FOOTBALL: Sports editor says LSU fans should support Miles, p. 5

The Daily Reveille

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Peers celebrate life of former student

Friends, family honor what would have been Drake’s 22nd birthday

Catherine Threlkeld
Special to The Daily Reveille

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Jenkins replies to concerns about system restructuring

Megan Dunbar
Staff Writer

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Student Government President Taylor Cox asked Jenkins whether students would have input in the LSU System reorganization, and Jenkins assured him the advisory board would assemble a student team. “Nobody recognizes a University’s greatness because of the provost or faculty; it’s always the students,” Jenkins said. Dean of Students K.C. White seconded this opinion, and added that faculty needs to stay committed to student success despite low resources.

Some faculty members expressed their discontent with the consolidation process, saying the University needs to make sure to stay in touch with faculty. The hiring process for the new CEO of the system includes requiring academic accomplishment, and the University has resources to implement whatever they need to stay in touch with faculty.

LUS Interim System President and Interim Chancellor William Jenkins hosts a town hall discussion Thursday in the Bo Campbell Auditorium, Cox Communications Academic Center for Student Athletes, on the reorganization and realignment of the LSU System.

INJURY

U High student recovering from coma

Controversy swirls around incident

Chandler Rome
Sports Writer

A 16-year-old University High School football player is recovering after an ambiguous incident late Friday night at the BREC Perkins Road Community Skate Park left him in a medically induced coma.

Though the Baton Rouge Police Department said the investigation is ongoing, one fact has been confirmed - D’Vante Dotson had alcohol in his system. But speculation has run rampant on Twitter and Facebook aboutDotson meeting teammates who possibly beat him into a coma.

“We’re still investigating, but at this point we have no evidence to believe he was assaulted,” said Baton Rouge Police Spokesman Lt. Don Kelly. “All signs point to he voluntarily consumed a mass amount of alcohol and fell on his head on the concrete, and that was the cause of his injuries.”

Carolyn Dotson, the high schooler’s grandmother, told nola.com her grandson was “doing a lot better, and he’s able to get up and walk around with the help of his mother.”

Dotson was supposed to have a CT scan Wednesday morning.

A Facebook page created Tuesday and numerous tweets support the rumor that teammates beat up Dotson, with a group of tweets compiled on neverjaded.com chronicling the evening.

Tweets on the website indicate that Dotson arrived at the skate park after being called to meet “three of his white teammates.”

“When he arrived he was beaten with bottles and a bat,” @Fresh_Logic tweeted.

Kelly said while the department cannot comment on specific cases involving specific juveniles, the investigation is ongoing.

Contact Chandler Rome at crome@lsureveille.com; Twitter: @Rome_TDR

ADMINISTRATION

Al;be  ‘teabagger’ sentenced to 2 years

Staff Reports

The man infamous for rubbing his genitals on an unconscious LSU fan after January’s BCS Championship game was sentenced Thursday to two years in prison on two counts of obscenity.

Brian Downing, the 33-year-old Alabama fan, pleaded guilty to the incident, was passed out in a Krystal Burger on Bourbon Street when Downing rubbed his exposed genitals and sexually thrusted on him.

A video of the incident quickly made its way around the Internet, eventually leading to Downing’s arrest.

Stamp was present at Thursday’s trial, but neither he nor Downing spoke, nola.com said.

Contact The Daily Reveille’s news staff at news@lsureveille.com; Twitter: @TDR_news

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Palestinians celebrate a U.N. vote 65 years after the Nakba

JERUSALEM (AP) — The black-and-white photos show masses of people yearning for independence, celebrating a vote recognizing a state in Palestine. It was a day that generations of pupils would be taught to remember with reverence: Nov. 29.

The jubilant revelers were Jews, the year was 1947, and the vote was held in the United Nations General Assembly. The Palestinians rejected the partition plan, which called for Jewish and Arab states to be established after the imminent expiration of the British rule over Palestine.

United Kingdom judge issues verdict in Arizona’s winner still a mystery

LONDON (AP) — Britain’s unruly newspapers should be regulated by an independent body dominated by non-journalists with the power to levy steep fines, a judge said Thursday in a report that pleased victims of tabloid intrusion but left editors and non-journalists with the power to novo.

Prime Minister David Cameron echoed concerns about government interference, expressing misgivings about a key recommendation of the report — that the new regulator be enshrined in law.

Missouri Powerball winner verified; Arizona’s winner still a mystery

DEARBORN, Mo. (AP) — Missouri Lottery officials on Thursday verified one of two tickets that matched all six numbers to split a record $588 million Powerball jackpot, but that ticket holder — and another in Arizona — remains a mystery, even as neighbors and co-workers lamented their losses and gossiped about who may have won.

The tickets were sold at a convenience store in suburban Phoenix and a gas station in Dearborn, Mo., just off Interstate 29, the highway linking Kansas City to the Canadian border.

Newark, N.J. mayor to live on food stamps for a week starting Tuesday

NEWARK, N.J. (AP) — Mayor Cory Booker said he will live on food stamps for a week starting Thursday.

Booker told The Associated Press on Thursday that he will honor the challenge he made to a Twitter follower earlier this month and try living on the monetary equivalent of food stamps for at least a week.

“December 4 to 11. Seven days,” Booker said after the ribbon cutting for new loft apartments in Newark. He said he will be limited to $1.40 for each meal.

New Jersey mayor to live on food stamps for a week

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Cory Booker said he will live on food stamps for a week starting Tuesday.

“It’s not going to be easy,” Booker said after the ribbon-cutting ceremony for new loft apartments in Newark. “It will be a genuine threat to the country’s wildlife.

The nation’s Ministry of Environment, Wildlife and Tourism made the announcement Thursday, saying the decision comes a day after President Ian Khama said hunting must be stopped to save the nation’s big game animals.

The ministry said that, left unchecked, rampant hunting would put into question and correct any mistakes which may have been printed in The Daily Reveille. If you would like something corrected or clarified please contact the editor at (225) 578-4811 or e-mail editor@lsureveille.com.

The Daily Reveille

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Make it a NOT-SO-SILENT NIGHT this holiday season.

Carols, gift-giving, and holiday cheer are just a few of the things that people look forward to during the holiday season. While the season can be joyful and exciting, it can also bring stress and anxiety. The Daily Reveille encourages you to make it a NOT-SO-SILENT NIGHT this holiday season by practicing self-care and finding ways to relax.

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University to observe World AIDS Day with Geaux RED

Free testing to be offered for students

Alyson Gaharan
Contributing Writer

The University’s Office of Multicultural Affairs is partnering with LSU Health Promotions for the LSU Geaux RED event to raise awareness about the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Baton Rouge in the Student Union and Free Speech Alley from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Dec. 5.

Baton Rouge is No. 1 in the U.S. for new HIV cases, a statistic that makes HIV and AIDS education relevant to University students, said LGBTQ Project Coordinator Chad Freeman.

"We want to bring as much attention to the issue as we can."

Chad Freeman
LGBTQ Project Coordinator

While World AIDS Day is observed internationally this Saturday, the University is marking the anniversary on a weekday to bring greater attention to the issue.

"This year marks 31 years that the U.S. has been living with AIDS," Freeman said.

The free HIV tests—consisting of a simple oral swab, will be available from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the Union’s Orleans and Ouachita Rooms.

"We want to increase the number of students tested this year," Freeman said.

A panel discussion with speakers from the Baton Rouge community will inform students about what living and working with HIV is like.

"Organizations like Family Service of Greater Baton Rouge, the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program and Volunteers of America will be represented on the panel.

University volunteers from LSU VOX, Spectrum and Sigma Lambda Gamma will man tables in Free Speech Alley all day to distribute handouts promoting awareness and information about how to keep the University HIV free.

Additional information can be found on the event’s Facebook page.

Contact Alyson Gaharan at agaharan@lsureveille.com

Gymnastics, tennis facility plans on horizon

Ben Wallace
Senior Contributing Writer

Gymnastics’ head coach D-D Breaux has waited almost 40 years for a stand-alone gymnastics training building. Relatively soon, her wait will be over.

"Once we put the shovel in the ground, I’ll feel real good about it," Breaux said. She was referring to the Tiger Athletic Foundation’s plans to build a gymnastics training facility in the next few years, but only after construction gets going on the new tennis complex.

Both projects are tied to the Tiger Stadium south end zone expansion, for which construction began midway through the football season. A $100 million TAF bond is funding all three projects, in addition to private donations aiding both tennis and gymnastics.

Each sport has major facility upgrade needs. For tennis, it’s indoor courts—since both teams compete year-round in one of the nation’s wettest cities. Gymnastics’ biggest need, according to Breaux, is space.

Overlapping dismount areas for nearly every event has created a crowded and somewhat dangerous practice area, Breaux said, while pointing to the two cut-outs on the far side of the gym that used to be a track field storage room and racquetball courts, respectively.

Now, her gymnasts train in those rooms. Breaux can hardly see what goes on inside each cut-out, unless she leaves the main room where balance beam, floor routines and uneven bar performances all happen in different areas of the large but crowded gymnasium practically hidden in a corner of the Carl Maddox Field House.

The new facility will serve as a valuable recruiting tool, she said.

The gymnastics team will continue hosting home meets at the Pete Maravich Assembly Center, since the new building will serve only as a training complex.

The tennis complex will likely be built across the street from Alex Box Stadium on Gourrier Avenue, pending a land lease approval by the Board of Supervisors in December that would allow TAF to build on University property, said Senior Associate Athletic Director Eddie Nunez.

It will feature 12 outdoor courts, six indoor courts and “everything [the team] needs to be able to compete at the highest level,” Nunez said, adding that construction should begin sometime during summer 2013, with an expected construction period of six to eight months.

As for gymnastics, TAF is looking to hire an architect sometime in January.

Contact Ben Wallace at bwallace@lsureveille.com

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ENTERTAINMENT DAILY

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2012

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EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH LIBRARY
Faculty Senate President Kevin Cope called the movements of the Board of Supervisors, who conducted the recent vote to bring the position of chancellor and LSU system president into one, “capricious,” and expressed concern about a lack of transparency.

Jenkins assured the mostly faculty crowd of all boards’ commitment to community input, and paraphrased Benjamin Franklin at the end of the meeting, saying, “If we do not hang together, we will hang separately.”

The realignment will have its main points in place in six months and should be completed in 18 months, Jenkins estimated.

He addressed the potential cost of reorganization, saying the benefits will “not be in the tens of millions...but will be substantial.”

He also said it is his dream for the University to be the premier research university in the southern region, and believes the future holds many mergers for the 14 four-year colleges in the state.

These reorganizations, and others across the nation, could possibly be modeled on the University’s example as it moves into the future, Jenkins said.

Before giving their input, attendees received bullet points summarizing the planned changes.

The main ideas are: single accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools across LSU System campuses, common course numbering, faculty research, the elimination of unnecessary administrative positions and to do so “as expeditiously as prudently possible.”

Jenkins said he plans to stay at the University until the key components of restructuring are in place.

Contact Megan Dunbar at mdunbar@lsureveille.com

Library extends hours for study time

Middleton Library will offer extended hours today and over the weekend, and will be open 24 hours next week.

Nov. 30
7:15 a.m. - 2 a.m.
Dec. 1
10 a.m. - 2 a.m.
Dec. 2
10 a.m. - midnight

Finals week
Open 24 hours a day

The Student Union will maintain normal operating hours, 7 a.m. - 11 p.m.
Mathieu to enter 2013 NFL draft

Cornerback was dismissed in August

Staff Reports

Former LSU defensive back Tyrann Mathieu announced Thursday that he will enter the 2013 NFL Draft.

“I am sorry that I was not able to complete my journey at LSU, but I will always support LSU in any way I can,” Mathieu said in a statement. “To my teammates, you are my brothers. You have kept me going. I will do my best to make you all proud of me.”

Mathieu was dismissed from the football program on Aug. 10 for what the University said was a violation of team policy.

He re-enrolled at LSU later in the semester, but left the school after being arrested for possession of marijuana on Oct. 25.

Mathieu was a finalist for the Heisman Trophy last season and won the Chuck Bednarik Award, which is given to the best defensive player in the nation each season.

Mathieu finished his career at LSU with six interceptions, two forced fumbles and a school-record 11 forced fumbles.

Contact The Daily Reveille's sports staff at sports@lsureveille.com; Twitter: @TDReports

Leading the Wave

Female leads male teammates to victory in state regatta

Alex Cassara
Sports Writer

While slicing through turbulent waters, the males of LSU’s rowing club need all the motivation they can get.

That’s exactly what Danielle LeBlanc seeks to provide. And no, she’s not a cheerleader.

As the only female member on the men’s varsity boats, LeBlanc serves as the on-water mother, coach and drill sergeant of her vessel and led her four-seater to defeat in-state rival Tulane on Nov. 10 at the Louisiana State Championship Regatta at New Orleans City Park.

LeBlanc grew up listening to her stepfather tell stories of his time as a collegiate rower, so when she arrived at LSU, she decided to study the sport along with petroleum engineering. She wanted to follow in his footsteps but her doctor disagreed, pointing to her scoliosis; her 5-foot-2, 120-pound stature wasn’t conducive to the position, anyway.

It made her the perfect coxswain, however.

“A lot of people see the commercial, where the fat ole hamster sits in the boat and says, ‘Row! Row!’” LeBlanc said, referring to miller’s beer commercials. “I said, ‘I get my hands on ball,’ said LSU coach Johnny O’Bryant III.

Johnny O’Bryant III was able to complete his journey at LSU in any way I can,” Mathieu said in a statement. “To my teammates, you are my brothers. You have kept me going. I will do my best to make you all proud of me.”

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LSU Rowing coxswain Danielle LeBlanc guides her team’s boat back to the dock Nov. 8 after morning practice on the LSU Lakes. LeBlanc led her team to defeat Tulane on Nov. 10 at the Louisiana State Championship Regatta in New Orleans City Park.

MEN’S BASKETBALL

Chandler Rome
Sports Writer

LSU took advantage of 26 Seton Hall turnovers and overcame a 16-point second-half deficit to take a thrilling 72-67 win against the Pirates in the Big East-SEC Challenge on Thursday.

The Tigers (5-0) switched to a full-court press in the second-half, forcing the Pirates (5-2) into errant passes and sloppy ball handling.

“We had a big defender on the front end and he was able to get [his] hands on ball,” said LSU sophomore guard Anthony Hickey. “It was a great win for us.”

Trailing by 8 at halftime, LSU dug itself in a deep hole in the first 30 seconds of the second half as Seton Hall buried two consecutive threes after an LSU turnover to stretch its lead to 41-27.

Led by Hickey’s six steals and senior guard Charles Carmouche’s four swipes, the Tigers chipped away at the Pirate lead throughout the second half with a press Hickey said the Tigers hadn’t practiced in quite some time.

“The press created some energy, not only in our team but the fans were able to get into the game as well,” said LSU coach Johnny Jones. “That really spurred us on.”

Fighting off double teams all evening, LSU sophomore forward Johnny O’Bryant III was able to power his way to a double-double, scoring 13 points and grabbing 11 rebounds.

Junior forward Shavon Coleman paced the Tigers for the third straight game, scoring 18 off the bench as one of four Tigers in double figures.

“We were trying to force [offense] out of them,” Coleman said. “I tried to always make a play for another player. I just came out there in the second half and executed well.”

The Tigers rectified their much-maligned free throw shooting late in the game, hitting seven of eight in the final 2:16 to ice the game and complete the comeback.

O’Bryant likened Thursday’s performance to his most memorable performance of the year — a 29-point effort in LSU’s overtime victory over Ole Miss.

“We just got a little more aggressive,” O’Bryant said. “It was more of a physical game. They really quickened their pace.”

Seton Hall’s top rebounder, sophomore forward DaJuan Watson, was held to 2 points and 4 rebounds.

The Tigers improve to 8-1 on the season and take on No. 16 Gonzaga on Sunday.

LSU should approve of Miles’ contract

Assuming the world doesn’t end in a couple of weeks, as the Mayans would have you believe, LSU locked in one of the premier coaches in college football for a long time — and you can bet Les Miles is worth every penny.

But for whatever reason, there are a couple of suits out there that wished the reported mega offer from Arkansas would have been enough to woo the Mad Hatter out of Baton Rouge.

To those of you taking that side, I must ask — do you care about winning the game, or do you care about the manner in which one does so? If you chose the latter, please carefully remove your head from your you-know-where.

In about a month, Miles will finish his eighth season as the jovial and sometimes incomprehensible face of the University.

In that short time frame, Miles has stamped his name all over the LSU record book.

Miles moved to No. 2 on LSU’s all-time wins list for a head coach earlier this season when LSU beat Ole Miss in a wild game at Tiger Stadium, passing Bernie Moore.

If he stays at his current pace — an LSU-best .809 career
Falcons pick off Brees five times, beat Saints 23-13

The Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — The Atlanta Falcons raced to a 17-0 lead and the defense made it stand up, picking off five of Drew Brees’ passes and ending his NFL-record touchdown streak with a 23-13 victory Thursday night.

The Falcons moved to the brink of clinching the NFC South with 83-yard drive consuming 15 plays and more than six and a half minutes. But the Falcons defense held again, forcing Garrett Hartley to boot a 21-yard field goal that cut it to 17-10.

Hartley connected again from much farther out on the Saints’ next possession, a 52-yarder that brought New Orleans even closer.

For the rest of the second quarter and most of the third, the Falcons dominated. Mark Ingram scored on a 1-yard run, capping an 11-play, 80-yard drive, and New Orleans should have tacked on more points at the end of the half. But Brees made a rookie-like mistake with 12 seconds remaining, dumping a pass over the middle to Sproles with no timeouts. He was wrapped up at the Atlanta 3 and the clock ran out before the Saints could spike the ball.

But New Orleans got the ball to start the second half, and Brees went back to work. This time, he made a couple of nifty moves to avoid sacks, completing six passes on an 83-yard drive consuming 10:35 and a half minutes. But the Falcons defense held again, forcing Hartley to boot a 21-yard field goal that cut it to 17-10.

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Miles and built on it, propelling LSU from football purgatory and set it on its current trajectory. "All he did was build on someone else's success," say the anti-Les-ites. "He's used Nick Saban's talent!" 

Sticking in the stomp of the boat facing the rows, the coxswain doesn't row but acts as navigator, steering the boat while assessing the competition around it.

For that reason, coxswains tend to be lighter; so as not to make it harder for the ones propelling the boat anywhere from 2,000 to 6,000 meters. The coxswain is also tasked with correcting and motivating his or her rowers for the duration of that exertion. Whether a rower is doing something right or wrong, he or she should hear it from the coxswain. The coxswain must know the crew well to say the right things so they can pull through the pain. It took her a while, but this position is where LeBlanc shines. "I want to try as hard as they do," LeBlanc said.

The coxswain must also keep them on the right track, and sometimes lead them to the next plane. "It took her a while, but this position is where LeBlanc shines," said Rosanne Coffey. "She doesn't fly off the handle at them. She stays relaxed during an entire race, that's difficult to do because it can get really exciting for a coxswain." As the stroke, or pace setter who sits directly before the coxswain, for the men's varsity, Kevin Benoit's interaction with LeBlanc is frequent and crucial. Benoit said her quiet demeanor helps walk that fine line, demanding respect. She showed her commitment outside of the water by practicing for and competing in a half-marathon with some of her burlier teammates. "I want to try as hard as they do," LeBlanc said.

Her team hit the water every day of the week leading up to the championship. It got off to a rough start in its first regatta, competing against some NCAA-sanctioned crews, but won four medals through the next two. The New Orleans race though was about pride, with LSU ever lead the country in winning percentage — Miles would pass LSU's all-time wins leader Charles McClendon in the sixth year of his new extension. LSU has won 85-of-105 with its grass-eating, superstquence hat-wearing eccentric coach on the sideline. He's led the Tigers to double-digit wins in six of his eight seasons.

Here's what makes that last statistic pop out: In the 112 years of LSU football before Miles' arrival, the Tigers had 10-win seasons just seven times. "But he's using Nick Saban's talent!" say the anti-Les-ites. "All he did was build on someone else's success."

Valid points, sure. Saban rescued LSU from football purgatory and set it on its current trajectory. But Miles sustained that success and built on it, propelling the program to previously unseen heights. "Have you ever watched LSU's offensive gameplan?" countered the Miles haters. "J.C. Copeland is an actual go-to threat."

OK, Miles doesn't win flashy. Yes, he has become famous for his penchant for the peculiar-yet-perfectly-timed fakes and gutsy fourth-down conversions, but his regular game plan is bland. The Les Miles brand of football is pound the rock left and right, then suddenly remember you have a quarterback for three or four plays, then rename rock pounding. Boring? Yep. Will LSU ever lead the country in yards per game? Nope. You know who might? West Virginia, which allowed 49 or more points four times in a recent five-game skid. Ask Mountaineer fans if they're happy with the season. All this, and I haven't mentioned the real reason why fans should be hanging banners that proclaim, "Seven More Years!" Miles will keep winning because of his infectious personality that's made him a star in the college football world.

Recruit take notice when Les jokingly taste-tests grass, or strips LSU's mascot of his jersey and strikes LSU's mascot of his jersey and strips LSU's mascot of his jersey. They notice the pictures in postgame press conferences. They notice the pictures that show Miles holding back a football-starved team moments before it storms the field.

Miles is a winner through and through. Rather than wishing for him to take the next plane out of town, enjoy what you've got while it lasts. Lucky for you, it's for at least another seven years. 

Lake Johnson is a 26-year-old mass communication senior from Lake Mills, Wis.
Michigan made cars, they weren’t quite up to par, the Japanese did better, the market got wetter — that’s the recession and there you are.

Well, that may not be the whole story.

Unlike the rest of the country, which entered a recession in 2008 or perhaps never, like some parts of the South, Michigan has been in a recession since 2001, according to its state website.

“A decade of almost continuous recession, many residents of Michigan have stopped expecting to hear any good economic news about their state,” said the site.

Despite this mess, the University of Michigan has remained one of the premier public universities in the nation. U.S. News ranked the Ann Arbor school 29th in the nation overall.

Michigan is similar to LSU.

Both schools have enrollments between 20,000 and 30,000 undergraduates.

Somehow, despite the economic mess, the University of Michigan was insulated from it all. It remained arguably the best university in the state while facing a substantial loss in the tax base.

Here might be the answer — endowments.

Endowments are essentially trust funds for colleges. They are the total value of an institution’s investments.

LSU’s endowment for 2011 was $443 million; Michigan’s endowment was $7.7 billion, according to U.S. News.

Big difference. So, why the discrepancy? Wouldn’t we expect two roughly equal universities to share a similar endowment?

Not necessarily. There are many reasons why Michigan has more cash than us. An unlikely reason is rich alumni, who only donate a fraction of a University’s operating budget.

Another scenario is bailout money from the federal government. If this were the case, it would be a testament to Keynesian economics, proof that intervention can work.

I think the most likely answer is Michigan is better at managing money than us (I know, sounds crazy, recession state).

Michigan was able to consolidate its cash through taxes, donations, grants and put all of it into solid investments.

Even when the national recession was expected to end and life to return to normal, Michigan residents feared they could be perpetually stuck in a one-state recession.

Why? Because Michigan makes a lot of stuff, unlike the South, where we find a lot of oil.

Michigan is a manufacturing heavy state, especially when it comes to the auto industry. In a nutshell, well, the poem says it all.

Screw conscience — let Michigan be our guide.

Despite popular belief, Michigan did not experience as massive of an exodus as the news media would have us to believe. The state’s population peaked in 2005 at roughly 10.1 million and currently stands at 9.8 million.

Louisiana lost enough people after Katrina to necessitate combining two congressional districts. However, we have oil and Michigan doesn’t. To put it simply, there is no reason LSU, this state’s flagship university, should ever be in financial peril.

But somehow, we are.

I encourage LSU to work with the state government to find some sort of solution to this financial mess. They don’t call it black gold for nothing, and we have tons of it.

Proper allocation of tax dollars is just as important as taxation itself. The highest grossing and highest taxed industry in this country is oil and gas. However, for the sake of higher education, I think they could do a little more.

You don’t see fewer oil men.

That’s a taxable industry, and it’s about time we started looking at taxes as investments in our future and not some sectarian ritual invented by Democrats and Europeans.

Parker Cramer is a 21-year-old political science senior from Houston.

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Les Miles and the question of priorities

I was stunned. The news that Les Miles was offered a coaching job at the University of Arkansas hit me in the gut. Good thing LSU could give the coach a raise and extend his contract. The Hogs brought home the bacon with a 27.5 million dollar offer, but the Tigers must have really roared in the big bucks.

I was actually daydreaming that Coach Miles was headed to Arkansas. Leaving the LSU Tigers would be the canary in the coal mine, and it would have shown just how far the mighty had fallen. Had Les Miles departed Baton Rouge, it would have been the zombie apocalypse all across Louisiana. Finally, the “lapdog” legislators and business elite would take note.

Though the Tigers appear safe for now, please get to know some facts about Louisiana higher education under Gov. Bobby Jindal.

Since 2008, $450 million dollars have been axed from college budgets, there are no raises for most faculty in five years, several universities are in a death spiral, and the LSU Board of Supervisors is nothing more than an adjunct of the Governor’s Office. The outrituation of faculty and administrators is staggering and a national embarrassment that grows worse by the day. Several university administrations are on the AAUP censure list and more are under investigation. Faculty and staff are demoralized and fearful. Students are paying a lot more for an inferior education. The medical schools aren’t far from losing accreditation due to the ongoing Charity hospital fiasco, and LSU merger shenanigans have the Southern Association of Colleges questioning potential conflicts of interest in Baton Rouge.

Tiger fans, without SACS accreditation, LSU is nothing more than a diploma mill with some pretty oak trees, and the NCAA won’t let an unaccredited school field a football team.

I could go on and on, but no one seems to care.

Some people have questioned LSU’s priorities giving Coach Miles an obscene pay raise when we’re closing hospitals and placing the entire higher education structure at risk.

Indeed, we should question the priorities of the state as a whole for letting the governor sink our ship while he pines away for 1,400 Pennsylvania Avenue.

Louisiana higher education and even football will be better off after Jindal’s departure. Les Miles would be sorely missed.

Carlos Osorio

Editor

PS: I have never won a fight.

The modern Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum shows Michigan State University’s wealth. Michigan’s endowment is far more than LSU’s and its rankings haven’t changed despite budget problems.

The Daily Reveille

Editor in Chief

Opinion Editor

Screw conscience — let Michigan be our guide

Opinion Board

Emily Herrington
Managing Editor

Editor in Chief

Managing Editor, External Media

News Editor

Quote of the Day

“I learned law so well. The day I graduated, I sued the college, won the case and got my tuition back.”

Fred Allen

American comedian

May 31, 1894 — March 17, 1966

The Daily Reveille

Editor in Chief

Opinion Editor

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The modern Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum shows Michigan State University’s wealth. Michigan’s endowment is far more than LSU’s and its rankings haven’t changed despite budget problems.

Carlos Osorio / The Associated Press
All Christmas gifts are not created equal; pick wisely

As the winter break quickly approaches, students will soon set down their textbooks and begin Christmas shopping.

While the exchange of presents tends to be the highlight of the season, many view Christmas shopping as a tedious chore. But with a little effort and the right set of rules, Christmas shopping can prove to be a painless, and even fun-filled, experience.

Here are three rules for Christmas shopping that you may not have considered:

1. Don't select your gift purely based on sales.

The stresses of Christmas shopping are further intensified when you aren’t sure which gifts to purchase. What should you get for the cousin you only see once each year? Or the relative who already seems to have everything? While it’s tempting to stroll down the “half off everything aisle” and start throwing generic items in your buggy, remember the times you’ve received random gifts.

“Thanks, Aunt Carol, for the...potted lily.”

As a cheap skate, I have no problem with shopping during sales as long as there is a little thought behind each gift.

For the aunt who enjoys cooking, buy a creative apron.

For the mother who is constantly curled on the couch with a book, buy a Kindle.

With the brother who plays video games 24/7, buy a gift card to Game Stop — but beware of rule No. 2!

2. Gift cards are safe but can seem lazy.

If you aren’t familiar with the gaming world, the example above would be the ideal route to take.

Gifts based on personal taste, such as clothes and jewelry, can be tricky. I can recall several accounts when I was given a purse or wallet that was absolutely hideous. For example, the hot pink, studded purse from the ex-boyfriend’s mom. Ugh.

In that case, I wish that I would have received a gift card to pick out a purse that fits my personality, rather than that of a 5-year-old.

But gift cards are also the easy way out. It should appear that you put effort into selecting the perfect gift, but if you’re confident that your gift will be liked, go for it.

3. Think back to your purchases from last year.

In every family, there’s always one predictable relative. Why are they so predictable? Because they give the same presents every year.

Obviously, accept the annual hand-knit sweater from your grandmother. Although you only wear the kitten-clad sweater for one day before stashing it in the back of your closet, it would be rude to refuse the gift.

But maybe you’re the re-gifter. Of course, it’s a treat to receive a gift basket with your favorite lotions and soaps from Bath & Body Works. But when the gift is repeated year after year, the present loses meaning.

So, injection where you can change your shopping behavior. Stop giving your friends and family the same presents and think outside the box.

All it takes is a little thought and effort to select your gifts to make the holidays a little sweeter for your family and friends. Hopefully, you’ll also receive some great gifts in return.

Good luck with finals, and happy holiday shopping!

Kate Mabry is a 21-year-old mass communication senior from New Orleans.

Contact Kate Mabry at kmabry@lsureveille.com; Twitter: @KateMabry1
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On his birthday Tuesday, family, friends and teachers gathered in the Sculpture Garden to write notes of remembrance to Drake. They attached mementos to flowers and hung them on fishing line from trees around the garden.

Some notes shared stories. Others wished him “happy birthday.” Most were attached to sunflowers — his favorite flower.

The Sculpture Garden is nestled between the architecture school and the studio arts building, the two places where Drake split much of his time at the University. A dual major in ceramics and architecture, he was a creator.

“Everything he did in architecture was amazing,” said Austin Sandel, architecture junior and Drake’s former classmate.

Sandel said the architecture students would make lists of who they thought would be accepted into the school’s elite third-year group. Drake was always at the top of everyone’s list.

“It was mind-boggling that he was in two majors that were time-consuming,” Sandel said. Drake developed a close friendship with his ceramics professor, Andy Shaw, after taking his introduction to wheel throwing class. Shaw marveled at Drake’s natural ability to pick up skills easily.

“I don’t think he saw barriers where other people saw barriers,” Shaw said. “He was someone at 21 years old that I really looked up to.”

It wasn’t just at the University where Nathan showed his creativity. He and older brother Darren remodeled his parents’ kitchen and bathroom at their home in Houston. When he was 8 years old, he wanted a bird. He built his own birdhouse out of recycled materials. He created a waterfall, pond and barbecue pit in their backyard. He distilled his own alcohol. Occasionally, he would cut his own hair.

“He was a modern-day Renaissance man,” Sandel joked.

To top a talented mind, Drake had the personality to match. His former classmates called him “humble,” an “encyclopedia” and a “beautiful soul.”

Catherine Drake, Nathan’s younger sister, said she, Nathan and Darren were home-schooled with her brothers, and they would protect her. In high school, they would take the same classes and sit together.

“We never really fought as kids like normal siblings do,” Catherine Drake said. His standout personality and talent brought dozens to the Sculpture Garden to share stories. His parents — Deborah and Ernie — drove from Houston to see the impact their son had on people.

“It was so very touching and comforting to do this, especially on Nathan’s birthday,” Deborah said. “I don’t know how they did it but they did it beautifully.” Those gathered remembered the whirlwind week that was Nathan’s transformation from a seemingly fine student into an immobile man on life support.

Nathan had complained of back pain before, but nothing too serious, perhaps a result of bending over his ceramics and architecture projects. He checked himself into Our Lady of the Lake Hospital in Baton Rouge after experiencing intense pain. Doctors first diagnosed him with appendicitis.

Doctors gave him a second diagnosis March 11, and this one suggested something much worse — cancer. It had already metastasized throughout his body. He was transferred to Memorial Hermann Hospital in Houston to be with his family. Five days after he walked into Our Lady of the Lake, he fell, hit his head and never woke up. Two days later, his family decided to remove life support. Drake waited until 11:27 a.m., the same numbers as his birthday, to die.

“Nathan did things on his own terms,” his mother said. “I mean, how do you die like that? That was Nathan.”

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