



## Vets return home; now off to college

**STEPHANIE NORMAN**  
Editor

Bloodshed, bombings, killings – American veterans have seen it first hand and they've made it back to their homeland. Many of these young men and women are enrolled at Paris Junior College.

Veterans are enrolling in college at a higher percentage than past years. This may be an effect of the new Post 9/11 GI Bill, which is the largest educational benefit for veterans since World War II. There are 120 students

PJC Greenville campus, who have been overseas, explain how the bill is working out for them.

Carr receives the Montgomery GI Bill, which is how she pays her college tuition, books and then she receives a monthly check from the VA.

"The amount depends on how many hours I take," Carr said. "I took 14 hours in the spring and got over \$1,000 a month. This semester I am taking only nine hours so it's a little bit less."

She joined the Navy at the age of 21 and got out in June 2007.

She plans to major in public relations and minor in something that has to do with sports.

"I honestly had never wanted to go to school," Carr explained. "In boot camp, I almost didn't set up to have the GI Bill, but at the last minute, I changed my mind. When it was time to decide to get out of the Navy, my sister asked me what my dream job would be. I told her public relations for the Dallas Cowboys. She talked me into really going for my

dreams. So when I got out, the first thing I did was enroll in college."

Vrooman joined the military at the age of 18 and he was in the Texas National Guard for seven years with one year of inactive reserve. He has completed his contract with the military now.

"It is impossible to work and go to school full-time with two children," Vrooman said. "Especially if we had to pay for daycare there would be no way to depend on the GI Bill to pay for living expenses. I haven't been paid for three months with the Post 9/11 GI Bill. Really, the GI Bill does not pay enough for a veteran with a family of four."

In general, the economy has played a part in students going back to school, but not many people break it down and realize

how many veterans are going back. Times are hard right now; just about everyone is feeling the economic strain.

"Fortunately my wife is providing for the family now," Vrooman said. "I would have to say I would be in the same position as the other veterans who are hurting because of no payments from the Post 9/11 GI Bill. Don't get the wrong idea; I'm hurting, just not as bad as other veterans are hurting. We are living in a tough economy right now. I am just hoping the new education bill gets revamped and fixed before it's too late."

Vrooman wants a career in environmental science.

"I want to go to college for the reason to better myself and enjoy the rest of my life with my family," Vrooman said.

Both Carr and Vrooman have seen first hand what it's like to be overseas during war. They have seen places most people could never dream of seeing in their lifetimes.

"I did two deployments on board two different aircraft carriers," Carr explained. "I was on the USS Carl Vinson for six months, July 2001 through January 2002. We went to Thailand and Singapore and then Sept. 11th happened and we didn't get to go anywhere



Courtesy Photo

**Veteran Tobi Carr of Greenville is "doing what she loves," as she says. She finished her contract with the Navy in June 2007.**

else until we headed home in December, then we stopped in Singapore again."

She was also on the USS Nimitz in 2003, at which time she went

to Singapore a couple more times, Dubai three times and Bahrain. She has also traveled to Canada

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Courtesy Photo

**Veteran Allan Vrooman, center, stands armed overseas during the current war in Iraq.**

at PJC using veterans benefits to go to school, according to Donna Glass, PJC counselor, who advises veterans. There is a small portion of those beneficiaries, who are not veterans themselves, but children or grandchildren of veterans.

According to an Associated Press article, emergency checks were to be issued starting Friday, Oct. 2, at 57 VA offices across the country due to a delay with the distribution of benefits; the surge of returning veterans has put distribution on overload.

Four years of free college, at a junior college or university, are provided via the GI Bill. It also provides \$1,000 per college year for books and a housing stipend.

Tobi Carr and Christopher (Allan) Vrooman, students at the



Elizabeth Brown/The Bat

### United Way

**Students Satabra Jackson and Shantwanee Akins get all wrapped up in Eve, biology instructor Jack Brown's female pet snake, during the United Way campaign kickoff Wednesday, Oct. 14, held in the PJC Ballroom.**

### Sulphur Springs garden day



Courtesy Photo

**The Sulphur Springs campus chapter of Phi Theta Kappa and the Hispanic Club worked together Friday, Oct. 2, to update the landscape around the center. From left, are Omar Sanchez, Phi Theta Kappa adviser Dr. Cynthia Steward, Nicole Rogers and daughter, Josh Schwen, Alberto Guiterrez, Hispanic Club adviser Mayra Cummings, Andy Pickles, Ben Walker. Not pictured, but also helping out were George Ellis and Jana Warren.**

# Opinion/News

## My style's country; what's yours?

**MARTA GOERTE**  
Features Editor

Clomping down to the barn one morning in my camouflage print shorts, red tank top, cowboy boots and spurs, a thought struck me. What the heck was I wearing?

But after another 20 minutes of slogging through the mud feeding horses, I decided I just didn't care what I was wearing anymore. I live in Telephone (aka, the boondocks) and nobody but the garbage man or the mailman ever get close enough to see me.

However, as the day wore on (and I continued along in my not-so-chic ensemble), some questions came to me: What exactly is fashion? Who decides what is considered fashion? Is a person "supposed" to be fashionable all the time?

What we wear defines each one of us, reflects our personalities, careers, and lifestyles. I get that.

But I don't get fashion; it's one of those things that has never made much sense to me. I ride horses and stay outdoors most of

the time, so naturally, jeans and boots are my preferred choice of attire. Many a city girl would cringe in horror at my jeans and boots (or camo shorts and red tank top) and immediately label me a redneck country bumpkin (and it wouldn't be the first time).

So, why does fashion have one definition, or does it? Fashion is also dependent on geographical location. No matter what some local socialite with upward aspirations



*"Fashion is an overused term that shouldn't be taken too seriously"*

says, fashion in Paris, Texas is not the same as it is in Paris, France.

I wouldn't be caught dead in a pair of skinny jeans and ballet flats, and in a dress and heels only under extreme duress, but that doesn't mean they're not in style; they're just not practical for me. I'll leave the purple leggings and glitzy gold top to

the girls who have seen a horse only through the window of their vehicle.

I tend to get a little defensive on matters of fashion, just because what I normally wear probably won't make too many people's best dressed lists.

In a classic episode of country girl meets big city last week, I went shopping at the Collin Creek Mall in Plano. The funny thing, or maybe the sad thing, is that about 80 percent of the clothes either 1) I have never seen anybody wear anything like it, or 2) looked like they came right out of the '70s or '80s. I heard my mom say at least five different times while we were shopping, "I wore that when I was your age."

I've decided where fashion is concerned, pretty much anything goes, and what goes around comes around. The fact is, every person has individual likes, dislikes, and needs where clothes are concerned, and "fashion" is an overused term that shouldn't be taken too seriously – especially where purple leggings or camo shorts are concerned.

Country redneck is my style. What's yours?



### Talent Show

A talent Show is scheduled for Nov. 19 in the Ray Karrer Theater. Contestants should be prepared to perform for at least 2 minutes during auditions. Individuals may only compete in one act, solo, or group. The open auditions are Oct. 15 from 6-8 p.m. in the SC Ballroom. A total of 12 acts may be chosen to participate.

Money will be given to the top three contestants: first place, \$150, second place \$75, and third place, \$50. Competition is open to PJC students only.

### Homecoming Parade

All campus organizations are invited to participate in the 2009 Homecoming parade as Paris Junior College celebrates its 85th anniversary on Nov. 5 at 4 p.m. "We want to make it a special event this year, so get busy and build that float to honor this special time in PJC's history," said Glenna Preston, Executive Secretary, student life at ext. 402 or email at gpreston@parisjc.edu to enter your organizations' float.

### Flag Football

Games will begin the week of Oct. 26 for all PJC students to attend. Form a team and sign up in the Student Center, Room 109. There is a maximum of 12 players to a team. The deadline will be Oct. 22 at 5 p.m. Winners will receive championship T-shirts. Complete information is available in SC Room 109.

### PJC play: "Private Lives"

"Private Lives" is a 1930's comedy of manners by Noel Coward, to be presented by PJC theatre students. Tickets are \$5 for general public and free to PJC students with ID. Show times are Nov. 6, 7, 13 & 14 at 7

## Astronaut? Spy? Then they grew up

**ELIZABETH BROWN**  
Staff Writer

Children often want to grow up to become firefighters or super heroes, but as they grow older, they become more realistic about their career choices.

According to the U.S. Labor Department's Bureau of Labor Statistics, a person may have as many as ten jobs between the ages of 18 and 38.



**Mason**

How many times does the average worker change careers? Statistically speaking, no one knows, simply because the Bureau of Labor Statistics does not gather that type of data.

PJC employees have made numerous career choices throughout their lives.

Diann Mason, English instructor and former PJC Human Resources director, had other plans as a child.

"I wanted to be an astronaut," she says. "It went on until I realized that they didn't

just wear a cool suit and go to the moon, they also had to know math and physics."

Her plans changed in her middle school years, however.

"I thought I wanted to be a draftsman. I took all the drafting classes, but I was a good English student, too." Now she is an English teacher at PJC.

Brent Cuttrell, who was a musician for years, now teaches math.

"We played a lot of Megadeth and Iron Maiden. I really enjoyed heavy stuff. Our band's name was Crum," he says.

Cuttrell was once a chemistry major, as well.

"I liked chemistry, but there was an opening in the math lab," he says.

He admits, however, "I always wanted to be a teacher."

Paul May, a speech teacher since 1992, says, "My life has adapted to the uniqueness



**Cuttrell**



**May**

of the times . . . I was a minister for junior high students, I was in public relations, and I was a copy editor for a textbook company."

Now, May is working very hard for something more, though.

"I am in the final stages of getting my Ph.D. at UNT (University of North Texas)," he says. "The specialty is Community College Administration and the 'research problem'/project focus is a national snapshot of 'high school graduates' expectations of the first year in college."

Pam Smith had many different jobs throughout her life. When she was young, she read a lot.

"I wanted to be a writer because I loved reading," she says. "I could go places in my head while reading."

She said she also wanted to be a spy. "Not only was I a window washer, which didn't last long because I'm afraid of



**Smith**

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### The Bat

The Paris Junior College student newspaper

Comments and views in *The Bat*, the student newspaper of Paris Junior College, reflect thoughts and opinions of individual writers and are not necessarily the views of other students, staff members, faculty, administrative offices, or the PJC Board of Regents.

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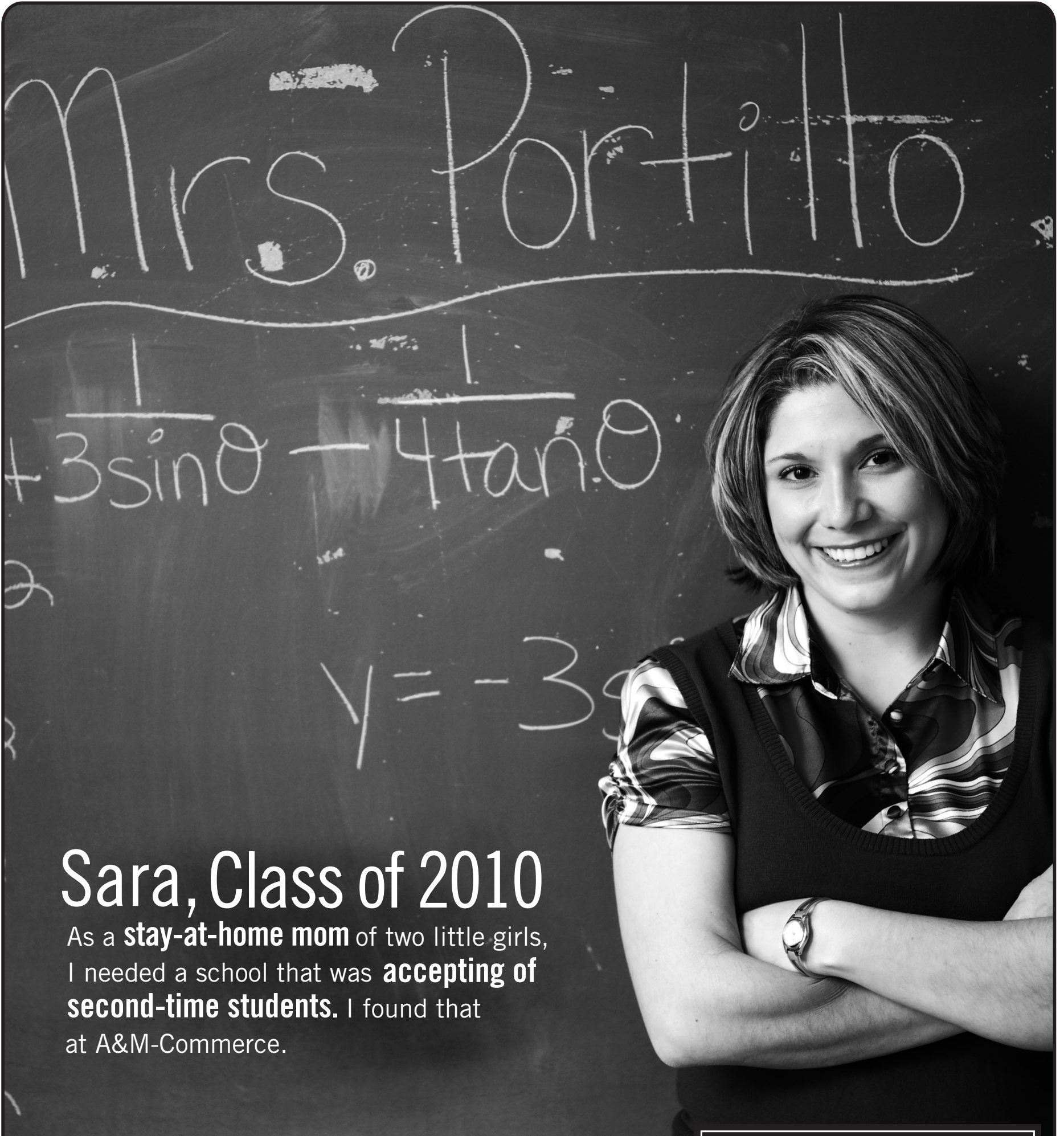
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### LETTERS POLICY

*The Bat* welcomes letters to the editor. Letters should be typed, double-spaced, signed, and include a telephone number. Mail letters to *The Bat*, 2400 Clarksville St., Paris, TX 75460. Letters will be edited for spelling, grammar, and libelous statements.

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# Sports / News

## Lady Dragon softball features four players, coaching staff on All-Star Team



Quentin Carpenter/The Bat

From left: Taylor Russell, Kaci Crawford, Megan Brigrance, Kara Crawford were the four players selected to the Region 14 Softball All-Star team. The All-Star Team is selected by all the opposing coaches in the conference.

**QUENTIN CARPENTER**  
Sports Editor

PJC softball had four players on the Region 14 All-Star Team, and if the game had been played Oct. 10, as scheduled PJC's coaching staff would have been the featured coaching staff for the conference. The game was canceled because of bad weather.

Infielder Megan Brigrance was one of the four players selected to the softball All-Star team.

"Of the returning sophomores, Megan is the one who probably had statistically the best year, last year," says Head Coach Corey Lyon. She is a very good leader, and very smart softball player: The epitome of any player you would ever want on your team, with all she brings to the table on and off the field."

Infielder/Pitcher Taylor Russell was another player selected to the All-Star team. Lyon says, "Taylor started every single

game last year for us at 3rd base; you will never have to question her heart or effort. She is one of the ones we are relying on this year to be a big run producer and solidify our infield."

PJC had twin sisters selected to the All-Star team as well; pitcher Kaci Crawford and catcher Kara Crawford.

Last year Kaci Crawford set the record for most wins by a pitcher in school history with 32 wins last year as a freshman, and has a win against Division I school University of Texas-Arlington this fall.

Lyon says, "She was our go-to pitcher last year. She carried us down the stretch to clinch conference title and to take us deep into the region tournament. She always took the ball, on short rest or no rest."

Talking about Kara Crawford, Lyon says, "Kara got hurt in the fall last year so we really didn't know what to expect out of her, but she came out and had a real solid spring."

## PJC All-Star baseball player scores run



Wuest

he did good."

Describing what Wuest meant to the team last season, Coach Clark says, "He was an offensive spark in the respect that he scored runs and drove in runs for us in some critical times; he was a guy the other team had to be concerned with."

On October 10, PJC's only All-Star baseball player Brian Wuest went 1-4 at the plate with 1 run scored at the Region 14 All-Star baseball game in Waco.

Head coach Deron Clark says, "He hit the ball hard all 4 times,

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heights, I was also a shoe cobbler, a truck driver, and a volunteer at my daughter's Head Start, which made my head hurt," she says.

She found something out when she applied for her English job at PJC.

"I had gotten my bachelor's in counseling, and had started my master's," she says.

"I took English classes for fun in my spare hours. That was when this job came open. I didn't think I'd get the job; I just wanted practice with my resume and with interview. When I was filling out my resume, I realized that I had a double major and didn't even know it."

Smith says, "I think it's funny. I came around full circle. I ended up doing what I loved."

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and Puerto Rico for a short time to do some drug recon work.

When she got home, she says she decided it was time to "grow up" and she wanted "positive change" in her life.

"What better way to get discipline right?" she asked.

Vrooman said he joined the military for multiple reasons.

"One of them because of 9/11," he said. "Another was to have an experience in something other than the small town life. I wanted to travel and meet people from different cultures. Last but not least, to be able to go to college and start a career with the knowledge I received after my time with the military."

He spent a year stationed in Bucca, which is in southern Iraq.

"I believe all veterans and myself have sacrificed a lot and kept our end of the bargain for our country and should be able to get higher education without all the red tape," he said.

## PJC faces winless Apaches

**QUENTIN CARPENTER**  
Sports Editor

Lady Dragon volleyball is taking on conference opponent Tyler Junior College, at Tyler, on October 15 to try and clinch a spot in the conference tournament.

Tyler is 0-4 in conference play but played the Lady Dragons tough in the first conference game taking the match to a full five sets before falling to the Lady Dragons 15-13 in the final set.

"Our conference isn't weak by any means, so any time we play a conference opponent we have to come out big, and the

ladies have show that over and over," says Head Coach Justin Maness.

PJC's volleyball team is 3-1 in conference play.

"This season has been a lot better than last season because we are a lot better at working together," says player Logan Anglin.

"We have a 20 game winning season. That is good in any sport and I think we have the potential to do a lot of good things," says player Hillary Baugh.

After Tyler, PJC hosts Panola Junior College, who beat the Lady Dragons 3-0 last time the teams faced off.



Quentin Carpenter/The Bat

Logan Anglin, center, and Kaila Johnson practice before the Tyler game.