

Lifestyles

"A Christmas Carol" rings
in winter season

page 8

Sports

Hoops Hogs host
Texas Southern

page 5



The Arkansas

Traveler



WEATHER



HIGH 52
LOW 26

Windy in the morning with
a 40% chance of showers
through out the day.

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CLCE to send students to Obama inauguration

Nick DeMoss

Contributing Writer

Forty UA students could have a chance to travel to the historic inauguration of Barack Obama if the UA Center for Leadership and Community Engagement can secure the money.

The experience would be what representatives from the CLCE call "an educational bus trip" to the nation's capital.

The four-day trip would begin Jan. 17 and students and staff would return Jan. 21, said Adrain Smith, assistant director for the CLCE. Smith is the chief coordinator of the program.

The application process for students will begin in the next two weeks, pending the allocation of funds from several sources, Smith said.

Students who want to be considered for the trip have to submit a two-page essay in addition to personal information. The topic of the essay still is being debated, but it will probably focus on how the student's experience on the trip could help the UA as a whole, Smith said.

However, the application process will not begin until funding is secure, Smith said.

The projected cost of the trip is about \$22,000 to cover lodging, charter buses, educational materials and miscellaneous expenses, Smith said.

The proposed fund allocation as it was presented to the Associated Student Government is: \$10,000 from the ASG, \$4,000 from Residents' Interhall Congress, \$2,000 from Housing Initiatives for Student Success (HISS funds), \$1,000 from the Multicultural Center and \$1,000 from the



Students interested in attending the Jan. 20, 2009, inauguration of President-elect Barack Obama could have a chance to go with the Center of Leadership and Community Engagement.

Division of Student Affairs, ASG Treasurer Ben Hale said in an e-mail.

After the funding is secured, the leftover cost to students will be \$150 to help cover lodging, transportation and some meals, Smith said.

However, Hale expressed several concerns about the ASG's proposed bill allocating its share of the money.

"I believe some fundamental problems with this piece of legislation were never addressed," Hale said in an e-mail to the ASG senate.

While the bill in question proposes a \$10,000 donation from the ASG, Hale said the

CLCE only had requested half of that. The extra money was added to match the funding given to the "Rolling with the Razorbacks" program because both programs are designed to provide transportation for students.

The problem is that "Rolling with the Razorbacks" was designed to take more than 100 people, Hale said. The fact that the proposed inauguration trip would only take 40 means that each student would be receiving \$250 of student fee money, something Hale said would not be fiscally responsible.

In addition to monitoring

student funds, Hale said he thought the hasty passage of the bill through the ASG senate was an issue.

"I do feel that it is a slap in the face to me, as well as the members of the Appropriations Committee who worked for at least 35 hours during the span of four days in cutting down over \$300,000 in requests from Registered Student Organizations to around \$90,000 so that ASG remained within its budget," Hale said.

Another problem Hale highlighted in his e-mail was that within the span of 15 minutes the ASG allocated \$10,000 to itself. Hale noted that the

Appropriations Committee took longer to review a budget that only requested \$250 and that this could make the ASG look like it was giving itself financial priority over other RSOs.

The most troubling part of the passage of the bill was the lack of debate that took place, Hale said.

"No debate was offered for or against," he said in his e-mail. "\$10,000 was approved as if the ASG was directly financed by the Walton family. As badly as I wish this were

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Chancellor, others raise funds for undocumented students

Brian Washburn

News Editor

UA Chancellor G. David Gearhart and a host of donors will raise private money to provide scholarships to 19 undocumented students currently attending the university. This decision came after the Arkansas Department of Higher Education decided to make any student without a Social Security number pay out-of-state tuition.

In May, the ADHE advised Arkansas universities that offering in-state tuition to Arkansas students who do not possess a Social Security card could violate federal law. Previously, Arkansas universities allowed undocumented students to pay in-state tuition if they graduated from an Arkansas high school, amongst other guidelines, Gearhart said.

But while these students might not have a Social Security number, they also have grown up in America and have very little connection with their home country.

"They grew up in Arkansas, they don't remember their country or origin, they speak fluent English, went through the public school system in Arkansas and, in some instances, played football, were in the band and different clubs in high school," Gearhart said. "We felt the only right thing to do was to help these students complete their dream of completing a bachelor's degree."

Gearhart, along with a group of private donors, has taken measures to make sure those 19 stu-

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ACLU may take aim at adoption ban on straight and gay couples

James Baker

Senior Staff Writer

Unmarried, cohabiting heterosexual and homosexual couples in Arkansas can no longer adopt or foster any of the 3,700 foster children within the state adoption system, which has only 1,100 foster homes available, and the American Civil Liberties Union may be eyeing a showdown in Arkansas courts.

The new law may be in the crosshairs of the ACLU after a Florida law that banned gays and lesbians from adopting was struck down Nov. 26.

"We're considering our options to see if we can now bring a legal challenge," said Paul Cates of the ACLU Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Project.

"It's a horrible law," Cates said. "Not only does it hurt the couples barred from fostering and adopting, but the children in the state's care are denied the opportunity for a loving family. Just because people voted a certain way doesn't make it right."

The initiative could be struck down as unconstitutional and referred to the previous court rulings, he said.

What started the initiative was a seven-year legal battle between the state and the ACLU over agency bans on same-sex adoption.

In 2004, an Arkansas Child Welfare Agency Review Board policy that banned gays from serving as foster parents was ruled unconstitutional because the board had tried to regulate "public morality."

In 2006, the state Supreme Court upheld the ruling, subse-

quently upholding the language of the Arkansas Constitution.

The result was a 2007 push by the Arkansas Family Council, a conservative group, to ban same-sex adoption, but it never made it in the legislature because Arkansas Gov. Mike Beebe said there were constitutional problems with the bill.

Initiated Act 1, which prohibits cohabiting couples from fostering or adopting children, was passed by voters Nov. 4 but was opposed by members of the Arkansas Families First coalition, Gov. Mike Beebe, Lt. Gov. Bill Halter, several state officials and the ACLU. The measure was spearheaded by the Arkansas Family Council Action Committee.

Although 55 percent of respondents in the 2008 Arkansas Poll disapproved of the ballot measure, the proposal sailed through the election with 57 percent of the vote. Despite the numbers against the proposal going into the election, proponents knew all along Initiated Act I had a good chance of passing, said John Thomas of the Arkansas Family Council Action Committee.

"We didn't have a media campaign," Thomas said. "It's a testimony to the grassroots campaign. We tried to empower people who supported it."

That didn't include students like senior Gracie Lambright.

"It's obviously a ploy to keep gay couples from getting children," she said.

But the adoption proposal

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More inclement weather unlikely in coming weeks

Jack Willems

Senior Staff Writer

The flurry of snow university students experienced Sunday afternoon is unlikely to be repeated for the remainder of the semester, a Ph. D. candidate in environmental mechanics said Monday.

Snowstorms probably will be less common this winter than they were last year because temperatures are likely to be warmer, said Dorian Burnett, a doctoral candidate at the UA. There may be more precipitation this year, though, he said.

This year, temperatures were lower than they normally would be because of a strong La Nina, an ocean-atmosphere phenomenon, Burnett said. After a cold year, temperatures typically rise in the next year, he said.

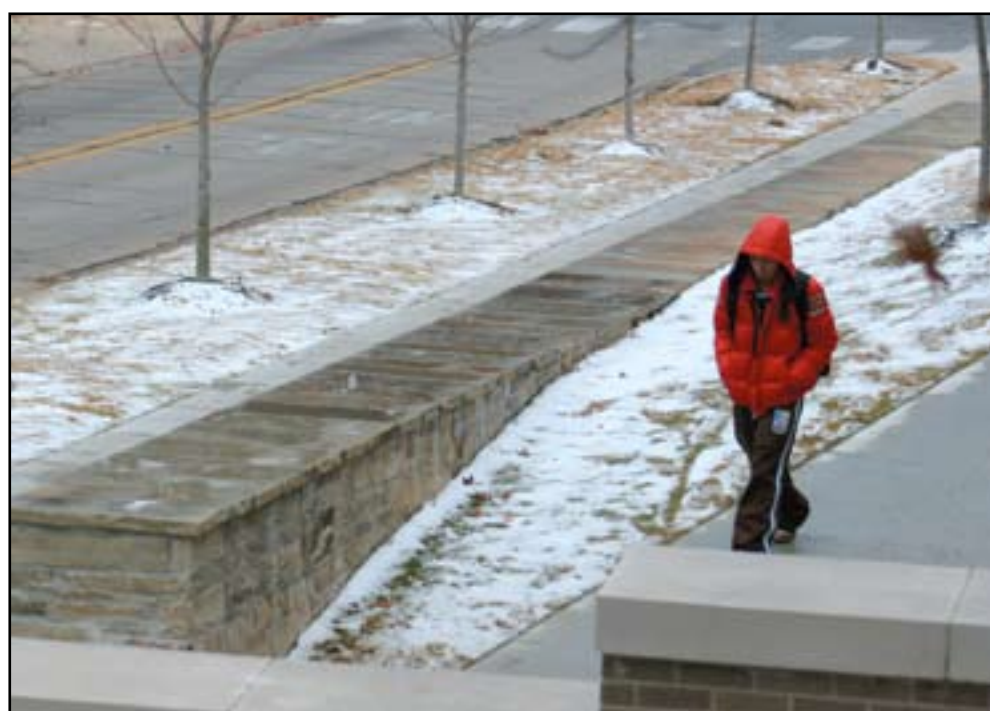
"Meteorologists like to say that it all evens out in the end," Burnett said.

In the short term, temperatures will increase after the snow flurry Sunday, and it is unlikely that it will snow again during finals week, Burnett said. A cold front will come through Northwest Arkansas, but it will not have much condensation to work with, Burnett said.

Still, it was not unusual for Arkansas to get snow this early in the season, he said.

"It is getting into that time of year where we are getting into our first winter blast," Burnett said.

The UA inclement weather policy, which can be found on the university Web site, is that the university will remain open despite inclement weather conditions, though it may close offices or classrooms if conditions are severe enough.



MEGHAN WALTON Staff Photographer

Snow fell over Fayetteville Sunday afternoon and Monday morning. Though it is uncommon for winter weather to hit the area in November, an Arkansas doctoral student in environmental mechanics says that more inclement weather is unlikely.

The decision to do so is made during a 5 a.m. conference call between the head of the Transit and Parking Department, the head of Facilities Management, the provost and the head of the UA Police Department, said Steve Voorhies, manager of UA Media Relations.

The decision is based on road conditions and other conditions concerning the safety of people commuting to campus, Voorhies said.

Aside from closing, the university also could delay opening for two hours, he said. The decision will be posted on the university Web site and a message will be sent through RazALERT.

Students should be careful walking and driving whenever there are adverse weather condi-

tions, Voorhies said. There are probably as many people injured on campus by slipping and falling on ice as there are injured in traffic accidents caused by ice, he said.

Last year, the university closed twice for adverse weather conditions, but road conditions had improved by midmorning, Voorhies said. While some have criticized the university for this, the decision was made to err on the side of caution, he said.

"We tend to get ice more than we get snow, and ice is more treacherous," Voorhies said.

Just because the university is closed does not mean that classes are canceled, according to the inclement weather policy. Professors may even if

the university is closed, so students should consult with their professors to determine when class is canceled, Voorhies said. The same rules apply during finals, though professors who cancel finals when the university is closed must reschedule them, he said.

Like many professors, Seok Eun Kim, a political science professor, will cancel classes if Fayetteville public schools close, he said. He previously canceled classes when the university closed, but he said he changed his own policy because of the number of hills in Fayetteville.

Others differ.

"My policy is that if the uni-

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