

# Rickshaw transports come to Austin Sketch By Quatro

AUSTIN — In a few weeks of owning and operating Golden Boy Rickshaws, UT student Daniel Navarro has been pleasantly surprised with his business' success. Navarro and his crew have pulled an estimated 500 customers, including working downtown San Antonio one weekend.

"It's like taking a taxi," he says. "Tourists can get a tour of downtown Austin or partygoers can get bar-to-bar service. We will even wait for them to go somewhere else. People want to get from point A to point B, or even point C and I take them there."

Rickshaw runners pull the carriage by two five-foot wooden handles that have two bicycle-like tires, while the passengers sit in what looks like a ferris wheel seat and lay back to enjoy their ride.

The rickshaws hold about 600 pounds, so runners can pull about four people at a time around downtown.

"Take a ride, we work for tips!" yells rickshaw runner Edward Navarro as a couple of students approach him and then hop in for a ride.

Bryan Deham, a master's candidate in business administration, watched the runners for several hours before finally deciding to take a ride.

"I think we ran over someone's foot, but it was quite entertaining," he says after the ride. "It is definitely a great idea — it's especially adding to the greater city of Austin. It's the best way to get around downtown."

Navarro said the idea for his rickshaw business came after watching a kung fu movie at 4 a.m. with his brother

and roommate last October.

"Runners were pulling rickshaws throughout the movie. It hit me like a big light bulb in my head: I could do this in Austin. So I put it down on paper and started working on my ideas that night," he said. "I started finding out more about rickshaws. I bought them in Canada for about \$2,000. I got a city license permit and had to get insurance for them, but everything finally came through."

Rickshaw runner Kama Bruce said he enjoys just about everything about his job, even running from Stubb's Bar-b-q to La Zona Rosa, his farthest pulling distance so far.

"You have to be in somewhat decent shape as far as your legs go and by the end of the night you're exhausted, but it's better than jogging on your own," said Bruce, an elementary education junior. "I'm not in it for the money, I'm just doing it for fun, but my biggest tip has been \$40 from a lady. It's a different adventure every night; you never know who you're going to meet or pull."

Austin Police Department Officer Lee Sayga, who has been patrolling Sixth Street for the last 14 years, said although there have not been any problems with the rickshaws, he is skeptical of their safety.

"They don't bother me," Sayga said. "But I wouldn't take a ride on them ... I don't even ride a bicycle."

However, runners say they are as careful as possible and respect the safety concerns of customers.



# 'Seinfeld' series finale to air May 14

LOS ANGELES (AP) — After nearly a decade of chatting in the coffee shop, munching on cereal, breaking up with all potential mates and yada yada yada, Jerry, George, Elaine and Kramer are ending their run as masters of their TV domain.

The final episode of "Seinfeld" — famously about nothing at all except laughs — was to be taped Wednesday night. The show is going out on top, still television's No. 1 comedy and the centerpiece of NBC's powerhouse Thursday night lineup.

The hour-long finale, which will air on May 14, was being handled under top-secret conditions reminiscent of the "Who Shot J.R.?" episode of "Dallas."

A VIP crowd was expected to watch some scenes, but the ending will be filmed without an audience. Those involved with the show were asked to sign confidentiality agreements, and

scripts were kept from actors and NBC executives.

"It's surreal if you're an actor. You don't know what you're going to be doing," John O'Hurley, who plays catalog guru J. Peterman, told the Los Angeles Times. "We're just told what to do."

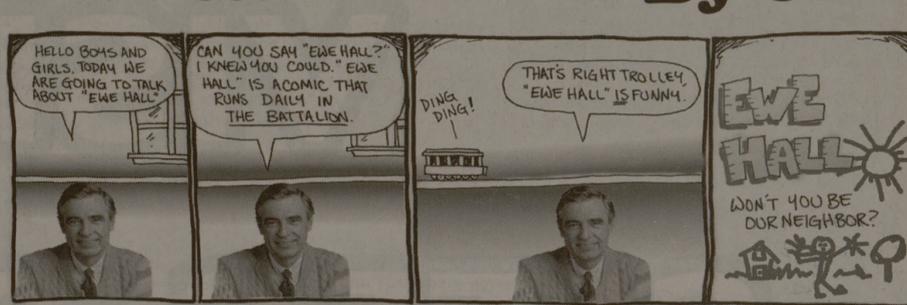
Supposed leaks about the ending — one of which had Jerry and his pals ending up in Los Angeles — were dismissed by producers as inaccurate.

The finale was written by Larry David, who created the show with its star, Jerry Seinfeld.

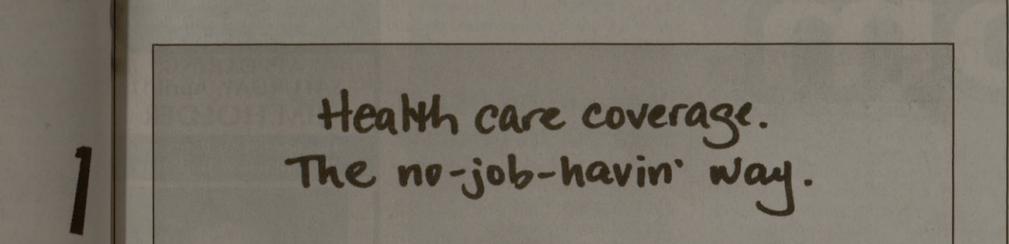
Despite an offer to raise his pay from \$1 million to an estimated \$5 million per episode next season, Seinfeld decided to end the show.

"I wanted to end the show on the same kind of peak we've been doing it on for years," Seinfeld told *The New York Times*. "I wanted the end to be from a point of strength. I wanted the

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