The Prospector, March 1, 2022

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Russia’s invasion of Ukraine has global impacts

BY VICTORIA RIVAS

After months of uncertainty, Russia invaded Ukraine early in the morning Thursday, Feb. 24, by firing a series of missiles near Kyiv and Kharkiv.

“Putin is the aggressor. Putin chose this war,” U.S. President Joe Biden wrote Feb. 24 via Twitter. The invasion began minutes after Russian President Vladimir Putin made a speech on national television announcing his decision to conduct a “special military operation” and denied any intentions to occupy Ukrainian territories.

According to a CNN report, Putin also claimed to conduct a military operation to protect the people subjected to genocide by the Kyiv regime.

“Both the claims of genocide and de-Nazification as a goal for the invasion of Ukraine are just misinformation,” said Leslie Waters, Ph.D., assistant professor of history at UTEP. “But what is based on, I’m guessing is the fact that Russian people who are setting the sanctions are long-term, political science at UTEP. “Which

people who are setting the sanctions will be implemented and profound-ly impact Russia’s economy and financial system by targeting Rus-sia’s biggest banks, Russian elites and their families, and implement-ing export controls on certain technologies.

“Russia’s economy has already faced intensified pressure in recent weeks; just today its stock market sunk to its lowest level in four and a half years, and the ruble weakened beyond its weakest daily settlement price on record – before additional sanctions were even imposed,” the Biden Administration said in a statement from the White House.

“With these new stringent measures, these pressures will further accumulate and suppress Russia’s economic growth, increase its borrowing costs, raise inflation, intensify capital outflows, and erode its industrial base.”

The U.S. and its allies, who are members of NATO are implement-ing sanctions on Russia to suppress Russia’s economic growth.

“It’s going to actually harm the citizens as opposed to the leader-ship,” said Gaspare Genna, Ph.D., professor and department chair of political science at UTEP. “Which means that the leadership can use it as a tool to galvanize against the people who are setting the sanc-tions.”

Although the sanctions imple-mented by the U.S. and the Europe-an Union on Russia are long-term, UTEP Professor of Economics and Finance Thomas Fullerton, Ph.D., said these sanctions could also lead to agricultural, steel and manufac-turing.

see UKRAINE on page 3
Critical race theory is essential to public education

Texas fails to protect trans youth

The Prospector

Opinion Alberto Silva Fernandez, editor-in-chief

Critical race theory is a college level concept study that aims to teach why we created the Liberty Institute at UTA. The fact that the lieutenant governor thinks this has anything to do with Marxism goes to show he has never talked to an actual professor. All he was trying to do was to interpret these gender-affirming types of care as abuse or neglect,“ Bernal said in an interview with El Paso Matters. Abbott’s decision to invoke himself and the Texas legislature in the lives of trans youth is unnecessary. Already prohibiting trans youth from being involved in sports, this is yet another attack on the normativity that is slowly dissipating in Texas for the transgender community. The order, which is reminiscent of the abortion law imposed Sept. 1, 2021, by Gov. Abbott, shows the similarities of limitations Abbott has put on the state. Not giving direct power to state officials but allowing for citizens of Texas to take the law into their own hands. Creating a sense of fear in young trans individuals who want to identify in their respected gender is inhumane and can be traumatizing for some. With that, some may never be able to fully express their gender out of fear they will face legal consequence, or the possibility of their parents and/or teachers facing legal action.

texas has become the gender they self-identify as, should be illegal. They believe it is classified as child abuse, and seek to prosecute the parents who provide those options to their child. In Abbott’s order, he states there should be legal action taken against those who do not report these cases. There is no law that legally allows anyone to report transgender youth to DFPS, let alone any other form of government. There is neither any law that is providing gender-transioning medical care as child abuse. Both Abbott and Paxton are trying to disrupt adolescents from accessing safe gender-affirming medicine and are labeling it as protecting the trans youth.

The Paso County Attorney Jo Anne Bernal has decided not to enforce Abbott’s order. “In my opinion, there’s no way you can stretch the laws as written to interpret these gender-affirming types of care as abuse or neglect,” Bernal said in an interview with El Paso Matters. According to the Bernal’s interview, he has rejected a bill that would ban trans youth from accessing medical services in Texas. He also says the bill would be unconstitutional. He believes that anyone who would report these cases is acting in bad faith. He states that trans youth should be allowed to make their own decisions and have the right to wear what they want and live as they please.

What the lieutenant governor is trying to implement in higher education is a direct violation of academic freedom. On July 30, 2021, The Prospector published an article on CRT where Socio-Cultural Foundations of Education Director and Chair Cesar A. Rossato, Ph.D., talked about the importance of academic freedom. “I was hired to teach CRT. Now you are passing laws and silence professors from doing their work,” he said in the article. “The idea that a professor could lose tenure, something that is seen as the highest form of academic achievement in your respective university. Because they chose to educate students about the truth of the foundations that America was built upon and continue to affect people of color like myself and my classmates in a negative way.”

As students, those of us who attend this university to grow in our pursuits of academia have a right to learn about topics such as CRT. With that being said, I call on UTEP President Heather Wilson to speak out against this trespass on academic freedom and ensure that professors are protected.

Alberto Silva Fernandez is the editor-in-chief and may be reached at asilva36@miners.utep.edu; @albert.sf08 on Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn.

Can the Miners play spoiler in C-USA tourney?

The Prospector

Daniel Alexis Lopez

The Miners are looking to change that outcome. The Prospector is published by the Student Media and Publications Board, 105 Union East, 500 W. University Blvd, El Paso, Texas 79968. The Prospector reserves the right to reject any student account. The Prospector is distributed on campus during the fall, spring, and summer semesters. The newspaper is not printed during holidays and when classes are not in session. The Prospector does not guarantee placement of all articles. The Prospector is provided to students through student fees. First copy is free. Any additional copies, if available, may be purchased for $1 through the Department of Student Media and Publications. The Prospector is not responsible for claims made by advertisers. All personal information (phone numbers and address) will be used for identification only. Letters are subject to editing to fit available space, clarity and brevity.

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The war may interfere with the planting seasons for many crops and lead to higher global prices for wheat, corn, cabbages, barley, and peas,” said Fullerton. “Additional supply-chain disruptions may result for steel and other manufactured products. Also problematic are financial market upheavals for commodities, stocks, bonds, and currencies. The dollar has strengthened in recent days because of its status as a safe-haven currency.”

Ukraine was formerly part of the Soviet Union but became independent when it collapsed in 1991. Putin claims Ukraine is part of Russia’s history and culture and considers it a “hostile act” if Ukraine joins NATO.

“We claim, rightfully so, that Putin has violated international law and international norms in doing what he did, and he did,” said Genna. “So, therefore, for the United States to actually intervene, it would have to do so along the lines of international law.”

Ukraine is not part of NATO, and therefore the U.S. and other Euro-

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Pastor Antonio Brown says a prayer in solidarity with Ukraine at Tom Lea Park in El Paso on Feb. 28. Photo by Alberto Silva Fernandez/

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THE PROSPECTOR - MARCH 1, 2022

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GRAD FAIR WEEK

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THE PROSPECTOR
Stay in touch.
The University of Texas at El Paso received a $2 million donation for NPR affiliate radio station KTEP-FM (88.5) and will provide funding for undergraduate students scholarships.

The endowment comes from the late Margaret O. Herman, an heiress of the Hess family, inventors of the steel-toe shoe was born in Baltimore, Maryland, in 1930. She moved to El Paso in the early 1980s. She later died in 2018, a result of cancer.

KTEP’s Director of Development and Interim General Manager John Carrillo said the $2 million was split evenly between the university and KTEP. The other half will go towards student services, he said. “Over the course of a year the $1 million set up in a trust will collect interest, the interest is what KTEP will have access to every year,” Carrillo said.

The gift KTEP received will be used to pay for programming and equipment, Carrillo said. KTEP plans on improving a production facility that has not been upgraded since 1985, Carrillo said. “The funds in this first wave are going to help transform that studio,” Pineda said.

An immediate upgrade for the radio station is a mixing desk. Which is used to mix different sound sources, Carrillo said. “There’s a lot of work that needs to be done. Not only in terms of the infrastructure itself, the acoustics for the room, but also in terms of the actual equipment, which is actually outdated,” Carrillo said.

Donations to a university help cover costs that tuition and state funding could not provide. “It’s somebody saying that they believe in the work that you’re doing,” Pineda said.

Trustee of Herman’s estate Sue Becknell says the endowment will touch many lives and Margaret was an avid reader of KTEP and supporter of education, news releases stated.

“As a listener, the next step is to either become a donor or volunteer,” said Pineda. “This is an unrestricted endowment, so we can use it for anything.”

KTEP plans on improving a production facility, Carrillo said. “The funds in this first wave are going to help transform that studio,” Carrillo said.

Michelle Blumenfeld: professional certified coach with the International Coach Federation, and with eclectic experience in leadership coaching strategies.

Emma Schwartz: President for the Medical Center of the Americas (MCA) Foundation, a non-profit organization that drives the vision for positioning the Paso del Norte region as the center of health delivery, medical education and biomedical research for military, border and Hispanic populations.

“With our particular donor the interest is what KTEP will have access to every year,” Carrillo said. "An immediate upgrade for the radio station is a mixing desk. Which is used to mix different sound sources, Carrillo said. There’s a lot of work that needs to be done. Not only in terms of the infrastructure itself, the acoustics for the room, but also in terms of the actual equipment, which is actually outdated," Carrillo said.

The Woman’s Wellness Summit, hosted by the Paso del Norte Hotel on May 19th, will include speakers such as LPSA golfer Gernera Pilar, UTEP alum and El Paso boxer Kayla Gomez, and two-time Olympic gymnast Alexandra Raisman. Photo courtesy of Agência Brasil.
Local artist to create a new Aug. 3 memorial

BY ALYSON RODRIGUEZ
The Prospector

El Paso was changed forever on Aug. 3, 2019. A gunman drove across Texas and took the lives of 23 innocent people. Since that day, two memorials have been created honoring the victims’ memory, and a new one is being built in Ponder Park.

The first memorial stands tall at 30-feet in the parking lot of the Walmart where the shooting took place, depicting a “grand candela” as a beacon of hope for the El Paso community. This monument opened in November 2019 after that Walmart reopened.

The second memorial is located at Ascarate Park, and is called The El Paso County Healing Garden. It is a tall wall with plaques of the victims’ names and stands as a reminder of our city’s culture and resilience that cannot be weakened by hate. It opened on the second anniversary of the shooting.

Local artist Albert “Tino” Ortega, known for painting the 3D balloon murals seen across El Paso, has been commissioned to create a third memorial. Ortega is going to have a budget of $170,000.

“I feel really enthralled and honored to be considered for this opportunity. I know how deeply that day affected me and pretty much everyone in the community,” Ortega said. “I want to make sure that this spot is a beacon of reflection of who we are as a community. We can come to this spot and hopefully reflect on this day that impacted us so deeply. That’s why I do the balloon murals too, because it is about the reflection of the community. The balloons reflect what our history is about and our culture and it is a way of mirroring who we are.”

Many public meetings have been held about the new memorial at the Marty Robbins Recreation Center, 11620 Vista Del Sol Drive, and more meetings to come.

The funds to pay for the new memorial will be taken from the City’s two percent of the city’s capital improvement budget that is allotted for public art projects. Ortega was chosen out of hundreds of artists vying for the opportunity to create the new memorial at Ponder Park, 7500 W.H. Burges Drive. Applicants needed to submit their resumes and works of art to be considered.

“I am trying to convey a lot of messages through this memorial,” Ortega said. “I would go to the other two memorials and would get inspiration from them. I tried to take pieces design-wise from them, so then they are all bridged to one another. The piece itself is supposed to represent a crown. Crowns are synonymous to people with power or nobility. The shooter took away 23 people’s power on that day. This memorial is restoring that power in remembering them.”

State banned books become accessible in El Paso Public Libraries

BY VICTORIA RIVAS
The Prospector

UTEF students applied El Paso’s City Council members’ decision to allow public libraries to display a section of banned books and make them accessible to the public, despite challenges across the state and country.

“I think history and all those important topics need to be learned by everyone so that children can also learn from it and have opinions,” said Ivan Aguilar, 20, a UTEP computer science student. The item was presented to the council by District 2 Representative Alexandra Anello and was approved unanimously by council members.

“Really important books that talk about history are being banned for no other reason than denying people the right to history,” Anello said during a city council meeting.

The YWCA will donate all books to the libraries to ensure all El Pasoans have free access to information and literature.

“Not all topics are easy, but it is incredibly important now as ever to continue to provide access to our community,” Deputy City Manager of Quality of Life Tracey Jerome said during the city council meeting. “Our libraries should be a place of safety and support where they can go and seek out and have access to all types of information.”

Some parents across Texas and the country have described the banned books as pornographic and/or age-inappropriate for children since they discuss topics regarding slavery, sexual assault, puberty, identity, and sexuality. They ask for these books to be removed from public and school libraries.

“Sexual assault and people of color are usually only taught through literature,” Anello said. “It is not something we sit down with young women and talk about. It is something that they, unfortunately, have to learn for themselves through entertainment, and it is very important that we make sure that this community is educated as it can be and that it has the resources that it needs.”

Brenda Risch, founder and executive director of the Borderlands Rainbow Center, believes that children need access to a diverse library that includes books which represent them to receive a complete education.

“First of all, in terms of represent- ing different races, racial experiences, LGBTQ+ experiences, like all children should see themselves reflected in the books in their schools. That is just part of human rights,” Risch said.

More than 800 books are at risk of being inaccessible to students in Texas by the Texas State leadership, including books such as:

• “To Kill a Mockingbird” by Harper Lee
• “Of Mice and Men” by John Steinbeck
• “Gender Queer: A Memoir” by Maia Kobabe
• “Animal Farm” by George Orwell
• “The Catcher in the Rye” by J. D. Salinger
• “The Hate U Give” by Angie Thomas
• “Middlesex” by Jeffrey Eugenides
• “The Handmaid’s Tale” by Marg- aret Atwood
• “And Still I Rise: Black America’s Song” by Henry Louis Gates, Jr.
• “The Indian Removal Act and the Trail of Tears” by Susan E. Hammon
• “Stamped from the Beginning: the Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America” by Ibram X. Kendi and Jason Reynolds

“I think it should be accessible to get these books, just so that kids can be aware that, that did happen, and so they can get more infor- mation on it, and that would give them a new perspective or make them think about their own thoughts on the subject,” said Susana Tapia, 23, a UTEP forensic science student.

In December 2021 Canutillo Independent School District voted to keep “Gender Queer: A Memoir” by Maia Kobabe (an LGBTQ+ themed book) at their libraries despite a parent’s complaint about the book containing inappropriate sexually explicit content.

“As long as it is age-appropriate, I think kids can have access,” Tapia
The Batman universe compared to Ben Affleck’s Batman vs. superman: dawn of justice, but remains about Gotham City being overrun by crime and is now being tormented by the rules of this film. The Penguin and The Riddler, Dano creates an unsettling feeling when it comes to The Riddler, as if it is realistic and could be some psycho off the streets. Ferrel allows for such character development in the film, especially since The Penguin is not the main antagonist of the film. In a movie as dark as this one, both visually and emotionally, humor seems almost impossible, but the subtle humor allowed it to feel natural. From the sudden clothing change, Batman endured to the Riddlers sly jokes, it kept the movie multi-dimensional. Being almost three hours long, I stressed the film would not live up to the standards of other movies that were just as long. This movie, however, seems to keep you on your toes, and right as you think the movie ends, it pulls the audience further into the plot. It is the storytelling done by the writers that allow this comic book adaptation to come to life in such a realistic way. It never becomes over the top and ridiculous. Rather, it is as if Gotham City could be only hours away.

Batman fans will be in for a real treat by the acting skills of everyone on the cast, the films’ direction, the storyline, and the quick cameo of a favorite Batman villain. Fans now hope that Pattinson continues to portray their favorite Batman, if not for Christian Bale’s performance in “The Dark Knight.” It is however, the best Batman portrayal in the past 10 years, and deserves all the credit. It is worth seeing more than once. Pattinson play Bruce Wayne a bit more than he did, but that could be me just being greedy and wanting more eye-liner Bruce Wayne.

“Once they start getting more curious and they start getting into those topics, it’s better that they have information, rather than they get opinions based on just biased opinions from either their families or peers.” Texas Gov. Greg Abbott asked the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) to remove banned books from schools’ curriculum.

“A growing number of parents of Texas students are rightfully outraged about highly inappropriate books and other content in public school libraries,” Abbott said in a letter to TASB. “The most disturbing cases include material that is clearly pornographic, which has absolutely no place in the Texas public education system.”

Risch believes children need to be exposed to a variety of ideas and books to help build their own opinions and learn what fits best with their values.

“There are a group of people who are afraid of change, and what they have realized is that literature can inspire things that they can’t control,” Risch said. “They don’t want anything to change; they want everything to stay the same as it has always been. If you want to stifle change, you have to stifle the transmission of information, ideas, development of imagination, and development of critical thinking.”

The banned books displays can be found at every El Paso public library. For information, visit www.elpaso.library.org.

Victoria Rivas is the arts and culture editor and may be reached at victoria.rivas@utep.edu; @VicRivas_18 on Instagram; @itzel_anahi_16 on Twitter.

*This story is the exclusive engagement article and may be reprinted with permission. Visit www.elpasolibrary.org for more.*
Junior guard Souley Boum has major impact on the court

Boum has been a key player in many of the Miners’ big victories this season. One of the many games in which he had an impact was against the third-ranked team in Conference-USA, Louisiana Tech University. Boum was able to change the game with a steal and layup that eventually led to the win.

This season, Boum has been averaging 19 points per game, and four rebounds per game. Boum struggled early in the year in shooting consistent 3-pointers and scoring in general asthere were games where Boum shot a low 28% from the 3-point line. But he is still able to make an impact on the glass despite the streaky shooting from beyond the arc.

“It has been the beginning of the season, I was still scoring, people was saying all this stuff, I was still averaging what I was averaging last year,” Boum said in a Feb. 24 interview after practice.

Boum’s scoring abilities were able to help the Miners during their six-game win streak. Boum was averaging high scoring amounts and making plays that helped late in game situations. His defense is nothing to scoff at, as some of the stifling plays have helped as well.

“It just gets me pumped to play, when you come in and get lost on defense, my old coach used to tell me... Your offense will take care of itself,” Boum said.

Originally from Oakland, California, Boum attended Oakland Tech High School and played all four years on the varsity squad. Then, Boum attended the University of San Francisco where he averaged 10.9 points per game and was selected to the freshman West Coast Conference All-American team.

Boum’s favorite basketball player is the late Kobe Bryant, former shooting guard of the Los Angeles Lakers. Boum also loves soul food and music.

Boum overall makes the basketball team better, whether it is by shooting the ball or knifing through the defense to score a lay-up. Boum is a threat to score from anywhere on the basketball court.

Scoring threat on the court

BY DANIEL ALEC LOPEZ
THE PROSPECTOR

Junior guard Souley Boum takes a shot against a Florida International University defender at the Don Haskins Center. Boum has averaged 19 points and four rebounds per game during the 2021-2022 season. Photo by Annabella Mireles/The Prospector

U.S. women’s soccer team settles equal pay lawsuit

BY KATHERINE VILLARREAL
The Prospector

The U.S. women’s national team (USWNT) reached a settlement with the U.S. Soccer Federation (USSF) to receive equal pay for years to come, ending a six-year fight Feb. 22. The settlement will ensure not only equal pay but offers the women’s team millions in back pay, equal pay on all fronts including world cup bonuses, and equality when it comes to equipment.

“There are a lot of off-field accomplishments like World Cups and Olympics, league championships, but this will really stand out as one of the most meaningful moments,” current USWNT defender Becky Sauerbrunn told Associated Press. The U.S. Soccer Federation will pay $24 million to the USWNT to settle the discrimination dispute. Both sides also announced that players will split $22 million, along with an additional $2 million to help the USWNT during their post-career goals and help with charity efforts to help grow women and girls’ soccer.

“We just think it’s so difficult sometimes to talk about and to articulate the kind of discrimination, abuse, inequity and disrespect that so many women feel so often in their jobs,” current USWNT midfielder and winger Megan Rapinoe told The Associated Press. “And I think we were able to start to put a voice to that, put a face to it, put walking points to it and put a sort of movement behind it.”

According to The Associated Press, the fight began in 2016 when five players from the USWNT, including Rapinoe, Carli Lloyd, Hope Solo, Sauerbrunn and Alex Morgan filed a complaint with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. The women explained that they were paid thousands of dollars less than the male players. In 2019, all 28 players of the USWNT filed a gender discrimination lawsuit.

In 2020, a district judge ruled against the women claiming that they had agreed to a different pay than the men’s team, according to the Washington Post.

During that same year, a legal file by the USSF was made public where they said, “(the women) do not perform equal work requiring equal skill and effort, the overall soccer-playing ability required to compete at the senior men’s level is not substantially equal.”
Olympics raises racial double standard

BY EMILY AUTUMN VELASQUEZ
The Prospector

There are plenty of double standards that are set for people due to gender, race, or sexual preference. During this Olympic season we saw a case of double standards that could not be overlooked and need immediate attention to see change. Sha’Carri Richardson, a 21-year-old U.S sprinter who won the 100-meter race in the US Olympic trials last summer, was barred from competing in the Tokyo Olympics after testing positive for THC when drug tested.

Richardson said she was using marijuana as a coping method after suffering from the loss of her biological mother. Richardson faced a lot of backlash for letting her emotions get the best of her when deciding to use marijuana. She apologized to her supporters for not being able to compete, but not for coping with the death of her best friend.

THC is not a performance-enhancing drug, but it is on the World Anti-Doping Agency’s list of prohibited substances, hence her not being allowed to compete in the Olympics. Russian skater Kamila Valieva failed her drug test in December after testing positive for Trimetazidine. Trimetazidine is a performance-enhancing drug; it is a heart drug said to boost a person’s endurance and blood efficiency. Two other substances were found when she took the test, but they were not on the list of prohibited substances. But all three together seem to be aimed at increasing endurance, reducing fatigue and promoting greater efficiency in using oxygen, according to Travis Tygart, the chief executive of the United States Anti-Doping Agency. Valieva’s drug test results did not come out until she helped her team win a gold medal in the Tokyo Olympics, whereas Richardson’s drug test results were revealed almost instantly.

“Failed in December and the world just now know however my result was posted within a week and my name & talent was slaughtered to the people,” Richardson tweeted Feb. 14.

The Court of Arbitration for Sport said suspension from Olympic competition would cause the 15-year-old “irreparable harm,” but no one considered the harm that would come to Richardson when she was not allowed to compete in the Tokyo Olympics for coping with her mother’s death by smoking marijuana.

“Can we get a solid answer on the difference of her situation and mine? My mother died and I can’t run and was also favored to place top 5. The only difference I see is I’m a black young lady,” Richardson tweeted Feb. 14.

Both athletes were favored to win medals in their sports, but despite both testing positive for drugs prohibited, only one of them was unable to compete in the sport they love.

Double standards are constantly being pointed out, but all these athletes get afterward is an apology – no effort to enforce changes to prevent it from happening again. Richardson was more than valid for using her platform to call out the injustice she was facing firsthand.

Richardson is constantly using her voice to highlight athletes that are beating the double standards and showcasing icons who have done a lot for the African American community. Richardson faced a suspension for a drug that did not even affect how she competes, but because she is African American, she did not get the benefit of the doubt Valieva received.

Claims of Valieva “accidentally” taking the performance enhancer came out almost immediately after her results, whereas with Richardson, all she faced was negative comments.

To compete at an Olympic level is one of the highest honors an athlete can achieve, so there should not be any room for double standards to exist. The unfairness Richardson faced is not one that we should ever have to see happen again.

Emily Autumn Velasquez is the sports editor and can be reached at eavelasquez@miners.utep.edu; @emilyautumnv on Twitter.