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Student Newspaper

The Pride

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California State University San Marcos

Vol IX No. 2/ Tuesday, September 4, 2001

Del Mar Fairgrounds Selected as Venue for Graduation

Associated Students Hold Its first Board Meeting for Semester

By STEPHANIE BAIRD
Pride Staff Writer

The first Board of Directors meeting of Associated Students Inc. (ASI) for the fall semester was held on Aug. 31. The most anticipated item of business on the agenda was the update for graduation location plans for 2001-2002.

Dr. Francine Martinez, Vice President For Student Affairs, announced that a contract to hold the June 1 graduation ceremonies at the Del Mar Fairgrounds was signed Friday.

Some students at Friday's meeting expressed their unhappiness about what they said was "little notification and information for students" about the graduation venue search.

Student Laura Derungs questioned Martinez about the graduation venue search. Derungs said she found it "hard to swallow" that all possibilities for on-campus graduation were exhausted.

At the board meeting, Martinez explained the yearlong history of the search for a graduation venue.

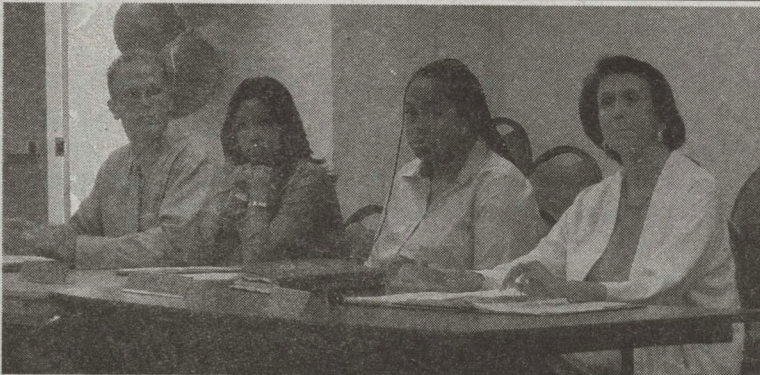
At the end of last spring, a graduation committee, composed of students and administrators, concluded that there was no possible way for the ceremony to be held on campus. In the past, Founders Plaza was the site for commence-

ment. Due to recent construction for a new library, however, part of the plaza has been closed and the site may be unavailable for the next two years.

The committee said it has examined all areas of the campus, specifically the parking lots and Mangrum Track, as possible venue sites. The parking lots were eliminated as a possibility due to the lots' uneven surfaces, which Martinez explained were designed for drainage purposes.

She also added that the pavement could also become very hot during a June commencement.

Mangrum Track was eliminated as a possibility after the committee decided it would be too costly to re-surface the field and to build additional access. The estimated cost to prepare the track for graduation, according to Martinez, was between \$300,000-\$500,000. Martinez also listed the presence of



Francine Martinez (far right) spoke at the ASI BOD meeting to announce the change in venue for commencement. (Pride Photo/Conor Mongan)

rattlesnakes in the area as a public safety concern.

When Derungs asked if there was any chance for graduation to be held on campus, Martinez answered, "That opportunity is completely gone."

The committee also considered local high schools, the San Diego Convention Center, the Moonlight Amphitheater, and the San Luis Rey Mission.

Students on the graduation committee pushed to exhaust all possibilities, Martinez said. "We heard from students that they wanted to keep graduation in the North County," said Martinez. "Their

first choice was the Del Mar Fairgrounds."

When the university first approached the staff at the Del Mar Fairgrounds, there were concerns that commencement would interfere with preparations for the Del Mar Fair, which takes place in June and July. The university then looked to Palomar College as a pos-

sible venue. After receiving complaints from students and faculty about the possibility of Palomar College as a graduation venue, however, the university re-approached the staff at the Fairgrounds, and a contract was signed to hold graduation at Del Mar.

Carmen Villa, Assistant Director of Enrollment Services, is one of the coordinators for graduation. When asked the approximate cost for graduation at the Fairgrounds, she answered, "It's much too early to tell at this moment."

Three committees will be involved in the graduation planning process. "We're calling for student members to help with graduation planning," said Martinez.

The committees include the Logistics Committee, the Program Planning Committee, and the Open House Reception Committee. Some of the responsibilities for the committees include setting up the graduation venue, creating graduation programs for students, and giving tours of the venue and taking photographs for students and their guests.

The three committees must be filled by Oct. 15. Forms are available at the ASI office in Commons 203 or call (760) 750-4990.



Construction is one reason graduation will be held off campus. (Pride Photo/Conor Mongan)

Campus Computers Upgraded

By JAMES NEWELL
Staff Writer

To keep up with current trends in technology and student needs, the university replaces or upgrades antiquated computer equipment each year.

This year a total of 204 student computers were upgraded, and 30 new units were added for students, bringing the total number of student computers to 439.

This year's upgrade consisted of Dell flat screens and Dell and Macintosh CPUs (central processing units). Not all units were replaced in the open-access labs in Academic Hall 202 and 204, but all the monitors have been upgraded to the flat screens. In addition to taking up less space, the flat monitors are more energy efficient.

Bill Ward, Director of Telecommunications and Network Operations said, "Although the monitors were more expensive, they will pay for themselves over time."

The university has instituted the computer refresh program, which is a three-year computer upgrade schedule. Costing around \$1.2 million per year, the refresh program upgrades or replaces approximately one-third of the computers in the program yearly. This number varies from year to year, but all the computers in the program receive an upgrade every three years.

There are currently 1,115 units in rotation, including faculty, staff and student computers, according to Ward.

"I think any improvement is good," said Andrew Watkins, a junior and computer science major. "If we're going to learn what it takes to work in the outside world, we're going to need the equipment used in the outside world."

The replaced equipment, although considered out of date by the university, is still operational and can be used by other schools. A majority of the old computers are donated to local K-12 public schools. At one time, a dozen units made it as far as Africa, said Ward.

Let the Welcome Week Festivities Begin

By ANN BENING
Pride Staff Writer

Welcome Week, sponsored by Associated Students, Inc. (ASI), began on Tuesday, Sept. 4, and runs through Thursday, Sept. 6. Daily festivities begin at 11 a.m. and end at 1:30 p.m. each day in the Dome Plaza. Welcome Week features free food, games, and music for students.

"ASI is very committed to fulfilling the interests of the students and providing an enriched campus life," said Brad Schmidt, Club Services Technician for ASI. "Enhancing the CSUSM experience, giving students ownership over their student life experience, and empowering students is key."

Tuesday was "Back to School Country Kick Off Day." The Carlsbad band Texas Sky per-

formed, and 99.3/Hot Country Radio was on campus to provide music as well. Country Kick Off Day, hosted by the American Indian Student Alliance, Future Educators Club, History Club, and Victorious Club included a student pie-eating contest, barbeque, and a potato sack race.

Alpha Chi Omega, Alpha Xi Delta, Tau Kappa Epsilon and Sigma Alpha Epsilon will host the "Go Greek Welcome Week Bash" today. Students can play double-shot basketball, radar speed pitch baseball, bungee run, and eat barbeque. Local bands Handful and Agent 51 will perform in the Dome Plaza.

"Club Fair," the last event of Welcome Week, is scheduled for Thursday. All student clubs will be invited to set up booths with club information, and local radio station Z-90 will be on site.



Students receive free food outside the Dome during the first week of classes. (Pride Photo/Conor Mongan)

Student Phantoms Haunt Campus

By AMY GRANITE
Pride Staff Writer

During the spring semester, CSUSM was introduced to the "phantom shopper" program. The "phantoms" were undercover students who visited various campus departments, unannounced, in order to rate them on several criteria based on a point system. This fall, many more students will have the opportunity to participate.

"The overall intention of the program is to, number one, have the students become effective evaluators of the campuses' programs and services, and number two, to assist departments in providing seamless, consistent and good service to the students," said Dean of Students Jonathan Poullard.

The "phantom shoppers" are

sent into a department, or instructed to phone a particular department, with a script put together by the students during the training process. The script serves as a guideline for students to follow when making visits or phone calls. The departments are evaluated on criteria such as physical environment, quality of interpersonal contact, pertinent knowledge of the staff, timeliness in addressing questions/concerns, usefulness of referrals/resources and overall department experience.

The founding co-directors of the program, Dean Poullard, and Assistant Executive Director of ASI, Susana Gonzalez, are confident that the program criteria and findings will improve department/student interaction.

The findings will be printed in an annual report that will

provide accurate details of how each department functions.

After each visit or phone call, the phantom shopper summarizes the visit and submits the information to be printed in the report. For example, a student might visit Parking Services with a script designed for a student who appeals a parking ticket. After the student makes the visit, he/she evaluates the department based on the overall experience.

The students and departments are made aware that the purpose of the program is not to get anyone in "trouble," but rather to assess the school's strengths and weaknesses in regards to service standards.

The spring results were released to the department chairs as a starting point for analyzing future reports. The main pur-

pose of the reports is to inform the departments of the findings. According to Poullard, it has yet to be decided how and when students will have access to the reports.

"The information collected from the spring 2001 data was a pleasant surprise," said Poullard, "especially since there had been some negative feedback." The report cleared up most implications of such problems as the rudeness of some staff members and problems within specific campus departments reported by some students.

The phantom shopper program was adopted by CSUSM based on a similar program started at California Polytechnic University, Pomona. Many changes have been made this semester at CSUSM based on its sister program and the results

of the spring 2001 shopping. With an increase in participating departments from eight to 26, and with a total of 20 phantom shoppers, it is anticipated that the program will continue to grow.

Shoppers spend a total of nine hours working in the program, which includes both training and the actual "shopping" of departments. Students are paid \$150 for their efforts. "Generous pay is given to encourage students to take the job seriously and to put in sincere and solid feedback," said Poullard.

For those interested in participating as a phantom shopper, flyers will be handed out during CSUSM's Welcome Week festivities. A diverse group of students will be chosen, to ensure accurate results consistent with the student population.

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Campus blasting resumed on Friday, Aug. 31st. Additional warnings are now in place and blastings will occur at 4p.m. on Fridays..

(Pride Photo/
Melanie
Addington)

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The workshop is part of the CTP Public Participation Program that will reach out to various communities throughout the State to solicit public views on transportation issues dealing with highways, streets, rail, transit, seaports, airports, bicycle and pedestrian concerns.

Discussion items will include: traffic congestion, safety, economic prosperity, efficient fuel and energy use, viable transportation choices, affordable and accessible growth, and enhancing built and natural environment.

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or via e-mail at: Shirley_Hautanen@dot.ca.gov

Persons requiring alternative formats in Braille, large print, audiotape or computer disk to attend this meeting, or assistive services such as sign-language interpreting, real-time captioning, note taking assistance or other services, please call Renee' Krolkowski, Caltrans, 619-688-3295.

Student Vacation Revisited: King Pacal's Secret

Editors' Note: This is the second in a series of travel articles from a CSUSM student.

By VLADISLAV CELIK

As we were about to enter the archaeological site at Palenque, I remembered a book by a self-taught Swiss archaeologist, Erich von Daeniken. von Daeniken, well known for his hypothesis that the human race had originated from outer space, traveled to many parts of the world and gathered information about ancient civilizations to try to support his theory.

One of the sites he visited was Palenque. He observed the carved images on stone plaques and concluded that they depicted astronauts in space ships.

So there I was entering Palenque, feeling extremely privileged and excited.

Palenque is somewhat different from most other Mayan cities because of its distance from other major crossroads of the region. The city remained undiscovered by many European settlers until the 20th century. In the 1920s, however, Danish explorer and archaeologist Frans Blom conducted excavations in the state of Chiapas and found an ancient Mayan city, buried under layers of mud and vegetation. He named it after a nearby village, Palenque.

The first settlements in Palenque date back to 100 B.C., but the city reached its cultural and economic peak between 600 and 700 A.D., during the 70-year rule of King Pacal. It had been the administrative center for the regions of the present day Chiapas and Tabasco. After Pacal died, the inhabitants abandoned the city in 800 A.D., and it was lost to the jungle until the 1920s. In 1952, Mexican archaeologist Alberto Ruz was researching the

tallest pyramid, the "Temple of the Inscriptions." There, at the top of the pyramid, he discovered an entrance to a tunnel well hidden in the floor of the temple. The tunnel led to the crypt in the pyramid's interior, in which the remains of King Pacal rested in a stone sarcophagus, decorated with relief carvings and jade relics.

I held my flashlight tightly in my hand, determined to explore the pyramid with or without a guide. I had already decided in my foolish mind that, in case my undertaking was not approved by the site's authorities, I would go there anyway at some time when nobody was around. Access to the secret crypt became so important to me; it was as if I was going to find the answers to the mysteries of the world.

As I slowly approached the tallest pyramid, the "Temple of the Inscriptions," I noticed a large number of tourists all around it. I climbed up the stairs, which were steep and numerous, and had to go around tourists who were wandering and taking photos. In a way I was disappointed because the crowd took away much of the excitement – I had expected to be there alone. But there was also a good side to having many tourists around. At least I did not have to worry about being taken by the armed Zapatista rebels or attacked by the beasts from the jungle. Plus, being in a crowd of tourists would not have put my explorations into the spotlight, where I might have been exposed to the scrutiny of the site's authorities.

At the top of the pyramid was a temple made of stone. Its thick walls were decorated with plaques on the exterior. The plaques were carved with

unusual inscriptions, which remotely reminded me of the inscriptions within Egyptian pyramids. Standing at the top of the pyramid, I was able to see the thick vegetation.

The interior of the temple was decorated with plaques as

sarcophagus was covered with a huge and perfectly carved stone block.

As I descended further, I saw a narrow stone duct extending from the crypt to the top of the temple, built by the Mayas to allow the king's soul to make its

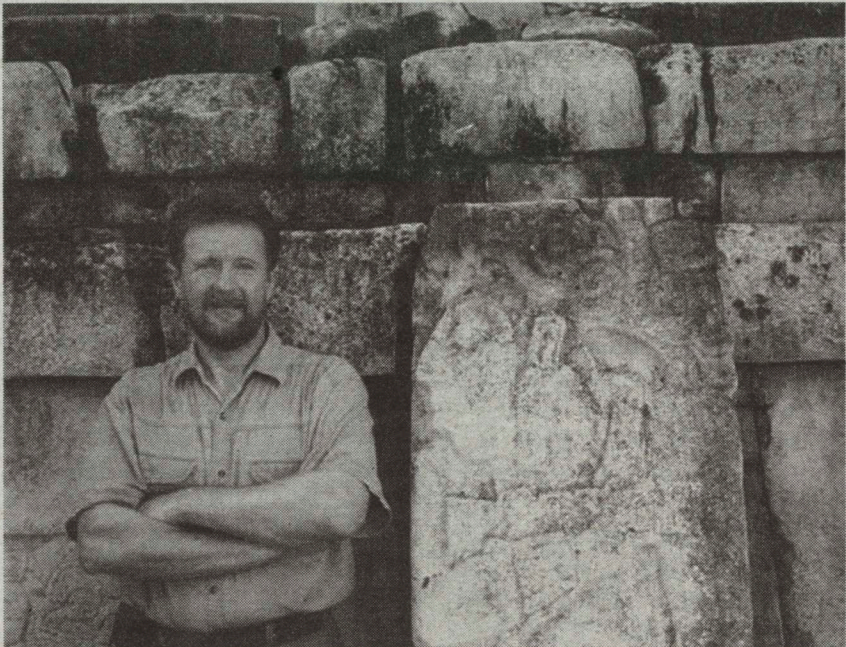
Since we were planning to come back to the site again early the next day, we wanted to spend the night as close to the ruins as possible. Luckily, there was a campsite about a quarter of a mile down the road. We assembled our tent, which was surrounded by coconut palms and banana trees.

There were several huts around with thatched roofs for the tourists who preferred to sleep in their hammocks. I felt that the jungle around might harbor snakes and that zipping up the tent was safer than sleeping in a hammock.

The night was starry and quiet at first, but we were awakened by eerie sounds coming from the jungle. The growling was constant and loud. Here in the distant land, under different skies, and in the midst of the rain forest, even a small commotion in the middle of the night can be disturbing.

Sleeping close to the ruins could be exciting but also frightening. Was King Pacal's soul hovering around, waiting to take revenge on us because of our intrusion? I wondered if I had done anything offensive to the king's soul while I was in the crypt. The answer was no, of course. While anticipating the new day and wondering about the source of the mysterious and eerie growling, I fell asleep.

The next morning the staff at the campsite told us that the monkeys and other wild beasts in the jungle made the noise at night, sounds that were nothing unusual for the locals. That day we visited more of the temples in Palenque, and later prepared for our next destination: Edzna, a major Mayan site in the state of Campeche, and a site in the state of Yucatan.



Vladislav Celik stands next to one of the carvings at the Mayan ruins he saw on his trip. (Courtesy Photo/Vladislav Celik)

well. There was a large opening on the floor and the stone stairs led to the interior of the pyramid. I learned from other tourists that it was the entrance to Pacal's tomb and anybody could go there without a guide. Excited, I wasted no time descending the stairs. The tunnel was narrow, and the stairs were steep, wet, and slippery. The ceiling was illuminated by incandescent light and a flashlight was not necessary.

The stairs changed direction several times. The air got stuffier and breathing became more difficult. Heat and humidity increased exponentially as the tunnel got narrower. Some awesome panic overtook me, and then I came to a wider area where I saw the crypt behind the bar fence. A heavy

journey to eternity. I wondered if that soul still hovered around the crypt.

I took a few snapshots and felt like getting out. By the time I reached the temple above, I was soaking wet, and I was tired. But I was overtaken by excitement and joy. Looking down from the top of the temple, I saw other pyramids in the horizon and noticed their shadows were getting longer as the sun disappeared.

The day, however, was not over yet, and some tourists were determined to stay at the site as long as they were allowed. I did not feel like I could take any more excitement, since my goal had been achieved. All I wanted was to think about the events that had recently taken place and I wanted to make sense of them.

Calendar

Workshops

Wednesday, Sept. 5
Resume Tips for Science Majors
Time: 2-3 p.m.
Location: Career & Assessment Center
What is the best science resume format? Come to this workshop and hear from a specialist in the field. Learn about the most effective resume format.

Friday, Sept. 7
Career Services for Graduating Seniors
Time: 12-1 p.m.
Location: Career & Assessment Center
Are you graduating? Want a full-time professional position? Learn how to access job listings, register with MonsterTRAK, and make your job search successful.

Registration Information
August 24-September 7
Open University registration and fall 2001 add/drop period.
SMART Telephone available for drops only

Clubs

Thursday, Sept. 6
Pre-Health Society
Time: 5 p.m.
Location: Craven 6205
For more info. call Justin (760) 583-3781

Events

September 5-October 3
La Paz Tras el Cerco: Peace Under Siege in Mexico
Location: Library Gallery
A photo exhibit on violence, war, and nonviolent resistance in Mexico.

Wednesday, September 5
Go Greek Welcome
Time: Begins 11 a.m.
Location: Dome Plaza
Featuring local bands such as Handful and Agent 51. Includes BBQ and games.

Thursday, September 6
Club Fair
Location: Dome Plaza/all day

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FURTHER ON DOWN THE ROAD



By MELANIE ADDINGTON
Pride Editor

Grateful Dead shows were always about the "jam" session, musicians just playing their instruments for fun on stage for as long as they could go. With the death of the Grateful Dead's notorious lead singer, Jerry Garcia, many deadheads, myself included, feared those days were over.

Instead, his spirit carried over into a new generation. Bands, like Phish and String Cheese Incident, began to fill the void missing from the old Dead tours. Bob Weir continued playing in his side band, Rat Dog, and Phil Lesh created Phil and Friends.

Then, in 1997, former Dead musician Weir and other singer/songwriters, including Arlo Guthrie, Bruce Hornsby, and the Counting Crows, jammed for seven hours on a hot July night. Thus, Further Fest was born — as a way to remember and honor the cherished Garcia.

Weir began thinking about what was to become Further Fest in 1996 and by 1997 he had some of the top musical performers at his side. As times have changed, so have the performers on the road, but the spirit of the "jam" lives on.

Further Festival, now renamed the So Many Roads Festival, was held at Coors Amphitheatre in Chula Vista on Tuesday, Aug. 28.

So Many Roads includes Ratdog, Karl Denson's Tiny Universe, Rusted Root, DJ Logic and Keller Williams. Rusted Root and Rat Dog headlined the show, but Root clearly stole the spotlight. Their live performance set free the structure of their recorded material, showcasing the freedom of improvisation.

Rusted Root went double platinum with their 1992 major label debut, "When I Woke," but in 1999 they disbanded after only eight years together. Last summer they came back together and performed a handful of shows with the Allman Brothers. Since then, they have been busy recording their newest CD, of which they played several songs at Tuesday's festival.

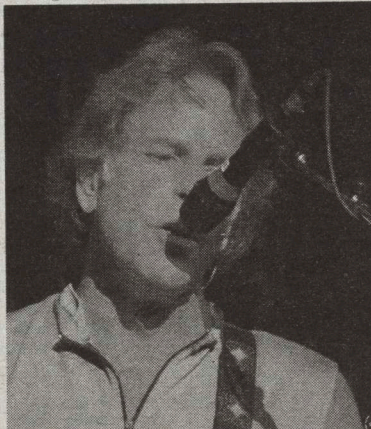
However, it was Root's classic "When I Woke" songs, such as "Cat Turned Blue," and a spiritually releasing "Drum Trip-Ecstasy," that sent the crowd into fits.

Rat Dog finished out the festival with a handful of guest musicians. Weir's introduction to a surprise guest performer, Johnnie Johnson, a.k.a. Johnny B. Goode, made it clear that Further Fest could never have occurred without such leaders in the rock and roll industry. Johnson played keyboards on the song "Tanqueray" with Ratdog on Tuesday night, providing some of the best music for the evening. Johnson was the pianist and original leader of the R&B band, Sir John's Trio, with drummer Ebby Hardy, and well-known musician Chuck Berry.

Johnson was not the only guest that evening. DJ Logic also performed with Ratdog. The band

performed "The Wheel," then took a break while Logic appeared for a drum and bass break. Ratdog then continued on, playing "Slipknot!" then making the well-known (to fans) transition to Franklin's Tower.

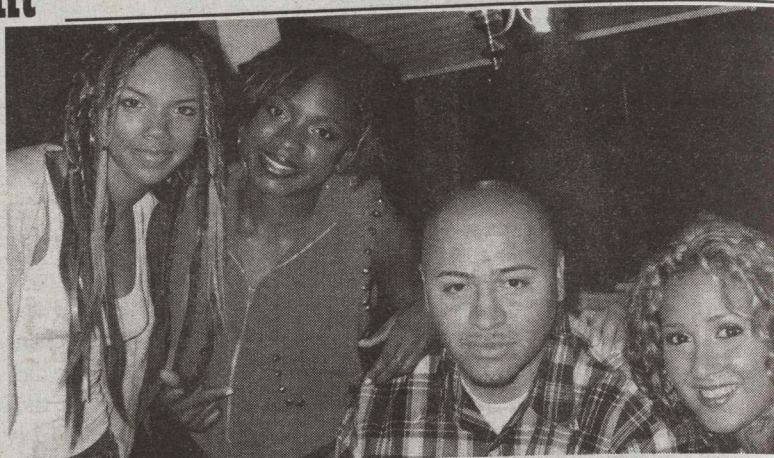
While the jam remains, other things remind music fans that times have changed. Fans and tour groupies usually celebrate the end of a show in the parking lots, while vendors sell vegetarian food, hemp necklaces, and hand blown glass. Instead, police officers rigidly enforced the "no lot" rule once the concert was over. A tow truck drove through the parking lot while police offi-



(Top Left) Rusted Root. (Above) Bob Weir, lead singer of Rat Dog.
All Photos (c)2001 Jonathan Rabhan / www.rabhan.com.

cers warned everyone standing around that they must leave the parking lots or risk having their cars towed immediately.

Without celebrating further with friends in the parking lot after the show, I again missed the old Dead tour days. I thought of my friend Brendan's shirt that simply says, "I Miss Jerry," while I waved goodbye to friends. Then, getting into my car, I obediently went on down the road.



3LW and CSUSM student Victor Padilla backstage at the MTV concert last Thursday night. (Pride Photo)

3 Little Women Join MTV Tour

By VICTOR PADILLA
Pride Staff Writer

eventually signed them to the label.

MTV's Total Request Live Tour came to San Diego Thursday, Aug. 30 at the San Diego Sports Arena. Headlining the TRL tour was Destiny's Child, who performed with other hip-hop and R&B acts, including Dream, Eve, Nelly, and 3 Little Women.

I was given the opportunity to interview the newest R&B sensation, 3LW (3 Little Women). After being introduced to the three ladies of 3LW, 17-year-old Adrienne Bailon, 16-year-old Naturi Naughton, and 14-year-old Kiely Ki Williams, I was able to learn a little more about them.

Their self-title debut album has already gone platinum, and Bailon said that their second album is "already in the works."

Their fast track to success started when Williams' mother decided to hold auditions to form 3LW. Naughton and Bailon found out about the auditions through friends from school. The two auditioned, joined Williams, and 3 Little Women was born. Tommy Mottola, CEO and Chairman of Sony Records,

They revealed that being on tour for such a long time can have a grueling effect on a group, and that they missed their families from time to time. They keep in touch with friends and family, however, by calling them at least once a day.

On a lighter side, the teenagers confessed that funny stage mishaps and blunders occur when they tour the country. On one occasion, one of the girl's pants ripped on stage. Naughton jokingly admitted to having "slipped on the stage in front of the crowd" during one of their performances.

All three members said they enjoy watching movies, such as "American Pie 2," going to the mall, and getting their nails done when they get a free moment to themselves during their hectic touring schedules.

Although their present focus is music, all three have plans to attend college. For now, school must wait. Instead, they look forward to starring in a new Pepsi commercial set to air in October, and, of course, they are looking forward to making more music.

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Student Life

Need talented, dedicated players! CSUSM Soccer Team. \$100 entrance fee. So far, 12 games scheduled. Practice Fridays 10 a.m. @ school; Contact Brad Schmidt, ASI Office.

Start your own Fraternity!

Zeta Beta Tau is looking for men to start a new Chapter. If you are interested in academic success, a chance to network, and an opportunity to make friends in a non-pledging Brotherhood, e-mail: zbt@zbtnational.org or call (800) 431-9674.

Miscellaneous

Egg Donors Needed

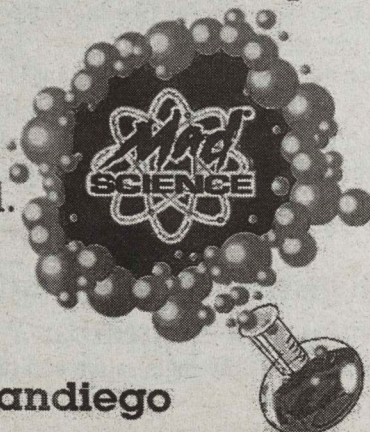
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EDITORIAL

It's official. Commencement 2002 will take place at the Del Mar Fairgrounds.

While we applaud the university's efforts in reconsidering its decision to make Palomar College the site for graduation (after many student and faculty complaints), we, like many other graduating seniors at Cal State San Marcos, are disappointed that we will be unable to graduate on campus.

At the ASI Executive Board of Director's meeting on Friday, Aug. 1, students were told that the opportunity for commencement at the university was "completely gone," according to Vice President of Student Affairs, Francine Martinez.

Although the university has already made its decision, we want to speak out and let the university know how its decision will affect students.

Dr. Martinez said she sympathized with the frustrated students present at the meeting and said that if a student poll were taken, she would bet that 100 percent of students would say they wanted graduation on campus. We also feel that most seniors will be upset with the university's decision.

Co-editor, Melanie Addington, for example, is graduating from the university this year with a B.A. in Literature

and Writing Studies. Addington graduated from home school for her high school degree, and never had the chance to attend a graduation.

At Palomar College, Addington received her A.A., but did not attend the ceremony, believing that most important, for her, would be the walk during her graduation from a four-year university. When she found out that she would not be graduating on campus, Addington felt that after years of hard work, and twice disappointed parents, every moment she had worked up to until her last semester was for nothing.

It may seem a small detail, graduating at a racetrack, but many students, like Addington, feel that the big moments in life, such as college graduation, should not be substituted with a disappointing consolation location.

At the BOD meeting, Martinez explained some of the reasons why CSUSM could not be utilized. The parking lots and Mangrum Track were considered graduation venues. The lots, however, were designed for drainage purposes, causing a slight slant and could also become hot during commencement. If the specific problem with the parking lots was a slight slant, we are sure the university would have taken the necessary steps to take precautions and ensure

public safety. Right?

We have, after all, gone through afternoon blastings on campus, and adjusting to our college surroundings and its many transformations is a part of the CSUSM experience.

Martinez said that the campus could not guarantee the safety of people in the parking lots due to the slight slant.

"It may seem a small detail, graduating at a racetrack ..."

However, the university has made an attempt to ensure our safety from rocks again flying through the classrooms, so why couldn't this dilemma be solved?

As to the heat, we understand it will be hot if graduation took place on the parking lot, but it will also be hot at the Del Mar Fairgrounds.

The other on-campus venue, the track, would have cost too much money (approximately \$300,000-\$500,000 to prep the area). However, if the university must spend money on the students, isn't commencement the best reason? This special occasion, after all, is the entire point for those of us that pour our money and time into the educational experience at Cal State. And while \$300,000 - \$500,000 seems like a great deal of money, it's nothing compared to the approximately \$3.6 million the university is spending to

replace computers which were already working. While we applaud the university for donating many of the old computers, we can't help but wonder why spending even \$500,000 for commencement is such an issue. We believe many students here would much prefer to walk on their own campus than type papers while staring at nifty new flat-screen monitors.

Some administrators consider students at this campus customers. We were always taught that the customer is always right. If 100 percent of us had the opportunity to vote on an on-campus graduation, regardless of cost, would our 6,000 voices have been loud enough for the university to hear?

Three students definitely have had a say, though. The graduation committee that first researched and suggested the grad venues was made up of mostly faculty and staff, with only three students: one who graduated last year, on campus, and two others who will be graduating this year. At the BOD meeting, Martinez did make it clear that the three students urged the committee to explore every possible option to have graduation on campus, and she said, "It was a difficult decision for the committee."

We truly hope the university honestly took all venue options into consideration. Regardless of cost. Because as student Laura Derungs said, it's truly a difficult decision to swallow.

HAVE AN OPINION?

SUBMIT A LETTER TO THE EDITORS TO PRIDE@CSUSM.EDU

Letters should be submitted via electronic mail to *The Pride* electronic mail account, rather than the individual editors. Deadline For submissions is noon the Thursday prior to publication. Letters to the editors should include an address, telephone number, e-mail and identification. It is *The Pride* policy to not print anonymous letters. Letters may be edited for, and only for, grammar and length. 300 words or less preferred. Editors reserve the right not to publish letters. Please contact *The Pride* if you are interested in writing news articles.

Letters to the Editor

Economic Leadership

Let me start by reviewing some facts. Fact number one, the U.S. economy (to put it bluntly) bites at the moment, particularly the computer industry. Fact number two, flat panels are more expensive than traditional computer monitors; a typical 17-inch monitor can be found for about \$200, a typical 17-inch flat panel costs \$1,500 (source, www.dell.com). Fact number three, the monitors in the main computer lab and library were replaced with flat panels.

It may be tempting to view the extra \$1,200 spent on each flat panel as a waste of our tuition. I believe however that during this time of economic slowdown, we must thank our administrators for their economic leadership, and their efforts to spend every penny they can get their hands on.

As an employee in the particularly slow telecommunication industry, I find this leadership particularly exciting. If we could get public schools everywhere to follow in CSUSM's footsteps, the economic stimulus should get the manufacturing and computer industries rolling again, and give the economy a much needed jump start.

Furthermore, as anyone involved with government budgets knows, a penny saved is a penny cut from next year's budget. Therefore, again I must thank our fearless leaders at CSUSM for keeping the spending up, so that there will be plenty of money in the budget for next year.

I cannot wait to see what our leaders at CSUSM can come up with next.

Sincerely,
David Ludwig

STUDENT POLL

Was there any hassle for you this first week of school? If so, what?

*Results from last week's poll on the online edition.

3/18	No
8/18	Yes, parking
1/18	Yes, crashing classes
5/18	Yes, waking up
1/18	Other

Have an opinion but don't have time to write? Check out our student poll online at: www.csusmpride.com

Suicide Attempt Destroys Student's Beliefs

By LISA LIPSEY
Pride Opinion Editor

I am a great believer in the concept that human beings are inherently good. I trust that people can, and in most cases do, make decisions with concern for other human life. However, after reading the news report about a suicide attempt Tuesday, Aug. 25, my beliefs were ripped to shreds.

The Associate Press reported: "A woman leaped off a 160-foot-high bridge Tuesday after authorities closed a busy interstate because passing motorists were yelling at her to jump."

The 28-year-old woman, whose name was not released, was rescued and taken to a hospital, where she remains in critical condition.

The woman was on the southbound side of the Interstate 5 bridge, over the Ship Canal, near the University of Washington.

"Jump, bitch, jump!" is what she heard. "We had motorists, truckers, and people in a Metro bus, screaming at her to jump," Diaz said. John Diaz, Assistant Police Chief, called it "a very disturbing trend."

I am amazed that people watching a suicide attempt could do such a thing, as if they were spectators at a sporting event. Shame on them. How can people be so cruel, so evil?

This go-ahead-and-jump crowd encouragement is far from a first time occurrence. What

do multiple occurrences of this type of event say about our tolerance for people with mental health issues? Or could it be that people are so wrapped up in their busy schedules that they can only think of how the distraught woman on the bridge is holding up their day?

It used to be that people would just turn their backs, and ignore cries for help. In New York, during the 1950s, the story of a woman stabbed to death in the streets made national headlines. No one bothered to call the police. Now, Americans have moved from refusing to help, or perhaps only engaging in apathy, to encouraging the destruction of human life.

This type of verbal assault mainly occurs when people are in large groups, where they will not be singled out and held accountable for their actions. I do not hold dear the thoughts of Alexander Hamilton, (first U.S. Secretary of State) but this incident certainly proves the phrase, "The masses are asses."

I imagine her mind and heart will be the last to recover. She may not always remember what onlookers said, but she will always remember how they made her feel. She has to live with her own justifications for wanting to end her life and the knowledge that numerous individuals, who did not know a thing about her, saw her as a burden, supported her decision, and spoke words of hate. Think before you speak.

The Pride

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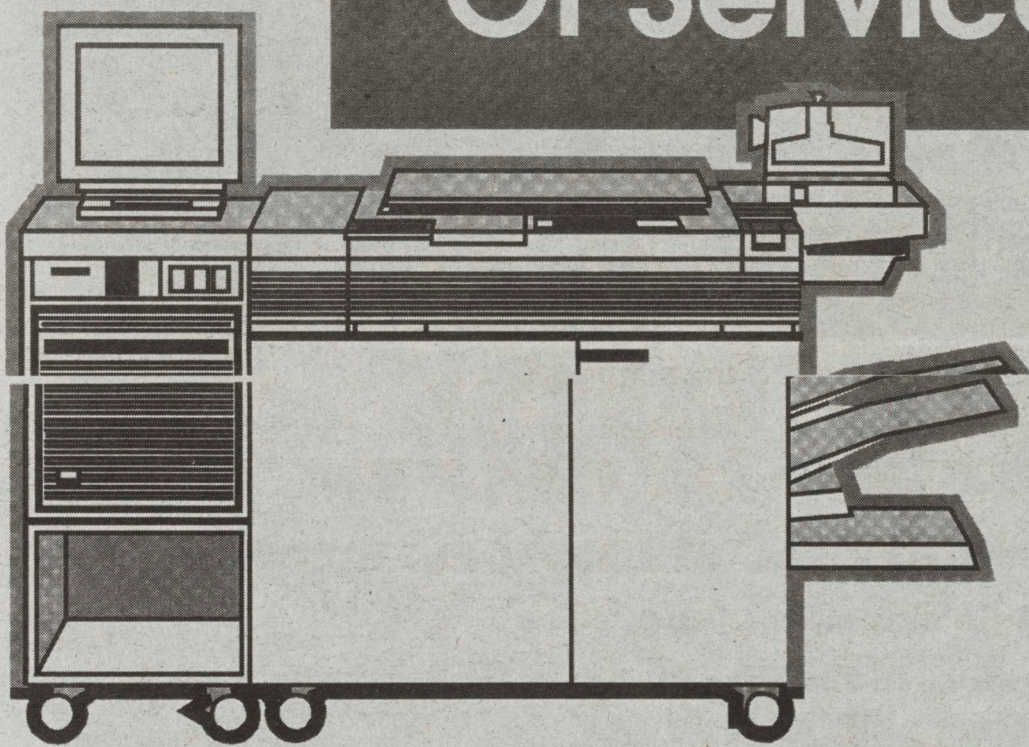
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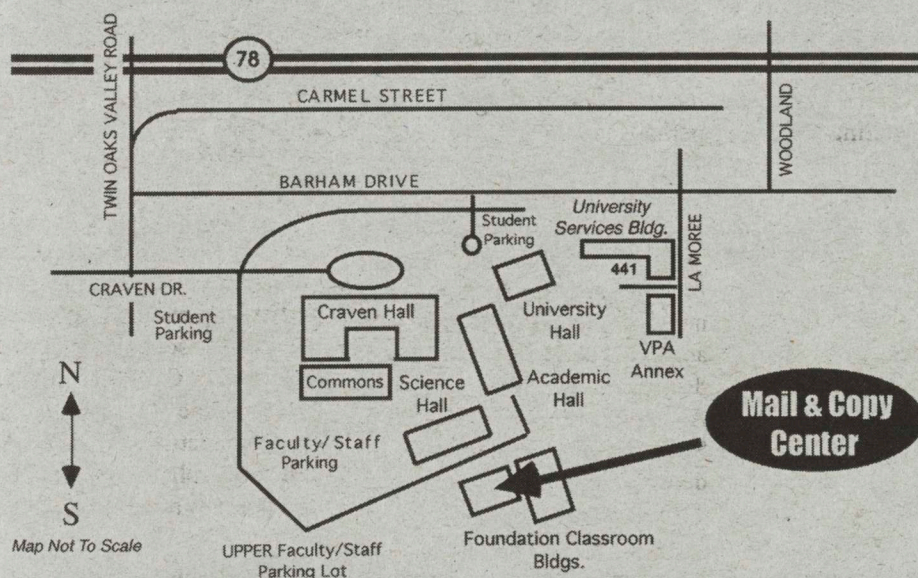
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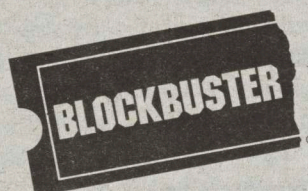
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