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Dissecting a losing season

Bill Parcells trusted his instincts ... and lost. **SPORTSDAY, IC, 12-13C**

TRAVEL: Indian Ocean destinations spared by the tsunamis are counting on tourism to aid the region's recovery, **II**



ERICH SCHLEGEL/Staff Photographer

Brad Wolfe of Brownsville crosses the border every workday to get to his job in Matamoros, Mexico. The U.S. warning on violence in Mexican border towns hasn't curbed his commute.

For border commuters, warnings have little effect

Workers take alert in stride, but legislators cancel dinner in Mexico

By **KAREN BROOKS**
Austin Bureau

MATAMOROS, Mexico — Every day, Brad Wolfe makes his way across the U.S.-Mexico border — and becomes a potential target. As a successful Texas businessman

FBI warns border agents of death threat. 30A
Violence may be keeping teenagers from Mexican bars. 30A

whose family began the city's first maquiladora, an assembly-for-export plant, Mr. Wolfe must contend with an increasingly vicious war among rival drug cartels.

Still, the violence that prompted a U.S. State Department warn-

ing last week for Americans traveling to Mexican border towns hasn't hit close enough for it to affect his daily routine — at least not yet.

But warning did prompt 25 Texas lawmakers to cancel a dinner in Matamoros on Saturday night. Instead, the state senators and representatives on a four-day tour of the Rio Grande Valley met

See **WARNINGS** Page 30A

Showers late



High: 46 Low: 38
5-day outlook, 2B

SCIENCE & MEDICINE

Climate change: new urgency?

New studies suggest that global warming is likely worse than previously believed — and may be reaching a critical point of no return. **9A**

Also: Are the children of gay parents worse off than those raised by heterosexuals? Not according to research done so far. **10A**

BUSINESS

Texas economy growing, but slowly

The Dallas Morning News Board of Economists says high oil prices might not be good for Texas. And D-FW is missing its mojo. **1D**

Also: Buy, sell or hold: The economists evaluate the North Texas economy like a stock. **1D**

DATELINE

Woman with an edge

Argentine cartoonist Maitea, who's been described as "lucid, smart, vital," is having her work translated into English. **32A**

TEXAS

Slain Wal-Mart clerk remembered

More than 1,000 mourners attended the Tyler funeral for Megan Holden, who was abducted leaving work and murdered. **6A**

METRO

Plano priest asks why he can't marry

Columnist Steve Blow talks to John Stack, a Catholic priest in Plano who plans to marry in May. **1B**

TEXAS LIVING

Hidden history

Researchers are working to preserve a World War II camp in Texas that housed German prisoners of war. **1E**

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IRAQ ELECTIONS: THE VOTING BEGINS

Building democracy from a distance



Photos by **MELANIE BURFORD**/Staff Photographer

Hussein Besfki of Richardson cheers after voting in the Iraqi elections at the state fairgrounds in Nashville, Tenn.

Expatriates realize dream to change homeland

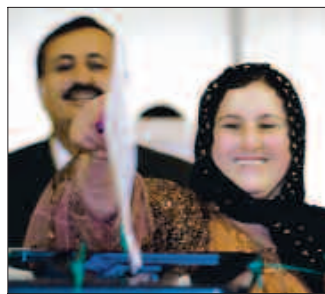
By **KATIE MENZER**
Staff Writer

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — After 11 hours on the road, it took the Besfki family of Richardson only seconds to cast their votes.

Moments after emerging Saturday from a voting tent, the family agreed that having the opportunity to participate in democratic elections in their homeland of Iraq was well worth the 700-mile journey to Nashville.

Jihan Besfki, 26, said his family would "do it again if we had to."

Nashville — which has one of the largest Kurdish immigrant communities in the country — was one of five U.S. cities chosen to host balloting for this weekend's Iraqi elections. While some voters might have traveled farther than the



Mr. Besfki watched his wife, Akilla, cast her ballot on Saturday.

Besfki family and their friends to reach Tennessee, none brought more enthusiasm.

The Dallas-area group voted at the Tennessee State Fairgrounds on Saturday, the second day of voting for Iraqi expatriates. Nearly 26,000 people have registered to vote in the United States. Tens of thousands more are expected to vote in 13 other countries during balloting that runs through today, election day in Iraq.

"To have a chance to vote in a real election for real candidates, it's the beginning of their country," said Karen Hirschfeld of the International Organization for Migration, which is helping coordinate the vote.

See **EXPATRIATES** Page 20A

DEVELOPMENTS

Polls open: Voting began early this morning. Suicide bombers attacked polling stations while heavy mortar fire and explosions broke out in Baghdad and other parts of Iraq. **21A**

Rocket attack: A rocket hit the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad, killing two Americans. **21A**

The great unknown: What will women do when they enter voting booths away from the influence of husbands, sheiks and clerics? **21A**

On their way: A Dallas lawyer gave a lift to local Iraqis who were registered but couldn't afford the trek to vote. **20A**

Is Iraq ready for democracy? Four different viewpoints. **4H**

Abstinence programs: lessons in futility?

Classes aren't changing Texas teens' sexual habits, researchers say

By **LAURA BEIL**
Medical Writer

Abstinence-only programs — the hallmark of the Bush administration's federal sex education policy — seem to have little impact on the behavior of Texas teenagers.

The first evaluation of programs used throughout the state has found that students in almost all high school grades were more sexually active after abstinence education. Researchers don't believe the programs encouraged teenagers to have sex, only that the abstinence messages did not inter-

Sex-ed campaign takes teen to Sundance. **1G**

ferre with the usual trends among adolescents growing up.

"We didn't find what many would like for us to find," said researcher Buzz Pruitt of Texas A&M University. He and his colleagues discussed their data this week with state health authorities in Austin, who sponsored the research.

The study has its flaws, and Dr. Pruitt and others cautioned against overarching conclusions. But scientists welcome the fact that Texas is contributing to a field lacking in solid data. The federal government will spend \$131 million this year on a smorgasbord of abstinence-only education programs. Many public health experts are concerned that no one really knows what the government is buying.

Among the findings in the Texas study: About 23 percent of the ninth-grade girls in the study had sexual intercourse before they received abstinence education, a figure below the state. After taking an abstinence course, the number among those same girls rose to 28 percent, a level closer to that of their peers across the state.

Among ninth-grade boys, the percentage who reported sexual intercourse before and after abstinence education remained relatively unchanged. In 10th grade,

See **STUDY** Page 2A

It's on their minds: Women in science fields speak up

Harvard leader's talk of male, female differences started something

By **SUE GOETINCK AMBROSE**
Science Writer

Lawrence Summers, the often outspoken president of Harvard University, ignited a controversy two weeks ago that is still simmer-

ing. At an academic conference to discuss women and minorities in the science and engineering professions, Dr. Summers reportedly questioned whether innate differences between men and women may help explain why fewer women rise to the top of scientific professions than men.

Excerpts of the conversation, **1H**

Since the remarks, Dr. Summers has apologized several times. "The many compelling e-mails and calls that I have received have made vivid the very real barriers faced by women in pursuing scientific and other academic careers," he said in a statement. But the discussion, in the media and among scientists, has not stopped.

The Dallas Morning News in-

ited five local female scientists to talk about Dr. Summers' remarks. In a provocative discussion last week at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas, the scientists shared their own experiences, including a few indignities suffered at the hands of male (and at least one female) colleagues, their thoughts on the differences between men and women, and whether there really

is a glass ceiling for female scientists hoping to advance in their careers.

Ellen Vitetta, a professor of microbiology at UT Southwestern, summed up her colleagues' reactions to Dr. Summers' initial remarks: "I think he put his finger on something that a lot of people think but won't say. And since it's out there now, people can see how ridiculous it is."



Photos by MELANIE BURFORD/Staff Photographer

Shadi Besfki, 7, and her uncle Farhad Besfki brought along a Kurdish flag and an American flag for their trip from Richardson to vote in Nashville, Tenn.

Expatriates mark a new dawn

Continued from Page 1A

Security was extremely tight at the fairgrounds, south of downtown. The polling place was moved there after some community members voiced fears of terrorist attacks.

Police and other officials circled the fairgrounds on foot, horseback and various types of vehicles. Visitors had to navigate a maze of concrete barriers before being directed to park in a muddy field. Video cameras, radiological meters and other equipment were also in use, said Scott Duke, chief of operations for the Tennessee Office of Homeland Security.

"There are people out there 24 hours a day," he said. "The site is covered. We have everything under control."

Family patriarch Hussein Besf-

ki said next to nothing could have ruined the historic moment for him.

"We are happy and excited," Mr. Besfki said. "That is why we drive all this way. We want freedom. We want elections."

Recalling another voyage

The journey to the polls started from his Richardson home at 9 a.m. Friday, but the voyage to freedom for Mr. Besfki and his relatives began 17 years ago in northern Iraq. That is when the family fled a small, Kurdish village to escape Saddam Hussein and the chemical weapons he was using against his people.

Mr. Besfki and others told the story on their ride to Nashville.

They left their village in the early morning hours of Aug. 26, 1988. The three girls rode on one horse.

On another was Mr. Besfki's pregnant wife, cradling her infant son, and her other two sons. Mr. Besfki walked beside them.

The boys sat in baskets hanging off the sides of the horse.

"Sometimes, we put rocks in one side to balance them out,"

said the Besfkis' daughter Heyam, 24.

She does not remember how long it took them to walk the 60-plus miles to the Turkish border, but she knows they walked through sunlight and darkness.

They sneaked into abandoned homes to get food, hid from passing soldiers and barely averted di-



The nine-minivan caravan of Iraqi expatriates from North Texas stopped Friday for a meal in Little Rock, Ark., during a break in their 700-mile trip.

saster when the boys' delicate basket system disintegrated and the children tumbled onto the ground. They were not injured.

"I don't remember that," said Mehvan Besfki, 19, who was only 3 when he sat precariously in those baskets.

On the other horse, the girls would pinch each other to keep from falling asleep.

"My dad said, 'Don't sleep or you will fall off and break your head.'" Heyam said. "Every time your head nods, you get pinched."

After waiting for days at the border with thousands of other Kurds, the family was trucked into a refugee camp by well-armed Turkish soldiers. They were placed in a small tent, where they slept, ate, showered and lived for more

than four years.

"It seemed like it was a lot longer because the days were so long," Heyam said.

The camp provided Heyam's first opportunity to attend school. The schoolchildren learned to write on cigarette rolling papers, and there were three students for every pencil.

The tents were heated by old furnaces that often caught fire. They slept on blankets on the ground because there were no mattresses. There was no running water.

"People were often very sick," Heyam said. "It was not clean."

Becoming Americans

It wasn't until 1992, after the first Persian Gulf War ended, that

the Besfkis were given a chance to immigrate to the United States.

"We are thankful every day to America," Mr. Besfki said.

The family members, however, haven't forgotten their homeland. That is why the Besfkis and their caravan of nine minivans have driven twice this month to Nashville. They had to make the trip earlier to register for the vote.

"This vote has been a dream of the Kurds for 100 years," said Aziz Selin, a Besfki family friend who drove in the caravan from North Texas. "It is a long drive, but I bring my kids with me, and I am happy."

Conversation in the cars on the trip Friday was joyous and loud,

See IRAQIS Page 21A

Voters get first-class treatment

By CHRISTY A. ROBINSON
Staff Writer

Dallas trial lawyer Windle Turley read Friday night in *The Dallas Morning News* about local Iraqis who were registered but couldn't afford the trek to vote.

One phone call led to another, and Mr. Turley found seven Iraqi expatriates — including six Kurds — to accept seats in his Cessna jet to Nashville, Tenn.

Beginning their voyage, they arrived at Love Field on Saturday morning carrying Kurdish and Iraqi flags predating Saddam Hussein's reign.

They thanked Mr. Turley profusely and shook his hand repeatedly.

"We've been waiting many years to be able to do this," said Temer Tovi, an Arlington city employee and owner of Mediterranean Cafe & Bakery in Richardson.

The father of four came to America in 1991 after spending three years in a Kurdish refugee camp.

His wife, Suveyda Abdullah — the only female in the group — said the day has special significance for her.

"I'm so happy as a woman now that I have the opportunity to vote," she said through her husband, who interpreted.

Some in the group had already driven toward Nashville by car for an hour Friday night when they received a call saying Mr. Turley would fly them there and back, a more than 1,300-mile round trip. They gratefully turned back.

"We never had this opportunity. Not since our great-grandparents have we had this," said Isam Ibrahim of Richardson.

Mechanical problems rerouted the seven excited voters to Addison Airport for takeoff on another plane Mr. Turley chartered.

"I want them to know how badly we want them to be able to vote," Mr. Turley said. "I just got to thinking of all the soldiers over there dying. I wish we could have taken more."

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Family patriarch Hussein Besfki displays his family's voter-registration cards.

ki said the voting process went quickly, with only a few snags. Voters had their right index finger dipped in ink as a safeguard against voting fraud, then dropped paper ballots into boxes.

Some of his friends were told to cover their T-shirts, emblazoned with the Kurdish flag, before voting.



Above: Jihan Besfki enjoys a moment with Shadi, her daughter, after the family's arrival in Nashville. Right: Hussein Besfki helps his wife, Akilla, at the voting booth.





Hussein Beskfi was surrounded by his countrymen during a celebration at a Kurdish restaurant in Nashville.

MELANIE BURFORD/Staff Photographer

Iraqis from N. Texas cherish chance to vote

Continued from Page 20A

and rare silences were broken by Mr. Beskfi's improvisational songs in Kurdish about his wife's beauty.

Along with discussions concerning Iraqi politics, the travelers talked about the O.J. Simpson trial, Friday's persistent rain, Mehsan Beskfi's future choice of college majors and the discomfort of a rented Dodge minivan after 10 hours of driving.

While approaching Memphis, Zeki Mustafa — Mr. Selin's brother — remarked that the muddy Mississippi River was not as beautiful as the Tigris River. Mrs. Beskfi said the scenery outside her passenger-side window in Friendly, Ark., reminded her of her village in northern Iraq.

"You see the trees and the rocks?" she said, pointing at the highway lined with reddish stones and tall, thin trees.

As on all good road trips, snacks were plentiful. The families ate a quick lunch at a rest stop in

Arkansas, and plastic containers filled with fragrant homemade Kurdish dishes — including fried rice balls stuffed with meat, a salsa of tomatoes and cucumber, and bright yellow curried rice with peas, chicken and almonds — were freely passed from hand to hand.

That party continued after the Beskfis and their friends voted Saturday. They commemorated the event with a trip to one of Nashville's Kurdish restaurants and spent the afternoon eating, dancing, talking and singing.

"We did good," Mr. Beskfi said after he had voted, eyes sparkling and arms raised in celebration.

The family planned to return to Dallas today. The thought of another daylong car ride would make many people groan, but Heyam Beskfi takes a different view.

"We are in a heated car. We are driving, not walking. We are not on a horse," she said. "It's just not that bad."

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Iraqis log votes as insurgents target polls

2 officers among 7 killed in attacks; forces ratchet up security

From Wire Reports

BAGHDAD, Iraq — Iraqis began casting ballots this morning in the country's first free elections in more than 50 years.

Insurgents made good on threats of violence, launching a deadly suicide bombing and mortar strikes at several polling stations across Iraq. Just hours after polls opened, at least seven people were dead, including two policemen.

Saturday, a deadly rocket strike on the American Embassy in Baghdad killed two Americans, wounded five and heightened fears of further attacks intended to intimidate voters. Iraqi soldiers and the police, backed up in places by U.S. troops, erected checkpoints across the major cities of northern, southern and central Iraq. American attack helicopters and jets circled overhead, and election workers wrapped voting sites, many of them schools, in barbed wire. The streets of Baghdad and Mosul were mostly deserted.

Also Saturday, a suicide bomber killed eight people in a Kurdish city near the Iranian border. Insurgents blasted polling stations in eight cities.

Iraqi officials have predicted that up to 8 million of 14 million voters will turn out to choose a National Assembly and governing councils in the 18 provinces. Voters in the Kurdish-run north also will select a regional parliament.

Trucks crisscrossed the country with deliveries of more than 7 million pounds of ballot boxes, voting forms, cardboard booths and indelible purple ink to stain voters' fingers. Turnout is uncertain, especially in the Sunni Muslim areas of central, northern and western Iraq where the insurgency is most deadly. About 300,000 Iraqi and Amer-

ican troops are on the streets and on standby to protect voters.

U.S. tanks and armored vehicles blocked roads and bridges to prevent insurgent movements. Iraqi national guardsmen, wearing black ski masks to hide their faces, roamed through the capital in sport utility vehicles and pickups, machine guns mounted. Police and Iraqi soldiers set up checkpoints and randomly searched cars.

Government spokesman Thaeer al-Naqeeb warned Iraqis to expect "sabotage operations" carried out by "the enemies of Iraq."

But he encouraged Iraqis to overcome their fear and turn out at polling stations. "It is important," he said. "If you vote ... the terrorists will be defeated."

Saddam Hussein will not be voting today.

Although a citizen of Iraq, the former president — and other prisoners — will not be allowed to vote in the country's first open election, said officials from the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq, the body that has set the rules.

President Ghazi al-Yawer, a Sunni running for a National Assembly seat, expressed hope that turnout will be high. But he ac-

knowledged that many Iraqis would probably stay away "because of the security situation."

Despite the lockdown — and a nighttime curfew — guerrillas hit the U.S. Embassy compound in Baghdad's fortified Green Zone with a rocket Saturday evening, killing a Defense Department civilian and a Navy sailor and wounding

four other Americans. Another American soldier was killed by a roadside bomb in Baghdad.

More than 40 American troops have been killed in the last three days.

The election is a major test of President Bush's goal of promoting democracy in the Middle East. It also could hasten the day when the United States brings home its 150,000 soldiers. About 15,000 of them are guarding the streets and polling stations in Baghdad today.

"The terrorists and those who benefited from the tyranny of Saddam Hussein know that free elections will expose the emptiness of their vision," Mr. Bush said Saturday in his weekly radio address.

Shiite Muslims, estimated at 60 percent of Iraq's 26 million people, are expected to turn out in large numbers, hoping to gain power after generations of oppression by the Sunni minority.

Sunni extremists have called for a boycott, claiming no vote held under U.S. occupation is legitimate.

The New York Times and the Associated Press contributed to this report.

KEY PARTIES IN IRAQ ELECTION

Prominent parties and coalitions in Iraq's national election and their leaders:

United Iraqi Alliance

Shiite-dominated coalition likely to get most seats in National Assembly; sponsored by Iraq's highest-ranking cleric



Leader: Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani

Iraqi List

Secular slate; led by current interim prime minister, a well-known incumbent; widely viewed as backed by U.S. funding, advisers



Leader: Interim Prime Minister Iyad Allawi

Iraqis

Strongest Sunni ticket; led by current interim president; candidates include influential tribal leaders, Cabinet members



Leader: Interim President Ghazi al-Yawer

Kurdish Alliance

Unites rivals Kurdistan Democratic Party and Patriotic Union of Kurdistan; expected to get Kurdish vote

Leaders: Jalal Talabani, PUK (left); Massoud Barzani, KDP (right)



Assembly of Independent Democrats

Led by Sunni elder statesman of Iraqi politics; did not join Sunni boycott of elections to protest U.S. military action in Sunni areas



Leader: Adnan Pachachi

People's Union

Led by Iraqi Communist Party; candidates are intellectuals, leftists; opposed the war, occupation; no religious, ethnic influences

Knight Ridder Tribune

IRAQ WATCH

Texan casualties: The U.S. military has identified two service members who were killed this week in Iraq.

■ **Army Spc. Taylor J. Burk**, 21, of Amarillo was killed Wednesday in Baghdad by an explosive; he was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood.

■ **Marine Lance Cpl. Fred L. Maciel**, 20, of Spring was killed Wednesday in a helicopter crash near Rutbah, Iraq; he was assigned to 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, 3rd Marine Division, III Marine Expeditionary Force, Marine Corps Base, Hawaii.

Australia fracas: Fistfights broke out at an Australian polling station for Iraqis abroad Saturday when extremists chanted slogans against voters.

Voting near Tikrit: Many Iraqis living near Saddam Hussein's hometown said they will vote today because the ballot — not violence — will end Iraq's occupation by U.S.-led coalition troops. The small town of Alam, 10 miles northeast of Mr. Hussein's home city of Tikrit, is relatively quiet, unlike other Sunni Muslim areas west and north of Baghdad.

From wire reports



BEN CURTIS/Associated Press
Iraqi interim President Ghazi al-Yawer holds up his ink-stained finger after voting.

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The New York Times and the Associated Press contributed to this report.

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ELECTION DAY

U.S. and Iraqi authorities will use sweeping security measures for today's election — sealing the borders, restricting travel, stationing Iraqi police and national guardsmen at polling stations and placing concrete barriers around some centers.



Each voter's identity is checked before entering polling areas.

Each gets two paper ballots — one for the National Assembly, the other for provincial legislatures.*



Ballots are marked in a cardboard booth, then handed to an election worker.

Workers drop ballots into collection box.



The exiting voter's hand will be marked with ink to prevent repeat voting.



* Voters in Kurdish-controlled areas get a third ballot for their parliament.

SOURCES: United Nations; Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq

S. Hoffmann, J. Hamlin - AP

What women will do in Iraq voting booths remains mystery

Privacy ticket to freedom from male views for some

The New York Times

BASRA, Iraq — The great unknown in Iraq is what women will do when they step behind the cardboard voting booths in a rare moment away from the immediate influence of husbands, sheiks and other clerics.

In the south, at least, where many expect a landslide victory by the Shiite clerical parties that

could tip the national tally, interviews with a variety of women suggest that their potential half of the vote is actually in considerable doubt.

Many women here express resentment over the de facto control that clerics already exercise in their lives, and they cite clerical rule in Iran as an example to be avoided. Many say that in the privacy of the polling booth, whatever the sheik may have directed will not be in play.

"I would go and listen to him and see if his words would be of interest to me," said Om Muntadhar,

an elderly government worker and a member of a local aid society. "But when I go to the booth, I will do as I wish."

Women in Basra generally cite security and stability as top concerns and put religion lower on the list. Partly for that reason, Prime Minister Iyad Allawi's secular party scores high here in interviews with women. Even with daily attacks by insurgents, he has cultivated an image of decisiveness and strength, qualities constantly mentioned by women here who intend to vote for him.

Two other women at the aid so-

ciety left no shred of doubt about their positions. "We want a really strong person, not a sheik," said Iman Abdul Karik, also a government worker. And Iman al-Timimi, a translator, said that she had heard the same message from women again and again: "No one would vote for the turbans."

The savviest of the political parties, all required by law to have women make up at least one-third of their candidate lists, understand the power of women in this contest and are heedful of their importance.

"According to our religion, we

have a special respect for women," said Salah al-Battat, head of the Basra branch of the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, an influential Shiite clerical association that backs the United Iraqi Coalition, a heavily religious ticket.

Relating a story about a man who objected to the one-third requirement, Mr. al-Battat said: "I told him this is less than women deserve; it should be at least 50 percent."

In interviews Saturday, many women in Basra were reluctant to say which party they would choose,

especially in front of their families.

"Why should I tell you about the list I am going to vote for tomorrow?" said a woman who was out with her four daughters and asked not to be named. "It is my secret."

But several allowed that they would heed their husbands.

"I will follow my husband — he knows better than I do," said Om Sajad, who was selling biscuits and drinks at a small stand and said that she was living in an abandoned government building. "I don't even know where the polling center is."