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**To the New Students in  
the College of Liberal Arts:**

Dean Woodrow Jones, Jr.

invites you to attend the

**New Students' Reception**

Thursday, September 9, 1999

5:00 to 7:00 P.M. in

the MSC Wayne Stark Galleries



MSC Great Issues is an open membership committee, meaning anyone who is willing to join our team is welcome. Our goal is to increase student interest and awareness in current events through programming.

**Topic areas:**

- Campus Issues
- Relationships
- Environment
- Science and Technology
- World Affairs
- Society

**Past Programs include:**

- School Choice
- Preventing Worldwide Depression
- The Biotech Century
- The Origin of the Kiss
- The Responsibility of Photojournalism
- Technology and the Ethics of Cloning

**Informational Meeting Tonight!!**

MSC 229

7pm

MSC Great Issues and Political Forum have joined forces in the biggest merger since Exxon Mobil. Come check us out. For more information, contact us at 845-1515



For 30 years, the Memorial Student Center Political Forum has focused on providing educational non-partisan programs on political topics to the students at Texas A&M University and to the people of Central Texas. MSC Political Forum has hosted a wide variety of speakers including former President George Bush and Mrs. Bush, former Governor Ann Richards, Senator Phil Gramm, and most recently Governor George W. Bush and H. Ross Perot.

**California bill boosts buckle law**

**Proposed law would require safety seats for children ages 6 and up**

FREEDOM, Calif. (AP) — Donny Bazar rides proudly to kindergarten every morning in the front passenger seat, toying with the loose seat belt that slides up over his mouth. "I like it up here in front," he said. "I like to play with the seat belt."

Donny's been riding shotgun for two years, ever since his mom, Marguerita Baltazar, took him out of the car seat mandated in California for children under 4 years old and 40 pounds.

Safety advocates point out that seat belts can be as dangerous to children as air bags. They say California's law does not go far enough. Children as old as 6 also are usually too small for a seat belt designed for an adult. The shoulder straps slide dangerously up their necks, and lap belts sit across their vulnerable abdomens, not low on their hips.

Gov. Gray Davis is considering a measure passed by the Legislature last week that will put kids like Donny back into booster seats or harnesses through their seventh birthday. The devices cost \$20 to \$110.

If signed, it will be the toughest child passenger safety law in the country.

"Children are irreplaceable," Judy Barrett-Miller, a consultant for the California Coalition for Children's Safety and Health in Sacramento, said.

**"If we want to safeguard our children, this is the best approach."**

— Judy Barrett-Miller  
California Coalition for Children's Safety and Health

"Traffic accidents are the leading cause of death for children who this law applies to. If we want to safeguard our children, this is the best approach."

A National Highway Traffic Safety Administration study of traffic accidents involving children under 15 found that 71 percent of

deaths and 66 percent of injuries eliminated if the children used an appropriate child safety seat, booster seat or seat every ride.

California Highway Patrol officer Debra by would not dream of driving her 8-year-old daughter anywhere without buckling her booster seat.

"The seat belt could come across and, in children, that windpipe is real so it could kill them. And then there's internal injuries that can be caused by a belt," she said. "Parents just aren't aware of the dangers. We really need this law."

All 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the U.S. territories have laws, most of which cover children up to 4 years old.

Consumer and safety advocates say laws have saved thousands of lives since 1979, when no states had car seat laws, until 1984, when most had. Deaths among children under 15 fell 30 percent nationwide.

**Pfizer promotes new drug**

**Officials dispute effectiveness of ear-infection treatment**

WASHINGTON (AP) — Pharmaceutical giant Pfizer Inc. is trying to convince doctors the best drug for children's ear infections is not the cheap, proven antibiotic the government recommends, but Pfizer's own pricey product.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) said in January that amoxicillin should be doctors' first choice for treating ear infections, which account for 25 million visits to doctors' offices each year.

The CDC ranked Pfizer's competing Zithromax among other antibiotics that "lack good evidence" for effectiveness against ear infections.

The consumer advocacy group Public Citizen uncovered a schedule for Pfizer teleconferences targeted at doctors nationwide to counter the CDC guidelines.

"We urge you to inform the nation's pediatricians of this campaign so they are not duped into draining the Medicaid program of needed resources and of wasting large amounts of money on treating other patients with this needlessly expensive and second-rate drug for ear infections," the advocacy group said

in a letter to Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala.

A Pfizer spokesperson defended the campaign, saying the Food and Drug Administration had approved Zithromax for treating ear infections.

Consequently, "everything we're doing is under the umbrella of what we're allowed to do according to the FDA," spokesperson Mariann Caprino said.

The CDC is "just basically weighing in with yet another opinion," she added, noting that the agency's amoxicillin recommendation is not an official treatment guideline.

As for the Pfizer teleconference schedule, Caprino said "it's not a corporate document that came down from on high," and it probably came from someone in one of our sales forces.

Pfizer has aggressively promoted Zithromax to doctors and parents, including giving away the drug's bag mascot "Max the Zebra." Max lives on an Internet site called KidsEars, which tells parents to ask their doctors about Pfizer's drug.

**Journal describes camper's death**

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Journal notes purportedly made by two friends who were lost while hiking in the New Mexico desert describe in detail how one killed the other before rescuers reached them.

The diary ascribed to Raffi Kodikian and his friend who was killed, David Coughlin, also included farewell notes to friends and burial instructions, *The Philadelphia Inquirer* reported yesterday.

"I killed & buried my best friend today. Dave had been in pain all night. At around 5 or 6 he turned to me & begged that I put my knife through his chest. I did, & a second

time when he wouldn't die. He still breathed & spoke so I told him that I was going to cover his face. He said OK. He struggled but died. I buried him w/ [sic] love. God & his family & mine, please forgive me," Kodikian wrote in a journal entry dated Aug. 8, the newspaper said.

Kodikian, 25, has told investigators that Coughlin, 26, bleaded with him to end his pain after the two men got lost early last month while camping in Carlsbad Caverns National Park and ran out of water. Kodikian said they believed they would die.

Investigators will not say exactly what they think happened, but they

do not believe Kodikian's story and have charged him with murder.

He is free on \$50,000 bail and currently is living with his parents near Doylestown in suburban Philadelphia.

The U.S. Secret Service is currently examining the journal for fingerprints and analyzing the handwriting to determine whether Coughlin actually wrote in the diary, Gary McCandless, chief of detectives for the sheriff's office, said.

On one page is a farewell note signed "David Andrew" and addressed to Coughlin's girlfriend, Sonnet Frost.

**Gore gets backing of labor**

DES MOINES, Iowa — Sen. Tom Harkin, Vice President Gore paraded through a class neighborhood yesterday, basking in warm words from labor leaders with whom he sometimes disagreed.

Gore strode side-by-side with AFL-CIO secretary and Richard Trumka, who spoke approvingly of Gore's bid for the Democratic presidential nomination.

"I'm proud to be with the vice president as he helps us celebrate Labor Day," Trumka said. The labor federation is expected to endorse a candidate at a convention, said Gore, the heads-on favorite in the race.

President Clinton has proposed trade proposals that amount to exporting jobs, said Clinton, who said that tension will continue to be felt.

"We have the same general philosophy on trade," Gore said. "I think part of our success in the economy has been to open up markets for our products."

Gore shrugged off questions about differences with labor on trade issues.

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