So that we couldn’t claim sexual discrimination, they also decided to close engineering technology.

— Barbara Weber
Former home economics department head

The home economics department was originally a part of the School of Professional Studies. But when the school closed in 1992, the major was reassigned to the College of Agriculture.

Death of a major

As talk of closing the home economics department circulated in 1992, students and faculty members weren’t prepared to say goodbye.

Jackie Pugh
MUSTANG DAILY

The decision to completely phase out the home economics department met resentment from the faculty and students. The chaos caused students to protest and march to President Warren Baker’s office several times in the spring of 1992.

One of the students who protested, Marshawn Porter, a home economics graduate, said the situation was disheartening.

“It was a shock to us, and it was kind of scary because we invested so many years and we weren’t going to be graduating with the major we intended,” Porter said.

At the time, there were students who had just started the program and others who were nearly finished, said Porter, now an Arroyo Grande High School teacher.

Muslim Student Association:
United by faith

Taylor Moore
MUSTANG DAILY

Although Cal Poly lacks diversity, the presence of different cultural and religious clubs like the Muslim Student Association help alleviate the problem.

MSA has been an active club on campus for over 20 years. Much like Campus Crusade for Christ for the Christian students and Hillel for the Jewish students, MSA plays an important role for Muslim students looking to educate themselves and others about Islam and its view and role in the world.

“Many people do not know about Islam so what we do is educate from a Muslim perspective,” said biology major and member of the MSA Board of Directors Naiyerah Kolkailah.

Annual events sponsored by MSA include the Fast-a-Thon and Islam Awareness Week.

Student works to revive black sorority
at University of Utah

Brock Vergakis
ASSOCIATED PRESS

SALT LAKE CITY — Aminatai Yusuf always wanted to be in a sorority. But when she arrived on the University of Utah campus as a freshman in 2002, the kind of sorority she wanted to join — a black one — didn’t exist.

In her final semester, she’s changing that for others. Delta Sigma Theta is becoming the only student-run Greek organization in the state specifically for black students. Her efforts come as the university struggles to maintain minority enrollment proportionate to Utah’s population.

“It’s very easy to spend a whole day on campus and never see another African-American student,” she said. “Membership, it seems the odds are against us.”

That might be an understatement. There are more than 28,000 students at the University of Utah. Of those, 71 were black, female undergraduates last semester.

The school has had a handful of black fraternities and sororities in the past 30 years, but none survived. A Delta Sigma Theta chapter existed from 1996 to 2000, but ceased after its last member graduated. Its membership peaked at eight students — including two from Brigham Young University in Provo, 40 miles
Muslims

continued from page 1

The Fast-a-Thon is one of MSA's biggest events, and not only contributes to the education of fellow students but also helps the local and global community. Every year, MSA holds the Fast-a-Thon during the religious period of fasting, Ramadan. Mikati, an architecture engineering junior, said the club has recently shrunk because several members have graduated last year. Currently, the MSA has 10 to 15 active members in Cal Poly's chapter, which is one of thousands across North America. "One of our goals is to recruit new members and we mostly do it through word of mouth," Mikati said.

The club tries to celebrate Muslim holidays, like Ramadan, together. Ramadan occurs during the month of the Islamic calendar and is a time when Muslims fast from dawn to sunset. One of the most important factors for this religious period is prayer, which members will observe for those who are less fortunate. This year, Ramadan will start in August, said Mikati, president of the club. There are several events that members find people in the local community and on campus to donate to their fasting. After the event, all of the donations go to a local or global cause deemed important to MSA.

Past Fast-a-Thons have donated to the victims of Hurricane Katrina, the South-Asian Earthquake, and to a local food bank. Not only is education a core value of the organization, both nationally and at Cal Poly, but the club also exists to unite Muslim students. "The idea is to come together," Khalil said. "What unites us all is our faith."

As the only Muslim group on campus, MSA feels it has the responsibility to connect Muslim students and bring awareness to diversity at Cal Poly. With a 64.7 percent Caucasian population on campus, according to the Office of Institutional Planning and Analysis, MSA represents one of the ethnic minorities at Cal Poly.

Mikati said that she's never faced discrimination at Cal Poly because of her faith, but said there is a level of ignorance some students carry toward Islam. "It's not done out of hatred," Mikati said of the stereotyping. She added that most students are "open-minded" when she informs them of her religion.

The national organization, MSA National, began in 1963 and became a part of the Muslim Student Association in 1991. Both Muslims and non-Muslims are welcome at MSA events and meetings and are encouraged to come and educate themselves about Islam and the Cal Poly Muslim community.

The first meeting of the quarter will take place tomorrow at 7:30 p.m. at Engineering East building, room 129.

Sorority

continued from page 1

south of Salt Lake City.

Yusuf isexpandant. The size of the sorority isn't important — providing community service, making lifelong bonds and providing a sense of community for black students is, she said.

In African-American culture, the Greek organizations are so important and so big and have such a history, to join another sorority just didn't seem to be an option," she said. "It's such a huge cultural thing."

"Her sorority's first rush period after years of dormancy begins next month. Fraternities and sororities have been on college campuses since the 1860s, but that organization black student weren't allowed. At Howard University in Washington, D.C., the first black sorority, Alpha Kappa Alpha, formed in 1908. After segregation ended, many white Greek organizations refused black students. Unofficially, some still do.

That often unspoken racial discrimination helped spread the establishment of black sororities and fraternities nationwide, entrencing the two different Greek systems on college campuses, especially in the South.

At the University of Arkansas, black students were kept when the first black woman joined a traditionally white sorority there in 2003, said Scott Walters, associate dean of students at the school.

"There was a backlash from our African-American community that was prevalent," he said. "She had some nasty notes left on her car, in the residence hall and on her door." Noise has joined since.

There are some historically black fraternities and sororities on more than 900 campuses. They are governed by their own national organization and have different recruitment processes and traditions than the traditionally white Greek system.

One of "the differences is that ours is a lifetime commitment. The others end at the college level," said Jennifer Carter, Western regional director for the National Pan-Hellenic Council, from Denver.

Some people allow to join after they graduate. That's what Cathy Christian did. She's the University of Utah's Delta Sigma Theta advisor. She graduated in 1986. There was no chapter on campus. She formed a chapter for graduates in 1988.

"We see our college as a training ground. They do public service on the campus and they do the community work, but even as adults we continue. We do even more as we get out of school," she said.

Christie remains active doing community service. It's one of the things that led Yusuf to form a chapter at the University of Utah. But she's also not shy about the importance of her sorority being a black one on a campus that is 78 percent white.

"A goal of ours is to be more visible so other students can see African-American students in a positive light. There's so much negative activity surrounding blackness in media," she said.

While traditionally black fraternities and sororities are open to students of all colors, there's an emphasis on providing academic and social support to a school, city or state's black community.

Some have questioned the idea of all-black sororities or fraternities. While having a black chapter for graduates in 1988.

"People don't understand why there are historically black fraternities and sororities. A lot of the comments I get are, 'Why do you have your own sorority? Isn't that segregation?' People don't understand the history," Yusuf said.

Lorne McDonald, the University of Utah's assistant dean of students, said the organization the school has that are tailored to a specific group, the better. It helps the university with recruitment, particularly with students who have had relatives in black fraternities or sororities.

"We tend to see people seek companionship with people who share our experiences and character. Our existing sororities are very dominant. But they are women of color at all, and I think it's important to have an option for people seeking brotherhood with people who are more like them," she said.

Major

continued from page 1

"Because they never came out and said what they really were going to do that next year, that meant everybody was scared. There were questions that were going to be allowed to go to other major," Porter said.

"(The administration) really thought that the students would just flock to some safe harbors," said Barbara Weber, former home economics department head. "But the Cal Poly students, as they are now, were loyal. They had a student uprising."

Lawrence D. Houglum, the philosophy department chair at the time, argued in a 1992 opinion piece that some would say that home economics should be abolished due to the stereotypical gender roles it would perpetuate. Yet, he further noted the deeper issue that "ultimately has to do with male power and the devaluation of women's work."

"To avoid this underlying belief on the part of some people that the program had no purpose and was not university level, the home economics major was not the only program to have to disappear," she said. "There was no backlash from our African-American community that was prevalent," he said. "She had some nasty notes left on her car, in the residence hall and on her door."

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Major
State

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — A wheelchair-bound man was convicted Monday of two counts of robbery and one count of attempted robbery in a San Francisco stealing spree that spanned two months in 2005, prosecutors said.

Caung Vinh Tran, 35, was arrested in April 2005 at his home wearing a necklace he stole two weeks earlier, according to the San Francisco district attorney's office.

After a three-week trial, the jury also acquitted Tran of one additional count of robbery.

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The California Highway Patrol recommended Monday that actress-singer Brandy be charged with misdemeanor vehicular manslaughter in a freeway crash that killed a woman motorist last month, a city attorney's spokesman told The Associated Press.

A message seeking comment from Brandy's publicist, Courtney Barnes, was not immediately returned. Earlier this month, Barnes issued a statement saying Brandy "wishes to publicly express her condolences to the family of the deceased."

WASHINGTON (AP) — A Democratic senator wants to cut off all Pentagon sales of surplus F-14 parts, saying the military's marketing of the spares "defies common sense" in light of their importance to Iran. Sen. Ron Wyden's bill came in response to an investigation by The Associated Press that found weaknesses in surplus-sale security that allowed buyers for countries including Iran and China to surreptitiously obtain sensitive U.S. military equipment including Tomcat parts.

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Lauren Nelson, an aspiring Broadway star, was crowned Miss America on Monday night, the second year in a row that a Miss America has won the crown.

Nelson, 20, of Lawton, is a student at the University of Central Oklahoma who wants to obtain her master's degree in musical theater.

"I wanted to be Miss America since I was 2 years old and never in my wildest dreams did I think I would be one of those girls on stage and never did I dream I would be Miss America," she said afterward.

EILAT, Israel (AP) — A Palestinian suicide bomber killed three Israelis at a bakery Monday in the first such attack inside the country in nine months, and the two radical groups that claimed to have sent him said they were trying to end weeks of Palestinian infighting by taking aim at Israel instead.

The bombing was praised by the Palestinians' governing Hamas movement as legitimate resistance — a position that was sure to hurt efforts to end a crippling economic boycott imposed by the international community.

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP) — Hugo Chavez has just about everything a president could want: popular support, a marginalized opposition, congress firmly on his side and a booming economy as he starts his second term.

Now, he's about to become even more powerful — the all-preeminent scientific body. He is a two-time winner of the Science Communication Award for print journalism, presented by the nation's premier scientific body. He is a two-time winner of the Science Journalism Award of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (2002 and 1985) and, along with other prizes, has won an adjunct professor at Columbia's Graduate School of Journalism.

The Truth: Our Impact on the Environment

One of America's most honored science writers, Andrew Revkin has spent nearly a quarter century covering subjects ranging from Hurricane Katrina and the Asian tsunami to the assault on the Amazon, from the troubled relationship of science and politics to climate change at the North Pole. He has been reporting on the environment for The New York Times since 1995, a job that has taken him to the Arctic three times in three years. In 2003, he became the first Times reporter to file stories and photos from the sea ice around the Pole. He spearheaded a three-part Times series and one-hour documentary last year on the truth of climate change.

Mr. Revkin has a biology degree from Brown and a master's degree in journalism from Columbia. He has taught environmental reporting as an adjunct professor at Columbia's Graduate School of Journalism.

International

OAKLAND, Calif. — Charges will not be filed against former University of California football star Marshawn Lynch despite an Oakland woman's accusations that he choked, slapped and sexually assaulted her, prosecutors said Monday.

An Alameda County Superior Court judge granted a restraining order Friday to the woman, who described herself in court documents as Lynch's ex-girlfriend. Lynch was not at the hearing.

Lynch, 20, announced earlier this month that he was skipping his senior year at Cal to enter the upcoming NFL draft, where he is expected to be selected in the first round.

But prosecutors said a lack of evidence — including no visible injuries or photographs of injuries, a witness' statement contradicting the accuser and inconsistencies in the woman's own story — meant the case couldn't go forward.

"We have an ethical obligation that we have to prove it beyond a reasonable doubt. And I don't think we can," said Alameda County senior deputy district attorney Kim Hunter.

The Pac-10 Offensive Player of the Year allegedly assaulted the 20-year-old woman on Dec. 13 outside her mother's house in Oakland, according to a civil complaint she filed six days later.

"He said he was going to kill me because no one else can have me," she said in her application for the restraining order.

Lynch forced her into the back of a car, where he slapped her, made her touch his genitals and told the car's driver to take off with her, according to the documents.

"Based upon the information that I'm privy to, including an interview with a third person who was present at the time, those allegations are false," said Lynch's attorney, M. Gerald Schwartzbach.

According to court filings in the application for the restraining order, Lynch was served in mid-January at a gym on Cal's campus with notice of Friday's hearing. But Lynch's lawyer said Lynch could never have received the notice because the star running back was out of the state training at the time.

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Iraqi cult planned attack on top Shiite clerics during religious festival, Iraqi officials say

Kim Gansel

BAGHDAD, Iraq — Iraq's army announced Monday it killed the leading Shiite clerics and pilgrims in a fierce gunbattle in a hotel room in front of the office of Iraq's most senior Shiite spiritual leader, Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, with plans to attack it.

The four-hour battle was ultimately won by Iraqi troops supported by U.S. and British jets and American ground forces, but the ability of a splinter group little known in Iraq to rally hundreds of heavily armed fighters was a reminder of the potential for chaos and havoc emerging seemingly out of nowhere. Members of the group, which included women and children, planned to disguise themselves as pilgrims and kill as many leading clerics as possible, said Maj. Gen. Othman al-Ghaneemi, the Iraqi commander in charge of the Najaf region.

The cult's leader, wearing jeans, a coat and a hat and carrying two pistols, was among those who died in the battle, al-Ghanemi said. Although he went by several aliases, he was identified as Abu Abdullah Zahra Kadim, 37, from Hillah, south of Baghdad, according to Abdul-Hussein Abtan, deputy governor of Najaf. Kadim had been detained twice in the past few years, Abtan said.

The U.S. military said Iraqi security forces were sent to the area Sunday after receiving a tip that gunmen were joining pilgrims headed to Najaf for Ashoura, a commemoration of the 7th-century death of Imam Hussein, grandson of the Prophet Muhammad. The major religious festival culminates on Tuesday.

The gunmen had put up tents in fields lined with date palm groves surrounding Najaf, 100 miles south of the capital. They planned to launch their attack Monday night when Ashoura celebrations would be getting under way, the Iraqi security officers told The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to disclose the information.

In the battle to foil the attack on the pilgrims, Iraqi and U.S. forces faced off against more than 200 gunmen with small arms fire, rocket-propelled grenades and hand grenades, the U.S. military said. The battle took place about 12 miles northeast of Najaf.

The American military said U.S. air power was called in after the Iraqis faced fierce resistance. American ground forces were also deployed after small arms fire downed a U.S. helicopter, killing two soldiers.

U.S. and British jets played a major role in the fighting, dropping 500-pound bombs on the militants' positions, but President Bush said the battle was an indication that Iraqis were beginning to take control.

"My first reaction on this report from the battlefield is that the Iraqis are beginning to show me something," Bush told National Public Radio on Monday.

The U.S. military said more than 100 gunmen were captured but it did not say how many were killed. Iraqi defense officials, by contrast, said 200 militants were killed, 60 wounded and at least 120 captured.

"It seems most likely that this was Shiite-on-Shiite violence, with sectarian cultists making an attempt to march on Najaf during the chaos of the ritual season of Muhammar," Jean Cole, an Islamic scholar at the University of Michigan, said on his Web site. "The dangers of Shiite-on-Shiite violence in Iraq are substantial, as this episode demonstrated."

Ismail Hussein, 48, died in the battle of Karbala in A.D. 680. The battle cemented a schism in Islam between Iraq's Shiite elite, who believe the hidden imam will appear again, al-Fatlawi said, and Sunni clerics, who believe the hidden imam will appear a second time six months ago.

Abtan said they planned first to occupy a major mosque in Najaf, then bombard the police stations and kill the religious leaders.

"They intended to occupy Najaf, then topple the Iraqi government and kill all the great religious leaders," he said.

Some of the gunmen brought their families with them in order to make it easier for them to enter the city, al-Fatlawi said. "The women have been detained," al-Fatlawi said.

Abtan said most of the gunmen who were killed were left on the battlefield and would be taken for burial on Tuesday.

"There were families with them, women and children," he said.

The U.S. military, which turned over provincial control to Iraqi security forces in Najaf last month, touted the operation as a victory for Iraqi forces, singling out their efforts to recover the bodies of two U.S. soldiers killed when their helicopter went down during the fighting.

"This is an example of a promise kept," Brig. Gen. Vincent Brooks, deputy commander of the Multi-National Division — Baghdad and the 1st Cavalry Division, said.

"But I know everything worked just as it should, according to al-Fatlawi.

The gunmen planned to distribute leaflets in Najaf saying that the hidden imam will appear again, al-Ghanemi said. In the tent outside Najaf, moobs found pamphlets titled "Heaven's Judge," according to the senior Iraqi security officers.

Members had gathered on a farm to prepare to launch their attack, Abtan said. They used date-palm groves as cover, forcing some farmers at gunpoint to help them, said al-Fatlawi. Other officials in Najaf said Saddam loyalists bought the groves six months ago.

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Microsoft launches long-awaited Vista operating system with Times Square bash, acrobatics

Jessica Mintz

NEW YORK — Acrobatics, blaring music and plenty of hype accompanied Microsoft Corp's long-delayed debut of its new Windows Vista operating system.

Hours before the software went on sale in New York, dancers clad in Microsoft color dangled from ropes high above street level Monday and unfurled flags to form the red, green, blue and yellow Windows logo against a building wall.

At a swank midtown eatery, speakers pumped out a hit from hip-hop hotspot Snoop Dogg before Steve Ballmer, Microsoft's chief executive officer, took to stage to proclaim, "Vista is the center, the innovation of connected entertainment in the home."

Later, two explosively loud, percussion-heavy rock bands shook the walls and riled up a crowd of early Vista test users, PC and chip-maker employees and others amid flashing lights at the Nokia Theatre — temporarily renamed the Windows Vista Theatre — in Times Square.

"Vista was set to go on sale in 70 countries today, along with new versions of Microsoft Exchange e-mail software and the Flagship Office business suite, which includes Word, Excel and PowerPoint. Several retailers had even scheduled midnight openings.

But unlike the recent launches of new products like Sony Corp.'s PlayStation 3, customers haven't been camping out for days.

"When I look at Windows Vista, I see a technology that is interesting, that is relevant, but to some extent is evolutionary," said Al Gillen, an analyst at the technology research group IDC. "I do not believe it will create a lot of motivation for people to rush out and get a new operating system."

In an interview, Microsoft chairman Bill Gates said the company actually wasn't pushing midnight sales events — after all, the software will be available as a download over the Web for the first time. Even that route will be relatively rarely taken — Ballmer acknowledged that, as in the past, most consumers will switch to Vista only when they buy new computers.

More than five years in the making, Vista was released for businesses Nov. 30, but the unveiling for consumers wasn't until Monday, Jan. 30, 2007. The Redmond, Wash.-based software maker contends that Vista is a huge improvement over previous computing platforms that users inevitably say "Wow" when they see it.

Gates ticked off some examples, such as how Vista presents a slick 3-D graphical user interface and document icons that give a 3-D appearance previews. Gates said the next wow comes when people start using a system-wide search program Microsoft's engineers built into both the operating system and new versions of Office.

Vista comes as changing dynamics of computing — notably the rise of open-source software and Web-based services that replicate what traditionally could be done only on a desktop computer — are threatening Microsoft's dominance in the industry.

But Gates contended that the operating system has a higher profile than ever before, as the PC has morphed from a souped-up typewriter to a networked entertainment center, personal media library and gateway to the Internet.

"When people think about their PC, they think about Windows even more than who the manufacturer is. That determines how you navigate, what the applications are that are available," Gates told The Associated Press.

And in this case Vista has folded in programs that users once bought separately — including automated backup systems and some spamware protections.

Microsoft built Vista so that different layers could be upgraded separately, so it's possible that this is the last massive, all-in-one update for Windows. No matter how Microsoft chooses to roll out Vista's successor, Ballmer said there's still work to be done.

"There's so many areas in which we need innovation. Developers need a richer platform if we're going to get speech, voice, natural language, and more rich 3-D-type graphics into the user interface," Ballmer said. Plus, the technologies around the PC — chip, storage, high-definition DOD will all evolve, he said. "The operating system will need to evolve with them."

"Frankly, we've got a very long list of stuff our engineers want to do, a lot of stuff that the companies here want us to do," he said.

Over the weekend, Dell Inc. started taking orders for PCs with Vista. Kevin Rollins, Dell's chief executive, said the company's Web site saw a 20 percent jump in traffic, with "tens of thousands of copies" of Vista sold for delivery Tuesday or later.

In Tokyo, about 80 people lined up Monday night at the DS(i International Department Store to become among the world's first consumers to own Vista. Celebrities and executives were on hand as a large-screen TV displayed a countdown to the midnight launch (10 a.m. EST).

The second person in line, Fumihiko Koyama, 33, waited three hours and was hoping the new operating system will make his work in Web design easier.

"My expectations are very high for Vista," he said. "I want to try it out because it's new."

For a Tuesday morning store celebration, DSG International PLC's flagship PC World store in central London hired costumed characters, including Sherlock Holmes to signify security and a movie star to emphasize multimedia.

Left, Bill Gates, chairman of Microsoft Corp., introduces the Windows Vista operating software Monday, Jan. 29, 2007, in New York. Below, a dancer scales the wall of a New York building to promote the launch. The software goes on sale today.
Imagine the scene: It’s almost 3 a.m. on Saturday. The Barcelona nightlife is in full swing. People in various states of inebriation are noisily walking down the long, tree-lined La Rambla on their way to the next packed bar or techno-thumping discotheque for a bit of a kick from the curry. The mixture of sweetness and mild spiciness makes the sauce enjoyable, but not too overwhelming. Anyone who likes Indian or Thai food will like this mild form of a curry sauce. It’s definitely a favorite.

For those looking for a creamier, less pungent option, the dill crème fraîche is a safe bet. French for “fresh cream,” the cool, creamy crème fraîche (similar to sour cream but thinner and less sour) is enhanced with a hint of fresh dill.

For those who prefer something fiery, the mustang ranch adobo is a flavorful, spiced-up variation on the classic ranch sauce. Indeed, there are hardly any remnants of that childhood favorite — but in a good way. If you like spicy food with a kick, then I recommend this selection.

Lastly, the roasted garlic honey mustard dipping sauce is a smooth, tangy, garlicky twist on sweet-tasting honey mustard. If you are a fan of conventional honey mustard, then perhaps you should choose another dipping option.

If you’re more of a traditionalist, stick with the free condiments, which include sea salt, Heinz ketchup, malt vinegar and Tabasco sauce. We also tried the barbecue seasoning. It had a nice sweet, smoky flavor; however, compared to the dipping sauces, the seasonings (or at least this seasoning) were lacking. The plain, traditional fries are a better selection. Although limited in space (you have to fight to sit at one of the nine barstools available), Bel Frites is the perfect place to take a quick break and grab a bite to eat while downtown or stop in for a snack while on the go.

The sparsely decorated (though the place is orderly and clean) leaves the ambiance lacking. But what Bel Frites lacks in style they make up for in substance — who cares what the place looks like as long as the food is delicious.

The void in my life since leaving my beloved Maoz has been filled. For the most part.

Janelle Eastridge

Bel Frites, located downtown at 1127 Garden St., serves a plethora of Belgian fries and flavored dipping sauces. Mustang Daily recommends trying one of these dipping options: curry mango chutney, crème fraîche or roasted garlic honey. Call (805) 748-0422 for more information.

The fries are what Bel Frites claims to be “fried potato perfection.” And they just might be.
Action flick ‘Smokin’ Aces’ a bunch of hot air

Ryan Chartrand

"Smokin’ Aces" is a "smokin’ hot" 2007 action flick in the sense that, like smoke, it will fade away very quickly. It has enough testosterone built into it, however, to deem it the ultimate Friday night "guy movie" and the ultimate antidote to "The Notebook" for the ladies. Joe Carnahan, director and writer of "Smokin’ Aces," is clearly a Quentin Tarantino fan, and I stress the word "fan." The sadistic humor and stylish executions are certainly present, but are not nearly as effectively executed.}

Carnahan’s carnage fest, while an enjoyable bloodbath for any male who likes big guns, is ridden with enough problems from the beginning to make the rest no more than cinematic anarchy.

"Smokin’ Aces" begins by grabbing an eclectic handful of characters and throwing them at a wall hoping some will stick, while others fall to the ground dead within 10 minutes. The first 30 minutes is entirely background information in an attempt to welcome you into a charming world of murder, cocaine and prostitutes. Carnahan should have stood outside handing out novellas for everyone to read before watching the film. Instead, he just tries to confuse you.

Once half of the characters suddenly die, the gist of the story is set in place. A $1 million bounty has been placed on the head of a renowned magician named Buddy "Aces" Israel, played by Jeremy Piven, who also has some complicated ties with the mafia. An eclectic group of hit men (and women) hear of the job and so begins a rat race to kill Aces, who has locked himself in a hotel suite with one too many grams of cocaine. The unbelievably creative tagline "May the best hit man win" sums up the rest of the film. It's Carnahan's way of saying, "Hey, that's basically it for the story. Now look at this chainsaw." Tarantino would be ashamed (then again, he'd probably also be on his feet applauding Carnahan's visceral action sequences).

Carnahan is to retain his legacy gained from his breakout film "Narc" after releasing this barely decent hit man flick, it will only be because of the 50-caliber sniper rifle. Carnahan practically rocks the theater with each bullet that tears apart not only human bodies, but a good portion of a floor of a building. Just about everything else considered gruesome or brutally pleasing in "Smokin’ Aces" has either been done before or is as pointless as watching any of the film's characters inevitably die.

I almost feel sympathetic to the established actors like Ben Affleck, Jason Bateman and Ray Liotta who were thrown in as useless characters, rendering them cameos at best. On top of that, Alicia Keys proved in her first motion picture debut that some musicians aren't meant for the big screen. That leaves Piven and Ryan Reynolds, who plays an FBI agent trying to protect Piven from the party of killers, to hold the film together with their comical talent and the occasional dramatic self-reflection scenes. It's too bad their characters are only slightly developed at best.

The core issue with "Smokin’ Aces" isn't that it's simply a bloodletting between the most one-dimensional characters you will ever see, but more so because there's no reason to care. Carnahan never gives any indication that there's anything below the surface of his visual madness, leaving you with only excessive blood, carcasses and even more prostitutes to take home in your head (although I understand if some of you enjoy that reward).

"Smokin’ Aces" is no doubt an entertaining series of stylishly directed action sequences, but unless sometime next week you are daydreaming about carving out someone's heart, "Smokin’ Aces" will be as forgettable as "Underworld: Evolution" was this same time last year.

Above: Femme Fatale Georgia Sykes (Alicia Keys) stares down the competition.

Right: Rip Reed (Jason Bateman) gets caught with his pants down.

Food4Less

NEW! Full Service Liquor Department!

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LOS ANGELES — Another week, another awards show, and the Oscar situation looks as up in the air as ever.

"Little Miss Sunshine," took the Screen Actors Guild's ensemble prize Sunday night, the group's equivalent of a best picture award. Top acting honors, however, went to "Sideways" and the Academy Award went to "Million Dollar Baby."

"I think we feel good. Does anybody not feel good? Raise your hand," said Greg Kinnear, who played the harried dad in "Sunshine," as he turned to co-stars Alan Arkin, Steve Carell and Abigail Breslin.

Asked what an Oscar would mean, Kinnear said, "It would mean a great deal to all of us. Making a movie isn't always a great experience, that's the facts. This really was a remarkable experience."

Whitaker won best actor for his thunderous turn as Ugandan dictator Idi Amin in "The Last King of Scotland," with Mirren taking the best actress statue for her scathing portrayal of Queen Elizabeth II in "The Queen."

Mirren seemed visibly stirred by her best-actress win (her second award of the night), beginning her acceptance speech at the Shrine Auditorium with a shaky, "Be still my beating heart, be still."

"When I did my costume fitting for 'The Queen,' I walked in and saw all those sensible shoes and those tweed skirts, laid out in a row, and I cried. I thought, 'I can't play anyone who chooses to wear those clothes, I just can't do it.' I learned to love the person who chooses to wear those clothes."

Earlier in the evening, Mirren pointed out that the last time she was in the SAG awards, "Grey's Anatomy" won best ensemble prize in 2002. "So I do downstairs as well as upstairs," she quipped.

"Whitaker, meanwhile, was soft-spoken and humble: "It's been an amazing ride, not a ride I'm used to. I've never had it."

Murphy won the supporting-actor award for his work as a tormented, drug-addicted soul singer in "Dreamgirls." His co-star, Hudson, received the supporting-actress award as the splashy musical's requisite Jewish housekeeper with her show-stopping numbers. "I just want to thank you for noticing me and for accepting me," said Hudson, a former "American Idol" contestant who looks more destined than ever for Oscar greatness.

Although this was an unusual dramatic role for Murphy, he couldn't help but joke onstage, accepting the award in a fake British accent.

"I've been acting for some 25 years now and this is a tremendous honor to me. No, I'm sorry," he said, cracking up. "It's just when the British people come up and get the awards, it's so smooth with their stuff. And I feel goofy up here 'cause I don't winning stuff."

Backstage, Murphy said he and his "Dreamgirls" castmates were as surprised as everyone else that the film received a leading eight Oscar nominations but not one for best picture.

"We got eight nominations, that was a great thing. We were happy about that," he said. "I was so happy to be nominated. I wasn't feeling disappointment about anything. I was caught off guard that we didn't get nominated for best picture but I've just been happy, nonstop happy."

On the television side of the awards, "Grey's Anatomy" won best dramatic series on the heels of its Golden Globe victory and in the midst of its off-screen troubles involving homophobic slurs uttered by actor Isaiah Washington, who has since entered counseling.

"Grey's" co-star Chandra Wilson, in accepting the award for best actress in a drama, addressed the matter with humor: "It's about those 10 cast members sitting over there, and the one other in rehab."

America Ferrera, two weeks after her surprise Golden Globe win, took the prize for best actress in a comedy series for her starring role as a sweetly awkward fashion magazine worker in "Ugly Betty."

Discussing the unprecedented success for the show, which has a largely Hispanic cast, Ferrera said: "What's great is that Latinos are a huge part of the audience. It's wonderful for them to begin to see representations of themselves on screen, which is something I prized for when I was younger."

Christy Lemire
ASSOCIATED PRESS

The cast of "Little Miss Sunshine" takes a break from the road to grab a meal and ice cream. Left to right: Alan Arkin, Steve Carell, Paul Dano, Abigail Breslin, Toni Collette and Greg Kinnear.

The Universal screening room was packed to capacity, but most of the audience was made up of those who have been living and sleeping in there for two weeks. There were a few signs that this was a bigger studio competition in "The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King" and "The Queen," but most of the audience was made up of those who have been living and sleeping in there for two weeks.

The SAG win for "Little Miss Sunshine," the low-budget, road-trip charmer, came out of the Sundance Film Festival and beating bigger studio competition. "Sunshine," the low-budget, road-trip charmer, came out of the Sundance Film Festival and beating bigger studio competition. "Sunshine," the low-budget, road-trip charmer, came out of the Sundance Film Festival and beating bigger studio competition.

"Little Miss Sunshine," as he turned to co-stars Steve Carell and Abigail Breslin.

"Sunshine," was the low-budget, road-trip charmer, came out of the Sundance Film Festival and beating bigger studio competition. "Sunshine," the low-budget, road-trip charmer, came out of the Sundance Film Festival and beating bigger studio competition.
HUMOR COLUMN

How to create a celebrity scandal

Turn on a television and what do you see? That right, people who have little talent, lots of money, and a whole lot of problems. I’m talking the Paris Hiltons, Britney Spears and Lindsay Lohan of the world. The only problem with these ladies though, is that the act is getting kind of old. I mean really, how many rehab visits, bad parenting instances, and sex tapes do we really need?2 It is getting old girls, and it is time for some new scandals to arise. In my newest “Guide to Life,” I’ll be giving you the advice to create a Hollywood-esque problem in your life that will make even you want to stand on your two feet. 

First step is to pick a drug of choice. You can choose drugs, the drug of your choice, or go for a drug that is more fashionable, or you can pick one of the old classics, like ecstasy, even though there have been some issues. It seems like the popular thing to do really is to pick some sort of substance, stick it to it, and use it till you need rehab. As I always like to do with my “Guide to Life” though, is to not just point out what is going on in the world, but also give you an example or two of things you can actually do yourselves on your way to success. What you pick doesn’t have to be so serious because you never know what will come out on it as a problem. Mine would be celery. Wait a minute, cel­ry? Yes celry, and yes I did just vouch for you on this. You see, celery is easily the most underrated vegetable there is, almost at the bottom of the obesity timetables. Many times, now, if people were to find out that I was addicted to the celery, it would be a ridiculous Good dream. It is damn good, but everyone seems to forget that. Really, I was like to be able to have so much of it that it would send me to rehab, then, “Hello Lindsay Lohan,” because I’ll be joining her shortly.

The next step is to refuse to wear any sort of underwear. Nothing has been more popular lately than paparazzi shots of celebrities without bras or panties, with the pictures spread all over the Internet. As far as trends go, there really is nothing more popular these days than a nip slip or upskirt shot for that quick celebrity celeb, because it seems like just when you forget about some celebrity starlet, a picture of her boo-hoo appears on the Web1. If you have more decency than to show your most private area though, and as a fine­reader of my article, I’m sure you do have more decency than that, I will give you an alternative. That would be to wear mirrored underwear. What a Mirrorstard underwear? It is common for the paparazzo, or to localize it, that creepy guy who always is taking pictures at parties, to snap that picture and instantly distribute it as quickly as possible. So, what will happen is that this photographer will create this picture and quickly put on the Web the shot that they think is an upskirt shot. But wait, the mirror will quickly reveal what the photographer was and the upskirt picture shot attempt will vanish, the repectability right away from the photographer.

Gentleman, fear not. You have not been forgotten. Why? Well, like always, I hope you learned something. I also hope that you take this “Guide to Life,” use the advice, and really put yourself on the map as the next celebrity to come out of Cal Poly, because well, everyone is getting sort of tired of having the only notable Cal Poly alum be Weird Al Yankovic. Love and peace and I will see you all in rehab.

Mike Heinoots is a journalist and Mustang Daily humor columnist. After you check out his own Hollywood scandals on IMDB.com, head over to visit mikeheinoots.com.

1 OK, wait, so I didn’t actually watching the VMAs, I swear I fell asleep while watching ENSP and when I woke up it was on.
2 Fine, the sex tapes don’t really get old. You with me, fella?
3 Panties and spread in the same sentence? No pun intended.
4 With that said, Rosie O’ Donnell you HAVEN’T been forgotten, and Scarlett Johansson you HAVE been forgotten.
5 Upskirt and watch? Again, no pun intended.
6 Oh my bad, or should I say the ladies of Hollywood and Rosie O’ Donnell. ZING!
7 Well, like always, I hope you learned something. I also hope that you take this “Guide to Life,” use the advice, and really put yourself on the map as the next celebrity to come out of Cal Poly, because well, everyone is getting sort of tired of having the only notable Cal Poly alum be Weird Al Yankovic. Love and peace and I will see you all in rehab.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

What if the United States was occupied by foreign forces? When I read in the newspaper or watch on the news about how horrible the Iraqi war has gone. We’ve seen the pictures over and over how the insurgents are winning and we, the Americans, are not. I beg to differ, but would love to throw the eyes of an insurgent. Let’s imagine the war where the insurgents hold our cities and towns and force us to do what they want.

Imagine the United States subject to a public forum. “The Mustang Daily is a designated public forum.” Student editors have full authority to make all content decisions without consulting or advance approval. The Mustang Daily is a free newspaper and are thankful for your careful reading. The Mustang Daily reserves the right to...
discount

Football

continued from page 12

and Ellerson said they are excited to play a full home season in Alex G.
Sparks Stadium, which had in seating capacity elevated from roughly
8,400 last season to 12,000 via ren­

...itions throughout the year which were not completed until the regu­
lar-season finale Nov. 18.

"I think it's going to be great," Ellerson said. "I think the thing that made a real impact on our football team's psyche is the students were there. It was obvious we had a lot of student interest. It was a shame that there were a couple weeks we had to turn students away. We hope we're never in that situation again."

Pro day in the works

Ellerson said that a pro day for scouts to visit Cal Poly and watch senior players such as linebacker Kyle Showell, cornerback Courtney Brown, nose tackle Chris White and free safety Kenny Chicoine run through drills is still being scheduled.

"Their agents, they'll set those things up," Ellerson said. "Then we'll have a junior day in April."

The highest-profile NFL Draft prospect for Cal Poly is Showell, who led all players in the East-West Shrine Game with seven tackles (five solo) on Jan. 20 despite being one of only four players in the 82nd annual all-star game from a non-I-A school. He won the Buck Buchanan Award as the top defensive player in I-AA after racking up 12 tackles and seven sacks this past season.

In addition to the noteworthy performance at the East-West Shrine Game, Showell was voted by the game's coaches — including Don Shula, Dan Reeves and Mike Singletary — and selection committee as the Pat Tillman Award winner. The honor is given to the player who best exhibits character and work ethic.

"He really did a nice job for himself," Ellerson said of the 6-foot-1, 235-pound Showell. "He really represented himself well. I haven't had a chance to talk to anybody who was there. Winning the Tillman Award, he helped his cause."

"I think what will be really important for him is how he tests. Like a lot of our guys, he's an extra­ordinary player but a tweener from a size standpoint. They really test the heck out of those guys physical­ly. They're always going to question the level of competition week in, week out. You mitigate that with your testing."

"..." Although it is unclear where Showell is projected to be chosen in the April 28 to 29 draft, it can't hurt getting some national publici­

In his "East-West Shrine report" published Jan. 23, Yahoo! Sports columnist John Murphy wrote of Showell: "The Buck Buchanan Award winner was worked hard by coach Mike Singletary during posi­

ional drills but then drew praise from the Hall of Fame linebacker, who said Showell was one of the hardest working kids he has seen the past few years."

Ellerson could not comment on specific individuals, but said the program hopes to sign about 15 players.

"It's gone well again," Ellerson said. "I try to be patient in the process. We've still got recruiting going on. It's been another remark­able year. We think we've identified some extraordinary people. Everybody we've brought on campus has committed to us. We're doing a good job of identifying the right guys. Some of the guys are getting recruited quite heavily."

One newcomer the Mustangs know they will have the services of is Allan Hancock College transfer Jonathan Dally, a quarterback whom Cal Poly announced Dec. 20 had signed a national letter of intent.

The 6-foot-1, 190-pound Dally, a former standout at Knights High in Santa Maria, threw for 2,229 yards and 24 touchdowns in his two seasons at Allan Hancock.

Dally completed 71 of 122 pass­

es (58.2 percent) for 1,050 yards and 13 touchdowns and rushed for

310 yards and seven scores as a sophomore. He was a two-time All­

Western State Conference selec­

tion.

"We have Jonathan enrolled, he's doing a nice job," Ellerson said.

The incumbent starter is Matt Brennan, who completed 45 per­
cent of his passes for 1,208 yards and 10 touchdowns with seven intercep­

tions and ran for 344 yards and two scores as a sophomore in 2006.

Asked whether the position will be open come the start of spring practice Feb. 21, Ellerson said, "I hope it'll be open. Hopefully it'll help Matt if it's very competitive. That's good for everybody."

Sports

Zenaida Montenegro: New Chef at VG Cafe

by Melissa Montecucullo

Zenaida Montenegro is a recent

graduate of the California Institute of Culinary Arts. She is the new chef

at VG Cafe.

Winter Quarter brought many changes to Cal Poly, including a new Sous Chef at VG Cafe (VG's). Zenaida Montenegro recently left her supervising job at Veranda Cafe to take the position of Sous Chef at VG's. Montenegro started working at Cal Poly in Oct. of 2005, first at Garden Grille. She then transferred to Veranda Cafe, doing extremely well in her first quarter there. Now she looks forward to her new job at VG's.

Montenegro wanted the job because it allowed her to be more creative. Veranda Cafe is limited to primarily serving Mexican cuisine while VG's has a wide variety of food offered. This was one of the main factors Montenegro considered when applying for the job.

"I don't want to make people tired of the same thing," said Montenegro. She wants people to appreciate the variety of VG's the same way she does. Montenegro says she can do so many more things at VG's. Another reason Montenegro wanted the job was to improve the reputation of VG's. With the popularity of Garden Grille, business was declining for VG's. But it's Montenegro's goal to improve the cuisine at VG's and make it more popular.

"I've worked here for three weeks and I already hear a lot of compliments," she said. Although she may still hear complaints, Montenegro works personally to fix the problem.
**Kentucky Derby champ Barbaro put down**

Dan Gelcom & Richard Rosenblatt

KENNETT SQUARE, Pa. — So many people felt a stake in Barbaro's recovery. They imagined his pain, gripped each time he faltered, the heart that dials in the clinical pressure he screamed to the world.

The 2006 Kentucky Derby winner's fight for survival was their fight, a symbol of strength, courage and comfort — and, more than anything else, a source of inspiration.

He was, after all, winner of the world's most famous race, in a sport desperate for a superstar. For months he seemed, remarkably, to take every-thing that came at him: good and bad.

Finally, it was too much.

Barbaro was euthanized Monday. After complications from his groin-cutaneous breakdown at last year's Preakness, ending an eight-month ordeal that made him even more of a hero than he was a champion on the track.

"Certainly, grief is the price we all pay for love," co-owner Gretchin Jackson said. A series of ailments — including laminitis in the right rear hoof, an abscess in the right rear hoof, as well as new laminitis in both front feet — proved too much for the gallant colt.

Barbaro was given a heavy dose of a tranquilizer and an overdose of an anesthetic and put down at 10:30 a.m.

"I really didn't think it was appro- priate to continue treatment because the probability of getting better was slim," said Dr. Dean Richardson, chief of surgery at the New Bolton Center.

Richardson, fighting back tears, added: "Barbaro had many, many good days."

The bay colt underwent nearly two dozen surgeries and other proce-dures, including cast changes under anesthesia. He spent time in a sling to ease pressure on his legs, had pins inserted and was fitted at the end with an external brace — extraordinary measures for injuries that most horses never survive.

Weeks of positive reports turned into months. Barbac was enduring every medical procedure, gobbling up his feed and trying to walk out of his stall. But Richardson, after an abscess in Barbaro's left hind leg, on Sunday, a day after Barbaro's fight for survival had reached a cri-tical stage, Richardson compared the various injuries to a "house of cards."

One card falls, and the rest start to crumble.

"That left him with not a good leg to stand on," Richardson said.

The disease affected his personality too. The eyes that had been so bright and full of life were darker Monday morning. Barbaro clearly was deteriorating.

"You could see he was upset," Richardson said. "That was the dif- ference."

Richardson, fighting back tears. "It was the right decision, it was the right thing to do."

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**Polk football schedule a work in progress, minus Sac State**

The Mustangs and Hornets will not play each other for the first time since 1982.

Tristan Aird

The Cal Poly football team expects to play five home games and six on the road in 2007, although the program is still struggling to finalize its schedule. Cal Poly athletics director Alison Cone and head coach Rich Ellerson confirmed Monday.

Neither Cone nor Ellerson named specific opponents, but both confirmed in separate interviews that Sacramento State has backed out of the series, meaning that Cal Poly and Sacramento State will not play each other for the first time since 1982.

"That thing's made it most difficult is losing the Sacramento State game," Ellerson said. "That threw things into a tizzy."

Two of the five Great West Football Conference schools — UC Davis and South Dakota State — have already announced their respective schedules for 2007. Cal Poly is somewhat behind in finalizing its schedule, Cone said, because schools are becoming more reluctant to play in San Luis Obispo, where the Mustangs are 19-3 over the past four years.

"In football, when you're losing a lot, it's really easy to get games," Cone said. "If there's somebody everybody wants to play you, Cone said. "This year's just been a bigger challenge than most, and I expect that will continue. But we will play five home games."

"We're very excited about them," Cone said.

Cone said she hoped that Cal Poly's schedule would be announced "within the next couple of weeks."

"It's close," she said. "There have certainly been obstacles. As the program has received such national attention, we've kind of perceived by a lot of people to be a loss. As people are looking to schedule, everybody's kind of scheduling strategy. People don't want to play us."

Although the all-time series between Cal Poly and Sacramento State — which dates back to 1967 — is tied at 15-15, Cal Poly has won the four games by a combined score of 143-53.

"I would characterize it as a surprise," Cone said of Sacramento State not playing Cal Poly. "They had a number of factors. Their (Big Sky) conference added Northern Colorado, they then had eight conference games. (UC) Davis because Davis is right across. They play Davis and they needed to play two (Division I-A) money games."

Ellerson added: "I don't think that will stay that way. It's crazy that they're not on our schedule. At the end of the day, we need each other."

Sacramento State athletics director Terry Wanless said in a phone interview Monday that the Hornets had little choice in the matter.

"We ran out of dates," Wanless said. "It had nothing to do with Cal Poly. I have great respect for Cal Poly. I know they're struggling to get games."

Wanless said part of the problem is that I-AA programs are not allowed to play 12 games like their I-A counterparts, something he hoped would change with proposed NCAA legislation which eventually failed.

Asked whether the series could resume in the future, Wanless was doubtful because of the current configuration of the Big Sky Conference and the limitations placed on I-AA schools.

"You never say never," he said. "I really don't have an answer to that question. The probability in the near future isn't great."

Although the Hornets are yet to announce their schedule, Wanless said the team's two I-A opponents are New Mexico and Fresno State. Sacramento State will open the season at Fresno State on Sept. 1.

Cal Poly played two I-A opponents last season, losing 17-7 at eventual New Mexico Bowl champion San Jose State before winning 16-14 at San Diego State.

"There are a lot more at our level playing I-A teams," Ellerson said. "What that means is there are fewer I-AA games out there for us."

The lone Great West team Cal Poly will play at home in 2007 is North Dakota State, which essentially ended Cal Poly's postseason hopes with a 51-14 rout of the Mustangs in Fargo, N.D., last November.

Cal Poly's three other Great West games last season were at home.

"It's especially difficult, the way our conference's schedule's set up," Ellerson said. "It's 1-3 as opposed to 2-2. Next year we have three conference games away and one at home. We're going to try to fix that in the near future. It's hard enough to find home games."