By Nadya Williams

The seventh stop of his eight-city United States tour. Large and enthusiastic evening of racial unity and harmony.

By Anthony Moir

Cal Poly professors attend Mandela’s LA address

The SLO trolley named Wally takes off on its maiden voyage as it rounds the corner of Palm and Oceano streets.

SLO trolleys Wally and Ollie make their downtown debut

SLO prepares for dry season

Cal Poly professors attend Mandela’s LA address

Cal Poly community members were among the masses who filled the Los Angeles Coliseum last Friday in a rare evening of racial unity and harmony.

South African leader Nelson Mandela has been inspecting and assisting in South Africa by continuing economic sanctions.

He also stressed that the goal of the South African liberation movement and of his organization, the African National Congress, is to "abolish apartheid and create a democratic, united, non-racist, non-sexist government and society.

"Mandela represents issues which are just tragic, but it does wake people up," Houdyshell said.

The 10-minute route begins and ends at the library, making a loop through the downtown area. Along the way, the trolleys stop at requested corners and pick up shoppers.

SLO prepares for dry season

Some areas that the CDF is worried about include: Highway 41 between Atascadero and Morro Bay and Highway 46 west of Highway 101.

Residential fire hazards can pose serious problem

Many residents of San Luis Obispo County are being required to clean up around their homes this summer to decrease fire hazards, a county fire official said.

The audience, 80 to 90 percent of whom were from the black community, was entertained for more than two hours with music, dance and speeches.

"It's a good day to be a black person," comedian Marsha Warfield told the delighted audience, who roared back in agreement.

Actor Robert Downey Jr., Sara Jessica Parker and Cree Summer spoke to remind the audience of the key role of young people in South Africa and in this country against the apartheid regime. Downey spoke of the nearly 2,000 protesting African schoolchildren who were shot to death in the streets by South African police in July 1976.

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By Bill Evans

In the aftermath of the Painted Cave fire last week that raged through Santa Barbara, fire officials in San Luis Obispo County are gearing up for what they say may potentially be the worst fire season in years.

Val Houdyshell, a California Department of Forestry public information officer, said, "Four years of drought has made a large impact on the fuel in the area.

"What we are seeing is a moisture content (in the local vegetation) so low that it's two months ahead of (the average moisture) schedule," Houdyshell said.

The Santa Barbara fire destroyed more than 50 apartment, public and business buildings, claimed 428 houses, and took one life. Officials are hoping this type of destruction will be avoided in San Luis Obispo County and the outlying areas.

"The fire in Santa Barbara was just tragic, but it does wake people up," Houdyshell said.

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Some areas that the CDF is worried about include Highway 41 between Atascadero and Morro Bay and Highway 46 west of Highway 101.

Chuck Howe, Lopez Lake supervisor, said that park forsces can keep things under control at the lake.

"We have one fire truck that is meant for prevention, not heavy firefighting," Howe said. "With a quick response time we try to control and stop a fire before it gets out of hand."

See DRY SEASON, page 3
Editorial

Board should drop hospital proposal

The San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors' support of a proposal to build a new San Luis Obispo General Hospital fails to make sense.

The proposal, which is also supported by the hospital's administration, is to tear down the old and build a new, modern one to be constructed in its place. The cost of the project is an estimated $40 to $50 million and would be paid for through county funds.

Consultants have said the existing 60-year-old structure is structurally unsound, projects are needed for the future of General Hospital for the county to choose from. Either the county could close down the hospital, try to acquire another existing one or build a new facility. Attempts to buy other local facilities failed, so the county decided to go along with the hospital administration's wish to construct a new General Hospital.

Mark Goldberg, General Hospital's chief executive officer, said another reason for a newer, better facility is because it would attract more privately-insured patients. Supervisor David Blakely said that this "improved patient mix" will increase revenue for the financially-troubled institution.

The proponents for this project have forgotten several things, however. First there is the financial effect on this county. Dipping into the General Tax Fund for $50 million is no small affair. It will chalk an already tight budget and force more cuts in other county programs such as mental health, welfare and children's services. Frank Freitas, a county tax official, has already expressed his concerns to County Administrator Robert Hendricks about the potential problems this project would create.

Building a new General Hospital also would keep medical costs rising. Having three full-service hospitals in San Luis Obispo (General Hospital, French Hospital Medical Center and Sierra Vista Hospital) is becoming a financial curse, but competition among hospitals does not lower prices. They go up as much institution tries to attract patients by offering more facilities. The costs of such a "technology war" are passed along to patients in the form of insurance costs.

Finally, there is really no need to keep three full-service hospitals in a town of only 40,000 residents. French Hospital and Sierra Vista alone can handle the patient load of the entire county. Of course, proponents of the new General Hospital say it is necessary because we can get better medical care than at a private hospital. However, 40 percent of the in-patients of General Hospital are sent out of the private hospitals. Also, the upcoming conversion of Arroyo Grande Community Hospital into a public hospital means that a not-for-profit medical facility will be found in this area as well. There would be little loss in the quality or availability of medical care if General Hospital closed.

It is fairly obvious that the community will not receive enough benefit from a new General Hospital facility to justify the $50 million expenditure. Yes, Goldberg and the Board of Supervisors have insisted that closing the hospital is not an option. It seems the administration of General Hospital and the Board of Supervisors have failed to look at the full picture of this issue. It makes sense to replace an antiquated facility with a newer, better one, but not where one isn't needed. As the board approaches the threshold of a final decision, it should keep this in mind.

Letters to the editor should be no longer than 300 words. They should include the author's name, address, phone number and major/majorette. Submit letters to Room 226 of the Graphic Arts building. They may be edited for length, clarity or factual content. Contact the Opinion editor at 756-1143 if you wish to write a guest column.

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Summer Mustang is published weekly on Thursdays by the Journalism Department and produced on campus by University Graphics Systems. Unsolicited estimates reflect the costs of processing a request for unsolicited information. The undersigned is solely responsible for the content and does not represent an endorsement by the publisher or university. The Summer Mustang office is located in room 226 of the Graphic Arts Building, San Luis Obispo, CA 93407. (805) 756-1143 and fax (805) 756-6784.

The newspaper for Cal Poly. Since 1916.

Opinion

Mixed emotions stir among the ashes

By Bridget Meaney

Summer Mustang is a newspaper for Cal Poly. Since 1916.

Reporters' Notebook

Many are just beginning to work through the process of viewing their homes, their pictures and having to start all over again from scratch.

And for Andrea Gurge, 27, it has been a test of her willpower as she has tried to keep her 4-year-old daughter, Faith, from the trauma of losing her home in the Painted Cave fire. For Andrea Gurge, it was heartbreaking to see people dig through the rubble in an effort to save anything they could find, but I would not want anyone to do that. It was heartbreaking to see people dig through the rubble in an effort to save anything they could find. I would not want anyone to do that.

I am concerned about two extremely important issues that directly relate to our health and the condition of our natural environment. The first problem is this nation's fascination and love for the consumption of animal flesh. It seems as if nothing matters as livestock (cattle, swine and fowl) are raised without regard for the fact that the production of meat is becoming a sacred task that defies all logical rationalism. The administration of General Hospital and the Board of Supervisors have failed to look at the full picture of this issue. It makes sense to replace an antiquated facility with a newer, better one, but not where one isn't needed. As the board approaches the threshold of a final decision, it should keep this in mind.

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Controversy looms over the future plans for General Hospital

By Erika Dills

General Hospital's plan to build a new $40-50 million medical facility with county funds is creating a lot of political heat among medical community members and county officials.

M. Mark Goldberg, General Hospital's chief executive officer, said outside consulting agencies told hospital administrators if the hospital is to remain in existence, the county should either acquire an existing hospital facility, or build a new one.

However, the consultants also warned that building a new facility could be a financial risk.

"If we go to that one before it was able to burn more than eight square feet," Howe said. "The Los Politas fire burned a lot of the heavier brush and what remains has a system of fire breaks that would help us control it if it ever got going."

With the fire season as bad as it is this year, fire forces will be strained statewide. Firefighters are shifted throughout the state to support other groups when a large fire breaks out.

San Luis Obispo forces were transferred to Santa Barbara to help fight the blaze last week, but this doesn't mean SLO was unprotected, Houdyshell said.

"We sent a lot of resources down, but San Luis was covered by forces from Tehama Glenn and Butte counties," she said.

From page 1

The most recent fire that struck the park was two weeks ago, Howe said.

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Original service dog in SLO County retires

By Monica Ortiz

He picks up trash that students leave behind and is a favorite figure in the University Union. Although many students don’t know his name, they have seen him around campus.

In honor of his retirement last Thursday, he was rewarded with a ceremonial hamburger patty. His name is Lathum, and he’s a doberman pinscher.

“Lathum’s been with me since December 1984,” said Beth Currier, the assistant coordinator of the Disabled Student Services program and Lathum’s owner. “He’s retiring to my 7½ acre ranch to relax and chase chickens.”

Lathum was the first doberman graduate of Canine Companions for Independence, a nationwide, non-profit organization that provides service dogs for people with impaired mobility, signal dogs for the deaf and social dogs for special schools and institutions.

Although Lathum’s claim to fame is that he was the first service dog to work for a wheelchair-bound person in San Luis Obispo County, this also has been the cause of discrimination against him and Currier. Almost six years ago when Currier and Lathum became a team, the law did not recognize service dogs as a medical necessity and did not accord them the same privileges as guide dogs for the blind.

In honor of his retirement last Thursday, he was rewarded with a ceremonial hamburger patty. His name is Lathum, and he’s a doberman pinscher.

“Lathum’s been with me since December 1984,” said Beth Currier, the assistant coordinator of the Disabled Student Services program and Lathum’s owner. “He’s retiring to my 7½ acre ranch to relax and chase chickens.”

Lathum, the county’s first service dog, retired last Thursday. His owner Beth Currier gave him a ceremonial burger patty as a group at Disabled Student Services looked on.

“Guide dogs are taught to be the eyes of a blind person; service dogs are taught to take the place of legs, arms and hands,” Currier said. “Lathum can jump onto high counters and pick up something as small as a quarter and as large as a can of tomato juice. His main function is to carry me up hills and pick up things that are normally too high or out of reach.”

Because of this discrimination against service dogs, Currier and Lathum traveled to Sacramento in 1986 to lobby for a bill that would give service dogs the same privileges as guide dogs. They demonstrated a service dog’s duties and capabilities, convincing California congressmembers that the service provided by the dogs is a medical necessity for people in wheelchairs.

Their lobbying succeeded, and in 1986, state health and service codes were amended to include service dogs, giving them the same privileges as guide dogs.

Currier said people shouldn’t pet or feed a dog in a harness without the owner’s permission because this distracts the dog while at work and may unwittingly cause harm to the owner.

“I remember one day, Lathum was pulling me up a steep and carpeted theater pathway,” Currier said. “One of the people in the aisle stuck his hand out to feed Lathum some popcorn. Like any other dog, Lathum loved the attention.”

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But Watson added that San Luis Obispo’s trolley system has several factors that enhance its chances of success.

“A few things we have going for it are the fact that it doesn’t duplicate the city transit route, and the fare is free, compared to the average of 50 cents in other cities,” he said.

“Trolley programs in other towns such as Seattle and Portland have failed, and Sacramento’s trolleys are always empty,” Watson said.

But Watson added that San Luis Obispo’s trolley system has several factors that enhance its chances of success.

“A few things we have going for it are the fact that it doesn’t duplicate the city transit route, and the fare is free, compared to the average of 50 cents in other cities,” he said.

Vice Mayor Jerry Reiss said, “I think once the trolley system is in effect and shown to be effective, we may want to take a second look at our existing parking program.”

“We're looking to be on time or ahead of time, depending on the traffic,” Reiss said.

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Eight retired Poly employees given honorary emeritus status

By Marie Byrne

The former vice president of Cal Poly has been awarded an honorary emeritus designation, along with seven other retired employees of Cal Poly.

Malcolm Wilson served as both senior vice president and vice president for Academic Affairs before he retired last November. He has been a member of the faculty in education and an administrator at the university since 1968.

Other faculty and staff personnel who have spent a minimum of 15 years in full-time service at Cal Poly are eligible for this status upon retirement.

Emeritus designations were awarded to Fred Cassill of Plant Operations, James Emmel from the speech communications department, William L. McGonagill from the architecture department, Richard Nelson from the biological sciences department, Edward J. Ward from the city and regional planning department, and Smiley E. Wilkins from the personnel and employee relations department.

Emeritus designation was also awarded posthumously to Bruce Kennelly, who had been a chemistry professor at Cal Poly until his death in 1982.

Companies often give awards for years of service upon retirement, but emeritus status is unique to institutions of higher education.

"Emeritus status gives people who retire an opportunity to remain involved in the university," said Don McBride, director of public affairs.

Emeritus faculty and staff are entitled to the use of university services, such as swimming pools, university recreational facilities, visitor parking spots, the library privileges, and a class structure.

Emeritus faculty and staff assistance for continued university service and research upon availability.

Malcolm Wilson

HOSPITAL

From page 3

that right now, both French and Sierra Vista hospitals are making a profit, but that a third facility could change this.

"I don't think the community is well served by having three hospitals which are only marginally financed ... and I don't think a $40 or $50 million hospital built by the county has a very good chance of breaking even," Bernhardt said. "I think it will continue to lose money."

In addition, if the facility is built, county taxpayers will pay the price, Bernhardt said.

"While the community will still pay the same taxes, programs (such as) children's services, welfare services and mental health services will all have to endure more budget cuts," he said.

Goldberg said even though the number of existing hospitals seems excessive, rapid county growth is another reason that adding another hospital may be feasible.

"The population of the county is supposed to increase by 100,000 people by the year 2000," Goldberg said.

Bernhardt said that he believed two facilities would be sufficient, and that additional hospitals would just increase medical costs. Hospitals would then have to compete with each other technologically by purchasing the latest medical equipment available in order to be the best hospital in the area, he explicated.

The Medical Society of San Luis Obispo County, an organization of health care professionals, has publicly come out in opposition to building a new General Hospital.

Bernhardt said one way to side with the hospital should be built would be to leave it up to the voters.

"It is curious that more consideration has not been given to putting the issue on the ballot ... That seems like it would be a good solution."

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Volunteers lend their ears
San Luis Obispo hotline celebrates 20 years of caring

By Deborah J. Holley
San Luis Obispo County

Every day of the year, 24-7 hours a day, professionally trained hotline volunteers are available by phone for crisis intervention, emotional support or for anyone who is feeling lonely, confused and just needs someone to listen.

This year, Hotline of San Luis Obispo County celebrates its 20th year of service to the community. Volunteers have donated more than 22,000 service hours listening to, talking with and helping county residents from all walks of life.

“We really do care,” said a Hotline volunteer who asked to be called Maggie. “We help people feel connected, let them know they’re not alone.”

Maggie, a social science major at Cal Poly, has been on the hotlines assisting callers for the past year and plans to continue doing so.

In addition to providing crisis intervention (which includes suicide prevention), Hotline assists callers with a wide range of services including community resource referrals, a support group directory and a separate line for information referral.

Hotline’s objective is to have a “live, caring person available to listen any hour, any day,” Winslow said.

Additionally, Hotline is a 24-hour resource phone line for 17 social service agencies including the Rape Crisis Center, and the North County and San Luis Obispo Women Shelters. Calls last anywhere from a minute or two to 11 hours, Winslow said, and may address very personal issues such as relationship difficulties, drug or alcohol problems and abuse, but some are simply calls for information.

Maggie said volunteers who answer the phones must “be there mentally” to handle such a variety of calls.

A 70-hour training program that is required of all Hotline applicants. Hotline volunteers, who work four-hour shifts, receive more than 40,000 calls per year, or eight to 25 calls per shift.

“Hotline is not just an answering service,” Winslow said. “Volunteers assess callers in a non-judgmental way and patch them to other agencies that can help them.”

Sometimes, however, just talking it over with someone who will really listen and helping the caller focus on the primary problem and look at the options is all that’s needed, Winslow said.

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New program will expedite civil court process in county

By Rimi Jarrard Source

For those who have been watching San Luis Obispo County courts, a new program may help.

A new civil case program should speed up the number of cases that come before a judge. Civil Trials Program will provide 65 extra judges on a rotational basis. They will handle the backlog of civil cases that have accumulated in San Luis Obispo during the last 10 years.

"The backlog developed as a result of a lack of judicial resources over that (10-year) timeframe," said Laurie Reiner, the administrative judge commission.

A different judge from the program will come in each week to hear cases. The Civil Trials Program allows for 250 working days a year—equivalent to the time judge —it is comparable to adding a sixth judge to the county courts.

"We're trying to get the total number of cases per judicial officer down to a manageable number," said Reiner.

"Rather than do 200 (cases) at one time, we're doing it in segments," he said.

Because the program will help eliminate the civil case backlog, the court can keep up more easily with cases and resolve them in the two-year period, he said.

Cases will be scheduled into the program in small increments, starting with 65 cases, Reiner said. Both parties in a civil case must agree to participate in the program. After participation is agreed upon by both parties, the case is scheduled by the court.

After the initial 65 cases go to court, 65 more cases will be selected. Although roughly 200 cases will be resolved in this first year, they will not be scheduled all at once, Reiner said.

"The remaining cases will be settled at some point before they go to trial for different reasons," Conklin said. For example, Reiner said that many cases will settle out of court.

The program went into effect on Monday, but the first judge is not scheduled to hear his first case until Aug. 20. The program will operate in the courtroom at the San Luis Obispo Vets Hall on Grand Avenue.

Several methods are being considered in order to fairly allocate limited permits.

"The county has told you they don't want you to take the easy way out," he said. "I hate to see you turn this issue into the Vietnam of San Luis Obispo County."

The supervisors also voted unanimously to publish a newspaper notice indicating that future land divisions may be subject to any growth controls that eventually would be adopted by the county.

In the meantime, the Planning and Building Department will continue to work on a growth ordinance management plan, as directed by the board.

Supervisor Bill Coy has proposed an ordinance allowing a 2.5 percent growth limit on residential building permits. Alex Hinds, county planning director, said Friday that this proposal would be linked with the amount of resources available and would exempt "reasonable" housing from the proposed limit.

Several methods are being considered in order to fairly allocate limited permits, Hinds said. These methods include a lottery or a first come, first served basis for application consideration.

County planners have been inundated with permit applications. Hinds said. Since last July, applications for building permits have increased more than 288 percent, while applications for land divisions have increased 111 percent.

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