TODAY'S WEATHER
High 69°
Low 48°

James Mellor
ART EDITOR

Striving to provide heightened cultural awareness and to address the issue of race relations on campus, the Black Student Union (BSU) will host a variety of events to celebrate Black History Month.

Black History Month has been celebrated in the United States each February since 1926.

"For the month, we're just trying to create some dialogue," BSU President Leon Smith said. "We want to get people thinking about political and social issues because this campus is pretty apathetic when it comes to this kind of thing."

B.J. Davis, a doctoral intern at Cal Poly's counseling center who serves as a liaison body to come all clubs and people fiximlogue, BSU create some dialogue, "Black Student Union (BSU) will host a variety of events to celebrate Black History Month. President Leon Smith said, "We need to talk about these things, "We need to talk about these things, "get uncomfortable, but then take the board and do something about it."

"The board will be up for two weeks, beginning this week. "We're going to take the board and have a culture talk, which will be on Feb. 23," Smith said. "We'll invite everybody to come — all clubs and people from the community — to create some dialogue about race relations on campus and what we can do to take ownership and doing something about it."

The culture talk will take place at 5 p.m. on Feb. 23 in the San Luis Lounge, UU room 221.

"We need to talk about these things," Davis said. "Get uncomfortable, but then get comfortable. That's usually how change works."

"People need to be aware of their prejudices and aware of their biases," he added. "The way to get past this is to force interaction."

Various other events will occur at Cal Poly throughout the month to celebrate black history.

The BSU and San Luis Obispo's Cultural Collective Group will be collaborating to put on a performance with dancing, drum circles and different aspects of black culture at Farmers' Market on Feb. 16. The event will be held at the E-Africa Gallery on 1531 Monterey St. at 6:30 p.m.

The Multicultural Center will host "Higher Movement," a cultural dance and musical performance during UU Hour on Feb. 20.

"Hopefully we'll get people to write how they feel," Davis said. "What their insecurities are, what they like or dislike and how people feel about diversity on campus."

"What would you be willing to do?" will be on the board, and anybody can write whatever they want, Smith said.

"We think this campus is pretty apathetic," he said. "We want to see History, page 2

Coretta Scott King dies at 78

Errin Haines
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

ATLANTA (AP) — Coretta Scott King, who worked to keep her husband's dream alive with a chin-held-high grace and serenity that made her a powerful symbol of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.'s creed of brotherhood and nonviolence, died Tuesday. She was 78.

The "first lady of the civil rights movement" died in her sleep during the night at an alternative medicine clinic in Mexico, her family said. Arrangements were being made to fly the body back to Atlanta.

She had been recovering from a serious stroke and heart attack suffered last August. Just two weeks ago, she made her first public appearance in a year on the eve of her late husband's birthday.

Doctors at the clinic said King was battling advanced ovarian cancer when she arrived there on Thursday. The doctors said the cause of death was respiratory failure.

News of her death led to tributes to King across Atlanta, including a moment of silence in the Georgia Capitol and piles of flowers placed at the tomb of her slain husband. Flags at the King Center — the institute devoted to the civil rights leader's legacy — were lowered to half-staff.

IN SLO OUTDOOR ADVENTURES, 16

This Month in BLACK HISTORY

Feb. 23, 1868
Important civil rights leader and co-founder of the NAACP, W.E.B. DuBois was born.

Feb. 3, 1870
The 15th Amendment, which granted blacks the right to vote, was passed.

Feb. 25, 1870
Hiram R. Revels, the first black senator took his oath of office.

Feb. 12, 1909
The NAACP was founded.

Feb. 1, 1960
A group of black college students in Greensboro, N.C. began a sit-in at a segregated restaurant's lunch counter.

Feb. 21, 1965
Malcolm X, promoter of black nationalism was killed.

Feb. 24, 1996
Bernard Harris, Jr. becomes the first black astronaut to walk in space.
She exerted her leadership with grace. She was strong if not stronger than he was," Young said. "Coretta Scott King was a woman of such courage it is impossible to actually describe or explain."

Coretta Scott King was studying voice at the New England Conservatory of Music and was earning a singing career when a friend introduced her to King, a young Baptist minister studying at Atlanta University.

"She said she wanted me to meet a very promising young minister from Atlanta," King once said, adding with a laugh, "I wasn't interested in meeting a young minister at that time."

She recalled that on their first date he told her, "You know, you have everything I ever wanted in a woman. We ought to get married someday." Eighteen months later, in 1953, they did.

The couple moved to Montgomery, Ala., where he became pastor of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church and helped lead the 1955 Montgomery bus boycott that Rosa Parks set in motion when she refused to give up her seat on a segregated bus. With that campaign, King began enacting his philosophy of nonviolent, direct social action.

Over the years, King was with her husband in his finest hours. She was at his side as he received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964. She marched beside him from Selma, Ala., into Montgomery in 1965 on the triumphal drive for a voting rights law.

Only days after his death, she flew to Memphis with three of her children to lead thousands marching in honor of her slain husband and to plead to the King Center's Plaza Church created a furor, Coretta Scott King campaigned at Carter's side the next day.

She later was named by Carter to serve as part of the U.S. delegation to the United Nations, where Young was the ambassador.

In 1993, on the 25th anniversary of her husband's death, King said the war in Vietnam that her husband opposed "has been replaced by an unordered war on our central cities, a war being fought by gangs with guns for drugs."

"The value of our life in our cities has become as cheap as the price of a gun," she said. In London, she stood in 1969 in the same carved pulpit in St. Paul's Cathedral where her husband had preached five years earlier.

"Many despair at all the evil and unrest and disorder in the world today," she preached, "but I see a new social order and I see the dawn of a new day."
WHO SAID THAT?

There are painters who transform the sun to a yellow spot, but there are others who with the help of their art and their intelligence, transform a yellow spot into the sun.
— Pablo Picasso

Before I got married I had six theories about bringing up children; now I have six children and no theories.
— John Wilmot

Wordly Wise

Malleable: Capable of being shaped; also, adaptable.

BREAKING NEWS

UPDATED AT THE SPEED OF COLLEGE LIFE

Name: Michael Flagg • Age: 21
Hometown: Monterey • Major: environmental engineering

MISSIO¥ GRILL

Best Sunday Brunch in SLO

And just to prove it we are going to put our money where our mouth is.

1/2 off Sunday Brunch Entree

With purchase of a Bottomless Mimosa or a Bloody Mary. Offer expires Sunday 2-19-2006
Max one per person. Max four per table.
Not valid with other offers. Must be 21.
18% gratuity added before discount

MISSION GRILL
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Patio Dining. Football in the bar.
Every Sunday 9 am to 3 pm


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Admission:
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Sat: Jun 28 - 8pm
Sun: Jun 29 - 2pm
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Fri: Feb 03 - 8pm
Sat: Feb 04 - 8pm

Alex & Faye Spanos Theatre @ Cal Poly
Sponsors: Theatre & Dance Department
College of Liberal Arts & MFA
AUBURN (AP) — Medical marijuana activist Steven Kubby is appealing to a Placer County judge to let him use cannabis, said Kubby, 39, appeared Tuesday in an Auburn courtroom, days after he was deported from Canada and arrested when he arrived in San Francisco.

His attorney, William McPike, said Kubby relies on the medical marijuana to treat a rare form of anal cancer. He also asked Placer Superior Court Judge Robert McElhain to let Kubby serve his sentence under home detention in Marin County.

OROVILLE (AP) — A 24-year-old man could be shoveling horse manure as part of his punishment for punching a police horse.

Butte County Superior Court Judge Stephen Benson sentenced Robert William Huff, of Chico, to 20 hours of community service and 24 hours in jail after he pleaded no contest to second-degree battery.

NEWPORT BEACH (AP) — Five owners of beach houses will pay $253,000 in fines for flattening sand dunes in front of their homes to improve ocean views and they agreed to restore the 6-foot-high dunes just south of the Santa Ana River mouth.

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Goleta — A woman who went on a so-called rampage inside a mail-processing plant, killing six employees, may also have killed a former neighbor shortly before the attack, sheriff's officials said Wednesday.

The sixth victim, who had been hospitalized in critical condition, died Wednesday morning. The woman who killed seven victims at the Goleta mail-processing plant before committing suicide in what is believed to be the deadliest workplace shooting by a woman in U.S. history, has been identified by the Ventura County Sheriff's Department as Santa Barbara County sheriff's investigators collect evidence at the scene of a multiple-fatality shooting at a mail-processing facility in Goleta on Tuesday.

Conference goers also discussed the labor movement.

Deputies say postal killer may have shot fellow neighbor

Tim Molloy

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President Bush gestures during his visit to the Grand Ole Opry House on Wednesday in Nashville, Tenn.

Bush says he understands Americans' worries

Nedra Pickler
ASSOCIATED PRESS

President Bush says he understands why some Americans are worried in a time of war and job cuts.

Bush has been bent by criticism that his optimistic messages of recent years haven't squared with the worries many Americans feel over high energy and health care costs, the costly and deadly Iraq war and continuing terrorist threats. Democrats say his words could not overcome those problems.

"It just wasn’t credible to hear him talk about making America more secure and honoring our troops or making America energy independent or making health care more affordable without hearing him explain why he’s done just the opposite for the last five years," said Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev.

Bush spoke Wednesday from the stage of the jam-packed Grand Ole Opry House, country music's home including Barbara Mandrell, Loretta Lynn, Lee Greenwood, Lorrie Morgan and the Oak Ridge Boys.

The $39 billion in cuts are generalized — a 0.4 percent cut in Medicare over five years — compared with deficits expected to total $1.3 trillion or more through 2010.

Still, the bill set off a brawl between Democrats and Republicans and whipped up opposition from interest groups like AARP.

A nearly identical bill passed the House Dec. 19 but the House held an unusual revote because Senate Democrats forced technical changes that the House needed to accept before the bill could be sent to Bush's desk.

Republicans said the measure is a necessary first step to trimming the burgeoning growth in so-called mandatory spending programs like Medicare, which threaten to swamp the budget with the retirement of the baby-boom generation.

"The Deficit Reduction Act seeks to curb the unsustainable growth rate of mandatory programs that are set to consume 62 percent of our total federal budget in the next decade if left unchecked," said Rep. Adam Putnam, R-Fla. He said many such programs "are outdated, inefficient and excessively costly."

But Democrats attacked the measure, especially for its cuts to the federal child support enforcement program and for allowing states to reduce Medicaid funding and 0.3 percent cut in Medicare over five years — compared with deficits expected to total $1.3 trillion or more through 2010.

The bill modestly cut Medicare, Medicaid and student loan subsidies with a renewal of the 1996 welfare reform bill and $30 billion in new revenues from auctioning television airwaves to wireless companies. There's also $1 billion in new spending to extend an income subsidy program for dairy farmers and a reprieve for physicians who had faced a 4 percent cut in Medicare fees.

The Democratic health care plan includes federal help to enroll uninsured Americans and a mandate on employers to provide health care. Some analysts say the Republican plan is more like a welfare reform bill.

The senate version will be voted on this week. It would then besent to the House for a vote on the floor next week.
Bush warned up the crowd under a sign that said “Americans Win When America Leads.” Bush joked to the enthusiastic crowd that he should have given the State of the Union there. “How cool would it be to give it a State of the Union address in a Porter Waggoner outfit?” he said, referring to the flashy singer who frequently played host on the stage.

Outside, more than 100 protesters held up their own signs that said “No Confidence” and “No warrant, no wiretap, no W.” That was a reference to Bush’s much-debated secret program of eavesdropping on phone calls and e-mails in an attempt to sniff out terrorist plots, which he vigorously defended in his State of the Union address.

In Tuesday’s speech, the president declared that America must break in long-standing dependence on Middle East oil and rebuked critics of his stay-the-course strategy for the unpopular war in Iraq. “There is no peace in retreat,” he said. He also slapped at those who complain he took the country to war on the erroneous grounds that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction. “Hindsight alone is not wisdom,” Bush said. “And second-guessing is not a strategy.”

He pledged to maintain “a civil tone” in disputes with those in Congress who oppose his policies, like the nation’s involvement in Iraq. But Sen. Joe Biden, D-Del., complained Wednesday that “he says that all the time, and then his administration, through the vice president and the secretary of defense and others, says that anyone who criticizes the war, they imply they’re not patriotic.”

Budget negotiations carried on behind closed doors. “This is a product of special interest lobbying and the stretch of special interests hanging over the chamber,” said Rep. John D Dingell, D-Mich.

Democrats also said the measure, when combined with an upcoming bill cutting taxes by about $70 billion, would lead to an increase in the deficit.

As if on cue, the Senate kicked off debate on a tax cut bill revising some expired tax breaks and preventing millions more families from paying the alternative minimum tax. The House version of that bill extends tax cuts for capital gains and dividends.

The powerful AARP seniors lobby, student groups, pediatricians and others have mounted a month-long campaign against the bill, making some lawmakers uncomfortable with their votes in December.

“Over the intervening months, people that I know and respect have gone through the details of this legislation and they’ve said, ‘This is really a disaster,’” said Rep. Rob Simmons, D-Conn., who announced he will change his vote from “aye” to “nay.”

The bill comes as Capitol Hill Republicans are trying to burnish their party’s budget-cutting credentials amid increased concern about the rising deficit and the costs of the Iraq war and Hurricane Katrina.

Bush is anxious to sign the bill and move on to next year’s budget cycle. On Feb. 6, he is to release his 2007 budget plan, which is likely to call for new cuts in benefits programs like farm subsidies, Medicaid, food stamps and Medicare.

Congressional investigators blame White House, Chertoff for lack of clear chain of command for Katrina

Washington — The White House and Homeland Security chief Michael Chertoff failed to provide decisive action when Hurricane Katrina struck, congressional investigators said Wednesday in a stinging assessment of slow federal relief efforts.

The White House had no clear chain of command in place, investigators with the Government Accountability Office said, laying much of the blame on President Bush for not designating a single official to coordinate federal decision-making for the Aug. 29 storm. Bush has accepted responsibility for the government’s halting response, but for the most part then-FEMA Director Michael Brown, who quit days after the hurricane hit, has been the public face of the failure.

“Up to the president of the United States,” said Rep. Tom Davis, R-Va., who is leading a special House investigation of the Katrina response, said the White House had no clear chain of command for the storm, which would have triggered a faster response.

“As a result, the federal response generally was to wait for the affected states to request assistance,” the report found.

In another stab at Chertoff, the report called for Homeland Security to provide stronger advance warning and planning for future disasters — including taking better advantage of the military’s ability to rescue and evacuate victims, provide supplies and assess damage.

Homeland Security spokesman Russ Knoke called the report misleading because federal officials and supplies were already at the Gulf Coast before Katrina hit. He said Chertoff did not act because a government-wide planning effort for dealing with catastrophes had not been completed.

The “displays a significant misunderstanding of core aspects of the Katrina response, one that could hardly have been more misstated in the most basic conversations with Homeland Security leadership,” Knoke said.

Rep. Tom Davis, R-Va., who is leading a special House investigation of the Katrina response, said the GAO findings will be included in his own panel’s conclusions, which are due Feb. 15.

“I’m very hopeful that our final report will answer a lot of questions that the American people have,” Davis said. “The most obvious being: How could our government fail so badly?”

New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin, in Washington to testify before a separate Senate-led Katrina inquiry, said he was not surprised at the report’s conclusions.

“One of the big challenges in this event was the chain of command issue,” Nagin told The Associated Press. “And for something that be a multistate event, something that pretty much overwhelmed our local government, we need to figure out how to do this better in the future.”

However, a transcript of an Aug. 28 briefing at Katrina bore down on the region indicates Gulf Coast state officials were satisfied with the federal assistance they had so far received.
Ryan Claytor, above, began drawing five years ago and owns Elephant Eater Comics, which started in Santa Ynez. His comic strips, right and below, are available at www.elephanteater.com.

Sitting with his legs crossed, the young boy stared nervously at his sketchbook as comic book artist Ryan Claytor continued to carefully draw a sketch for him. Claytor's meticuclus hand slowly crafted the sketch, his eyes glaring into the book. It was as if he was on another planet.

"You might as well take a hike around the store if you're going to wait for Claytor, kid," another artist said, bellowing in friendly laughter with the other unoccupied artists lined up beside him at the signing.

Claytor finally raised his head and summed the boy whose eyes lit up immediately at the sight of the sketch. He shyly thanked him and hurried away.

Claytor has been producing small, velvet-covered comic books called "And Then One Day." Each book is a graphical journal of events in his life, all of which are far more entertaining to read about than they should be. As each day passes and the pages continue to turn, the life of a comic book geek trying to pursue a career in teaching develops to the point where readers envision themselves at his interviews, cheering him on. Claytor's ability to transform his everyday life into an emotional and exciting experience for all audiences separates his comics from any other rising artist.

Born and raised in Santa Ynez, Claytor became addicted to comics in 2001, inspired by the work of his favorite artist, Sergio Aragones.

Comics became more than simply a hobby around the time he was finishing up his undergraduate at UC Santa Barbara. When not consumed by comics or studying at UCSB, Claytor remembers when he would come up to Cal Poly to "whomp on the pingpong" tables with his "money maker" at The Graduates. Once he had a degree under his belt, Claytor wasted little time in continuing his passion for comics.

After an internship at Marvel Comics in New York, Claytor returned to California and created the first issue of "And Then One Day." Since then, he has helped organize and also participated in two "24 Hour Comics Day" events where artists must make a 24-page comic book in a mere 24 hours. Claytor described the experience as "if for one day your head is turned into a giant tube of toothpaste, the contents are your creative juices and for 24 hours straight you have someone jumping up and down on your head spraying the contents all over these pages in front of you. It's an uncanny, trying and very rewarding experience."

Every year, Claytor attends several geek-swamped comic book conventions such as ApeCon, ComicCon and WonderCon where he meets with comic fans of all shapes and sizes. When not "geeking out" with fellow comic book fans, Claytor enjoys meeting with the younger crowd.

"I'll get kids who come up to me, showing me their portfolio and I love giving them encouragement and little helpful tips that I've received walking around doing the same exact thing that they're doing," Claytor said. "That's love, baby."

In September 2005, Claytor decided to pursue his dream of teaching and entered San Diego State University in hopes of attaining a master's of fine arts. Prior to his return to school, Claytor had been teaching comics, page 9
Screening of Oscar nominated film today

Justin Fivella
MUS T A N C: D A I L Y

The star of the Oscar nominated documentary “Murderball” and captain of the U.S. quadriplegic rugby team, Mark Zupan will speak tonight after a free screening in the Chumash Auditorium. Doors open for the free show at 7:30 p.m. and Zupan will speak at 9 p.m. following the screening.

“Murderball” swept the 2005 Sundance Film Festival, where it won several awards, according to a press release. The film follows the fiercely competitive sport of quadriplegic rugby and the larger-than-life players that battle for gold medals in their gladiator-like wheelchairs.

The film focuses on Zupan, the team captain, and his fellow players of Team USA and their experiences in the full contact sport of Murderball.

“Murderball” is the story of a group of indomitable, world-class athletes unlike any other shown on screen,” said Gina Knox, student supervisor on concerts, in a press release. “Mark Zupan is an amazing athlete and individual and will change everyone’s perspective on life.”

As a teenager, Zupan was left a quadriplegic after he was thrown from the back of a truck in a drunk driving accident. Steel-willed and determined, Zupan overcame the ordeal and in the process became active in the sport of rugby. Zupan is currently the captain of Team USA as well as its official spokesman.

Doors open at 7 p.m. for the free event. Seating is limited.

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Thank You Students!
For helping to make last year’s Mardi Gras weekend safe & sane.

Your help turned it around last year. Smaller and friendlier crowds — fewer arrests — violence curtailed...and you made the difference.

We need your help again this year.

TO SUPPORT THE EFFORT, THERE WILL BE:

• 300+ law enforcement officers on duty for the weekend
• DUI check points throughout SLO
• Violation costs tripled citywide
• University discipline for student violators
• Special fines in effect for flashing and nudity

San Luis Obispo belongs to all of us. Please help keep it safe. Tell your friends looking for Mardi Gras parties to stay home the weekend of February 24th.

The Party's Still Over

www.MardiGrasSLO.com
...and another artist switch off drawing panels. Claytor said that he and his partner in the strip, Shana Manion, "were both so excited about it, that for a time in the beginning we were hammering out one, sometimes two panels a day. It was amazing to see this really thoughtful story unfolding, and even more exciting not knowing where it was going to go.

Claytor has a few ideas about future non-autobiographical comics, including a 19 panel sequential art quilt depicting his close relationship with his grandfather, but for now is all about finishing graduating school. As his father used to tell him, "It's like eating an elephant. You do it one bite at a time and before you know it, you're done!"

A decision to become abstinent for my decision. This isn't a soapbox, that column is on Tuesdays. I'm a Christian guy and we'll leave it at that.

A sedex life is not an easy one. As we saw last quarter with the oh-so-controversial Salsa Club, sex is all over. But abstinent folks do what they can to steer clear of it.

"Nick, what do you do on Saturday night?" I'm a healthy eater, but I do eagerly await my wedding. Now me. I'm a healthy eater, but for now it's all about finishing school. As my journalism cronies probably any guy on the face of the Earth, that column is on Tuesdays. I'm a Christian guy and we'll leave it at that.

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SEX COLUMN
Scorched by Cupid's flame

I'm in the momentum of work Amores. The picture. Ovid wrote poems and poetry dedicated to finding love, keeping love and getting rid of love when it became tiresome. The whole process began with the sharp prick of an arrow from Cupid's bow - what we dreamt of was loving at first sight.
The love poet even cherished the mischievous cherub, saying, "Cupid, no words can match my indignation ... why hurt me, when I've never left your color?" Real. being shot with an arrow full of angry love wasn't a whole lot of fun back then, either. Although, we have to come to realize that Cupid's myth as exactly that (although most commodity commercial writers haven't gotten the memo yet), the concept of love at first sight remains the same, even some two thousand years later.

Even the most die-hard evolutionists must admit that we haven't come far very far in love.

Suffice it to say that falling in love is painful and usually embarrassing. Ovid himself felt scorned by the town as "the fellow scorched by Cupid's flame." You become silly and breathless, taken to planning out every conversation the two of you may ever have and how irresistible you'll make yourself. Most ot us could get butterflies from many different things.

What does the other sex have to say?

The next best thing, the thing that exists in reality, is that first spark when you meet somebody: seeing the "window of love" at first sight, if you like.

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State of Union Address was a wasted opportunity

Staff Editorial

Kent State (Kent State U.)

Kent, Ohio - Last night, President Bush fulfilled his Constitutional obligation and informed Congress as to the State of the Union. In the past, many presidents have used this pulpit to announce bold, new proposals which have changed the face of America. This was not one of those speeches. Instead, the speech given was a grand example of same old, same old. The speech was redundant enough that one could argue the awkward transitions throughout were due to bad cutting and pasting from speeches over the last five years.

As should be a surprise to absolutely no one, Bush showed his usual resolutions/umbrellas (depending upon what side of the aisle one is on) regarding the war in Iraq. A prime example of this opaqueness was apparent in his promise to cut the deficit in half by 2009. Granted, he did say he was proposing to cut $14 billion from spending and announced support for the end of earmarking. But even if the cuts go through, they would be a drop in the bucket compared to the amount we’ve spent in Iraq over the last three years. Domestic policy was the president’s weak spot on the night, as he appeared to be getting genuinely annoyed on a couple occasions. Then again that might be misplaced anger at the doj who inadvertently wrote in an applause line for the Democrats.

Again, Bush repeated the same old talking points. We need to reform Social Security. We need to renew the Patriot Act. Activist judges are screwing up America. The only proposal which seemed particularly out of the ordinary was the statement that Americans are addicted to oil, but even that was old hat as Bush called for hydrogen cars in a previous State of the Union.

And for the rest of the world, Bush reiterated his doctrine from the first term: Democracy is a necessity in the war on terror, and dictatorships are breeding grounds for terrorism. Unless of course you provide lots of cheap goods for use in the United States, as China does, and then they get a free pass. Or at least that’s the implication of China’s absence from Bush’s laundry list of countries whose people desire democracy.

Regarding the economy, Bush’s policy seemingly can be boiled down into four little words: Tax cuts are awesome. Otherwise his plans were rather nebulous, as they were the old parlor trick of increasing spending while cutting government intake of income. A prime example of this opaqueness was apparent in his promise to cut the deficit in half by 2009. Granted, he did say he was proposing to cut $14 billion from spending and announced support for the end of earmarking. But even if the cuts go through, they would be a drop in the bucket compared to the amount we’ve spent in Iraq over the last three years.

Domestic policy was the president’s weak spot on the night, as he appeared to be getting genuinely annoyed on a couple occasions. Then again that might be misplaced anger at the doj who inadvertently wrote in an applause line for the Democrats.

Again, Bush repeated the same old talking points. We need to reform Social Security. We need to renew the Patriot Act. Activist judges are screwing up America. The only proposal which seemed particularly out of the ordinary was the statement that Americans are addicted to oil, but even that was old hat as Bush called for hydrogen cars in a previous State of the Union. Although we did find out that math is essential. Who would have thought that? Stylistically, while nobody will ever confuse Bush with Cicero, the speech was fairly mediocre, even by his usually generous standards. From the strained metaphors to the over-drawn self-comparisons to Lincoln and MLK, this speech was a far cry from the State of the Union in 2002, which can arguably be considered Bush’s high point as a speaker.

One last thing: The line-item veto was declared unconstitutional years ago.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Mr. Eller’s arguments are not convincing

I would like to thank the conserva­tive columnist Brian Eller for citing some sources in his article, “American history and black history, it’s one and the same.” This is something I found severely lacking from his previous article on global warming.

Unfortunately, he still seems to be preaching to the choir. In his previous article, he tried to convince us that global warming was not a threat without actually quoting any legitimate scientific sources. While he probably spoke to many people, these were most likely people who already agreed with his opinions. The point of the political columns should not be to throw the same old opinions in the same way, but to present these in a new way to explain to the other side, and perhaps, even learn what their objections are.

I will admit I tend to lean a bit liberal, but there are several areas (nuclear power plants, small government, fiscal policy) where I lean conserva­tive. If Mr. Eller cannot convince me that he’s got a legitimate argu­ment, how can he hope to convince anyone who doesn’t already agree with him?

Troy Keasten
Aerospace engineering junior

Help the students’ voices be heard on Mardi Gras, Tylor Middlestadt

Please support the Mardi Gras this year. I voted for you because I believed that you would stand up for students’ rights. I voted for you because you said that Blake (Bobbi) had failed in with the Mardi Gras situation last year by doing nothing for the students. Last year, the city had no strong student voice present and we were promised that something would be done so that another Mardi Gras marathons would not be instigated. Please do something so that our voice as students will not be silenced once again. Although the city calls last year’s non-celebration an overwhelming success, it was an utter failure in city-student relations. Not only were the tender-student-city-rela­tions worn even more thin, but there was a huge financial loss. According to the New Times, the “virtual police state” cost the city a “half-million dollars police officials estimate they spent on planning and execution.” This doesn’t even include the money spent on advertising and revenue the city lost. When I hear that the city thinks in three DGR check-points were a huge success because they caught five people the entire weekend, it makes me sick to think of how much money was wasted. I understand that the city is afraid of a repeat of 2004, but please don’t let the actions of a few people depress you for the rest of us, and destroy what little relationship the city has with its stu­dents once again.

There is a solution out there that will satisfy both sides, but we first need to try and work together for once.

Matthew Neal
Aerospace engineering junior

Mr. Ingram managed to label himself

In response to your article entitled “Political convictions without political labels,” I’d like to give you advice instead of lowering myself to your level. Quit trying to be “raw” and “unconventional” because your columns are anything but. Peppering your article with four-letter words makes you far too unbecoming to be taken seriously and comparing our president (yes, he’s your president too) to Tweedle Dumb makes you simply pass.

Why is the state always the bad guy? When a man takes another man’s life, they surrender some protection of their rights. Quit blaming the govern­ment for everything wrong in this world and please do not compare the life of an unborn child to that of a convicted murderer. Come up with an idea to better America, and quit wasting our time with your thoughts on what a poor job Bush is doing.

Whether you deny it or not, you are labeling yourself with your article. While your conservative counterpart is commenting on real issues and backing up his article with original ideas, you would rather think out loud and even use cliche columns. If you are so concerned with being fresh, then be a fresh liberal. Come up with some new, occasionally cross part­isan lines and confront a real issue. Oh wait, then you might be labeled con­servative.

Scott Jones
Aerospace junior
A microwave-sized compartment, containing mucoid bacteria, is converted to the gas nitric oxide. Bacteria can't dispose of the nitric oxide metabolically and can't handle the effects of the gas, so they die, according to Hassett.

"These bacteria had a defect that we didn't anticipate," Hassett said. "I've never been so happy in my life to be wrong."
Judge pushes ahead with trial despite Saddam’s absence

Hamza Hendawi
ASSOCIATED PRESS

BAGHDAD, Iraq — A female witness, testifying Wednesday at Saddam Hussein’s trial, said she was stripped naked in prison, hung by her feet and kicked in the chest by the former Iraqi leader’s half-brother.

The woman provided some of the most gripping testimony so far in the trial, which went ahead despite a boycott by Saddam and four other defendants who demanded the removal of the chief judge.

Weeping several times during her testimony, the woman described being stripped naked, hung by her hands, beaten and given electric shocks.

Then, she told the court, Barzan Ibrahim — Saddam’s half-brother and the top co-defendant in the trial — told guards to instead hang her from her feet, then he kicked her three times in the chest.

“I told him (Barzan), ‘For God’s sake. I’m a woman. Master. I have nothing to confess. Why are you doing this to me?’” said the woman, who spoke from behind a beige curtain to protect her identity.

The woman was one of five witnesses who took the stand during Wednesday’s 4 1/2-hour session, all of whom were hidden behind the curtain.

The woman’s testimony directly implicated Barzan, Saddam’s one-time head of the Mukhabarat intelligence agency. She recounted her torture at the Mukhabarat’s Baghdad headquarters, where she said she and family members were taken after being arrested in a crackdown following a 1982 assassination attempt against Saddam in the Shiite village of Dujail.

She said she was later taken to the notorious Abu Ghraib prison. One day, she was driven back to the Mukhabarat headquarters for interrogation with her father, when guards threw a dead baby into the car and ordered it taken to “the Mukhabarat garage.”

“What crime have we all committed to go through this agony?” she asked, sobbing.

Chief judge Raouf Abdel-Rahman, who took over last week, pressed ahead with the proceedings Wednesday at a rapid pace, taking advantage of the calm in a courtroom that has been plagued by shouting matches, scuffles and protests since the trial began Oct. 19.

But the boycott by five of the case’s eight defendants and their defense team was likely to further undermine the trial, which has been cast as a key plank in Iraq’s transition from dictatorship to democratic rule.

President Bush said Wednesday he was not worried about the disarray surrounding the Saddam trial.

“Hopefully the trial will resume and be conducted in a fair way,” Bush told The Associated Press in an interview. “It certainly stands in a stark contrast to how Saddam treated his people. I’d like to see the trial move forward. That’s what democracies do. They give people a fair trial.”

Abdel-Rahman, a Kurd, appointed new defense attorneys, and the three defendants who accepted them and attended Wednesday’s proceedings sat quietly, surrounded by the empty chairs left by Saddam and the others.

Saddam and his co-defendants are on trial for the killing of more than 140 Shiites after the 1982 attempt on the former ruler’s life in Dujail, north of Baghdad. They face death by hanging if convicted.

The original defense team chosen by Saddam and his co-defendants has petitioned the tribunal to remove Abdel-Rahman, saying they will not attend unless the chief judge is replaced.

They accuse Abdel-Rahman of having a “personal feud” with Saddam because the judge was born in Halabja, a Kurdish village hit by a poison gas attack allegedly ordered by Saddam in 1988. Some 5,000 Kurds were killed in that attack, including several of Abdel-Rahman’s relatives.

“The only way to play my role is to give these matters to my client,” Saddam’s original chief attorney, Khaled al-Dulaimi, told the AP in the Jordanian capital, Amman. “Abdel-Rahman ‘shouldn’t be allowed to preside over the hearings because he can’t be fair in this case.”

Al-Dulaimi also claimed that Saddam’s regime tried Abdel-Rahman in absentia and sentenced him to life in prison in 1977. He said the judge was a member of a Kurdish party that was opposed to Saddam and so “holds political animosity with the defendant.”

Al-Dulaimi’s claims could not be immediately confirmed. When a defense lawyer raised the issue at the end of Wednesday’s hearing, Abdel-Rahman said the court had yet to receive a formal note asking for his removal.

Tom Hays
ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK — Colombian drug dealers turned puppies into couriers by surgically implanting them with packets of heroin, federal authorities said Wednesday.

Investigators believe the ring used the dogs, as well as human drug smugglers, to conceal millions of dollars in liquid heroin on commercial flights into New York. Cred for distribution on the East Coast.

Ten puppies, including Labrador retrievers, were rescued during a 2005 raid on a farm in Colombia, the Drug Enforcement Administration said, while announcing more than 30 arrests. A veterinarian had stitched a total of 3 kilograms of heroin into the bellies of six pups. Three later died from infections after the drugs were removed.

It was unclear how many dogs were used in the overall scheme, and investigators do not know their fate after they arrived on U.S. soil, said John P. Gilbride, head of the DEA’s New York office.

“I think it’s outrageous and horrendous that they’d use small, innocent puppies in this way,” he said.

Besides the pups and human smugglers, authorities said the ring based in Medellin also concealed drugs in body cadavers, sensal cans, and the linings of purses and luggage.

Recent raids in Colombia resulted in more than 20 arrests; another 10 suspects were seized in Canada and New York, Florida and North Carolina. About 24 kilograms of heroin was seized, officials said.

Six of the ten puppies used by Colombian drug traffickers as canine drug mules are shown in this photo released by the United States Drug Enforcement Administration on Wednesday.

New York-bound puppies used as drug smugglers, feds say

Hamza Hendawi
ASSOCIATED PRESS
Jewish settlers and their supporters clash with Israeli troops and police as authorities evacuate the West Bank settlement outpost of Amona, east of the Palestinian town of Ramallah, on Wednesday.

The clashes were on par with the most violent scenes during the pullout from the Gaza Strip and part of the West Bank, in which 25 settlements were dismantled.

"The behavior of the settlers can no longer be tolerated," Olmert said. "Today they crossed every line!"

The confrontation began Wednesday morning after Israel's Supreme Court ordered nine uninhabited houses recently built on private Palestinian land to be demolished. The remainder of the outpost, including a synagogue, playground, and cramped trailer homes inhabited by about 35 families—was not affected.

The Palestinians were allowed to leave one by one, and bulldozers were used to clear out the buildings.

"There seems no way to make peace with people who believe that Israel does not exist and that the outposts will never be dismantled," Olmert said.

With determination against settlers who were injured in the elbow. One settler who was injured in the elbow.

The West Bank was seen as a test for Olmert, who has said he would act with determination against settlers violating the law.

During the daylong operation, the rios, most of them young Orthodox Jews, including girls, pelted police with eggs, rocks, sand, and paint-filled balloons from their rooftops.

Police burst into the homes, climbing ladders and firing in the shoves of bulldozers to reach the rioters. The protesters beat the police with sticks and set fires on the rooftops.

The military said 32 people were arrested at the scene along with "dozens of other rios" in the area.

The West Bank battle was a likely harbinger of what lies ahead if Israel decides to leave other parts of the West Bank. Acting Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, who is the front-runner in the March 28 Israeli elections, is widely expected to withdraw from more areas of the territory and dismantle additional Jewish settlements if he wins.

Olmert has said he is ready to make painful territorial concessions as part of a negotiated peace agreement, but he has signaled he will act unilaterally if an accord is not possible.

The likelihood of unilateral action including limited withdrawals meant to boost Israeli security—has grown since the victory by the militant group Hamas in last week's Palestinian parliamentary elections.

Hamas, which has killed hundreds of Israelis in suicide bombings, has come under intense pressure to change its ways. In the first major challenge to Hamas, Israel forced the transfer of about $45 million owed to the Palestinians while Egypt called on the Hamas group to give up violence.

The Israeli decision deepened a financial crisis for the Palestinian Authority, which said it did not have enough money to meet its monthly payroll. Palestinian officials said they had arranged emergency funding from Arab allies.

The battle over Amona, an Israeli hilltop enclave in the heart of the West Bank, was seen as a test for Olmert, who has said he would act with determination against settlers violating the law.

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Hundreds of protesters watched the melee from afar, occasionally scuffling with lines of riot troops, some on horseback. The houses were cleared out one by one, and bulldozers and large jackhammers knocked down the buildings.

Israel's rescue service said 219 people were wounded, including 150 people in moderate to serious condition.

At a field clinic, people milled around, their heads wrapped in bandages and blood splattered on their shirts. Corpses were draped on the ground, their arms in slings. Several lay motionless on the ground, necks in stretchers being taken away by ambulances.

Samuel Greenwald, an 18-year-old seminary student from Jerusalem who was holed up in one of the homes, accused police of using excessive force and of committing human rights abuses.

"They tore me on the back, no questions asked," he said through a interpreter. "They just came in swinging," he said through a interpreter.

Among the wounded were more than 50 police officers, one with serious head injuries. Two Israeli nationalist lawmakers who support the settlers.

Amona is one of dozens of illegal West Bank outposts established by Jewish settlers since the 1990s to prevent Israel from leaving any territory to the Palestinians. Under the U.S.-backed "road map" peace plan, Israel has pledged to remove about two dozen outposts.

Settlers and their extremist rein­forcements vowed to fight to the death. "There is no resistance, the withdrawal will continue," said Uriel Shih, an 18-year-old Black Mask leader who was injured in the elbow.

Settlers and their backers say all of the West Bank belongs to the Jews.

Iran and Hamas reject Bush's call for change; many Europeans praise him for energy initiatives
Outdoor Gunn
continued from page 16
International Olympic Committee. Men and women's snowboard half-pipe, snowboard cross and snowboarding parallel giant slalom.

What does this all mean in the grand scheme of things? The advancement of all 13 Winter X events to levels never before seen is real.

When I was growing up, the X Games were new and hardly familiar. Any notion that athletes were pulling were far less difficult than the tricks that athletes in all disciplines are pulling today.

One only has to look at the X Games as the main contributing factor in the popularity explosion of alternative sports around the world.

The X Games not only force athletes to push the envelope in order to make the cut, but it has also inspired the legitimacy of numerous sports that were formerly more like expressions of rebellion than competitive sports.

In a way, one might think that the X Games has made it possible for kids that are not gifted in a traditional sport—sense to find their niche in the athletic community.

Essentially, the expansion of the alternative sports gives kids a chance to break stereotypes, become focused and, in some cases, achieve high levels of success. At the very least, the X Games have given kids around the country and the world, inspiration.

In 10 years, heroes have emerged, barriers have been shattered, stereotypes have been broken down and a world community has been formed.

Chris Gunn is a journalist senior and associate sports editor. You can e-mail him at chris@ESPnOL.com.

Snow safety
continued from page 15

"Assume that there are dangerous people on the mountain because there are," Boyer added. "You have to not only watch out for your own safety, but realize there are other people on the mountain.

"That's often the most dangerous aspect of the mountain," he said. "Not the terrain, but other people. You get a lot of skiers and snowboarders getting in over their heads, and become sort of a normal coming down the mountain. They'll pose the biggest hazard to other people.

Also, before heading to the mountain, Boeger says, "Know before you go. Know the weather, make sure your equipment is checked out, know the responsibility code" he said. "Maybe having radios is good idea to stay in contact with the other people you go with at all times. Make meeting points and rendezvous points. Stay hydrated and ski within your ability. Start off small, then go big."
Snowbound safety

James Mellor

James Mellor

In the afternoon of my first day of snowboarding, I started to get a little cocky.

"It's time to start hitting some jumps," went through my 10-year-old brain.

I saw a little kicker along the edge of the trail and headed toward it. A spurt of adrenaline at the last second slowed me down so much I barely had enough speed to make it to the lip of the jump. I became airborne, I fell face first into the snow, but my board's momentum carried through until it hit the back of my head.

Luckily, the ski patrol didn't have to escort me off the mountain to the nearest hospital, but there was a massive bump emerging from my skull and I had a pounding headache.

Snowboarding and other snow sports are dangerous activities that cause many injuries every winter.

Chris Boyer, a wilderness Emergency Medical Technician on the Ski Patrol at Sierra Summit, said he sees a lot of inexperienced skiers who try to ski outside their abilities.

"This brings a lot of injuries down the hill," he said.

The most common injury Boyer said he sees occurs when, "People fall with an extended arm, causing their shoulder to dislocate," he said.

"We see a lot of fractures, broken collar bones, wrist injuries — especially snowboarders in the terrain park, and knee injuries."

A completely fractured wrist is the worst injury Boyer said he has seen. "The ulna and the radius, which are the bones in the forearm, were protruding out of the skin. This guy had a compound fracture on the underside of his wrist," he said.

"We also had a young girl who was skiing out of control and had an accident," Boyer added. "The snow mobile cut her forehead and you could see a piece of her forehead. That was pretty nasty."

"One of the busiest days we had all season was on a real icy day, and it was sunny, so it was hard to see the ice," Boyer said. "We saw about 30-plus incidents go on that day. That's usually the maximum number we'll have on a busy day. The average is anywhere from 10 to 15."

At Clown Medical Center, the closest hospital to Sierra Summit, patient representative Eduardo Navarro said he sees around 10 injuries a day when there are good conditions after a storm. However, he has seen up to seven people injured in only 20 minutes.

"The type of conditions you want to look out for include days where it's super cloudy. That's what does it make it difficult to see the terrain and features," Boyer said.

"You want to look out for the really sunny days in the afternoon where it gets shady," Boyer said. "We call it 'snow snakes,' where you'll be skiing and then it's like you get attacked out of the blue. Your ski stops, but your body keeps going."

That causes a lot of knee injuries," Boyer said. "Also, they said to be cautious in hitting conditions as well. "Ice is hard, it's like hitting cement," he said. "We get a lot of concussions on icy days.

Snow sport activities are a lot of fun for many people and there are certainly ways to prevent injuries from occurring.

Some words of advice Boyer would give to beginners is to get a lesson and know the responsibility code on the back of the lift ticket.

Specific things he said to be aware of are where to stop and to look out for skiers below you. see Snow safety, page 16

A bright, here is the situation:

You sit quietly, fingers clasped in your lap, thinking about the sequence: Pick up some speed, drop in to the pipe, jump over the first wall, grabbing mute and setting up for the next wall where you spitz it up with a front side 720 and stump it. Keep up your speed, the next wall approaches and you launch into a switch 540 followed by a backside 540 on the opposite wall. Your run is almost done, but before you call it quits you throw a McTwist, a giant 360 on a front side 1080.

The snow is falling all around you, as you imagine each movement and slip into a state of complete focus. The crowd noise is deafening, cameras are flashing but it does not matter, because you know why you are here, and you have been preparing for this moment since the first time you strapped on a snowboard and felt the exhilaration of coasting freely on a soft blanket of snow. You were born for this, and the Winter X Games have given you the opportunity to show your skills in competition against some of the best athletes in the world.

Ten years ago, the Winter X Games were born with the intention of exposing alternative sports to audiences on a global level. Before that, it was just a pipe-dream shared by winter sports enthusiasts around the globe.

Last week, Winter X Games 10 was held Jan. 29 through Jan. 31 at Buttermilk Mountain in Aspen, Colo. The event showed the world how much competitive alternative sports have grown from a pipe-dream to a flat-out reality, since its debut in the early '90s.

The event was broadcast over the course of 15 hours of live programming and 17 hours of total original programming to over 190 countries around the world, according to ESPN.

The X Games have become an international hub for alternative sports and have influenced the increased presence of alternative sports like snowboarding in the world spotlight.

In 1999, these Winter X events were recognized by the see Outdoor Gunn, page 15