Nipomo — Sheila Kearns had a Christmas tree delivered to her home on Sunday. She says she thought she’d been pricked by pine needles when she reached into the tree while decorating it. But the next morning, she found a bat hanging upside down in her home.

It turns out that the Christmas tree farm Kearns bought from keeps bats around for pest control and that one unwittingly hitched a ride to her home.

Animal control officials picked up the bat, which tested negative for rabies.

Kearns got a tetanus shot and some antibiotics, but says she’s not fazed. She says she’ll keep buying her trees from the same farm.

Not all students aware of hookahs dangers
Geoff Johnson
THE CALIFORNIA AGUC (U.C. DAVIS)

DAVIS, Calif. — Hookahs, with a rich history dating back to the 1600s, have become popular with youth in the United States. Hookahs are generally used to smoke fruit-flavored tobacco that is made with molasses and fruit extract, although they can also be used to smoke marijuana or various other herbs.

One former University of California at Davis student, Malik, who declined to give his first name, said although various substances could be smoked with a hookah, the fruit-flavored tobacco offers an alternative to illegal substances. Local hookah use has been increasing since 2001, he said.

Malik cautioned against rampant use and warned that “it’s still very bad for you.”

Those who smoke incessantly, Malik said, are prone to sickness.

Another former hookah owner suggested that the appeal lies in the effects of the tobacco.

“You get light-headed off the (carbon dioxide),” senior history major Justin Barron-Wheaton said.

Wheaton said he is no longer fond of hookahs use and has, in fact, given his pipe away. Wheaton noted that his own distance aside, hookah use has been growing among students.

see Hookah, page 2
Local briefs

SAN LUIS OBISPO — A Cal Poly student hit a 40-year-old motorcyclist early Tuesday morning, police reported.

Jeffrey Carroll, an architectural engineering freshman, was traveling on Santa Rosa Street from Islay Street when he hit Rene Johl of San Luis Obispo with his Toyota pickup truck shortly after 8 a.m., a San Luis Obispo Police Department press release said.

Though Johl was wearing a helmet, he suffered trauma to his upper body upon impact and was taken by ambulance to Sierra Vista Emergency Room for further assessment, authorities said.

CAL POLY — Student-made holiday cards will be on sale Thursday in the University Union. The cards were designed and printed by students in the graphic communication department's Shakespeare Press Museum on antique letter- press-style presses. The card designs vary from traditional to modern and feature envelopes and embellishments.

CAL POLY — In response to the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the solar panels installed on the Engineering West roof, the Empower Poly Coalition will rally students to learn more about renewable energy on Thursday.

The coalition and several other campus clubs, such as the BioDiesel Club and Poly Greens, will feature games, activities and show their efforts toward making Cal Poly more sustainable.

The clubs will be on Dexter Lawn from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., and the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the solar panels will take place at 11 a.m., also on Dexter Lawn. Scheduled to speak at the event are President Warren Baker and representatives from Empower Poly, Associated Students Inc., PG&E and more.

Compiled by the Mustang Daily staff

Frites

continued from page 1

come from drinking down the street.”

There's no doubt about the late night feature that takes in the European delight, with Downtown Brewing Co. only a couple doors away.

Open for a little under two weeks, O'Toole said business is better than what the family expected.

To give Bel Frites a try, the shop is located at 1127 Garden St. Hours of operation are Tuesday through Wednesday from noon to 9 p.m.; Thursday from noon to midnight; Friday and Saturday from noon to 2:30 a.m.; and Sunday from noon to 6 p.m.

Hookah

continued from page 1

"I guess it has a lot to do with it being so cool now," he said.

The devices are usually about three feet tall — the size and shape of a thin lamp — and are built with a mixture of glass and metal parts. On the bottom lies a water chamber to cool the smoke, and from it one or several felt-laden tubes extend to the mouthpiece from which users inhale.

Adrienne Cheung, student coordinator for the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Treatment and Prevention program at UC Davis, cautioned that the cooling of the smoke does not make it safer to smoke.

"People think it's not as addictive because you're smoking it through water, but hookah users have a higher rate of long cancer," she said.

Cheung said the dangers of smoking hookah are actually worse than those associated with smoking cigarettes. The charcoal involved in hookah use means users are inhaling carbon monoxide, she said.

"Hookah smoke has higher concentrations of nicotine, tar, carbon monoxide and heavy metals (than cigarettes)," Cheung said.

Cheung advised that those who choose to smoke despite the risks should not share because the smoke has the same chemicals normally used on airplanes.

But for its 40th anniversary Sunday, officials think the 4.4-foot-high goat — a centuries-old yule tradition — will survive unscathed. The 43-foot-high goat — a centuries-old yule symbol that preceded Santa Claus as the bringer of gifts to Swedish homes — has been burned down 22 times since it was first set up in Gothenburg square on Dec. 3, 1966.

But for its 40th anniversary Sunday, officials think they have finally outsmarted the resourceful vandals by dousing the battered ram with flame-resistant chemicals normally used on airplanes.

THE BIZARRE

Swedes protect giant straw Christmas goat

STOCKHOLM, Sweden — For 40 years it has been torched, vandalized, had its legs cut off and even been run over by a car. But officials in the Swedish city of Gothenburg are guaranteeing that this year's giant straw Christmas goat — the victim of Sweden's most violent yule tradition — will survive unscathed.

The 43-foot-high goat — a centuries-old yule symbol that preceded Santa Claus as the bringer of gifts to Swedish homes — has been burned down 22 times since it was first set up in Gothenburg square on Dec. 3, 1966.

But for its 40th anniversary Sunday, officials think they have finally outsmarted the resourceful vandals by dousing the battered ram with flame-resistant chemicals normally used on airplanes.
I've done it for a while. It's a social thing."

"No, it's bad for my voice and I'm a music major."

NYC health board bans artery-clogging trans fats at restaurants

Sara Krugler
ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK — The Board of Health voted Tuesday to make New York the nation's first city to ban artery-clogging artificial trans fats at restaurants.

The ban, which passed the ban unanimously, did give restaurants a light break by relaxing what had been considered a tight deadline for compliance. Restaurants will be barred from using most frying oils containing artificial trans fats by July 2008 and will have to eliminate the artificial trans fats from all of their foods by July 2009.

But restaurant industry representatives called the ban burdensome and unnecessary.

"We don't think that a municipal health agency has any business banning a product the Food and Drug Administration has already approved," said Dan Fleishler, a spokesman for the National Restaurant Association.

Health Commissioner Thomas Farley said recently that officials seriously weighed complaints from the restaurant industry, which argued that it was unrealistic to give them six months to replace cooking oils and shortenings and 18 months to phase out the ingredients altogether.

The ban contains some exceptions; for instance, it would allow restaurants to serve foods that come in the manufacturer's original packaging.

Trans fats are believed to be harmful because they contribute to heart disease by raising bad cholesterol and lowering good cholesterol at the same time. Some experts say that makes trans fats worse than saturated fat.

Mayor Michael Bloomberg, who banned smoking in bars and restaurants during his first term, is somewhat health-obsessed, and even maintains a weight-loss competition with one of his friends in order to stay slim.

He has dismissed cries that New York is crossing a line by trying to legislate diets.

"Nobody wants to take away your french fries and hamburgers — I love those things, too," he said recently. "But if you can make them with something that is less damaging to your health, we should do that."

Many food makers have stopped using trans fats on their own, after the Food and Drug Administration began requiring companies to list trans fat content on labels.

Fast-food restaurants and other major chains were particularly interested in the board's decision on Tuesday, because for these companies, a trans-fat ban wouldn't just involve substituting one ingredient for another. In addition to overhauling recipes, they have to disrupt nationwide supply operations and try to convince customers that the new french fries and doughnuts will taste just as good as the originals.

Already, McDonald's Corp. has been quietly experimenting with more than a dozen healthier oil blends but has not committed to a full switch. At an investor conference last month, CEO Jim Skinner said the company is making "very good progress," it developing an alternative, and vowed to be ready for a New York City ban.

Wendy's International Inc. introduced a zero-trans fat oil in August and Yum Brands Inc.'s KFC and Taco Bell said they also will cut the trans fats from their kitchens.

Taco Bell worked for more than two years to find a substitute, conducting blind consumer taste tests and extensive research, the company said.

Chicago is also considering its own trans fat law, which wouldn't ban them outright but would severely restrict the amount that kitchens can use. The measure would apply only to large restaurants, defined as those that make more than $20 million in sales per year.

New York's move to ban trans fats has mostly been applauded by health and medical groups, although the American Heart Association warns that if restaurants aren't given ample time to make the switch, they could end up reverting to ingredients high in saturated fat, like palm oil.
Robert Burns
WASHINGTON — Robert Gates, the White House choice to be the next defense secretary, conceded Tuesday that the United States is not winning the war in Iraq and warned that if that country is not stabilized in the near future or two it could lead to a "regional conflagration."

At a Senate confirmation hearing that was long on praise for Gates and short on criticism, the man President Bush chose to replace Donald H. Rumsfeld said he is open to new ideas about correcting the U.S. course in Iraq. He said the war would be his highest priority if confirmed as expected.

Gates, 63, said he believes Bush wants to see Iraq improve to the point where it can govern and defend itself, while seeking a new approach: "What we are now doing is not satisfactory," Gates said.

"In my view, all options are on the table, in terms of how we address this problem in Iraq," he added. He did not commit to favoring any specific new course, saying he would consult first with commanders and others.

Asked point-blank by Sen. Carl Levin, D-Mich., whether the U.S. is not winning the war in Iraq, Gates replied, "No, sir." He later said he believes the United States is not winning the war in Iraq — something that put Democrats back in control of both houses of Congress.

"Our course over the next year or two will determine whether the American and Iraqi people and the next president of the United States will face a slowly but steadily improving situation in Iraq and in the region or will face the very real and possible reality of a regional conflagration," Gates said.

Gates has repeatedly rejected the idea of a quick U.S. withdrawal from Iraq and said he wants to keep U.S. forces there until Iraq is able to govern and defend itself without being a haven for terrorists.

"It seems to me that the United States is going to have to have some kind of presence in Iraq for a long time ... but it could be with a dramatically smaller number of U.S. forces than are there today," Gates said.

Meanwhile, Bush had an in-person preview of a prestigious blue-ribbon panel's recommendations for a new way forward in Iraq. Talking to reporters, Snow said that commission chairman James A. Baker III merely gave a glancing briefing and did not leave the report behind.

Gates, who served on the commission until his nomination was announced by Bush on Nov. 8, said he did not know what the panel would recommend.

"It's my impression that frankly there are no new ideas on Iraq," he said.

There has been little sign that Democrats, poised to take control of Congress in January, will block Gates, and a vote by the full Senate is expected by Friday.

Gates said at one point that "long-term stability in Iraq will be influenced by Syria and Iran" and that the U.S. government should "take some very aggressive steps to prevent them from being constructive. How do we do that, I don't have any specific ideas at this point."

Of al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden, he said: "The way we'll catch bin Laden eventually, in my view, is that just as in the case of Saddam Hussein, one of his people will turn him in."
Iran blocks access to video-sharing Web site YouTube.com

Allak Dareini  Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran — Iran has blockaded access to the popular video-sharing Web site YouTube.com, and a media rights group warned Tuesday that Internet censorship in the Islamic state is on the rise.

Internet users who tried to call up the YouTube site Tuesday were met with the message, "On the basis of the Islamic Republic of Iran laws, access to this Web site is not authorized — which appears on numerous pornographic and video Web sites the government blocks.

It was not known how long the site had been off line on Iran's Web blacklists. The Paris-based media rights group Reporters Without Borders said YouTube had been blocked for the past five days.

Iran’s Shite cleric-run government regularly blocks opposition Web sites, including blogs, and the number of sites that bring up the "unauthorized" message has been increasing over the past year. Western news sites, however, are generally available.

Videos from the Mujahedeen-e-Khalq and other Iranian opposition groups have been posted on San Bruno, Calif.-based YouTube.com, along with clips of the armed forces chief credited with downing the capital and putting the끄 running of this country.' ‘

In his declaration, Bainimarama said the takeover, like the previous three coups, has its roots in the ethnic divide between the descendants of ancient Melanesian warrior tribes and those of European and Indian origins.

Bainimarama, who was named from a group of some powers of the president and was using them to dismiss Prime Minister Laisenia Qarase. In the 2000 coup, Bainimarama set up an interim government and hand-picked Qarase, a former banker, to lead it.

"We are acting alone or part of a plot. The armed forces are deferring to our leader, an army general," he said.

Bainimarama said Qarase is "the visionary who helped transform Los Angeles from a coastal pueblo into a metropolis by building a 240-mile stretch of the Owens River, which was a rushing stream generations ago before the aqueduct diverted its flow and reduced it to a pathetic trickle.

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A man who was beaten by other inmates while in jail will receive a $44,000 settlement, the Los Angeles County claims board decided.

The board decided Monday to pay Anthony White should have been segregated from the general population of the jail.
Students show off their grooves

Amy Dierdorff

"Another Type of Groove" was created five years ago by Mark Fabian, former director of the Multicultural Center on campus, with the mission of building an authentic sense of community and generating knowledge about the uniqueness of individuals and different cultures. The event is funded by Student Life and Leadership.

"Another Type of Groove" is held on campus at 7:30 p.m. on the first Thursday of every month. It consists of open mic poetry and a different featured poet each month.

"Call Po'ly's open mic poetry event has attracted the nation's top poets including World and National Slam champions, countless local and national Slam champions and HBO Def Poets. "We have had the best poets in the world come here," Middletstadt said.

The featured poet in November was Joe Hernández-Koksi, also known as "Pocho Joe." He is a spoken word poet who has performed on HBO's "Russell Simmons Presents Def Jam Poetry" and has developed and toured for his own hip-hop solo show, "You Wanna Piece of Me." He currently hosts "Downbeat Groove." He has performed at many different colleges across the United States, but says that he loved the atmosphere and community on "Another Type of Groove" the most.

"This is one of the best vibes I've had," he said. "Creating a comfortable atmosphere for students to share their poetry and staying true to their catch phrase, "Open mic. Open minds." is a priority of the coordinators for "Another Type of Groove." The venue has attracted approximately 100 students each month, and even some faculty, staff and community members.

Perry, a first time open mic poet at November's event, believes it's very important for students, especially freshmen living in the dorms, to have a place like "Another Type of Groove." Perry, an open mic poet and creative writing major at Cal Poly, came to the event to share his poetry and "shopping and have open dialogue.

"It was so comfortable, warm and friendly. This is the only outlet for students and it's something that should never die. I'm definitely coming back," Perry said.

"Another Type of Groove" will hold their next open mic night tomorrow at 7:30 p.m.

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Stefani's 'Sweet Escape' CD gives toothache

Rosanna Hadadi

"Another Type of Groove" was released Tuesday and strays far from her original sounds in No Doubt. Gwen Stefani's second solo CD, "The Sweet Escape" was released after all. "Hollaback Girl" was an act of stomp genius. But on "The Sweet Escape," Stefani's new and catchy, inducing pop sensibility has ruined nearly everything that made her unique, warping her into a caricature of her former self. Yes, nearly all of the fifteen songs on the album are distastefully catchy and will get tons of radio airplay.

Yet the proverbial path of Stefani, what make her an iconic balance between very gritty- ness and clever intelligence — has disappeared as she has chosen style over substance for "The Sweet Escape." The ingenious blend of musical styles that made Stefani's her work with No Doubt genre-shattering and her solo albums, "Love. Angel. Music. Baby.**, acceptable has taken a painful toll on her singing skills and overproduced beats by The Neptunes on this album. Too often, "The Sweet Escape" sounds like Fergie's "The Dutchess," which comes with a chintzy scratching option: If Fergie made a career out of pretending to be a trashier Stefani, now who is copying whom? Unfortunately she has. Although now 37 years old, happily married to Gavin Rossdale — the former singer for the post-grunge band Bush and the mother of Baby boy, Kingston, Stefani still has a need to copy and imitate sounds about heartbreak and romantic tiffs. Back when Stefani was No Doubt, such lyrics were believable, expressed of a single rock star who was yearning for a meaningful relationship after she has left Stefani. "Love. Angel. Music. Baby." is the new wave, danced to the regretting and her solo album, "Love. Angel. Music. Baby.**

Over the years, Gwen Stefani fans have gotten used to the star constantly reinventing herself — personally loved the ska, tolerated the new wave, danced to the reggae and hoped the posse of Harajuku girls couldn't cripple the some-times-singer of No Doubt after all.

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Stay Fab: Heat up winter with sexy style

Natalie King

This is a fabulous moment for fash- ion: A divine fusion of ladylike luxury and sexy glamour is streaming down the runways and into our closets. The mood behind this season's fashion is "innate glamour," like the liquid eyeliner to create a seductive look. For style inspiration, think mod- elling- turned-virgin singer and Brigitte Bardot: Glamorous tousled hair, wine-colored glossy lips, pouty lips, and an assortment of liquid eyeliner to create a seductive yet effortless look.

Many of the following dresses, sexy bustiers, and opulent jewelry is the major fashion houses. But you can chise-up your look by pairing the boot with curve leggings, an oversized wrap, and Jackie O-style sunglasses. For style inspiration, think mod- elling- turned-virgin singer and Brigitte Bardot: Glamorous tousled hair, wine-colored glossy lips, pouty lips, and an assortment of liquid eyeliner to create a seductive yet effortless look.
ViewDo: The future of how-to

Katherine Tiffin

Have you ever been so frustrated with something and wished there was a tool at your fingertips to help you figure it out? Well, now there is. Viewdo.com is a free site with "how-to" videos for portable devices like iPods and cell phones, and contains everything from how to fit an egg into a milk bottle to the art of beer pong.

ViewDo.com, which is growing in popularity around the world, was founded by two Cal Poly graduates, Gordy Wray and Kathrene Tiffin. Wray graduated from Cal Poly in 2002 with a degree in architectural engineering and co-founder Alan Puccinelli in 2001 with a degree in industrial technology.

"We (the site) have about 20,000 videos right now with over 3,000 registered users," Wray said. "We made probably 30 or 40 of those and the rest are all coming from outside sources."

The site was first launched in July 2006 after Puccinelli had an epiphany in January. Wray said, "He was trying to install an iPod converter into his car...he thought if he had a video on how to take apart his dash it would be helpful."

"(I thought) this would be really nice if there was a video I could have on my iPod rather than have to run back and forth from the computer to my car," Puccinelli said. "It kind of started as a hobby idea and then I kind of took the idea a step further."

People have responded to the site quite favorably. Puccinelli said, "I think everybody is always happy to have some insight on how to do something."

The site is open to anyone looking to put together videos or wanting to upload a video of their own, the only requirement is that it's how-to based and not a health threat or illegal.

"The majority of the content on the site is provided by enthusiastic amateurs looking to gain Internet notoriety and corporate content providers looking to gain brand exposure," Wray wrote in an e-mail. "Everyone knows how to do something, and we would love to have some Cal Poly knowledge shared with the world."

"We look for enthusiastic amateurs as well as experts," Wray said. "We welcome all types of production content, whether it's a single shot made on a digital still camera into movie mode, or people who have more expensive editing to put different videos together for us."

The site also includes 14 DoPartments, which separate the videos into categories ranging from arts and crafts to tips and tricks. Wray said that their education DoPartment is growing and hopes that the site will eventually become a tool for students who need to do projects. Students could come up with a how-to topic, present it to their class in video form and then submit it on the site. Wray wrote, "This would give students an opportunity to refine their public speaking skills, get some film and editing experience and have something lasting to show for it."

Another feature the site offers is a request tab. Users can request videos they would like information on and then other users can search through the requests and make videos for them. Wray explained, "Like a picture is worth a thousand words, a ViewDo's worth a thousand pictures."

For more information visit www.viewdo.com or send questions or comments to mail@viewdo.com.
Candace Raw  THE ORACLE (A U. SOUTH FLORIDA)

"The Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest" two-disc DVD set includes a treasure trove of special features that add to the overall experience of the movie.

The audio commentary by writers Ted Elliott and Terry Rossio is surprisingly interesting because they mention trivia that the casual viewer might fail to notice, such as foreshadowing. They clearly clarify a few facts about the plot that could have been confusing.

"I wonder if we should have made that clear — that if you control the chest, you can tell Davy Jones to do whatever you want and in that way you control the sea?" asked one of the writers.

The bloopers are airy and funny, and show that Johnny Depp stays in character even after a mistake.

There are a few Easter eggs on the second disc, such as a short documentary on the film's coconut picker, also known as the coconut man, who makes sure there are no loose coconuts that could injure the cast and crew during filming.

The documentaries are informative and entertaining most of the time. "Charting the Return" is a video diary of the pre-production of the film, where the drama of not having a finished script four months before shooting unfolds.

According to Play is a documentary of the filming and is filled with interviews and behind-the-scenes footage. It starts with the Stefani, will.i.am for Fergie traveling to the tropical islands, and ends when the crew and cast are saying their goodbyes. The stress and frustration of making a high-budget movie is captured in the segments on getting through hurricanes and difficult terrain, and makes the viewer more appreciative of the film. There are a few shots of the filming of the next movie, "Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End," which was filmed at the same time as "Dead Man's Chest."

Other features include "Captain Jack: From Head to Toe," where Johnny Depp, his costume designer Penny Rose, and others explain Jack's ensemble from the infamous hat down to the boots. "Mastering the Blade" follows the sword fighting experiences of Orlando Bloom, Keira Knightley and Jack Davenport. Another documentary, "Meet Davy Jones: Anatomy of a Legend," is about the mythology and development of the live-actor and 3-D computer generated Davy Jones.

However, the multiple hours of special features may have included too many obscure technical details. For instance, the footage and interviews of moving equipment from location to location are too much information. Also, during the commentary, the writers bring up older scenes that have actually been cut in editing.

Overall, the DVD gives fans just enough of a "Pirates" fix to last until the release of the next movie, scheduled for May 2007.

"The Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest" was released Tuesday on DVD. It includes a two-disc set which features commentary from the writers as well as bloopers and several mini-documentaries. The DVD also gives a sneak peak into the next addition, "Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End," which is out in theaters May 25, 2007.

Stefani continued from page 6

Two disappointing little dirty about how her cell phone's constant static symbolizes her lackluster connection with a romantic interest? "The Ordinary World," blah, blah, blah.

The majority of the rest of the album follows along the same one-dimensional vein of faux-rap, shallow lyrics and bass-heavy beats. Songs like "Orange County Girl" embody this horrible formula to a T: Stefani basically speaks her lyrics — to call it "rapping" would do actual hip-hop artists a grave injustice — about how she's just an "ordinary girl" living in her "extraordinary world." Blah, Blah, Blah.

The thing is, Stefani has already made this song; it was called "Just a Girl," it came out in 1995 and it was a million times better than this. Every has a looping clap-and-drum instrumentation (Stefani calls the music "disco Tetris," but it sounds stolen from Lady Sovereign's "Love Me or Hate Me"), a bad faux-rap delivery, a featured stint from prominent rappers — Pharrrell for crew getting shot — and the pathetic parallels go on and on. The only good part of this song is the unprecedented techno break-down toward the song's end, accentuated by power-tool sounds and horror-themed keyboards; even Italian techno genius Benny Benassi would be proud.

Sure, there are some songs that aren't complete embarrassments to Stefani's legacy. "Don't Get It Twisted" has an entrancing circus-up scenes or stories that had been cut in editing; any "Pirates" fan would have loved to have actually seen those.
An end to the reign of oil

The world is faced with a set of challenges now that are unlike any faced before. There are new and exacerbating diseases, state-sponsored internecine tensions, problems with fossil fuel dependence and weapons of mass destruction in the hands of defiant dictators. Many of these problems will take the cooperation of dozens of foreign governments to fully combat, which is why adept worldwide diplomacy will be a necessity in the 21st century.

With that said, our prevailing dependence on fossil fuels is one major problem that can be addressed entirely at home. We have the technology, the resources and the public support to achieve energy independence in a few decades. We are the only group, it seems to me, that has not truly grasped the enormity of the oil crisis.

Energy independence is not only for the well-funded oil producing countries, and it is not just a pipe dream of marginalizing environmentalists. It is possible and may be found in the fuel we know as ethanol. Ethanol is a plant derivative that is traditionally manufactured from sugarcane and corn. Cellulose ethanol can also be produced more efficiently from cornstarch, switchgrass, and many other common agricultural leftovers. It is non-toxic, water-soluble and quickly biodegradable. This fuel can be produced in the United States and has the potential to add thousands of new productive American jobs to our already overburdened heartland.

The beauty of ethanol over a futuristic, dream-like oil is that we have the technology now. Cornstarch ethanol is being pro­duced as we speak and cellulose ethanol production is improving at an exponential rate. We also have the infrastructure now because ethanol can be blended and widely used in our current fleet of cars, tanker trucks, tanks and pumps up the Middle East. Western nations shell out billions and billions of dollars every year to perpetuate totalitarian theocracies like Iran, and socialist dictators like Hugo Chavez. In many cases, we are at the mercy of our biggest enemies who control access to our worst addiction.

We should look to Brazil, who solved its dependence on foreign oil in just 30 years and is now the country we all turn to run on ethanol as well as being a major exporter of the fuel. This energy independence would allow us to stretch our 7.5 percent as well as being a major exporter of the fuel. This energy independence would allow us to stretch our 7.5 percent

getting it off your chest!

Send your opinions, rants and raves to MUSTANGDAILYOPINIONS@GMAIL.COM or submit your letter to the editor through the improved www.mustangdaily.net

All letters should be 250 words or less and subject to editing for grammar, spelling and style.

A great brownfield is now available for you to build this marvelous new reality in the heart of the United States. As university students who live in the wealthiest nation in the world, we ought to care enough to take action, either through financial donations, with our time, or both. We are empowered to relieve the daily hardships that face billions and to restore human dignity to those who may be the leftovers of the world's poor.

Six years later, the plight of the world's poor is much the same. Thirty-four percent of children in the developing world live without adequate shelter, 31 percent without adequate sanitation and 21 percent without access to clean water, according to the UNICEF 2005 "State of the World's Children Report.

In the world, 1.2 billion people live without access to safe water and 2.6 billion people without sanitation, according to a 2006 United Nations Human Development Report. Half the hospital beds in sub-Saharan Africa are occupied by AIDS patients, according to the Los Angeles Times.

There are many other reports that chart and graph the millions affected by inadequate healthcare, lack of education, disease and oppression. When asked, most would agree that poverty is a problem. But how often do we actually care?

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There are many other reports that chart and graph the millions affected by inadequate healthcare, lack of education, disease and oppression. When asked, most would agree that poverty is a problem. But how often do we actually care?

As university students who live in the wealthiest nation in the world, we ought to care enough to take action, either through financial donations, with our time, or both. We are empowered to relieve the daily hardships that face billions and to restore human dignity to those who may be the leftovers of the world's poor.

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Maddux, Padres close in on 1-year, $10 million deal

Greg Maddux was 6-3 with a 3-30 ERA for the Dodgers this season.

Ronald Blum and Bernie Wilson

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Greg Maddux and the San Diego Padres neared agreement Tuesday night on a $10 million, one-year contract.

The deal for the four-time Cy Young Award winner would contain a $1 million player option for 2008. The price of the option would increase incrementally up to $10 million if Maddux pitches 200 innings.

Agent Scott Boras, without indicating a team, said Maddux's deal "was moving positively ... but not done yet."

Details on Maddux's potential contract with the Padres were disclosed by two people familiar with the talks who spoke in condition of anonymity because no deal had been finalized.

UCSB

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today, and it's a bad day to play a poor game," Salcedo said.

UCSB wasted no time in getting the lead it would never relinquish. In the third minute of the match, midfielder Tyler Rosenlund created space along the touchline and found forward Nick Peters in front of the goal mouth. Peters capitalized on the opportunity to put the Gauchos up 1-0.

UCSB would continue to put loads of pressure on UCLA in the first half, totaling eight shots to the Bruins' three, and controlled the pace and character of the game to its advantage.

"We (normally) like to play around teams," Zaher said. "(But) they started dumping the ball, so we got excited and started dumping the ball. I mean, they have Andy Iro and some big guys back there versus David Estrada and Nakazawa. The air battle was to our disadvantage."

Sunday's championship match was the first game in the NCAA Tournament in which UCLA failed to score three goals, a total that would have given the Bruins the win. The Bruins were pressing for the equalizer literally into the final minute of play, until a Gauchos free kick put the ball deep into their territory with under 10 seconds left.

After the game, the UCLA players sat in the locker room, mentally and physically exhausted and frustrated to come so close to their goal and have to settle for first runner-up.

"To work this hard and play that many games to get second place (is) not what we wanted," Alvarado said.

Frankly

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North Perimeter end of Mott Gym.

Last year, Cal Poly head coach Jon Stevenson painted a picture for me. He told me how the Central Coast was a volleyball mecca. He described a fervent rivalry between Cal Poly and UC Santa Barbara. One time the football team trekked from the football stadium up to Mott Gym immediately following a game so they could watch the volleyball match between Pacific and Cal Poly — and when they got there, it was standing room only.

Team members from the days of the "Magnificent Seven," or so they were nicknamed by a local television news station to mimic the old western flick, recalled volleyball as the hottest ticket on campus at the time. Last spring I spoke with some of the players from the 1984 and 1985 squads at a fundraiser for Carol Tchahar-Daniel, a former All-American at Cal Poly who was the target of a hit-and-run driver. The players were shocked to see such a small crowd — an estimated 500 or so loosely distributed around the gym.

Stevenson was disappointed about the lack of spectators at matches last year and at points during this season. He's old school — a guy who played volleyball at UC Santa Barbara in the 1980s when it was an emerging sport and fans flocked to the gym to watch the matches. He was worried that nobody was paying attention, that his team wasn't being noticed.

Forget the loss. The 2006 Mustangs were worth more than wins and losses. They gave people a reason to watch — a reason to care.

They have ushered in a new era of Cal Poly volleyball.

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Poll voters say they sent Florida to title game to avoid Big 10 rematch

Strength of schedule and winning a conference title were also reasons why the Gators will play Ohio State in the national title game.

Richard Rosenblatt

Avoid a rematch. Stronger schedule. Conference championship. Those were the main reasons cited Monday by many poll voters for jumping Florida over Michigan on their final ballot, setting up a Gators-Buckeyes matchup in the BCS national title game Jan. 8.

“If you beat a team one time, why do they get the national championship over the second time?” said Earl Bruce, the former Ohio State coach who voted in the Harris Intercollegiate poll and moved Florida ahead of Michigan. “I mean, they've already played one time and lost.”

Jim Hoke (12-1), who beat Arkansas to win the Southeastern Conference title on Saturday, moved from fourth to second in the final BCS standings Sunday. The Wolverines (11-3), who lost to the Buckeyes 42-39 on Nov. 18, remained third, while USC dropped to fifth from second after losing to UCLA.

“At the end of the day, Florida won conference championships, Michigan did not,” said Harris poll voter Ray Melick of The Birmingham News. "If you're not in a playoff, I think a conference champion ought to carry more weight than a conference runner-up at the BCS conference level.”

Strength of schedule carried the day.

It was such a big deal for Jim Walden, a former Washington State head coach, that he picked up the No. 1 in the Harris poll, calling Florida's schedule "mendacious." "In my heart of hearts, I believe the neither the Buckeyes nor the Gators could get through Florida's schedule with only one loss.”

Tom Luisi, who voted for Michigan who bumped Florida up to second, said he made his assessment based on Michigan's body of work — not one game. "Michigan has had quality wins over Wisconsin, which played no one, and Notre Dame, which won the Commander-in-Chief trophy (a reference to wins over the service academies) which I don't consider a major cup.”

As for Florida, Luisi noted its weak nonconference schedule "but that doesn't matter when you play every good team in the SEC, and have quality road wins, too.”

Florida played 10 bowl teams and beat six times, including road wins against Tennessee and Florida State, neutral site wins against Georgia and Arkansas and home wins against LSU and Alabama. The Gators lone loss? At Auburn, 27-21.

"Michigan had its shot," said Harris poll voter Joe Biddle of The Tennessean. "If you replacd that game it would be nothing more than a Big Ten championship — and I don't think you get mulligans in college football. "If there's a viable alternative, I stay away from a rematch and I think Florida gives them a viable alternative, "

Jerry Palm, an independent BCS analyst, estimated that 11 of the 13 voters in the Harris poll and 25 of the 62 in the USA Today coaches' poll moved the Gators past the Wolverines. The teams were tied in the computer ratings, the third component of the BCS standings.

The Associated Press media poll is not used in the BCS rankings, but 25 of the 65 AP voters moved Florida ahead of Michigan.

"I'm a great believer in the coaches' poll," said AP voter Scott Breden of The Arizona Republic. "I thought you were supposed to vote the way you feel. One vote wasn't going to make the difference. A bunch of people turned around and flipped and voted Florida ahead of Michigan. For me, it was the fact that they played a 13th game.”

That game, for the conference title, was one that Michigan fans say they want to play. And because it was played two weeks after Michigan's season-ending loss to Ohio State, it bumped Michigan ahead of Florida. "It was more fresh in voters' minds, "

"I had to reconcile a fundamental problem with giving Michigan a chance to win the national championship when it didn't even win a conference championship,” he said.

"At the end of the day, Florida won conference championships, Michigan did not," said Harris poll voter Ray Melick of The Birmingham News. "If you're not in a playoff, I think a conference champion ought to carry more weight than a conference runner-up at the BCS conference level.”

"I kept Michigan second even after they lost to Ohio State, and felt nothing has changed for me since that loss for Florida to jump over them,” said coaches’ poll voter Brian Kelly, the former Central Michigan coach who accepted the Notre Dame job Monday.

David Glazer, Detroit Lions senior vice president who votes in the Harris poll, said he had second thoughts about picking "politicking that people in the media did" trying to steer people away from a rematch. "
The 17th-ranked Gauchos upset Chico State, San Jose State and UCLA to claim the Pacific Coast Division championship at Cal Poly on Nov. 5. Cal Poly won the game 9-6 in overtime. Kyle Reynish made a diving stop on Kyle Seidler's penalty shot, and another UC Santa Barbara (UCSB) shot deflected off of a UCSB player on the edge of the six-yard box. UCSB goalkeeper Kyle Reynolds made a diving stop on defender Mike Zahn's penalty shot, and UCSB forward John Schilling made the save.

The Gauchos broke two streaks Saturday. They are the first unseeded team since Connecticut in 2000 to reach the NCAA tournament, and they beat the Mustangs for the first time since Oct. 30, 1982. The last time the two teams faced each other, at UCSB on Oct. 5, UCSB won 3-1. While UCSC came out looking stronger than it did in its semifinal game, UCSC was the exact opponent the Mustangs battle.

Cal Poly senior water polo standout Ryan Smillie (13) takes aim against UC Davis at the Pacific Coast Championships hosted by the Mustangs. Senior Brian Shilling said, "When we won in 2000, we didn't have a good game. It hurt us. When we won in 2000, we didn't have a good game. It hurt us."

Last year, Cal Poly didn't make it to the National Championships, and placed second in the Pacific Coast Division behind UCLA. The Mustangs had an impressive record, and were named national champions in 2001, 2002 and 2004. This was the season when we wanted to get back into form," said Mix.

No matter what, Mix said, Cal Poly works hard and enjoys water polo.

Before the game, UCLA had a 2-0 lead, but Cal Poly's reply was 2-2. Cal Poly's reply was 2-2. "It's a fun sport to play, and everyone is excited," he said. "The practice is always worth it when you perform well. It's a sport that requires a lot of training just to stay in shape." Shilling, who led the Mustangs in steals this season, said there are unconventional methods of fundraising to support the team's needs.

They put together a 2006-07 academic wall calendar, following the success of their 2004 calendar. It's a mixture of action shots from practices and games and posed photos, humorously featuring the scantily-clad players. As its only source of funding, the team hopes the calendar is fun and attention-grabbing enough to gain support and student support, even though sales have been slow this year.

The calendar is on sale at El Corral Bookstore for $10, and will soon be reduced to $7 for winter quarter.

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