



TRAVELING FOR THE HOLIDAYS? PREPARE YOURSELF FOR TSA SEARCHES

BY DEVONNE EDORA
PRIDE STAFF WRITER

As the holidays approach, students gear up to go back home. For those who live further away, flying on an airplane is the fastest way to get there. Traveling by plane, especially during the holidays, can be a stressful time. The Transport Security Administration (TSA) has bulked its security and have even experienced a backlash from the infamous "pat-downs." To help make the trip smoother, familiarize yourself now with TSA's rules and regulations.

In light of the events of Sept. 11, John Pistole, Administrator of the TSA, advocated that elevated airport security is crucial. Pistole said, "Nothing is more important to me than the safety of the traveling public."

This has caused more stringent security and check points at airports which have created discomforts with travelers. What students can do to ensure a more enjoyable trip is to know what the TSA does and doesn't prohibit. TSA has announced that their security personnel will ex-

tensively x-ray carry-on items. They suggest travelers follow a few rules to enhance efficiency.

Follow the 3-1-1 rule for carry-ons. Travelers should have only one quart-sized clear, plastic zip bag that only contains 3 oz. of liquids or gels on board the aircraft. Declare larger liquids if necessary. Gifts should be unwrapped, as TSA has clearance to unwrap any suspicious items. When going through security screenings, try to pack jackets in checked baggage or wear easily removable clothes and shoes to keep the line moving. Set aside items that may set off the metal detectors such as keys, jewelry, or PDAs.

Don't pack oversized electronics like laptops in checked baggage. Bring them along as carry-ons. However, be ready to remove them for separate x-ray screenings. Always have your boarding pass and ID ready at all times. This way, shuffling for your ID won't slow down the screening process. Carry-on luggage should never contain sharp objects like knives or razors. They should all be checked in before boarding.

Lastly, the TSA advises

when in doubt, leave it out.

Tiffany-Raven Peters, a senior at CSUSM, just recently traveled home to Toronto, Canada and experienced the TSA security measures.

Her experience traveling to and from Canada were very different. Peters said, "Coming back from Toronto was much more strict entering back to the United States. I had to take off my school sweatshirt and they even searched my bags. I even got a pat-down by female security personnel."

Security asked Peters to step aside, and they went through her make-up and toiletries. "They were especially eyeballing my MAC foundations, but thankfully they let me keep that, but I had to throw out my Shea butter lotion." When asked about her feelings regarding the pat-down, she added, "I do understand the security measures that they took. However, I do believe that they need to be careful in differentiating security and invasion of personal space."



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CSUSM STUDENT RECEIVES PRESTIGIOUS SCHOLARSHIP

HOLLY GERRITY TO REPRESENT CSUSM IN DUBAI

BY AMY SALISBURY
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

College scholarships remain the elusive goal for many young people as they plan their university studies. Academic and athletic scholarships make up the majority of types of awards available for gifted students. The daunting task of searching for college funding is tedious, and many

students abandon the investigation when a scholarship appears too exclusive or intimidating.

However, a bit of digging will produce mountains of gold, as CSUSM senior Holly Gerrity discovered. Gerrity received the William Jefferson Clinton Scholarship, and was one of only 10 students nationwide to collect the award. According to the scholarship's website, Ger-

ritty will attend the American University in Dubai and "further the goals of the Clinton Presidential Foundation to strengthen the capacity of people in the United States and throughout the world to meet the challenges of global interdependence."

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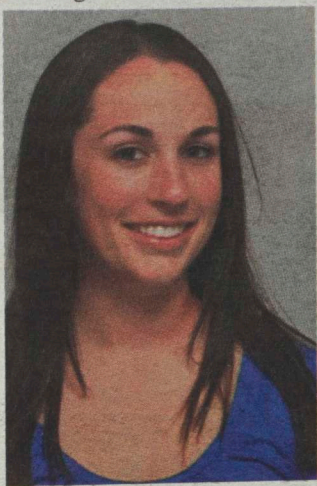


PHOTO COURTESY OF HOLLY GERRITY



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WHERE DOES ALL OF OUR TUITION GO?

THE HIDDEN BENEFITS STUDENTS DON'T KNOW ABOUT

BY SANDRA CHALMERS
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

The tuition fee students pay each semester covers more than just academic classes. Programs and services CSUSM offers its students are funded and operated by portions of paid tuition.

Thinking about a gym membership, but worried about the sky-high monthly rates? A portion of the University Student Union (USU) fee covers a semester long gym membership to the Clarke Field House. Included in students' tuition is an ASI student recreation fee of \$12 that serves in conjunction with the gym membership at the Clarke that provides free fitness classes. Students can enjoy hip-hop, Ashtanga Yoga, cycling, Jiu-Jitsu, and Zumba salsa lessons at the Clarke all semester long.

"The goal of ASI events and programs is never to make a profit for ASI, but rather to pro-

vide diverse opportunities for all CSUSM students to engage in campus life in ways that help them experience a sense of community with their fellow students and feel connected to the university," said Rodger D'Andréas, Interim Executive Director for ASI.

The \$50 ASI fee funds our favorite semester dance events, the Masquerade Ball and the Spring Fling, while also supporting diverse programs made to service the students.

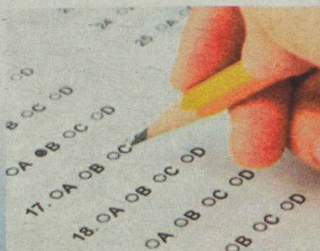
"These fees fund student programming provided by the ASI Board of Directors, Campus Activities Board, Women's Center, and LGBTQ Pride Center," continued D'Andréas.

"What ASI does for the students and what it pays for is ASI as the official voice of the students, according to the chancellor of the CSU."

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From, **TUITION**, page 1

We represent you, at larger scales, and meet with other CSUs every month and talk about the issues our students are facing," said Amanda Riley, the current Vice President of External Affairs for ASI.

ASI responded to students' needs as finals week fasts approaches. Susana Figueroa, ASI President, met with President Haynes and library officials to extend our library hours. The library now offers special extended hours on the 2nd floor, from 6 a.m to midnight Monday - Thursday, Dec. 6 - 9.

"It was really something I felt our school was behind on. Other school's libraries are open for 24 hours during finals," said Figueroa.

Another main portion of tuition supports our USU.

"The \$140 that is notated as the "Student Union Fee" is tied to both The Clarke, which currently serves as both a Student Union and a Field House, and the future USU construction project," said Sara Quinn, Director of the Clarke Field House, and the Executive Director of the University Student Union Advisory Board.

This new building will be located west of the Chavez

Steps on the old parking lot T, next to the Kellogg Library.

"We anticipate starting construction once all building code approvals are complete around February 2012 and completion of construction in August of 2013 and occupancy no later than Spring semester 2014," said Bradly Fenton, Director of Planning, Design and Construction.

"We expect the USU will be a very wonderful place on campus and a place all students will be proud to call their own," continued Fenton.

Other valued services paid by our tuition include the Student Health and Counseling Center.

No co-payments are required to schedule an appointment. Services offered to students include flu treatment, cold, sinus infections, pregnancy testing, physical exams and much more. Additional lab work may require a supplementary fee.

Many of these fees were voted on and approved by past CSUSM students through fee referendums.

FEES YOU MAY NOT KNOW YOU'VE ALREADY PAID*

~ASI fee \$50

~ASI Student Recreation fee \$12

~Academic Record fee \$11

~Athletics fee \$60

~Childcare Service fee \$10

~Field House Recreation fee \$12

~Health Facilities fee \$25

~Health Services fee \$70

~Instructionally Related Activities fee \$5

~IRA Campus Recreation Program \$11

~Student Union fee \$140

~State University Undergraduate fee \$2,220

*Fees reflect full-time student status, according to mycsusm.edu

From, **SCHOLARSHIP**, page 1

Amy Salisbury: You received this award pretty recently. Has the excitement worn off, or are you now focused on looking forward to arriving in Dubai?

Holly Gerrity: Surprisingly, the excitement still hasn't hit me because this opportunity is very surreal - I've never been out of the United States so I'm still trying to wrap my head around this adventure. I'm sure reality will hit when I step foot on the airplane.

A.S.: I'm sure it will! The scholarship is very prestigious and select. What parts of your experience at CSUSM contributed to your selection as a recipient?

H.G.: My faculty mentor, Dr. Elizabeth Matthews, has always supported all of my endeavors, so I definitely attribute my success to her support. Dr. Matthews goes above and beyond her duties by reading my statements of purpose, scholarship essays, and writing samples. Without Dr. Matthews's assistance, it's quite possible that I would not have been selected for this scholarship. Moreover, the CSUSM Political Science Department has an amazing group of faculty that have all contributed to my love for political science. These professors have challenged me to think both critically and creatively, and this has enabled me

to flourish in my field of study.

A.S.: You've been involved in CSUSM's Political Science Club and participated in a Model United Nations Conference. How have these experiences prepared you for political study in Dubai?

H.G.: Both Model United Nations and the Political Science Club have provided me with opportunities to gain background knowledge on the Middle East through club events. But what has best prepared me for studying in Dubai are the numerous CSUSM political science courses I have taken regarding Iraqi politics, terrorism, and the Middle East Peace Process.

A.S.: How do you think exposure to politics in an American classroom will differ from hands-on foreign policy study in the Middle East?

H.G.: Compared to American classes, I believe that my classes in the Dubai will more often reference religious beliefs as an influential factor in politics. Also, I have not had the opportunity to learn about the Gulf States in the Middle East (countries next to the Persian Gulf) so I believe that my courses in Dubai will give me insight into the politics of these countries. In America, it seems we only learn about countries that we have interests with (e.g., Israel, Iraq, Iran), so it will be interesting to learn about

other Middle Eastern countries that are often overlooked like Oman, Bahrain, Kuwait, etc.

A.S.: What sparked your interest in applying for the scholarship?

H.G.: I stumbled upon this scholarship when I was looking for fellowships to pay for graduate school. Many universities host large databases of external scholarships and I used these databases to find an array of scholarships/ fellowships. The Clinton Scholarship caught my eye because the program takes place in Dubai; one of my professors always show us pictures of Dubai so I thought it would be a great opportunity to get some first-hand experience in the region that I study.

A.S.: What are you looking forward to most during your semester in Dubai?

H.G.: The American University in Dubai (AUD) has quite a diverse student body, so I'm looking forward to meeting students from other countries. I'm sure it will be an eye-opening experience to hear what other international students think of United States foreign policy. Also, I'm definitely looking forward to meeting President Clinton! I'm planning on having President Clinton sign an op-ed that he penned this November on the Middle East Peace Process.

A.S.: Do your ca-

reer goals involve politics?

H.G.: My career goal is to become a professor, but I definitely would not dismiss a great career opportunity from the Department of Defense or the State Department. Within academia there exists a debate regarding the gap between theoretical work produced by academics and policy work produced by the government, so I hope I can bridge that gap by producing academic literature that can be used in the political arena.

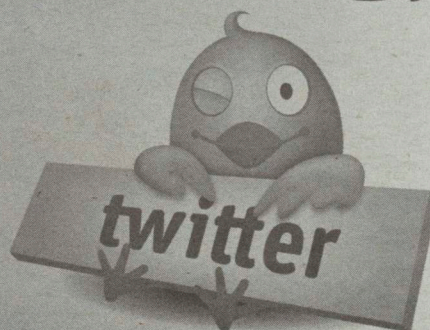
A.S.: What other parts of the globe do you believe your studies will take you to?

H.G.: My hope is that I can soon visit Israel - it would be invaluable to experience the wealth of history in that region of the world. Also, I find that people do not realize that Muslim countries do not exclusively reside in the Middle East, thus I would like to visit Muslim countries in other regions of the world like North Africa and South-East Asia.

BACKGROUND IMAGE COURTESY OF BLUEBIRDJUNIOR.COM

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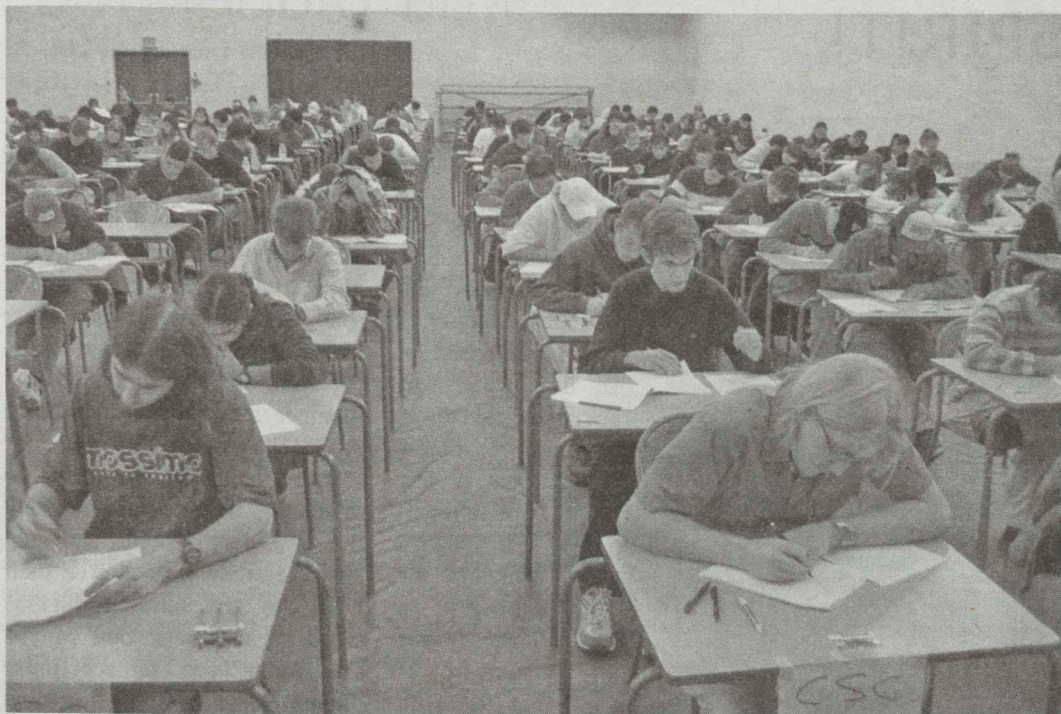


PHOTO COURTESY OF CNAPRACTICETEST.NET

STUDY TIPS FOR CRUNCH TIME

BY DEVONNE EDORA
PRIDE STAFF WRITER

It's that time of the year when the aroma of caffeine wafts through the corridors, students clad themselves in sweats, and the feeling of sleep deprivation permeates the air. 'Tis the season of final exams.

Finals are the last way for our professors to know if we have been paying attention all semester. If you've been sleeping instead, well, this might be the last chance at getting that A—or C. As a senior at CSUSM, I've been reflecting on what has helped me get through finals week. With age comes wisdom, so they say, and while I don't claim to be a professional test taker, I've narrowed down some tried and true tactics that I wish I had known my freshman year.

Tip #1: First, study early. Procrastinating is not key. I know firsthand that being prepared ahead of time is a luxury that a night-before cram session cannot compare to.

Tip #2: Socializing Ends. Trust me, no one else wants to be studying, so they will try everything else instead of that. Studying is now the priority, so shut off your cell phone, deactivate your Facebook, or hibernate in the library. I try to find a place where I can collect my thoughts peacefully so more gets accomplished.

Tip #3: Study Groups. Depending on the subject, I sometimes try out

a study group. However, I don't go in expecting they will teach me everything. Doing this will make either you or someone in the group very frustrated. Instead, I review what I know, and then work with the group to gain their perspectives on the subject. This way I have someone to help correct me if I'm wrong, or vice versa.

Tip #4: Figure out the test format. This is my favorite tip because it helps narrow down my studying and what I need to study. I always ask the professors the format of the finals. The same idea applies if you're only being tested on things learnt recently or the cumulative of the course material, because no one wants to study more than they have to.

Tip #5: Food and Rest. Once I'm in the zone, it gets really hard to make sure I'm taking breaks. Well-being is important because, while you may understand the material better, taking the test half awake is never good. Your essay may start nice and straight and become chicken scratch by the second page. Eat foods that will give you a natural boost of energy like oatmeal, apples and citrus fruits. Salmon is also known to be helpful in improving mental function, giving you an excuse to make that study break into a sushi date. For coffee drinkers, try drinking it around 20 minutes before the exam to let the caffeine properly take affect.

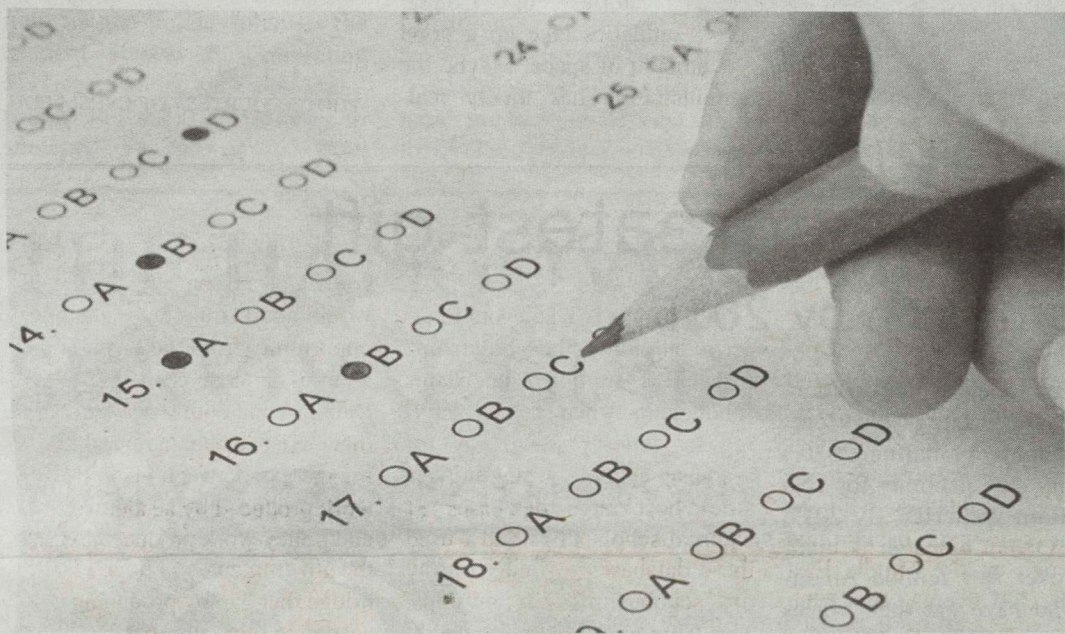


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CALIFORNICATION

A SEMESTER ABROAD

BY SUSANNE BERGSTEN
PRIDE STAFF WRITER

As an exchange student from England, I did not know what to expect coming to Cal State San Marcos or the U.S. in general. With that said, I also have to mention that I have had the time of my life.

The first thing I noticed is that everything in the U.S. is way bigger: the cars, the roads, the malls, stores, portions of food, etc. The Mexican influence here can be compared to the Indian influence back home; we have loads of Indian food places while barely any Mexican places whatsoever.

Cars here are just massive. Trucks are not at all popular back home, and having one would just make it impossible to find a parking spot as we parallel park a lot. I also realized the necessity of having a car. Back home, public transportation is very good, so you don't really need a car. Buses, trains and subways are cheap and well maintained. They run regularly, not like the

sprinter which just runs twice an hour. Here, you can barely get to a grocery store without a car, while back home, I'd rather walk than drive. Finding a parking spot would be too much of a hassle.

When I first arrived, I asked myself, why do I have to buy books and live with only girls? In England, I barely ever needed to buy books for school as most of the course books could be found in the library. The teachers do not expect their students to buy all the books.

Also, the double spacing and sourcing is new to me. We use the Harvard referencing system, not the MLA or APA. One of my teachers told me in the beginning of the semester, "Sweetie, your essay is a bit long, about twice as long as it has to be." I forgot to double space because I'm not used to it and wrote seven regular pages instead of seven double spaced!

The dorms here are very different too, way more expensive and in England we have co-ed rooms and RAs.

Upon arriving in California, I realized football isn't soccer here. Sports in the U.S. are different, as soccer, which we call football, is essentially the national sport in England. American Football and baseball are much bigger, and we don't even have those in England. Surfing is also something that is barely possible with the tiny waves and super cold water in the British Isles.

The best difference though is the weather. England is cold and it rains a lot. (At the moment it's 30 or so Fahrenheit in England, so the last thing I want to do is to go back.) It is quite different being able to go to school in shorts and flip flops here compared to rubber boots and coats back in England.

I also like that there is always something to do here: music festivals, concerts and great nightlife. The funny thing is that we can drink when we are 18 back home but also have to wait until we are 18 to drive while here you have to be 21 to drink but can drive when you are 16.

Both movies and music come out here way before they do at home. I recently heard that "G6" by Far East Movement just started playing in clubs back home, and I also noticed I cannot buy certain songs on iTunes here because they have not been released back home yet and my account is connected to my English address.

When I came here, I didn't think people actually played beerpong. Back home we only see it as something Americans do in teenage movies, and we never play it. That is something that I for sure will take with me back home and do with my friends.

I think my exposure to all things American has changed me a lot, and I will truly miss SoCal. I've had the time of my life, and going on exchange is the best decision I've ever made. I would encourage anyone to go, as traveling and meeting new people is just awesome.

PHOTO COURTESY OF SUSANNE BERGSTEN



SHOW ME SOME SCHOOL SPIRIT! COUGAR PRIDE: DOES IT EXIST?

BY AARON JAFFE
PRIDE STAFF WRITER

California State University San Marcos has no identity. Quite a bold statement, yes?

Over the last seven years, I have clicked the student button in every survey that asks me what my occupation is. I am looking forward to clicking that button for a few more years given the declining rate of necessary classes being provided at reasonable times. I enjoy being a student and dealing with the real world on my own terms. The one thing I do not enjoy is the daily grind that is campus life (or lack thereof) at CSUSM.

In my travels as a student, I have been to many campuses, both in state and out of state. At each and every single campus I visit, I come away with one con-

stant: the students at other schools are proud of their schools. More often than not, this pride is a direct result of the athletic performances of their teams, whether students are sports fans or not.

Are you proud of CSUSM? For me, the answer is short and succinct: no.

I am not proud of how few of my Cougar students, faculty, and administrators I see supporting their fellow colleagues or students in both athletic and non-athletic endeavors. I am not proud of



those of us that look at school like a trip to the grocery store with the “get in and get out” type mentality instead of helping build our campus identity. I am not proud of how many of us have to dump our blood, sweat, and tears to represent CSUSM without the support of those they represent. In the Fall/Winter issue of CSUSM’s alumni magazine, Steps, stories of Cougar athletics take up a good amount of space. Maybe the administration has finally real-

ized that they do not need to cram Cesar Chavez quotes and statues down our throats to unify us. Maybe they have finally realized that athletics are the glue that hold campus pride together and help new people get stuck in.

What are you going to remember about being a student at CSUSM when you graduate?

My challenge to you is to take some time out of your hectic schedule to go out and support the students that give their hearts to representing CSUSM week in and week out. Maybe you might just replace those memories of walking up and down stairs with having some fun at a game. You might even find some Cougar pride in the process.

PHOTO COURTESY OF CSUSM.EDU

HIV awareness and progress greatest gift ONE petitions to eradicate HIV transmission by 2015

BY DANNY CASTRO
CONTRIBUTOR

We humans tend to try to find differences between each other and end up segregating based on trivial differences. This holiday season, I decided to see what kind of differences there are in the desires of people that are “different” from one another by asking them what they want for Christmas. Granted, my sample is very small, but perhaps something can be illustrated.

Politics and religion have proven to be wonderful tools for discrimination. I’m aware that there are more viewpoints than I am listing and of the increasing trend against the pigeonholing of people, but I went with the obvious and went ahead and classified. I asked a conservative what he wanted for Christmas: Microsoft Office 2011 for Mac. What do you want for Christmas, my liberal friend? Well, my liberal friend told me she wanted me, which is probably not so typical of a liberal. Good luck with that.

I searched for atheists to see what their Christmas wishes were, but alas, they are hard to find these days. I made do with an agnostic and a Christian. I thought for a second that maybe my agnostic friend would tell me that he didn’t know what he wanted for Christmas, but instead he told me he didn’t want anything. I thought that was what the atheist wanted. And for you, Christian friend, what would you like for Jesus’s birthday? She wants gift certificates to go shopping. I expected more for such an important day. My Jewish friend told me I was silly for asking him what he wants for Christmas.

What do a Caucasian, an African American, a Latino, and a couple of Asian girls have in

common? I don’t know, but I asked them what they want for Christmas. My white friend wants a Hello Kitty bowling ball. My black friend wants shoes. My brown friend wants a pedal board, and my Asian girlfriends want a car and a surprise, respectively. I guess I do know what those people have in common after all: they literally have wishes.

Finally, I asked a homosexual person and a heterosexual person what they want for Christmas. They both said they want sex. I hope they enjoy safely. According to USAid.gov, it is estimated that 5,500 people die every day from AIDS, one third of which are living in sub-Saharan Africa. None of us were given the choice to be born in the circumstances we were born in—we could have just as well been born into extreme poverty. We should put ourselves in their shoes, and most of them probably don’t even have shoes.

We humans are not so different from one another after all. The trivial differences in the kinds of gifts we want illustrate the trivial differences we invent to segregate ourselves. We are all human.

It wasn’t my intention to make it seem as if my friends and their Christmas wishes are representative of the groups they identify with—obviously, that isn’t the case. I’ll tell you this though, and the birthday boy said it best: “it is more blessed to give than to receive.”

This holiday season, in the spirit of giving, you should consider giving your voice to help those who need it most. 31,000 babies will get HIV in December for Christmas because their mothers have HIV. We now have the medicine and treatment to prevent HIV from spreading from mother to child. By giving your voice, you can help get this

treatment to those that need it. Please visit one.org (www.one.org/us/actnow/globalfund2010/) to sign the petition for No Child Born with HIV By 2015.

The ONE Campaign is made up of over two million Americans who have put their voices together as ONE to keep our leaders accountable when they make promises to help the poorest people in the planet. ONE petitions have raised awareness, and our voices are being heard. In 2008, 50,000 ONE members petitioned Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to respond to the food crisis in developing countries and helped keep the crisis on the 2008 New York UN Summit agenda. As a result, world leaders pledged to commit \$1.6 billion to fill in the funding gap.

Join Bono and company in making your voice heard to keep our government accountable to its promises by making this a world where children being born with HIV is a thing of the past by 2015. As different as we make ourselves out to be, if President George W. Bush and President Barack Obama can agree on this issue, I think everyone can too.

The U.S. and all 192 United Nations member states have already agreed to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015 (goals include eradicating extreme poverty, reducing child mortality rates, and fighting disease epidemics such as AIDS). Our voices serve as a reminder to our leaders that we care about those issues, that we put ourselves in the shoes of the poorest people who cannot even afford shoes, that we know any one of us could have been born into such circumstances and that we wouldn’t want that for anyone, and, finally, that we do not think getting HIV for Christmas is ever OK.



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POST HOLIDAY BLUES

BY REBEKAH GREEN
PRIDE STAFF WRITER

The holiday break is a time to celebrate. People, for all sorts of reasons, express excitement over holiday traditions, family gatherings, or excitement over the Winter Break.

For many though, the holidays arrive with an unwelcome guest: the holiday blues. These blues seem like an issue easily remedied, but in many cases, it can lead to much more serious problems. The stress of holiday shopping, a whirlwind of family gatherings and the inability to visit family and can be a couple of factors that accumulate to holiday blues. Particularly with students, the stress of dealing with the end of the semester added to these issues can easily contribute to the blues.

A good source to seek for help for the holiday blues is the Student Health & Counseling Services, which provides counseling and medical services to students, located across from

campus along Craven Road.

According to The National Mental Health Association, some effects of the holiday blues include over-eating, drinking, sleeping problems and other issues that can cause bodily and emotional discomfort. A large amount of those afflicted with holiday blues experience it following the new year. Psychology Today lists a few ways to lessen the blues this season including making sure not to set too busy a schedule especially in the already hectic times of the winter season, and remembering that holidays always change each year, and nothing will stay the same, therefore try to accommodate new plans/activities for the winter break each year.

There are plenty of ways to get involved during the holidays too: charity events, local Christmas events, and many forms of community service.

The holiday blues are common in individuals, but from these blues stems a more serious

issue. The National Institute of Mental Health, lists Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) as one of the major forms of depression. It states that this disorder takes effect during the winter season, primarily due to the fact that there is less sunlight. Depression, unlike the common blues, is something that may need more attention than simple remedies. Seeking help is not something to be ashamed of. In the end one can only benefit from ridding of the winter blues. Another cure for the com-

mon holiday blues has no price attached. Maintaining a positive attitude is a very common and often easy way to overcome difficult times. Remember that the holidays do not have to be hectic and stressful or lonely

and sad. Create schedules that work well with your time. Seek out activities on campus, within, or around the community.

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THE HANGOVER SURVIVAL GUIDE

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO PREVENT PRAYERS TO THE PORCELAIN GOD

BY DEVONNE EDORA
PRIDE STAFF WRITER

While I don't endorse consuming large amounts of alcohol, it is possibly an experience that many college students may or have come across. As the semester is slowly coming to a close, end of year festivities start popping up in abundance. So to keep feeling in tip top shape the next day, it doesn't hurt to keep handy a few hangover cures to help ease the rough morning after.

Naturally, the best way to not having a hangover is not to consume alcoholic beverages. Regardless of your alcohol tolerance level, not taking a drink ensures no aches and pains, period. According to besthangovercure.com, alcohol is a diuretic that

leads to dehydration in the body. This is the main culprit in causing all the symptoms: headaches, tiredness, sensitivity or nausea. They suggest a few remedies that will hopefully alleviate some of the symptoms.

Eat a balanced meal: You should eat a meal before drinking to help with alcohol absorption. In the morning, eat eggs as they contain cysteine, and it breaks down the acetaldehyde that alcohol consumption leaves in the body. Fruit is great at speeding up your intake of vitamins that will

increase your body's activity in flushing out the toxins. Taking a multivitamin can help support your body's stability. You want your body to metabolize the alcohol faster. If you find that eating solids feels too much at the time, soup is an alternative and is better than not eating at all.

Fluids:

Drinking lots of fluids will greatly decrease the effects of over-drinking. Lifescript.com recommends consuming large doses of water. Sports drinks are helpful, especially if you vomited the night before. Try drinking Gatorade, as it can replenish the electrolytes you've lost and rehydrate the body. Coffee is the common drink of choice the morning after drinking.

However, while it may help relieve headaches, it is only temporary in removing symptoms. The "hair of the dog" trick, where you have another alcoholic drink is never helpful and only prolongs the inevitable.

Rest: Get plenty of rest. Your body has undergone plenty of activity so the best way is to sleep and gain back your energy.

Again, the best way to not have any hangover is to not drink at all or know your limits with alcohol. If the situation calls for drinking, at least now you know some ways to help your body and give your liver a break.



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10 Classes to Take before You Graduate

A survey of classes that promote social awareness and life enjoyment

BY ASHLEY DAY

PRIDE STAFF WRITER

Many students are leaving CSUSM soon, but have not fulfilled all their graduation requirements. Before they step into the “real” world, here are some classes that stimulate the mind and propel them toward graduation day. Each class is followed, in parentheses, by the undergraduate requirement it fulfills.

Philosophy 110: Critical Thinking (A3)

Philosophy 110 explores approaches to nature and logic as well as rational arguments and fallacies used in everyday conversations. This class makes one think about different ways people argue and how they cannot really support their arguments.

GES 105: Intro to Physical Science (B1)

Let's face it. Many of us are scientifically challenged. GES 105 is a general science class intended for people that are not too “science savvy.” This class provides a conceptual viewpoint to different aspects of physical science.

FMST 100: Intro to Cinema (C1)

Intro to Cinema is a fine art requirement class. It is one of the eleven class options CSUSM offers in fine arts. The class explores the four elements of cinema: categories, structures, theories and production of cinema. This is a class for film junkies and people interested in learning about the world of movies.

WMST 205: Gender & Identity in Pop Culture and the Media (C2)

This women's studies class surveys the way pop culture and the media have shaped gender roles, sexuality and

race through the generations. This course is available to fulfill a humanities requirement. Women's studies courses are great for students looking to embrace the way women have developed modern day society.

ECON 202: Principles of Macroeconomics (D)

Economics courses are not only for business majors. We live in a capitalist country, so to make it in society, you need to understand the relationship between the U.S. economy and the world. Principles of Macroeconomics may not be everyone's “cup of tea,” but this class will help you learn about gross domestic products (GDP), inflation, unemployment, monetary policies and deficits.

ASTR 342: Elements of Astronomy (BB Math or Science)

Elements of Astronomy counts as an upper division math or sci-

ence graduation requirement. The course examines human knowledge of the solar systems, galaxies, and their relationships to Earth.

ANTH 380: Current Archaeology (DD Social Science)

This anthropology course delves into one anthropological subdivision: archaeology. Elements of Current Archaeology explores local archaeological sites and indigenous culture. This class piques the interest of people who would like to connect modern society with our biological ancestors.

PSYC 330: Developmental Psychology: Infant/Child (DD Social Science)

Most students may one day have children. It would be a great idea to start learning about children now. This upper division psychology class explores the aspects of physical and emo-

tional development of a child from conception to early life.

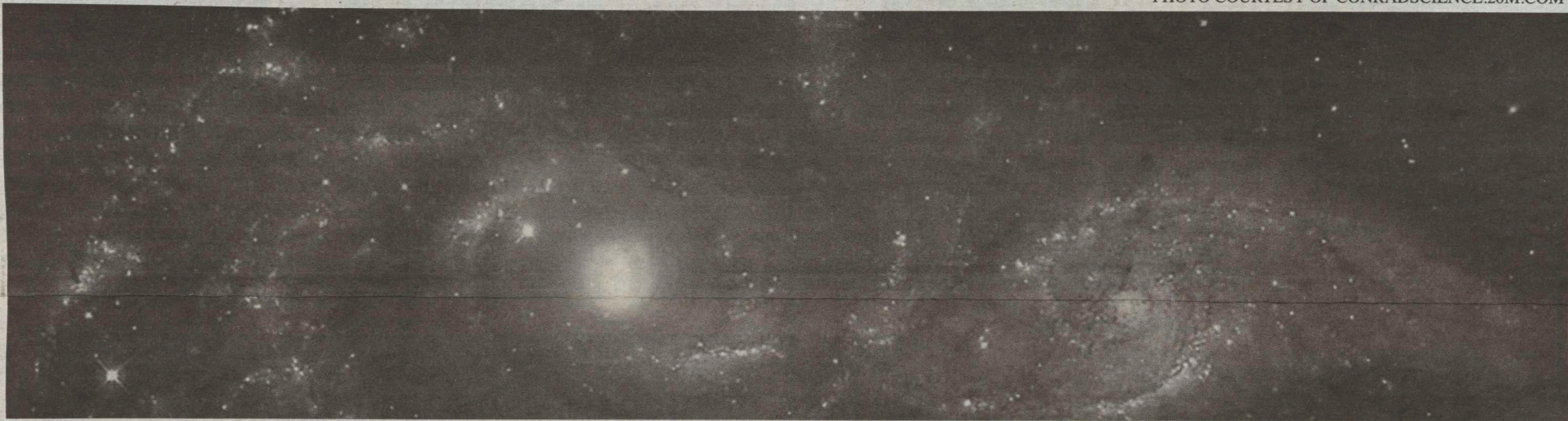
HIST 347: California History (DG Gov)

This history course provides an in depth look at different periods in the history of the Golden State. This includes periods of Spanish, Mexican and U.S. governance. The course also covers each government's relationship with the original inhabitants of this land.

TA 301: Intro to Acting

This is a three-unit course that may be repeated for up to nine units. Intro to Acting is a small class that allows the student to practice basic acting techniques and bring out their inner “drama king/queen.” During the semester, the student has to prepare their own monologue and scene to perform in front of the class. This is a course for those of us who always dreamed of being in the spotlight.

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TO COMMUTE OR NOT TO COMMUTE?

I AM A STUDENT AND A COMMUTER

BY DEVONNE EDORA
PRIDE STAFF WRITER

Students recognize CSUSM as a commuter school.

Our school's on-campus housing at the University Village Apartments (UVA) is only able to accommodate a total of about 500-600 students, from a total student body of about 9,142. Obviously, a great number of students end up having to commute to campus almost everyday. Luckily, students live in a wide variety of off-campus housing. Living in San Marcos isn't always the best financial choice for a student. So, commuting to school is the way to go.

Others may believe that commuting is hard for a variety of reasons. I don't think it takes anything away from being a college student. I got the chance to talk with two commuters and asked them what they thought about CSUSM's commuter campus. I spoke with Lia Alvarez, a sophomore who commutes from Fallbrook Monday through Thursday. Alvarez's schedule getting to school consists of waking up at 5 a.m. dropping off her daughter by 6, and trying to make the train that will transfer her to the Sprinter arriving at CSUSM. I

asked her why she didn't opt to drive to school. She replied, “I could drive [to CSUSM] and it would take me about an hour, but I don't like driving.” Especially if her husband isn't on deployment, Alvarez's only option is to take the train/Sprinter route to get to school. Downsides to commuting are that she has to be on schedule with everything. “If you miss the 306, you have to wait a long time [for the next] to come and you're going to be late,” Alvarez said. Students can take the Breeze bus, but it only comes twice every hour, compelling students to travel on foot to reach campus. While to some, this commute may seem tedious, a good amount of students do take the Sprinter to school. Alvarez said that she sees a “lot of students from Palomar and Mira Costa, around 10-15 students, and about 25 students from CSUSM.”

Jilliane Douglas, currently a junior, also commutes. She had previously lived on campus. Driving from San Diego twice a week, Douglas describes some of her experiences switching from San Marcos living to commuting. “[Commuting] makes me go to school more, because I have to make that conscious decision to

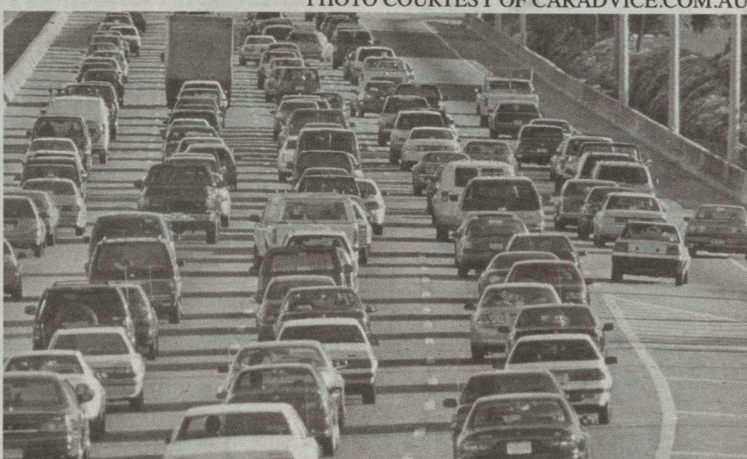


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go class. If I don't go to my first class, it's probably likely I won't go to my next one.” Douglas also commented that commuting to school hasn't affected her involvement on campus. In actuality, she believes that it has done the opposite. “Honestly, I'm more involved with the campus. I'm going to participate in the Triathlon through the Clarke, and I'm interested in joining a sorority,” Douglas said. “Living on campus—I took it for granted. I felt living on campus was the same feeling of being on campus.”

In comparison to other colleges, this amount of commuting to school appears to be going against what it is to “go to college.” Making the drive everyday and being far away from

campus events can make it seem like you're not getting the a complete “college experience.” Commuting instills a type of discipline that is taken for granted when students live on campus.

Interestingly, no one mentioned the perks of living off campus, such as not having to share a bedroom or bathroom with anyone, doing laundry without quarters, and no one telling you to be quiet after 10 p.m. Tedious or not, commuting can still work. Whoever says otherwise doesn't dictate what is and should be your college experience.



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Prowlin' the Kitchen

Chilaquiles Verdes



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BY JENNA JAUREGUI
DIGITAL MEDIA MANAGER

Those who think the day after Christmas is the worst day of the year are seriously overlooking New Year's Day. If the mess of streamers, confetti, and champagne spills on the carpet isn't daunting enough, add the fact that you're probably hungover from last night's party and to top it all off, you have to start keeping your New Year's resolutions! Well, don't just pull the covers back over your head and swear you'll wake up in time for dinner. The Cookin' Cougar has the perfect wake-up recipe to help restore you to your fully functioning self. Don't let the first day of the year slip by you—drag yourself into the kitchen and let's get cooking!

Many people believe in the "salt, grease, protein" cure for a hangover. It may not be a proven science, but it's a great excuse to eat a "heart-stopping" breakfast! This time around, dabble in a culinary cure from the Hispanic culture. Chilaquiles Verdes is a popular breakfast dish from Mexico that many hail as a remedy for headaches and queasy stomachs. The tortilla chips take care of the "salt" requirement, the cheese serves as the "grease," and the egg adds protein. It is also a great way to use up leftovers from Taco Night! While it may not be completely authentic, this version utilizes ingredients that people

may already have in the pantry or fridge.

Chilaquiles Verdes

- 2 cups small tortilla chips
- 2 cups verde (green) enchilada sauce
- 1 cup shredded white cheese
- 4 eggs

Start by heating the enchilada sauce in a large frying pan over a medium flame. Add the chips to the sauce, letting them simmer and absorb the liquid. Meanwhile, cook the eggs in a separate pan in whatever manner you prefer. Once the chips are very soft, transfer to a casserole dish with a spatula. Top with the eggs and sprinkle cheese on top. Cover with lid and microwave until the cheese melts. Top with anything you like—onions, olives, sour cream, tomatoes, or whatever else sounds good. Or, just eat them plain. The morning's looking brighter already! Ciao, everyone, and happy New Year!

DRAWING COURTESY OF CHELSEA JAUREGUI



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GIVING BACK DURING THE HOLIDAYS

DONATION EVENTS AROUND THE COUNTY

BY REBEKAH GREEN
PRIDE STAFF WRITER

The holidays are the time for giving, and each year hundreds of charity drives are held throughout the country. Listed below are some local charities that you can contribute to and be a part of this season.

The Annual Holiday Basket Program

Location: Del Mar City Hall
Information: Donate gently used blankets and jackets for this annual program. The program itself has helped over a thousand families. The donations are then put together to form a "shopping" experience for recipients at the Del Mar Fairgrounds on

Wednesday, Dec. 15. For more information, see delmar.ca.us.

Food Drive for San Diego Food Bank

Location: Academy of World Dance n Arts, Poway CA.
Information: The Academy of World Dance n Arts is seeking donations of nonperishable food items to benefit the San Diego Food Bank. Donations are accepted from Dec. 1 – 22. Foods needed include canned meats, fruits, vegetables, infant formula, etc. (Full list at worldancenarts.com).

San Diego Food Bank Holiday Food Drive

Location: Donated food can be placed in red barrels lo-

cated in front of Vons and Stater Bros. supermarkets, and at the San Diego Food Bank. **Information:** The food donated is distributed to those in need through many charities (churches, shelters, etc.). The drive began Nov. 1 and continues through Dec. 31. For more information and specific donation locations, see sandiegofoodbank.org.

Promises2Kids Give From Your Heart

Location: Donation bins at Wendy's restaurants and California Coast Credit Unions. **Information:** This drive, collecting gifts for foster children, lasts until Dec. 13. Gifts are distributed to organizations such as the

Polinsky Children's Center and Mary's House Transitional Housing Program. For suggestions on what to donate or more information, visit promises2kids.org.

Adopt-A-Family Program

Location: Varies
Information: Various churches, businesses, and members of the community adopt a family in need and provide a family gift basket. The gift baskets contain nonperishable foods and gift cards. For more information on this program, as well as other events, see ccsasandiego.org.

Annual Reggae Holiday Concert and Toy Drive

Location: Soundwave, San

Diego, CA.

Information: Polynesian Underground Ent. brings together various San Diego reggae bands for this drive event. Visitors who donate a toy get in to the event for \$5. It is a 21+ event on Dec. 10 at 5 p.m. Donated toys are distributed at the Ronald McDonald's House (rmhcsd.org) and Father Joe's Village charities. To view more information and the musical line up, check out thingstodo.signonsandiego.com.

For full list of charities throughout San Diego County see charity-charities.org/charities/CA/SanDiego.html.



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MYSTERIOUS CAMPUS SPORTS ARENA WHEN WILL THE NEW FACILITY OPEN ITS DOORS?

BY MICHAEL RAWSON
PRIDE STAFF WRITER

Noah spent forty days waiting for the world to stop raining. But at least he knew it would be forty days.

Our baseball and softball teams are getting their own home on campus, but it looks like the agonizing cycle of waiting begins when the date of its arrival remains a mystery.

Cougar sports fans are used to being spectators away from school. The baseball and softball teams have spent their first few seasons playing at off-campus sites, like San Marcos High school. The women's softball field opened in time for spring 2010 and the baseball team will open competition on their home field in 2011. Meanwhile, the multipurpose arena for basketball and volleyball will open at a date more mysterious, than an Agatha Christie novel.

The man who might hold the answer, CSUSM Athletic Director Tom Seitz, was unavailable for comment by the time The Pride went to print.

In an interview with the North County Times in January of this year, Seitz prophesized some things but also came off

vague on the indoor arena, which the article explained construction will begin in 2010-11. In the interview, Seitz talked about his desire to start men's and women's basketball teams, along

ly, the new coaches seem to be completely uninformed about their future home court.

When the North County Times asked Seitz about the new sports facilities, Seitz quoted the total

Volleyball coach, Sarah Gustin, she had no idea when the arena might come to be. Women's basketball coach, Sheri Jennum, said she did not think about the new facility because it "won't be

Lutz said that "[a]n arena would be a terrific addition to our campus and we are currently exploring the possibilities of building one. However, there are no formal plans nor a concrete timeline currently in place for construction."

Could it be that the new home of basketball and volleyball might still be in doubt? According to Tom Seitz, it's unlikely. Since taking over as athletic director in July 2009, he has sent the already thriving athletic program into overdrive. An affiliate minor league baseball club of the San Diego Padres had been considering CSUSM's baseball home as a possible stadium, but after the team stalled, Seitz helped make the decision go forward with a much needed field for the Cougars. San Marcos sports seem destined to soon compete at the NCAA Division II level. The softball field is a successful operation. The new basketball and volleyball teams are in motion—they just don't have a home.

How long will it be before they do? No one seems to know, and it will undoubtedly be more than forty days. But the Cougar arena seems unlikely to end up underwater.

"[a]n arena would be a terrific addition to our campus and we are currently exploring the possibilities of building one. However, there are no formal plans nor a concrete timeline currently in place for construction."

-Margaret Lutz

Public Information Director

with a women's volleyball team.

In April, students voted in favor of a \$60 tuition increase devoted to athletic fees over the next two years in efforts to welcome the new sports. Now, those squads have coaches and scheduled games. Strange-

ly, the new coaches seem to be completely uninformed about their future home court. When the North County Times asked Seitz about the new sports facilities, Seitz quoted the total

built, as we understand, for at least a year or two." And men's basketball coach, Jim Saia, offered the most curious testimony of all: "Hopefully, it's a matter of when, and not if, the arena comes."

In an email, Public Information Director for CSUSM, Margaret

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PLAYSTATION MOVE VS. XBOX KINECT

THE BATTLE BETWEEN MOTION CONTROLLED VIDEO GAMES

BY JIMMY PIRAINO
PRIDE STAFF WRITER

As the holiday shopping season goes into full swing, there is an abundance of electronic gifts becoming available for the savvy consumer. Video games eat up a large portion of the holiday gift market, and it is important to know what exactly is out there.

The name of the game this season is motion control. The two biggest hitting gaming systems (Xbox 360, Playstation 3) have thrown their motion controlled systems into the ring. But which one is better? And more importantly, are either worth the money?

Both Playstation and Xbox have decided that motion control is the wave of the future in terms

of games, and have taken two drastically different approaches to the so-called "future."

The "Kinect," for Xbox 360, is a modified webcam that requires no controller to use. A new program developed by Microsoft maps a person's body, which translates that body's movement onto the screen. This gives the player ultimate control over characters in a game.

Playstation's iteration of motion-controlled gaming is called "Playstation Move." Like its Xbox counterpart, the "Move" uses a webcam to track a player's movement. However, the "Move" also requires a controller to use. Resembling a Wii controller, it looks very similar to a standard remote control,

but with a glowing orb on top.

The first time using the "Kinect" was a surreal experience. Recognizing my hands, it then allowed me to switch screens and scroll through the Xbox home menu with a wave of my hand. It also allowed for voice commands that I considered more "icing on the cake" than a selling point.

During games, the "Kinect" gave me a high amount of accuracy when controlling my character, and I was amazed at how precise the motion tracking was.

Utilizing the "Move" was very similar to that of the "Kinect." While I had to use a controller, a quick flick of my wrist let me scroll through the Playstation menus with ease and matched speed of the "Kinect."

I found that during games, the "Move" had a slightly better motion tracking than the "Kinect." I also felt less goofy using the controller than waving my arms around with the "Kinect."

While neither motion-control system is perfect, both perform admirably in terms of accuracy and precision. The selling point really boils down to the audience. I found that the available games for the "Kinect" are focused more on party games, such as "Kinect Adventures," which is full of mini games such as river rafting.

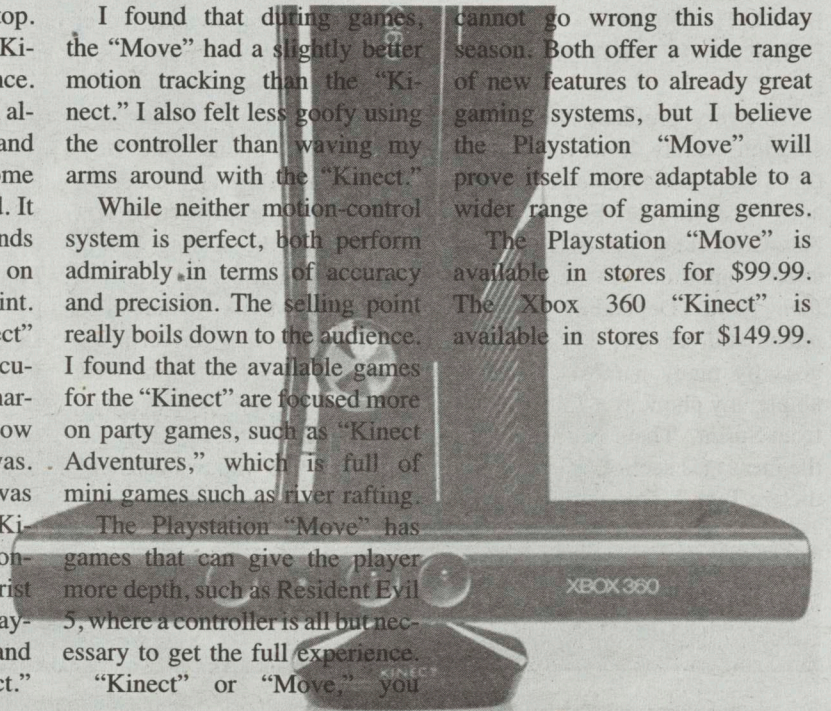
The Playstation "Move" has games that can give the player more depth, such as Resident Evil 5, where a controller is all but necessary to get the full experience.

"Kinect" or "Move," you

cannot go wrong this holiday season. Both offer a wide range of new features to already great gaming systems, but I believe the Playstation "Move" will prove itself more adaptable to a wider range of gaming genres.

The Playstation "Move" is available in stores for \$99.99. The Xbox 360 "Kinect" is available in stores for \$149.99.

BACKGROUND IMAGE COURTESY OF TECHIT.IN



The Pride Playlist

This week's Pride Playlist is a short list of music that holds holiday feelings from nostalgic classics to new beginnings. Cuddle with your hot drinks by a decorated tree or a warm fireplace, then get up and celebrate the new year with this mini mix of songs.

Bobby Helms – Jingle Bell Rock

St. Vincent – We Put a Pearl into the Ground

Mates of State – California

Vince Guaraldi – Christmas Time Is Here (from A Charlie Brown Christmas)

Joshua Radin – Closer

Elton John – Step Into Christmas

Feist – Mushaboom

Michael Bublé – The Christmas Song (Chestnuts Roasting on an Open Fire)

Sigur Rós – Hoppipolla

Coldplay – Life in Technicolor II

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TEXTING NIGHTMARES

AUTO CORRECT CORRECTING CORRECTIONS

BY FAITH ORCINO
PRIDE STAFF WRITER

To every problem, there is a solution. Sadly, however, sometimes these solutions end up creating more trouble. For example, AutoCorrect settings in text messages sometimes do more harm than good. Depending on the phone and service, this program goes by many names. For example, my phone is a Sanyo 2700 from Sprint. There is a setting in the messages section called "Predictive Text." This setting allows

certain phrases to pop up to select while typing a word it recognizes. During a conversation, I tried to say, "Hey, I am at a meeting," but instead my phone sent, "Hey, I am at a meet me at." Luckily, I turned off the predictive text after finding the setting menu.

Roberto Barragan, a third year Mass Media major, also ran into some AutoCorrect problems with his Droid phone. He texted, "Do you wanna hang pants tonight?" when he wanted to say, "Do you wanna hang out?" It at first seems like a

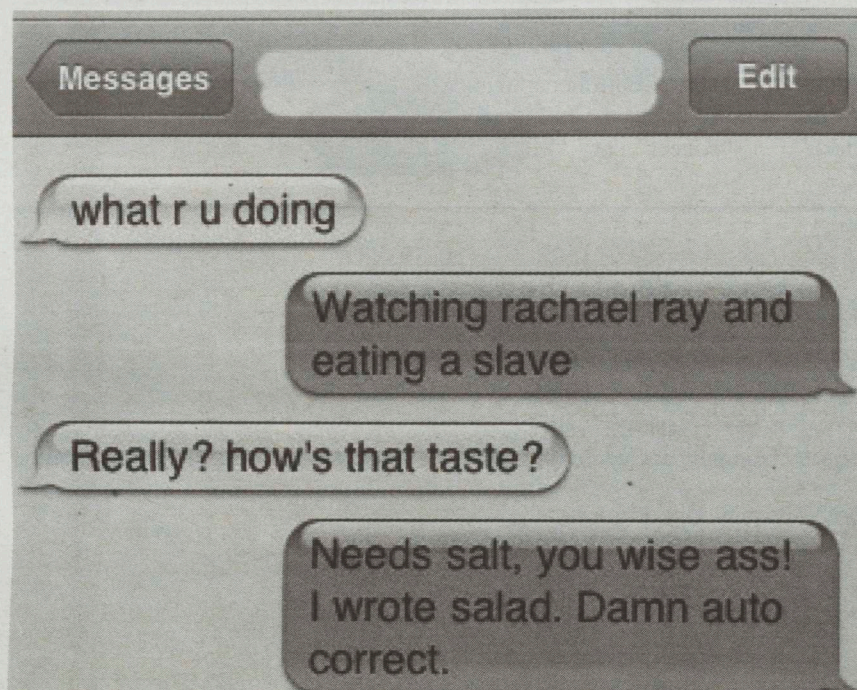
funny situation, but it is a growing hassle for cell phone owners.

In the early years of the cell phone, before touch screens and full keyboards, the program for the basic 9-key keypad was Nuance's T9. According to Nuance, users gain features like Next Word Prediction, Enhanced Word Completion, and "One Key Press per Letter." Now many in this technologically advancing age own iPhones, Droids, and other new products where a full keyboard is available. The software, now mainly called AutoCorrect, works

like the spell check on Microsoft Word. Type out your message and any "mistakes" found, the program fixes with its preset solution list of words. Now, as people and the world change, so do the languages. Some people create new slang terms for many expressions, and when they input the terms into the phone, the device registers the so-called error as a misspelling for another word. Sadly, there are those moments when we hit the send button before realizing the original message changed.

This problem has solutions.

Many may be different due to the wide variety of phones and devices. Going to a trained specialist of your corresponding phone service provider may be the best option. I myself looked around through my phone to find how to close the program, but for those who want experts, contact your service provider.



LEFT: Texters poke fun at the oddly corrected message sent through an Apple iPhone.

PHOTO COURTESY OF ITUNES.COM

RIGHT: ACE Flashcards keep your iPod or iPhone up to date with current study cards befitting many different subjects.

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Basic Gestures

Swiping left and right are the basic gestures for using Ace Flashcards. That's



APP OF THE WEEK

ACE FLASHCARDS

BY HALEY DUVEL
PRIDE STAFF WRITER

Cramming late into the night, drinking gallons of coffee to stay up, trying to review those last few chapters - sound familiar? These days are soon upon us with finals week right around the corner. With tons of studying to come, we will all be looking for ways to make it easier and more efficient.

This semester, don't bother with making or carrying around tons of paper flashcards in a thick stack. ACE Flashcards from Apple is here to help. Made by Agile Partners, the application can easily be found on their website, agilepartners.com/apps/aceflashcards/ or in the iTunes store for 99 cents.

There are quite a few flashcard applications out there but none that have as many helpful features as ACE. With a built in English dictionary you don't have to look far for the definition of any word. You just type in the vocabulary word you want and ACE will automati-

cally put the definition on the back. It will save you the time and hassle of having to write out every definition. You can even email flashcard decks to friends.

ACE Flashcards are a great studying tool for a wide range of subjects. They are not only easy to use but also extremely efficient. The application comes preloaded with Spanish animals, U.S. capitals, and sample vocabulary flashcards. It might be kind of corny, but the best part is the "shake-to-shuffle" feature. By shaking your iPhone the deck shuffles itself.

Save yourself the precious time this semester and dump the old ways of cramming. ACE Flashcards will be amaze you with all the cool features it has to offer and by how fast your studying will get accomplished.

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NEW YEAR'S CELEBRATIONS

ALL AROUND THE WORLD

BY SUSANNE BERGSTEN
PRIDE STAFF WRITER

Most people like New Year's celebrations and it is something that is celebrated all over the world. Champagne, fireworks, good food in the company of friends and family seems to be a winning concept wherever you go.

In Paris, wishing people "Bonne année" and exchanging "bisous," kisses, comes with the New Year celebrations. People flock at the famous street Champs-Élysées with champagne in hand to celebrate and watch fireworks blast off around the Eiffel Tower at the stroke of midnight.

In London, the Brits get their drink on for New Year's, and people traditionally gather at Trafalgar Square in central London for the countdown to midnight. The ultimate firework show goes off from South Bank next to the big Ferris wheel The London Eye when Big Ben chimes at midnight. Tube rides are free in London on New Years and so going from a house party to South Bank to see the fireworks should not be too much of a problem.

The Italians in Rome traditionally gather at Piazza del Popolo to celebrate New Year's Eve with live music, dancing and fireworks that starts at 11 p.m. and continues throughout the night.

In Sydney, more than 1.5 million people gather at the Sydney Harbor to welcome the new year. Firework shows start at 9 p.m., but at midnight the whole opera house is lit up by the many fireworks blasting off in the night sky.

A crazier New Year's Eve party than the one at the Thai island of Koh Phangan is hard to find. 50,000 people from all over the world gather at the Haad Rin beach to dance the night away with buckets of drinks instead of glasses, fire dancers, loud music and lots of fireworks. The crowd is young

and people celebrate until the tide comes in and the sun comes up.

The New Year's Celebration is one of the biggest events in Rio de Janeiro. More than 2 million people gather at Copacabana beach where the festivities start at 8 p.m. with live music. The firework show starts at midnight, and they are fired from boats offshore so all the spectators are safe and can see them light up the sky and the ocean. It is also tradition to wear white clothes and to bring flower to throw into the water at midnight.

Kuala Lumpur, the Muslim capital of Malaysia offers a massive New Year's Celebration with streets so crowded it is hard to get anywhere. Most restaurants, bars and shops are open and the best festivities are in the many bars that offer live music and activities. The streets and shops are covered in light and at midnight, a large firework show goes off in front of the Petrona Twin Towers.

In Hong Kong both Dec. 31 and the Chinese New Year are two big festivities to be celebrated. The latter is wider celebrated than our New Year, though. People gather in "Times Square," or the Victoria Harbor, for the countdown. From the Harbor large firework shows can be seen with the many skyscrapers in the background.

South Africa's Cape Town offers large festivities, though they celebrate New Year on Jan. 1. The locals look forward to the New Year's celebrations weeks ahead and the celebrations are ushered with ringing church bells and gunshots. Houses, shops and all public places are covered in gorgeous decorations. Tourists and locals flock at the Victoria and Alfred Waterfront were the largest festivities in the country take place and people dance the night away with fireworks blasting throughout the night.



TOP AND RIGHT: Fireworks in Sydney and Hong Kong light up the city skylines welcoming the new year.

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SOLUTIONS FOR SUDDEN DILEMMAS

LAST MINUTE HOLIDAY FIXES

BY FAITH ORCINO
PRIDE STAFF WRITER

Black Friday and Cyber Monday 2010 came and went, and now the shopping madness left many discount shelves empty.

In order to fix those last minute jams, several places and methods can help you.

Re-gifting is an inexpensive way to put the useless into use. People gave some presents out of good cheer, but sadly, you could not use in your lifestyle. Instead of letting them gather dust in storage, simply wrap the items up for ones you know may need them. It is a green solution where you save time, money, space and probably some trees along the way.

On the subject of saving money, thrift stores are also cheap solutions for gifts. A donated necklace or fishing rod might be what you have been looking for.

The Goodwill in San Diego, there are 15 locations to purchase and donate items. Several other non-profit groups have their own thrift stores in the area. Not only can you find gifts, but also you help some of the unfortunate residents in the county.

When it is a challenge to find an exact present for someone, buying a gift card is an easy option. It allows the receiver to buy what they want with the money that is in the card within the designated store.

Many stores, including some grocery and online ones provide gift cards for shoppers. Places like Ralphs, Vons, Albertsons and Wal-Mart carry a wide variety of gift cards. Just stop by to check out the choices.

If you do not have time to buy a gift card, checks and cash are good backups. It might be better just to let gift recipients choose what they want.

For those who will be hosting parties and/or fixing up the place for the holiday, affordable decorations are available. Dollar Tree, a money-saving branch of stores, has 12 locations within a 25-mile radius of San Marcos where most of the stock is only a dollar each.

They also deliver bulk orders from their website to those 12 locations, if requested. You can use any of the given options not only work for the holiday seasons, but also for any celebration like birthdays, anniversaries, parties and other festivities.

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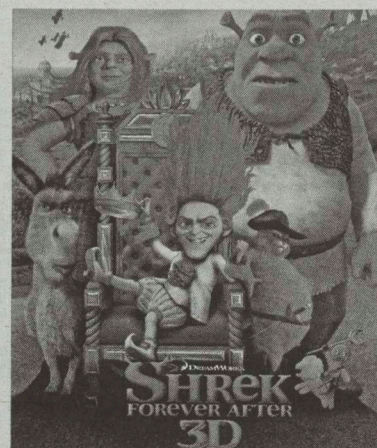
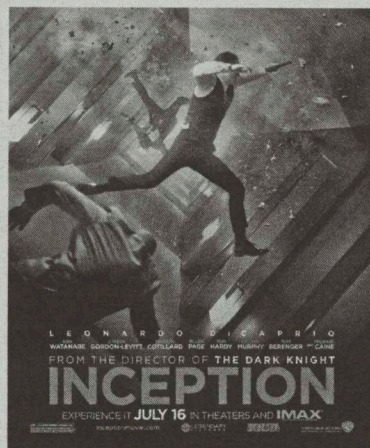
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DROPPING THIS WEEK

BY MILA PANTOVICH
PRIDE STAFF WRITER

“Inception” (PG13)

Christopher Nolan’s borderline genius film that delves into the way a human mind functions while deep in sleep is finally released on DVD and Blu-ray today. The film follows a group of dream extractors, led by Cobb (Leonardo DiCaprio), as they take on a life-altering heist that involves planting an idea in someone’s mind. Offered his only chance of redemption, Cobb risks his own sanity and grasp on reality to succeed in pulling off the perfect inception. Nolan artfully skews reality with the unconscious landscape, causing you to question everything that you think you know. The film stars Leonardo DiCaprio, Marion Cotillard, Joseph Gordon-Levitt, Ellen Page, Cillian Murphy, Ken Watanabe, Tom Hardy, and Michael Cain.

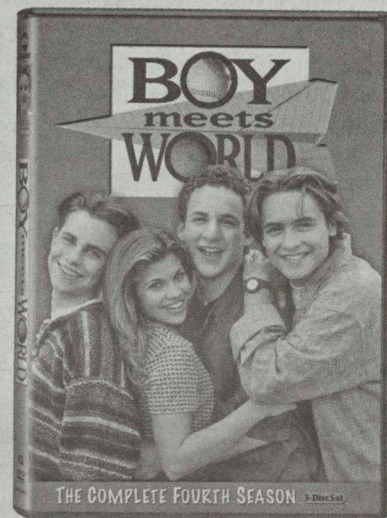


“Shrek Forever After” (PG)

Shrek is back in the fourth, and final, film of the Shrek franchise. Bored with domestic life, Shrek (Mike Myers) longs for the days when he was a feared ogre. After he is coerced into signing a deal with Rumpelstiltskin, Shrek is thrown into an alternate reality where Rumpelstiltskin is King, ogres are hunted, Far Far Away is a shell of what it once was, and where he had never met Fiona (Cameron Diaz), Donkey (Eddie Murphy), or Puss in Boots (Antonio Banderas). “Shrek Forever After” fails to match the comedic gold of the first two Shrek films but it succeeds in surpassing the third, continuing to show an evolution in Shrek’s character. While funny, “Shrek Forever After” relies a little too heavily on pop culture references and songs for all of the comedic relief. New to the franchise are actors such as John Hamm and Jane Lynch.

“Boy Meets World: The Complete Fourth Season” (NR)

Want to relive your childhood? The fourth season of “Boy Meets World” is the perfect answer to the nostalgia you may be feeling now that finals are creeping closer. The show follows Cory Matthews (Ben Savage) and the life lessons he learns while growing from a young boy to a grown adult, orchestrating college life and marriage. With his best friend, Shawn (Rider Strong), his older brother Eric (Will Friedle), his childhood sweetheart and future wife, Topanga (Danielle Fishel), and his mentor, Mr. Feeney (William Daniels), Cory slowly learns how to be an adult without losing the playful innocence of childhood.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF AMAZON.COM

COMING TO THEATRES: FROSTY FLICKS

BY CHRIS GIANCAMILI
PRIDE STAFF WRITER

Each year, the holiday season sees the release of several blockbuster films, and 2010 is no different. From sci-fi action to western drama, this winter movie season promises not to disappoint.

A-listers Johnny Depp and Angelina Jolie team up to thrill audiences in “The Tourist.” Johnny Depp plays Frank, an American tourist who travels to Europe in an attempt to get over his broken heart. There he meets Elise (Jolie), an intriguing woman who

misleads Frank into becoming the target of a group of criminals. The romance-thriller “The Tourist” travels to theaters Friday, Dec. 10.

The Chronicles of Narnia continue the tale as “The Voyage of the Dawn Treader” is set to bring more fantasy-adventure to the big-screen this holiday season. The film follows Lucy Pevensie (Georgie Henley) and Edmund Pevensie (Skandar Keynes) as they return to the mystical land of Narnia. There, the siblings reunite with their old friend Aslan the Lion, voiced by Liam Neeson. Joined by their cousin

Eustace Scrubb (Will Poulter), King Caspian (Ben Barnes), and Reepicheep (Simon Pegg), the group embarks on another epic journey for the fate of Narnia. “The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn Treader” sails into theaters Friday, Dec. 10.

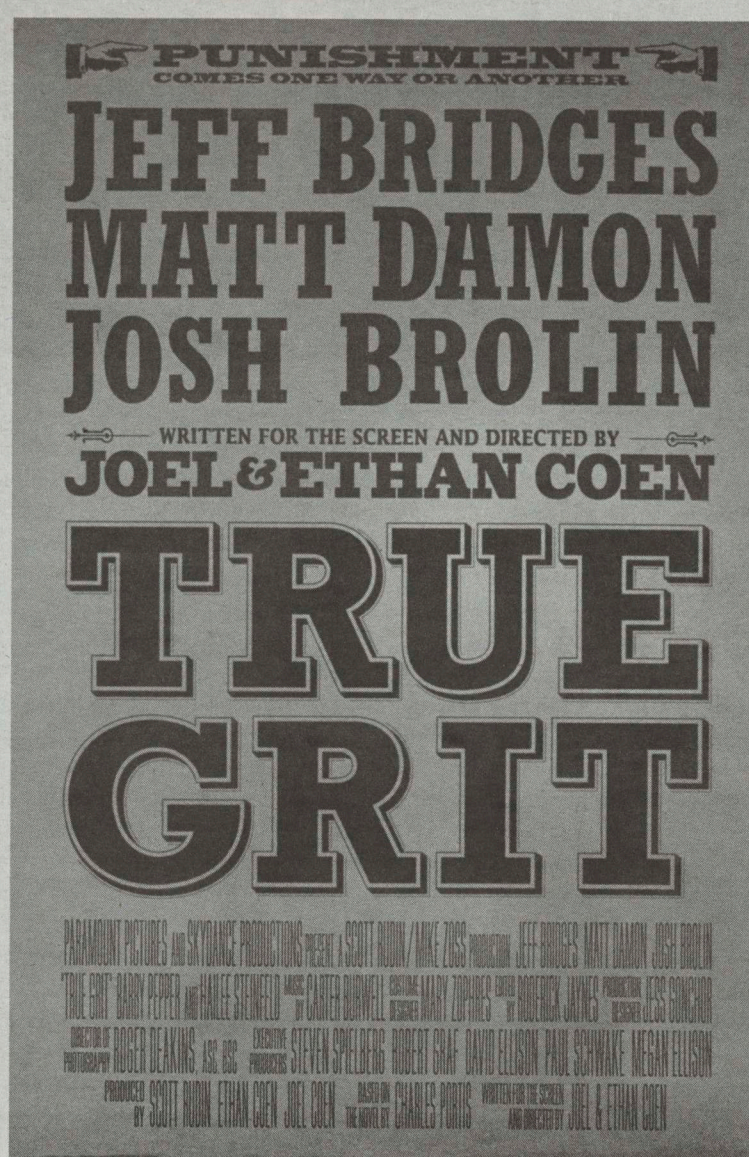
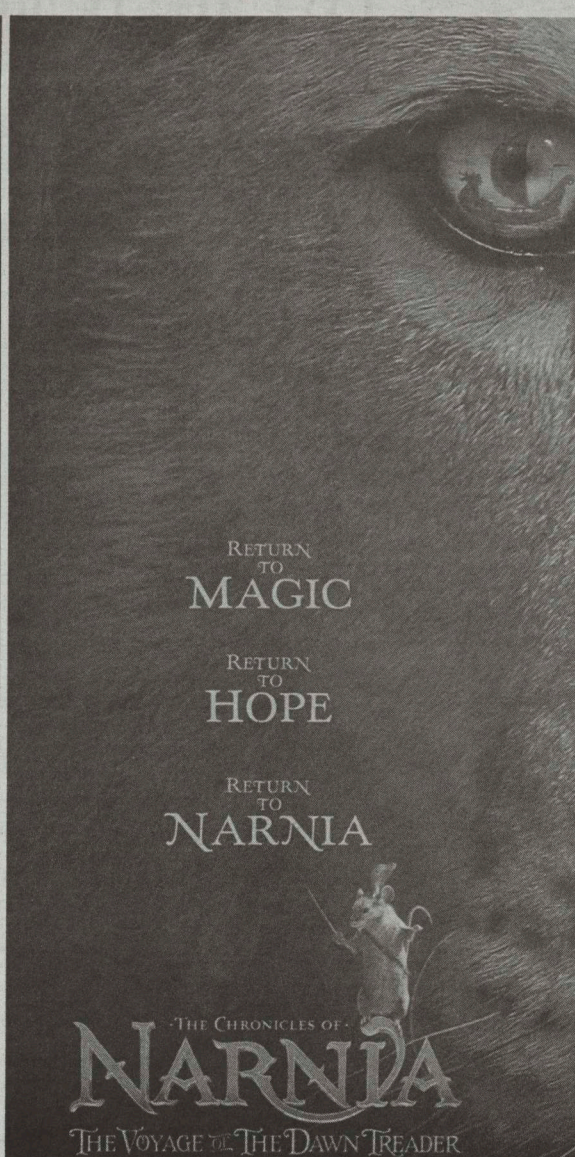
“Tron: Legacy” boasts highly stylized visuals and dazzling 3D effects. This film is the follow-up to the 1982 Disney classic “Tron.” Garrett Hedlund stars as Sam Flynn, a 27-year-old who finds himself trapped in a digital world searching for his lost father. Jeff Bridges and Bruce

Boxleitner reprise their roles as Kevin Flynn and Alan Bradley. “Tron: Legacy” looks to captivate audiences Friday, Dec. 17.

Joel and Ethan Coen are back with their latest drama “True Grit.” Set in the old west, “True Grit” follows the story of a 14-year-old girl Mattie Ross, played by Hailee Steinfeld. Ross enlists the help of Rooster Cogburn, played by Jeff Bridges, to seek vengeance against the man who killed her father. Matt Damon and Josh Brolin also lend their acting prowess to this western. “True Grit” rides into theaters Wednesday, Dec. 22.

Ben Stiller and Robert DeNiro return in “Little Fockers,” the third film in the “Meet the Parents” series. The film picks up as Gaylord “Greg” Focker (Stiller) is now the father of two five-year-old twins. When the family reunites, Greg’s father-in-law, Jack Byrnes (DeNiro), looks to pass the man-of-the-house torch to Greg. Greg and Jack battle it out in this comedy on Wednesday Dec. 22.

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BLACK SWAN

BY MILA PANTOVICH
PRIDE STAFF WRITER

When it comes to Darren Aronofsky ("The Wrestler," "Requiem for a Dream," and "Pi"), regardless of the genre, you know exactly what sort of film you'll be walking into; it will be intelligent, passionate, brutal, beautiful, and raw. With each film, Aronofsky continues to deliver, and "Black Swan" only further ups the ante. Within the competitive and physically abusive world of professional ballet, Aronofsky poses a constructed reality that just may be more truthful than that which is considered real outside of the frame. Channeling Franz Kafka's "The Metamorphosis," the psychologically disturbing "Black Swan" will leave you stunned, stuttering out pieced together fragments of your shattered thoughts.

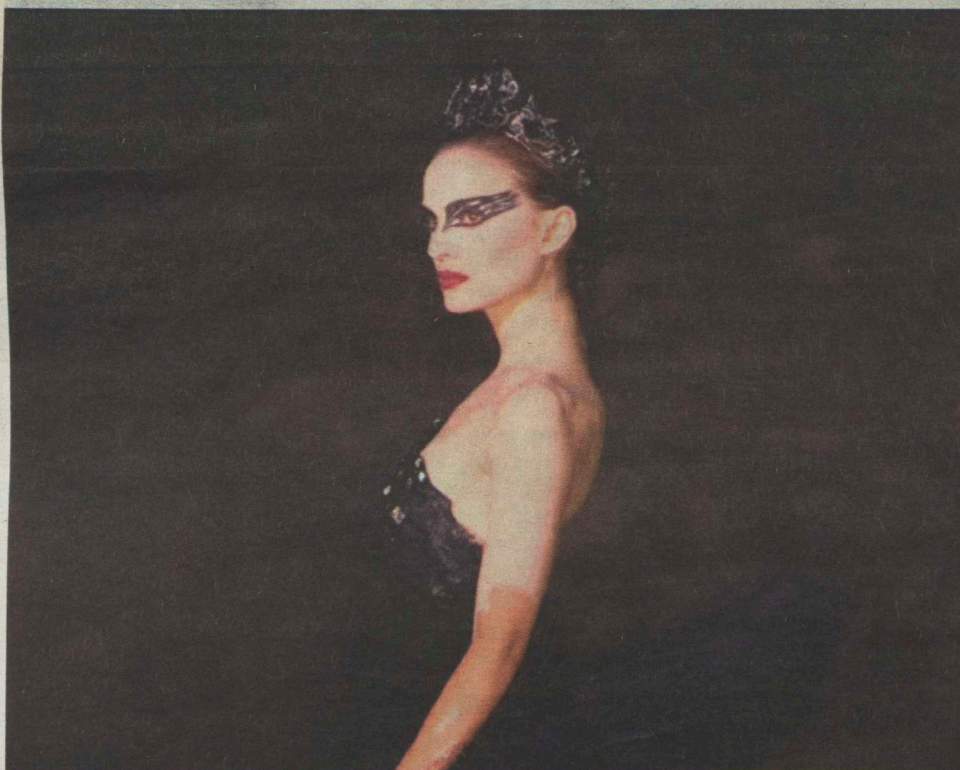
Nina (Natalie Portman) is a dedicated and poised dancer with the New York City Ballet Company who pushes her body and her mind to the limit to be her best. Delicate and childlike, Nina is a perfectionist who still lives with her overbearing mother (Barbara Hershey), while frozen in a ten year old's bedroom. After Thomas (Vincent Cassel), the company director, forces the company's star (Winona Ryder) into retirement, a new star is needed to play the dual role of the Swan Queen for the new

*"... intelligent,
passionate, brutal,
beautiful, and raw."*

season's opening performance of Swan Lake. It's immediately apparent that Nina completely embodies the White Swan, the epitome of virginal innocence, but she is unable to bring the seductive Black Swan out from within. With the role in her hands, Nina is pushed to her limits when the relaxed and sexually vibrant Lily (Mila Kunis) arrives. With Thomas's urging her to awaken the passion he knows is within and with Lily as a reflection of everything she cannot be, Nina quickly finds herself losing grip on her rapidly fragmenting reality as she pursues the perfect performance.

Set in the world of professional ballet, "Black Swan" can easily be seen as a companion film to Aronofsky's 2008 "The Wrestler." Both films show how far pro-

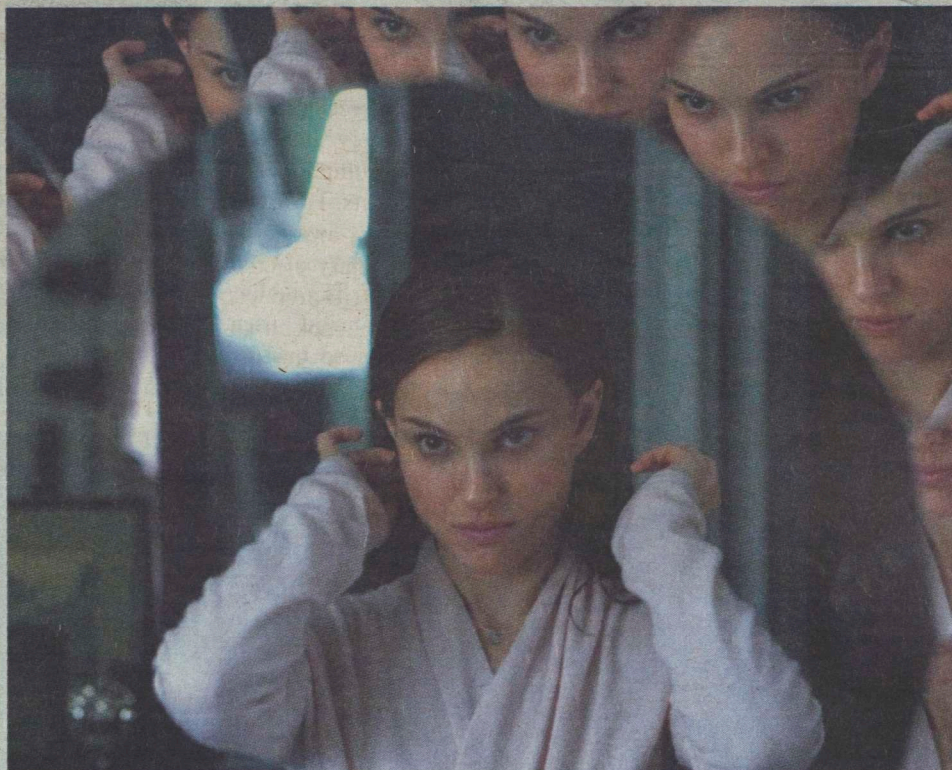
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fessional athletes will push themselves, forcing their bodies and minds to take on abuses that can physically and mentally cripple them in an instant. Whereas "The Wrestler" approaches the theme through the use of a hardened and aged man, showing the deep vulnerability within, "Black Swan" centers on an incredibly delicate and timid young woman who is internally deeply disturbed and twisted. Every choice made by Aronofsky, the excruciating emphasis put on bloody toe nails and the straining corded muscles of Nina's feet as she stands en pointe for hours on end, violently and delicately propels forward the story of a ballet dancer on the brink of darkness.

After strenuously training for a year and losing twenty pounds, Natalie Portman completely transforms herself into Nina, obliterating any doubt as to her unending talent. Completely perfecting the dual nature of the Swan Queen, she blurs the lines between the timid beauty of the White Queen with the underlying darkness of the Black Queen lurking beneath. With Nina's rapidly fracturing mental state, her perception of reality can never be completely trusted, making Portman's Nina delicately terrifying; the perfect unreliable narrator.

While Portman's performance absolutely stuns, leaving you breathless with its intensity, the rest of the cast never dares to solely rely on Portman's performance. Winona Ryder is wonderful as the aged ballerina who is pushed from the spotlight, terrified of her limitations and living with the unending crippling fear of aging. As the seductively sleazy director, Vincent Cassel shines. He pushes and prods Nina, his actions methodical and always with purpose, until she has no other response but to mentally crack. Mila Kunis, in a role completely different from those in her past, slides within the film seamlessly. She plays Lily with a free-spirit that is questionable in its intentions, reflecting all that Nina needs to bring out from within herself. Out of the excellent supporting cast, Barbara Hershey is spectacular as Nina's mother. She manages to effortlessly play the role of a domineering mother seen th-



rough Nina's cracked perception, subtly layering her character. You have no idea what to believe and in this sense, "Black Swan" completely blurs the lines between reality and its false perceptions, to the point where the mere concept of reality fails to hold any merit.

"Black Swan" is as close to perfection as a film can get. Every single decision is thoughtful and nothing is wasted, building up psychological terror to culminate in the inevitable ending. The camerawork is frenetic and claustrophobic, framing countless fast-paced close-ups that place you within the fractured reality of Nina's life. You are never allowed to take a step back from the unending pain that is threaded within the film's fabric. The score emphasizes the slightest sound, magnifying it to a degree that suffocates you. Nina's labored breathing, the unbearable feeling of her nails scratching along her skin, it all works to lock you within the frame and stutter your own casual breathing. Aronofsky expertly uses as many reflective surfaces as he can and films Portman through these surfaces more often than not, portraying Nina more as a reflection than a person, highlighting her rapidly splintering personality.

While "Black Swan" may not be a horror film in the conventional sense, portions of the film will disturb you in ways that a slasher film never could. Don't dare let a film set in the world of ballet turn you off because "Black Swan" is deeply and psychologically terrifying and will easily go down in film history as a rare and perfect achievement. Beautifully framed and emotionally tense, the film is layered so expertly that it is rigid in form but loose in content. Working as a modern adaptation of "Swan Lake" itself, Aronofsky manages to create many self-reflective layers within "Black Swan." The film itself even works as a reflection of the layered Swan Queen; "Black Swan" is a controlled beauty that is wildly dangerous, incredibly free and terrifyingly seductive beneath.

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