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

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

“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 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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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 boonies) 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 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 city girl, 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.

Country redneck is my style. What’s yours?

The Bat

Astronaut? Spy? Then they grew up

ELIZABETH BROWN
Staff Writer

Children often want to grow up to become firefighters or superheroes, 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.

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.

PIC employees have made numerous career choices throughout their lives. Diann Mason, English instructor and former PIC 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

“Fashion is an overused term that shouldn’t be taken too seriously.”

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,” she says. “Now she is an English teacher at PIC.

Brent Cutrrell, who was a musician for years, was a copy editor for a textbook company.”

“Private Lives” is a 1930’s comedy of manners by Noel Coward, to be presented by PIC theatre students. Tickets are $5 for general public and free to PIC students with ID. Show times are Nov. 6, 7, 13 & 14 at 7 p.m. Winners will receive championship T-shirts. Complete information is available in SC Room 109.

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. To reach staff: 903-782-0321 sdennedy@parisjc.edu
Sara, Class of 2010

As a stay-at-home mom of two little girls, I needed a school that was accepting of second-time students. I found that at A&M-Commerce.
Lady Dragon softball features four players, coaching staff on All-Star Team

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

Infielder Megan Brigance 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 one who probably had the potential to do a lot of good things,” says player Logan Anglin.

Describing what Wuest meant to the team, Lyon says, “He hit the ball hard all 4 times, 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.”

PJC All-Star baseball player scores run

On October 10, PIC’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, he did good.”

PJC faces winless Apaches

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.

PIC’s volleyball team is 3-1 in conference play.

“This season has been a lot better then 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.