Future of Cal Poly free modem pool uncertain

By Stephanie Holub
Daily Staff Writer

America Online isn't the only Internet service that gets complaints from customers receiving too many busy signals.

If the seemingly never-ending busy signals from trying to access Cal Poly's free modem pool on campus have become annoying, possibly by spring quarter students free off-campus access to the Internet may cease for good.

Instead, to gain access to the Internet, including e-mail, Cal Poly students may have to either pay a monthly charge to the university or to commercial servers like America Online and Compuserve.

According to Jerry Hanley, chief information officer at Cal Poly, no decisions have been made to eliminate the free service for students yet.

"One of the challenges here is to understand what represents the kind of access a student requires to be a good student and to fulfill the expectations of his curriculum," he said.

Hanley explained that the free (or subsidized) pool costs the university a lot of money. The demand is becoming excessive. A Mustang Daily article stated that "people logging on to the modem pool were encountering an average of 20,000 busy signals an hour."

Hanley's job involves dealing with how information impacts learning on this campus, how it's done and how it's accessed.

Computer labs on campus and in the library would remain Internet-accessible for students without a fee. Only the free access students receive by logging on to the campus system through a personal modem may be eliminated.

Access to the subsidized pool from a private modem in Hanley's view, is purely a convenience.

He illustrated this view using a book in a library.

"If you go to the library to check out a book," he said, "and there's 10 copies of the book, then you're in luck. If you're not one of the first 10, you're not so lucky until someone returns the book. You either go to the library for investment in computer upgrades

By Emily Bradley
Daily Staff Writer

A referendum for increased fees will put the future of the Cal Poly Plan in the hands of student voters this April.

Last spring the Cal Poly Plan Steering Committee conducted a random survey of 940 students. The results showed that the majority of students favored the $45 fee increase. This supported a similar survey conducted in fall last year. With these results, the fee increase for this year was approved by the CSU Board of Trustees and the chancellor.

But according to ASI President Steve McShane, the CSU Board of Trustees has changed a number of policies with respect to fees. This is largely due to the efforts of the California State Student Association, an organization advocating the rights of students to have a say in much how they pay for their education.

This means that when the Board of Trustees and CSU Chancellor Barry Munitz approved this year's $45 fee increase, it was contingent on a vote this spring for the additional fees proposed for the next two years.

The competition was based on Baseline Hardware/Software Access, Training and Support (BATS). This CSU initiative was aimed at providing every campus with a baseline level of computer hardware and software, training to use the technology 24-hour computer labs and technical support.

Bob Clevenger, director of instructional application and Mary Shaffer, budget planning specialist for ideas, wrote the winning proposal.

Clever said there are many objectives in the plan. One of them is to have 24-hour labs with hardware and software that is current. While there are 24-hour labs open now, the computers cannot do very much. Students can only send e-mail and do other small tasks. The plan is to upgrade them so they can handle graphics and more complicated functions like the World Wide Web. These upgrades would also take place with the computer in the library.

Training is also part of the plan. There are currently two computer training labs. One in the business building and one in Chase Hall. The

Poly wins $500,000 in CSU competition for investment in computer upgrades

By Brian Johnson
Daily Staff Writer

Cal Poly received a windfall of money from the Chancellor's office.

More than $500,000 in state funds were awarded as a result of its high ranking in a California State University competition.

Cal Poly ranked number around received the full funding of $36 dollars per student. Three other schools received full funding as well and another received partial funding.

The competition was based on

CRASH!

Marsh Street's own version of a geyser appeared when a truck slammed into a fire hydrant and crashed into a downtown business early Sunday morning. The truck lost its traction and slid sideways, jumping over the curb, sliding into the hydrant and crashing into Traditions, a business at 748 Marsh St.

The sun makes me smile: Forestry and natural resources junior Ivan Mulkey and social science senior Ron Long make the most of a sunny afternoon in the University Union Plaza.
Forecasting floods a far-from-exact science

By Ken Davidson
San Francisco Examiner

SAN FRANCISCO — Forecasting floods isn’t easy, as scientists at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory are finding out.

They’re using supercomputers to forecast the flow of flood waters in California two days before it arrives.

But a vast lack of data — on soil moisture, land-use changes such as urban development, and other factors — keeps their forecasts from attaining high precision. For now, forecasts remain experimental.

Norman L. Miller and Jinwon Kim’s forecasts fared pretty well during the December floods in Northern California. The two meteorologists forecast that on Dec. 29, water would flow past a stream gauge on the Russian River near the town of Hopland at a rate of 10,000 cubic feet per second, or roughly 75,000 gallons per second. The actual rate was a little more than half the predicted amount.

They did even better a day later. The gauge measured water surging into the basin at a rate of just under 37,000 gallons per second, almost exactly the amount they had anticipated. They also accurately forecasted that flooding would peak on New Year’s Day, when the rate was 127,000 gallons per second, about 22,000 gallons per second less than forecast.

But their accuracy seriously slumped on Jan. 2. On that day the flow rate was a little more than 37,000 gallons per second, less than half the predicted amount.

“There are still large uncertainties, and we certainly hope to reduce that uncertainty,” said Kim. He and Miller work in the nonmilitary atmospheric sciences division at the nuclear weapons laboratory east of San Francisco.

At first glance, forecasting flood rates may seem straightforward — like forecasting how long it takes water to fill a bathtub, only more complicated.

If scientists could forecast floods with perfect accuracy, they could warn residents of flood-prone regions to head for high ground before disaster strikes. But forecasting flood rates is intellectually daunting, partly because it relies on another uncertain science: meteorology.

When will the rain and snow arrive (if at all)? Where will they fall? How fast will the rain fall? And how quickly will the snow melt?

Miller and Kim try to answer such questions partly by analyzing precipitation forecasts from the National Centers for Environmental Prediction, formerly known as the National Meteorological Center.

Using that forecast, Miller and Kim forecast precipitation levels within twokm regions — 12 miles by 12 miles — across California.

Then they feed the results into a computer model of a river basin. The model forecasts how the precipitation will affect river levels.

So far they’re developing computer models of three river basins in California: the headwater of the Russian River and the headwater of the Santa Ana River in Southern California.

Miller and Kim call their computer model the Regional Climate System Model. An earlier version of the model “closely simulated the observed river flow during the flooding stage” of major state floods in January 1995, they reported in the January 1996 Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society.

Back then, the article notes, “the (computer) simulated river flow was within 10 percent of the observed river flow at the Hopland gauge station on the Russian River.”

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MUSTANG DAILY
3 for a buck
WEDNESDAY
TAQCITO

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Controversy arises over fraternity ritual

By Matthew Waite
The Daily Nebraskan (U of Nebraska)

(U-WIRE) LINCOLN, Neb. — A fraternity ritual designed to burn a cross.

A fraternity ritual designed to burn a cross.

Controversy arises over fraternity ritual

By Matthew Waite
The Daily Nebraskan (U of Nebraska)

Friday that the ritual was a skit which symbolized the unity of the fraternity since the Civil War. He said crosses were carved into soap bars, they were put in a large metal cross, and the cross was heated to melt the soap into one.

Denker said he knew nothing about a wooden cross to be burned.

The burning of a wooden cross is most commonly known as a Ku Klux Klan ritual, symbolizing purification.

Phyllis Larsen, a spokeswoman for the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, said Sunday that deputies were dispatched Thursday night about a suspicious party half a mile south of Highway 33 and SW 59th Street.

When the deputies arrived, they found 30 white males who were members of the Sigma Chi fraternity holding a private ritual.

Officers also saw a 6-foot tall wooden cross that was to be burned later in the ceremony.

One member was ticketed for drinking alcohol in a wildlife area. Since no other laws were being broken, the officers left the scene.

Lancaster County Sheriff Terry Wagner said the ceremony seemed to have racial undertones.

"The explanation I've gotten from members of the fraternity is that this is a historical ceremony that has been going on for years," Wagner said. "But the connotation this brings up is one of racial bigotry."

Curt Denker, the Sigma Chi house corporation president who talked to several media outlets Friday, refused comment to the Daily Nebraskan Sunday.

There was no answer at Sigma Chi house president Craig Vaske's room. Calls attempting to reach Chapter Adviser Rich Rice were unsuccessful.

Denker told reporters on Friday that the ritual was a skit which symbolized the unity of the fraternity since the Civil War. He said crosses were carved into soap bars, they were put in a large metal cross, and the cross was heated to melt the soap into one.

Denker said he knew nothing about a wooden cross to be burned.

The burning of a wooden cross is most commonly known as a Ku Klux Klan ritual, symbolizing purification.

Phyllis Larsen, a spokeswoman for the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, said Sunday that administrators had looked into the incident on Friday and found there were no violations of the university's student code of conduct.

Larsen said, however, that Greek affairs administrators were still looking into the matter. The Associated Press contributed to this report.

A pay pool has already been established for the university system charging students $11 a month.

Director of communication services Norm Johnson said that the $11 charge is used to upgrade, add to the pay pool and cover basic costs.

Pacific Bell charges $15 a month for each of the 322 lines in the pool and up to 12 modems can run off each line. Johnson said communication services will keep a close eye on the pool in order to not exceed the 12-student-to-one-line ratio so that users will not encounter busy signals while logging on to the system.

Johnson said communication services is losing money right now because for fewer than 12 people are using each line. If such line were

See MODEM page 7

Five-legged frogs baffle researchers, scientists

By Kathleen Strickland
The Battalion (Texas A&M U.)

U(WIRE) COLLEGE STATION, Tex. -- On September 21, 1996, three children playing near a pond in Burleson County, Texas, miles from College Station, found a frog laying on a dirt path.

Upon closer inspection, they realized the frog was deformed, possessing an extra back leg protruding from a knee. The frog was taken to Texas A&M University for scientific research.

The discovery could be linked to a series of discoveries of deformed frogs in the northern region, from South Dakota to Quebec. Vast numbers of ponds have been found to contain these abnormal frogs, particularly in the Minnesota area, raising concerns with residents, scientists and the Environmental Protection Agency. Scientists nationwide have been puzzled as to why an increasing number of deformed frogs are being found. Some of the more popular theories are related to the thinnest ozone layer or parasites.

The contamination is also potentially harmful for other animals in the area. Damage to the ecosystems of the frogs is another strong possibility that would have long-term effects on the environment.

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Presented by The Missing Button
Those damn computers
Why our desktops and laptops will cause mass chaos at the turn of the century

Kabir Gambhir

You are staring at a carton of 100 year-old milk in your fridge. As you reach for the sound of mail echoes through your house as it makes its way to the mail and discard nine junk-mail ads, one
COLUMN

The mail is driving you crazy. A few seconds later the milk in your fridge. A few seconds later the milk in your fridge is still warm, and you’ve been billed for 51 million minutes. As you laugh this off, you glance at the colorful, low-substance news magazine with the banner headline: “year 2000. What’s new? Nothing.”

This scenario is going to be a real one because of our wonderful computers. The problem is simple, but the solution is not. Basically, for the last 20 years, computers have been programmed to acknowledge date in this format: MM/DD/YY. On the date January 1, 2000, the majority of this world’s computers will acknowledge this day as January 2, 2000. By the year 2000 is registered into most of the world’s computers to recognize the last two numbers, 00, and not four, 2000. This leads to the Y2K effect. This may seem trivial, but the reality is electronic chaos. The error will affect everyone, except your local Afghan. This mistake will lose a conservative $200 billion to reinstate, anticipate, or update existing computers and software.

The government could come to a standstill as all transactions would slow down with errors. Airplanes could be grounded because they have not, according to the erroneous computers, been maintained for a hundred years. This will be a great depression in computing.

Although many suffered during the economic Great Depression, a few prospered. Likewise, lawyers are salivating and investors are priming their greedy little pockets to invest and make a profit from this electronic chaos.

I have a solution to this mess. Throw all of the computers in the ocean and allow marine life to chew on some of its information systems overload with some of its information systems overload. This may be a global solution, but a few small numbers can crazily mess things up. Or, and if you care about your money, I suggest taking it all and stick it in a coffee-stick. Only three more years. I will be ready, will you?

Kabir Gambhir is a mechanical engineer-
ing senior.

Mustang Daily welcomes letters and commentaries from students, staff and other community mem-
bers. Please e-mail entries to: jam pleaded and keyboard errors. Kabir

Letters to the Editor

Jerry Zimmann

I have just finished reading Heidi Laurenzcco’s Health Maintenance Organization (HMO) article in the Jan. 24 issue of Mustang Daily. Her story accurately presented on a presenta-

tion sponsored by the health care industry. Jan 22 in Chumas-

Auditort. Ms. Laurenzcco’s article made it abundantly clear that this presentation was from the insurance company/HMO perspective. There is nothing wrong with the story, however, the patient perspective.

A recent assignment for my PE441 class was to read and summarize the article entitled, “One woman’s battle with her HMO” from “Time” maga-

rine, Jan. 22, 1996. The following is my summary and commentary on this article, which views HMOs from the patient perspective. After reviewing both perspectives, which do you believe?

“Time’s” investigative report chroni-
cles the struggle of a woman against metastatic breast cancer and against her HMO, the latter in an attempt to get them to pay for cov-
tered treatments she desperately needs to save her life. The article is a story within a story. With her story together, they provide an insightful look deep within one of the managed-care companies.

According to this report, “Their con-
duct is typical of the hundreds of blooming and merging HMOs throughout the country.” These “man-
ed health care organizations aggressively try to control the rapidly increasing costs of health care. In so doing, they have also changed in funda-

mental ways how doctors view patients, and perhaps how patients should view doctors.

One of the most frightening aspects of this article is that if the HMOs continue to reduce costs have put physicians in an adversarial position concerning their patients.

The story relates the struggle of Christine deMeurers. Christine was diagnosed with cancer and received an optimistic prognosis of her condition from the referred specialist. At UC San Diego Medical Center, an hour later she received a totally pessimistic prognosis from the same doctor. The only thing that happened para-

m for this woman is a series of calls between the specialist, the administrator for the HMO involved and a high ranking executive at UCLA Medical Center. In this case only doesn’t equal “need to withhold research grant money to the center if this patient received the expensive treatment.”

DeMeurers’ HMO was Health Net of Woodland Hills, California. It is a wholly owned subsidiary of Blue Cross of California. Health Net has a repu-

HMOs in the state. This firm earned the economic incentive for Health Net is clear. If it withholds treatment long enough by the dictate of refusing to pay, eventually all patients will die of the disease.

I have never had a personal experience with an HMO. I was both shocked and offended by the egregious conduct of this one. The lesson for me is to thor-

oughly investigate the past ethical conduct of any HMO I might come across in either my personal or profes-

sional life.

Jerry Zimmann is a physical edu-
cation junior.
That means that approximately 5,000 students are trying to log on to the 64 free modems that are left. If that free modem pool is shut down, then all students who want access to the Internet will have to either pay $11 a month to access Cal Poly's system, or purchase access to a commercial system that could cost nearly double that amount. When this issue comes up, several committees will review it.

The Instructional Advisory Committee on Computing (IACC) reviews Baker's recommendations and other approves or disapproves of them. The committee is made up of faculty and administration members as well as two student representatives from ASI.

Joe Grimes, chair of the IACC, had not heard of the proposal to cut the service. He said that when the university decides to get rid of a service or program, it is usually to allow for another to take its place.

Hanley said that the Information Resource Management Policy and Planning Committee (IRMPPC) will also look into the matter.

"I am going to ask that the IRMPPC (working with me and other key groups including students) look at a number of policies that relate to how we deliver service on this campus," he said.

Computer science senior Chris Collins dislikes the free modem pool and said in a Mustang Daily article last quarter, "The free modem system will prevent a lot of people who are not (computer science) majors from exploring the Internet on their own."

After waiting for more than 50 busy signals on the free pool, Collins decided to use a type of digital connection that supports speeds faster than a regular modem to log on to the modem pool quicker.

Some problems that became apparent in the old computer main-frame system in fall 1995 were overcrowding of the free modem pool that caused delays in e-mail delivery and general difficulties with the system. University computer services has tried to fix the system through upgrades and changes in the computer system...

A new mail server was installed on Oct. 15, 1996 to control e-mail and handle an average of 75,000 to 90,000 messages a day. The old system, which had 200 modems, handled about 45,000 messages a day, nearly half of the demand.

Communications services took out a loan from the university to buy new modems and upgrade the others.

To pay for the faster machines, they created a pool that people paid to use — a quicker service that serviced less users. With the creation of this pay pool the communication services department had to take into account those students who couldn't pay the new fee. Thus a creation of 64 modems to service as a new free pool.

Although students have to handle with busy signals and failing systems, Cal Poly administrators and staff don't. They have access to a free modem connection they received when hired. The state picks up the tab — not the students' tab.

Business junior Melissa Kawasaki uses the free pool about 10 times a week from her personal modem. She doesn't agree with the idea of the fee-based pool as Cal Poly's off-campus server.

"The $11 charge seems unfair," she said. "I can see if they do it now, because it's an option to students. (The free pool and student Internet usage and understanding is something that our school is technologically ahead on. I don't understand why they might take it away," she added. "It's like a step backwards — especially for a polytechnic school.

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FLOODS

Miller, 41, got his doctorate at the University of Wisconsin at Madison. Kim, 39, received his doctorate at Oregon State University at Corvallis. Their work is funded by Livermore and the University of California.

They are trying to improve their model in collaboration with scientists from Scripps Institution of Oceanography in San Diego.

Hydrologically speaking, California is a checkerboard of regions that are ever-changing.

Miller and Kim show a map of the Russian River basin, broken like a jigsaw puzzle into numerous "catchments," depressed regions into which water flows. In any catchment, the behavior of precipitation is affected by factors such as soil properties, vegetation, changes in land use and the underlying bedrock.

For example, when the soil is saturated, rainfall will stay on the surface - "overland flow," it's called - and rush quickly into the main river. But the soil isn't always saturated. When it isn't, it may soak up rainfall like a sponge, delaying runoff into rivers.

Land use varies over time, as in "paving over large farm fields for a shopping mall or putting up a parking lot," Miller says.

Unfortunately, it's almost impossible to keep up, Miller acknowledges.

"Data is the bottleneck to most of this work," he says. "Suppose you make a computer model of the basin as it was 10 years ago. Since then, urban developers may have started building a lot in a flood plain.

"That new development is going to have a big effect on the amount of water that's running off. So if your computer model doesn't take that new development into account, your forecast is going to be off."

To get around the data shortage, they "extrapolate" what they've learned about water behavior in one catchment basin to similar basins - those with similar topography, soils, geology and vegetation.

But "extrapolation is very dangerous," Miller acknowledges. Two basins may share many similarities, "yet respond to precipitation and runoff differently," say, if the upper-air jet stream steers the main part of a storm over one basin and away from another.

Worse, flood modeling contains a subjective dimension - the individual judgment of water control engineers. They must decide when and where to release water from dams to minimize flooding.

The engineers, Miller notes, face a dilemma. On one hand, they must release enough water to prevent the dam from failing. On the other hand, they must not release so much water as to cause severe damage or fatalities downstream.

"The real difficult part is understanding the rates at which the engineers release water... You can't predict that," Miller says.
**Bailu seeks admission to alcohol education program**

**By Christie Hanley**
Associated Press

WEST HARTFORD, Conn. — Olympic figure skating champi

On Tuesday, January 28, 1997, a woman in her late 20s applied for admission to an alco

Bailu, a Ukrainian who lives in the Hartford suburb of Newington, was charged with drunken driving and reckless driving.

Bailu, known to friends and family, is now free on bail.

This is the second time she has been charged with driving under the influence.

**Schools**

**PLANS for the future**

one to look at how information is distributed on this campus and what is required to fulfill the core curriculum of the students.

Convenience always costs more.**
### Sports

**On the road...**

#### AT A GLANCE

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The men's basketball team played two on the road this past weekend, losing to UOP 68-64, and Long Beach State, 89-80. Despite the losses, the Mustangs had some good performances, like Marcus Johnson (11) and Mike Wozniak (4), who both had 21 points against Long Beach State.

**Can Parcells leave New England?**

By Howard Ullman  
Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS - NFL commissioner Paul Tagliabue will decide whether coach Bill Parcells, who took the New England Patriots to the Super Bowl, is free to leave them behind. A conference call involving Tagliabue and both sides in the dispute over Parcells' contract is set for Tuesday with a decision possible by Wednesday.

Parcells claims he can coach wherever he wants in 1997. The Patriots requested the conference call, and owner Robert Kraft says Parcells cannot coach or take a comparable position with any other NFL team next season.

Despite the Patriots' successful season, ending with Sunday's 35-21 Super Bowl loss to the Green Bay Packers, Kraft and Parcells have had a cool relationship. Speculation has focused on the New York Jets as Parcells' next stop, but no other team can negotiate with him until a ruling by Tagliabue, for many years the NFL's chief couthoof.

A Tagliabue decision in the team's favor would give Kraft leverage to demand compensation from any club that wants to hire Parcells. Patriots players and coaches seemed to be in the dark as they prepared for their trip to the airport for their return home.

"I didn't get any inclination of what he's going to do," said guard William Roberts, who also played for Parcells on two New York Giants championship teams. After the game, "he was saying that no matter what happens, you all stick together and commit yourselves."

Dante Scarnechia, a defensive assistant, said all Parcells' coaches hope he stays with the Patriots. "He's an impact guy in so many ways," Scarnechia said. "This guy is a special guy, he's a special coach, he's a special person."

The Patriots' result against New Orleans, however, has mixed results. Parcells said after the game that he hadn't thought about his future.

"He's an impact guy in so many ways," Scarnechia said. "This guy is a special guy, he's a special coach, he's a special person."

The Patriots motorcade - seven police motorcycles, two stretch buses - left for New Orleans on the team charter plane Monday morning without Parcells.

He reportedly did not leave New Orleans on the team charter flight but said he would be in New England on Tuesday.

Parcells said after the game that he hadn't thought about his future.

"My whole time has been occupied with getting to this point," he said.

As of Sunday, the Jets had not contacted the Patriots for permission to talk with Parcells, according to Patriots spokesman Don Lowery. He also said the team had no firm plans to interview possible successors.

"We have a coach," Lowery said.

A report last week said San Francisco defensive coordinator Pete Carroll, who coached the Jets for one year in 1994, would meet with Patriots officials Thursday. But Tagliabue's ruling may not be issued by then.

**Pinning means winning for Poly**

The Mustangs, however, took it from there and never looked back.

David Wells (158 pounds) won with a 12-0 major decision over Warren Newsome. Jeremiah Miller (167 pounds) also won with a 19-4 major decision over Mark Pisoni, that put Cal Poly up 21-9.

Mike French (177 pounds) and Scott Adams (180 pounds) added victories in both of their weight classes.

Davis, however, grabbed the last three points in a surprise victory in the heavyweight division. Gan McCain lost a close one, 7-6, to Davis' Jarold Jasso.