Almost 3,000 Cal Poly students went through commencement ceremonies on Saturday at Mustang Stadium, where the bleachers were packed with cheering families and friends of the graduates.

The first ceremony began at 9:30 a.m. and recognized the colleges of Agriculture, Architecture and Environmental Design and Liberal Arts. The afternoon ceremony began at 1:30 p.m. and recognized the colleges of Business, Engineering, Science and Math, Teacher Education and the Nursing Program.

The first half of both ceremonies consisted of several speakers, including President Baker, who addressed the graduating seniors and congratulated them on their success.

"Cal Poly is a better place because you spent time here," Baker said. "Come back and see us. We'll leave the porch light on."

During the second half of the ceremonies, the different colleges went to separate locations. There, each student's name was called and the graduates were presented with a Certificate of Participation.

For example, the College of Business stayed at the stadium, while the College of Science and Math moved to the Rec Center for each student to be personally recognized.

Central Coast U.S. representative Leon Panetta was the featured speaker at both the morning and afternoon commencement. He gave a light-hearted speech for 15 minutes, telling students to give back to the community.

"You're here today because you had the discipline to be here," he said. "You shape your own future. Use the tools you have received to help others."

Panetta said life is about loving, touching and caring for others. He warned the graduates to never become isolated from other people and said true leadership is about serving others.

Panetta encouraged students to use the tools they have received to help others. He would one day earn a college degree. He graduated in 1966 and served in the Clinton administration as director of the U.S. Office for Civil Rights. He was responsible for enforcement of civil rights laws.

Panetta briefly served in the Nixon administration as director of the U.S. Office for Civil Rights. He was responsible for enforcement of civil rights laws.

"Cal Poly is a better place because you spent time here," he said. "You shape your own future. Use the tools you have received to help others."

During the second half of the ceremonies, the different colleges went to separate locations. There, each student's name was called and the graduates were presented with a Certificate of Participation.

Ceremony celebrates Chicano grads

By Kristen Hall
Summer Staff Writer

Three students, out of the thousands who went through commencement on Saturday, received special honors for outstanding achievements in their graduate work.

Biological sciences graduate Tobe Cox received the Outstanding Graduate Student Award, while two other students shared the Outstanding Thesis Award.

Cox, 33, turned in her final paper on Friday after beginning her Cal Poly education six years ago. She graduated on Saturday with a master's degree in biological sciences and a 3.9 GPA.

"I was excited and honored when I found out I won the award," she said. "I owe a lot to my advisor and Dr. Frey. They made an atmosphere that was inspiring and supportive."

The criteria used to evaluate students for the awards was the student's ability to complete their academic work with excellence.

Quick Facts

Almost 3,000 students graduated during two ceremonies on Saturday at Mustang Stadium.

Photos by Michael Troxell

See GRADUATION page 6
SOUTHERN BAPTISTS TRY TO TRAP MICKEY

By John Hurst
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Want to watch ESPN’s "bcn Night base-
ball game? That’s off limits, if you’re a Southern Baptist.
Take the kids to a matinee of "Hercules?" Scratch those plans.

Disney’s ubiquitous empire embraces theme parks, the
Anaheim Angels baseball and Mighty Darts hockey teams and
the television networks ABC, ESPN and A&E. And Disney
advertisements appear to be Hollywood’s leading supplier of
family fare, even as its theme parks are inviting the kids to see "Most Valuable
Pitch" or "George of the Jungle" this summer. Southern Baptists
parents now face such non-Disney alternatives as "Hoodlum," "Kill
the Conqueror," "Dark City.

Anyone boycotting Disney couldn’t read the upcoming past-
ent book from Hyperion Press, "School is Not a Four-Letter
Word: How to Help Your Child Make the Grade," the Disney-owned science magazine Discover; or the medical journal Skin and
Allergy News — formerly owned by Capital Cities/ABC.

Disney’s entertainment entan-
glements run so deep that black-
balling it won’t work, Southern Baptists essentially must avoid popular culture
properties as diverse as "Bill Nye the Science Guy," Family Fun
magazine, Disney Cruise Line, Broadway’s New Amsterdam thea-
ter and "Live! With Regis and Kathie Lee," he said.

On the convention floor Wednesday, delegates scanned
"the Disney Company Family Tree," a three-page list of Disney
affiliations circulated by the church; many conceded it would
be almost impossible to steer clear of Disney.

"If we approve this resolution, we must have a moral obligation to go
home, cancel your ESPN cover-
age, get rid of the A&E Channel, stop watching Lifetime television
and never turn your TV to ABC," said Delegate Michael Goldenstein
during the floor debate who was opposed.

"Good Moral America," said the Rev. Rick Markham, pastor of Mount Zion
Baptist Church in Shively, Ky. Markham objected to the resolu-
tion.

Monte Shinkle, pastor of Concord Baptist Church in
Jefferson City, Mo., has four chil-

dren aged 11 to 21. "One of our
concerns is how large Disney is," Shinkle said. "Are we always going to avoid the ABC
channel anytime?"

"It’s a fun way to meet people and enjoy a nice walk on the beach. It usually lasts about an hour and
a half and friends and children are welcome. Gloves and bags are pro-
near the pier at 10:30 a.m. at Cayucos.

For more information call 754-1594.

Sixth annual Cambria Fest June 21-22 hosted by the Arthritis
Foundation. There will be wine-tasting, a BBQ lunch, two bands and
an auction hosted by Archie MtLaren. Tickets are $30 per person.

The event runs noon to 4 p.m. Free entry at
Cambria Pines Lodge.

Call 544-6317 or 1-800-549-3153 for more information.

The Road to Unlimited Devotion Tour 1997 comes to Biddle Park
tour from Eugene, Ore. down the Pacific Coast Highway on the
way to Los Angeles for a chaotic circus madness. Bands including
The Mother Hips, Jerry’s Kids and the Rainforest Band will play.

Camping at Lopez Lake. Tickets for the June 21 and 22 event
available at Boo Boo Records $18.50/day.

Contact Backburner Productions for more information
544-6317.

Central Coast Roadrunners return home to Mustang Stadium after
a long road trip. They will be playing the Everett Bigfoot at 7:30 p.m.

Tickets can be purchased at the stadium box office on the day of
the game.

Sixth Annual Cambria Festival hosted by the Arthritis Foundation pre-

ts a micro-brewery tasting with Jill Knight and The Folk Blues.

Local service clubs will provide a variety of food selections.

Tickets are $25 per person for the noon to 4 p.m. event.

Call 544-1234 for more information.

Summer Mustang Agenda Items: c/o Shoshana Hebshi
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Summer Mustang hits the racks on Thursdays, so agenda items
must be in the Monday before publication. Due to excessive
demand, not all items submitted to Agenda will be printed. To
guarantee publication, an advertisement must be purchased.
affected by students is Pizza Hut. As a large franchise, it doesn't do any local marketing like student discounts. As a result, only 5 to 7 percent of its business is student generated. Many Denner, the manager of the Pizza Hut on Foothill Boulevard, said that the two Pizza Hut restaurants in San Luis Obispo get some student customers, but not many. As a result, there is little impact on their business in the summer when most students leave.

Movie complexes also capitalize on the student population, drawing students in with discount offers. Downtown Theatre Cinemas recently raised its student price 75 cents to $5.75, 81 less than general admission. Fremont Mission Cinemas does not give a student discount at the theater, but it has group activity ticket that students can get at El Corral Bookstore for $4.25. Fremont's regular admission price is $6.75.

On average, 40 percent of Downtown Theatre Cinemas' customers are students. Students account for half of Fremont's total viewers. However, these theaters' business does not suffer much in the summer because that is when the biggest movies that draw the largest audiences come out. Many of the theaters' employees are students, though, and they must be replaced during summer and breaks.

Round Table Pizza on Olive Street also depends on student business. Manager Rebecca Dukes said that 80 percent of Round Table Pizza customers are college students, mostly from Cal Poly. She added that 98 percent of her employees are students too.

Round Table offers a student discount and does fund-raising activities with some campus groups to get its name out. One pizza business not much

Chamber holds high hope for new SLO Card

By Jeffrey Jen
Special to Summer Mustang

The Chamber of Commerce is attempting to help businesses draw more students as customers. On June 27, it will hold a forum on how to market to students for its member businesses. The Chamber is also working with ASI on getting a general discount card for Cal Poly students.

Sam Aborne, a civil engineering freshman, has worked with the Chamber on the card, which will be on sale in September. Called the SLO Student Card, it is a partnership between the two organizations.

“We want to have something worthwhile to students,” Aborne said. “We feel it improves the relationship between students and the community.”

The plan is for students to buy a $10 card and key tag that will automatically gain them certain discounts to some businesses that are members of the Chamber. Businesses will pay $85 to be a member of the discount card and will have two-for-one sales and 10 percent to 30 percent discounts for students all year round.

“We have to make sure that businesses would get the short end of the stick,” Aborne points out that the discount card would generate more potential customers among students who are more inclined to pay for something because of the cheaper cost.

“We have a win-win for everyone,” Aborne declared.

Aborne said that ASI will be in charge of the program while the Chamber will try to attract businesses to sign on for the deal. It is hoped that 3,000 SLO student cards will be sold next year and at least 50 businesses will join in.

Best said the Chamber encourages local businesses to find other ways to get students as customers. One such way is participating in the Week of Welcome downtown for incoming students on September 1.

One new idea that is taking the advice is Coldstone Creamery, an ice cream parlor on Higuera Street. After being part of the WOW tour last year, Coldstone is making sure it is this year. The benefit is getting their name out to students, especially new ones

See BREAK page 7
Editor,

Bitch and moan. Bitch and moan. Nearly every letter to the editor I've read this month has been students bitching and moaning about something or another. Muhammad was here. He shared his views with the select student body. Sorry, it wasn't the truth. The Pope isn't some homosexual with little boys under his skirt. People wrote several letters to the editor bitching about how it was bad how he came. I got a message for all those who wrote. Don't complain. Listen the message that Muhammad gave, learn from it.

A surfer decided to comment on how he and other surfers get upset when people wear surf attire and they don't even surf. Don't be so superficial; imitation is the highest compliment.

Matt Milbury
Computer engineering freshman

Editor,

A recent in class reading of Plato's "Allegory of the Cave" led to a lively discussion of the concept of the "truth." I must admit I was somewhat shaken by that I will leave Cal Poly with some new understanding of what the "truth" is, nor do I believe any of us will. I will leave knowing that it is the search for truth that matters.

Lorie Durbin
Graphic communication junior

Page 4

Editor,

I am writing because I hope you will publish my letter to help some fellow students. I am a Cal Poly student who rented an apartment from Farrell-Smyth, Inc. I feel compelled to write to warn other renters about this agency which has treated me very poorly over the course of this school year. As I write this, it is finals week and I have been awakened in the mornings by maintenance actions scheduled by Farrell-Smyth. On Monday there was a man walking noisily across the roof pruning the trees at 9:30 a.m. That might sound very early, but I was awakened after getting hours of sleep because I was studying most the night. On Tuesday the maintenance crew was outside trimming, weeding, mowing at 7:30 a.m. while the units was talking loudly with the previous day's runner about doing further pruning. But the event on Wednesday really took the cake. At 7:45, I woke to the sound of two men saw-cutting the asphalt in the parking lot. I went outside to ask them why they were doing this then and they said they had met with Farrell-Smyth and this was the only time they could do it in preparation for re-paving the parking lot the following week. But they also said that the agency took into consideration that it was finals, so they were only doing a small amount of the cutting. Right, it was really considerate that they were thinking of their tenants in that decision. However, I couldn't go back to sleep and had to take a two-hour final on very little sleep.

The events that week were the worst, I have often felt that Farrell-Smyth has been rude during the course of the whole year. It started the day when one of my roommates and I went to the office to sign our apartment lease. We were handed the agreement and told curiously to read it and sign in the appropriate places, which we did standing at the front counter. While we were there, a young woman and her mother came in to take care of the same business. But they were invited to sit at the table and an employee sat with them and went through the agreement. We wondered why we weren't as good as these other people in their eyes. After all, we were paying rent, too.

During the year, I would bring the rent checks in, I was never acknowledged by an employee. It was like I was completely invisible.

Once when I called to check why a problem in the apartment was not serviced, I was rudely told by an employee that someone in my apartment had canceled the service request, which no one did. Perhaps I should publish this letter to help prospective renters. In a town with many agents like Farrell-Smyth, I know that I'm not going to deal with them again.

Megan Long
Journalism junior

Editor,

"As I write this, it is finals week and I have been awakened in the mornings by maintenance actions scheduled by Farrell-Smyth."
The flat line we call Poly

Last night, in a successful effort to stall from studying for finals, I decided to surf the tube. I ended up watching a show on much of the 90's. The show gave me a very ambivalent feeling. I was happy to see year who display these characteristics. I was sad because I tried to relate this brief moment in time to my experiences at Cal Poly. It made me realize how stagnant our college community is.

What I realized was really missing from our school is a combination of enthusiasm, courage and individualism. I find it very difficult to recall many people I've met this year who display these characteristics. Perhaps the best example for this is the U.U. hour. There have been several good bands playing during the one hour of mass relaxation this year. Yet, how many times do you remember seeing more than per­haps a handful of people dancing? Do you remember seeing more than per­haps a handful of people not like to dance or are you just scared? Another frightful fact of life for me is difficulty to recall many people I've met this moment in time to my experiences at Cal Poly try their hardest not to stick out. Being a face in the crowd is obvious easier than being an individual.

Don't get me wrong, there is orga­nization at this school. Unfortunately it is focused almost primarily around having a good time. For instance, the biggest club on campus is the Ski Club. People orga­nize every weekend at people's houses in order to get inebriated. While other schools have giant protests against inequality and environ­mental wrongdoing, Cal Poly students struggle to get their cups filled the fastest at the keg line. Parties can be a fun time, but how often have you actually participated in a conversation worth remembering the next day?

Perhaps the problem lies in the fact that Cal Poly students fail to realize there are a whole lot of messed up things happen­ing outside of this little bubble called SLO. Ten-year-olds are being charged with crimes against humanity (mass murder) in Rwanda, (even worse super per­haps the largest bubble called Cal Poly, it's a country in Africa), our govern­ment is being led by a spineless president, a.k.a. Bill "Coffee Klatch" Clinton and a Congress answering to tobacco, the NBA and any other high-paying corporation that wants a tax break.

Our planet is being destroyed more every minute and Californians just passed a bill disallowing minorities an equal opportunity. Still the only critical thinking we students do is deciding where to go drink first.

The really scary aspect of our uninter­ested, uniformed community is that not too far from now we will be the ones inher­iting this country. Once we hold the power, only then will we fully comprehend the extent of the trouble this world is in. Since we are going to be up shit creek then, we need to start building a strong paddle now.

I write this commentary as a sort of challenge to everyone now attending this university. I challenge all of you do some­thing to alter our world: organize a protest (or riot), pass off or onto an administrator, wear the ugliest and loudest shirt you never had the courage to wear or perform some service in the community. Perhaps then you'll have an answer when your child asks you "What did you do to change the world?"

Jan Novak is a Soil Science sopho­more.

Chinese opinions had wrong info

Misinconceptions about credit/no credit revealed

Editor,

To all the teachers and students that are "Graded CR/NC," I take a class CR/NC. CRNC scandal. Please note my follow­ing observations which obviously haven't occurred to you. First of all I'm saying that people with high GPAs are dumb.

Observation 1: "IT IS HARDER TO PASS A CLASS WHEN YOU TAKE IT CR/NC." Teachers get paid salaries. Hmmm... people who pay, and people who get paid. In every situation, I've encountered, one of these groups is the boss, and the other is...uh, not the boss. If anything, the student body alone should be allowed to vote on this issue. Observation 4: Probably eliminating the CR/NC option won't make people try any harder. I know I wouldn't. Probably the only people that will try harder are the people who worry (almost obsessively) about their high GPA. Please ask yourself. "Do these people need any more stress?"

Observation 5: This one is for the stu­dents. Regardless of whether a CR/NC option exists, you'll graduate in the same percentile of your class. It's like the test that is curved. It doesn't matter how hard the test is. A conversa­tion I had once with a girl illustrates this point. Miss 3.7 - "I hope the test is easy." Mr. 2.8 - "Why?" Miss 3.7 - "So I'll get a good grade." Mr. 2.8 - "Let me ask you this... if we have a hard test, where do you think you'll rank when they're graded?"

Observation 3: Student bodies pay tuition. Teachers get paid salaries. Hmmm... people who pay, and people who get paid. In every situation, I've encountered, one of these groups is the boss, and the other is...uh, not the boss. Observation 2: "When a student takes a class CRNC, they barely have to try and they pass the class," I've heard teachers say. Yep. Great argument, until you realize what's actually being said -- "Classes are way too easy to pass here at Cal Poly." Here teachers! Here's a hot tip for you! Want CRNC people not to slack? Simply make it harder to get a "C." People will then have to try harder. Oh, wait! What about the people that have to struggle to get a "C?" Well, there's nothing wrong with a "D" (unless they were foolish enough to take that class CRNC, heh, heh).

Mr. 2.8 - "You think that's gonna change if the test is easy?"

Mr. 2.8 - "What did you do to change the world?"

Mr. 2.8 - "No, I don't know, seventh or eighth."

Observation 6: It's not like grades at this school matter. Our probably most schools aren't the biggest joke since the whoopee cushion. How do you compare someone with a 3.7 GPA with someone with a 3.9 and tons of free time? Grades inherently mean zero. They are a function of intelligence, but also of how much you work, how much beer you drink, whether you're a mother or father, if you own a computer, how many times you've puked the night before a midterm, how many times you go to the beach and about 1000 other things. You know what you know. You get out of a class what you put into it, and you can only cheat yourself. So, study, damn it.

Travis Roberts
Civil engineering senior

Letters to the Editor

Policy Box

Summer Mustang welcomes reader contributions. If you've read something that struck a nerve, let us know. Or, if you feel like striking nerve, give it a go. Simply email your contribution to class CRNC, heh, heh.

Editor, Business freshman

Reader contributions. If you've read something that struck a nerve, let us know. Or, if you feel like striking nerve, give it a go. Simply email your contribution to class CRNC, heh, heh.

TRAVIS ROBERTS
Civil engineering senior

Travis Roberts

Letters to the Editor
AWARDS

Two students were nominated for the Outstanding Thesis Award. The committee said both nominees were so good that it could not decide between them, so they gave the honor to both students. Architectural graduate Thomas Stewart and Katherine Moldauer of the University Center for Teacher Education (UCTE) each received $250 — half the cash award — and a plaque.

Stewart received his master's in August 1996 and graduated with a 3.7 GPA. He turned 50 in two months and attributes his success in college to his passion for his work.

"I had a strong desire to make a contribution and had a great support system," he said. "When I received the award I felt good for myself, the graduate program, my college and my family."

The criteria for Outstanding Thesis Award include creativity, originality, depth, significance, clarity and methodology.

Stewart's focus was landscape ecology. He was nominated for his well-organized thesis, which the committee said was clear and original for Stewart's discipline.

Stewart said he developed a way to evaluate ecological integrity over time and that his evaluation was clearly written so environmental designers and planners could use the system.

"I closely studied a complex area of knowledge relating to landscape on a regional scale," he explained. "Then I developed a system for evaluating sustainable development in rural areas."

Stewart works in Mill Valley, marketing and designing landscape irrigation components and systems. He's also working on a watershed project in Marin County where he's mapping hik

ing trails within a watershed on Mount Tamalpais.

"Take full advantage of the time and resources available to you at Cal Poly," Stewart advised. "And pursue your work with a passion."

Katherine Moldauer also received the Outstanding Thesis Award. She was honored for creating a unique anatomy lab manual for artists. The manual is now being used by San Francisco's Academy of Art College where Moldauer works as an administrator and professor.

"I was surprised when I heard about winning the award. I didn't know it existed," she said. "I was completely astonished and honored."

Moldauer finished her graduate work in March and graduated with a 3.9 GPA. She said she faced many personal hardships as well as criticism about her thesis while trying to make it through the teaching program.

"I made it through because my focus wasn't on the thesis but on my students, plus I was passionate about the topic," she said.

The third annual presentation of the Outstanding Thesis Award included creativity, originality, depth, significance, clarity and methodology.

Other graduates said they couldn't hear the speakers because their classmates were too rowdy. And one graduate said the seniors were just there to have a good time and not listen to what the speakers were saying.

"I wasn't really charged about the speakers," said Jennifer Bertucco, an environmental engineering graduate. "I had never been to a Cal Poly graduation before, but I thought it was fun."
**MUSTANG DAILY**

**BREAK** from page 3

Shuck said, "We are trying to pro­vide students with a special bene­fit or privilege, maybe only because they expect it and don't see it as a privilege but as a right. We've had a lot of problems over this.

"There is a possibility we won't have the discount if we continue to have the problems that we do," she added.

Fremont assistant manager Chris Stanley said that students get out of hand sometimes but he accepts that as typical student behavior.

Stanley adds that all the the­aters are in competition to get movies and only one theater can show a movie in the local area. For some people, it doesn't matter which theater the movie is at, but what movie is playing.

Student discounts are the only thing businesses use to attract Cal Poly students.

Weber said, "It is located right that students still are a major part of Tortilla's business.

Plaza has nowhere near the stu­dent business we do."

Sometimes location is the biggest key into whether students come or not. Lucky's supermarket has two stores in San Luis Obispo. It is the one on Foothill Boulevard that gets most of the student busi­ness because, as manager John Weber said, "It is located right down the road from Cal Poly. The other Lucky's out in Madonna Plaza has nowhere near the stu­dent business." Weber added.

"It affects the business when students leave for the summer," Weber added.

**CHICANO** from page 1

y Espiritu also entertained the crowd of mostly parents, some of Chicano Commencement cer­emony, was performed in both Spanish and English to cater to all the participants. It began with dinner at 3 p.m. and ended with a dance at midnight.

This year's Chicano Commencement motto was "Acknowledging the past, struggle­ing in the present, improving the future."

Keynote speaker Hilda Zarazua's speech matched the group's motto.

"Life is a struggle but anything is possible," she told graduates.

Zarazua is a liaison for Congressman Walter Capps (D- 22nd Congressional District) and Cal Poly alumni.

"We have to stop sexism and racism. But it has to start with us," she said. Zarazua also spoke in Spanish, saying "Nosotros podemos hacer cambios (we can make a difference)."

Graduates were individually recognized following the keynote address. Each graduate walked up to the auditorium stage, fol­lowed by his or her parents. The graduates thanked teachers and parents, siblings and friends.

Many, like social science graduate Hugo Ayon, fought back tears. Others, like biological sci­ences graduate Aracei Contreras let the tears roll uncontrollably. Between sobs and sighs Contreras thanked her parents and family members for supporting her at every step of her career at Cal Poly.

The Chicano Commencement Committee was established in 1978 by members of Movimiento Estudiantil Xicano de Aztlán. It was established to raise funds and coordinate efforts for a bilingual graduation ceremony.

The Chicano Commencement Committee is made up of Cal Poly graduating seniors from a wide variety of majors, clubs and organ­i­zations like Student Academic Services, Minority Engineering Program, Latinos In Agriculture and Society of Hispanic Advocates for Health.

Throughout the year, members of Chicano Commencement Committee raised funds for the commencement expenses. Fundraising activities included T- shirt sales, U.U. hour food sales, ra­ffles, dances and enchilada sales.

The commencement ceremony was followed by a dance with hip­ hop, techno and traditional Mexican music like banda, cumbias and quebradita.

"All I want is the opportunity to have an opportunity."

**CHAMBER** from page 3

who will be starting their college careers and will be at Cal Poly for the next several years.

Mary Ann Lodato, owner of Coldstone Creamery, said this past year was its first year of busi­ness and students made up 30 percent of customers, Lodato hopes to increase that in the com­ing year and is attempting to reach out to the student popula­tion.

"We want to introduce fresh­men to our business," Lodato said.

When asked why she is target­ing students, Lodato gave an answer that holds true for many businesses around in San Luis Obispo.

"Our business is one that needs college kids. This town is filled with them."
Giants sweep Mariners, Javier homers again

By Rob Gostler
Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — Mark Gardner allowed three hits in 7⅔ innings, and Stan Javier hit his third interleague homer as the San Francisco Giants defeated the Seattle Mariners 4-2 Wednesday to complete a two-game sweep.

SCOREBOARD

Mariners 2
Giants 4

Gardner (8-2), who retired the first 13 batters before allowing Russ Davis' 10th homer leadoff single in the fifth, struck out four and walked two. The second hit he allowed was Russ Davis' 10th homer leading off the eighth.

Rod Beck struck out the side in the ninth for his NL-leading 33rd save.

Javier hit a solo homer in the sixth as the Giants won their fourth straight. He added a sacrifice fly in the eighth.

Javier has three homers this season, all since interleague play began last Thursday. Javier, who spent eight seasons in the AL, hit a two-run pinch-hit homer in the Giants' 4-3 win over Seattle on Tuesday night.

SEATTLE — Even though all the ballots haven't been counted, billionaire Paul Allen and local officials all but declared victory Wednesday in a stadium referendum and agreed to move forward with Allen's purchase of the Seattle Seahawks.

King County Executive Ron Sims and Allen's representatives announced they had agreed on the wording of a letter of intent that assumes passage of Referendum 48, a $4.25 billion stadium-financing plan.

The measure was ahead by 17,850 votes on Wednesday — 699,239 votes (51 percent) to 681,389 votes (49 percent). A survey of county auditors indicated at least 100,000 ballots remained to be counted.

Without public approval of a new stadium, Allen has said he would walk away from the deal.

"Even though the issue is not yet decided, it's our belief that it's time to move forward because we believe the voters have spoken and Referendum 48 will pass," Sims said at a news conference.

The King County Council's approval of the agreement is necessary before Sims can sign it.

The council held a hearing on the plan Wednesday, angering stadium opponents who have criticized it.

"Even though the issue is not yet decided, it's our belief that it's time to move forward because we believe the voters have spoken and Referendum 48 will pass" — King County Executive Ron Sims

Allen for spending a record $5 million on the campaign and for agreeing to reimburse the state for the $4.2 million cost of the special election.

"It would really be nice if they respected the vote," said Seattle stockbroker Chris Van Dyk, a leader of Citizens for More Important Things, one of two organized stadium opposition groups.

"They've bought the election. They've spent tons of money, demanded all sorts of things, and they're not even waiting until the ballots are fully counted before holding a hearing and going forward on this."