds of alternative things you can do to get your mind off of test preparation, such as watching a movie, eating a good meal, or even taking a joy ride/walk around campus. But like I mentioned earlier, there are also some (disturbing) ideas I heard from a few individuals around this campus. For entertainment purposes only, and keeping the donors' names undisclosed, let me share a few with you.

While some people like to holiday shop for relaxation, one person likes to spend time on the toilet catching up on luxury reading.

Not that reading is a bad thing, but buddy, don't spend too much time on the toilet or you'll wind up getting more out of it than just a good book, if you know what I mean.

Overall, I think the best one I heard was when someone said they prefer to have a drink of bourbon while putting their book aside. I must say, only in Kentucky.

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- Campus Address
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- Date, Time and Location of Pickup

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SATURDAY I.U.P.U.I.

MIDNIGHT AT THE LEXINGTON ICE CENTER

'Kong' gets giant-sized premiere

By John Horn
LOS ANGELES TIMES

NEW YORK — The star of "King Kong" is very large. The premiere of Peter Jackson's new film was even larger.

Universal Pictures filled no fewer than 38 Times Square movie theaters Monday night as it unveiled "King Kong" for nearly 8,000 people. Jackson introduced his \$220-million film — Screen 13 at the Loews E-Walk was the A-list auditorium — while clutching the metal frame used to create Kong in the original 1933 film.

"This is my security blanket," Jackson said, holding tightly to the 1-foot-tall model. "I wanted to make 'Kong' ever since I was 9

years old."

Even though Jackson didn't film a day in Manhattan — he made the movie in his native New Zealand — New York, of course, plays a prominent role in the three-hour film. The city even allowed Jackson to climb to the 103rd floor of the Empire State Building so the filmmaker could better visualize Kong's final stand.

"That was a huge thrill for me," Jackson said of ascending the landmark skyscraper via a workmen's elevator, then a ladder.

To accommodate the crowds, Universal started some screenings as early as 6 p.m. and others as late as 7:45 p.m. For the first five minutes, where Jackson and stars Naomi Watts, Jack Black and Adrien Brody sat,

the film sound was about half a second out of synchronization. The problem — one of the prompts of the night — was promptly fixed.

The premiere gave composer James Newton Howard a chance to finally meet the film's director. Howard was hired just six weeks ago, after the film's original composer, Howard Shore, parted ways with the project because of artistic differences. Given the tight deadline, Howard orchestrated the music from Los Angeles, while Jackson reviewed it from New Zealand.

Thanks to the staggered starting times, Universal was able to transport the throngs across town to a reception for 3,000 people.

Universal Pictures Chairwoman Stacey Snider

praised Jackson for his "master work," even though, under a previous regime, Universal had refused to make the movie. The premiere was very much aimed at establishing a profile for Jackson's film, which opens Dec. 14.

With an obviously biased audience, which included Donald Trump, George Lucas, Glenn Close, actor-comedian Richard Belzer and Fay Wray's daughter and son-in-law, Victoria Riskin and David Rintels, the word was uniformly enthusiastic, with many guests sobbing at the film's conclusion.

Through their tears, however, some spotted Jackson in a cameo as one of the pilots buzzing Kong in the final scene.

DVDs lead the way in getting the message out

By Elaine Dutka
LOS ANGELES TIMES

HOLLYWOOD — In these polarized times, there's at least one thing upon which liberals and conservatives can agree: the political potential of film. DVDs, in particular, are regarded as a way of sidestepping a risk-averse Hollywood establishment and getting the message out.

Launching this week, on the left side of the aisle: Ironweed, a San Francisco-based DVD-of-the-month club (www.ironweedfilms.com) that will disseminate "progressive" documentaries and feature films and also serve as a networking tool. As part of a grass-roots marketing campaign, groups such as MoveOn.org, the Progressive Majority, Working Assets and Nation magazine have alerted their subscribers.

On the right: Eagle Publishing, a leading conservative publisher based in Washington, was selling so many DVDs through its book club that it recently set up its own DVD Web site (www.conservativedvds.com). A documentary about political commentator Ann Coulter, "Is It True What They Say About Ann?" has sold more than 4,000 copies through the combined outlets.

"Our Web site has only a couple of dozen titles, but we're hoping for 100 before long," said Jeffrey Rubin, editor of the book club and head of Eagle Publishing's new DVD operation. "DVDs are democratizing Hollywood, making for greater diversity. Someone with something worth saying no longer has to be left out of the suite by a producer who'd rather be dead than make a movie that sniffs of anything conservative."

Ironweed is the branchchild of Los Angeles native Adam Werbach, who, in the mid-1990s at age 23, became the youngest president of the Sierra Club. Werbach later switched his focus to producing benefit albums for the Beastie Boys and Pearl Jam, developing online ads for the Kerry-Edwards campaign and distributing video material to schools through his Act Now Productions. Building community — eroded by suburbanization and endless TV-watching, he says — is the primary goal. His DVD club, he says, is a synthesis of the "dry" efforts at social change and the jazzier world of show business.

"Films are far better at bringing people together than elections, which people approach like medicine," Werbach said on the phone from

his San Francisco office. "Instead of being preachy and didactic, however, they must, first of all, be entertaining."

The club was inspired by the success of Michael Moore's "Fahrenheit 9/11," which created a new generation of social-interest documentarians, he says, and Robert Greenwald's home video success with "Uncensored: The Whole Truth About the Iraq War."

"Ironweed" refers to Werbach's determination to "champion the weeds of the world" — amazing pictures that fell through the cracks. Members pay \$14.95 for a monthly DVD selection.

Each month's offerings will conform to a theme, the first of which is "boundaries." The feature is "Wetback: The Undocumented Documentary" by Arturo Perez Torres. The story, about two undocumented Nicaraguans apprehended at the Mexican border en route to Canada, won nine awards at U.S. film festivals and has played on TV abroad. Though National Geographic bought the foreign rights, domestic distribution never came to pass.

Two shorts accompany the feature. In "Where Is Iraq?" filmmaker Baz Shamoun joins other Iraqi exiles on the Jordanian border, capturing their

views of the Saddam Hussein regime and the Americans on the eve of the current war. In "Terminal Bar," Stefan Nadelman illuminates the strange mix of characters at a New York bar.

Conservatives are playing catch-up, says Jim Hubbard, president of the American Renaissance Film Festival, an event featuring right-of-center fare that is coming to Mann's Chinese Theater in Hollywood Jan. 19-15.

"The documentary 'Michael Moore Hates America' debuted at our festival and the DVD sold about 20,000 copies on our Web site alone," Hubbard said. "That's not a turn-of-the-head number for a studio executive, but it's a huge opportunity for producers of low-budget films. Anyone with a camera and a good idea can compete these days because the cost of entry is very low."

DVDs are cost-effective in terms of marketing as well, notes Govindini Murty, co-founder and co-director of the annual Liberty Film Festival, Hollywood's first film festival for conservative and libertarian filmmakers.

"If theatrical is prohibitively expensive," said Murty, "DVDs are a great way to get out a political message."

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IN OUR OPINION

UK's sold on its top-20 mandate — are you?

President Lee Todd has thrown down the gauntlet: UK is serious about achieving top-20 status.

But is the state? When the Kentucky legislature handed UK its mandate, it was assumed the state would have backed the university in attaining such a lofty goal. But with increasing budget cuts irritating UK administrators and students, it looks like the state is leaving UK behind.

Between now and January — when the General Assembly returns to session — Todd has said he and the university will lobby the state heavily to make their case clear. The state needs to listen carefully to UK's plan. Feedback needs to be given.

And above all, the General Assembly needs to make a decision that it will back UK for the better of the state, not just the university.

Todd makes clear arguments about the benefits of a robust, fast-growing university. The economic values of such top institutions in other states are too hard to ignore, and this state cannot afford ignore UK.

Legislators should also pay attention to the burden students would undoubtedly suffer if state assistance were inefficient. If the General Assembly takes its own top-20 mandate seriously that can soften the financial costs of higher education to students, grow the university, grow the economy and ultimately give Kentucky a better state of living.

Plan's initial steps

The first stage of Todd's Top-20 Business Plan is to cap enrollment until 2008 while adding 27 new faculty members each year for the next three years.

This will prove invaluable to UK — it will

help decrease the current student-faculty ratio.

But the trade-off will probably anger most students: If the university receives the annual increases from the state legislature it's banking on, tuition will increase 9 percent each year until 2012, then increase 4 percent for the following eight years.

"While the cost will go up, the goal is to increase the value of your diploma from this research institution," Todd said Monday.

He's right — tuition increases are an inevitable, necessary evil. If UK wants to get to top-20 status, we students must be prepared to pay for that prestige.

"If we cannot invest in this institution, we will always be a low-income state," he said.

Goals for growth

In addition, UK hopes the plan will help achieve five target growth areas by 2020:

- Increasing enrollment by 7,000 — 34,000 students total.
- Increasing graduation rate by 12 percentage points — 72 percent total.
- Increasing the total number of faculty by 625 to more than 2,500.
- Increasing research expenditures by \$470 million — a total of \$768 million.
- Increasing engagement in Kentucky's schools, farms, businesses and communities.

UK's plan for self-help

The Board of Trustees will vote on the plan Tuesday, which also calls for UK to contribute 40 percent of the overall cost for the next 14 years, with tuition and state funds making up the other 60 percent.

"In order to achieve this, we have to pick

up some of this ourselves," Todd said.

To generate this 40 percent, Todd said UK plans to increase fundraising efforts and replace \$21 million from the university's general fund expenditures with endowments — especially scholarships, which is a much-needed, cost-effective move; the Singletary, Wethington and Governor's Scholars and Governors School for the Arts scholarships all come out of the school's general fund.

Also, the university plans to reallocate funding already in the budget by having "fewer people paid more," Todd said. Though this would mean some job cuts, it would also allow UK to concentrate on filling faculty and staff vacancies.

At the same time, Todd also wants to work toward increasing faculty salaries by 5 percent, a move that will only help retain the professors the institution desperately needs in its top-20 quest.

Selling the plan to the state

Now that UK has a concrete business plan for becoming a top-20 university, it's incumbent upon Todd to sell it to the UK community and Kentucky as a whole. The plan ultimately merits support, but it will come at the cost of tuition and tax hikes — and so it will take a lot of convincing.

The student body is largely hesitant to embrace the top-20 goal, and understandably so. Many ask why we should pay higher tuition now in hopes of achieving a possibly unreachable goal for the sake of future students. But this concern is ultimately shortsighted.

Of course, helping future students isn't a bad goal in itself. But if UK moves up significantly in the college rankings, that would ben-

efit us as well — specifically by increasing the value of our degrees. Being UK alumni will open more career paths for us in the future if employers see UK as being in the same echelon as top public schools like the University of North Carolina and the University of Virginia.

In addition, bringing in more faculty would be an immediate benefit to students. Classes are too large, and too many are taught by graduate students. So although the full academic benefits of becoming a top-20 institution would come gradually, some would come right away.

Perhaps the more difficult task for Todd is gaining the support of Kentuckians as a whole — and through them, votes for increased funding by state legislators.

In the minds of most people, universities are just places for the children of the middle class to go off to learn and party for a few years before getting a job. Why, one might ask, does such an institution deserve such a large portion of tax dollars?

The answer is that UK really isn't that sort of place. Yes, educating students is one of the main missions of the university — but it's not the only one, by far.

Producing high-quality research is almost as, if not equally important, and the research done at UK (especially in the schools of medicine, agriculture and engineering) can directly improve the lives of Kentuckians.

Just like current students, the state's voters need to know that there's something in it for them before they'll support the top-20 mission. We know that there is. Now it's Todd's job to get the message out.



CHRIS STEWART, THE KENTUCKY KERNEL

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Down with UK Dining Services

As a newly entered freshman this fall, I've learned to hate UK Dining Services with a passion. I have no shortage of complaints about this monopolizing trash heap of medi-

ocrity. The Plus Account and Dining Plan are checked full of absurdities that are chasing thousands of students out of living on campus. Imagine my surprise when I first attempted to use my dorm's washers and dryers and discovered that I couldn't use real currency, but had to go through their Plus Account instead. I soon after discovered that UK's antiquated DART machines do not recognize post-1998 \$20 bills.

The Dining Plan has already been harped on enough by other students and faculty as being a complete and total failure, but I want to share my greatest complaint about it: It cannot be used anywhere on campus after 9 p.m. Is this reasonable, given the nocturnal nature of most college students? This is confusing, given that K-Lair stays open until 2 a.m. They just will not accept it past the 9 o'clock hour. Absurd.

You may have noticed that the Corner Store and Blazer Express are exceptionally busy recently. Many students with leftover meals have had to downgrade their meal plan and be compensated with hundreds of dollars in Flex Dollars, whose value can only really be traded in at the convenience stores. The meals and flex dollars do not transfer across semesters and must be spent haphazardly now or disappear into the confines of UK Dining Services.

Whether through ineptness or outright malice, these systems are tantamount to highway robbery.

When it all boils down to its cost-efficiency for students. No more can I let thousands of my dollars be flushed down this broken system; I just can't afford it. I will gladly be Krogering and packing my lunches next year, just in time to watch the next batch of naive freshmen suffer through UK Dining Services.

ROSS UBER
music education freshman

Lexingtonians should be proud

I would like to address Delaurah Kamrani's Dec. 5 letter. "Yes, Lexington is worthless." While Kamrani is a friend of mine and I respect her, I feel that most of her frustrations were with UK and its campus, not Lexington.

As a student body I am sure all of us are aware of UK's problems. And as a Lexingtonian, I understand that Lexington has many downsides, such as traffic, police caring more about parties than criminals and not being flexible with university, and a very unproductive city council. Still, Lexington is full of charm and charisma.

I spent my summer in Hilton Head, S.C. There I met all types of tourists from the North, the Midwest and the South. Whenever I told people where I was from, all of those who had visited Lexington commented on how pretty and hospitable our land and people were.

In response to the complaint that there is not many things to do in Lexington, I feel there are activities that other cities do not offer.

Of course, there is always Keeneland and UK sports, and if you want culture, walk downtown and visit the art gallery hops, try a midnight movie at the Kentucky Theatre, or experience the diverse bars with diverse types of people.

For outdoor activities, the Red River Gorge is at your fingertips. Enjoy a tour through Henry Clay's home and see part of Lexington's southern grace. Lexington's restaurants, such as Ramsey's and Merrick Inn, have better cuisine and more personality than most in big cities.

My point is that Lexington is one of the most unique cities you will ever find. This summer I will be touring Europe, and whenever someone asks me where I'm from, I will proudly reply, "Lexington, Kentucky, home of fine bourbon, hospitable people, world class horses, gorgeous rolling hills and the best college basketball in the world."

JAY HARDEN
Marketing and economics junior

Alito a judicial threat to progressives

As indications keep emerging that Supreme Court nominee Samuel Alito is a reactionary hellbent on reversing decades of progress in American law, conservatives have tried to reassure.

They've said, in essence, "Well, yes, his personal beliefs are a wee bit kooky — but they have nothing to do with his judicial philosophy and the decisions he'd make on the court!"

I'm not buying it. And neither should the rest of Americans.

That Alito's political views are far out of the mainstream is at this point undisputed. The most sickening example comes from his application for a Reagan administration job in 1985, in which Alito professed his disagreement with the Supreme Court's decisions on reapportionment when Earl Warren was chief justice.

What the Warren court decided was the now-widely accepted "one person, one vote" principle, which held that each Congressional district in a state had to consist of roughly the same amount of people and that district lines must thus be drawn based on population rather than geography.

It's quite a sensible principle — everyone should have equal voting power. There's no reason why rural voters should have more say than urban ones do, simply by virtue of living in a more sparsely populated area.

So why would anyone, especially someone with top legal training, be opposed to the Warren court decisions on reapportionment? I'll give you a hint: because it gave urban (i.e., mostly black) voters the voice they deserved in the political process. Geographically based districting was the flimsy pretext for watering down the black vote — and America's current Supreme Court nominee op-

posed the sensible solution to this ugly problem.

Alito's conservative backers have scrambled to defend him, with the most common excuse being that what he said in 1985 has nothing to do with his views now. (Less common, though predictably popping up in certain corners of the Internet, is the "Yeah, the Warren court was wrong!" faction.)

But, to be frank, I don't care if his views have changed, and there is reason to seriously doubt that they have. In 1985, Alito wasn't an impressionable 19-year-old writing newspaper columns as a hobby. He was a 35-year-old Ivy League law-school graduate applying for a job in the White House who was, judging from his comments on reapportionment, an avowed racist — or, if you prefer polite New Democrat mumbo-jumbo, "an opponent of racial progress."

In my opinion, being a racist at age 35 should be enough to disqualify you from ever serving on the Supreme Court. I don't think that's too strict. (And please spare me the e-mails asking why I'm OK with Sen. Robert Byrd, D-WV, who was a member of the Ku Klux Klan. I'm not, and I wish the Democrats had abandoned him long ago.)

Now this is where that excuse I talked about before — "His personal views have nothing to do with his jurisprudence" — comes into play. What matters, we are told, is Alito's judicial philosophy, and that has nothing to do with whether he favored watering down the black vote for the sake of partisan politics back in the '80s.

I certainly agree with the first part of the excuse: Earl Warren could have spent his free time telling prejudicial jokes or kicking cute puppies, and it would have no effect on my admiration for his progressive judgments on segregation, reapportionment and criminal justice.

But isn't it a stretch to believe that someone with such a progressive judicial record was a racist or canine-kicker? Of course it is. Personal politics and

judicial philosophy often go hand in hand, because neither is the sort of thing one is born with. They are the effect of environmental influences early in life and personal choices later on — and it is plausible, even likely, that the same sets of factors affect both.

Here's a somewhat oversimplified illustration of my point: One of the dominant strands of contemporary conservatism is the "religious right," consisting in large part of Biblical literalists who believe that the Bible is not open to interpretation and that its words are law as written. And it's unsurprising that people with a strict, literal view of religious texts would take a similar view toward the law.

To make the point more accurate but more abstract: Rightists tend to trust received wisdom and hold up the past as the ideal. Such trust molds easily into interpreting the law in light of original intent — the cornerstone of the conservative philosophy of Justices Antonin Scalia and Clarence Thomas. Leftists, on the other hand, are more willing to take new directions — and thus to view the law not as some prescription handed down from centuries ago, but rather as an evolving framework open to new interpretations.

So if political beliefs and judicial philosophy aren't distinct entities that can be neatly separated, what are the implications for the nomination of Alito? The point of greatest importance is that, contrary to what his right-wing defenders want us to believe, his "non-judicial" views — whether on abortion, reapportionment or admitting women to college — are in fact relevant.

The public needs to recognize the disingenuous logic implicit in the assertion that Alito's personal views have nothing to do with his jurisprudence. It's time for the obtuse guessing games ("Will he overturn *Roe v. Wade*? Will he fight racial equality?") to end and for the filibuster to begin.

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Brenton Kenkel
KERNEL COLUMNIST

