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The Prospector, October 24, 2023

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THE PROSPECTOR

Assayer of Student Opinion

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO

theprospectordaily.com



VOL. 109, NO. 5
OCTOBER 24, 2023

OPINION Page 2

Podcasts: The only thing scary is the lack of creativity

NEWS Page 3

It's the scariest time for unsafe candy

ARTS & CULTURE Page 7

915 Echoes of Horror

SPORTS Page 9

UTEP Rifle coach breaks Mexican record

Little section BIG news

DISQUALIFIED FROM U.S. GRAND PRIX

Following the F1 race in Austin Oct. 22, Lewis Hamilton and Charles Leclerc have been disqualified from the U.S. Grand Prix due to skids not following compliance with 2023 Formula One Technical Regulations. Max Verstappen took the win with Hamilton close behind, although the disqualification boots both Hamilton and Leclerc out of the standings for the U.S. Grand Prix in Austin.

EL NIÑO COMING TO TEXAS

Despite 2023's scorching summer, The Farmer's Almanac predicted in August Texas will see an unseasonably cold winter. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), El Niño is expected to continue this winter leading to above average precipitation levels.

KILLER GIVEN LIFE SENTENCE

Joseph Angel Alvarez has been sentenced to life in prison for the murder of El Paso lawyer, Georgette Kaufmann and assault of her husband. Alvarez was convicted Oct. 20 after a jury reached the verdict.

"EL BOMBI" NAMED ALCS MVP

Adolis Garcias and the Rangers stayed rolling hot as the long ball helped the Rangers defeat the defending champ Astros. The Rangers await their opponent (winner of today's game 7 matchup Phillies vs D-backs) as they reach the world series for a third time but seek to win their first championship.



Opinion

Itzel Anahi Giron, editor-in-chief

The only thing scary is the lack of creativity

BY ELISHA NUÑEZ
The Prospector



I think society has reached a point where everything needs to be recorded. There was a time it would only be funny moments or mishaps, now it can be a conversation with your friend about your favorite menu item at Chili's and you can post it online as a "podcast". Not only that, but ever since sharing opinions on the internet became a thing, people have started to share too much about themselves. Like the famous Twitter (or now X though nobody wants to call it

that) meme, we should all know each other a little less.

I can admit, I am a fan of some podcasts. Things like scary stories, true crime, and celebrity interviews all have me sitting back with my noise-canceling headphones. Then, when I take a stroll among Instagram stories I see people, mostly guys who wear their brim caps backwards or who have a pencil mustache, throwing up a peace sign with a mic behind them and the words "First Episode Coming Soon" above them.

This might just be me, but I am tired of listening to the "masculine advice" of some and the misogynis-

tic thoughts on women that follow. Not all guys suffer from these condescending traits luckily, but it is safe to say that for the ones who do, please do not share your thoughts on the internet.

Unlike this certain podcast population, there are also some who share thoughts too plain for the internet. In today's world, I can share with you all how I climbed out of bed this morning and took a long hard look at myself in the mirror just to go on with the rest of my day, and that would be considered a podcast episode. Whether it is just me or not, I do not think we all need to know how we wake up in

the morning, or various routines for that matter. We couldn't care less about your avocado toast and iced matcha. For now, give us something we can use. Many people like to talk about the inside of their jobs and living as a student, which I think is interesting. Topics like these can prepare and teach others the lives of people who work or attend a place they have always wanted to be a part of.

When it comes to podcasts, I also like to learn new things or hear something out of the ordinary. That is why I find the podcast topics I mentioned above so interesting. They intrigue you, teach you about

things you may not have known about, or let you in on the difficulties of handling stardom. These topics can also tell you different stories and different perspectives from people from all walks of life. Overall, a lesson to learn from these podcasts is to be different, and interesting, but also modest. In many instances, we should not share too much or too little because everyone is listening, so to those of you who may be thinking of starting your own podcast, I advise you to consider your choices before making them.

Elisha Nuñez is a staff reporter and can be reached at egnuñez2@miners.utep.edu

Laying down cempazúchitl to honor those lost

BY ITZEL A. GIRON
The Prospector



For much of my young life, I never truly felt a connection to the Day of the Dead or "Dia de los Muertos" in Spanish. I saw no importance in the holiday due to me not having dealt with loss quite yet. Losing

anyone can have a severe impact on anyone, I just did not think it would have such a big impact on me. It was not until the death of my grandfather in 2017 that I came to this realization.

Seeing my grandfather slowly lose his bright light due to colon cancer over the span of months in 2016, I knew his death would hit me at

some point. I just did not know when. Having passed away Jan. 8, 2017 I still had not accepted that I would no longer hear his voice calling my name or his pet names of 'chamaco' or 'chamaca' to me or any of my siblings.

Having grieved my grandfather in many ways, it was not until Disney released the movie "Coco" that I understood how much I missed him and how I wished I could celebrate his life. With a movie surrounding Hispanic heritage, the importance of Dia de los Muertos and hearing the grandfather character Hector call Miguel 'chamaco' made me not only feel my grandpa's presence, but I found myself bawling in a movie theater wishing I could hug my grandpa one more time and tell him how much I missed him.

It was then, that November night that I knew I would always honor my grandpa by laying down bunches of cempazúchitl and have an altar for him every Dia de los Muertos. The movie was released a couple of weeks after Dia de los Muertos which takes place at the beginning of November.

The holiday, which is a fusion of indigenous Mesoamerican and Catholic traditions, celebrates the lives of those who many have lost. Common tradition is to create an altar with the deceased's photo and their favorite items, such as food, drinks, hobbies and other items. It is believed that every Nov. 1

and 2, the dead follow the trail of cempazúchitl flowers back to the world of the living to rejoice one day a year with the loved ones they left behind.

After watching "Coco", I felt guilty for not having an altar for my grandpa that year, making me believe my grandpa's soul had disappeared because I did not create an altar with his photo. Wiping away my tears, I walked out of the movie theater knowing I could not let the legacy my grandpa created fade away.

Although my grandpa was not a war hero, esteemed professor,

legendary musician or an extraordinary actor, my grandpa was all those things to me. My grandpa, Efrén Bello Sr., was a proud American patriot aside from being a migrant from Iguala. When he received his citizenship, he could not have been prouder to be an American, who brought his children to the promised land.

The amount of knowledge he held and passed on to his children and grandchildren could have fooled anyone, convincing even me that he only had a third-grade education.

If it were not for the movie "Coco" I don't think I would have understood how important it is to hold on to the memory of your loved ones and to continue sharing stories about them. Since that day, I have been proud to tell stories of my grandpa and continue his legacy.

Everyone has an impact on our lives whether it be family, friends, enemies, neighbors or anyone who crosses our path. It is why I find myself not only honoring my grandpa during the day of the dead but also those who I believe need someone to remember them. So, in the words of "Coco," "The dead are always with us, as long as we keep their memory alive."

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COMIC BY MAYA ALVARDO MALVARADO29@MINERS.UTEP.EDU



Photo courtesy of Itzel Anahi Giron

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It's the scariest time for unsafe candy

BY KATY RUIZ
The Prospector



Kids might love Halloween for its colorful costumes, impressive atmosphere and free candy, but parents might think otherwise. While there has always been the fright of poisoned candy, the reality is there are other dangers that parents might now be aware of like accidental drug intake.

Many parents check their kid's candy for needles, poison, or tampered candy as there have been cases where children were exposed to drugs posed as famous brands. There are even drugs that are known as edibles that use the image of popular candy and food brands to disguise the product.

Though this is not to alarm parents, but rather to raise awareness among the public so parents and responsible guardians can properly inspect the much-anticipated Halloween candy for the safety of their children.

Though some parents might not stop their children from enjoying the festivities, others share their worries and opinions regarding the matter.

"I sometimes double think whether I should take my children trick or treating," said Esperanza L., mother of two children. "Either it be conflict with my job or leaving

them with another family member for that day. You don't know what the children might eat on the way before I get to check it. While I do take my precaution, I sometimes think that I should not expose them and just buy them the candy or do something at home."

On the other hand, other parents, who despite knowing the exposure, say they will not stop letting their children enjoy the

will not stop going to Halloween events with my kid," said Mary Carrasco, mother of one. "I often

have a party for their kids during this holiday, a local library event, or even just a school party. I don't think we should stop children from enjoying things. We do have danger present, I know I must double check to be sure. But I want my kid to enjoy this part of their childhood."

Some parents around the country might

ing candy for kids. To make trick or treating safer, it's recommended to have a responsible guardian with children as well as lit costumes like lights and other decorations to make the holiday tradition safer. It is also good to stick to familiar areas and plan routes that are safe. Children should stay on sidewalks and have a buddy system, so no child gets lost.

Letting children know their address and other contact information is important and should be told not to trust strangers. Although, most parents choose outfits that keep their children warm, it's sometimes best not to have masks on them as it could obstruct their vision or have someone mistake them for another child.

It's not necessary to go trick or treating outside, there should always be the option of having indoor activities.

Such as playing movies or throwing a small house party.

At the end of the day, it's the parents' responsibility to check their children's candy as well as keep them safe during the festivities. The culture of trick or treating is different in each household, that doesn't stop children from enjoying it each year and ensuring they are safe in the process.

Katy Ruiz is a contributor and may be reached at krui12@miners.utep.edu



spooky holiday.

"I know we have to take responsibility for what the children can eat and cannot, but I

look to see if a family friend will

think differently, but

one thing for certain is there should be precautions when check-

ABILITY AWARENESS WEEK OCTOBER 24-26



DAY 1: PANEL DISCUSSION VIA ZOOM
WORKING DOGS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES
Oct. 24 | 9 to 10:30 AM

MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES AT UTEP AND THE EL PASO COMMUNITY
Oct. 24 | 1:30 to 2:50 PM

DAY 2: RESOURCE FAIR AT CENTENNIAL PLAZA
UTEP resources for individuals with disabilities. Giveaways and door prizes will be provided!

Oct. 25 | 9 AM to Noon

DAY 3: PANEL DISCUSSION VIA ZOOM
UTEP RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS
Oct. 26 | 10:30 to 11:50 AM

INFORMATIONAL CASS STAFF PANEL FOR FACULTY
Oct. 26 | 1:30 to 2:50 PM

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Cherry Duke: A guiding voice in the UTEP music community

BY H. CATCHING MARGINOT
The Prospector



The Opera may be daunting to some and a little unfamiliar to others. However, the Opera is home to the craft of telling a story through music and singing.

There is a combination of art, words, drama, and dance, where the singers use their natural, authentic voice without microphones.

However, what would it be like to actually perform these shows? To actually sing one's heart out in front of hundreds of people in real-time.

Look no further than performer, soloist, teacher and producer/director of Opera at UTEP, Cherry Duke. Duke has traveled worldwide for her work, having a portfolio more extensive than some of the venues she has performed in. Those venues include Carnegie Hall and the Avery Fisher Halland famous shows like 'David T. Little' and Royce Verek's landmark opera 'Dog Days'. Duke has done 60+ operatic roles and 30+ concert/oratorio roles. Duke leads Opera at UTEP, teaching an ensemble class and workshop where she works with students showing them the essentials of an operatic performance. Recently, Duke was one of 14 Texas Faculty members to win the University of Texas System Board of Regents' 2023 Outstanding Teaching Award (ROTA).

"I grew up in Burseson, a suburb in Fort Worth, and both my

nobody was a professional artist." Duke recalls growing up in the



Professor Duke has also been involved with the El Paso Opera and has performed in productions such as "Hansel and Gretel", "The Magic Flute", "La Traviata", and "Bon Appétit."

Photo by Annabella Mireles/The Prospector

parents sang in the church choir," Duke said. "When I was a little kid, I was very fortunate in that my parents could give me piano lessons, dance lessons, and voice lessons in middle school. We weren't rich, but my parents prioritized art; we were an artistic family even though

United Methodist Church and how hymns and songs were written differently than they are today. The harmony helped train her ears, connecting her with a sense of musical direction. She also detailed her father's love of music during her formative years of youth.

"But my dad loved classical and all kinds of music," Duke said. "He was always playing music in the car; jazz, classical, and country. My mom had a lot of LPs, too, so I heard various music growing up, and I think that greatly influenced my tastes. I remember the first time I had a singing solo, wearing a bear costume in the fourth grade; I was terrified. But I feel at home if I'm on stage, with an audience away from me."

After the support of voice lessons and passion for music being evoked, Duke went to Texas Woman's University (TWU) in Denton, Texas. After Denton, she traveled to Connecticut to pursue Graduate School at the University of Hartford, specifically The Hartt School; a performing arts conservatory within the university. After graduate school and time in New York City, Duke moved with her husband, tenured professor Brian Downen, to El Paso for a job offer. Soon, Duke was offered a position in Opera here at UTEP.

Duke details the passion of the Opera, as well as her excitement in teaching the art form.

"My opera students and I are in the business of getting out of your comfort zone and making an exchange of energy with the audience, scene partners, and character you're playing," Duke said. "You really have to look outside of yourself and into someone else's reality to try and find a relationship, which I think is the recipe for cultivating compassion and empathy regardless of whether you like Opera."

Duke also shares her experience with El Paso and the artistic community within it.

"I love El Paso, and the weather really suits me, and I didn't know it was going to be so pretty," Duke said. "There's so much freedom of expression and creative spirit here that I really respect. There are so many people here that are doing it their way, and the people that say, 'there's nothing to do here' are sorely mistaken."

Among many supportive people in her life, Duke highlighted TWU professor Joan Wall's efforts on her.

"Joan is a remarkable person, and many of my students will recognize her because she wrote the dictionary textbook many of them use," Duke said. "She affected me so deeply, and it's her influence that has made me the person, teacher, and singer I am."

Duke also thanks her students for what they have given her and the music community.

"I just want to thank them all so much for being game, for being so brave and for letting me be myself," Duke said. "So, with this award I really want to thank my students for allowing them to be their guide and allow me to pursue my passion."

El Pasoans voice concerns over conflict in Israel and Gaza

BY ERIK ACOSTA
The Prospector



Children's clothes seen in rubble, and destroyed houses and buildings are seen for miles as innocent civilians cry and yell in agony for their loved ones wounded or deceased under the broken bricks after countless air strikes in Gaza. Blood stains and wounds cover the faces of children as tears trickle down their faces, screaming and crying for their parents.

A longstanding history of conflict over land and independence has plagued both parties for centuries, marked by violence and shifting land boundaries that have ended the lives of many innocent children, women, and men.

While celebrating a Jewish Holiday, Hamas militants attacked nearby Israeli towns near the Gaza Strip Oct. 7, massacring dozens and abducting children and women from their homes in a deadly surprise attack, leading Israel to declare war on Hamas.

In the wake of the attack and ongoing conflict, the El Paso community has felt the impact bringing in an array of emotions, especially for Rabbi at Temple Mount Sinai, Ben Zeidman.

"I'm in mourning, and I think El Paso understands this because of the experience we all had with the August third shooting, there is a deep sense of grief at somebody or group of people doing something that doesn't make any sense," Zeidman said. "It's traumatic and painful, it's unbelievable that somebody would do that or people do those things to people."

The violence didn't stop there as Hamas fired thousands of missiles at communities near the Gaza Strip and opened fire at a music festival in southern Israel, claiming the lives of 260 civilians. Reported by AP News, the surprise attack left 1,400 dead, making it the deadliest in Israel in decades, and has left many Jewish people like Zeidman in disbelief and frustrated on how something like this could happen.

"The state of Israel exists to protect and provide a haven for Jews, and that haven was violated, and we are all feeling different about how and why that happened," Zeidman said.

To read the full story head to theprospectordaily.com

Erik Acosta is the web and copy editor and may be reached at emacosta6@miners.utep.edu

CELEBRATE DAY OF THE DEAD BY HELPING THE LIVING

October 31st and November 1st.
From 10:00am to 4:30pm.
Fox Fine Arts Building second floor, next to sculpture studio.

For Day of the Dead celebrations, food is provided to loved ones that are no longer with us. Help us extend this tradition to all by contributing to the well-being of our community.

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- Donate non-perishable food to pantry. Please refer to list of preferred foods at: <https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/foodpantry/donations/>
- Get your t-shirt printed. Spread the word!



H. Catching Marginot is a staff reporter and can be reached at hcmarginot@miner.utep.edu



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ON THE COVER



School Spirits.

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10.20.23

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Do not dump waste, chemicals, paint, custodial waste, and general rubbish items (tires, old car parts, shopping carts, etc.) into storm drains, channels, or ditches.



Arts & Culture

Meagan Garcia, editor



Have a scary good time at the hacienda 915 Echoes of Horror

BY ALYSON RODRIGUEZ
The Prospector



Step back in time and enter a world of spine-tingling suspense as the historic 1700s hacienda in Socorro, Texas, unveils its darkest secrets in a chilling new haunted house experience.

The newest haunted house attraction, 915 Echoes of Horrors, makes waves in the El Paso horror scene with a new take on a haunted house and fright night experience.

Bryan Rosas, creator of 915 Echoes of Horrors, is in his second year of creating new horror experiences with the help of his family and friends. Rosas and his team started preparing for their haunted house months in advance, dating back to June. He has always enjoyed putting on haunted houses for his family and friends and has worked for other haunted houses around the city which inspired him to create his own.

"We're a family-run haunted house, I have about 12 of my friends and family who are the actors," Rosas said. "We're one big haunt family and we provide a full experience to customers. Our haunted house isn't just one long hallway where things are jumping out at you, we have different scenes, and we interact with the customers. We're also the only haunted house in El Paso that has a venue."

The attraction has 5,000 square feet of artificial grass, allowing attendees who visit the location to explore the outdoor bars, food trucks and a 20 by 9-foot movie screen. Waiting to enter the haunted house, actors interact with customers to get their heartbeat pumping before the full-on 20-minute terrors.

"It was awesome," said haunted house attendee Astrid Cochran.

"The setup of all the different rooms and the actors were great. There were lots of jump scares and some unexpected stuff I won't spoil. I'm so happy we went tonight even though I screamed way too much and almost peed my pants."

Not only do the actors dress up as ghouls lurking in the shadows of the 1700s hacienda but actual ghosts reside there as well. Rosas talks about the ghostly experiences he and his workers have had at the historic hacienda.

"It's a beautiful hacienda, it was built in the 1700s," Rosas said. "It's got a lot of history; we've caught 3 or 4 ghosts on the security cameras. People who said they didn't believe in ghosts, became believers at our haunted house. So, it's a perfect place for what we do."

Rosas says visitors who come to his haunted house will experience an adrenaline rush and will be winded from running away from monsters. As customers enter, they will experience full on frightful and fun entertainment.

"Personally, I think the best part of what we have is that we have a lot of actors with a lot of talent," Rosas said. "A lot of them make their own costumes and do their own makeup. They are all really good at what they do. People like how we put on a whole production. We give visitors something to see, not just something to run from."

The haunted attraction is open from 8 p.m. to 11:30 p.m. Tuesday through Thursday, from 8 p.m. to midnight Friday and Saturday and from 12 a.m. to noon then 8 p.m. to 11 p.m. on Sunday. It is located at 10167 Socorro Rd at the Cultura District Event Center and tickets are sold on site for \$25.

Alyson Rodriguez is a contributor and may be reached at aerodriguez20@miners.utep.edu; [@alyson_rod1127](https://twitter.com/alyson_rod1127) on Twitter.

Photo gallery by Daniela Gonzalez Bustamante/The Prospector



'posdata (or what I wish I said):' A play for El Paso by El Paso

BY ELISHA NUÑEZ
The Prospector



By the end of the play, postcards were lying across the floor underneath the bright-colored stage lights as some had wishes, others with regrets. At the end of the night, the audience left knowing they matter and so does their city. "posdata (or what I wish I said)" is a play that made its first stage appearance last Tuesday, leaving theatergoers with a new sense of identity.

The play was written by Georgina Hernandez Escobar, former visiting

professor of practice and playwright at UTEP's Department of Theatre and Dance. It was also a collaboration with Kim McKean, the school's former director of theatre. After the idea came about during the pandemic, the two began working on it until it finally made its debut in the June Sadowski Kruszewski Studio Theatre.

"It's about really respecting our people as a whole and telling the story as authentically as possible while incorporating the history of El Paso," said Mia Flores, who played the character Ruthie in the play. "I truly believe it's about representation of El Paso and just told

through the eyes of the people that live day to day in our city."

A representation of El Paso's past and present, the play showed the audience two separate dynamics of the city. The parts that portray the past tell the story of Remo Guillén, who discovers postcards from the future during a time of war in Mexico. He deals with the troubles of being in love with a married woman, Esther Jones-Fontana, whose family photography business he works for.

The future timeline shows five high school students locked in the same building as the business in the present, trying to produce a pitch

to win the scholarship contest they participated in. While the two timelines show characters from different areas and backgrounds in El Paso, the play brings them together in a way that is relatable for everyone watching.

"It truly represents everyone no matter what side of town you're from, even if you're not from El Paso," Flores said. "I would have to say it really doesn't center around one main character because everyone helps each other shine in a way."

Not only was this play a representation, but interactive. The postcards in the play were written by El Pasoans from across the city and integrated into parts of the play. In telling the stories of the characters, the play manages to tell the stories of ordinary people who walk around the mall or drive by

on I-10.

"We have these postcards from around the city that people from around El Paso got to fill out and their postcards are in the script," said Fern Trousdale, the play's costume designer. "It was written with the intent to have El Paso natives and people who live here and have experienced El Paso culture. It is cool that it was written for us, and we are originating a lot of these costume designs, scenic designs, and roles."

Coming purely from the imagination of UTEP professionals, the play puts El Paso culture and life into the limelight for those native to the city and others who have never known it otherwise. From the past to the present, the play shows everyone how important it is to not only embrace themselves, but the

see **POSDATA** on page 8

POSDATA from page 7
 city they come from.
 “As an outsider to El Paso, ‘pos-data’ illustrates the preconceptions that one’s origins could have,” said Melissa Aviles, a theatre education major from Houston and assistant costume designer for the show. “But the wonderful, hopeful thing is that those biases will be thrown at the wayside when helping others. I also believe the show does a great job in

representing El Paso’s ‘small town’ vibes with city-specific references.”
 The play will have tour dates spanning from Oct. 26 to Oct. 29 at a variety of venues and all shows will have free admission. For more information on tour dates and locations visit <https://www.utep.edu/liberalarts/theatre-dance/about/prices.html>

Elisha Nuñez is a staff reporter and can be reached at egnunez2@miners.utep.edu

‘Star-crossed’ celeb politics

BY MARCO HINOJOSA
 The Prospector



As the ongoing conflict in Israel and Palestine continues to progress, celebrities have taken to social media with their stance on the world and it is not tasteful to society.

Ever since the Israel and Hamas conflict began the world recognized and witnessed the ongoing tragedy. Once the news hit social media, well-known celebrities shared their opinion on the ongoing situation. However, some jumped to share an opinion without understanding where the content they were posting originated from.

Celebrities ranging from Gal Gadot, Kylie Jenner and Florence Pugh expressing their support for Israel, celebrities like Jamie Lee Curtis and Justin Bieber were claiming support for Israel while unintentionally showing support towards Palestine with the images they shared.

Many of these public figures came out on social media condemning supposed violence against Israel while the pictures they posted were of a missile-ridden Gaza and Palestinian people.

Other stars such as Dua Lipa, Zayn Malik and Gigi Hadid shared their support for Palestine and praised them as “freedom fighters.” Hadid, supporter of the “Free Pal-

estine” movement and general Palestinian rights made more detailed comments on what is happening in West Asia.

“The terrorizing of innocent people is not in alignment with and does not look good for the ‘Free Palestine’ movement,” Hadid said.

What causes such discourse is the mere fact that many celebrities do not educate themselves properly about this ongoing conflict. Many of these idolized celebrities did not take into consideration the people being affected and have more sympathy for the victims.

In such a difficult moment in history, it is important for people to gain empathy and respect for others. With such high platforms, celebrities need to make sure they are using it for good and being empathetic towards the public.

Many are influenced easily, social media can be an easy way to get manipulated into viewing false realities and misinformation.

The reality of it all is that celebrities and people all over the world need to do a better job at educating themselves before they set a firm belief. Many do not acknowledge the extreme measures people overseas have gone through.

It is prominent for people to look at the overall issue of innocent lives being affected.

UTEP student Sonya Quickley shares how she feels towards celeb-

rities sharing their stance on social media too soon.

“With the situation of Palestine and Israel I feel like they have the power to spread a lot of misinformation about the subject,” Quickley said. “I feel like celebrities aren’t taking precaution when speaking about the situation, especially when their opinions carry so much influence over others.”

Innocent individuals are being affected and everyone needs to take into accountability the extreme measure of it all.

It is highly insensitive for celebrities to be sharing support for one side when something so drastic and traumatic is slowly uprising to a larger issue.

UTEP student Diana Hernandez speaks on how celebrities need to be more mindful about what they post and to educate themselves.

“I think that they should vocalize that they’re willing to educate themselves on worldwide issues before taking it to social media and sounding naïve,” Hernandez said. “It can come across as harmful and insensitive to many.”

As the crisis continues and numerous lives are on the line, it is vital for social media users to educate themselves and have empathy for those affected.

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Sports

Emmanuel Rivas Valenzuela, editor

UTEP rifle coach breaks Mexican record and strives to fulfill lifelong dream

BY ALYSON RODRIGUEZ AND IZIAH MORENO
The Prospector



While competing in the 53rd ISSF World Cup, UTEP Rifle Head Coach Andrea Palafox set a new Mexican record, beating the old record set by her. Photo by Izhah Moreno/The Prospector

In a triumphant return to the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) shooting range, UTEP Head Rifle Coach Andrea Palafox had her eye on the prize.

Palafox set a record for Mexico at the 53rd ISSF World Cup held in Baku, Azerbaijan from Aug. 14 to Sept. 1. The head coach's passion for shooting began when she was 15 years old.

She followed in the footsteps of her family's marksmanship after her grandfather, father and brother.

"Competing internationally was one of the first things that I wanted to accomplish as a young athlete," Palafox said. "My dad inspired me to one day compete in the Olympic games and world cups. It's something that he always dreamed of when he was younger."

Leading up to the competition, Palafox put her plan into action and

practiced any chance she got when she was not coaching the UTEP rifle team.

Palafox also worked out and dieted in order to be in superior shape for the competition.

The previous Mexican record at the ISSF was 581, also set by Palafox. At this year's ISSF competition she shattered her old record by scoring 586 in the 50m Rifle event in the first stage.

Palafox said she was a little shocked at first after learning she had set a new record for Mexico.

"I tend not to focus on scores but instead on the work that I am doing," Palafox said. "When I first saw the score, I was really surprised and very happy because it's something that not even men have been able to achieve. It's a really good score and I was very happy to have done it at an international competition."

In the elimination round of the 50m Rifle 3 positions event, Palafox placed fifth in the first relay, recording a 586-27x score: 199 kneeling, 198 prone, 189 standing, and then during the qualifications round, Palafox shot 581-24x: 193 kneeling, 196 prone, 192 standing.

She essentially tied with five other shooters recording 581. The differential comes from the X-count.

She placed thirty-sixth overall at one of the most prestigious international events in shooting and most challenging and competitive events at the Olympic games.

Over the years, Palafox has won the national record multiple times, being the first Mexican female to have the first national record, which she gained in 2005.

Since then, the discipline of rifle shooting has been increasing and more people are taking interest in

competing in the event. Palafox says this means more work for her.

"The discipline has been growing and there's more people practicing now," Palafox said. "It's still a sport that is not very popular in Mexico. It's quite difficult to have the equipment, ammunition, and a place to practice. So, to achieve a score like this is pretty impressive. I think my win can inspire more people in Mexico."

The head coach says she wouldn't have been able to achieve this without the support of the people she works with at UTEP and the rifle team.

She also says she noticed her recent win has inspired the members of the rifle team to work harder and push their limits.

"I've been looking forward to this moment my whole life and at this point of my life is when I feel the


most prepared and confident that I can achieve a spot in the Olympics," said Palafox. "I'm just not sure if I will because nobody knows the future, but I want to enjoy it and be present just to be able to show all the hard work that I've been doing in the past months and years."

Palafox will compete in the 2023 XIX Pan American Games from Oct. 20 through Nov. 5th in Santiago, Chile at the Poligono de tiro de Pudahuel.

This will determine if she gets the chance to compete in the 2024 Olympic Games in Paris, France.

The UTEP Rifle team will also start its home season stretch versus Texas Christian University Sunday, Nov. 12 at the Military Science Building at UTEP.

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Volleyball sends LA Tech to the ‘doghouse’

BY H. CATCHING MARGINOT
The Prospector



UTEP volleyball went up against the Louisiana Tech University Bulldogs (LA Tech) (6-16, C-USA 1-9) in victorious fashion, as the Miners won both games at Memorial Gym.

During the series, the Bulldogs had strong starts in the first sets. However, it seemed to be “all bark, no bite” for the team.

Many fans of all ages were cheering for the Miners, showing how high the spirit and attendance was for UTEP volleyball.

UTEP is now overall 17-6 and 9-3 Conference USA (C-USA) play in their games, with LA Tech dropping 6-16 and 1-9 CUSA.

UTEP volleyball fan Paul Casares speaks about the team’s improvement and his thoughts on the season thus far.

“I think it’s been going great,” Casares said. “It was a little disappointing last year, but I think they have the potential to do a lot better in the postseason. The coach is fantastic; he engages with the fan base and brings some youth to the athletic program. You see that the girls are ready to play every time they hit the court (and) probably one of the better teams I’ve seen in recent years.”

UTEP volleyball fan Randy W. Fertel expresses his excitement for the Miners and the program’s hopeful future.

“I think they are playing very well, and they have a chance at the post-season for sure,” Fertel said. “I think they are very exciting to watch and have many highlights. It’s hard to

get to all of them.”

Game one

In game one, Miners middle blocker Danika Washington and libero Alyssa Sianez made match highs with five blocks and eight digs, respectively, for defense. Washington, outside hitter Torrance Lovesee and outside hitter/middle blocker Alianza Darley paced the team with eight kills each hitting above (.400).

As a team, the Miners held the statistical average in kills 45-23, aces 8-3, and blocks 10-4.

In set one, the Bulldogs took the opening point, but the Miners came swinging soon after with two kills by Darley to create two time-outs from the Bulldogs. Right side hitter Marian Ovalle made a few kills, jumpstarting a seven-to-one run to win the set 25-1.

In the second set, the Bulldogs committed a number of mistakes, which the Miners would take advantage. This helped give the Miners a 7-0 lead.

After two kills by Darley and a second ace by Sianez, the Miners got to 10-3. Soon after an intense number of minutes and a score of 19-8, both teams went one to one, with an ending score of 25-13.

With two kills by Washington, an ace by Sianez and two blocks by middle blocker Kaya Weaver, the Miners were on the board at 6-2.

After the Bulldogs had a small 3:0 spurt to cut the deficit to one point later in the match at 11-10, Washington made two kills and a block to a media timeout.

After chasing the Miners’ tail, the Bulldogs were defeated by a kill and an ace by Miners middle blocker

Sakira LaCour and Lovesee to secure the win of game one.

Game two

Game two marked 20 consecutive sets won in Memorial Gym, helping UTEP volleyball’s overall score. Setters Mattie Gantt and Kalia Kohler helped with a combined 88 percent of the team’s assists to help the offense get a .296 hitting clip.

Set one saw both teams going back and forth with a highlight play from LaCour, who made a block and a kill to put the Miners in the lead. With a service error from the Bulldogs and a kill from Darley, UTEP won set one 26-24. Sets two and three were intense but won quickly.

Set two saw a lead from the Bulldogs, but with a few kills, blocks and a pick-up of pace from Washington, UTEP won 25-17. Set three saw another LaCour highlight with three straight kills and with five errors from the Bulldogs, UTEP soon won the match 25-16 with a slammed kill from Darley.

After the game, Head Coach Ben Wallis expressed his pleasure at the outcome of these games.

“It was a good test for us,” Wallis said. “The fun part about playing LA Tech is that they come into the match excited to play and they give you everything they got. Our offense was very complete, and I was pleased with how well we played as LA Tech pushed back and stressed us out especially in the first set.”

The Miners will be back at Memorial Gym for its Halloween game versus Chicago State at 6 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 31.

H. Catching Marginot is a staff reporter and can be reached at hcmarginot@miner.utep.edu.



TOP: Sophomore setter Mattie Gantt goes up for the ball. MIDDLE: Blockers Danika Washington and Sakira LaCour take a block. BOTTOM: Miners celebrate after sweeping the Bulldogs. Photos by Gianluca Cuevas/The Prospector

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Bogdan returns home to UTEP cross country

BY NICHOLAS MAES
The Prospector



Mircea Bogdan completed his first regular season as associate head coach of UTEP cross country, just ahead of the C-USA XC Championships Oct. 28. Bogdan reflected on the journey that led him to where he is now.

Bogdan began his career at UTEP as a student-athlete where he was recruited by the current Director of Track and Field/Cross Country Mika Laaksonen. The Romanian native credits a friend for introducing him to the track and cross-country programs at UTEP.

“I think it all started with my friend Adrianna; my friend who is also from Romania just like me,” Bogdan said. “So, we were coached by the same coach back home.”

Bogdan was encouraged by his friend and his own drive to come to the United States and compete at the collegiate level. The program’s successful history enticed him to come and be a part of its legacy.

“It wasn’t easy, it was a lot of work, a lot of things needed to connect and happen, but I was here,” Bogdan said. “Biggest thing was when I saw the history of this program I was like ‘Wow, I’m going somewhere cool, this program has been successful.’”

Beginning his collegiate running career in 2003, Bogdan went on to



Mircea Bogdan, a former student-athlete at UTEP from 2003 to 2006, has returned to UTEP as an associate head cross country coach for the Miners. **Photo by Izhiah Moreno/The Prospector**

win the 3000-meter steeplechase in 2005. Although he placed second in 2006. The steeplechase was the right event for Bogdan to excel in at the time. Distance runners are required to run longer distances compared to sprinters, so for these events, endurance plays a greater role than speed.

“My whole life had been distance

and middle distance, but mostly distance and cross country,” he said. “When it came to track, the steeplechase, outdoor track, was my main event. I didn’t have a lot of speed, but I had a good engine to put a lot of running under my belt, so I was healthy enough to support all that training.”

After a successful running career,

Bogdan received his bachelor of health science in kinesiology, applying what he learned to his first year as a coach. In 2006 Bogdan joined the UTEP coaching staff as a post-NCAA eligibility student coach.

Bogdan continued his education at Saint Francis University, receiving his masters of education in May 2009. He returned to coaching

at Loyola University-Chicago in 2014, as a volunteer assistant coach, then as assistant coach.

Most recently Bogdan spent a year as the director of track and field/cross country at Chicago State during the 2022-2023 season. His return to UTEP marks 20 years since he first set foot on campus since 2003.

Bogdan credits the foundation he received through UTEP and his kinesiology degree for his success as both a runner and a coach.

“Studying kinesiology at UTEP, it was almost like it filled the gap that I was missing,” Bogdan said. “By being an athlete, you miss some things, so I think studying what I studied, and my minor was education, helped me understand some more dynamics and more what’s happening inside the human body.”

UTEP affected Bogdan in a big way, influencing him to return as a coach and give back to the community that got him to where he is today. Because of this influence, Bogdan hopes current student-athletes can follow his example and someday return to UTEP to continue its rich history in athletics.

“Take advantage of the opportunity that you join a great program, contribute, maybe help somebody else,” Bogdan said. “After you leave, come back and keep the program running. This program should never stop having success.”

Nicholas Maes is a contributor and may be reached at nemaes@miners.utep.edu.

Volleyball brings ‘fright’ during the upcoming Halloween game

BY JOEL MOLINA
The Prospector



Halloween brings the joys of trick-or-treating and pumpkin carving, many of which take place on October 31st.

While those things on that day are fairly common, a volleyball game that looks to be full of spikes and kills is an added twist to an already spooky day.

The UTEP volleyball team will play their first game on Halloween since 2014. They will be coming off back-to-back road games against Middle Tennessee on Oct. 27 and Oct. 28.

The team’s 7-0 home record is tied for best in the conference. They will look to bring the scares while extending their undefeated home streak against out of conference foe Chicago State, who will be coming off an away game against New Mexico State, the previous day.

Middle blocker Danika Washington and setter Kalia Kohler both recently earned Conference USA player of the week honors with Washington being named C-USA defensive player of the week and Kohler being named C-USA freshman of the week.

UTEP student and volleyball fan Rosa Maria Sanchez speaks on the idea of attending the Halloween game and what makes it interesting.



UTEP volleyball will face Chicago State Halloween afternoon, Tuesday Oct. 31 at Memorial Gym. **Photo by Joel Molina/The Prospector**

“I wouldn’t mind coming to a game; I love coming to a game,” Sanchez said. “I think it being on Halloween is fun. I know a lot of the parents take their kids trick-or-treating and stuff, but I would prefer to come to a game.”

The Halloween game will be held at 6pm Oct. 31st at Memorial Gym and will be streamed on ESPN+.

This will also be the start to the Miners’ three-game home stretch to close out the regular season.

Joel Molina is a photographer and can be reached at jmolina16@miners.utep.edu

Read more about the ‘Battle of I-10’ on theprospectordaily.com.

Story by H. Catching Marginot/The Prospector

Photos by Joel Molina/The Prospector

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