Cal Poly team has radical approach to land spacecraft

As an alternative to the methods currently used by NASA, the team plans to use bungee cords to safely land spacecraft

Crystal Phend

The Mars landing of the Spirit and Opportunity rover missions used downward-towed nest blasts, parachutes and balloons around the craft to allow the spacecraft to land safely.

Physics professor Sidi Benzaara said the design is simple compared to some of those currently used.

“You don’t have to have these complex systems, you can’t afford a trip to Mars, you can’t afford a trip to Saturn,” he said.

The Mars landing of the Spirit and Opportunity rover missions used downward-towed nest blasts, parachutes and balloons around the craft to allow the spacecraft to land safely.

With a rocket attached to the spacecraft by a bungee cord, the rocket would be timed to launch upward when the craft reaches a specified altitude.

WOW seeks fresh faces

Crystal Phend

WOW hunters prowled campus Saturday and Tuesday filming a video to capture 600 leaders for this fall’s “Week of Welcome” freshmen orientation events.

The short film in the style of Animal Planet’s “Crocfiled Hunter” was shown at the program’s final information session Tuesday night, but recruitment continues until March 29.

“We have the largest orientation program in the nation,” said Jason Mockford, graphic communication senior and member of the WOW board.

The Mars landing of the Spirit and Opportunity rover missions used downward-towed nest blasts, parachutes and balloons around the craft to allow the spacecraft to land safely.

Week of Welcome introduces freshmen and transfer students to the campus and the community and is many students’ first experience at college. It takes place the week prior to the start of fall quarter, Sept. 12 to see WOW, page 2

Spring will bring electronic progress reports

Next quarter, for the first time, Cal Poly students will receive e-mails containing the same information as graduation evaluations

Crystal Phend

Next quarter for the first time, students in every college at Cal Poly will be able to receive electronic Progress reports, although few actually will because of software limitations.

The records and evaluations office now sends almost 4,700 reports to mostly freshmen and sophomores, but that falls far short of the approximate 17,000 students at Cal Poly.

Students with complicated transcript, like Roer, may have to be content with a single traditional graduation evaluation.

“You found that I pretty much have to go to the engineering advising center, page 2
Schools," said Rose Whitworth, a
years-old who invited Taylor to teach them
fishing trips in Colorado.
the next stream." His favorite place to go fishing, but a few
fishing" of his favorites include Yellowstone, a place that he loves.
the technique."

The idea to offer the class came
2006 Phoenix mission and the 2009
The course will be only class

The course costs $1.55 and will be held on campus in
from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. Thursdays start- ing March 24. The course costs
Copyright
Europe's. The course is also open to

"Fishing in New Zealand is like
The six-week course will be held
Team member Peter Brennen, a

"Outside casting clinics are a big

"I had a lot of fun being a WOW

"Women make great fly fishers

The course will be only classrom
of course will be only classroom

"Fishing in New Zealand is like

"It's kind of almost mentoring

"Women make great fly fishers

"It's a sport that you will want to

"A ray Bergman, my mentor said,
Taylor, and the outdoor experience

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Report

continued from page 1

center every quarter to make sure I'm on track because I don't have anything like that set up for me," Koerfer said. "Students with many transfer credits, double majors or blended programs, as well as those in graduate programs, may not begin to receive electronic evaluations until PeopleSoft gets integrated into the process, Director of Academic Records Thomas Zuur said. The current system requires records personnel to code courses and requirements for each major and program as well as deal with transfer credits. Therefore, they have mainly focused on students with transcripts that are relatively simple, said Dee Ann Wells, manager of the Degree Works (the vendor name for Poly Progress) project in the Office of Academic Records and Evaluations. PeopleSoft software will integrate evaluations with student records electronically without the need to pull information over from one system to the other. It will also expand the student population who will receive the reports because it is not expected to have problems with double majors or even graduate programs. This may not occur until 2008 though, Wells said.

The main advantage of the electronic format is that students get feedback more often, Wells said. The Poly Progress e-mails contain the same information a graduation evaluation: courses completed, courses still required, GPA and such. It also includes "advice" in the form of courses and electives that fulfill major requirements the student has not yet completed.

Koerfer said the report would have been useful to him in choosing courses.

"I know there is at least one or two quarters where I registered for the wrong classes," Koerfer said.

Electronic progress reports at other universities have different formats with widely varying readability, Zuur said. Cal Poly's format is the easiest to understand and the most usable.

"This is one of the best I've seen in the country," Zuur said.

The first electronic evaluations were completed in 2001 for the College of Liberal Arts. The College of Agriculture is the last college to be completed, which Wells said she hopes will occur this quarter.
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Overcrowded schools and misconceptions about costs are among the greatest barriers to college for minorities

Melissa B. Tadda
THE CALIFORNIA AGGIE

While the nation's sixth-largest world economy, yet it is ranked 40th in the nation on per-pupil spending. While some students have flourished despite education shortcomings, the achievement gap between races and ethnicities remains wide open at the college level.

According to a study conducted by Deborah Reed of the Public Policy Institute of California, at every step of the process — eligibility, admission, enrollment and graduation — Latino and black students fare worse than Caucasian and Asian students in the University of California system.

While Latinos make up one-third of the state's high-school graduates, they comprise only 12 percent of UC graduates. Blacks represent 7 percent of high-school graduates and only 3 percent of UC graduates.

Fall 2004 data for University of California at Davis showed that of 23,171 undergraduates, there are 376 blacks and 2,417 Latinos enrolled, representing 2 and 10 percent of the student body, respectively.

Reed concluded from her research that educational equity initiatives are not enough to close the gap when black and Latino students face family, socioeconomic and educational disadvantages.

Several family factors increase the likelihood of college attendance and success, including having a mother who has completed high school, having a mother who speaks English, and having a family income above the poverty line, according to the study.

"Among children in most racial and ethnic groups in California, over 90 percent have a mother who speaks English," Reed said. "But the share is substantially lower among Hispanic groups."

Many blacks and Latino students begin with additional family disadvantages. According to UCD assistant professor of sociology Eric Borderick, African-American students are more likely to come from single-parent, poorer families.

Borderick said the perception of college costs also affects whether students and parents plan for college. He said black parents tend to make larger errors in their estimates of college costs, and the difference between races and ethnicities in perception of college costs holds true even when socioeconomic differences are controlled.

Ed Aguilar, director of the UCSD Early Academic Outreach Program, which provides services especially to first-generation college-goers, said Latino families frequently have two parents but there are other complications.

"Many are working extra jobs to keep the family afloat," he said.

"They are absent parents but they have to sacrifice something. It is about survival."

In her study, Reed also cited the likelihood of attending low-achieving, overcrowded schools as a factor in college attainment. She said more than half of Latino students and 43 percent of black students attend schools that do poorly on state achievement tests, compared with 11 percent of Caucasian students.

To some extent, Reed's study is a confirmation of facts already known, as university representatives from across the state have expressed concern about the state of underrepresented students.

In early March, a meeting was held by the Chicano/Latino Intergenerational Convocation Organization to bring educators and students together from all over California. In a CLICO press release, Gonzalo Rojas, campus administrator at San Diego State University, said it is necessary to create an organization that focuses on the issues affecting the Latino student population of California.

"The five growth industries in California require a postsecondary education, and Latinos therefore will be left out of the abilities to compete in these arenas if we don't address the problems that exist early on," Rojas said.

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Redlands woman convicted of murdering her 18-year-old friend

SAN BERNARDINO (AP) — A woman who claimed the killing of her friend was a botched practical joke was found guilty Wednesday of first-degree murder.

Krisie Noordnian, 21, of Redlands, faces 15 years to life in prison when she is sentenced on May 13. The Superior Court jury deadlocked on a special circumstance allegation that the murder was committed while lying in wait. Noordnian was one of two people charged with the September 2003 death of Kelly Bulwkinkle, who was shot in September 2003.

The trial, which was declared a mistrial in the case of Damien Guerrero, 20, of Highland after a separate jury deadlocked 11-1 in favor of conviction.

Bulwkinkle, a student at Crafton Hills College, was killed after weeks of disputes between the three and Guerrero's girlfriend. Guerrero had been romantically linked to Bulwkinkle for a short time that summer.

About 2 1/2 weeks after she disappeared, Bulwkinkle's decomposed body was found in a shallow grave in San Timoteo Canyon. She had been shot twice in the back of the head.

At trial, a prosecutor told jurors that the defendants had dug the grave a day before the killing and that Noordnian methodically planned to kill the teenager by establishing alibis in advance and steering detectives to other potential suspects.

Guerrero testified that the plot was only to scare Bulwkinkle, but his gun accidentally fired and Noordnian then picked up the dropped gun. She fired another shot to end Bulwkinkle's suffering.

The two then went out to eat dinner and saw a movie, the prosecutor said.

Prosecutors said they will retry Guerrero on murder charges.

"Mr. Guerrero by no means should consider this a victory," Deputy District Attorney Jon Ferguson said.

Outside the courtroom, some jurors hugged the victim's mother and apologized for being unable to gain a conviction.

"No matter what the verdict is, nobody is going to win out of this," Diana Bulwkinkle said. "It's not going to bring my daughter back. This is a nightmare I'll never wake up from."
Arizona student nabbed for piracy

Authorities found more than $50 million in music and movies on a 17-year-old's computer

Beth DeFazio
ASSOCIATED PRESS

PHOENIX — An Arizona university student is believed to be the first person in the country to be convicted of a crime under state laws for illegally downloading music and movies from the Internet, prosecutors and activists said.

University of Arizona student Parvin Dhaliwal pleaded guilty to possession of counterfeit marks, or unauthorized copies of intellectual property.

Under an agreement with prosecutors, Dhaliwal was sentenced last month to a three-month deferred jail sentence, three years of probation, 200 hours of community service and a $3,400 fine. The judge in the case also ordered him to take a copyright class at the University of Arizona, which he attends, and to avoid file-sharing computer programs.

"Generally copyright is exclusively a federal matter," said Jason Schultz, an attorney with the Electronic Frontier Foundation, a technology civil liberties group. "Up until this point, you just haven't seen states involved at all."

Federal investigators referred the case to the Maricopa County Attorney's Office for prosecution because Dhaliwal was a minor when he committed the crime, said Krystal Garza, a spokeswoman for the office.

"He is the first big factor," she said. "If it went into federal court, it's a minimum of three months in jail up front."

Garza also said Dhaliwal had no prior criminal record.

The charge is a low-level felony but may be dropped to a misdemeanor once he completes probation, she said.

"It is a call to Dhaliwal's attorney, James Martin, was not returned.

A判or, he committed the crime, said Krystal Garza, a spokeswoman for the office.

"It's a call to Dhaliwal's attorney, James Martin, was not returned."

Martin, a man who identified himself as Dhaliwal's father, but refused to give his name, returned a message left Monday at Dhaliwal's parents' home.

He said his son had made a mistake, and was trying to put the case behind him. The man declined to comment further.

Brad Buckles, executive vice president for anti-piracy at the Recording Industry Association of America, said estimates say Internet piracy has cost the industry up to $30 billion a year in CD sales alone.

The FBI found more than $50 million in music and movies on Dhaliwal's computer. The illegally copied property included movies that, at the time of the theft, were available only in theaters. They included "Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind," "Matrix Revolutions," "The Cat in the Hat" and "Mona Lisa Smile."

A federal task force that monitors the Internet caught on to the student and got a warrant, Garza said, adding that Dhaliwal was copying and selling the pirated material.

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No Cancun? Explore California

The typical college spring break is usually filled with crystal clear warm water, bronzed bodies, discoteques and white, sandy beaches. Unfortunately, that description often costs hundreds of dollars and doesn't fit into the average student's budget. Because no one wants to sit at home all break, we're here to offer some alternatives that won't break the bank. We've got three trips that will fill your spring break with natural beauty, beaches and adventure.

Spring break is about getting away from it all. Big Sur is the perfect, local location to soak up a little rest and relaxation while enjoying the natural beauty of California. Camping is a huge draw for both residents and tourists alike. "So many people bring all this unnecessary equipment to campsites. All you really need is a sleeping bag to sleep under the stars," said forestry sophomore Cyrus Bell, who was born and raised in Big Sur.

The area boasts several incredible parks, such as Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park and Andrew Molera State Park. Campgrounds can also serve as hiking or biking trails. Redwood forests can be found at Paskett Creek Campground and Fernwood Campground. Both sites offer amazing views of nearby mountains.

"We go there to surf, definitely. It is hard to find most of the really good spots, but there are a lot of decent locations," said food science junior Candice Mar.

Regardless of the time of year, most beaches are cool in temperature. Packing warm clothes to fend off the wind chill is a must, as well as hiking boots or tennis shoes for easy navigation.

Bordered by jagged cliffs on one side, Pfeiffer Beach might be Big Surf's most popular beach. With its gorgeous sunsets, and long stretches of sand, Pfeiffer is the perfect spot to relax.

If you are looking for an island getaway for spring break but can't go as far as Hawaii or the Caribbean, Catalina Island makes for a quick and fun island vacation minus the expensive flights and lavish resort.

Catalina is located just 22 miles off the coast of Southern California and is famous for the variety of activities that the island has to offer its visitors including swimming, scuba diving, snorkeling, kayaking, fishing, horseback riding, hiking, parasailing, golf, as well as just hanging out in the quaint town of Avalon spending the day shopping, enjoying the restaurants and relaxing at the beach.

The island is known for its preserved natural beauty. The coastline is dotted with secluded coves and beaches while the interior has stunning peaks and valleys with a variety of wildlife.

For the hikers and adventure seekers out there, take to the interior of the island. Here you will find trails, mountain biking trails and camping grounds.

Round trip boat rides to the island start at $33.

San Luis Obispo gets plenty of sunny summer weather, even in winter.

Huntington Lake offers a refreshingly different kind of winter, the kind that delivers 10 feet of snow to your front door and keeps fresh powder on the slope.

The rough-hewn town nestled in among the Sierra pines overlooking the lake from which it gets its name. At about 60 miles east of Fresno, it is a haven for Central Valley daytrippers on their way to nearby Sierra Summit's slopes.

Though Sierra Summit does not rank among the top ski resorts in the state, it offers some distinct advantages for college students trying to cram in as much entertainment as possible into their brief reprieve on a limited budget.

At only $45 a day for a lift ticket (compared to Tahoe's Heavenly at $65 and Kirkwood at $62) Sierra Summit is a steal. Renting a board, boots and bindings add $36, skis can go even cheaper at $24 a day for equipment rental. Students with ID get a 10% discount and the Sierra Summit Inn offers a Stay and Play deal for midweek lodging as low as $60 a night with complimentary lift ticket.

Try the trails in the adjacent woods the next morning or go to one of the five nearby Sno-Parks for sledding and inner tube racing.

From Cal Poly, Huntington Lake is about 5 hours away. Go north on 101 then east on 46 and north on 41 to 168 east through the mountains.

— Crystal Phend
**Celebrity obsessions**

Derrick J. Lang

**NEW YORK —** They're out there.

Catherine Zeta-Jones, Sheryl Crow and Meg Ryan, recently faced off in court. Anna Kournikova's stalker showed up across the pool deck at the wrong house. Zeta-Jones and Paltrow have claimed stalkers. In the past two weeks alone, people were convicted or pleaded no contest to stalking Evans and Zeta-Jones. And in the Kournikova case, a man was arrested Jan. 30 after swimming nude across a Florida bay toward Kournikova's $5 million estate, then turning up on the pool deck at the wrong house, yelling, "Annal! Save me!"

Much like murder, mental health plays a major part in the crime of stalking. But stalking isn't always the result of a mental disorder.

"Most of the time what you've got is an individual who is lonely or socially incompetent," said Mace Benson, a psychologist at the University of California Los Angeles who's worked on many stalking cases.

When mental health is an issue, stalkers often do or say things that would be in the realm of a "normal" person. But they trick us, like burglary and murder leave copious amounts of physical evidence, but stalking is harder to prove. Witness the lowdown of the world's most famous fan when she was acquitted last November after allegedly pursuing the singer for 15 months, claiming he communicated with her telepathically and even visiting her sister and father.

"Stalking is much more nebulous, much more of a challenge," said John Lane, a former Los Angeles Police Department detective. "It is very difficult to investigate."

Laws now exist in all states to combat stalking in some form or another. In Los Angeles, the LAPD's Threat Management Unit exclusively tackles stalking. In 2004 it handled 600 celebrity cases. That's typical, according to the unit's leader, Detective Jeff Dunn.

"After three years of living in terror, Evans quit "One Life to Live" and dropped out of public view. She wouldn't be seen on a soap again until 1999. Following the murder of "My Sister's Sun" actress Rebecca Schaeffer in 1999 and incidents like Evans', the government, Hollywood and the world began to recognize celebrity stalking around 1999.

As many armchair sleuths have the pool deck at the wrong house, there was reluctance for fear of negative publicity. But it's hard to prove. These elements combined make it easier for an individual to break down that invisible fourth wall.

"Usually, there's been some kind of major loss in the life of the individual either one event or a series of events," said psychologist J. Reid Meloy, who's consulted on high-profile cases involving Madonna and Paltrow.

"Somewhere, they connect at a very deep emotional level," said Meloy. "With the Paltrow case, he saw her in the movie "Shakespeare in Love" and formed a bond. The onset was very rapid."

**TOP 5 STALKERS**

Most infamous celebrity fans:

1. Mark David Chapman — John Lennon

Chapman shot Lennon in immediate silence of his autograph.

2. Lucy Nowak — George Michael

Nowak was caught living under the alias of a man who was acquitted last November after allegedly pursuing the singer for 15 months, claiming he communicated with her telepathically and even visiting her sister and father.

3. al-Qaida — Russell Crowe

Terrorists claimed he communicated with her telepathically and even visiting her sister and father.

4. Downtte Knight — Catherine Zeta-Jones

Knight wrote a note to Zeta-Jones saying she should "slice" the actress up.

5. M ichael Perry — Olivia Newton John

Perry was found camping in the hills near Newton John's estate. Unfortunately, he was only sent back to his family — which he murdered.

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Quality education is a right, not a tax

It's been a rough quarter — to say the least.

Sometimes working here is like riding the best rollercoaster in the amusement park: you have your ups and downs, but in the end you're going to jump in line again for another whirl.

In retrospect, it's amazing to see what we've been through. But what's more exciting is looking ahead to what we have in store.

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And through all this, it's inevitable that we'll hear more about left-wing views, right-wing views, religion and Top 10 — all from Morgan Elam, Patrick Gourley, Casey Constock and Jeff Corner.

Yet, before we know it, the year will come to an end. Graduation will be upon us and we'll have to say goodbye. But for now, we'll just say, "Good luck on finals" and "Happy spring break" as we get ready for our final ride.

-Mustang Daily editorial staff

Quality education is a right, not a tax

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In his state budget proposal released Jan. 10, the governor advocated raising undergraduate student fees by 8 percent for the California State University system; and graduate student fees by 10 percent by July. Last year, Schwarzenegger led a victorious effort to raise student fees by 14 percent and froze enrollment for 2004, turning away nearly 15,000 qualified students from CSU campuses.

"Education is a human right, not a privilege," said Hector Flores, an organizer for Action in Defense of Cuts, resulting in higher fees, fewer classes and less planning for enrollment.

"We're all getting screwed," said Jennifer Lilia, president of the University of California Student Action.

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As to why Elam thinks that he is the only one that can have an opinion on politics, because he's studying political science, some may wonder why everyone else wanted to be entitled to their opinion too.

"And lastly, and most importantly, is that under Mr. Elam's regime I won't be allowed to procreate. But I rank 11 on Pat Goulding's, Conservative Permissible Gene Scale. Thus, Morgan's sometimes-reasonable arguments are all unfounded.

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CAMPUS Troubleshooter

STAFF EDITORIAL

Looking back, we can't wait for spring

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Goldien continued from page 16
Here's my take:
The men can blame star guard Kameron Gray's ineligibility and forward John Manley's injury for their 5-22 record. With the women, they fell short of that final place, too.
Paterson's illness. When Paterson played this season, the Mustangs were effective, forging their best wins ever. After Paterson was sidelined, though, Cal Poly floundered. Saturday, the women floundered one final time.
Flukes happen often, whether it's the accidents of children or the afflictions of star players. At least there won't be the chance for any more flukes in Mont Golf Gym until next year.
Graham Howk is a journalism senior and Mustang Daily assistant sports editor. E-mail him at ghowk@calpoly.edu.

CONE continued from page 16
Communities more and increase scholarships, while concentrating coaches more on the academic efforts of their athletes.
There are so many facilities she'd like to upgrade. She hopes to increase the number of seats in Baggot Stadium to 3,000, go forward with pool renovations and make some cosmetic renovations around the hallways and offices of Mont Gym.
Then there's the seemingly ever-present issue of completing the renovations for Mustang Stadium, which could still be several years away.
It's made for huge amounts of work for Cone. The initial part of her job, when she worked every day for nearly two weeks to hire a new women's volleyball coach in the wake of Steve Schlick's resignation, has settled down to a constant for her. She foresees 60 to 80 hours per week. "They're fun hours, but there's a lot of them," Cone said.
It makes personal relationships hard, though Rogers exchanged e-mails with Cone after their convention, but gradually lost touch, saying now she'd enjoy spending a little time with her if the two were situated closer to one another geographically. Distance aside, though, Rogers said she meant to call Cone when she was promoted.
"I wish Alison the best of luck and I think she's going to do great."
Leading lady: Cone embarks on tenure

Graham Womack

Thursday, March 10, 2005

Alison Cone could be either part of the majority or minority. It all depends on if she's looked at simply as a woman or an athletic director.

Certainly, with her recent promotion, Cone became one of a distinct minority, one of just 19 female athletic directors, including Sondra Harbour at Cal Berkeley and Deborah A. Yow at Maryland, alongside more than 300 male directors at the NCAA Division I level. She's no feminist, like many of her colleagues — even her fellow female ones.

Dawn Rogers is thankful she "never had to be a bra-burning feminist," she said, not in nine months as the athletic director at Xavier, nor in four years prior to working under the male AD before "I always felt in college athletics that the loud squeaking voice got drowned out."

Cheryl Levick has never had to play the gender card either to advance professionally. As the athletic director at Saint Louis, her passion has been combining education and athletics in her department, not quoting "The vagina monologues." She considers gender irrelevant in her job.

"Whether you're a man or a woman in this role, you're here to help male and female athletes become leaders of tomorrow," Levick said.

Levick's and Rogers' acquaintance Cone has similar views. The St.-Louis native, has stepped out of athletic administration, going from Green River Community College to Cal State Dominguez Hills to Cal State Fullerton to Washington State before finally coming to Cal Poly.

Initial, after arriving in 1994, she served as senior associate athletic director, filled in as interim athletic director in 2000, then spent another year in an interim capacity after former athletic director John McCutcheon left in February 2004 for the same job at University of Massachusetts. Cone ultimately beat out 20 other applicants to become AD.

"I'm delighted that Alison is going to lead Cal Poly's athletics program," Cal Poly President Warren Baker said when Cone's hiring became official Jan. 31. "She has tremendous experience and her first-rate leadership skills will help us move our athletics programs forward in the 21st century."

Rogers said, "She made you feel comfortable when they sat next to each other."

"I was immediately struck by her first-rate leadership skills and her goals are numerous. She wants to stabilize funding for programs, involve Mustang athletics in community service, become AD... "

Like Levick, Rogers said that Cone approached her new role extremely confident and comfortable in her role when the two worked together during a four-day NCAA conference earlier.

"I was immediately struck by her personal way," Rogers said. "She made you feel comfortable immediately."

It's praise echoed by people like Mustang cross-country coach Mark Conover and praise that resonates deeper considering that Cone appears quiet, almost guarded to outsiders. It could be little known that she's a Van Halen fan (she went to two concerts last summer) or that she shares her Grover Beach home with four cats and two dogs.

More than anything, she's business-like, saying that though McCutcheon was a tremendous influence in terms of maintaining integrity even in tough times, her main area of expertise, developing business relationships, makes her different.

"In the past it's been done more internally," Cone said. "Now it'll be done more externally."

Overall, her optimistic as she embarks on the final job she hopes to have, saying it meets all of her career objectives.

"I'm sure that I will be happy... I'll be a challenge... a good one," Cone said.

Her goals are numerous. She wants to stabilize funding for programs, involve Mustang athletics in community service, become AD, even more quietly than she went to two concerts last summer.

She joined the Big West after sitting in the Anteaters went on a 13-0 run. After the run subsided, the game was effectively over. The women's post-game tears and the men's 30-point beating in their game Saturday said it for the first time in six years, neither team is at the Big West Tournament. There'll probably be talk among fans about what went wrong, perhaps with some suggesting a coaching change or two.

see Cone, page 15

COMMENTARY

Mott Gym will be fluke free until next year

I t was a sign of bad things to come.

It was Saturday night, and I was in Mott Gym at the Cal Poly—Irvin women's basketball game. A few hundred miles away, the Mustangs were getting beaten and buried alive in their game, having been eliminated from making the Big West Tournament two nights earlier. But the women still had a chance to qualify with this, their regular season finale.

Miscal spent the first half trading leads with the Anteaters. Now, with Cal Poly trailing 33-32, it was halftime, the break entertainment proceeding.

Halftime entertainment varies. During this break at Cal Poly, two kids were allowed to race with pizza boxes strapped to their feet. I've seen some pretty rank entertainment in Mott, but still, this was a new low.

After the race started and the smaller kid quickly fell behind, struggling to maneuver an unwieldy box feet, a dude in a Mustang Miniaci T-shirt raced onto court and scooped the kid up behind to help him catch up, seeming a nice gesture.

He took about eight off-balance steps holding the child then fell. Memo to whoever was in charge: Selfless (but strangely hilarious) violence is indeed the goal for halftime entertainment. I recommend in the future having midgets with flame throwers duke it out. If that's not feasible, or indeed illegal, simply allow the dance team to perform twice as long.

Thankfully, the kid missed being crushed in the fall Saturday and didn't appear to be hurt, although he was carried from the court with his hands over his mouth. Additionally, his flame accident didn't affect the Mustangs when they returned to the court. Another earlier fluke did. For some reason, standout senior center and the Mustangs leading scorer Katy Paterson contracted mono earlier this season. It might as well have been SARS.

Misco's one of those strange afflictions that people can get for seemingly no reason. And once it's there, it's for good.

Paterson missed some midseason games and eventually returned, though not at full energy Saturday, she played much of the first half, but needed a long rest before playing thereafter. With Paterson sitting, the Anteaters went on a 13-0 run. After the run subsided, the game was effectively over. The women's post-game tears and the men's 30-point beating in their game Saturday said it for the first time in six years, neither team is at the Big West Tournament. There'll probably be talk among fans about what went wrong, perhaps with some suggesting a coaching change or two.

see Golden, page 15