Walking in the shoes of the homeless in SLO

Ashley Wolf  MUSTANG DAILY

"Since we don't have shelters located centrally in town, most people don't see homelessness as an issue in SLO."

— CHARLENE ROSALES
SCS program assistant

Almost 3,000 homeless people visit San Luis Obispo County shelters each day.

Alex Madonna, 85, dies of a heart attack

He was a prominent figure in SLO and a supporter of students and faculty, notably the Cal Poly rodeo

Jake Ashley  MUSTANG DAILY

Alex Madonna, San Luis Obispo native and successful developer, died Thursday at about 1:15 a.m. of a heart attack. He was 85.

Though he had a well-known adversarial relationship with the city, Madonna's works have marked San Luis Obispo for years. Most of his construction projects are taken for granted by the casual observer, from the Marsh Street reconstruction and the underground storm drains on Higuera Street to the addition to the Los Osos Valley Road.

The week began Thursday with an art show at Farmers Market. Homeless participants of a weekly program called "Space to Create" at the Prado Day Center had the opportunity to display their artwork to the community. The art will then be moved to the University Union and will remain on display through out the week.

"This is a chance for clients at the Prado Day Center to show off their creativity and talent," said art and design senior Heidi Schawel, coordinator of Homelessness Awareness Week. "It will be a positive event, one that shows the community our efforts. The clients are looking forward to it.

The event not only works as a visual statement, but also as a community fund-raiser, Rosales said. "The homeless are such a diverse crowd," Schawel said. "Many are working hard to get out of their situation. There are many clients who had something unplanned happen to them to end up homeless and others suffer from illnesses. It's not always something that they can control and the most we can do is try to help understand them and their situation instead of making judgments."

People can sign up through team pledges and entry fees or make a donation to support local organizations like the Economic Opportunities Commission Homeless Services county-wide and the north county El Camino Homeless see Homeless, page 2

Alex Madonna

The Cal Poly Wheelman club hosted Bike with Baker, an opportunity to get a free picture with the president. The event included a free barbecue for participants who biked from the Santa Lucia lawn to Dexter Lawn at 11 a.m. Thursday. Baker was scheduled to ride with the students but over the weekend he tripped and fell on concrete flooring at work, fracturing both elbows. He was unable to ride a bike but still attended the event.

Baker rode in a 'Think Vehicle' — a go-cart style car — as an alternative mode of transportation.
Homeless Awareness Week

Organizations: Students, faculty and community members can register and pick up a check-in form in the office in UU 217 or sign up at the event.

On Monday, Cal Poly students will have the opportunity to spend the night in a "mock shelter" from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. The night in a local church, participants will have to sleep in a small room in a local overnight shelter.

The idea of the mock shelter is to give students a first-hand experience of what it is like to be homeless. Rosales said "Not only will they sleep in a shelter setting and eat a similar meal, we will also be providing activities to educate them and hopefully open their eyes to this issue.

Other student organizations are joining the cause by helping to present events during Homelessness Awareness Week. Students for Social Change will be holding an open mic discussion during UU Free Speech hour on Tuesday at 11 a.m. and The Pride Alliance Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Center will show a film about the realities of homelessness for sexual minorities among the homeless on Wednesday at 6 p.m. in the business rotunda.

Homelessness Awareness Week will host a needed items drive on Wednesday, an awareness booth during UU Hour on Thursday and a Power of the Voice at Linnaro's Cafe on Thursday from 6 to 9 p.m. This is a part of a population that really goes unnoticed," said Chris Cox, a nutrition senior. "People need to gain awareness for this issue because you never know if you yourself might end up in this exact position."

For more information about Homelessness Awareness Week and the weekly events, visit the SCS Web site at ssc.calpoly.edu or call the SCS office at 756-5854.

Opera

The opera has double casts and understudies to allow more students the opportunity to participate, but Britz said that students were paid $215 to play in the opera because the music department didn't have the funds to produce the show alone. "It's definitely been a learning experience," vocal music junior Lauren Groff said. "It's different than performing in a play or musical because not only do you need to learn your lines, but you need to remember the notes that everything is in as well."

Longtime voice, dictation and opera teacher at University of California, Santa Barbara Michael Ingham is directing the show, and pianist Rudolf Budginas will be the accompanist and conductor.

Jacelyn Kreitzer, the opera's producer and a Cal Poly voice, performance and dictation teacher, was a key instrument in convincing Cal Poly to produce an opera. "The students have been extremely enthusiastic about this project and the very models of professionalism," Kreitzer said in a press release. "For many of them, this is the first time that they have ever performed and producing Haydn.

The students are also very thankful for the support the department has put forth with this project. "It's nice to have someone believe in us," Britz said. "She has worked so hard for us to make this happen." Howard Gee of the Cal Poly Theatre and Music Department will provide sets. Cynthia Vest, a costume assistant with the Pacific Repertory Opera, will coordinate the costumes provided by UC Santa Barbara. And Laura Przgoda, a music department alumna who is now a theater performer, will provide the makeup.

Britz and Groff both said that they hope this performance will help to expand the music department.

"The more students and faculty come and support this event the more opportunities the department has to grow," Britz said. "Hopefully we will be given the chance to produce more operas in the future." Tickets are $10 for students and $15 for the general public. They are on sale at the Performing Arts Center ticket office.

CORRECTION

An article published in Thursday's Mustang Daily gave the wrong date for the play "Agnes of God."

"Agnes of God." The event will be held Saturday at the Cal Poly Theatre.

Assault panel addresses myths

Aimee Anderson

The Cal Poly Women's Center hosted a sexual assault panel discussion in the University Union Wednesday night as part of ReMember Week.

The meeting was organized to address student questions, educate the public and discuss how sexual assault cases are handled in San Luis Obispo.

"A big focus is addressing myths and misconceptions about sexual assault and educating the public," said panel member Jenny Adams, a representative of the Sexual Assault Response and Prevention Center.

Adams was joined by Karen Coffey of the Victim/Witness Assistance Program, a department of the district attorney's office that assists crime victims and tries to "prevent witnesses from being re-victimized," San Luis Obispo Police Chief Deborah Lindsay and University Police Chief Tony Ateo.

Each panel member discussed his or her organizational how they serve the community, and then allowed attendees to ask questions and suggest ways to prevent and handle sexual assault cases.

"This is not a comfortable topic," Coffey said. "Ultimately, we need to get into prevention."

One attendee told the panel that many students do not believe the district attorney's office adequately handles sexual assault cases because they rarely produce a conviction.

"A lot of women on this campus have the impression that the DA won't take their cases," said psychology junior and Women's Center staff member Becca Swanson.

Much of the discussion dealt with how the district attorney's office and local police departments handle such cases and why they have such little success settling them.

"We've had several cases fall apart after pressing charges," admitted Coffey. "It's frustrating."

Members of the panel said that the lack of evidence or witnesses and too little justice education make their jobs difficult.

"It may sound like we never convict anybody, but we do," Lindem said. "Cases are most successful when we have witnesses and a confession. We like putting people away for as long as they deserve."

Attendees seemed interested in hearing how legal professionals view sexual assault cases.

"It was important to hear their side," said biology senior Tina Nasta. "I just wish there were more people here."

The panel also took a moment to acknowledge the men in the audience and thank them for their concern.

"We're not saying that all men are rapists, but unfortunately 90 percent of rapists are men," Lindem said. "This is not a women's issue, it's a men's issue."

Creative Women & Men Needed

At Mustang Welcome Extravaganza by University of California, Santa Barbara. Includes name major & class level. MUSTANG DAILY, A3, 2/26/2004.

For more information on Mustang Welcome Extravaganza, visit www.ucsb.edu/mustangwelcome or call 756-2586.

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**State Briefs**

**SACRAMENTO** — Local governments will accept deeper funding cuts this year and next in exchange for a bigger share of property taxes and a promise from the state not to raid their coffers in the future, negotiators of a proposed budget deal said Thursday.

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger proposed in January that cities, counties and special districts receive a permanent annual contribution to the state's $29.3 billion general fund. The governor has apparently agreed to sunset the contribution after two years, but no final accord has been reached.

Officials close to the talks say local leaders have won a pledge from Schwarzenegger not to seek additional money in the future and has promised to sign a constitutional amendment that would solidify the agreement.

**SACRAMENTO** — California should ban the use of 15,000 touch-screen voting machines made by Diebold Election Systems from the Nov. 2 general election, an advisory panel to Secretary of State Kevin Shelley recommended Thursday. By an 8-0 vote, the state's Voting Systems and Procedures Panel recommended that Diebold cease the use of the machines, saying that Texas-based Diebold has performed poorly in California and its machines malfunctioned in the March 2 primary election, turning away many voters in San Diego County.

**SAN FRANCISCO** — State power regulators cleared the way Thursday for Pacific Gas and Electric Co. to distribute one-time customer refunds totaling $100 million.

The rebate, ranging from an average of $10.64 for the smaller customers to $4,583 for major business customers, will begin appearing on PG&E's May bills.

PG&E is returning the money as part of a previously approved $79 million, or 8 percent, reduction in its electricity rates. The California Public Utilities Commission required the decrease as part of an agreement that allowed the utility to emerge from three years in bankruptcy court.

The refunds are meant to repay customers for the higher rates in effect during January and February, before the California Public Utilities Commission approved this year's price increase.

Households that use less than 130 percent of PG&E's base-line electricity allowance won't receive a refund.

**LOS ANGELES** — Michael Jackson's secret indictment in Los Angeles on Friday is likely to have little impact on the singer's career, his publicists said.


The move by a Los Angeles County grand jury to seek the arrest of the pop superstar could have a more significant effect on his career, the lawyers say.

Jackson is widely expected to challenge the Los Angeles County Superior Court's decision to release his case unsealed.

**National Briefs**

**WASHINGTON** — The government Thursday approved a joint development agreement between states that has saved millions of dollars in prescription costs, a decision that could lead other states to form similar agreements.

"This is the first time in the history of the Medicaid program that states have been able to work together like this to negotiate lower drug costs," said Mark McClellan, administrator of the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

Michigan, Vermont, New Hampshire, Nevada and Alaska are now participating in the program, McClellan said, and Hawaii has applied to join it.

The program requires states to adopt a list of drugs that doctors should use when treating low-income Medicaid patients.

**WASHINGTON** — A Senate bill to create a multibillion-dollar trust fund for people suffering from asbestos-related diseases failed in a close vote Thursday, but Senate leaders hope that discussions with a mediator could revive the legislation later this year.

Republicans were not able to muster enough support in the Senate to force a vote, but the vote was 50-47. Senators left open the possibility of reviving the legislation, however. "It certainly doesn't mean this legislation is dead for all time," said Sen. Tom Carper, D-Del.

**WASHINGTON** — Airport security screeners perform poorly, whether they're government or private-by a wide margin, according to a survey of the Homeland Security Department's chief investigator told Congress Thursday.

The House aviation subcommittee received reports from Inspector General Clark Kent Ervin, the General Accounting Office and a private firm. The government reports found airport security is lax and all three described the Transportation Security Administration as overly bureaucratic.

**WASHINGTON** — Fearing that terrorists might target Congress, the House on Thursday approved a bill to set up speedy special elections if 100 or more of its members are killed.

The House, in a 386-97 vote, put aside for now the larger issue of whether Congress should be allowed to temporary appointments in the event that an attack causes mass fatalities among lawmakers.

**WASHINGTON** — A federal appeals court in Washington, D.C., on Friday said it can't decide whether President Bush has the authority to fill a Supreme Court vacancy before the Senate acts on his nominee.

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**World Briefs**

**SEUL, South Korea** — Two fuel trains collided in a North Korean rail station near the Korean border Thursday, igniting a deadly explosion that killed dozens for more than 3,000 people might have been killed or injured.

The communist government in Pyongyang declared an emergency while cutting off international telephone lines to prevent details of the crash from leaking out, South Korean Roh Han news agency reported.

The North Korean leader, Kim Jong II, had quickly paced by rail through the station as he returned from China before dawn some nine hours earlier. It was not clear what caused the crash, or if it was related to Kim's journey.

**PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti** — Proclaiming his innocence, a rebel commander convicted of killing supporters of ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide surrendered to justice officials Thursday.

Lous-Joul Chamblain's surrender came as a conference for international donors opened in Port-au-Prince. Haiti's government hopes to get millions of dollars in aid to rebuild the shattered country, which is reeling from a revolt that ousted Aristide on Feb. 29.

To a few cheers from a curious crowd, Chamblain said his conviction in absentia in 2000 was politically motivated and he would be vindicated. Under Haitian law, those convicted in absentia are entitled to another trial when they return to the country.

**LONDON** — School programs discouraging carbonated drinks appear effective in reducing obesity among children, a new study suggests.

A high intake of sweetened carbonated drinks probably contributes to childhood obesity, and there is a growing movement against soft drinks in schools. But until now there have been no studies showing that efforts to cut children's soft drink consumption actually have any good.

The study, outlined this week on the Web site of the British Medical Journal, found that a one-year "drink the fizz" campaign discouraging both sweetened and diet soft drinks led to a decrease in the percentage of elementary school children who were overweight or above.

**FALLUJAH, Iraq** — Guerrillas and residents in Fallujah have "days, not weeks" to turn in heavy weapons, a U.S. pledge to hold back on plans to storm the city, and allow the return of families that fled the city.

The few arms that have been surrendered so far were "junk," Marine commanders said.
It's 8 p.m. the night before a big test. If you have to study at home one more minute you will a) let your heavy lids drop to their final closed door, or b) have to shove the earplugs beyond the point of no return into your ear canal to avoid the cheerful domestic din penetrating the tightly resting place and drift into slumber or b) have to shove the earplugs beyond the point of no return into your ear canal to avoid the cheerful domestic din penetrating the tightly closed door.

For many students the choice is obvious: Go somewhere else. If your timing is right, the department lounge or study area can be a great study spot. It is near the faculty offices and is likely to have students of that major hanging around to help you through tough homework. Ecology junior Carine Zoellner said she usually studies at the Clyde Fisher Science building for this reason. Most majors have access to these rooms whenever they need it no matter how late. For example, H-bar is the place to be for many physics students and the statistics computer lab has specialized programs available. When it is too late or you don't need tutoring, try the University Union. The quiet rooms are better for individual study but have Dangerously comfortable chairs. Limited Internet access is available in the main area, where the atmosphere is more casual and conducive to group study. The UU is open until 1 a.m. on Friday and Saturday and 11 p.m. the rest of the week.

The most popular study locale on campus is Kennedy Library. The reserve room's long tables can accommodate your entire economics class if needed. Food and drink are welcome as long as they stay in the reserve room, though the vending selection is limited. Internet access is only a swipe of the Poly Card away.

"It's noisy, but when I meet people there we get more done," kinesiology junior Brian Brooks said. The higher floors are better for individual study when concentration is vital, but beware of the sleep-inducing chairs on the second-floor landing. Group study rooms are scattered around the upper floors if you need privacy or if the reserve room is packed. For seriously late study, the reserve room is the place to be. It is open until 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday and until 1 a.m. the rest of the week.

However, some have reached a state of burnout that exceeds even the traditional study Zen of the library. "I'm sick of the library. When I go there my body instantly gets weary of studying," animal science sophomore Tyler Otto said. For these students, a coffeehouse can provide the caffeine IV drip to staying alert while studying. "I like studying at coffee shops. It's not too quiet, and you can't fall asleep," landscape architecture sophomore Amy Boinski said. "I need a little background noise," history sophomore and self-labeled "frequent flier" Frank Orazio said. "There are a lot of people here studying and you join in the flow."

"Starbucks is known for its joe but the downtown locations are open latest, until 11 every night at Barnes & Noble and 11:30 p.m. at the Higuera Street location. The artsy atmosphere and garden area at Linnaea's Café appeal to students regardless of the caffeine served there. "I like the music a lot," mechanical engineering senior Erin Fredericks said. Even on open mike or live band nights, just as many students come to study, Linnaea's employee Jason Joyce said. The coffee shop is open until 11 p.m. Sunday through Wednesday and until midnight the rest of the week. If Starbucks and Linnaea's aren't enough to prop up your eyelids, then it's time to wave the white flag and make peace with your pillow.
**Saturday**

Creekside Lanes - Atascadero
Cosmic Bowling - 8 p.m.

Frog & Peach
Band: Trusting Lucy - 21+

Linnaea's Café
The Transmissions - Rock - Starts at 8:30 p.m.

**Sunday**

Creekside Lanes - Atascadero
California Karaoke - Starts at 8:30 p.m.

Tortilla Flats
Salsa Dancing - Dancing 9 p.m. to close

**Monday**

Mother's Tavern
Karaoke - 21+

SLO Brew
Double D Monday Mayhem - Top 40 Remix - 18+

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**Rachel Musquiz**

Hopeless love life? Struggling in school? No one shows up at your parties! You must have negative Chi flowing in your personal space. If you think you're doing everything right and still not happy with the status of your life, maybe it's time to rearrange your room.

Whoa, whoa. Back up there. Yes, you read correctly. Feng shui (pronounced fung schway), the ancient Chinese art of placement, can improve all aspects of life, from family and relationships to work and money, by optimizing the surrounding environment. The position of furniture and design of the environmental influences balance and comfort every level of life and every moment, whether intentional or not. In short, every person has control over their life by controlling the placement of the objects around them.

"Your environment is a reflection of who you are. If it's chaotic, then your life will be unnecessarily chaotic," recreation administration junior Ashley Wood said. "Creating harmony reflects positively on you." Wood spent fall quarter stressing out which she attributes to the arrangement of her room. After moving her bed and furniture, she has found that being in her room is now peaceful and relaxing.

Before getting lost in this Eastern art of placement, it is important to know that feng shui is simply in nature. It provides immediate results in bringing balance, comfort and harmony. Even Winston Churchill once said, "We shape our dwellings; and afterwards, our dwellings shape us." Feng shui is an interaction of humans with their environment. The main concept of feng shui states that every thing is comprised of energy called Chi (pronounced chee). The flow of Chi is affected by the placement of objects in the environment their interaction with personal energy flow. Chi moves like the flow of traffic.

"Anytime you have congestion in your environment, you have congestion in some area of your life," feng shui consultant Suey Irvine said. The dilemma with college living is the small space, having multipurpose rooms and sharing living space with too many inhabitants. "In a small area, you should have something you like and are excited about," Irvine said.

Getting a new roommate is a better choice than having one that prevents this, she said. There are easy yet incredibly important steps to immediately improve feng shui.

"When you walk into a room, you can tell if it is balanced," Wood said. "You can see immediate results by moving things around or adding a plant or peaceful colors."

The best room to start with is the room where the most time is spent — the bedroom. Clutter is the single, most sure sign that there is disharmony. Downsizing "stuff" is the easiest way to make the most of a small space. Adding mirrors wherever possible expands the space by creating an illusion of more room. Placing the desk in the commanding position of the room will make work more efficient. A messy desk or workspace will have an effect on academics while the placement of the bed can wreck a potential love life. Also, the pathway to and from the front door is the primary factor in how the Chi will flow in the living area.

The next room to work on should be the living room. It symbolizes and reflects a person's life and goals. Having symbols or negative imagery in the living room can have a powerful effect. One example of this comes from a couple who called Irvine to aid their feng shui. The couple had their wedding picture hanging over a trashcan and in turn was having relationship problems. Symbolically, they were throwing away their relationship. Test out feng shui at your next party. Before the guests arrive, play classical music to clear the energy of the room. It is not necessary to play it the entire evening, but the music will lift the Chi of the room while clearing negativity.

While rocking out to some classics, arrange the furniture in a way that will be inviting and conducive to the social interactions you wish to have. "You can set the tone by using common sense," Irvine said. Be sure to remove any blocks of the energy flow. Take away chairs that would encourage people to sit in small groups rather than mingle with the rest of the crowd. Remember, energy and opportunity coming through the front door, along with friends and positive Chi can get congested like rush hour traffic.

Common sense will dictate when to move furniture or other obstacles that restrict the flow of movement.

While feng shui is not a quick fix to all of life's problems, simple changes will enhance the quality of living by finding romance, prosperity and harmony.

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**Get good karma and have a little feng too**

Kiss me!
I work for the Mustang Daily

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16. Spank ___ Real 17. Tiny Tim sang in it
18. Suited aggressively 19. Motor ad
20. Scuttlebutt 21. Selling points
26. ___ about (circum) 28. Pundit rival
30. Upright features 35. "Mazel ___"
36. Singer of the song: "Largo al factum!"
38. Fort 39. Consumes with pleasure
41. Akron title 42. Reporting
44. Attendence 45. Counter
46. TV puppet 47. Generic
48. T V puppet 49. Note
50. Existing at birth 51. Past
52. Saarinen of Finland 53. Note
54. In a timely way 55. Mesh
56. Trig functions 57. One with good looks?
59. George W.

DOWN
1. "Yeah, right!"
2. Property
3. Stall of Dover
5. Get out of Dodge
6. Mesh
7. Tendency toward chaos
8. Vanity case?
9. Jacuzzi
10. "Yow!"

11. Put back in the oven
12. Fishing aids
13. "Daring, that dress looks divine!"
14. Flywheel
15. Ponder of TV comedy
16. Some family heads
17. Tell the host yes
18. Some feds
19. The "She" in Spike Lee's "She's Gotta Have It"
20. Bright Dam river
21. "Blanda its"
22. Bony
23. Sister of Grecian
24. Revelation
25. "Well, perhaps"
26. Guard
27. Fort
28. Make waves
29. 1 bed @$775
30. "Neat"... is cool
31. The host yes or no
32. "Perfect or
33. Mentally unsound
34. Cigarettes
35. Ad
36. Horoscope
37. "Yeah, right!"
38. Traditionalism
39. Eraser
40. P. D. Nourish
41. Eat
42. Chemistry test topics
43. Break up
44. Intros
45. Locatie identifier

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE
1. Large, as in "aching at the table!"
2. Consumes with gusto
4. Akron title
5. Note
6. Trig functions
7. Note
8. Past
9. Saarinen of Finland
10. Note
11. Counter
12. Property
13. Stall of Dover
15. Get out of Dodge
16. Mesh
17. Tendency toward chaos
18. Vanity case?
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36. Chemistry test topics
37. Break up
38. Intros
39. Locatie identifier

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PR biking

won't help the environment

Commentary

We are familiar with cheesy public relations events put on by prominent politicians to show just how much they care about certain issues (elaborate aircraft carrier landings come to mind). Normally, we have to watch the nightly news to see these well-crafted affairs, but Thursday Cal Poly got to see one live, in the form of Associated Students Inc.'s "Bike With Baker" event.

The event, a "bike ride" to promote alternative transportation, was supposed to feature President Warren Baker riding a bicycle, with a group of students and staff, from the Santa Lucia residence halls all the way down to Dexter Labs. An epic journey designed to be less than one-quarter of a mile and all downhill in order to minimize both time and effort.

In actuality, Baker didn't ride a bike at all. After a trip-and-fall accident in his home, Baker suffered two fractured ankles and was deemed unable to navigate a bicycle. Instead, he rode in a "Think Vehicle" go-kart, arguably another form of "alternative" transportation.

At the end of the ride, participants had the opportunity to get their picture taken with the much-talked about, but rarely seen Baker. They also enjoyed a free barbeque and bike tune-ups.

In a 30-second clip on the local news it may look like Baker is genuinely concerned about alternative transportation, just what PR events are intended for do.

Unfortunately, like most events of this nature, it seems only to mask the fact that little has actually been done for the environment. One can only hope that issues of alternative transportation will not be forgotten after the event.

For real changes to take place at Cal Poly, there needs to be more than shallow PR events once a year, we need major changes coming from the administration.

Many students who do drive within easy walk- ing or bike-riding distance to campus. Most others live near bus routes. Still, so many students drive.

In a 30-second clip on the local news it may look like Baker is genuinely concerned about alternative transportation, just what PR events are intended for do.

Flag waving is not patriotism

Commentary

The terms "patriot" and "patriotism" have been thrown around so much since Sept. 11 that it has become part of any politician's daily vocabulary. On Monday, Patriot Day, was celebrated in many ways by the United States. But what does the term mean, anyway?

According to Dictionary.com, the definition of patriot includes a person who "loves, supports, and defends one's country.

Additionally, that is a very broad definition, which probably why the term is used so often. It is difficult to say a person does not love or his or her country. How do you prove that? Maybe the person is of the honest opinion that what he or she says is in the interest of the country.

Throw in the snipit from the Constitution — assigned reading for any self-proclaimed patriot (except John Ashcroft, who brought a letter from his parents in the cartoons from that rule) — that guarantees free speech to anybody; and it seems that open discourse and even dissent was built into the Constitution and Bill of Rights.

So then you have an administration that is allowed to speak out, but everybody is also allowed to disagree with them. Both are equally patriotic.

Then there is the oath taken by troops and many officers of the U.S. government. It includes the line "I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic.

If the logic of the oath is followed, it means every politician, no matter what his or her role, can be deemed a threat to the Constitution if they moved to revoke essential parts of the Bill of Rights. This includes all ranks of senators or the president and opens them up for criticism.

But criticism never seems to go in an easy trap to fall into.

As the election campaign is heating up, the Bush campaign has already run onto accusing presumed Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry to have voted against "higher combat pay for our troops." What could be more unpatriotic than not supporting the people that fight for our country and protect out freedom?

But President George W. Bush, while running on his record as a "war president," did the same thing of which he is accusing Kerry. More specifically, he proposed to cut veteran's pay as well as decrease pay and benefits for current troops.

When the president visited troops at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C., in December he said, "We have made a commitment to the troops ... we will provide excellent health care — health care that anybody who is injured on the battlefield.

Later he proposed to cut $1.5 billion from funding for military family housing and medical facilities, a cut of 14 percent of the total budget, according to the Web site IndependentBudget.com, a site created by Paralyzed Veterans of America to represent the interest of veterans and troops.

If this teaches us anything, it is that pointing a finger at somebody and.propogating that person's politics does not make it so. It also does not mean the person pointing the finger is, by default, any more patriotic than the one they are criticising.

Such shortfalls of self-proclaimed patriots can only be overcome through open discourse. Only if such things are discussed in the open can it be ensured that the interest of the people, and therefore the country, are put above everything else.

This of course is not always convenient because it includes not only tolerating, but treasuring those who hold a different opinion.

Bush, on his first trip to Washington, D.C., as president-elect, said, "If this were a dictatorship, it'd be a heck of a lot easier — just as long as I'm the dictator.

A dictatorship in which nobody can state their opinion without their "patriotism" being called into question is nothing but a dictatorship. Anything that would serve this country a lot more than any amount of flag waving.

Sebastian Meyer is a writer for The Oracle at the University of South Florida.

L e t t e r  t o t h e E d i t o r

Referendum guidelines were not followed

The referendum for transportation fees was conducted is very disconcerting. As addressed in statements from other groups, the administration has gone out of its way with the timing of the vote.

Fee referenda are governed by the police department's "Student Government Policy & Guidelines: Advisory Student Referendum For Campus Facilities." These "Student Fees," available at the University Fees Web site (www.fees.calpoly.edu/fees) are equally patriotic.

These policies require that a fee referendum be announced 30 days prior to the scheduled election. Additionally, "The 30-day notice period shall exclude academic holidays. The first notice was published on March 8, exactly 30 days before the election. (By the university's calendar, spring break was March 23 to 28).

The policies also state, "The dates, times and polling locations shall be published in the campus newspaper each week for four weeks prior to the election." Whether or not this requirement was met is debatable. The Mustang Daily was not published from March 15 to April 1, more than a week and a half (again, excluding spring break), leaving three weeks of actual publication.

Finally, the policies state, "Referenda shall not be held prior to student census.

"The university calendar lists the census date as the end of the third week of instruction, or April 19, four days after the election.

Nevermind the questionable tactics used by the administration and the ath- letic department. The administration scheduled the referendum at a time that would minimize our ability to educate ourselves, discourse and make an informed decision.

Jeffrey Wong is a computer science sopho- more.

L e t t e r s  P o l i c y

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By mail: Letters to the Editor Building 26, Room 226 Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo CA 93407

By fax: (805) 756-6784

By e-mail: mustangdaily@hotmail.com


letters editor: Alix Milton

arts editor: Lisa Hecox

sports editor: Stacie Martin

on the rocks editor: Andrea Sambuca

photography editor: Brian West

design editor: Brian West

head copy editor: Jenni Minta

Alison Myers

faculty advisor: George Ramos

graphics editor: Patrick Munroe

graphic designer: Eric Battato

print editor: University Graphics System

production manager: Brooke Finan
business manager: Paul Bittles

circulation: Kyle Harnbeck, Kevin Varnhout

advertising: Kristin Kelly

assistant advertising: Kristen Buck

advertising: Kevin Vanhouten

sales manager: David Christensen

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Mustang Daily
Baseball to play No. 7 Long Beach St.

Dan Watson
MUSTANG DAILY

Deep in the files of Mustang athletics, there is a baseball boxscore from 2002 that reads: Mustangs 8, Long Beach State 2. The winning pitcher for the Mustangs was Coach Correia, now a member of the San Francisco Giants triple-A organization. The losing pitcher was Jered Weaver. Weaver gave up seven earned runs and was knocked out early.

Going against him Friday is Weaver, who is 11-0 this season.

The Mustangs last beat the 49ers and Jered Weaver in 2002. They will go against him Friday. Weaver is 11-0 this season.

A trio of can't-miss QBs in this year's draft

Dave Goldberg

NEW YORK — This year's draft has three "can't-miss" quarterbacks: Eli Manning, Ben Roethlisberger and Philip Rivers.

Buyer beware? Think of Ryan Leaf. And remember that Todd Marinovich and Dan (Mark's brother) McCwire were drafted ahead of a guy named Brett Favre in 1991.

Leaf, of course, is not the only quarterback bust. Rick Mirer, just Druckenmiller, Akili Smith, Cadie McNabb, David Brown, Marinovich and McGwire are all long gone or at the end of some bench.

Yet, drafting is a guessing game as much as an exact science, especially when it comes to quarterbacks. How else to explain that two-time Super Bowl MVP Tom Brady went in the sixth round in 2000, while two other current stars, Marc Bulger and Davis Carr, were drafted in the seventh rounds.

"There's so much focus on the top two or three quarterbacks that a lot of people forget there are more than that who can play very well," St. Louis Rams coach Mike Martz said. "There are 10 of them in this year's bunch that I would really like to have."

Martz has some credibility on the subject.

In the summer of 2000, he remarked during a casual chat that New Orleans had "a kid named Bulger I really like." A few weeks later, the Saints obtained Aaron Brooks and eventually released Bulger, who ended up with the Rams and now starts.

This year's top three QBs would seem to have a better shot at success than most first rounders.

Manning comes with a great pedigree — brother Peyton was this year's co-MVP, and father Archie was an outstanding player stuck on a dismal team in New Orleans. But horse breeders can tell you that pedigrees are no guarantee against injury or simply failure.

The rap on Roethlisberger is that he needs work, while Rivers is still struggling, and the other two are bombs. Brooks, drafted in the fourth round by Green Bay before being traded to the Saints, is the third-best QB that can.