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The COMMONS

Published biweekly by and for the Upper School students of Riverfield Country Day School in Tulsa, OK

VOLUME IV NO. 5

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

Don't just do something, stand there.



Will your hair be able to handle the weather this winter?3

The COMMONS is published biweekly during the school year by the Upper School Newspaper class at Riverfield Country Day School, 2433 W. 61st Street, Tulsa, Oklahoma 74132. No issues are published the weeks of Fall Campout, Winter Break and Spring Break.

The COMMONS reserves the right to edit any article or letter submitted for publication. Send all submissions to the Editor-in-Chief at mfaeth@riverfield.org. All opinions expressed are those of the individual writers and do not reflect positions of the newspaper staff, advisers, or school administration.

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Matt Faeth

SPORTS EDITOR
Tristan Hightower

A&E EDITOR
Marisa Morgan

OPINION EDITOR
Malachi Keeter

FEATURES EDITOR
Ramsey Talladivedula

PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR
Kaitlyn Richardson

DESIGN EDITORS
Ryan Peake, captain
Chris Dickey
Kenzie Zwayner
Claire White

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
Madeline Berry
Jordan Buggs
Torey Byrne
Nick Pond
Ben Rao
Stephen Sesso

NEWSPAPER ADVISERS
Mr. Daniel Hodges
Mrs. Patricia Dickey

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INFORMATION FROM WEATHER.COM, 11/9, 9:00 A.M.

"Hopefully, once the students see their results, it will lead to better decision-making..." — Mr. Breig

Got a sweet tooth?

By Marisa Morgan
STAFF WRITER

If you had the choice to eat an apple or a candy bar, which would you choose?

Personally, I would choose the candy bar, but like a lot of other people today, I should probably start to eat healthier. Obesity in children and teenagers is becoming more and more commonplace, and this is starting to build into a huge issue.

It seems like this problem could be so easily solved, but we are facing a few hurdles. First, there is a pricing issue. If you have the choice between a normal product

and an organic product, which is going to be more expensive? The organic product, most likely. The next problem would be the taste factor. Candy bars taste really good, and that probably isn't going to change any time soon.

But before you work on those concerns, you need to realize what it takes and what it means to be truly healthy. The seniors in Mr. Breig's Anatomy class are working on this very subject. Through the next few weeks, we will be doing a series of tests on 6th through 12th grade students regarding their health habits. Then we will reevaluate them later in the year. It will be very interesting to see which is the healthiest class.



PHOTO BY KAITLYN RICHARDSON

Benefits from Business class

By Madeline Berry
11TH GRADE

As you all know, one elective option for Upper School students is Business class. What you might not know is what the Business class does.

Business class is more than just an elective. They raise money for the Upper School students by running the vending machines found in the Upper School kitchen.

Twice a month, the class travels to Sam's Club to buy supplies in order to restock the vending machines. The machines require constant maintenance to run

smoothly and remain fully stocked, so the class is divided into teams for each school day, Monday through Friday.



Business students restock the vending machines.

PHOTO BY PATRICIA DICKEY

According to Bryce Rossler, one of the class members, "Business is the elective most essential to Riverfield. We run the vending machines, and we get the last vote on everything. We recently approved a bill submitted to us by the Student Council. We donated money so we could rent the Harwelden Mansion for prom, something everybody should be excited about."

As you may remember, last year Riverfield hosted its first prom at The Silo. The change in location to Harwelden Mansion may not have been an option without the contribution of the Business class.

Man's best friends aid research

By Ramsey Talladivedula
FEATURES EDITOR

Did you know that dogs can get cancer just like humans? It's sad but true. But this unfortunate situation for dogs could help cancer research overall.

Dogs with cancer could offer needed information for fighting the human forms of the disease. "This could lead to better treatments and screening for tumors," say researchers from the U.S. National Cancer Institute.

One million dogs develop cancer in the United States every year. They can help scientists understand how investigative and experimental treatments work.

Some dog owners turn to chemotherapy, radiation, and/or surgery as a last resort, and this can be very expensive. So if someone is running low on money and their dog's cancer is not treatable, it may be easier to just put the dog to sleep. In other cases though, owners like the idea of contributing to the development of cancer treatments for humans and canines.

Many diseases that develop in humans have also developed in dogs. Paying attention to similarities could provide very helpful information in the search for cures.

Blue Raven Singers

Performing in
Tulsa Opera's
"Noah's Flood,"
a children's
opera,
at Harvard Avenue
Christian Church,
5502 S. Harvard

All are invited!

Sunday,
November 15
3 p.m.

BASKETBALL GAMES THIS MONTH

11/3	Eagle Point	HOME	VG 6:00 VB 7:15
11/9	Town and Country	Away	JVB 6:00
11/13	CHEF	Away	VG 6:00 VB 7:15
11/17	Rejoice	Away	VG 6:00 VB 7:15
11/20	ECHO	HOME	VG 6:00 VB 7:15
11/24	Summit Christian	Away	VG 6:00 VB 7:15
11/30	Prue	Away	VG 6:00 VB 7:15
11/30	Town and Country	HOME	JVB 6:00

RCDS basketball season begins

By Tristan Hightower
SPORTS EDITOR

Fall sports season has come to an end, which means basketball season for the Ravens is now underway.

On November 3, the high school boys and girls teams played against Eagle Point Christian for the first games of the season, which took place at home in the Clark Gymnasium.

The Lady Ravens shut down Eagle Point, only allowing them only 2 points and dominating them for an easy 39-2 win.

During the Ravens game, it was very much the same thing. While the Eagle Point boys team was putting up

some points, Riverfield was scoring point after point, giving the Ravens one of their highest scoring games in history. The game ended 78-28 in favor of Riverfield.

The Lady Ravens have a

determined squad this season, and led by seniors Lynley Fox, Alayna McClendon, Abby Saizow, and Molly Tierney, they are primed for an exciting year.

For the Ravens, there are many new faces on the court for the first time. Senior Michael Kelley, along with a big post-player down low like Moose Alred and freshmen sinking baskets like Jon Kelley and Hunter Skoog, will likely make this year's team the strongest it has ever been.

The next games, on Friday, November 13, will be on the road against CHEF, and are sure to be very good games. Our teams could use everyone's support, cheering Riverfield on to victory.



On November 3, the cheerleaders were assisted by the new Blue & Green Man Group. PHOTO BY BERT PEAKE

Dez Bryant dispute

By Ryan Peake
STAFF WRITER

Dez Bryant, Oklahoma State's leading receiver and All-American, has been suspended until September 2010. At first the NCAA didn't suspend Bryant, but OSU did on October 7 for lying to an NCAA investigator about his interaction with former NFL standout Deion Sanders and now agent.

During this past summer, the NCAA started looking into the details of the Bryant/Sanders relationship because of a rule prohibiting student athletes from entering into an agreement with an agent until they are a senior.

Bryant admitted to training with Sanders in a Dallas gym and to having dinner with him. In July and September before

this admission, Bryant denied spending time with Sanders, thinking that the meeting with Sanders was a NCAA violation.

The NCAA has no proof that Bryant and Sanders talked about agent stuff, the draft, or going pro. All they have done is create a relationship with each other that involves running in a gym together, going out to eat, and maybe even telling life stories, almost like a grandpa would. No one knows. So why was Bryant suspended for an entire year?

With all this happening, OSU is having a good season with a 6-1 record. Without Bryant for the Texas game, it could affect the turnout of who wins and loses. If Bryant does not come back this season, everyone should expect him to leave for the 2010 draft.

OU and Sam Bradford's surgery

By Tristan Hightower
SPORTS EDITOR

On September 5, Sam Bradford, the Heisman Trophy winning quarterback for OU and the backbone of the team, injured his throwing arm and had to sit out as the team lost their season opener to Brigham Young University.

He would sit out the next three games, and when he returned, he led the Sooners to a 33-7 win against Baylor.

But on October 17, the Sooners went up against Texas in the Red River Rivalry. A safety sacked Bradford, and

although it wasn't a hard hit, it aggravated the shoulder enough to make him have to sit out the rest of the game for the second time as he watched his team fall once again.

Bradford had a decision to make, whether to keep going this season and risk more injuries to the shoulder, or to get surgery on it and be out the rest of the football season. Surgery is the path he chose, and after the 4-6 month rehabilitation time, he will attempt to enter the 2010 NFL draft.

No doubt he will have lost millions of dollars because of staying with OU this extra year,

but he might even have to spend another year with them. There is an early-entry deadline for players entering the draft, and that will be far before his shoulder has healed up. It is a guessing game which hopefully will turn out for the best.

Whatever happens, he definitely has the support of the Oklahoma Sooners for everything he has done for them.

In the meantime, let's see if the mustached backup quarterback Landry Jones has what it takes to finish what Sam Bradford started.

2009 NHL season

By Ben Rao
10TH GRADE

With hockey season just getting underway, many questions are being asked about how the season will unfold and which players and teams will come out on top. I'll try to answer some of those questions with my thoughts on the matter.

I believe the league MVP this year will be Alex Ovechkin of the Capitals. He was the league's leading scorer last year, and it seems that he will get even better. At only 24 years old, his potential is scary. He could pose a challenge for Wayne Gretzky's single season scoring record.

The Vezina award winner for top goaltender will be Martin Brodeur of the Devils. He

may be old, but this could be his best season. It could also be his last. His 552 career wins are the most in history.

The James Norris award for top defensive player will go to Zdeno Chara of the Bruins. At 6'9", he's the NHL's tallest player and hardest hitter. He is an unstoppable force and will help Boston get into the playoffs.

And for the ultimate prize, the Stanley Cup, I say Pittsburgh will win over San Jose in six games. For the last several years, San Jose has been the classic good-in-the-regular-season, bad-in-the-postseason kind of team. This year they will break through but get beaten by the Penguins. Led by Sidney Crosby, Pittsburgh will win their second straight championship.

The WNBA finally arrives in Tulsa

By Matt Faeth
STAFF WRITER

What is the one thing that every single person in Oklahoma cannot live without? Naturally, that would be sports since Oklahoma touches Texas, which has one of the most sports-oriented societies known to man. So most of that obsession rubs off on us Oklahomans.

Tulsa itself has a good number of mid-level professional teams that includes the NBA D

league Tulsa 66's, Double A baseball Tulsa Drillers, CHL's Tulsa Oilers, and an Arena football team in the Tulsa Talons.

Tulsa has been stuck in the second tier of sports teams for a while, and many Tulsans are eager and ready for the step up to the first tier that has been awaited for decades, especially with the completion of the stunning BOK Center.

The wait is finally over. The Detroit Shock will move to Tulsa in 2010, giving Tulsa a

WNBA team and its first major sports franchise. The Shock has been very successful as a franchise, making the playoffs in each of the last seven years and winning three championships in those years. So Tulsa is welcoming a proven winner.

Nolan Richardson has been selected to become the team's coach and general manager. Richardson made three Final Four appearances and made it to two national championships as head coach of the Arkansas men's college basketball team. He is no stranger to Tulsa, having also had a successful stint as men's coach at the University of Tulsa.

It looks as if the new WNBA team has the tools for almost immediate success. We look forward to their addition to our city, and hopefully in turn, they will help Tulsa progress as an emerging sports city.



LOGO REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION

3 Features

NEW MOVIES NOW SHOWING: "The Box," starring Cameron Diaz (PG-13), "A Christmas Carol," starring Jim Carrey (PG, also in IMAX) . . .

Concurrent Enrollment at TCC

By Marisa Morgan
12TH GRADE

Concurrent Enrollment has been an option at Riverfield for a couple of years now, and more and more students are taking advantage of it. Concurrent Enrollment means that seniors and some juniors have the option of taking one or more college-level classes at Tulsa Community College.

There are definitely pros and cons. One of the positives is that most classes only meet twice a week. If you don't have a class that day, you might have free time for studying, resting, etc. You get a sense of what a real college class is like, and you get to meet new, interesting people.

But there are some potential quirks. If you are con-



Riverfield students standing at the TCC West Campus entrance.
PHOTO BY KAITLYN RICHARDSON

stantly leaving to go to TCC, you might miss out on some important high school experiences as a senior. In order to get the best of both worlds, it might be best to limit Concurrent Enrollment to one class. That would give you a bal-

anced schedule, so you can do all the things you enjoy while still furthering your academic career.

Of course, the situation is different for every student, and everyone should do what is best for themselves.

One man's 'Twilight' obsession

By Jordan Buggs
12TH GRADE

As a man, I have gotten a lot of smack for reading *Twilight*.

I always ask my fellow men, "Have you read the book?" and then they look back at me with a puzzled face and say "Are you kidding me? It's a girl book!"

My response to them is this: If you haven't read it, then how do you know it's a girl book? I don't think that the problem for most guys is that they think it's a girl

book, rather that it's just a book, period!

I have to admit that when I picked up the book I was also a male skeptic. The only reason I read it was because I wanted to know what all this fuss about Edward Cullen/Robert Pattinson was all about. It seemed silly how this guy is on every magazine just because he plays some vampire in a chick-book-gone-movie.

Then I read it and developed a "bromance" with this

character. He's strong, suave, and...did I mention that he glitters in the sunlight?

After finishing the book I immediately went to Wal-Mart and bought the movie, which was somewhat disappointing. Robert Pattinson couldn't really live up to expectations as Edward Cullen.

But I must say Kristen Stewart saved the film with her smile, her eyes, and—oh yeah, her acting. What can I say? I'm a man!

Airplanes — now with airbags?

By Kenzie Zwyer
STAFF WRITER

As our society has advanced, so have our safety standards. Steps have been made to protect us in nearly every way possible.

But at some point it has to stop—there must be a point at which we can't do anything else that is practical to ensure safety. Right? Well, it would appear that airlines haven't reached that point yet. After 15 years of debate, it was proposed by the FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) that airbags be installed in airplanes.

It could be argued that this is an unnecessary addition since most crashes are fatal and even an airbag wouldn't help. But perhaps in smaller scale mishaps, these bags could have saved lives.

The estimate is about 14 lives over the past 15 years, according to one federal safety official. While this number may seem insignificantly small, re-

member that some people value human life enough to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars to save even one person.

AMSAFE is currently manufacturing a new airway seatbelt with an airbag built in. Designers say the airbag would be deployed instantly upon impact, creating a large cushion that makes a padded space between the person and any obstructions. The price of installing air bags in a single seat can be up to \$2,000, making it a pricey renovation. However, not all seats on an airplane require airbags. There are currently 25,000 seats using the airbag technology worldwide, but certain airline companies are now building all of their new planes with AMSAFE seatbelts.

With all of the precautions taken by pilots and airlines, one has to question why we need airbags on airplanes. On the other hand, there are thousands of school buses driving around without seatbelts.



ILLUSTRATION BY KENZIE ZWAYER

The Perfect Hair

By Ramsey Talladivedula
FEATURES EDITOR

Winter is on its way, and that means your hair is at risk. Colder weather will zap the moisture out of your hair, leaving it dry and lifeless.

A treatment that may help is Keratin Straightening. Keratin treatments, also known as



James Colpitts, showing off good hair done right.
PHOTO BY KAITLYN RICHARDSON

Brazilian straightening, revive and replenish hair, making it soft and smooth. It sounds great, but the price is a negative. It costs \$200 to \$600 dollars, depending on where you go.

If you want a flat iron that's good for your hair, don't get a ceramic iron. Tourmaline irons give off a greater number of negative ions which strengthens hair and makes it silkier and shinier. Tourmaline irons are also cheaper and straighten your hair faster. The top-rated tourmaline is the Solia Tourmaline Ceramic Ion Flat Iron which costs around \$70. But I have a tourmaline iron that I got for only \$40 at Wal-Mart, and it's amazing.

Here are some other effective ways to help your hair. First, make sure you have a good brush. Boar head bristles are the best. They cut down on damage to your hair because they flex easily. Always use a good quality shampoo and conditioner. Don't wash your hair everyday unless you have really oily hair. Washing hair all the time gets rid of the natural oils, and if you dye your hair, the color fades faster.

Winter is the toughest season to keep your hair healthy, so make sure you're taking care of your hair.

Movie Review: Zombieland

By Torey Byrne
11TH GRADE

Halloween is mostly a holiday for younger children, so many Upper Schoolers found themselves looking for a way to celebrate without going trick or treating.

While costume parties, handing out candy, and dances were certainly options, the most popular tradition for high school students this time of year is watching a scary movie.

Luckily, Sony recently released a horror film called *Zombieland*. The film follows a character named Columbus who

has survived a viral infestation by creating and following his 47 rules for successfully avoiding the undead.

The virus, a human strain of mad cow disease, started to spread after "patient zero" consumed a burger in a gas station, which goes to show you that no good can come from eating gas station food.

The virus causes the human brain to swell and the body to crave human meat. Only one bite from someone who is infected will cause your brain to swell as well.

The character of Tallahassee (Woody Harrelson) is later in-

troduced, and the two make their way across the United States in search of other human beings.

Overall this movie was suspenseful, surprising, and above all, witty. I found myself sitting on the edge of my seat more than a few times. The actors do a wonderful job—you will leave with a new appreciation for their acting abilities.

This movie has something for everyone, whether you're a fan of scary movies or not. It is rated R for language and violence, but its worth seeing even if you have to go with your parents.

Want to see a particular book or movie reviewed here? Contact our A&E Editor, Marisa Morgan.

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A HUGE THANKS to these Contributing Writers: Madeline Berry, Jordan Buggs, Torey Byrne, Nick Pond, Ben Rao, and Stephen Sesso . . .

Stephen vs. Nick : The war in Afghanistan...stay or go?

By Stephen Sesso
9TH GRADE

My personal opinion on the war in Afghanistan is a negative one.

The number of American troops being sent to fight in a war that should have been over years ago is astonishing. Did you know that Georgia, one of our biggest allies, has only 1 NATO troop in Afghanistan? One! I think that we should stop sending so many troops, and start asking other countries to help out. This shouldn't just be our war, it should be our war, Ireland's war (7 NATO troops currently in Afghanistan), the

Ukraine's war (10 NATO troops), and...do I need to go on?

Quite frankly, I believe that there are too many American soldiers dying in Afghanistan. According to *Icasualties.org*, as of this month, 866 American soldiers have died in the eight years since we first went there. And when you look at the casualties by year, you see a dramatic increase in troop fatalities from 2001 to 2009.

Someone will always say that to end this war we need to send more troops, but we have been sending more and more troops since 2001. Where has all this increase in troops gotten us?

By Nick Pond
10TH GRADE

We need to stay in Afghanistan. There it is, plain and simple. Why, you ask? Well, there are three good reasons.

More troops are needed in Afghanistan to help cut off the Taliban's main cash crops and their profits. The main sources of income for the Taliban are opium, hashish, and heroin, which are all derived from the poppy plant and turned into drugs. If we can cut off their profits, they will swiftly run out of cash to purchase weapons and ammunition on the black market.

We also need to stay for an even more serious reason. If we leave now, while Afghanistan is in an unsettled state, the Taliban will attempt to take back the government.

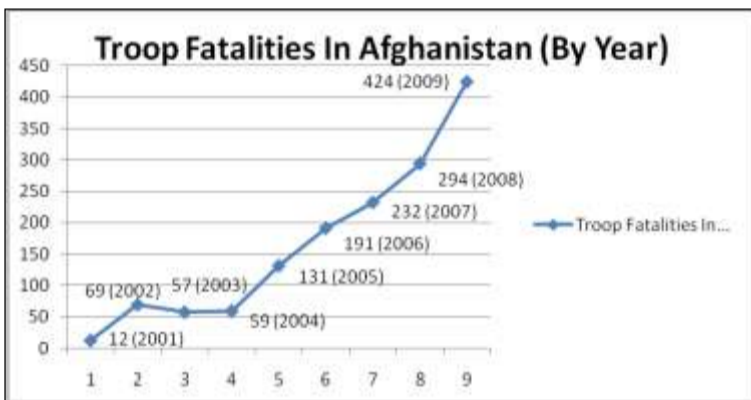
The Taliban's ultimate goal is to regain its power and spread the rule of Sharia law. These laws not only severely restrict the rights of women, but also enforce inhuman punishments on homosexuals, adulterers, and gamblers. Under Sharia, women are deprived the right to vote, cannot own any sort of property,

and cannot leave the house without the permission of a man. People of other religions, such as Christians and Jews are deemed impure, and are either killed or forcibly converted to Islam. Sharia law allows two options for non-Muslims: Islamic fundamentalism or death. Who knew the Taliban was pro-choice?

My final point is that we

haven't helped rebuild the infrastructure enough to call it quits. Hospitals and schools are rare in Afghanistan, and a lack of education can lead to troubles for Afghan youth. If we stay, it will give us more time to build such facilities.

With these reasons in hand, it is quite clear that more troops are necessary, and we shouldn't pull out of Afghanistan.



GRAPH BY STEPHEN SESSO



Demonstrating their Debate positions, Nick says "Stay and fight!" but Stephen wants to leave.

PHOTO BY KAITLYN RICHARDSON

RCDS's hat policy

By Chris Dickey
STAFF WRITER

Since the weather recently has gotten a lot colder, students have once again started wearing hats. But this is against the rules because of Riverfield's strict no-hats rule.

In an interview with Mr. Clark, Upper School Head, regarding this issue he said that "the rule is simply, no hats at school."

When asked why it is that we have this rule at school, Mr. Clark responded "flat bills could be used for cheating, because you can't see the student's eyes," though Mr. Clark did also say that "there has never been a reasonable proposal to change the rule."

It should be noted that the Student Council has the power to put together a proposal for the administration to change this rule...perhaps something along the lines of only being allowed to wear hats outside or allowing beanies since they couldn't be used to cheat. The Student Council is currently discussing the topic.

There are many mixed ideas about the no-hat policy among Riverfield students. Junior Malachi Keeter said that "hats make your head warm, but on the other hand they can smell bad...and that's bad." In all of the discussion about hats, the main point seems to be that when it is cold outside, you need something to keep your head warm.



Students showing off their hats on Dress-up Day...

PHOTO BY KAITLYN RICHARDSON

The internet goes international

By Malachi Keeter
OPINION EDITOR

In 1998, a non-profit organization known as ICANN (Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers) was set up in California to help oversee domain names on the internet, and what names lead to what sites. In essence, they maintain the road signs on the information superhighway.

For years, ICANN has had an idea about making the internet more internationally accessible. This idea, to be discussed in a meeting this week in Seoul, is to allow domain names to be registered in non-Latin characters. Latin characters are those letters and numbers coming

from Latin (surprise!) that are present on your keyboard right now.

Since the internet's creation, domain names have been required to be in English. However, by ICANN's estimation, over half of the internet's population uses a language of non-Latin characters, such as Arabic or Chinese.

This could, however, lead to translation errors if there were any flaws in the script that would redirect Latin characters to non-Latin websites. It would also make life difficult because, if you'll notice, your keyboard is not made to handle non-Latin languages. Assumedly, there would be keyboards in the respective countries that could

handle such languages though.

All in all, this is a major development, and also a major movement toward globalization of the internet. In the words of ICANN chairman Peter Thrusch, "This is the biggest change technically to the internet since it was invented forty years ago."



"Can you read this?"

PHOTO BY KAITLYN RICHARDSON

Gays vs. Obama: 'Not enough'

By Malachi Keeter
OPINION EDITOR

Before the election of Barack Obama, the last president elected after campaigning in support of gay rights was Bill Clinton. Under his presidency we got the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy (DADT). This policy basically states that gays can serve in the military as long as they do not "act gay" or speak about their sexual preferences. Doing so can be grounds for discharge.

The policy was a step in the direction of gay rights, but it was a letdown to many gays, who saw it as watered down. Throughout Obama's campaign,

he was for not only the abolishment of this policy, but for gay rights in general.

On the campaign trail, the President received quite a bit of money from LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transsexual) communities, and many of these groups are now protesting his actions, which they see as attempts to sweep these communities under the rug.

One can certainly see why they think this. Obama campaigned to repeal DADT, but then issued statements supporting it. And he did not step in when more than 50 gay soldiers fluent in Arabic were discharged due to their "coming out," even though translators are

very valuable in our current war efforts.

However, one must consider a few things. One is that we are in a major recession with a huge debt problem, and one wrong move could send the country's economy down the drain. Another is that we are at war, occupying foreign nations, and continuing to pump resources overseas. Obama has quite a bit on his plate right now, and he has to be careful what he eats.

Also, numerous polls show that the majority of American citizens don't support many gay rights initiatives. If the president gives gays too much too soon, he could be stepping on a socio-political landmine.