El Niño storm kills 2 CHP officers in Santa Maria

Associated Press

SANTA MARIA — Two Highway Patrol officers on their way to help a disabled motorist were killed Tuesday when their patrol car pitched into a gushing river swelled by a savage El Niño storm that killed five others and caused mudslides and tornadoes.

The two-day storm, the worst from El Niño this winter, blew out of the waterlogged state just hours after the officers and at least three other drivers were sucked into the muddy river.

Two men were rescued by helicopter, but divers searched for other victims in the Cuyama River near Santa Maria, about 200 miles north of Los Angeles after part of Highway 166 gave way.

The patrol car carrying Officers Rick Rivard and Britt Irvine was upsidedown, buried under silt, mud and debris. Crews with cranes attempted to lift it from the river, which washed away 100 yards of the rural highway.

The veteran officers, who were working the graveyard shift, were answering a disabled motorist call.

"We were out doing what they are supposed to do. They were out helping the public," Matthies said.

Matthies said a chaplain was at a news conference.

"I was just rocking and rolling, and just desperately crying my way to the top of wherever I was," Ann Quilter said. "Every second, you're trying to keep your hands in front of your face to create an air pocket."

San Luis Obispo County has taken an active role in preventing pet overpopulation. The County Board of Supervisors voted unanimously on Tuesday to grant $20,000 in vouchers to be used by the public toward the cost of spaying and neutering animals for Spay Day USA and Prevent A Litter Month, and then continuing throughout the year.

Tuesday was Spay Day USA, the most important day of Prevent A Litter Month which ends March 31. The day, as well as the entire month, was set up to attack pet overpopulation and to gain awareness around the nation. Locally, 23 veterinarians throughout the county are offering 15- to 20-percent discounts for spays and neuters until Prevent A Litter Month ends. Humane organizations are also offering coupons for an additional $10 to $20 off the veterinary fees. For more information write to Second Chance at Love, P.O. Box 31, Arroyo Grande, CA 93420, or call 472-5297.

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CNN reporter to share experiences with Poly students

Award-winning CNN reporter Paul Vercammen is coming to Cal Poly to meet with interested students this Thursday and Friday.

Vercammen has recently covered the World Trade Center bombing, the Olympic Games in Atlanta and the Los Angeles earthquake. He also profiles entertainment personalities.

Vercammen got his start locally, reporting on such stories as the PSA plane crash near Atascadero, how Hollywood used the Pismo Dunes for a major movie picture, and how a memory was born.

Vercammen will be at the Graphic Arts Building (261) in rooms 303, 309 and 205 Thursday and Friday from 11 a.m. until the late afternoon. Sign up at 282-220 if you are interested in either meeting Vercammen or getting your work critiqued by one of TV’s most prominent news reporters.

Farce by Czech President Vaclav Havel staged Poly

“The Increased Difficulty of Concentration,” a play by “the world’s hippest head of state” (according to the Chicago Tribune), will play in the Chumash Auditorium from 11 a.m. until the late afternoon. The play was written by Vaclav Havel, the first duly elected president of the Czech Republic since the fall of communism.

Considered a major thorn in the side of the Communist government for more than 30 years, Havel is now known as one of the most popular leaders in the world.

The Chicago Tribune, reporting on a past production of “Increased Difficulty,” said: “The farcical plays of Vaclav Havel inhabit a kind of uneasy middle ground between Ray Cooney and Franz Kafka.”

The play is considered a broad and absurdist farce, but its themes are more self-reflective. The central character, Huml, is a social scientist who spends his time juggling a wife, a mistress, a secretary and several people.

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BIKE from page 1

er across the country. In 1990, the Recumbent Bicycle Club of America was founded. Recumbent bicyclists give several reasons for their love of these machines. One of the main advantages over conventional bikes is the higher level of comfort, which encourages the rider to ride longer and therefore get more exercise. Rather than a "saddle seat," recumbent riders are seated on a full, cushioned seat which also supports the back. The rider's posture is better on the recumbent bike which allows for easier breathing because the lungs can open wider when a rider sits in the upright position the recumbent supports. Strain on the back and neck are also greatly reduced because the rider's weight is not supported by the arms.

Some potential problems associated with riding conventional bikes are kidney problems, inflammation of the prostate gland and possible male impotence. These complications aren't associated with recumbent cycling, according to a recumbent manufacturer, BikeE. Recumbent bikes also offer increased rider safety. Recumbents have a lower center of gravity than conventional bikes which enables the rider to stop faster, and the single-line braking system works on both wheels simultaneously, keeping the rider from getting thrown over the handlebars. If the recumbent rider crashes, he or she falls to the side, absorbing the impact with the hip and leg. On a conventional bike, one would most likely fall forward, absorbing the impact on the head and shoulders.

Recumbent designs also merit a few additional features like rear-view mirrors and a fairing, a curved, plastic-like windshield. Owners of recumbents also enjoy faster speeds and adjustable gears. In general, recumbents are 10 percent faster than conventional bikes, and can be 15 to 25 percent faster with a fairing in place. However, climbing hills is often an obstacle for newer riders. BikeE's web site recommends for forward propulsion that a rider uses more of a spin (pedaling faster on a lower gear) than a climb (pedaling harder on a higher gear).

Travis Collins, a bicycle technician at Copeland's Sports, said the store carries two BikeE models—a mountain version for $900 and a road version for $1,000. He said a few have been sold, since the bikes are still gaining popularity, and the maintenance costs are about the same as a conventional bike's, with some of the parts costing slightly cheaper.

Footbll Cyclery owner Seiya Nishi said he anticipates getting some recumbents in stock soon, but for now he just orders them from a catalog on request. A couple people every once in a while come in and ask about the bikes. "I'd like to get some floor models in so people can try them out to see how they like it," he said. But he still expects the demand to be quite low, "maybe two or three sales a year."

He said he's tried the bikes and they are good and comfortable to ride.

Some factories, like Anglewelt in Woodland Park, Colo., will take orders over the telephone, and make special requests for a customer's special height or weight needs. Anglewelt ships its custom-made bikes, almost fully assembled, directly to the customer. It also offers recumbent tricycles (there are two wheels in the front), tandem (two-person) recumbents, the Quadra-ped (the handlebar is a hand pedal) and fiddable recumbents.

For do-it-yourselfers, the option of building one's own recumbent is also available. By buying a design plan and instructions, one can build a bike and spend less than it would cost to purchase a bike from a store or out of a catalogue. Not all bike brands have plans anyone can purchase, but some are available from the manufacturer. Deciding whether to build a bike or buy one already made should depend on the amount of free time one has to dedicate to the bike's construction. It's not a quick task.

Ross Pepper, a former Cal Poly psychology professor, bought the plans five years ago from Easy Rider in Davenport for $40, and used two regular 10-speed bike frames to cut, reenage and weld, making his own recumbent bicycle. In six weeks he had a 21-speed Gold Rush (a popular, record-breaking $3,500 model for which the company has a six-month purchase waiting list) for a total cost of about $500.

Pepper decided to try out a recumbent bicycle because he has knee problems and thought being in a different position would help ease the pain. It appears to have been effective because his home-made recumbent has helped him win bike races. And when he was an instructor at Cuesta College, it carried him the 13 miles twice a week to and from his home in Country Club Estates in about 31 to 38 minutes.

At a dead run, it can gauge the exact instant to backhand a tennis ball traveling 95 miles an hour for a baseline winner. Calculate how electrons move in a crystal. Compose symphonies. Even program a VCR.


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At Andersen Consulting, we always keep you in mind.
A game of hide and seek

Julie O'Shea

Where in the world is Warren Baker? This is my third year as a Cal Poly student, and yet I haven't had the opportunity to shake hands with my president. I don't even know what he looks like, and I am bothered by this. Every day I pass his house. I sometimes wonder what he'd do if I walked up his front steps and rang his doorbell. If I told him my name, would he invite me in for milk and cookies? Or would campus police be called? I am not sure, but I do have the opportunity to shake hands with him. I looked him up on the Web. President Baker seems to be a well-rounded individual. However, his credentials don't tell me a thing about his character--except of course that he's an intelligent man.

Is he honest? Is he caring? Concerned? Or does he just aim to get his job done? I wonder if he has a dog. I am always hearing about the great accomplishments of the new First Dog--why don't I ever see President Baker jogging with his?

President Baker, why don't I ever see you strolling in the University Union? Greeting your students? Why don't you ever sit in on one of my classes and find out how I'm being taught? Why have I never seen you at any of the football games? Are you hiding from me?

I'm worried that my job doesn't tell me a thing about his character; except of course that he's amiable, and a real gentleman. Have you seen him run into the history books. The event of the century is coming, and Baker will be there. It's not too late yet to hire the best coach for our team--he's the one with the potential. The game is huge, and Baker is the difference maker.

I want to know what he'd do if I walked out how I'm being taught? Why don't I ever see President Baker jogging with his? I want to know why don't I ever see President Baker greeting your students? Why don't you inform me of my concerns? Will I really get any answers? I'm tired of being put off.

Please don't tell me I have to rely on other people to get my thoughts across to you. I'd rather tell you myself. So come out, come out wherever you are and answer my questions.

Julie O'Shea is a journalism junior.

Advice column

Ann Landers looks out! Cal Poly has its own advice columnist right here at Mustang Daily.

Hello Ann. Doubts or doubts about a relationship, school, work, family or just life in general? Here's your chance to ask questions and receive advice from me, a psychology junior.

Letters should be addressed to Dear Ann and sent to madh@polymail.polopoly.com.

Letters chosen for the column will appear anonymously under the name of the Opinions page. All letters will be anonymous. Give it a whirl and see what Mir has to say, and then take it or leave it.

This month marks the 53rd anniversary of the battle for Iwo Jima and every year that it passes it slips further into the history books. The event that has become the visual trademark of the Marine Corps demand recognition. Not only for the shattered dreams and thousands of young lives shortened on that bloody beach, but for the survivors—old men now and their memories. The daughter of two Marines, I understand that surviving can sometimes be harder than dying. An excerpt from this article ran in an eastern newspaper last year. As I was leaving school in the morning, the phone rang and a man's voice said hello. Silence followed for a few seconds, and then sob, he managed my name, but the crying continued. Finally, the stranger was able to say, "Thank you for remembering. It was there." I stood numb in my kitchen and started to cry myself. The man had it backwards—I thanked him. To read about Iwo Jima is to know a war hero had called me. Three thousand miles and a year later, his works again dampen my face. Wrinkled warriors, tales is there for the enemy for their stories. Almost.

Children remember, and the feeling of being "drilled" into me is now voluntary. I was a teenager before I realized February was about presidential birth dates, not a Marine Corps battle. Not that I was stupid, but as children we live what we know.

Born and raised a military brat, I learned early to obey quickly and without question. Home life was one of orders and discipline. Military Jarvis was our language, and my brother and I were Pop's personal platoon. To this day, I automatically respond to a question with "sir" or "ma'am.

Pop seldom acknowledged I was a girl, except to wish me happy birthday. He was going to make me tough, make a "man" out of me. When not drilling me, Pop always had my brother, who was small and bookish and required more effort. But Pop's regimen paid off. My brother went to Vietnam ... and returned unharmed. He always jested that after Pop, Chu Lai was a piece of cake.

I was 40 years old before I began to understand my father. First and foremost, Pop was a military man: He was trained to kill the enemy. He was lazy at fatherhood, lazy at marriage, but one hell of a Marine.

Ten years when he was dying, I flew back to Kentucky to see him. Pop said two kids (my sister is born much later). My brother hated him, my sister was afraid of him and I forgave him.

I spent a week with him. Never once when I walked into his hospital room did I fail to think that he resembled a wounded tiger lying there. Even trucked up with tubes and other hospital paraphernalia, he still commanded respect, like a tiger. I was the one standing, but Pop appeared taller. The eyes that could once bark and order with only a look still burned big and blue. They would be closed forever for my next trip back to Kentucky.

February will end, and other dates will pass—quick flicks on a calendar growing dusty from war where duty and honor beckoned men and women like my parents. From their efforts, and others like them, comes the freedom that makes America the envy of the world. The military life is difficult, and in eulogizing my father I am adding my own personal recognition and gratitude.

"Tell him to wait," I kept repeating, "tell him I'm coming." Like any demanding child I expected it of him. After all, I was his daughter; he was my father and besides people just don't die from some...
Logically looking at evolution

Editor,

Over the past couple of weeks, I have noticed several letters about "religous" issues. People seem to only care about God and God's Bible type of preachers. What they say is incorrect with respect to content and approach, but which character of God's existence. For a moment, look past the childish things of the Church, the hypocritical Christians you know, and mistakes that have been made by Christians in the past. Because, once again, this doesn't change God.

"How did we get here?" is the question I have heard a lot lately. Only two alternatives have presented themselves: Creationism and Evolutionism. I propose that this was done by a Creator and identify some of the evidence of a Creator and existence of God. Just for a know, and mistakes that have been made by Creationism and Evolutionism.

Bible Jim type of preachers What they say is NOT refuted by creationists. Moths breaks down and things stop making sense.

Second, consider the implications of life being formed from non-living substances. This is called spontaneous generation and was disproved long ago. It has led to the Law of Biogenesis, which says that life can only come from other life—it doesn't come from non-living material. Biology has been founded on this axiomatic principle, it applies to life now, and applied to life then.

But, consider the possibility that some cell dim form did exist and reproduced itself on early earth. According to Darwin's theory, any organism that has not existed since that time is no longer capable of reproducing itself.

This is a very condensed argument. Volumes have been written for both sides, and I have read some of each. I don't claim to be an expert, and I am open to criticism. I'm willing to discuss anything, just e-mail me at dbsharp@polymail.calpoly.edu. If you can come up with a better evolutionary argument, I'm willing to discuss anything. just e-mail me at dbsharp@polymail.calpoly.edu.

Dan Sharpe in civil engineering senior

Editor, Thank you Matthew Mohel for your article in Mustang Daily yesterday about not taking life for granted. I agree with everything you said and will need that reminder once in awhile. About two years ago my younger brother Andrew's unusual illness came crashing down and put him in a coma for seven days. My family's world stopped and suddenly didn't exist. But putting him back together we all prayed and by his bed telling him all the things he had to look forward to in life. We were lucky and unlike so many other families waiting and praying with us in ICU, we left the hospital with our loved ones.

Not until then did I realize how uncertain life is and how little control we have over what happens to us. For you Matthew and for my brother and all those others there that already know this. I am not taking you for granted. Thank-you for your courage, insight and wisdom.

Searching for the truth behind creationism

Evolutionists are usually willing to allow the god of desisn since a god who confines his activity to the beginning is not a god who is important to humans. God of the Bible, on the other-hand, is always been concerned with human life, according to the Bible. The life behind the scenes. Providence: the idea that some claims to be actively working in those who follow him (Hebrews 13:21). The God of the Bible is not just God over those things. Changes that can be broken down and things stop making sense.

God is not the only one who requires our faith. Evolutionists have faith that their theory (that is what Darwinism is theory of descent with selection) is correct. Through their faith they believe that the matter and energy needed for the universe's existence somehow appeared. They also believe, contrary to the scientific law of biogenesis, that life can come from non-life in the form of single-celled algae. This algae arose from assumed inorganic soup of ammonia, nitrogen, salts, and carbon dioxide. They then assume by faith that this alga formed into fish that eventually sprouted legs and came up on land. The arguments go on and on, but Darwin constructed his theory believing that science would eventually fill in the missing pieces (i.e. transitional fossils).

But a century of digging since then has only made their absence more glaring" (Newsweek 3/29/92).

I have put my faith in the God of the Bible because it is historically, scientifically, philosophically, and archeologically reasonable. I implore you to search earnestly for the reason behind your existence. If you do so open-mindedly, I know you will find the truth.

Michael Allshouse is a civil engineering senior.

We have little control over life

Editor,

It is a rare issue of the Mustang Daily that doesn't contain examples of clutter or juvenile gutter language. I learned to live with those things.

However, I find it especially unsatisfactory to see a phrase like "... bust their butts..." or a word like "passes..." appearing in big bold type at the top of an opinion column or news article. Such gutter language does not belong in a respectable newspaper. But then no literate individual would ever accuse the Mustang Daily of falling in that category.

Jay Devore is a statistics professor.

Letter Policy

Mustang Daily welcomes and encourages contributions from readers. Letters should be submitted complete with name, major or department, class standing and telephone number. We reserve the right to edit grammar, spelling errors and length without changing the meaning of what is written. Letters sent via e-mail will be given preference and can be sent to jborras@polymail.calpoly.edu. Fax your contribution to 756-6784 or drop letters by Building 26, Suite 226.

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Editor,

Thank-you Matthew Mohel for your article in Mustang Daily yesterday about not taking life for granted. I agree with everything you said and will need that reminder once in awhile. About two years ago my younger brother Andrew's unusual illness came crashing down and put him in a coma for seven days. My family's world stopped and suddenly didn't exist. But putting him back together we all prayed and by his bed telling him all the things he had to look forward to in life. We were lucky and unlike so many other families waiting and praying with us in ICU, we left the hospital with our loved ones.

Not until then did I realize how uncertain life is and how little control we have over what happens to us. For you Matthew and for my brother and all those others there that already know this. I am not taking you for granted. Thank-you for your courage, insight and wisdom.

Mustang Daily isn't respectable

Editor,

It is a rare issue of the Mustang Daily that doesn't contain examples of clutter or juvenile gutter language. I learned to live with those things.

However, I find it especially unsatisfactory to see a phrase like "... bust their butts..." or a word like "passes..." appearing in big bold type at the top of an opinion column or news article. Such gutter language does not belong in a respectable newspaper. But then no literate individual would ever accuse the Mustang Daily of falling in that category.

Jay Devore is a statistics professor.

Letter Policy

Mustang Daily welcomes and encourages contributions from readers. Letters should be submitted complete with name, major or department, class standing and telephone number. We reserve the right to edit grammar, spelling errors and length without changing the meaning of what is written. Letters sent via e-mail will be given preference and can be sent to jborras@polymail.calpoly.edu. Fax your contribution to 756-6784 or drop letters by Building 26, Suite 226.
WASHINGTON — American high school seniors scored below students from most other countries in an international test of math and science, according to results released Tuesday.

Even those Americans who took tough physics and advanced math courses performed worse than most students taking equally rigorous courses elsewhere, according to the Third International Mathematics and Science Study.

Although students from 21 countries took the test of general math and science knowledge toward the end of the 1994-1995 school year, Americans scored below the international average. They outperformed only students from Cyprus and South Africa. Asian countries did not participate in the 12th-grade study.

A comparison of the high school elite — those who took physics and advanced mathematics — showed Americans close to the bottom of the 16 nations where those comparisons were made.

"For some time now, Americans have comforted themselves when confronted with bad news about their educational system by believing that our better students can compare with similar students in any country in the world," said William H. Schmidt, a Michigan State University professor and national research coordinator for the study. This test, he said, "has burst another myth."

"There is no excuse for this," President Clinton told the National Council of Jewish Women in a speech pushing his proposals to recruit more teachers, cut classroom size and target aid to poor city schools. He said adults have failed in their duty to educate the next generation.

Education Secretary Richard Riley blamed easy graduation requirements and a lack of teachers with college majors or minors in math and science.

About half of college-bound seniors have not taken four years of science, and many stop taking math and science after the 10th or 11th grade, he said.

"How can we expect our students to test well in math and science internationally when we do not even ask them to take challenging courses and rigorous tests throughout their middle and high school careers?" he said, repeating the administration's call for national math and reading tests.

Schmidt said students in other countries begin learning elements of algebra, geometry, physics and chemistry in middle school while American students can compare with similar students in any country in the world.

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MUSTANG DAILY

"Titanic" sets box office record

Associated Press

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 1998

LOS ANGELES - Late Monday night, at a theater somewhere in the world, "Titanic" became the biggest moneymaker in movie history, breaking the previous box-office record set by "Jurassic Park."

20th Century Fox said Tuesday the movie has grossed more than $913.1 million worldwide, vs. $913.1 million for "Jurassic Park." And "Titanic" did it in just 10 weeks.

This from a movie in which you know the boat's going to sink, the hero's going to die and it will take more than three hours for the story to be told.

Yet hundreds of millions of moviegoers are saying, 'So what? What we want?'

The movie's appeal cannot be measured in ticket sales alone. "Titanic" outs a far wider swath than just film. It's a pop culture phenomenon reaching into music, tourism, teen-age obsession and the very essence of what it means to be swept away.

Starring Leonardo DiCaprio and Kate Winslet as young lovers on the doomed ship, "Titanic" could end up selling more than $1.2 billion in tickets, analysts say.

The movie also is on track to break the domestic box-office record of $426 million set by the 1977 release and subsequent re-releases of "Star Wars."

"Titanic" has been boosted by higher ticket prices, yet undercut by the movie's long running time, which allows many theaters only one showing a night.

A large percentage of patrons are teen-age girls, some of whom have seen the movie several times. Yet, the result could not have been reached without a broad demographic mix.

"It's a movie that's defying every pattern, "Bill Mechanic, chairman of Fox Filmed Entertainment, said Monday. 

Fox produced the film, which cost an estimated $280 million, with Paramount Pictures. Each company is expected to enjoy profits of at least $250 million, industry experts say.

"Titanic" soon will be shown on some 275 screens in China, believed the widest release for a Western film in that country. President Jiang Zemin reportedly enjoyed a private screening so much he asked for another showing for friends.

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FINALS

T T h e Local Beat

The College of San Luis Obispo presents: The Muses

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