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Ka Leo O Hawai'i

THE VOICE OF HAWAI'I

Wednesday
January 24, 2007

VOL. 101 | ISSUE 83 Serving the students of the Universit 1922 WWW.KALEO.ORG

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Lingle announces education initiatives

By Tiffany Hill
Ka Leo Associate News editor

Tailoring a quote from educator Mary Jean LeTendre, Governor Linda Lingle declared in her State of the State address Monday that, "Hawaii's future walks through the doors of our schools and universities each day."

In her speech given at the state capitol on Punchbowl Street, Lingle announced her education initiatives for all students of Hawai'i, particularly for those enrolled or planning to enroll in the College of Engineering at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa.

"We have to change our economy from one based on land development to one fueled by innovation and the new ideas generated by our universities," Lingle said, proposing education innovations in science and technology to benefit Hawaii's economy and workforce.

Song Choi is a professor and assistant dean at the College of Engineering at UH and was involved with Lingle's education proposal. Choi has been working with high school robotics teams since 1999.

"What was proposed," Choi said, "is that robotics can be an integral tool for the development of high school and middle school student awareness in what we call the STEM [program]: Science, Technology, Engineering and Math."

Lingle's Education Proposal

Lingle stated that technology is a key resource for success. In response to technology and science education standards, she outlined her specific education criteria for properly teaching Hawaii's youth and kick-starting the STEM program. For middle school children, Lingle proposed the establishment of STEM programs through hands-on project learning. Choi said that students would work with Legos in creating robots not only to learn but to have fun as well.

The STEM program would continue through high school with science and technology academies taught by UH community college professors. There, students would earn both high school and college credits. Lingle also proposed to offer undergraduate scholarships at UHM for students successful in the STEM curriculum.

"[If] students can get involved in these robotics programs," Choi said, "some of the aspects or features that will come out from it could be scholarships for students that want to go into science and technology."

Choi said that the scholarship program related to STEM should be in full swing for the fall 2008 semester.

"Whether students study STEM subjects or other fields of study, we need to increase the incentives for parents to save for their children's college education," Lingle said in her address.

Ka Leo Video

In her State of the State address, Governor Linda Lingle announced that she will promote awareness in the areas of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM).

Song Choi, a professor at the College of Engineering, constructed an underwater robot called ODIN and has been helping high school students since 1999. See kaleo.org for a video of the robot in action see http://www.kaleo.org

> "Whether students study STEM subjects or other fields of study, we need to increase the incentives for parents to save for their children's college education"
>
> Song Choi | Assistant Dean, UH College of Engineering

She suggested that the current state-sponsored college savings account be expanded so that parents would be able to reduce their taxable income annually by $20,000 and use the saved money to pay for tuition.

ODIN

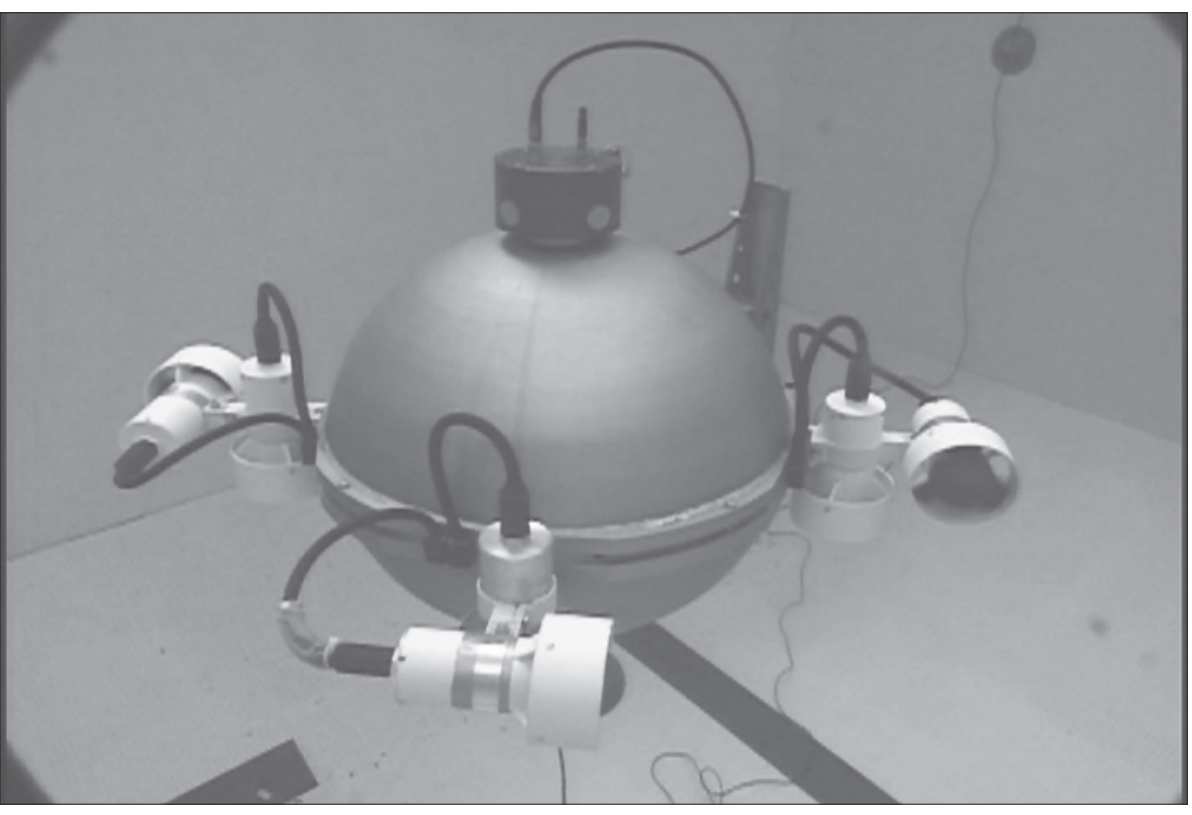
Although Lingle just announced her new education initiatives two days ago, Choi and some of his fellow faculty members within the College of Engineering have long since begun working with students of all ages using STEM concepts in their robotics teams and competitions.

One of their primary examples is the underwater robot ODIN, which stands for omni-directional intelligent navigator. ODIN was developed in 1991 as a test device used in the water's surrounding the Hawaiian Islands, but Choi said the robot is currently an outreach to kids ranging from pre-school to high school.

"Some of the programming on [ODIN] as well as our larger vehicle has been done by high school interns [at the UH College of Engineering]," Choi said. "There's a lot of involvement."

Choi pointed around the robot-

See Lingle, page 2



COURTESY PHOTO • Song Choi

ODIN, the Omni-Directional Inteligent Navigator being tested underwater in a pool . ODIN was developed in 1991 and is currently being used by robotics teams on the Island. Some of the robot's programming was done by UH College of Engineering interns.

Parade for Peace

Tim Fox marched in a parade for peace last week in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. The march took two and a half hours along Ala Moana Boulevard, provoking mixed reactions from spectators.

JOSH REASON
Ka Leo O Hawai'i

Hawai'i residents proclaim their support for peace on Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

By Josh Reason
Ka Leo Staff Reporter

Students protested the government's ability to use the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa for military research in the annual Martin Luther King Day Parade in Waikiki.

Tim Fox marched two and a half hours along Ala Moana Boulevard waving to crowds of people that came to watch the parade. The group that Fox marched with carried signs that protested the current presidential administration with the words "Can't wait until Bush" is gone written on them. Fox carried a sign that said the government represses science, and forces generations to pay a terrible price. Although the sign was controversial, Fox thought that the crowd had a good response to their demonstration.

"We got more peace symbols than we got middle fingers," Fox said.

Fox walked with a group called the Communist Revolution. He said he takes part in the parade every year, but not always in the same city.

"The walk was only two and a half hours long," Fox said, "but we were exhausted by the time we were done."

The main reason for his participation in the parade came down to two issues, and Fox thought they needed to be brought out into the open.

"I was supporting the fact that our government is corrupt from the inside, filtering information from the public," he said. "Figures like the death's toll In Iraq, information on global warming and the truth about Hurricane Katrina. If the public had knowledge of the true information they would want to change the info the government is releasing."

The other reason was the rumor that UH was taking part in military research that would employ students for that cause.

"Over all, the people seemed receptive to the banner that we were carrying," Fox said.

Fox found out about the communist revolution and their march in the parade from the Revolutionary Bookstore on King Street. They were handing out flyers to support the party's ideas on the war in Iraq and the current Presidential administration.

"I will take part in the parade again," Fox said, "but not with that organization."

The group shouted things like "Hey, ho, Gorge Bush has got [to] go," while Fox and others' marching in the parade heckled the crowd while they listened to the comments and criticism of the citizens of Hawai'i.

"The only thing that was mildly threatening was the police escort that followed us through the entire parade," Fox said. "Otherwise the event was actually quite unexciting, from an actors point of view."

Lingle

From page 1

ics room in Holmes Hall at the other various robots created and tested by students and faculty.

"The initiative is to [help] Hawai'i high school and junior high school students get a better understanding and interest in science, technology, engineering and math, and help them develop all the way through college ... The catalyst or mechanism they're going to use is robotics," Choi said.

Choi has been using ODIN with students especially at Waialua High School, McKinley High School and Mililani High School. He has coordinated robotics teams and held competitions in addition to giving engineering lectures at the high schools.

Choi also stated that one of the reasons UH and the Governor are stressing the importance of education in science and technology is the lack of engineers in the state of Hawai'i.

"Right now there's this huge need for engineers," Choi said, "especially with all the construction going on and stuff like that. He added that 40 percent of employed engineers in Hawai'i are currently being brought in from the Mainland and overseas. "We want to see if we can cut that down and have more people graduate from here."

"From the College [of Engineering] standpoint and my perspective, that is the main reason why we are involved, because we want to see if we can assist in the workforce shortage in the state," he said.

Choi hopes that his work in robotics with students will inspire them to continue to study science, technology, engineering and math throughout their college years.

News Briefs

Siren and Emergency Alert System Test

By Ka Leo News Desk

The State Civil Defense will be conducting a monthly test of the Emergency Alert System, along with its sirens, on Thursday, Feb. 1, at 11:45 a.m.

The attention/alert signal will be a steady tone of 45 seconds and can be heard across the island at various points. The signal usually goes off in case an emergency poses a threat to life or property in general. Furthermore, the system can be used when there are terrorist incidents or acts of war.

The State Civil Defense advises that when the siren is heard in your area, tune in to a radio station or a TV channel for more information on the emergency and possible instructions. Participating stations will carry a detailed explanation of what the sirens mean. KTUH FM 90.3 will run a generic Civil Defense warning, "This is a test ...," when the sirens go off.

Corrections for Monday, Jan. 22

Interim Chancellor Denise Konan has the power to raise dorm rates from 4 percent to 6 percent, but has not actually done so. According to the article, it was mentioned that "her first call to action was to increase housing costs by 5 percent."

There was a 14.5 percent attrition, rather than 4.5, of the retainment of students at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa when compared to the Teresa Farnum and Associates Agency's standard.

In the same article, the third paragraph on the jump had an incomplete sentence.

Speak Out

What do you think the school can do about student retention?

"Don't make you take classes that you don't need. Classes are redundant."

Colin Brady | Senior in Finance and International Business

"To equal the level of courses, [in terms of content] to schools on the mainland."

Meike De-Nooy | Junior in Psychology

"I have a hard time getting my classes, especially the ones I need."

Duane Fukumoto | Freshman in Architecture

"I've graduated from here a while ago ... I would say a lot of classes aren't offered or they're full. They should have alternate classes."

Aleli Starosta | Senior Citizen Visitor Program

"Make the places more comfortable, more suitable, maintain the buildings, keep it clean ..."

Ching-Mao Wei | Junior in Marine Biology

The wait is over, timeless comedy comes to stage

Sharon Wezelman, MFA student in Asian Theatre, plays the role of a wife trying to restore honor and courage to her husband.

COURTESY PHOTO
Kennedy Theatre

By Sean Horie
Ka Leo Staff Reporter

Theatre students Alan Shepard and Daniel Sakimura rehearse a scene in their rehearsal costumes. Actual Kyogen costumes are imported from Japan, costing thousands of grant dollars.

RUSSELL SAITO
Ka Leo O Hawai'i

This weekend, many of you will choose to take in an action flick. Some will choose to play a few rounds of mini golf and others will throw on those dancing shoes to swing the night away. Did Kyogen happen to cross your mind?

"Kyogen: Timeless Comedy" is playing at Kennedy Theatre on Jan. 26 and 27 at 8 p.m. Taking over a semester's worth of work to make, many University of Hawai'i at Mānoa students have been diligently studying this mid-level form of theater to bring a different type of play for the masses.

Translated from Japanese, Kyogen means "wild speech," originating from Chinese sarugaku, a form of theater. Noh, a major form of Japanese musical drama, had comical breaks called Kyogen, which evolved into modern Kabuki.

Kyogen is an art of words. Known for its clean humor and witty remarks about social class, Kyogen brings tasteful comedy in the form of wholesome satire and slapstick, called "chikidiki."

"Kyogen is a Japanese form of farcical theater," said Jeremy Dowd, who will play the dim-witted brother in "Futari Bakama" a part of "Kyogen: Timeless Comedy."

Passing the theater department's one-time offering of the course, Dowd said there are vocal movements and training involved in this theatrical performance. Dowd's smarter brother in the performance will be played by Alan Shepard.

Shepard, who has been in several Western-style plays, told me he found many different elements in Kyogen that separated it from the typical play. Kyogen's nontraditional style, he said, will show the audience that "comedy is universal."

Many uncouth forms of plays were banned in Japan during the 17th century except for Kyogen, which would become the protected entertainment of the land during the Edo Period (1603-1867). Former President Ulysses S. Grant and his wife were the first Americans to witness this form of play.

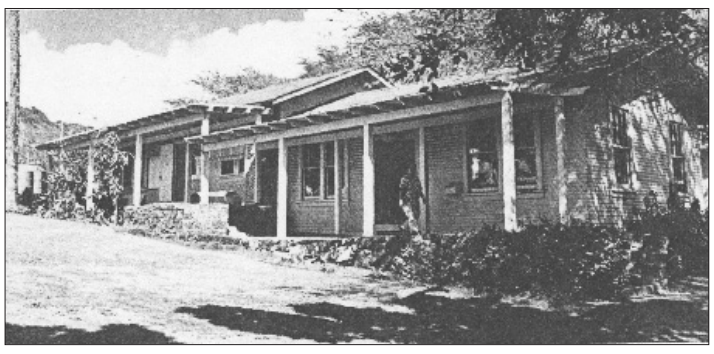
The staff behind "Kyogen: Timeless Comedy" believes Kyogen is worthwhile to bring to today's audiences, and has invested thousands of dollars in this performance. Daniel Nishida, whose character in the play is of the Japanese high class, will wear a costume worth about $7,000, said costume coordinator Hannah Schauer. Nishida will be wearing a massive kimono during "Sanbon

See Kyogen, page 5

100 Years Strong

By Patricia Wilson

Chick in dorm



1922

The first Hale Aloha Women's Dormitory, which students called the "Chicken Inn," is built. Originally located near the modern Business Administration Building, the Hale Aloha Women's Dormitory was the site of the first nursing school, and later, the headquarters of the East-West Center.

Photo Courtesy of "Building a Rainbow" by Victor Kobayashi

An Obama Nation

COURTESY PHOTO • Barackobama.com

Should he seek the presidency, Obama's rhetoric may not fit his record

By Michael Willenborg
Ka Leo Contributing Writer

Ever since giving the keynote address at the Democratic National Convention in 2004, Barack Obama has been climbing his own stairway to heaven. After trouncing Republican opponent Alan Keyes in his race for the United States Senate, the general estimation seemed to be that we were witnessing the workings of the Democrats' "rising star."

Though there was some hope among his supporters that he would take a stab at the presidency in 2008, such speculations were dismissed by the media and Obama himself. That tune began to change, however, once the prospects began to look bleak for Republicans in 2006. After first "considering" a presidential bid, he has now formed an exploratory committee and, by all accounts, will seek to wrest the Democratic nomination from Hilary Clinton, who is still thought to be the frontrunner.

However, the senator from Illinois appears to be beating Clinton at the very game used so successfully by her husband during his successful road to the White House. While doubts still linger about her electability due to her perceived image as an intense partisan, Obama has attempted to position himself as one above the fray, someone unconcerned with political squabbles who will utilize the best solutions from either side of the ideological divide in the service of combating the nation's most daunting challenges.

This is a theme echoed time and again in his recent book, "The Audacity of Hope: Thoughts on Reclaiming the American Dream." On the back cover, one finds this excerpt:

"A government that truly represents these Americans – that truly serves these Americans – will require a different kind of politics. That politics will need to reflect our lives as they are actually lived. It won't be pre-packaged, ready to pull off the shelf. It will have to be constructed from the best of our traditions and will have to account for the darker aspects of our past. We will need to understand just how we got to this place, this land of warring factions and tribal hatreds. And we'll need to remind ourselves, despite all our differences, just how much we share: common hopes, common dreams, a bond that will not break."

The strategy embodied in this pericope was originally engineered by former Clinton advisor Dick Morris, who apparently drew his inspiration from former French president Francois Mitterrand (127). Dubbing it "triangulation," the idea is to steal the thunder from the opposing party by solving the problems that energize their base. Thus, in 1996, then-President Clinton worked to reform welfare, cut crime, balance the budget and "mend" affirmative action. In so doing, the GOP had very little upon which to base its campaign, and was soundly defeated in that year's election as a result.

Though this seems to be the model Sen. Obama is attempting to follow, it is not at all obvious that he will be able to fit his rhetoric to his record. Consider the following:

(1) He was given a rating of 100 percent by both Planned Parenthood and NARAL in 2006.

(2) He voted against the Born Alive Infant Protection Act, a bill opposed by NARAL, three times.

(3) On page 57, he says conservatives ought to realize that "most women feel as protective of their right to reproductive freedom as evangelicals do about their right to worship." Undoubtedly, such a statement can be sure to raise the eyebrows of both evangelicals and some in the pro-choice camp.

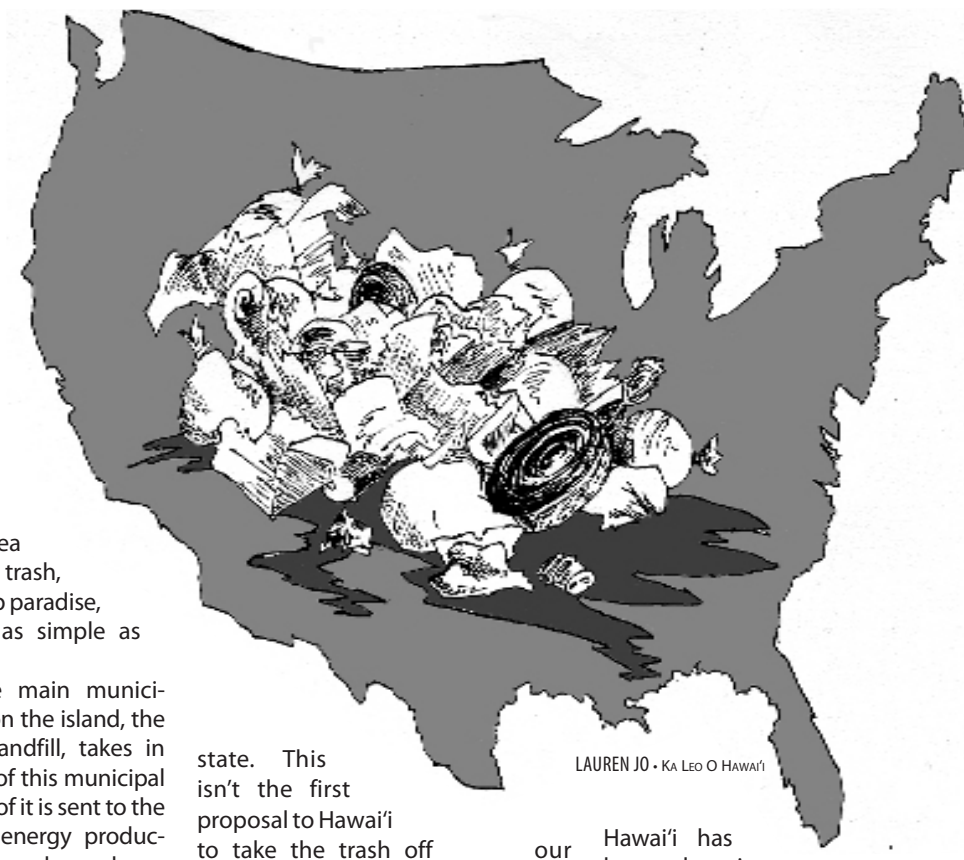
(4) He received a 100 percent liberal rating by Americans for Democratic Action in 2005, and a rating of 95 percent for 2006.

However, what is perhaps the most interesting remark to find its way into the pages of his book is the refrain that "we can never act with the certainty that God is on our side; and yet at times we must nonetheless act as if we are certain, protected from error only by providence." Though it is difficult to discern its precise meaning, one gets the impression that by it, Obama wishes to walk the tightrope between moral relativism and the principled rejection of obvious evil.

Given the volatile nature of the threat posed by countries such as Iran and North Korea, one can only hope that, should Barack Obama assume the reigns of our nation, he will choose to leave his political consultants (or at least, the strategies drawn up by them) behind.

Trashy exports to the mainland

By Jenny Sharaf
Ka Leo Contributing Writer



LAUREN JO • Ka Leo O Hawai'i

O'ahu generates more than 1.6 million tons of trash every year. With a growing population and limited space and resources, it was only a matter of time before we thought of shipping our trash to the mainland. It sounds like a great idea in theory – we make trash, ship it away and keep paradise, paradise. But is it as simple as that?

Each year, the main municipal garbage dump on the island, the Waimānalo Gulch landfill, takes in about 300,000 tons of this municipal solid waste. The rest of it is sent to the HPOWER plant for energy production. At this rate, the garbage dump is predicted to hold up for another 15 years. It has been the receptacle of O'ahu trash since 1989 and is run by the largest waste management company in the nation – Waste Management Incorporated. One advantage in this setup is that the charges that private haulers pay to use the landfill indirectly pay for the residential trash collection, but the benefits end there.

A Seattle-based company, Hawaiian Waste Systems, is eager to add Hawaii's waste to a huge landfill in the Northeast area of Washington state. This isn't the first proposal to Hawai'i to take the trash off our hands, but it is a heated issue that is getting hotter as time goes on. The landfill in Washington is run by Allied Waste Industries and already accepts trash from California and Alaska. Economically, the proposal seems to be a good idea. The trash would be shipped back on barges used to carry construction materials to Hawai'i from the mainland, which currently return empty. Unless a barge exploded during the 2,000-mile cross-ocean journey, the plan is environmentally friendly, too.

Hawai'i has been slow in the decision to ship our garbage out of the islands, and subsequently, the trash is building up on O'ahu's Leeward side. Ghastly odors are a result of an overwhelming amount of trash, and some West-side residents say they are suffering from the smell.

Hawai'i desperately needs to figure out other methods of dealing with our trash. Whether strict recycling rules go into effect or we accept the proposals to ship our trash to the mainland, another plan is vital to keeping Hawai'i beautiful.

Letters

Impending bird flu research concerns student

Yesterday, I attended the Department of Agriculture's public committee meeting that decided whether samples of bird flu would be permitted into Hawai'i for research. After two hours of testimonies, the committee voted 6-1 to allow the University of Hawai'i Burns School of Medicine to import unlimited quantities and types of avian bird flu into the state for research. This means that in three months, there will be a constant and unrestricted flow of bird flu cultures arriving into Honolulu via mail. According to the proposal, samples of the disease will arrive weekly, one at a time, in small boxes through standard mail.

The main argument for bringing the disease to Hawai'i is so that we can identify any cases of human bird flu more quickly instead of having to send samples off to the mainland.

UH is requesting the disease in order to conduct research that will provide diagnostic information to help quickly identify bird flu if it is ever reported. While many see this as a good thing, I am concerned that the research itself is the biggest threat. We shall see what happens in three months, when one of the most feared diseases in the world arrives in the Islands with the promise of saving lives by growing avian flu right here in Hawai'i.

Peter King
Senior
Communications

Commentary writers wanted

Email: commentary@kaleo.org

Letters to the Editor
SUBMISSION POLICY

Ka Leo O Hawai'i welcomes letters to the editor on any subject. Letters are given priority on the basis of importance to the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa system and its surrounding communities.

All letters must be accompanied by the author's true name, e-mail address and daytime telephone number. Letters should address a single subject and should be no longer than 500 words. Letters of any length are subject to trimming and editing.

All letters and articles submitted to Ka Leo O Hawai'i may be published or distributed in print, online and other forms.

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Kyogen

From page 3

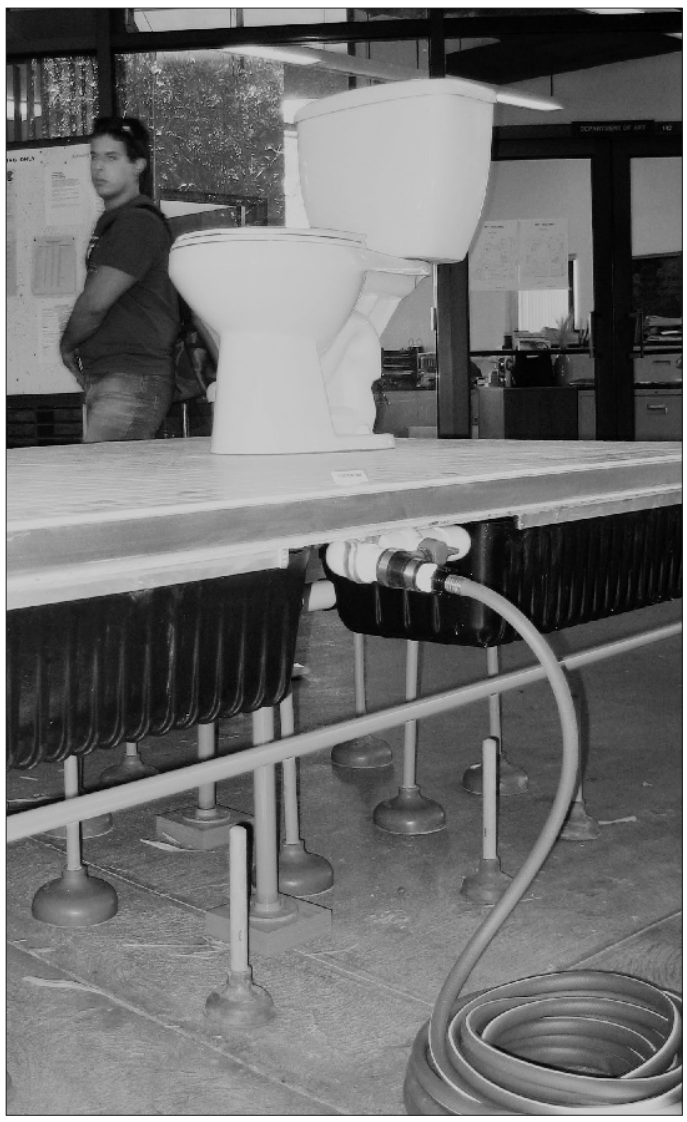
Bashira," the first play. He said his movement is restricted due to the garment.

How each character uses their feet is an integral part of Kyogen. All the characters shuffle their feet across the elaborately made stage, except when trying to sneak around. This movement is a part of the art form. Also, the stage itself could be considered a piece of art. It is a large, polished cherry wood platform with bamboo jutting out at the front to draw the essence of nature onto the stage. The bamboo will be used as fountain heads to soothingly trickle water out into the man-made pond surrounding the large square. There are heavy vases in the corners containing sprigs of green fern, tying the elegance of medieval Japan into the production.

Stage manager Liz Harwood said over 50 people have contributed to making this production possible. In order to overcome setbacks like prop and curtain difficulties, Harwood said the crew really "stepped up." Director Julie Iezzi and assistant director Jessica Nakamura are dedicated to making this production a spectacular event.

"Kyogen: Timeless Comedy" is a play that will bring lightheartened humor and family fun into your humdrum routine. This play will surely be a good change of pace, and it will try to fill the fun meter in your life.

Dirty Art



DAN RICHARDS • Ka Leo O Hawai'i

A toilet that is held up by plungers, plumbing and other support systems was put on display outside of the Graduate Art Student's exhibit in the Art Building on Monday. Many students walked past the toilet not knowing about the show and the significance of the display.

Events Calendar

Please e-mail any community or campus events to calendar@kaleo.org.

The study abroad fair, today, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Campus Center mall. The festival will have information about the center's study abroad opportunities in 27 locations around the world, financial aid and scholarships. Info: Study Abroad Center, 956-5143, uhmsac@hawaii.edu, http://www.studyabroad.org.

"Genomes, medicine and the environment," a seminar, today, 3:30 to 5 p.m., Kaka'ako University of Hawai'i medical school campus, Medical Education Building, third floor. Craig Venter, founder, chairperson and CEO of the J. Craig Venter Institute, will present. The institute is a nonprofit, research and support organization dedicated to genomic research. Info: David Baker, 956-9405, bakerd@hawaii.edu.

Erica Reynolds Clayton will deliver an English colloquium today, 3 to 4 p.m., Kuykendall Hall, room 410. Clayton focuses on writing assessment, as well as composition theory and pedagogy. Info: English department, 956-7619.

"Keepers of the Reef," a film, part of the University of Hawai'i Planet Film Series, tomorrow, 7 p.m., Spalding auditorium. Admission: general - $5 and students - $3. Info: 223-0130.

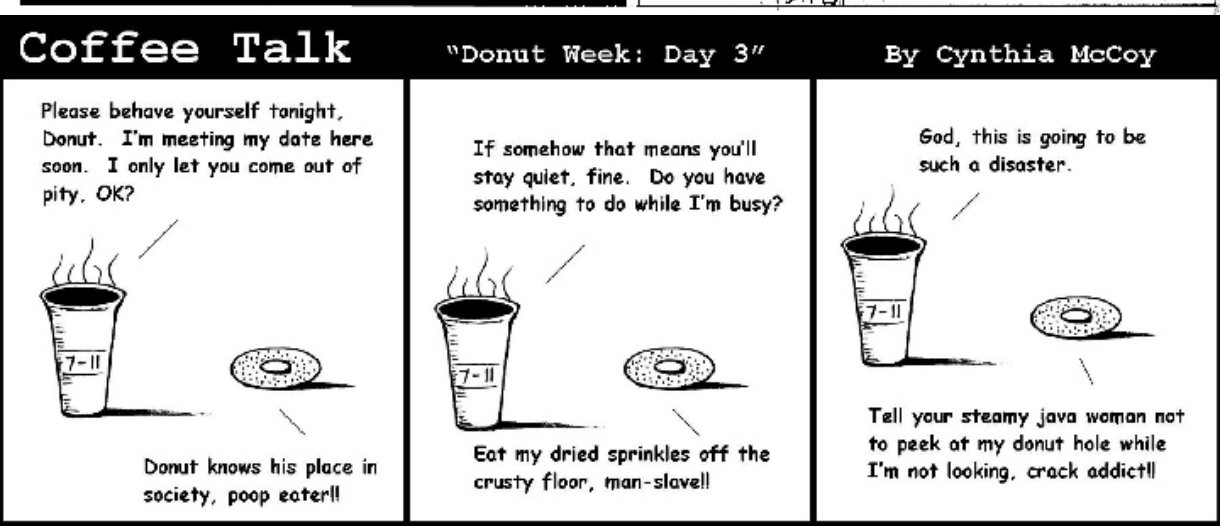
"The ocean genome: a key to earth's habitability," a lecture, tomorrow, 7 to 9:30 p.m., Campus Center ballroom. Craig Venter will present. Info: David Baker, 956-9405, bakerd@hawaii.edu.

"The National Institute of Hydrology, Roorkee, India," a Water Resources Research Center seminar, Friday, 3 to 4 p.m., Hawai'i Institute of Geophysics, room 110. NIH, an autonomous science and technology institute, has provided research and development for hazard-free sustainable development and management of water and water-related disasters. K.D. Sharma, director of the NIH, will present. Info: WRRC, Moravcik, 956-3097, morav@hawaii.edu.

"A beauty and a beast? Effects of predation by the introduced grouper roi (cephalopholis argus) on populations of native reef fishes of Hawai'i," a zoology seminar, Friday, 3:30 to 4:30 p.m., St. John auditorium, room 11. Jan Dierking will present this Ph.D. defense. Info: zoology department, Lynne, 956-8617, logata@hawaii.edu.

"Negative curvature and algorithms for discrete groups," a mathematics colloquium, Friday, 3:30 to 4:30 p.m., Keller Hall, room 401. Daniel Groves from the California Institute of Technology will present. Info: mathematics department, Robert Little, 956-4668, little@math.hawaii.edu, http://www.math.hawaii.edu.

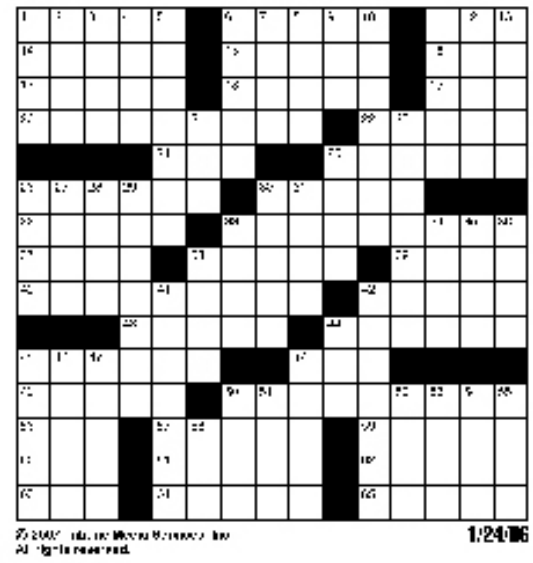
"Kyogen," a series of four medieval Japanese plays, performs Friday and Saturday from 8 to 10 p.m., Sunday from 2 to 4 p.m., Kennedy Theatre. The plays will highlight the range of stock characters commonly found in kyogen plays, from the conniving servant, Taro Kaja, and dim-witted son-in-law, to a earthly demon and high-handed lord knocked from his high horse. Tickets available at Kennedy Theatre box office: regular - $16, senior, military, University of Hawai'i faculty/staff - $14, non-UH Mānoa studies - $11, students with validated UH Mānoa ID - $5. Info: Kennedy Theatre box office, 956-7655 (voice/text), http://www.hawaii.edu/kennedy.



Crossword

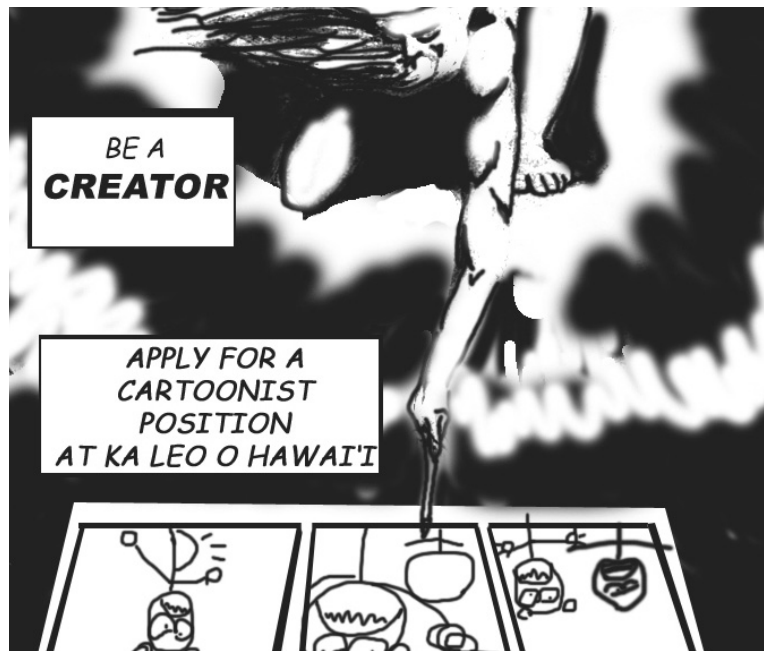
ACROSS
1 Coffee-cull remark
6 Prison session
11 Former draft org.
14 Pat or Debby
15 Bible tale
16 Turn left
17 Political coalitions
18 Dismay
19 Stacked contents
20 What's left
22 Classic whodunit pair
24 Some stomach?
26 Shag's target
27 Type of found
30 Masterstrokes
32 Happy songs
33 Confirmed again
37 "Sopranos" star Falco
38 To the point
39 Chess turn
40 Figure out
42 Magnificent number?
43 Ishmaelites
44 Addictions to confess
45 Humiliate
46 ___ dimmer
48 Strange
50 Frat party supervisor
55 Cul-de-sac
57 Obsolete encyclopedic
60 Sort of situation
61 Stretch the truth
62 House keepers
63 Yo-yo Ma's instrument
65 Was unsure
66 Bridge hand
67 Sch. employees

DOWN
1 Brief vow
2 Pineapple from Mexico
3 Weaver's apparatus
4 Abbr. suffix
5 Fuchsia hue
6 Unbroken
7 Fit as a fiddle
8 Snatch or Epee
9 "___ the rompers..."
10 Alley prowlers
11 Certain preacher
12 Sentiment
13 Estate separation
21 Final pitch
22 Took for granted
25 Founding org.
26 Wash basin feature
27 Helper
29 Mg. now measure
33 Pittsburgh ale
36 Seedless plants
37 Darkness
39 Hold your horses
41 Warder
45 O'Neill title
46 Lairs
48 Fled
49 Actor Brooks
50 Personal
52 "The ___ of the Ladies"
54 Rhythmic pattern
55 Reside



Solutions 1/23/07

48 Fit for a King?
49 Stuck in the mud
50 Pen
51 ___ En-tial
51 Tire pull for weight
52 Considerations
53 Nocturnal raptors
54 River of Thebes
55 Adam's grandson
56 In addition



KA LEO O HAWAI'I CLASSIFIEDS

The Ka Leo Building
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'Pan's Labyrinth' is a beautifully haunting film

Guillermo del Toro balances both brutality and wonder

By Casey Ishitani
Ka Leo Comics Editor

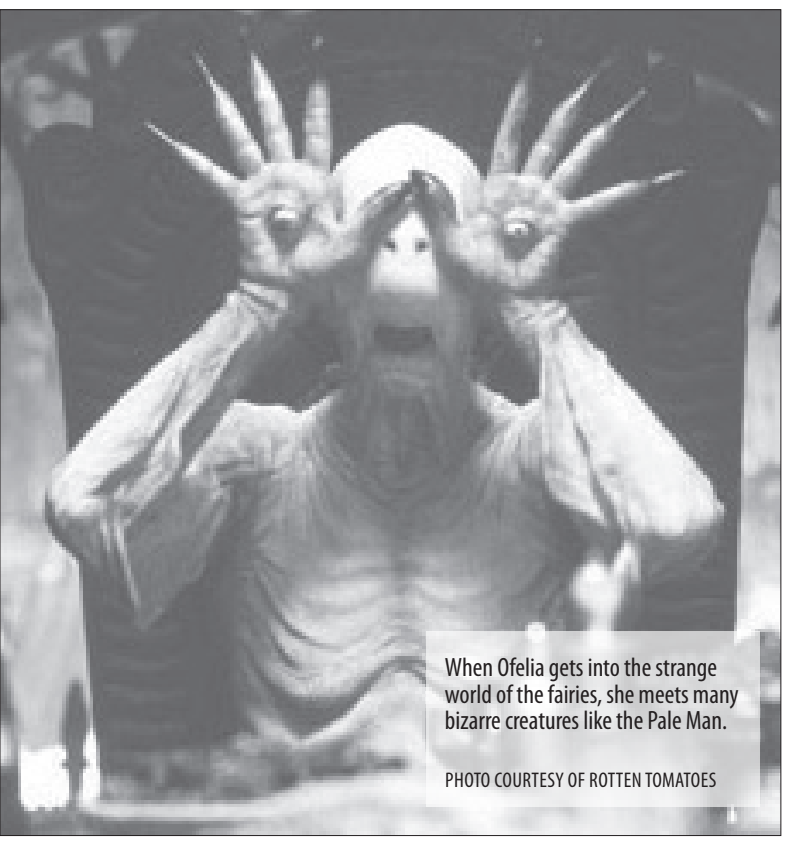
The faun gives Ofelia the book that tells her what to do to regain her birthright.

PHOTO COURTESY OF ROTTEN TOMATOES

"Pan's Labyrinth" director Guillermo del Toro is the best current director to come out of Mexico, meaning that he is one of the best directors in the world. Despite the fact that he has indeed cut his teeth on horror films such as "Mimic," and dwelled in the potential schlock of "Blade II" and "Hellboy," del Toro somehow finds a way to keep his audiences entertained while putting little hints of the mad genius surging in between every frame. The proof, of course, is seen in his achievements with "Cronos" (the best vampire film in quite some time) and "The Devil's Backbone" (the best ghost film in quite some time).

However, whether it may be the surprisingly beautiful death of a main character in "Blade II" or the gentle heartache behind Ron Pearlman's defensive humor in "Hellboy," del Toro shows that even the pulpiest pulp has weight and substance. Think of Hammer Films if they were inspired by Isabel Allende and maybe even a little bit of Charles Dickens.

Gracefully blending elements of Latin American magic realism, Dario Argento gore and C.S. Lewis wonder, "Pan's Labyrinth" is the director's timeless pièce de résistance. Set in the throes of the Spanish Civil War (also touched upon in "Devil's Backbone"), the film follows a curious young girl named Ofelia (Ivana Baquero) as she moves to the Spanish countryside with her very sick and very pregnant mother to visit her new "father," Captain Vidal (Sergi Lopez) – who is courting her mother just to gain an heir.



When Ofelia gets into the strange world of the fairies, she meets many bizarre creatures like the Pale Man.

PHOTO COURTESY OF ROTTEN TOMATOES

In the country house, she meets a housemaid named Mercedes (Maribel Verdu), who becomes a surrogate to her weakened shell of a mother. One curious evening, Ofelia follows a fairy into an ancient labyrinth to meet with an imposing faun (the grotesquely charming Doug Jones) who charges her with completing a series of tasks in order to ascend beyond her earthly vessel and take her place as an ethereal princess. Fairy violence, secret passageways and a man with eyeballs in his hands ensues.

With that suspiciously hokey plot development in mind, del Toro then juxtaposes the wonders of Ofelia's supposed dream world with the horrors of her immediate and violent real world with lavish style and detail. Cinematographer Guillermo Navarro fills the fantasies with luscious green and amber hues and washes away saturation and color from reality, while retaining the beauty of both with smooth, serpentine camera movements; the CGI effects serve the story, as opposed to distracting from it; but it is the makeup effects, ranging from gut-wrenching violence to the beautifully realized creation of the faun – with his long limbs, ghostly blue eyes, and sword-length horns, that really emphasize both the whimsy and horror of the worlds that "Pan's Labyrinth" straddles.

Of the performances, Verdu – as in her comely turn in "Y Tu Mama Tambien" – reveals bits and pieces of Mercedes' strength until, backed into a corner, she explodes with passionate emotion, bringing her foe to his knees. Then, there is Lopez, who played the black-market smuggler in "Dirty Pretty Things," slithering through the frame with fabulous venom in his maw, trying his hardest not to show the coward within. And thankfully, Baquero displays a naturalness and genuine wonder of the world enveloping her, bringing a touching gravity to a role that most child actors would have savaged with forced tears or awkward "wise-beyond-her-years" line deliveries.

The gap between the two realities within the storyline eventually merges, revealing with great empathy the themes of sacrifice, bravery, and hope under Franco's Spain. It is mostly to del Toro's credit that his dual narrative approach enriches both sides of the dichotomy the more the story progresses. The result is a gorgeous, brutal, whimsical and haunting film that doesn't cheat its way to an easy dénouement. "Pan's Labyrinth" is a work of del Toro's timeless and distinctive genius. Why can't Hollywood produce filmmakers like this?

Writer's note: "Pan's Labyrinth" is currently up for six Oscars, including Best Foreign Language Film.

Rainbows return to the field

'Bows tied with Fresno as WAC season favorites

By Rebecca Gallegos
Ka Leo Sports Editor

The University of Hawai'i baseball team begins its 2007 campaign at Les Murakami Stadium Friday, Jan. 26, when the members face the Santa Clara University Broncos in the first game of a three-game series ending Sunday.

The Rainbows commence their season tied with Fresno State University as the Western Athletic Conference preseason favorites. The Bulldogs were last year's conference champs.

UH finished the 2006 season with a 45-17 overall record and an appearance in the NCAA tournament, where they lost to eventual national champion Oregon State University in the regional finals. It was UH's first appearance in an NCAA regional since 1993.

All seven head coaches in the conference voted in the WAC preseason poll, with Hawai'i and Fresno receiving 33 total votes. The poll also included a vote upon the preseason all-WAC team. UH had the most selections, with six Rainbows chosen.

The preseason all-WAC team includes sophomore catcher Landon Hernandez, junior outfielder Derek Dupree, senior shortstop Eli Christensen, senior third baseman Justin Frash, senior reliever Tyler Davis and senior pitcher Ian Harrington.

Harrington was also selected as the preseason pitcher of the year. In 2006, he went 9-3 with a 3.99 ERA and 52 strikeouts in 103.2 innings.

Yesterday, the WAC announced that UH left-handed pitcher Mark Rodrigues will be granted another year of eligibility after sitting out in 2004 and 2005 due to a medical situation. In 2006, Rodrigues had 12 starts with a 4.66 ERA in 58 innings.

UH head coach Mike Trapasso returns for his sixth season with the Rainbows and has an overall record of 150-134. On Trapasso's 2006 roster, eight athletes were named to the All-WAC team and four players were taken in the Major League Baseball Draft. As a result of his success with UH last season, the National Baseball Association named Trapasso the national coach of the year. He also earned his second WAC Coach of the Year title in three years.

This season, the Rainbows will meet Wichita State University, ranked No. 10 in Baseball America's preseason polls, in February as a part of a three-game regular-season series.

Santa Clara, UH's first opponent of the season, was chosen sixth in the preseason polls for the West Coast Conference, receiving 19 total points. After posting a 28-26 record last year, the Broncos went to work, recruiting and acquiring 12 players for the 2007 season. They also return 2006 freshman All-Americans Matt Long and Matt Wickswat.

The game is scheduled to begin at 6:35 p.m., and all students will receive free admission into any of the three games this weekend with the presentation of a valid UH identification card.

FILE PHOTO• Dan Richards

UH senior Ian Harrington was selected by the Western Athletic Conference as the preseason pitcher of the year. In 2006 he had a 9-3 record with a 3.99 ERA.

FILE PHOTO • Dan Richards

Justin Frash is one of eight seniors on the UH squad this season. Frash, along with five other 'Bows, was voted onto the the preseason all-WAC team.

SportsBriefs

One Free Admission for UH Students in Opening Baseball Series

This weekend, University of Hawai'i students will receive free tickets to the University of Hawai'i Rainbows' season-opening series against Santa Clara University at Les Murakami Stadium. Students who present their valid UH identification card will receive one ticket for each of the games scheduled on Friday, Saturday and Sunday (Jan. 26-28). Present your student ID at the stadium box office on game day or at the Stan Sheriff Center Box Office in advance.

Rainbow Wahine Volleyball Team Recognized at Halftime

The University of Hawai'i Rainbow Wahine will be honored at the Stan Sheriff Center for their Western Athletic Conference Championship tomorrow during halftime at the men's basketball game against San Jose State University. The Wahine ended their season with a 29-6 overall record after falling to the No. 4 University of California, Los Angeles Bruins (33-3) in the NCAA Honolulu Regional Final at the Stan Sheriff Center.

Members of the Armed Services Receive 2-For-1 Deal for UH vs. San Jose Game

Both active and reservist military members will receive two tickets for the price of one (maximum of eight tickets) to the men's basketball game this Thursday against San Jose State at the Stan Sheriff Center. A valid military identification card is required when picking up the tickets, either in advance or on game night, at the box office. Tickets are for special promotion sections. Tip-off is set for 7:05 p.m.

UH Faculty and Staff Receive 2-For-1 Deal for UH vs. Utah State Game; First 2,000 Fans Will Receive Mini-Basketballs

University of Hawai'i faculty and staff members will receive two tickets for the price of one (maximum of eight tickets) to the men's basketball game on Monday, Jan. 29, at 7:05 p.m. against Utah State at the Stan Sheriff Center. A valid identification card is required when picking up the tickets, either in advance or on game night at the box office. Tickets are for special promotion sections. The first 2,000 fans will also receive free mini-basketballs, courtesy of American Savings Bank.

UH Diving Hosts Final Regular Season Meet

The University of Hawai'i men and women's diving teams will compete in their final home meet of the season, against Wisconsin-Oshkosh, this Friday and Saturday, Jan. 26 and 27, at the Duke Kahanamoku Aquatics Complex. The Rainbow Diving Invitational begins with the 3-meter springboard, scheduled for 1:30 p.m. on Friday. The platform competition is set for noon on Saturday, followed by the 1-meter springboard at 1 p.m.