



SOMETHING MUST BE DONE

Editor In Chief addresses CSUSM Administration

Dear CSUSM Administration,

The safety of the CSUSM community is at risk. Something must be done, immediately, to ensure the preservation of everyone's safety while on campus.

For the second time in as many semesters a pedestrian has been hit by a vehicle on campus. With the addition of Parking Lot F traffic has increased dramatically; so too have the chances for accidents on campus. Something must be done now, before we have a fatal accident, to ensure that no pedestrian on campus is at risk.

Campus Police cannot be held solely responsible for the protection

of pedestrians on campus, nor can motorists. The fact of the matter is, we have dangerous intersections and a severe lack of planning to protect pedestrians.

While it is reported (coincidentally in this same issue of The Pride) that Planning, Design and Construction have plans to address traffic on campus, nothing will be implemented for several years. Even then, protection against pedestrian accidents will be minimal.

The fact of the matter is, without the death of a pedestrian, there is no sufficient pressure driving this issue. How many more students, faculty members, visitors (including local

children like the most recent victim) need to suffer while we wait for "traffic improvements"? Two accidents is two too many. Simply put, this problem should have been identified long before the multi-million dollar construction of Lot F was completed, however it was not. After the first accident, something should have been issued to the community addressing the problem, and outlining possible solutions, however there was nothing. This second accident reaffirms the problem, reaffirms the lack of control over the situation, and regrettably brings shame onto the entire Campus for not dealing with this problem before its escalation.

Affordable, reliable and quick solutions are available. Take for instance The San Diego County Fair; temporary overpasses are used to safely allow pedestrians to cross into the infield every year, something similar would work perfectly until a more permanent solution can be resolved.

As Administrators, it is your responsibility to the students/staff/and faculty to provide a safe learning environment.

It is also your obligation to address the community when these issues develop and reoccur.

Your lack of action, lack of voice, and insinuated lack of concern is appalling.

CSUSM is a relatively small university, if we cannot act decisively and rapidly to growing problems, this wonderful establishment that we are trying to create will even more rapidly become unmanageable, unattractive and unsafe.

Your concern with this issue is most prudent.

Please reply to us at pride@csusm.edu or better yet, speak to the campus community, outline some solutions, and show us that you indeed do care about the members of this fine University.

David Gatley
Editor In Chief

Girl hit by car suffers minor injuries

BY KELLY CORRIGAN
Pride Staff Writer

On Thursday, Feb. 1 at 3:36 p.m., a 13-year-old girl riding her bike on campus was struck by a car. The driver was attempting to make a left on Palm Canyon drive toward Craven drive. When the driver was waved down by another driver to turn,

the driver let their foot off the brake and collided with the girl on the bike who was halfway through the crosswalk. At once, students on foot ran to assist the girl who ultimately sustained minor bruising and swelling.

University Police caught the scene on video from a camera pod. Perched on top of Craven Hall, Markstein Hall and Kel-

logg Library, these camera pods can zoom in and out, and can reach as far as to the Ralph's shopping center across the street from campus. Sergeant Jesse Flores of University Police was also present at the scene and made the report. Flores said, "We would like the community to be cognizant of people walking and driving and to the Com-

munity Service Officers who direct the traffic."

On Mondays through Thursdays, University CSOs work the four-way stop every 15 minutes. On Friday's, they work the intersection every 45 minutes and they are constantly patrolling traffic.

With the addition of parking lot F and the highest enrollment in

CSUSM history, the intersection of Campus View drive and Palm Canyon drive is seeing record traffic levels. Last fall, Education Librarian Toni Olivas was struck by a van as she attempted to walk through a crosswalk.

Ironically, a committee holding a discussion on the necessity of the future stoplight was in session at the time of the accident.

The Sprinter to arrive in San Marcos in December 2007

BY KELLY CORRIGAN
Pride Staff Writer

As early as December, the North County Transit District will be offering a new mobility solution for CSUSM students and North County residents. It is called the Sprinter and it is a rail system that will run between Oceanside, Vista, San Marcos and Escondido. The 22 miles of track will run along Highway 78 between 1-15 different stations.

The Sprinter will be using a

See **SPRINTER**, page 3

COUGAR BASEBALL



Photo courtesy of Cory Scoggin and www.scoggart.com

See **Sports** for more on baseball, pages 6 & 7

Governor approves bill no cell phone when driving

BY PAMELA CASTILLO
Pride Staff Writer

Driving while using a handheld cell phone will become punishable by fines on July 1, 2008, according to the bill signed into law by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger. The first offense costs drivers \$20, and the following offenses will cost \$50.

Sociology major Nicole Yescas shares the same frustration that most drivers have felt at one time or another, "I have to say 90 percent of the time that I observe problems on the road it is due to someone talking on their cell phone. From people sitting at green lights, to running stop signs, to only going 40mph in the fast lane or pulling out of CSUSM parking lot F, the cell phone unfortunately seems to inhibit people's ability to drive attentively."

Soon enough, we will be able

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Making the transition from Campus to University

BY KELLY CORRIGAN
Pride Staff Writer

Many students come to school everyday, thinking of CSUSM as a campus, but Russell Decker, director of planning, design and

construction, is looking to turn CSUSM into more than just a place, but a university. CSUSM is in the midst of Phase II of construction, planning and design, which will take place over the next ten years. Most students

have seen at least one completion of a project from beginning to end. Stairs that once led nowhere lead to Markstein Hall, and most recently the culmination of Cougar Central made a pivotal change our campus. But

it is exactly this that Decker and his team are here to see through. Decker said, "A lot of people use 'campus' and 'university' interchangeably but it's not. A univer-

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THE PRIDE

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From CONSTRUCTION, page 1

sity is a community of scholars, and campus is a place. You've got to have a place to do the work." Decker has been working for CSUSM for 13 years. When he began, only Craven Hall, Academic Hall and Science I existed. Now, he and his team are working to transform this place which students call a campus into a university.

Steve Ramirez, Capital Analyst of Planning, Design and Construction, has been working for CSUSM for five years, has lived in San Marcos since 1992 and attended CSUSM. Ramirez said, "I've been lucky because I've been able to see a lot of the different projects, the fact that it's something tangible, you can see something you've done from start to finish."

The first step toward the construction of any building is the approval of the schematic design by the Board of Trustees. By the end of May, Decker expects the Board of Trustees to approve the schematic design of the Social and Behavioral Sciences Building. In order for a building to be approved, the Board of Trustees must examine how the building fits in with the other buildings on campus. Decker said, "We're particularly sensitive to that on this campus, because we're all new buildings, ours do kind of fit together to begin with. So we really do try to make certain that they're consistent from one building to another."

In January 2011, Decker and Ramirez expect to see the completion of the Social and Behavioral Sciences Building. It will be built across from Science Hall II. At four stories, with 111,000 square feet, the building will encompass 45 percent more space than Markstein Hall and will consist of 125 faculty offices and a large amount of lab space. The architect hired for this project is the same one who designed Markstein Hall. For the completion of most buildings, it normally takes about three years for planning and design and then another four years of construction time until the opening ceremony can occur. Decker said, "We've been thinking about social and behavioral sciences (building) for a number of years already. I think it's fair to say that seven years is not unusual. Seven years is going at a pretty good clip."

As for the University Village Apartments, in a few years, they hope to double the amount of beds that are currently in the UVA. They will also build the apartments to mimic the hills behind them. "The whole format is from the Italian hill town, that's what we're trying to mimic. The buildings kind of step up on each other," Decker said. The new apartments will become part of UVA and will look similar to the current apartments but will stand five stories tall.

Decker added, "Studies have shown that if students get through freshman year, there's almost certainty that they'll graduate from college and secondly, you've got a social network, if you get through that first year, it makes it

so much easier for retention and that's real important. You form bonds that are really important for going through college. It's really important that we provide more beds."

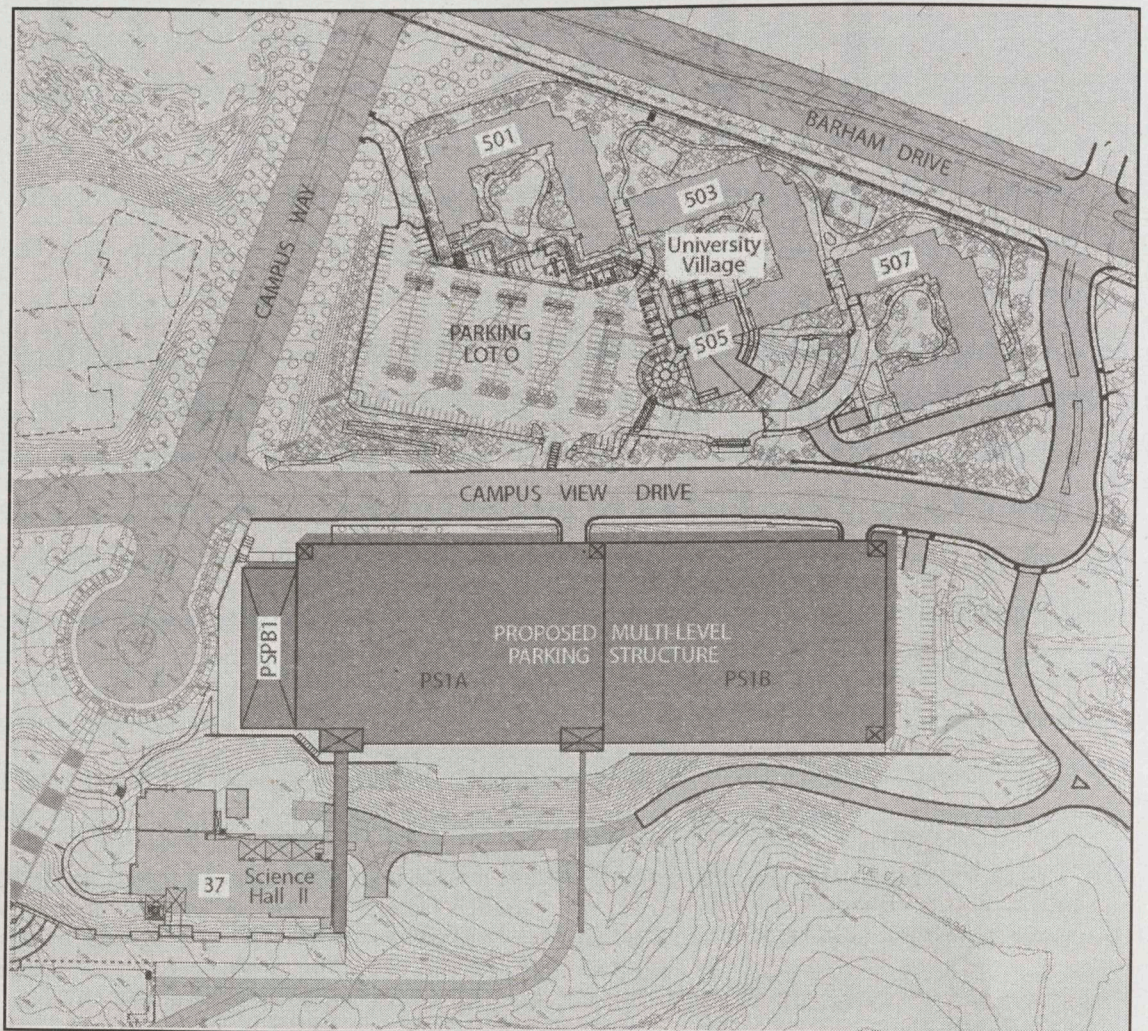
Additionally, in what is now Lot N, the parking lot closest to the Arts building, just above the UVA, there will be a parking structure to be completed in January 2011 that will eventually provide 2,800 spaces. A bridge will connect the structure to Science Hall II.

Soon, construction will begin on the Center for Children and Families. The 20,000 square-foot center will be licensed for 152 children ranging from ages six months to five years and will primarily serve children of CSUSM students, faculty and staff. If there is any space left over, the Center for Children and Families will provide care for children in the community.

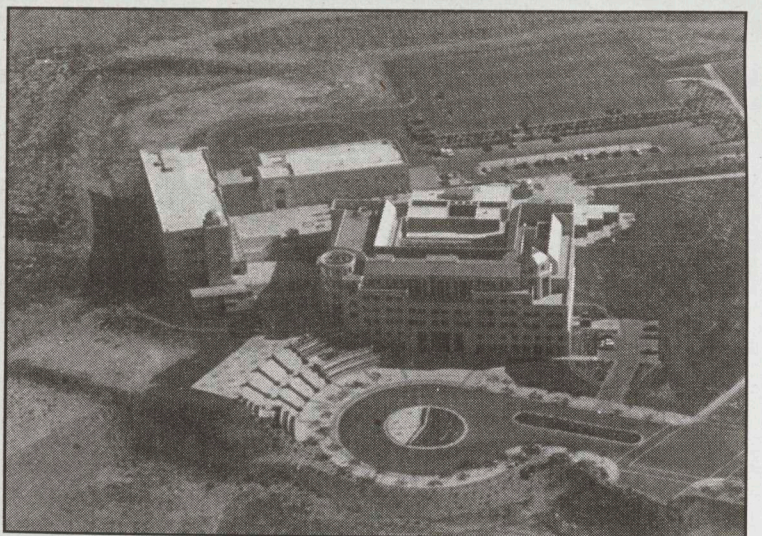
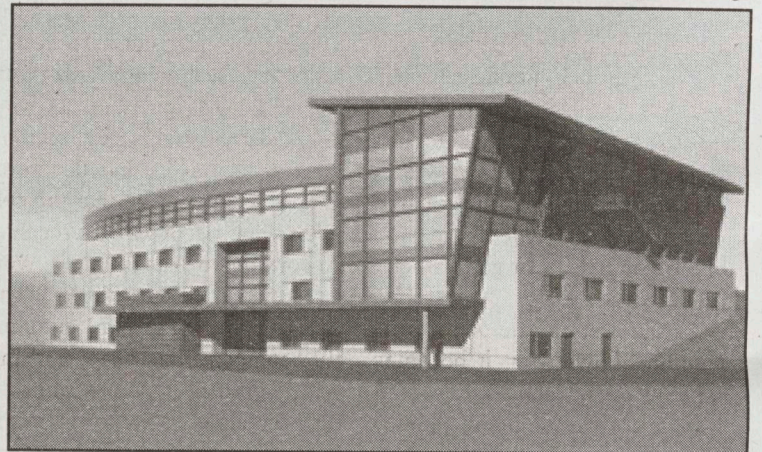
The center will offer health screenings, parent health education and learning style tests. In each of the 11 classrooms that will be part of the center, CSUSM students will be able to observe the children through mirrors as they learn and play in the center.

In order to fund the construction of this project, CSUSM received a grant of \$7.7 million from the First 5 Commission. The First 5 Commission collects money every year from the taxes that cigarette smokers pay when they buy a box of cigarettes. This money is given to the First 5 Commission, who turns it over for preschools in various communities. This year, in all of San Diego County, CSUSM received the largest amount of money from the First 5 commission. Decker said, "I don't want to go overboard and be too overly sentimental about these projects, but this one is going to change lives."

A study is underway to investigate the need for a traffic light at the Craven intersection but it is probable that it in the coming years, one will have to go up.



Above and below: photos courtesy of CSUSM Planning and Design



From Top to Bottom: A schematic design drawing of the parking structure. An architect's rendering of what the Social and Behavioral Sciences Building could potentially look like. Bird's eye view of the campus during early construction.

File photo/The Pride

"This is like an urban corner here with lots of people walking back and forth," Decker said. "And a lot of cars," Ramirez added. "The vehicles don't let the pedestrians go; the pedestrians don't let the vehicles go, and there's all this traffic." The traffic light would serve both cars and pedestrians.

Another project underway is the McMahan House. Funded by a \$2.3 million donation from Richard and JoAn McMahan, the McMahan House will serve both the university and the community. It will be built beside the track. The knoll beside the track will remain, but it will have a garden. "We've just had the schematic design approved by the Chancellor's Office," Decker said. The McMahan House will mainly be a place where people

can gather, dine and hold events.

In all construction activities, the state will only provide the money for instructional space. Parking, housing and recreational activities remain outside of this realm. A baseball and softball diamond are presently just an idea, one that cannot become viable until there is funding behind it. There is also a plan to build a diving and swimming complex behind the Clarke field house. Until then, Phase II of construction, which includes various other projects over the next ten years, will keep Planning, Design and Construction busy. Decker and Ramirez both agreed that their plans for the next ten years are ambitious. Decker said, "We run like crazy at the end, but there's a real sense of completion and accomplishment and closure."

From **SPRINTER**, page 1

light rail service unlike any in California. In fact, this new light rail service is fairly new to the United States. Used many places throughout Europe, the first in its

class is now in use only in New Jersey. The Sprinter is the first to be used on the West Coast.

The light rail vehicles utilize new power generation, system-midsized modern diesel multiple units which are self-propelled

and known for being clean, quiet, sleek and sensible. The interior of these vehicles were designed with customer comfort in mind. Some of the features include padded seats, wide aisles, extra-large windows, generous light-

ing and luggage racks. Boarding the Sprinter will also be a breeze because of wider doors, low floor space, and level boarding.

With these vehicles servicing 15 stations every half-hour, the 64 daily round trips will make it convenient to use. It will also be very affordable. Ticket prices will be the same as using the NCTD's bus system: four dollars for a day pass, two dollars for a single trip. The Sprinter's low emission vehicles are environmentally friendly.

NCTD spokesperson Tom Kelleher said, "The Sprinter was a perfect fit for the Escondido-Oceanside corridor because there was an existing track dating back to the 1800s. Freight trains have been operating in the corridor ever since. Without the existing line, this project would be difficult to start from scratch."

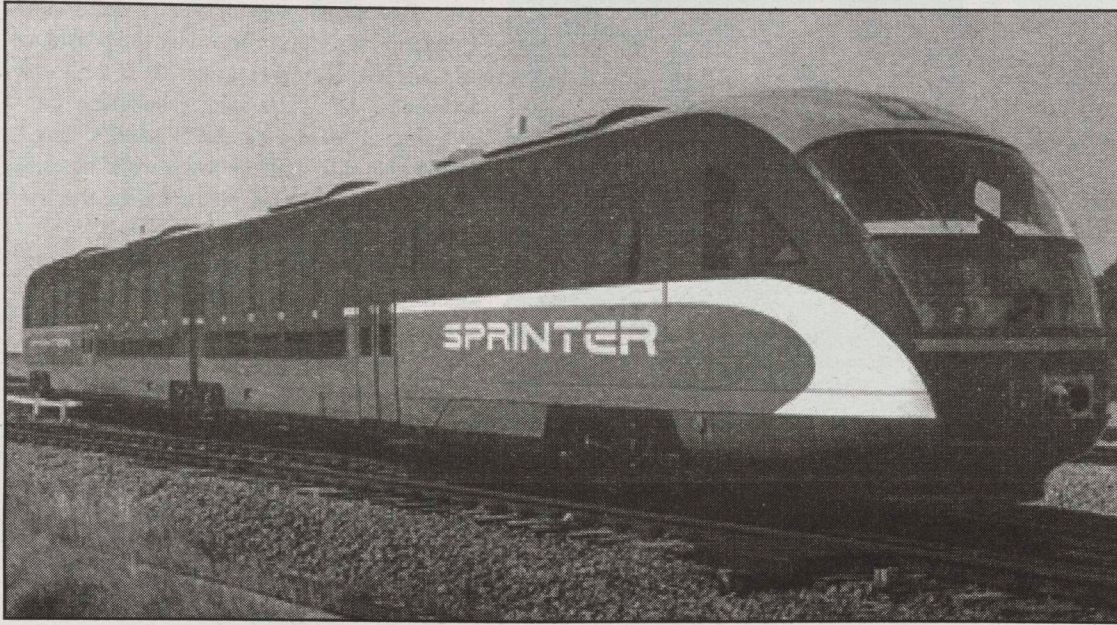
Although there are still many milestones to achieve to be able to open in December 2007, the North County Transit District is

optimistic that it will be able to open on time or at least by spring 2008.

"Once the rail line is reconstructed and the loop completed," Kelleher explains, "our contractors need to integrate all the new signal systems at grade crossings, our closed-circuit television system along the line, (and) our communication systems at our dispatch facility in Escondido. Our vehicles are being tested along the line in Escondido and San Marcos."

Once completed, the Sprinter will help to make North County a better place. In the near future, being stuck on Highway 78 traveling to or from school may be a thing of the past. The station at Cal State San Marcos will be located over by the campus police station on La Moree, providing easy access to the campus and a way to escape escalating campus parking fees.

The Sprinter project information line can be reached at 760-599-8332.



A sneak peek of the Sprinter vehicles.

Photo courtesy of North County Transit District

From **CELL**, page 1

to say, "Remember when we used to hold the cell phone, fix our mascara, and use the remote control to click to the next song, all while driving on the freeway?" The phenomenon is kind of like when we used to ride in the back of pick-up trucks, or go to smoke filled coffee shops.

As the first decade of the millennium draws near, it becomes apparent that the widespread accessibility to cellular phones has played an enormous role for this decade, but research is

beginning to show that talking on the cell phone while operating a vehicle is just not safe. Revolutionary technology for celling while driving is on its way. Coincidentally, this new method for California driving debuts at about the same time that the cell phone law becomes enforceable. According to Mary Hayes Weier's article, "Sharp Turn," she describes how the Ford automotive company has been working with Microsoft for a solution to the problem of safe conversations in the form of an in-dash system for hands-free calling, text mes-

saging, and media player. The new toy will come standard in some of the 2008 Ford models, including the Focus. The system allows the driver to choose songs with voice commands, along with options for personalized and non-personalized preprogrammed messages for text messaging that are activated from the steering wheel.

Some researchers are not convinced that the new toy is the answer to the problem. The University of Utah conducted research that showed some alarming details, for example, driving

while cell-ing, hands-free or not, had the same level of distraction, which the researchers also compared to the impairment of driving under the influence of a 0.08% blood alcohol level. So as shiny as the new technology may seem, it may be a disaster. According to the article, "The Impact of In Vehicle Cell-Phone Use on Accidents or Near-Accidents Among College Students" by Dong-Chul Seo and Mohammad R. Torabi, research the risk of collision increased "between 3 and 6.5%," when driving and using the cell phone. Seo and

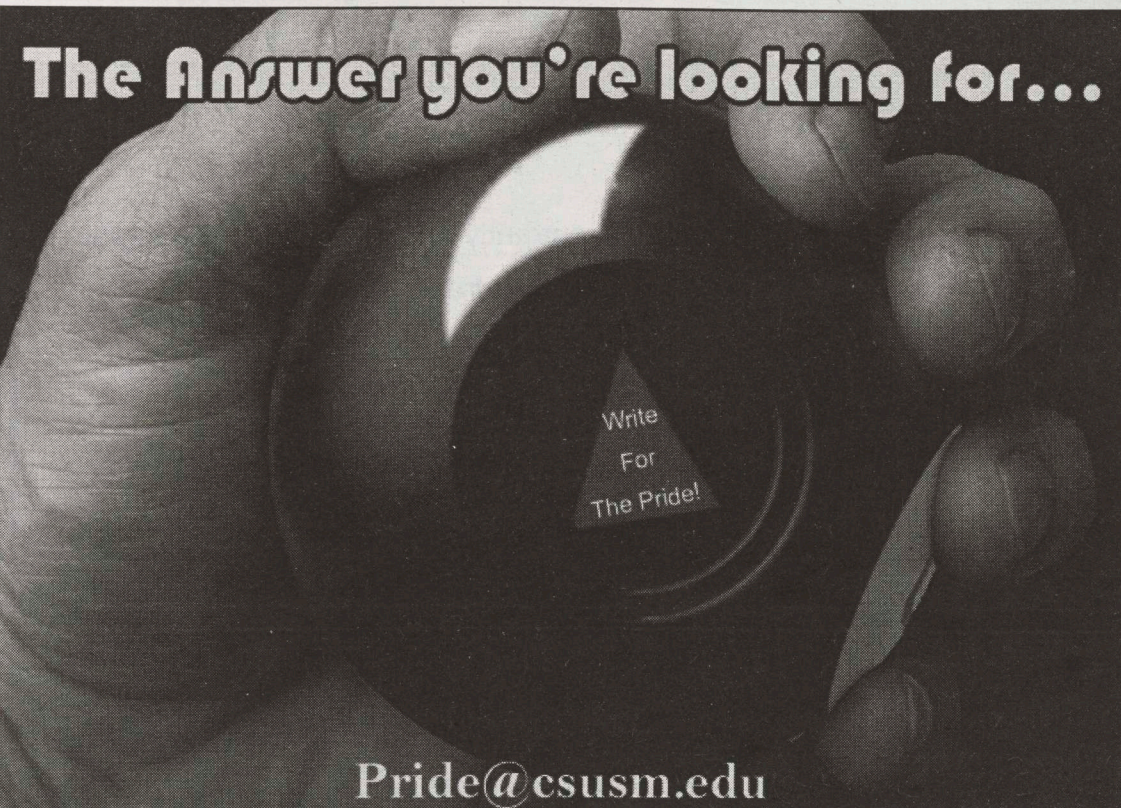
Torabi summarize their research, "That using hands-free cell phone use while driving did not differentiate from using handheld cell phones in accidents or near-accidents implies that reduced physical distraction does not necessarily enhance driving safety." The article also demonstrates that while male college students hold the title for greater likelihood to drink and drive, female college students hold the title for "frequent cell phone users" while driving. We'll have to see for ourselves how the new cell phone law will impact California roads.

Want your voice to be heard?

Social and economical problems, unfair conditions for students, stair related injuries on campus, problems with articles or previous letters to the Editor, compliments of how flawless the Pride is every week; all are encouraged.

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Website of the Week:

www.finaid.org

BY DAVID CHURCH
Pride Staff Writer

Mark Kantrowitz established FinAid.org in 1994 as a public service site, and since then FinAid.org has been regarded as one of the best sites for students to receive financial aid information from. FinAid is mutually beneficial to high school and college students and their parents. Furthermore, the website has also received several honors by the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators among others.

FinAid gives students and parents their own step-by-step guide for financing college. First, the website gives students a College Cost Projector that calculates the estimated cost of tuition. Then it gives students an opportunity to find out how much the financial aid institution expects the student to receive from parents. It also allows students to calculate how much financial aid will be needed with the help of the Financial Aid Estimation Calculator.

Once a student determines the total amount of financial needed aside from parental contribution, FinAid encourages students to look at several types of loans. The website lists several options on how to receive a student loan, which is a low interest loan only available for students. Another type of loan available is a private loan. It is often based on one's credit score, as a private lender gives them and is separate from the government.

Another option suggested is scholarships, which do not have to be repaid, as they are rewarded for a person's academic excellence. With hundreds of thousands of scholarships available each year, FinAid provides information that will help students find the particular scholarship field he or she is searching for, such as academics, athletics or artistic talents.

FinAid aims to find a scholarship that fits each individual student. It also informs students of certain scholarships that one should not go after. FinAid also gives information on financial aid for specific types of groups such as: religion, race, heritage, orientation, and so forth. For example, there is also a unique

scholarship list such as Scholarships for Left-Handed Students and Little People of America Scholarship for those 4'10" and under. Besides these unique scholarships, FinAid also provides a list of scholarships for the average students who maintain a 2.0 GPA and are in need of financial aid.

FinAid also encourages students to complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid, which could give a student the opportunity to receive both federal and state aid for school, which are separate from each other.

The federal government gives federal aid. A student can qualify for federal aid through the FAFSA, and the student's financial need is allocated according to the information filled out on FAFSA. Additionally, the FAFSA is forwarded to the state departments, which then can distribute state aid to those who qualify. In addition, other scholarships and loans are only available to students who have filed a FAFSA.

If visitors have trouble understanding some of the terminology on the website, FinAid has a glossary to help with those words, such as fellowships, which is aid given to graduate students to help pay for their education. Another important term for those who have loans would be maturity date, which is the end date of a loan that must be repaid in full.

If the glossary doesn't help answer questions, FinAid has over 100 financial aid administrators in the United States that are available to answer questions. Administrators can answer questions that aren't addressed on the website, and they can also help clarify things that aren't making sense.

One of the things the website does very well is help prepare students on applying for scholarships. It guides students into finding a scholarship that fits his or her needs and then helps get the student organized for a particular scholarship by informing the student of upcoming deadlines and eligibility criteria. FinAid also offers students a guide to writing essays, as they may be required for certain scholarships.

For more information, please visit: www.finaid.org

Dr. Jill Watts receives award

BY KIM ANDERSON
Pride Staff Writer



Image courtesy of CSUSM History Department

Dr. Jill Watts is the recipient of the 2007 President's Award for Scholarship and Creative Activity; the ceremony took place on Jan. 18. Dr. Watts, a History professor and the coordinator for the Film Studies minor at CSUSM, is currently celebrating the release of her latest book, "Hattie McDaniel: Black Ambition, White Hollywood," originally published in October 2005, to be out in paperback on Tuesday, Feb. 6. In addition to these accomplishments, Watts is also the coordinator for the Department of History's first master's degree program, which will be starting up in the fall of 2007.

Watts, born and raised in San Diego, holds a bachelors degree from the University of California, San Diego, and obtained her master's and doctoral degrees from the University of California, Los Angeles. She joined the faculty at CSUSM in January of 1992. Watts has also published two other books in addition to her latest since her stay at CSUSM.

When asked about how she likes CSUSM, Watts commented that it is a great university; "I can't think of a better place to be," Watts said in an interview over the telephone.

"Hattie McDaniel: Black Ambition, White Hollywood," is coming out in paperback in the beginning of February, which Watts said pleases her, "since February is Black history month, and also the month that people are thinking about the Academy Awards," Watts said. McDaniel was the first African-American to win an Academy Award in 1939 for her role as Mammy in "Gone with the Wind."

The curiosity of her students was what most motivated her to pursue not only her research on McDaniel, but all of her books including past books on Mae West and Father Divine, and future books which she

is currently researching—one on film censorship up to World War I, and another on the strong cinematic women of the 1930s, said Watts

The President's Award is a prestigious award in which a professor is nominated by faculty and then chosen by the president of CSUSM, Karen Haynes. "It is an honor to receive it," Watts said, "especially considering all of the excellent faculty here." Watts also said that she loves working with so many excellent people including the student body, who are "very inspiring."

The Film Studies minor, which Watts coordinates, is an interdisciplinary program that is shared between departments. Watts considers it rewarding to work in a program that brings together students from so many disciplines. Thus far students at CSUSM have been and continue to be very interested in the Film Studies minor, however there are currently no plans to expand the program.

The new History Master's program, another of which Watts coordinates, is generating interest nationwide as it is one of the first programs to incorporate mass media with history. The idea behind the degree is that one can gain experience with using new technological advances that are currently revolutionizing the field of history, while obtaining a traditional Master's education in history. The department is accepting applications for the Fall 2007 semester. Watts is pleased that many people have already applied to the program, which is pioneering the way history is taught, studied and preserved. "Incorporating technology with history makes it a more marketable degree to obtain," Watts says.

Watts celebrates her 15th year at CSUSM this semester.

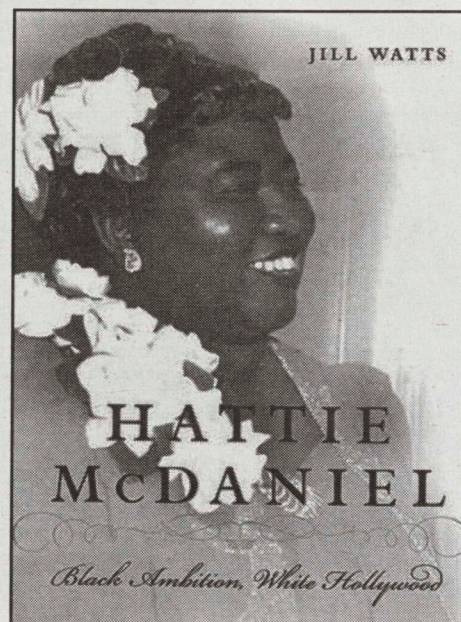


Image courtesy HarperCollins Publisher

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Aquarius

Jan. 20 – Feb. 18

Lucky Numbers: 3, 26, and 72

Lucky Color: Lavender

You've never experienced such a strong urge of curiosity before about a new classmate. Are the sirens and red flags going off in your head this very moment? That's because your new peer isn't exactly whom they say they are. Proceed with caution.

Pisces

Feb. 19 – Mar. 20

Lucky Numbers: 14, 24, and 37

Lucky Color: Periwinkle

Sing out! Sing out loud and proud! There is a talent inside of you dying to get out and be heard. Don't be afraid to nourish your skills and harness your talent. There is an audience waiting nearby to be dazzled and amazed.

Aries

Mar. 21 – Apr. 19

Lucky Numbers: 9, 33, and 54

Lucky Color: Beige

A person of mystery has caught your interest this week. Their charisma and charm have enticed your curiosity. Perhaps this new addition to your life will bring the excitement and change to your schedule that you've been looking for.

Taurus

Apr. 20 – May 20

Lucky Numbers: 17, 48, and 82

Lucky Color: Silver

It's raining second chances this week! So don't worry, there is always time to right your wrongs. Don't be afraid to be assertive and reclaim the opportunity you overlooked last week. It might come in handy later on down the line.

Gemini

May 21 – June 21

Lucky Numbers: 6, 33, and 37

Lucky Color: Magenta

Your competitive nature flares this week. You can't help but compete in every aspect of your life and with everyone, for that matter. A little friendly competition never hurt anyone; just don't let your pride get the best of you.

Cancer

June 22 – July 22

Lucky Numbers: 1, 30, and 59

Lucky Color: Charcoal

Sleeping is your best option if you want to feel healthy and rejuvenated. You haven't been sleeping enough, and your full-speed-ahead lifestyle is finally catching up to you. Do yourself a favor: turn off the cell phone, pull the shades down next to your bed, put on your flannel pajamas and sleep the week away.

Leo

July 23 – Aug. 22

Lucky Numbers: 11, 63, and 78

Lucky Color: Gold

Freeze! Just what do you think you are doing? You're not going to get away with your sneaky little plan. Just about everyone is onto you, you just don't realize it yet. You're best bet is to come clean before things get too messy.

Virgo

Aug. 23 – Sept. 22

Lucky Numbers: 16, 43, and 100

Lucky Color: Rose

All you are looking for right now is for someone to just hold your hand and tell you everything is going to be okay. The answer is closer than you might think; stop trying to seek out a savior and turn to your best friend instead. They are waiting for you right now.

Libra

Sept. 23 – Oct. 23

Lucky Numbers: 4, 23, and 39

Lucky Color: Teal

Forget the plan. Plans are bound to go wrong every now and then. It's time to live in the now and take life as it comes—plan, or no plan. Though your family may not share this sentiment, once they see how happy you are and the short-term success of your "no-plan" plan, they will fully support your decision.

Scorpio

Oct. 24 – Nov. 21

Lucky Numbers: 12, 25, and 67

Lucky Color: Orange

Don't expect others to understand what you're going through this week. A heavy load of classes and uncertainty of which direction you want to take your scholastic career are really weighing you down and fogging your judgment. Take some time to gain some perspective, it's in your best interest.

Sagittarius

Nov. 22 – Dec. 21

Lucky Numbers: 29, 40, and 96

Lucky Color: Kelly Green

A costume or disguise might be in store this week at the rate your new romance is unraveling. Your friends were definitely right about this one; they are not "the one." As much as you disagree with that idea, we all know that there is heavy shit at the bottom of your stomach that is telling the truth. It's time to pull the plug on this fling.

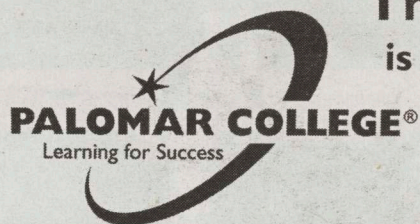
Capricorn

Dec. 22 – Jan. 19

Lucky Numbers: 15, 47, and 80

Lucky Color: Yellow

You are going to meet the love of your life this week. You may not realize it at first; in fact, you might think that is the most absurd thing you've heard all year. But, believe it or not, someone unexpected is going to waltz in and change your life forever.



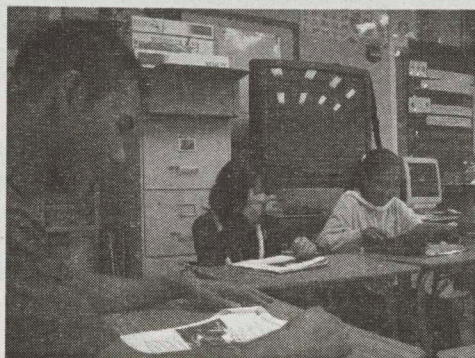
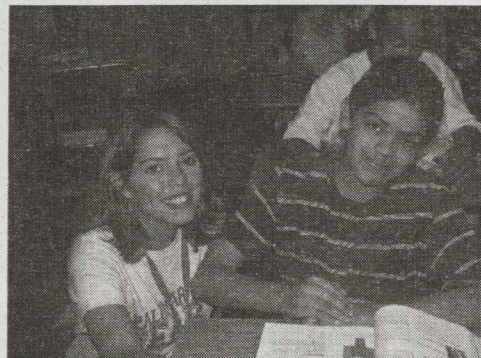
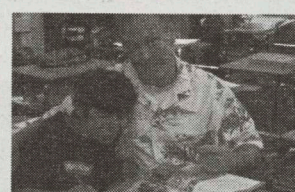
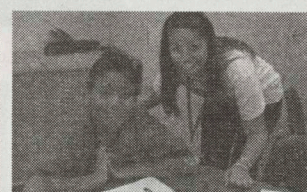
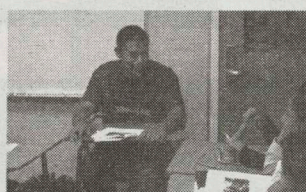
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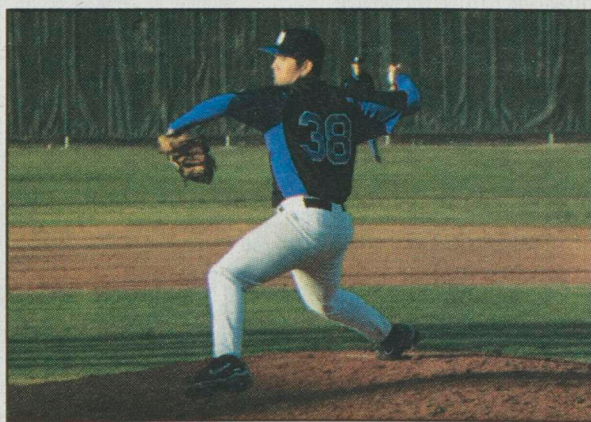
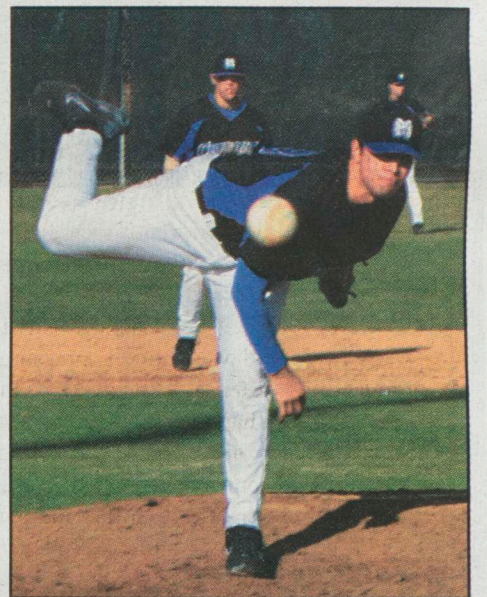
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CSUSM Cheer hosts pep rally for teams



Photos by Pamela Castillo/*The Pride*

Cougar Baseball at home



Photos courtesy of Cory Scoggin and www.scoggart.com

BY PAUL BAIMBRIDGE
Pride Staff Writer

A large, vocal and stuffed (thanks to catering by Mr. Taco) crowd of Cougar fans cheered the team on in its official home opener Friday which ended with a 15-7 loss to San Diego Christian.

The young San Marcos squad is now 0-5 in its inaugural season. Starting pitcher David Julio gave the Cougars four innings of work but got roughed up, allowing 11 runs. He took the loss. Hawks' starter Lance Janke gave his team six quality innings of four-run

ball to pick up the win.

Early on, the large crowd at San Marcos High had plenty to cheer about. After San Diego Christian got on the board in the top of the first, the Cougars came roaring back thanks to a two-run homer by slugger Scott Shapiro, giving the home team a 2-1 lead.

It would not be long-lived. The Hawks methodically pushed seven runs across in the second, posting five straight singles after making the first out. After another out, cleanup hitter Brandon Rauch smoked yet another single, and Texas A&M transfer Aaron Vasquez blasted a home

run over the right field fence.

Janke was able to settle down and keep the Cougars in check for the majority of the day. Once he got his breaking ball working, Jake began getting ahead of Cougar hitters and finishing them off with the off-speed stuff.

After Julio posted scoreless third and fourth innings, he was knocked out in the fifth and relieved by Auggie Richardson. Richardson was promptly greeted with a run-scoring double by Chris Denhart, followed by a sac fly by Danny Gonzales, making the score 11-2.

In the bottom half of the inning,

the Cougars threatened but were only able to push across two runs courtesy of Adam Ricciardulli and Chuck Baird RBI's.

The Hawks would tack on another run in the seventh and then be shut down by pitchers Travis Zabel and Lance McCormick in the final two innings. Quality relief work by Hawks pitchers Garrett Russell and Chris Priesendorfer kept the game at 15-4 going into the ninth, but the Cougars wouldn't go quietly. Freshman lefty Matt Jenkins drilled a three-run homer to right center before the Cougars bowed out, making the final score 15-7.

Though the scoreboard didn't favor the Cougars, the fans certainly did. It was standing-room-only throughout the game, with students and members of the San Marcos community showing their support for the new CSUSM team. While the squad is in the "building" stage right now, there will be brighter days ahead once the freshman-heavy roster makes the adjustment to college ball. Admission to home games is always free, and all fans are encouraged to come out and support the team throughout its inaugural year!

Cougar softball season preview

BY RICHARD ESPERTI
Pride Staff Writer

Cal State San Marcos introduced its first softball team this spring with high aspiration. Some say that time is required to create a winning ball club; however, Head Coach Jennifer Milo might not agree with that belief.

"I've set the bar pretty high from day one," said Coach Milo, who spent the last year constructing what she believes to be a team capable of great things in its inaugural season. Milo's highly ambitious team entered the pre-season to show that they are going to be a competitor sooner rather than

later.

The Cougars' highly competitive nature was displayed during the fall pre-season against Division I-A contenders USD and SDSU. The Cougars battled with USD and SDSU right down to the wire and showed that they have the ability to do great things this season. However, much of the team's pre-season success can be credited to the coaching staff whose systematic building process created chemistry among the players.

"We're a big family," said Melissa Lerno, a sophomore transfer from Palomar.

Although the exhibition games

do not reflect on the team's season, it can be viewed as a sample of the team's potential success come game-time this spring.

"They are an extremely hard-working group," said Coach Milo, who feels that everything has gone the way she had anticipated thus far.

The talented squad is lead by captains Danielle Tucker (Outfielder) and Leilani Madrigal (Outfielder). Leilani is the oldest transfer on the team, entering as a junior.

One of the biggest stories is the acquisition of Lerno, a sophomore pitcher. Lerno was dominant in her freshmen year at Pal-

omar and is anticipated to bring the same success to Cal State San Marcos after turning down multiple scholarships to Division I schools.

"I didn't think we had a chance at getting her," said Milo, who heard about Lerno while coaching at SDSU.

"I wanted to be close to my family so that my parents could watch me play," said Lerno about her decision to come to CSUSM. "It's perfect, and I'm happy that I'm here."

The Cougars season began Feb. 3 in Concordia where the team hoped to show everyone that they are a determined group destined

for success.

"We're hoping to make a name for ourselves as a good program and get some recognition," said Tucker, who is excited about beginning her college career and softball season.

Looking ahead, what goals does this team have for the future?

"Our main goals are one, to get into a conference – we need to be in a conference – and two, to have a field on campus," said Milo.

The team's home opener is a double-header Feb. 10 at Mission Hills High School, beginning at noon.

Tiger roars through San Diego

JEREMY ALBERS
Pride Staff Writer

Tiger Woods reached into his bag of tricks for another win. Woods snatched another victory Sunday Jan. 28 at the Buick Invitational held at Torrey Pines along the beautiful coast of San Diego. It was his third straight win at the Buick and his fifth overall at San Diego's finest public course set to host the '08 US Open. More importantly, it was Woods' seventh victory in a row in PGA tour events, a streak topped only by golfing legend Byron Nelson in 1945. That's right: it is the longest streak in 62-years. In today's game the pressures are much more intense. The advent of the information age has sports writers tracking Tiger's every move. Also, the field of golfers in each tournament has increased tremendously in that time. Golf is an international sport, and Tiger has to beat players from New Zealand, Japan, Fiji, and every other country's top ranked performers. The win was tournament victory No. 55 (fifth all-time), and his eighth in San Diego County. He has won at La Costa three times. On Thursday, Tiger found himself five shots back after a course record tying 61 by tour rookie Brandt Snedeker. The twenty-six year old, who said it was like playing the Tiger Woods video game, was stalked

and eventually caught by the world's No. 1 ranked player. Each event Tiger enters seems to have some early fireworks by a fresh face or seasoned veteran. On Sunday, Woods lurked a few shots back ready to pounce. It doesn't seem to matter the situation, Tiger can overcome just about any lay from any angle. Even landing in the bunker 16 times in the final two days netted only one bogey. That is due to focus and a brilliant short game. Going up against Tiger Woods on Sunday is like running from a tornado; better duck and cover, because it will go right over you. While the youngsters fell back and the veterans played well, Tiger was busy shooting the lowest score of the final round to walk away with \$936,000. When the pressure mounts, he seems to get better. While other golfers are happy to get a top ten finish, Woods considers that a loss. Anything other than first is a bad weekend. Golf is not supposed to be played with that mentality. A tour player should plug along through the season, finishing in the money, finding some consistency, and getting a win here and there. The attitude of Tiger Woods is that of a different breed. He goes into every tournament trying to win. It is his incredible mental ability that separates him from the other golfers in his era and elevates Tiger Woods as one of

the best players to ever swing the clubs. In April, Woods will attempt to get his fifth green jacket at the Masters Tournament in Augusta, Georgia. That's enough to start a basketball team. Only Jack Nicklaus with six has more. Nicklaus, with eighteen, is the only man with more major championships than Woods who has twelve. At

31-years-old, Woods is two thirds of the way to Jack Nicklaus. If he can win all four majors this year and the masters next April, Tiger Woods will be gunning to tie a legend here in San Diego at a place he is pretty comfortable – Torrey Pines. It is not a likely scenario, but with Tiger Woods nothing is impossible.

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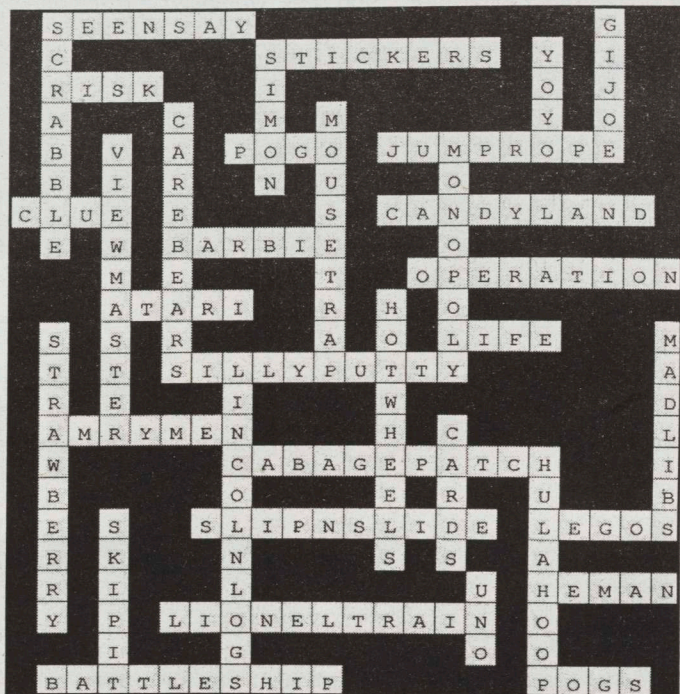


Cougar Words SS

Courtesy of The Pride

Celebrities (Last names)

Last week's key:

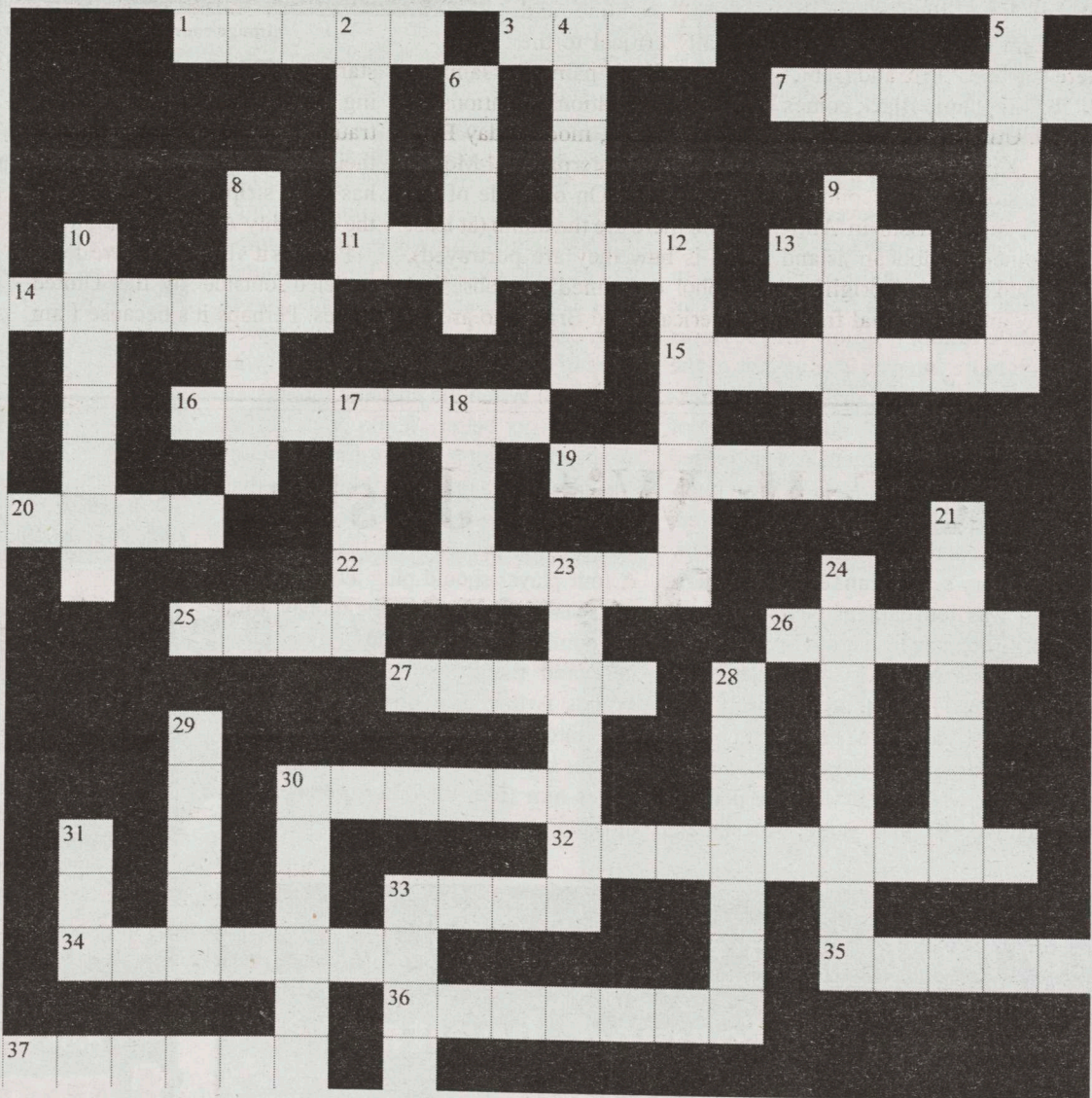


ACROSS

- 1.) This "Cinderella Man" is also a "Gladiator."
- 3.) This man of the "Sin City" is "Closer" to "Children of Men."
- 7.) Many guys wouldn't mind if this "OC" star gave them their "Last Kiss."
- 11.) This funnyman spends his time meeting the parents, playing dodgeball, and being a professional male-model.
- 13.) She's more than "Friends" with David Arquette.
- 14.) This "40-Year-Old Virgin" works in "The Office."
- 15.) He found his golden-globe-winning character on "30 Rock."
- 16.) She fights in "Star Wars" far away from the "Garden State."
- 19.) This "Father of the Bride" bargains for kids that are "Cheaper by the Dozen."
- 20.) This car enthusiast is one of the leaders of late night television.
- 22.) She can write about crashing weddings in her "Notebook."
- 25.) This pirate used to live on "21 Jump Street."
- 26.) She causes quite a "Storm" in "Monster's Ball."
- 27.) You can find him wearing his "Scrubs"
- 30.) No mission is impossible to for this "Top Gun."
- 32.) He may have turned down \$50 million, but his "blind black white supremacist" sketch put the comedy in Comedy Central.
- 33.) This comedian is "Down to Earth," once the "Head of State," and performs each show "Bigger & Blacker."
- 34.) This talk show host is infamous nowadays for her expensive show giveaways and her exhilarating encounter with Tom Cruise.
- 35.) He was "Bourne" to star in "Good Will Hunting," "The Good Shepherd," and "The Departed."
- 36.) Pitt's ex who has good "Friends."
- 37.) He's been "The Usual Suspect" in films such as "Seven," "Pay it Forward," and "American Beauty."

DOWN

- 2.) This Nike-sponsored golfer is arguably the greatest of all time and can often be seen in a red polo shirt.
- 4.) She promised to "never let go" as the Titanic sank.
- 5.) This "Rainman" played a great father Focker.
- 6.) The "Tomb Raider" of "Mr. & Mrs. Smith."
- 8.) This "Shanghai Knight" crashes weddings with Pixar's "Cars."
- 9.) This Bull just may be the greatest basketball player of all time.
- 10.) This funnyman has gone back to school, played as a professional golfer, and has been on "50 First Dates."
- 12.) This "Pretty Woman" was a "Runaway Bride" at her best friend's wedding.
- 17.) "You're fired."
- 18.) The "Dark Angel" of "Sin City."
- 21.) This "Anchorman" used to spend his Saturday nights live.
- 23.) The Ben in "Bennifer."
- 24.) This comedian calls his friends Kramer, George, and Elaine.
- 28.) This former newlywed had her eyes set on the "Employee of the Month."
- 29.) This "mean girl" enjoys going out on "Freaky Friday."
- 30.) "Alllllrighty then."
- 31.) He is "Closer" to being a 'sky captain' than "Alfie."
- 33.) This woman 'got mail' after Harry met Sally in the "City of Angels."



"Life and Debt"-Global call to action

BY AMANDA ANDREEN
Pride Staff Writer

I don't know about any one else, but it seems like everything, every global activist organization, every global call to action, and every celebrity, has their eyes set on Africa right now. Whether it's Darfur, Uganda, the exploitation of child soldiers, or the horrendous AIDS epidemic that continues to decimate the whole of the African continent, there doesn't seem to be too much talk or any media eyes on anything besides Africa and the war in Iraq, which doesn't get enough coverage at that.

Keeping all of that in mind, however, there is a place, a small place that is being destroyed and uprooted by the American dollar, which no one seems to know about. That place is Jamaica. Jamaica? You might be asking yourself. Yes. Jamaica. Many of us think of Jamaica as home to Bob Marley, the origin of Reggae music, and as a tropical dream vacation destination, and that's about it. There is much more to Jamaica, however, than meets the eye, or should I say, than meets the mainstream media.

Here is where "Life and Debt," a film by Stephanie Black comes into play. Utilizing the text from Jamaica Kincaid's "A Small Place," a story about economic strife, life and tourism in Antigua (another Caribbean island and Kincaid's place of origin) as an overlay and contextual frame

for her purpose, Black opens the film with tourists, both American and British, arriving in Jamaica for their vacations. Images of white, middle-aged and middle class Americans and Europeans flood the airport as the backdrop of the gorgeous Jamaica scenery lays only a few feet away from the awestruck vacationers.

The film then segues into a collage of discussion and observation with Jamaican natives, covering a cross-section of the economical and agricultural Jamaican subcultures. The people in the movie are Jamaica, but they are not the Jamaica I know, nor are they the Jamaica we see on the tourism commercials of sandy beaches and sparkling turquoise water. The people of Jamaica, their commentary and actions, the lifestyle in which they live, their perspective and remorse, are all genuine and equally critical to the

picture Black paints of Jamaica and its international relationship with America, modern day Britain, and the International Money Fund (IMF). On one side of the island there are the dumb (at least that is how they are portrayed), alcohol consumed, tan-obsessed Americans and Brits who are all

about the bang for their buck and shameless entertainment within a beautiful tropical setting. On the other side of the island (which in reality is only a few blocks off from the hotel after a left hand turn or two down the Queens Highway) is a society and conglomeration of generations

naïve on this matter; or perhaps it's because I am a middle class white American woman who hasn't had to struggle or suffer to live the life I live because through a chance of fate I was born where I was and live where I do. And, perhaps because of all of these things, it doesn't seem so inconceivable that I have never even considered an idea like this, or thought of Jamaica for that matter. Why and how a country that seems so eager to prosper and desperate to be free and is just left to fend for itself by the global community is beyond me.

At the time the movie was made, to date Jamaica owed the IMF roughly \$7 billion. A report on the IMF's website (www.imf.org) by Rodolphe Blavy suggests that the only way to save Jamaica, as its "high investment-low growth" policy certainly isn't working out, is for private sectors to buy out Jamaica; that, however, contradicts former Prime Minister Michael Manley's statement in the film, that though that is an option, "Jamaica isn't for sale." Jamaica's decline in productivity and increase in debt since they began relations with the IMF in February of 1963, only worsens as none of the numbers add up correctly. As a result of the sums owed to

the IMF, there are giant restrictions that are in place over Jamaica's economy, imports, exports, and production (including labor). It just doesn't seem right.

Politics aside, the film definitely struck a chord within me, and I strongly urge my peers who haven't seen it, to take an interest in it and speak out on behalf of Jamaica. Overall, the film reaffirmed some things I already knew—how indifferent people can be as well as insensitive our society is to the needs of other countries, how fortunate we are to live in America regardless of our political leaders, how little about the world I really do know and understand, and how there is so much more out there than we ever see or hear about because of the fact that we do live in America. It also taught me that nothing is as it seems, and that as students of this university, and students of any university for that matter, have the opportunity to do something because of the academic and open environment we have at our disposal. The words of one student can incite the actions of thousands of students. Therefore I dare all of you to speak out. Give Jamaica a voice; end their life in debt.

For more information on "Life and Debt," please visit: www.lifeanddebt.org.

For more information on the IMF, please visit: www.imf.org.



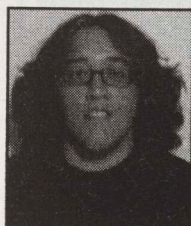
Image courtesy of New Yorker Films

staring off into oblivion, playing cards, unemployed and distraught, because their Jamaica, their island, and their livelihood has been stripped from them by the almighty American dollar.

Perhaps it's because I have never traveled outside of the United States. Perhaps it's because I am

Jock Talk With Josh: Barry Bonds

BY JOSH SANDOVAL
Pride Sports Writer



As of Thursday February 1, 2007, Barry Bonds is yet to resign with

the San Francisco Giants for the upcoming season. Major League Baseball is partly to blame since they denied an agreement between the two parties. The reason for concern is because the contract had a stipulation that said the Giants could terminate the contract if Bonds was indicted on steroids charges.

What many people don't know is that there were other stipulations in that contract that could have terminated the deal at any point in the season.

Clause 1B stated: If the defendant...I mean...Mr.

Bonds shows any side effects from steroids, the contract shall be terminated. Things that fall under this category include the changing of skin color from black to green, exploding of purple pants, and changing the name on the back of his jersey to "The Incredible Hulk."

Clause 10J stated: If syringes are found in possession of Mr. Bonds then they better be for the use of heroine and not for the use of horse steroids.

Clause 16E stated: If Mr. Bonds is found grazing in the outfield looking for horse feed then the contract shall be terminated.

Clause 24L stated: If Mr. Bonds violently punches a teammate in the face then it better be because the teammate sat in Mr. Bonds' personal La-Z-Boy in the clubhouse. If the punch is because of "roid rage" then the contract shall be terminated.

Clause 9W stated: In order

to prevent injury, Mr. Bonds is not allowed to do certain things for himself. The following services will be provided for him. Mr. Bonds will be provided a designated runner after base hits in order to prevent knee problems. Mr. Bonds will be provided a designated driver after home games so that he doesn't have to think about driving. Mr. Bonds will be provided a designated "pharmacist" so that he can claim ignorance if something tainted should happen to appear in his urine.

Clause 51Z stated: Mr. Bonds will be subject to a weigh-in every week. The weigh-in pertains just to his head. If the weight of his head is in the neighborhood of 50-pounds it will be assumed that he is on steroids and the contract shall be terminated.

Clause 17C stated: If Mr. Bonds hits less than 22 homeruns in the 2007 season his "pharmacist" will be

relieved of his duties and Mr. Bonds will have to pay back half of his 2007 salary.

Clause 22G stated: During the season, Mr. Bonds is required to make 10 public appearances, which don't include ones in front of a judge.

Clause 34K stated: During the season, Mr. Bonds is required to perform three public service announcements in the fight against drug abuse. Among the drugs Bonds feels most strongly against are Nyquil and Tylenol. The contract shall be terminated if he fails to complete the P.S.A.'s.

THE GRANDFATHER CLAUSE: If Mr. Bonds breaks Hank Aaron's all-time home-run record in 2007 all the prior clauses will be null and void.

This contract was drawn up by the Law offices of "Jock Talk with Josh." Mr. Sandoval is available for hire at Sando026@csusm.edu.

Letter to the Editor: Net Neutrality

This email is in response to the "The Freedom of the Internet" article (Jan 31st). I am very proud that such a serious issue such as Net Neutrality has finally gotten exposure in our school's paper. It blows my mind that people, rather telecom corporations, who had nothing to do with the creation, development, and distribution of the internet feel they can take the reigns of control over the content of OUR world wide web. Not talking about this or brushing it off will only aid the billion dollar fat cats in their maniacal plot to go Fahrenheit 451 on our only remaining open media outlet. The article was well researched and presented very admirably. Probably the most important article to grace the pages of The Pride since I have started coming here. Thanks Pride,

Christopher Thar
Junior

NUTS

By Greg Bishop



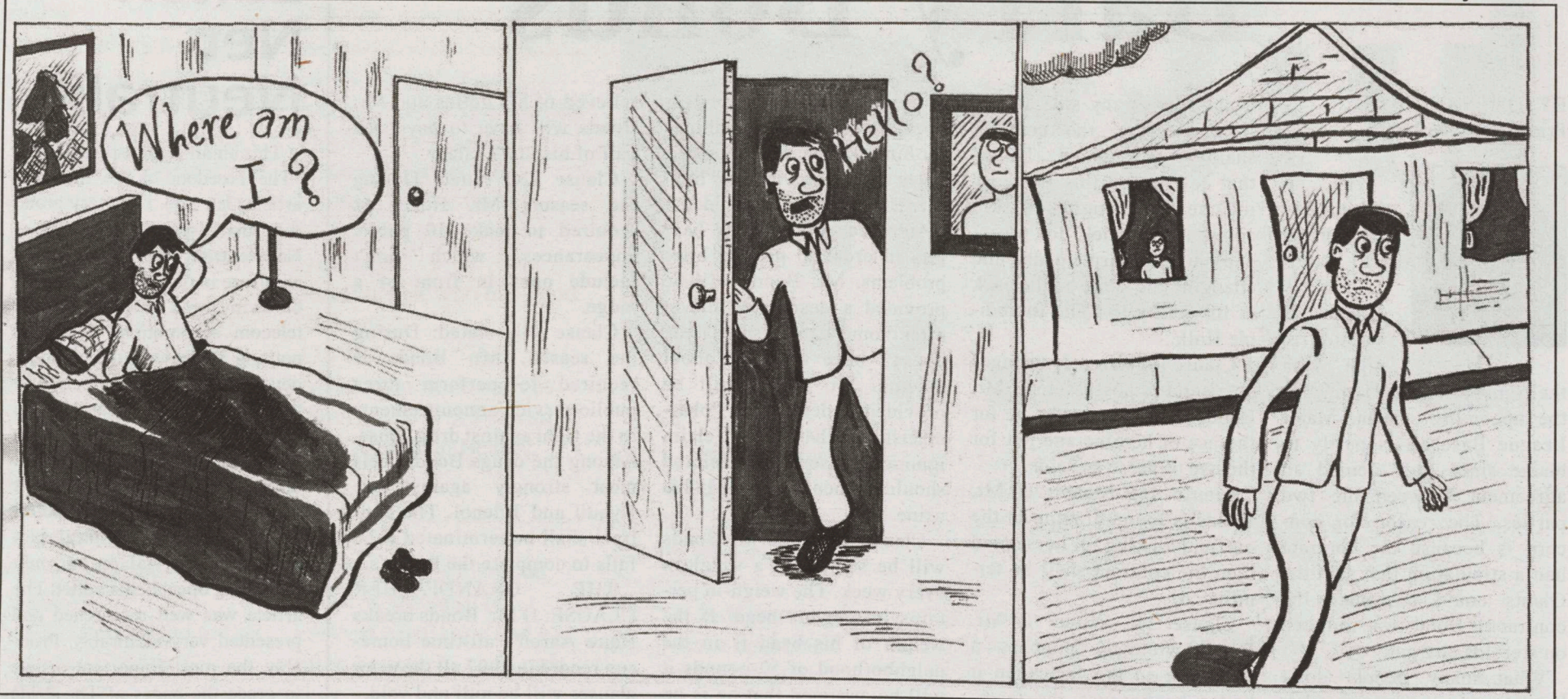
Just For Shiggles

By Jenny Bigpond



Trainwreck Theater

By T. Ward



-Part Two-

Drink of the Week

Midori Sour

BY AMANDA ANDREEN
Pride Staff Writer

Picture this: it's Friday night, and you, being the adventurous devil you are, decide to walk on the wild side and treat your pals to a night on the town. With wallet in hand, and a little liquid confidence already flowing through you, you and your homies walk into a club. The lights are flashing. The DJ is bumping. The whole place is buzzing, and the cuties in the corner are flashing you their pearly whites. You casually strut to the bar with your posse, lean up against the stool and suavely rest your arm atop the countertop, all the while mentally rummaging through a roster of possible drinks. Trying to show off, you throw a nod and a wink at the cuties in the corner, and yell at the bartender, "I'll have a Midori Sour."

Seeing your drink in hand, your friends ogle the neon

green concoction and order a round of the melon-licious mixed drink. Two parts Midori Melon liqueur, and one and half parts sweet and sour mix, the neon chilled potion is served in an Old-fashioned glass on the rocks. On occasion it is appropriate for a Midori Sour to be served with a red Maraschino cherry. However, according to Midori's website (www.midori-world.com), the original and correct garnish for a Midori Sour is a fresh orange slice; still, most of the time the gremlin-like drink is served straight up on the rocks.

For those who have never experienced Midori Melon liqueur, it is cool, sweet, goes down softly, and reminds of melon cotton candy in the summertime, or perhaps an alcoholic version of a Starbucks green tea frappacino. That in mind, drinking a Midori Sour is almost like drinking a bag of melon-flavored Sour Patch Kids gummy candies; sugar, sour-faced grin, shivers and all.

Midori, the premier bright green melon liqueur, was first launched in the United States in 1978 at Studio 54. Created by Suntory, Midori was the glue to the hit drink called "The Universe," which is comprised of Midori, vodka, pineapple juice, lime juice and pistachio flavored liqueur. Within five years of its release, Midori instantly became a favorite of the masses, being sold in over 20 countries, with sales steadily increasing at 200,000 cases sold per year.

So, the next time you're at the bar, or getting your groove on at a club and want to enjoy a palette-tantalizing experience, a Midori Sour is for you.

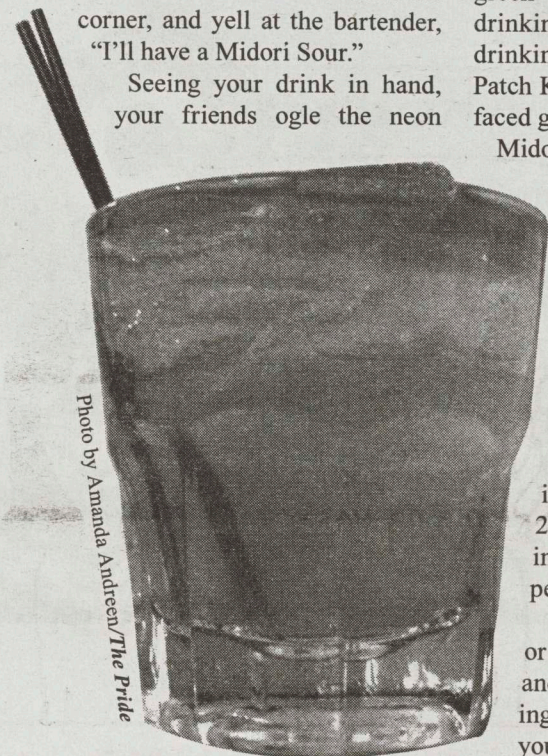


Photo by Amanda Andreen/The Pride

Beer of the Week

Molson Canadian

BY DAVID CHURCH
Pride Staff Writer

Molson just celebrated its 221st year of brewing, dating back to 1786, and is the oldest brewery in Canada as well as North America. Molson has 11 breweries in three countries and over 10,000 employees worldwide. They have brought us great beers such as Coors Light, Corona and Carling. In 1959, Molson introduced a new beer, the Molson Canadian Lager. This beer was created with years of experience and has grown to be one of Canada's top selling beers as well as one of America's top imported beers.

Molson Canadian won the gold in the 2003 "North American Lagers" category at the North American Beer Awards. In 2002, Molson Canadian received silver at the World Beer Cup for American-Style Lager. Molson Canadian is also one of the top selling beers at Canadian hockey arenas.

Being the hockey fanatics that my friends and I are, it was easy to become exposed to Molson Canadian. While watching TSN, Canada's equivalent to our ESPN, and Hockey Night in Canada, we began to watch their commercials and slowly get exposed to their beers.

After a while, I began to wonder about these beers, but it took a night out with the boys to a hockey game to become truly exposed to Molson Canadian. After a great night out, we stopped by a bar before calling it a night. My friend bought a pitcher of Molson Canadian, and without thinking I began to drink it. I quickly realized that this wasn't my usual Coors Light.

I then learned the great combination

taste of wheat, rice and malt flavor. Molson is said to be a better tasting beer than Bud and Coors Light, and I agree. It is a light lager, in which it the fact that it is a lager only becomes evident in the aftertaste.

Molson Canadian has made it clear that they only use only the finest natural ingredients. With their extensive experience and willingness to adjust to the taste of the consumer, it is no wonder why Molson Coors Brewing Company has lasted all these years.

For more information, please visit: <http://www.molsonusa.com>



Photo by Mary Foley/The Pride

February

Tues 6	Wed 7	Thurs 8	Fri 9	Sat 10	Sun 11	Mon 12
Sorority Recruitment and Fraternity Rush Week (Greek Week)	Greek Week!	Greek Week!	Greek Week!	Greek Week!	End of Greek Week!	"Rooted Dreams" Art Exhibit in Kellogg Library
IRB Workshop for grad students 5:30pm The Clarke	Sara Pennypacker Arts 111 9am Children's book author & at 5:30pm in Marstein 202	Resume Writing Univ. Hour Craven 1400	Student Organization Recognition Training 9-11:30am The Clarke Rm. 113	Softball Season Opener 11am @ Mission Hills High School	BSU Sweetheart Dance The Clarke Rm. 113	SHCS: Walk-in Clinic for MMR and Hepatitis B 9-11am & 1-3pm
Ken Waldman Arts 111 7pm Poet/Performer	Psychology Research Fair Planning Committee Univ. Hour in Kellogg 3010	International Coffee Hour 1pm Commons 106	"Rooted Dreams" Art Exhibit @ Kellogg Library Artist reception 9:30-11:30am.	The Belly Up: Elijah Emanuel And The Revelations w/Stranger, and Black Hart Warriors Hi-Fi 8pm/\$12	The Casbah Rafter, Castanets, Bedroom Walls, The Affair \$7	Financial Aid and Application Workshop Univ. Hour Markstein 305
The Casbah Miho Hatori (Cibo Matto), Los Abandoned \$14	Alpha Kappa Psi Rush BBQ 11:30am-1pm Kellogg Plaza	Alpha Kappa Psi Alumni Networking Night 6-9pm The Clarke Rm. 113	St. Valentine's Dance @ The Clarke \$5 for students \$6 general 7:30-10pm	Modern American Masters San Diego MOCA 11am-5pm	Modern American Masters San Diego MOCA 11am-5pm	The Casbah: ANTI-MONDAY LEAGUE: Stellastarr, Monsters Are Waiting, Minipop \$12
Writing Center open!	ASI Line Dancing 6-8:50pm The Clarke Rm. 113	The Belly Up: Poncho Sanchez W/Steph Johnson Band 8pm /\$18	Museum Month	Museum Month	Museum Month	Museum Month
Museum Month: 1/2 price admission to many San Diego museums	Museum Month	Museum Month:	San Diego Jewish Film Festival	San Diego Jewish Film Festival	San Diego Jewish Film Festival	San Diego Jewish Film Festival
RecycleMania Continues!		San Diego Jewish Film Festival @ Lawrence Family Jewish Community Center Free	San Diego Lunar New Year "Tet" Festival 2007 Qualcomm 5-10pm	San Diego Lunar New Year "Tet" Festival 2007 Qualcomm 10am-10pm	San Diego Lunar New Year "Tet" Festival 2007 Qualcomm 10am-10pm	RecycleMania Continues!
			USA Sevens Rugby Tournament Petco Park \$35-\$120	USA Sevens Rugby Tournament Petco Park \$35-\$120	USA Sevens Rugby Tournament Petco Park \$35-\$120	



BY TIFFANIE HOANG
Pride Staff Writer

One naïve cocaine-addicted Las Vegas magician with an attraction to hookers, five groups of hit-men, a team of FBI agents, and the Mafia makes for an entertaining set of events. "Smokin' Aces" is set up in such a way that leaves room for a wide array of actors. The film includes big-time actors such as Andy Garcia and Ray Liotta, popular actors such as Ben Affleck, Ryan Reynolds, and Jeremy Piven, and even leaves room for a rapper, Common, and a singer, Alicia Keys, in their acting debuts.

Aside from the impressive cast, the heart of the film revolves around Buddy "Aces" Israel (Piven), a modern day version of what Frank Sinatra might have been if he had half the talent, twice the sleaziness, and a mind constantly fueled by cocaine and the prospect of power. What the two do have in common is their association with the Mafia. Buddy has confined himself to a hotel penthouse and is attempting to save his life by turning in valuable information about the mob, which initially started his career, into the

FBI. Now, the boss, Primo Sparazza (Joseph Ruskin) is offering one million dollars for Buddy.

Buddy's brash and shameless demeanor towards those who loyally work for him catches up with Buddy when he betrays not only the Mafia, but his own bodyguard (Common). The only people Buddy has left on his side are FBI agents, Donald Carruthers (Liotta) and Richard Messner (Reynolds), instructed by their director, Stanley Locke (Garcia), to protect him so long as he provides ample information about the mob. However, with five separate groups of hit-men after him, and two measly FBI agents do not seem like a lot of help.

The first hit men to enter are Jack Dupree (Affleck) and two former police officers, Hollice Elmore (Martin Henderson) and Pistol Pete Deeks (Peter Berg), working for alcoholic mafia attorney Rip Reed (Jason Bateman). The second group to present itself is the Tremor brothers – a neo-Nazi band of skinheads (Maury Serling, Chris Pine and Kevin Durand). The assassins that seem to have the most intelligence compared with the others are a cunning disguise artist, Lazlo Soot (Tommy Flanagan) and Pasquale Acosta (Nestor Carbonell), a hit-man with a keen interest in torturing his victims. Include two les-

bian assassins, Georgia Sykes (Alicia Keys) and Sharice Waters (Taraji Henson), and you have an eclectic group of would-be killers.

Jeremy Piven does an overwhelmingly convincing job in playing Buddy. His display of the chaos that drove the character to dig himself so deeply into his unfortunate situation makes the film as entertaining as it looks in trailers. In addition to the dynamic that Piven brings to the screen is the nearly effortless bond that Liotta and Reynolds appear to have as to FBI partners. Though the initial idea of the wise older cop and the ambitious rookie is not original, the actors deliver an authentic performance. Yet, the film also consists of so many key players, that the majority of the characters barely get the chance to develop. Nevertheless, the movie delivers what is seen in the trailers – heaps of action and tons of wit.

Movie review:

"Smokin' Aces" hits the mark



Movie review:



"Catch and Release" is a keeper

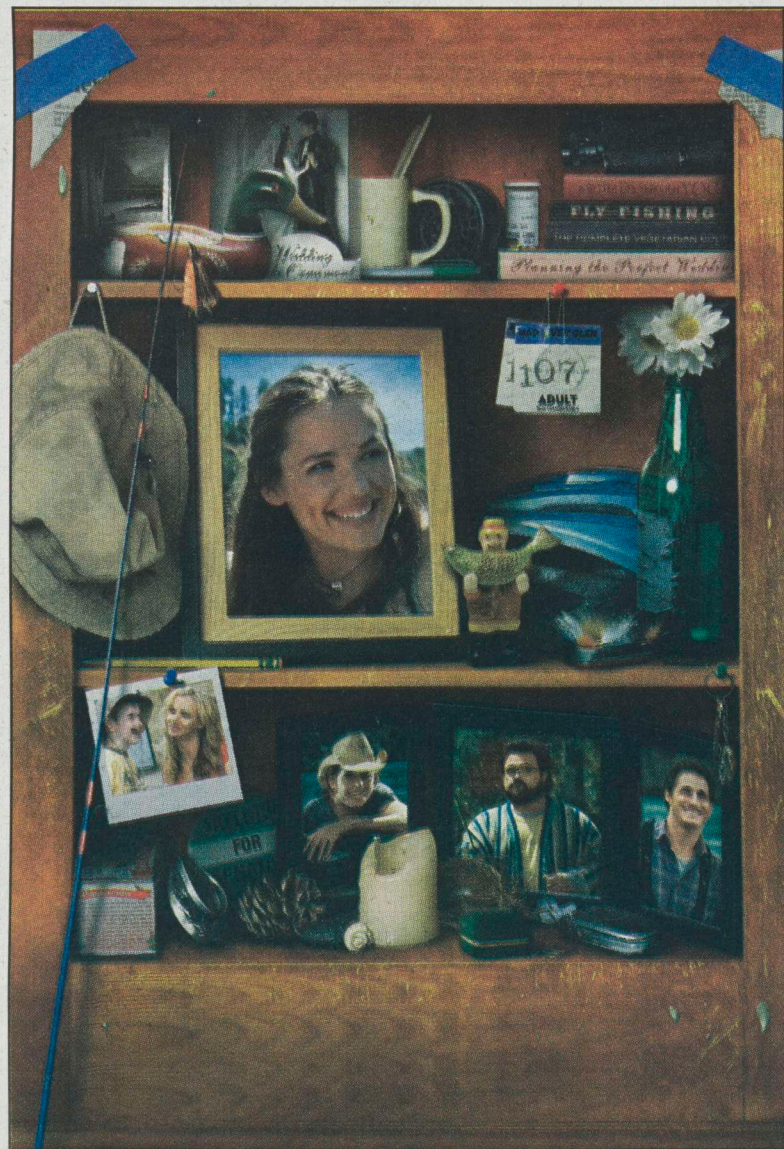


Image courtesy of Sony Pictures

BY SARAH PULTZ
Pride Staff Writer

"Catch and Release" has all the ingredients for the perfect chick flick. There's tragedy, there's comedy, and most importantly there's romance. This movie has romantic settings, love triangles, the girl next door, the sexy bad boy, and even a small, adorable child. The romantic in me took in all these things with glee, in spite of the fact that my more cynical side interrupted from time to time.

I don't think the story could get any more sappily romantic, and I mean that in a good way. Gray (Jennifer Garner) is a young woman who loses one love only to find another. After Gray's fiancé, Grady, dies only days before their wedding, she moves in with his two best friends, Sam (Kevin Smith) and Dennis (Sam Jaeger). As she struggles to deal with her loss, Gray learns that man she thought was the love of her life wasn't as perfect as he seemed. The one person

who knew the real Grady was his slightly skeezy friend Fritz (Timothy Olyphant) who Gray begins to see in a new light as she takes a second look at everything she once took for granted.

What's that you say? What kind of a name for a romantic lead is Fritz? Don't ask me; for the first twenty minutes, I kept getting Garner's character confused with her dead fiancé because their names sounded so similar (Gray and Grady).

Regardless of the oddly named characters they play, "Catch and Release" features some talented actors. Garner is amazing as the grieving Gray. Without storming or sobbing, she expresses the devastation her character goes through perfectly. All she has to do is look, and the heartache hits you. Smith is also hilarious as Grady's loveable and somewhat useless friend. This offbeat guy works for Celestial Seasonings picking out the quotations written on their tea boxes. Juliet Lewis is in her element playing the other woman, a dumb and just a little trashy masseuse. How-

ever, for me Jaeger stole the show as the quiet, dependable guy who keeps trying to do the right thing and just gets ignored in the background.

"Catch and Release" is perfect in conception, if a little flawed in execution. For me, those flaws detracted from the movie when they pulled me out of the moment and I stopped buying into story. The physical attraction between Gray and Fritz is undeniable, but I kept thinking that their relationship looked less like blooming love and more like an unhealthy stage of grief they would later regret. I found myself hoping that in some atypical plot twist another character would get the girl, or perhaps in a fit of feminism Gray would eschew all men and move to Tibet to pursue her heretofore unrealized dream of climbing Mt. Everest. However, that's not the kind of movie this is. "Catch and Release" is a cheesy romantic comedy all the way, and if you can suspend your cynicism for an hour or two and just enjoy it for what it is, then you will walk out of the theater with a smile on your face.