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Douglas Williams is developing a project that has been in development since 1975. The project involves a lagoon at Cal Poly's dairy farm, where manure is converted into methane gas through anaerobic digestion. The gas is then piped into a 30-kilowatt microturbine, which generates electricity. This process is ideal for small dairy farms and helps to reduce pollution. Moreover, it makes energy more affordable and sustainable.

Williams is excited about the potential of the project, stating that it could benefit the future of dairy farms. He believes that by combining the farm's resources, it can also provide an educational opportunity for students. The project has been an inspiration for many students, including Ryan Smith, who was enrolled in Williams' bioconversion class last spring. Smith believes that students like him will benefit from this kind of project, and it will help them to learn and grow in their careers.

The project is currently being funded by university donations, and Williams plans to use the generated electricity to power the university. He is optimistic about the future of the project and believes that it will continue to grow and expand. Overall, this project has the potential to change the way that dairy farms operate, and it will continue to be a valuable asset to the agricultural engineering department at Cal Poly.
Poly forestry professor spends summers at his Sierra mountain resort

By Meredith Corbin
MUSTANG DAILY STAFF WRITER

Norman Pillsbury has spent his summers in Sequoia National Park. Unlike other visitors to the park, the he is not spending his time camping but is running his resort. Pillsbury, the head of Cal Poly's forestry and natural resources department, and his wife are the owners and operators of Silver Creek City Resort in the high Sierra recreation area of the park. The resort has been in his wife's family for more than 20 years and is said to be one of the last, rustic, summer, cabin resorts left in the U.S. Pillsbury and his wife also invite Cal poly forestry students to the resort to work in the restaurant or to do their senior projects.

Jeanne Dawson, a forestry senior, is a member of the logging team and loves the opportunity to go up to the resort.

"Norman's love of forestry drives him and makes him the best he can be," she said.

Pillsbury said he always dreamed of owning his own resort.

"Being a forestry professor, that's what we do up here," Pillsbury said. "I am right back here in my element."

The Silver Creek City resort is a place where people can go to get away, he said.

"The road up here is 21 miles long," Pillsbury said. "If you're a person who doesn't want to get away, then you most likely won't be here."

Pillsbury spends much of his time catching mice, chasing away bears and maintaining the 14 rental units.

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Professors’ reason for writing academic, not economic

By Laura Dietz

Many professors have more genuine motives for writing their own textbooks than just the additional income.

Several Cal Poly professors said that publishing a textbook is rarely a profitable venture. The money from royalties, the percent of the profit an author receives for every book published, is a small amount when textbooks are first published and when students resell their textbooks, professors receive no profit.

"I don’t get anything unless they buy it new," said Carroll McKibbin, who has written two textbooks for his political science classes. McKibbin has made very little money since first publishing his books over 10 years ago, he said.

"We’re not talking tens of thousands of dollars," McKibbin said. "In the hundreds (of dollars), but not in the thousands."

McKibbin only made $66 in the past year from the more profitable of his two books, but he said this small amount is given to a scholarship fund at Cal Poly, which is where he said he donates his royalties to every year.

"I would feel uneasy profiting when I assign the book," McKibbin said.

The real motive behind writing is to tailor the textbooks to their students’ needs. Harold Kerko, social science professor, originally began publishing his textbooks because of a lack in quality books in the area his classes cover.

“When I started writing, the other ones were too out of date or didn’t include the right theoretical perspective,” Kerko said.

"I would feel uneasy profiting when I assign the book."

Carroll McKibbin
political science professor

The need for textbooks for non-majors taking general education classes is also a concern for professors. McKibbin said that one of the major reasons for writing his book was that the American government class he teaches is primarily made up of non-majors who are unenthusiastic about the class.

"I found non-majors were not motivated in the classroom," McKibbin said. "I couldn’t draw them out, so I wanted to get some more action."

He said that his response to the lack of good textbooks was making a work-book like textbook in which students have to take stands on issues and back them up intelligently.

But it has been worthwhile for him to write for other reasons. He attributes his invitation to teach at the University of Vienna, Austria for two quarters to the recognition for helping write and edit a series of books.

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Professor receives Presidential Early Career Award from NASA

By Bonnie Guevara

MUSTANG DAILY STAFF WRITER

Cal Poly biological science professor Mark Moline has been recognized by NASA as the 2001 recipient of the Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers (PECASE).

Moline, 37, is among 60 young scientists and engineers from across the nation who will be recognized for this award.

"We are very proud of Mark and all his accomplishments," said V.L. Holland, chairman of Biological Sciences Department. "This award reflects well not only on the biology department but also on Cal Poly."

NASA announced these annual awards for scientists and engineers in the early stages of their professional careers. Selections are based on the innovative and integrative character of proposed research in areas that will benefit NASA's understanding of the Earth, the solar system and the universe, the exploration and development of space, or the development of advanced aeronautics and space technologies, according to the National Science Foundation website (www.nsf.gov).

NASA nominated Moline for this award because of his exploration and extensive studies of phytoplankton, ocean sea plants and primary producers of energy.

Moline's research explained how these tiny plants convert the sun's energy into energy that fuels the ocean's entire food chain can use. These plants help signal scientists to changes occurring in the oceans, such as pollution. In his phytoplankton studies, he used NASA photos to indicate locations of the sea plants in the ocean. The photos revealed phytoplankton is more abundant on the continental shelf.

Moline also researches bioluminescence (plankton in the ocean). He doesn't stop at just testing the water for this plankton, but takes his research to the next level by using an AUV (autonomous underwater vehicle) to help him and his students.

This underwater torpedo-shaped vehicle is 7 feet long and 8 inches in diameter. The AUV dives beneath the ocean on a particular course, records data, and then serves the top. Moline and his students then download the AUV's bioluminescence information onto computers.

The underwater vehicle is being used right off the coast of Avila Beach at the Cal Poly pier. Some of Moline's students currently work off the pier on various projects. The pier will be open to biology classes this fall.

"Mark is very deserving of the award," said biological science graduate student Shelley Blackwell. "He emphasizes the fact that learning is not only

Tomography, but also on Cal Poly."

Moline has been teaching for five years at Cal Poly.
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Cal Poly obstacle course gets new look, name in coming months

By Andrew Parker

Change is in the wind for the Chumash Challenge obstacle course, according to Nancy Clark, fitness program coordinator for Cal Poly Rec Sports.

The course, located on a dirt road in Stenner Canyon near College of Agriculture land, will be receiving a new name and a new look in the coming months. The changes are being funded entirely by ASI.

The Chumash Challenge program includes physically challenging elements involving harnessing, climbing and belaying.

"The physical challenges faced by program participants develop teamwork and leadership skills," Clark said. "We brought in a national inspector. They didn't like what they saw, so we're rebuilding the course.

High component challenges are designed to encourage individual success, while "low component" ground challenges emphasize group teamwork, Clark said.

Certain parts of the course will also be redesigned by Massachusetts-based Project Adventure, a company specializing in the building and design of physical obstacle courses.

"In a low component challenge, a group might have to move a bucket across a creek with some 2 x 4's, bungee cords and some rope. They have to develop a team solution, and it's difficult," said Clark, citing an example of a challenge the program offers.

The program hasn't been heavily promoted to Cal Poly students in the past, but that is about to change, said Clark.

"At first it was focused outside of college students - lots of local schools, county youth-at-risk groups, Americorps," she said. "We are now gonna turn the focus to the Cal Poly community. We're gonna push it with clubs, departments and classes.

Groups wishing to participate in the program schedule a workshop date to be guided by an employee facilitator. A one-day workshop usually lasts about six hours. It costs $225 for a Cal Poly-affiliated group of eight to 15 people to complete the course, while a community group of the same size pays $675, Clark said.

The original Chumash Challenge course was built in 1995 with assistance from PG&E, which has also been involved with the course's redesign.
From time to time is a Me to hike in the mountains, he said. "Even though the mountain ranges are relentless and can make a hike pretty tough, I love them," he said. "They are my place."

Pillsbury said many people come from all over the world to enjoy the resort and meeting them is one of his favorite aspects of his job. "I love working with the public," he said. "We get to meet people from different countries and they are some of the greatest people I ever met." Pillsbury said that he is glad he didn't have to pick which profession he would rather do: teaching or running the resort. "I like running the resort because it is summer and it doesn't interfere with my job at Cal Poly," he said. "I get the best of both worlds."

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