CSU faculty begin strike authorization vote

Faculty at the California State University system began voting Monday on whether they should strike over stalled contract negotiations.

Associated Press

Berkeley, Calif. — Frustrated by stalled negotiations, faculty of the nation’s largest four-year public university system began casting their first strike authorization vote Monday.

The vote, expected to be completed over the next two weeks, comes after nearly two years of negotiations that have failed to yield a new contract.

Both sides agree faculty should be paid more, but the union wants larger across-the-board raises than CSU administrators have offered. The two sides also disagree on merit pay.

The vote is now before an independent fact-finder. If faculty authorize a strike and there is no contract resolution, CSU faculty could strike later this spring at CSU’s 23 campuses.

CSU spokeswoman Carla Peters-Fellow said administrators have made a fair offer and are “working hard to complete the fact-finding process with the goal of reaching an agreement with the faculty union. In the meantime, we hope that the faculty keep in mind that students come first and all we want to make sure that students do not get hurt.”

Union leaders say they plan to minimize the impact on CSU’s more than 400,000 students by having brief strikes that roll from campus to campus.

“It will cause the students less pain than it would cause faculty.”

see Strike, page 2

Vigil, speaker shed light on foreign conflict

Students from various campus clubs, such as the Muslim Student Association and the Progressive Student Alliance, held a silent candlelight vigil on Monday night in front of Spanos Theatre as people entered the building to see guest speaker Daniel Pipes. The vigil was a response to Pipes, who spoke on “Israel, America, and Middle East Threats,” and to give insight into the number of innocent lives claimed in Middle Eastern wars.

The event was sponsored by ASI, Hillel of San Luis Obispo, AEPI fraternity and the American Jewish Congress.

see Vigil, page 2

Poly student spins to success on ‘Wheel of Fortune’ episode

Janelle Eastridge

Jack Knoebber is a game show junkie. For the past six months, the art and design junior has consistently watched “Wheel of Fortune” on TV every night, stepping up his viewing habits from before. And when he recently received a new phone, he made sure to download the “Wheel” app as soon as possible. He’s a self-described obsessed fan.

“I’ve always liked that kind of stuff,” said the art and design sophomore. “I’ve also always liked crossword puzzles, and they’re kind of the same thing. ‘I’ve always been good at those kinds of things.’

But having this object of obsession has finally paid off for Knoebber. Three weeks ago, he drove down to Los Angeles to record an episode, which will appear on television June 6, for the game show.

The process has been long and intense, but ultimately enjoyable for Knoebber.

After signing up two years ago for the “Wheel of Fortune” Web site and not receiving a response, Knoebber made a second attempt four months ago, “not really expecting (to get an audition).”

But two months later, that’s just what he got.

So, on Feb. 2, Knoebber skipped class and drove solo to Culver City to make the 2 p.m. group audition. Once there, prospective contestants were separated into groups of 50.

see Wheel, page 2

ASI pleased with recent e-vote turnout

Samantha Freitas

Students rocked the e-vote in Associated Students Inc.­­’s campus­wide test of a new electronic voting system last week.

ASI hoped to get at least 300 students to the polls to test the system and ask them if they like the new form of voting, which political party they’re affiliated with and their favorite 2008 presidential candidates.

“Hopefully we had 728 students vote (whether to use electronic voting), which was more than double our original goal. We were really excited about that,” said Mia White, ASI Election chair and nutrition senior.

Of the students who voted, 81 percent declared which political party they are affiliated with. The results showed the Democrats were most popular, with 65 percent of the votes. Closely following them were the Republicans with 37 percent of the votes; trailed by the Green Party with 10 percent and the Libertarian Party with 7 percent.

According to the results, the two most favored 2008 presidential candidates are both Democrats — Barack Obama followed by Hillary Clinton.

John McCain came in third, only one vote behind Clinton, and was followed by Rudolph Giuliani and John

see Vote, page 2

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Wheel good on TV,” Knoebber said. “Everyone is trying to be enthusiastic and loud, to see if you can look crazy,” he said. “I was so excited. I was shaking and going toward the end of the ‘very intense’ process. It wasn’t just about picking the right answers, considering he walked away with an amazing experience and we think it’s going to be a big impact on the state and local economy,” according to a new study. Based on 2,650 figures, a study of the economic impact of wine grapes and wines included such factors as wages, utilities, shipping and packaging costs and even Uxlging revenues where most of the county’s wineries are located. The wine industry employs more than 6,364 people full time in San Luis Obispo County and it contributes more than $1.35 million in state and local taxes, the study showed. Winemakers attract 1.1 million visitors to San Luis Obispo County, particularly the Paso Robles area, and they spend about $96.5 million annually, according to the report said. “Recent studies indicate the wine tourism seeks an experience and visits the area with the intent to buy wine, dine out, shop downtown and stay in our region,” Economic Vitality Corp. president Michael Munchak said. "The lack of a write-in option was one of the few problems that ASI encountered in its testing. "A couple of people got error messages that said they had already voted, which was because the person before them didn’t log out. It wasn’t necessarily a problem with the system, but something that we need to look at if we want to use electronic voting,” White said. "This is crazy to be on a game show — it’s still surreal, like it never happens. But people on game shows are just normal people. I met some people who have been on three game shows before — it’s just luck,” he said. "If anyone wants to be on one, sign up. You could get picked, it’s chosen randomly.” wheel of Fortune” studio to begin the long process of reviewing rules and legal information, putting on makeup (“they made us look all pretty”), and practicing with the heavier-in-person metal wheel. When the audience finally arrived at 11 a.m., the contestants drew numbers to see which episode they would appear on. Knoebber drew the last episode, which meant that he was required to stay at the studio until 6 that night. During the recording of the other episodes, Knoebber sat in the audience “clapping [his] heart out” under the strict guidance of audience control personnel. But it was all worth it once he got onstage. One of the highlights was standing next to Pat Sajak behind the wheel. “It was really cool meeting him!” Knoebber said. “I almost thought that he had a fake personality... But in real life he’s really nice and really personable.” In a somewhat embarrassing, albeit ironic, moment, Knoebber froze up after buzzing in, only to finally recall the answer: speed reader. Overall, Knoebber came in third place. But considering he walked away with an amazing experience and a little over $4,000, third place is not too bad. (On the show, Knoebber won $7,500, but the government taxes the show at about 40 percent, leaving contestants with a little more than half of their earnings.) “I was excited that I got last place, but left with more than the (automatic) $1,000, like some of the other people who came in third place,” Knoebber said.

Knoebber pointed out that there are thousands of people who sign up for game shows every year; only a couple hundred of those people are selected to appear on tapings. But that’s not reason to give up hope — and Knoebber stands as an example. “You’re a bundle of energy, she said.

"We’re going to meet with (ASI President) Todd Maki to continue discussions. I don’t think we’ll be able to make a decision just yet because we don’t want to rush into anything,” she said.

"A couple of people got error messages that said they had already voted, which was because the person before them didn’t log out. It wasn’t necessarily a problem with the system, but something that we need to look at if we want to use electronic voting,” White said. "The only other problem with the system came in the form of comments from students who said they didn’t like the look and layout of the pages — problem ASI hopes to fix. “We want to make sure that any problems people see and anything cosmetic will be changed for the real election,” White said. Despite the problems for a few students, most students made it through the electronic voting process successfully and 99 percent of students who voted said they would like to see electronic polling in the best ASI election. “Everything went great,” said biochemistry senior Peter Asiedu. “I liked the system. I thought it was much more efficient. It was quick and will probably save money on having to hire people and using paper.” White said they hadn’t made a definite decision on whether or not they are going to use the electronic voting system, but that they hope to decide by the end of the quarter. "We’re going to meet with (ASI President) Todd Maki to continue discussions. I don’t think we’ll be able to make a decision just yet because we don’t want to rush into anything.”
Violence roars back to Baghdad as Shiite militia feels new pressures

Brian Murphy

BAGHDAD, Iraq — A suicide car bomber turned a venerable book market into a deadly inferno and gunmen targeted Shiite pilgrims Monday as suspected Sunni insurgents brought major bloodshed back into the lap of their main Shiite rivals. At least 28 people died in the blast and seven pilgrims were killed.

"The violence — after a relative three-day lull in Baghdad — was seen as another salvo in the Sunni extremists campaign to provoke a sectarian civil war that could tear apart the Shiite-led government and erase Washington's plans for Iraq.

The Shiite Mahdi Army militia has so far neutralized full-scale retaliation through a combination of self-interest and intense government pressure. But the militia's leader, the radical cleric Muqtada al-Sadr, is now being cornered in new ways that have put him on the defensive.

An expected Cabinet reshuffle could take a serious bite out of al-Sadr's voice in government — a move strongly encouraged by Washington.

Al-Sadr also opened the door for U.S. and Iraqi troops to enter the Mahdi stronghold of Sadr City in Baghdad — under a painstaking deal with the cleric — but his loyalists are still being hunted outside the capital. "The-Sadr and his forces could be feeling under siege," said Aliereza Nourizadeh, chief researcher at the London-based Center for Arab-U.S. Iran Studies. "That makes them less predictable. That means they are more dangerous."

One possible sign of brewing pressures was the bloodiest day in the dty in several days, police said.

Within seconds, flames engulfed the Mutanabi book market in central Baghdad Monday, March 5, 2007, killing at least 26 people and injuring more than 50, in a first major blast in the city in several days, police said.

A suicide car bomber struck near the well-known Mutanabi book market in central Baghdad Monday, March 5, 2007, because of frequent power cuts — powered generators — needed by workers who were driving about 200 yards from the blast and seven pilgrims were killed.

Bloodstained pages that escaped the fire were carried away in a wind-whipped pillar of black smoke.

Firefighters had to spray huge arches of water from blocks away because their trucks were too large for the warren of lanes in old Baghdad. At least 28 people died and 66 people were injured, police said.

But the final casualty count may not be clear until Tuesday. Fire crews still battled the blazes nearly 12 hours after the attack, said civil defense Maj. Gen. Abdul Rasoul al-Ukaili, head of the security plan to proceed.

The Shiites were apparently heading to shrines and holy sites in southern Iraq for the annual commemoration to end a 40-day mourning period for the death of a revered seventh century Shiite martyr, Imam Hussein.

It was the bloodiest day in the capital in more than a week, and came on the heels of a major push by nearly 1,200 U.S. and Iraqi troops into taming Sadr City as part of a nearly 3-week-old security offensive across Baghdad.

The sweeps seek to drive out insurgents and establish permanent bases in troubled areas. Search teams also uncovered a nearly tenfold increase in hidden weapons stashes in the past week, the military said.

More than 21,000 small arms rounds were confiscated last week, up from 2,160 the previous week; 937 mortar rounds were discovered, up from 89 the week before, it said. Attacks on soldiers in some Shiite districts are also down sharply.

That's mostly because al-Sadr once again ordered his fighters to pull back after coming under strong government arm-twisting to allow the security plan to proceed.

In Sadr City, Iraqi troops set up checkpoints and took a far more visible role than Americans, who led the push in the area Sunday. The move was an apparent attempt to avoid Shiite anger in a place of past street battles with U.S. forces.

The troops plan to establish outposts in Sadr City that will bring together Iraqi police, military and U.S.-led forces, said U.S. Gen. Terry Belton, who oversees training of Iraqi soldiers.

"It's about presence," he said.

But pressure on al-Sadr and the Mahdi Army continued on other fronts.

In the southern city of Karbala, the home of a Mahdi Army leader was raided in a joint U.S.-Iraqi operation, the U.S. military said.

Al-Sadr's followers also warned they would fight any Cabinet changes that would single them out.

"We will not give up our share and any of our ministerial posts under any circumstances unless all other blocs are subjected to the same procedure," said Saleh al-Ukaili, head of Sadrist faction in parliament, where the bloc controls 30 of the 275 seats.

An adviser to Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki said 10 of the 39 ministry posts soon would be replaced — including five of the six ministers loyal to al-Sadr. The adviser spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not supposed to release the information.

Relations between al-Sadr and the government are already tense. Late last year, the prime minister withdrew his official protection for al-Sadr and the Mahdi Army and allowed U.S.-led forces to close in.

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CHICAGO — The number of U.S. children having obesity surgery has tripled in recent years, surging at a pace that could mean more than 1,000 operations this year, new research suggests.

While the procedure is still far more common in adults, it appears to be slightly less risky in teens, according to an analysis of data on 12- to 19-year-olds who had obesity surgery from 1996 through 2003.

During that time, an estimated 2,744 youngsters nationwide had the operations. The pace tripled between 2000 and 2003, reaching 771 surgeries that year, the study found.

Youngsters had slightly shorter hospital stays than adults and none died in the hospital during the study period. By contrast, there were 212 hospital deaths out of an estimated 33,000 who underwent obesity surgery in 2003, or a rate of 0.2 percent, the study found.

Researchers at Robert Wood Johnson Medical School in New Brunswick, N.J., included children's Hospital Medical Center analyzed a database of U.S. hospital patients. Obesity surgeries in children during the eight-year period and adults in 2003 were included in the analysis.

The study appears in Monday's Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine.

About 5 percent of children and adults had major complications, mostly respiratory problems. Children spent an average of about 3.2 days in the hospital in 2003, versus 3.5 days for adults. Total hospital charges also were lower for pediatric patients, $30,804 per patient versus $36,056 for adults.

The youngest patients were 12, but most were older teens. Eric Decker was one of them. In 2003, at age 17, he had gastric bypass surgery, the most common obesity operation in teens and adults.

"I was 5-foot-8 and 365 pounds," Decker said.

He had struggled with his weight since he was 11, and said he had tried just about every diet, but nothing worked.

Obesity surgery was a last resort for Decker, and doctors say it should be for overweight teens.

Decker had no major surgery complications. A year and a half later, he was down to 185 and says he has stayed there through diet and exercise.

"It's definitely a painful surgery," said Decker, a student at the University of South Carolina. It also requires drastic changes in eating habits, he said. "I don't regret it because it's something that I felt needed to be done for my health."

Study co-author Dr. Thomas Inge attributed the surge in teen operations to publicity about celebrities having obesity surgery, including pop singer Carnie Wilson and broadcaster Al Roker.

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The numbers contrast with an estimate in January from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, which reported that 349 youngsters aged 12 to 17 had obesity surgery in 2004.

The study included children up to age 19, which accounts for the higher number, said lead author Dr. Randall Burd of Robert Wood Johnson Medical School.

Burd said the numbers of youngsters undergoing obesity surgery likely has continued to rise along with adults having the surgery.

The American Society for Bariatric Surgery estimates that last year, there were 177,669 obesity surgeries. From 1990 to 1993, the second year in which the operation was done, only 34,857 were performed.

The organization doesn't keep track of the number of pediatric operations. If it has kept pace with adults, the number of obesity surgeries in teens likely would climb well past 1,000 this year.

Inge, of Cincinnati Children's, said the new study suggests the risks outweigh the benefits for most patients. But it also left many unanswered questions, including how teens fared after leaving the hospital.

Obesity surgery during the teen years poses different psychological risks than for adults, Inge said. Many teens already are struggling with identity issues, and rapid weight loss after surgery can catapult them "into situations that they didn't really imagine before," he said.

His center is taking part in a five-year study to examine the medical and psychological results of obesity surgery among teens.

"It's critically important that the short-term and long-term outcome of these kids is studied" because of the potential health implications, Burd said.
Oil prices fall more than $1 a barrel on continued concern over stock market declines and an indication by a OPEC official that the cartel won't cut production at its next meeting.

Light, sweet crude for April delivery tumbled $1.57 to settle at $60.67 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange. Earlier the contract dropped as low as $59.55 a barrel, dipping below $60 for the first time since Feb. 28.

Brent crude for April also fell $1.54 to settle at $60.54 a barrel on the ICE Futures exchange in London.

On Monday, the Shanghai Composite Index fell 1.6 percent, while the Dow Jones industrials dropped 63.69 points to close at 12,050.41.

Comments from an oil official that the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries is unlikely to call for another round of production cuts at its March meeting, undermined Qatar's Oil Minister Abdulah bin Hamad al-Attiyah said the cartel wouldn't decrease production if crude oil stays near its current basket price of 58.34 a barrel, according to Dow Jones Newswires.

"This is a general sort of reced from the market," said Tobin Gorey, a commodity strategist with the Commonwealth Bank of Australia in Sydney. "There are ongoing ramifications from China's drop last Tuesday. It was a job for the global economy.

In recent weeks, the benchmark Shanghai Composite Index plunged 9 percent, triggering huge losses on Wall Street and other markets. The oil market closed at a record high on Thursday in the news of tightening gasoline supplies, but afterward followed the stock market's downward pull.

On Monday, the Shanghai Composite Index fell 6 percent, while the Dow Jones industrials dropped 63.69 points to close at 12,050.41.

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"The Shanghai market is more concerned about things that are more potentially bearish sanctions on Tehran over its failure to comply with demands to halt its uranium enrichment program. Although the United States has said it has no plans for a military strike, the option has not been ruled out.

Underlying fundamentals for crude oil remain supportive, analysts said.

Last week's U.S. inventories report showed stocks of gasoline and distillates, which include heating oil and diesel fuel, dropped by a larger amount than analysts had forecast. Meanwhile, demand for products over the last four-week period rose by 7.5 percent from the same period last year.

Top Evans, an energy analyst with Citigroup Futures Research, also pointed out that traders appear to be ignoring the return of colder temperatures in the Northeast and a spate of production disruptions, both supportive of prices.

"The crude oil market is more concerned about things that are more potentially bearish than actually bearish," Evans said.

In other Nymex trading, heating oil futures fell more than 4 cents to settle at $1.7248 a gal­ lon, while natural gas gained more than a penny to $2.254 per 1,000 cubic feet. Gasoline futures settled at $1.8447 a gallon, down near­ ly by 6 cents. Washington is pushing for tougher U.N.

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March 13th - Round 2 Semi-finals
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Enemas, iPods and emotions run amuck at weekend indie rock show

Brendan Fowler of the band BARR gave himself a nasal enema at my house before he played the show at the Steynberg Gallery Sunday night. The process is much the same as a regular enema: you mix a powder with distilled water and place it into a tube with a long spout. However, with a nasal enema, the water apparently shoots up through one nostril (nostril A) and comes out another one (nostril B). He's doing this because he's sick, and while it's slightly embarrassing for him to ask me to do it in my bathroom upon meeting me, it turns into a night-long joke.

And such is the music and performance of BARR. At times it's humiliating and embarrassing and nakedly emotional, but it's also just a posed to be an AIDS screening. Meanwhile, a bunet pounces across equipment in an endearing rock display.

He closes his set with "Context Ender" before an impromptu encore demanded by an enraptured audience. Before he drives away, I tell him that song is my favorite and I probably listened to it for a full hour over and over the moment I got his album. And I know in some way that statement is awkward, weird, nerdy and slightly ridiculous. But then again ... so is BARR. It's the first time I have ever said something like that and had someone take it in the right way because he then tells me that song is one of the few things he's ever made that he's proud of.

It's a really serious moment until Marrie Stern yells about hurrying up. It's ridiculously appropriate that the call of Tio Albino's ends the conversation forcing it into a hug and "come back again soon."

Show tip: Mountain Goats on Saturday at the Steynberg Gallery. It may be sold out by the time you read this. So if you can't get tickets, maybe see Port O'Brien play at Steynberg Gallery on Thursday at 7 p.m.
Hi-Tek's newest CD raises the bar for other hip-hop DJs

The Cincinnati-based DJ adds to his status as an underground hip-hop icon with "Hi-Teknology 2."

Tristan Aird

The inside of the CD case of Hi-Tek's new album, "Hi-Teknology 2. The Chip" says it all about Tony Comelli's accomplished but underpreached career.

A soundboard is proudly displayed with a label in between buttons and switches that read, "Nas, Me, Common." Those are the kind of big names in the hip-hop industry that Hi-Tek has worked with since beginning his professional career as a DJ in the late 1990s. In many cases, such as with BlackStar's self-titled album in 1998 and his collaborative effort with Talib Kweli on 2000's "Train of Thought," Hi-Tek has been the man behind the scenes, key in piecing together instruments for some of the underground hip-hop culture's defining albums.

The Cincinnati-based Hi-Tek used "Hi-Teknology 2," a superlative anthology of the finest hip-hop voices from all over the map, to give fans something new while at the same time paying homage to his roots.

Several songs stand out, but it is clear which is best among the 15 tracks — the last one, "Music For Life." The song spans nearly seven minutes and features an unfeigned collision of performers, including Nas, Common, Butta Rhymes, Dilla and Marsellous. The song uses a phone message recording of "next message," to segue from one verse to the next. Nas' verse, as always, is exceptional. "It started with rhymes I heard listenin' to the wall. The bouncin' of basketballs on playgrounds and all... Fother did his blues smooth, leg­ edary jazz man, say his wife sec­ ondary to his true passion..." Hi-Tek himself holds his own with the others on the track, saying: "My whole life, man, is really music, when I'm just out here, it's my sanity." Common reminisces of his childhood: "So vital to a youngster, comin' up amongst street hustlers... Givin' the ghetto a taste of what freedom is... I needed a point in my life where I wasn'titin' the mic..."

At the end of the beautifully worded lyrics, the listener is thrown for a loop when the narrator says, "first skyped message." What follows is J Dilla (in a mocking tone) taking on a Top 40 mindset, bragging about his reputation and how others can't "play hate." The segment at the end shows the contrast between what Hi-Tek is all about — producing conscious hip-hop albums with messages and allegories — and the MTV form of rap that is more about making money and getting radio play than saying some­ thing of social significance.

Another song, "Josephine," tells the story of a prostitute who eventually rights her life and rises above prior hardships, but only after she has acquired AIDS. Ghostface Killah kicks off the vocals with a verse about how he grew up in the same neighborhood as the woman before Pretty Ugly speaks of how — after also growing up with her — she sees her many years later only to learn her years are numbered. A somber choral sound from the Wilie Colbert Band separ­ ates the verses: "The rain won't wash away your sins, you'll be here to do them all over again... Up all night under the party lights, some old pop­ ping and party hopping, all of your so-called friends are leading you down the wrong road." The second-to-last song, "Song Tired," features Bun B, Devin the Dude and Dion discussing how they want to lead more responsible lives, but the difficulties in doing so because of the alcohol/drug culture surrounding touring with a band.

No single track on the CD feels more like a Hi-Tek song than "Can We Go Back," which features verses from Kweli and a mesmerizing chorus from Ayak.

The song likely to get the most radio play, "Where It Started At," is a masterpiece in its own right, featur­ ing Kweli, Jadakiss, Raekwon the Chef, Poppus and Dion dropping spirited lyrics paying tribute to their Radio New York. "Immediately after that track, however, is a song "1-800-Homicide" featuring The Game — that leaves the listener wishing for more. The Game's rhymes always pack a punch, and this song is no exception: "Every city's got Crips and Bloods, but since Pac died there ain't been no California love. It is a catchy and provocative West Coast response of sorts to the New York version, but lasts less than two minutes.

One track is just plain fun. "I Think I Got A Beat," Hi-Tek's todd­ ler son, giving the recording name of Lil' Tone, makes a short, solid instrumental by using a toy key­ board.

In the end, "Hi-Teknology 2" has something for everyone. It features an all-star cast of vocalists, 15 tracks with diverse themes and is a prime example of why DJs are so impor­ tant in the hip-hop universe.

Even without radio waves, blues/rock band Sister Hazel still stays afloat

Amanda Sebba

If you listened to the radio in mid­ dle school, you probably listened to Sister Hazel. In 1997, Sister Hazel's single "I'm Your Man" became a pop radio staple and propelled the band's second album to platinum status. That pair was through the difficult to find Sister Hazel songs on the radio, despite the fact that they've had top-30 singles and four albums' worth of new material since "All For You.

What has changed since then isn't Sister Hazel — it's the radio. Many of the stations that used to play music like Sister Hazel — whose style is often described as jangle-pop, Southern rock, or rock roll — have changed formats since the late '90s, leaving Sister Hazel with plenty of new music and few radio stations to play it. "A lot of bands try to change the music to fit the format, but that's not what we're all about," said Sister Hazel's guitarist Ryan Newell in a recent phone interview. "We, fortu­ nately, have built up a career for our­ selves that we don't have to be a slave to radio anymore.

The career that Sister Hazel has built up rests on the support of its devoted fan base — self-proclaimed "Hazelnuts" — who follow the band's adventures with or without radio play. Sister Hazel use the Internet to reach out to those fans and, according to Newell, to create a "community of like-minded people."

"We have a voracious group of fans that are constantly keeping in touch," Newell said. "They have show reviews, they have all kinds of discus­ sions about the band's music and lyrics... I think that's the beauty of the site." Newell isn't exaggerating when he calls Hazelnut "voracious." For example, it took Hazelnut just one day to buy up all the cabs on the Carnival cruise ship that hosted the seventh annual Rock Boat — a five­ day floating music festival founded by Sister Hazel. And the band is always looking for more ways to engage with fans outside the bounds of radio. "Along with the Rock Boat, we also do an event called the Rock Slope, which is a ski trip for every­ body. We have a charity, called Lyrics for Life. We just create a bunch of events for people to feel the vibe of what it's like to be in this commu­ nity," Newell said. "We're creating a lifestyle, and hopefully we'll be the soundtrack for that lifestyle." For fans, a key part of that lifestyle is attending Sister Hazel concerts, and since the band plays about 150 shows per year, they have plenty of opportunities to do so. Without widespread radio play, touring is also the way the Sister Hazel expands in fan base.

"We pride ourselves on our live show," Newell said. "If someone gets dragged to our live show, we have a feeling that they're going to come back." The next generation of Hazelnut has also started showing up at Sister Hazel shows, bowing well for the band's long-term popularity. "Parents are playing this stuff for the kids, and the kids are being raised on Sister Hazel, and they become fans. And we look out in the audience, and there's kids — it's great. Sister Hazel's busy tour schedule continues with a stop here in New York Tuesday night. "We love play­ ing New York," Newell said. "There's not too many places you can go on a Tuesday night and expect everyone to be there. ... But you can go to New York, and everyone will be there.

Until radio trends change, Sister Hazel will have to continue relying on the Internet and on Hazelnut to promote their new music (an acoustic album is in the works) and concerts. In the meantime, Newell said, "We just stick to our guns, and you know, hope that the wheels spin back around — when it does, we'll still be here."
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Moral arguments differ from political ones

As an ardent advocate for civil liberties (and particularly of First Amendment rights which provided the basis for the Texas v. Johnson decision relating to flag burning), I agree with Eller's positions on the constituiveness of the FSM flag burning by the College Republicans. However, I believe Eller's column discussed two arguments: one defending the act on a constitutional basis, and the other justifying the act on a moral basis. To Eller, the act was not legitimate but morally justified, as he argued from a politico-religious standpoint. There may be a distinction between these two arguments for, as I'm sure, there may well be as much agreement on Eller with the first, and very differently on the second. It is a truism to our First Amendment rights that we should hear such dissonant views, but those views should not be dis­ criminated against on the basis of the majority views held by the FSM administration.

I will refrain from stacking Eller's view relating to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, for that is not the real issue at hand (even if it is sensational).

Audrey Crescenti
Political science and history sophomore

Smokers should keep their cigarettes away from people

Some people will give you your numbers like they hoped for, but a good smoke should make you want to reserve your drink as what really happened. Stuff like, "Tell me, did you want to lead into that? Get better!" or "Oh my god, did you ask Tyler or Brett or Chad or Brad if they have it? You totally were like hooking up with all of them at that Kappa Omicron Kappa party last night and it is probably in one of their rooms", will surely show up on the wall's truth. The truth hurts, but that could have been avoided if you didn't create the group in the first place.

Well, that brings me to the end of another "Guide to Life." It is a testament to our First Amendment rights that we should hear such dissonant views, but those views should not be discriminated against on the basis of the majority views held by the FSM administration. I will refrain from stacking Eller's view relating to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, for that is not the real issue at hand (even if it is sensational).
Atlanta cuts LB Hartwell, possibly clearing way for poly grad Beck

As of Monday, former Cal Poly star Jordan Beck was listed on the Atlanta Falcons’ Web site as the starting middle linebacker on the team’s depth chart.

MUSTANG DAILY

SPECIAL TO THE LAD

ATLANTA — The Atlanta Falcons opened free agency Friday by signing fullback Ovie Mughelli and releasing injured linebacker Ed Hartwell. The Falcons also released veteran linebacker Mike Jones, who was cut primarily on special teams.

The 25-year-old Mughelli, who spent the last two seasons with Baltimore, agreed to a six-year, $18 million contact that includes a $5 million signing bonus.

Triathlon

continued from page 12

谓 the 3-year-old girl was inside the house when he received a report of a crime.

Deputies arrived around 9:30 a.m. at a gated community about 25 miles on an inbound play as the 49ers up by seven —

Sheriff’s officials said the woman, the victim of the floor several times, then attempted to leave.”

The woman threw a hit at the Hammer, shuttering in its windshield, Scott said. He would not disclose the woman’s relationship with Artest but said she was a 3-year-old girl was inside the house during the incident.

Deputies departed around 9:30 a.m. at Artest’s five-acre estate in the Sacramento suburb of Loomis and arrested him on suspicion of domestic violence, sheriff’s spokesman Senia Erwin said. He was also arrested on suspicion of using force or violence to prevent the woman from reporting a crime.

“Mr. Artest was very cooperative,” Scott said of Artest, found sitting calmly inside the house. “He gave no proba­bility to any of the officers on scene.”

Artest, the central figure of the infamous 2004 brawl between Indiana Pacers players and Detroit Pistons fans, was booked into the Placer County Jail and released later on $50,000 bail. His arraignment is scheduled for March 22.

Sheriff’s deputies have been called to the home at least once before, but there were no arrests, Erwin said.

“Geoff Petrie, the Kings’ president of basketball operations, said the team was removing Artest from the team, pending a full investigation.”

“The Kings have excused Ron Artest indefinitely from any further participation with the team due to his arrest today for domestic violence,” Petrie said in a statement.

Team spokesman Troy Hanson told The Associated Press that Artest had not been suspended and still was being paid.

An emergency protective order obtained by sheriff’s officials prevents Artest from returning to his home or contacting the woman until she can obtain a restraining order. Scott said this was normal procedure.

Sheriff’s officials said the woman had injuries but would not describe them. She declined medical treatment.

Artest, who joined the Kings from the Indiana Pacers in January 2004, has had previous run-ins with police.

He was at the center of the Nov. 19, 2004 brawl between Pacers play­ers and Pistons fans at the Palace in Detroit. Just when a confrontation between players seemed to be over, Artest, leaping on the scorer’s table, was hit with a cup filled with an icy bev­erage. He bolted into the stands in a rage, according to witnesses.

Two days later, Artest was sus­pended for the rest of the season —

the 49ers finished the regular season in first place, but largely because of one play in Long Beach State’s No. 1 seed-clinching 82-76 win at Pacific on ESPN Big Monday on Feb. 26.

That play was a buzzer-beating 3-pointer banked in from NBA range on an inbound play as the first half expired. After the shot —

which put the 49ers up by seven — Nixon didn’t pop his jersey, do a dance or strut his way to the locker­room. He simply high-fived teammates before walking off the floor, something that caught Brodey’s eye.

“Those are the tools I can use. So with the ESPN game,” Brodey said. “As a whole, the men’s first team is comprised of Brown, Nixon, Stockalper, Cal State Fullerton junior forward Scott Cutley, UC Santa Barbara junior swingman Alex Harris and Long Beach State senior guard Kejuan Johnson. Long Beach State’s Larry Reynolds was named Coach of the Year and LC Riverside swingman Thomsen Freshman of the Year.

The men’s first team includes Eggleston, Nicole, San Barbara junior post player Jenna Green, Cal State Northridge senior wings LaJoyee King and OG Tulkikhito and Cal State Fullerton sophomore post player Tony Thomas. UC Riverside’s John Margaritis was named Coach of the Year and UC Santa Barbara forward Jordan Franey Freshman of the Year.

Of being named to the All- Freshmen Team, Wills said “I really wasn’t expecting to get All-Freshmen Team. I was just trying to do what I could to help the team win. ... Now that I’ve got it, I’m in awe. I don’t know how to explain it.”

Wells averaged 3.3 points, 1.1 assists and one steal per game in only 12.6 minutes an outing. As one of only six players on the team to play in all 27 games, she was key in stepping up to fill the void left by a myriad of players who suf­fered injuries during the season.

Harrison averaged 11.9 points and 4.9 rebounds, Newsom 8.9 points, 6.5 rebounds and three steals and Stewart 3.2 points and 2.4 assists.

Eggleston said having five play­ers awarded various honors is a sign of the program’s growth.

“Something shows that this program is getting better,” she said. “Kudos to our coaches. They’re obviously making us better players. I think everyone’s put in the work this year and gotten themselves better.”

Wills averaged 11.7 points and 3.2 assists, McGinn 11 points and Clark 8.9 points, 3.6 assists and 1.4 steals.

Both Cal Poly teams begin the Big West Tournament this week.

The third-seeded women will play in the quarterfinals at noon Thursday against one of the teams seeded Nos. 5-8. They depart for the Anaheim Convention Center Thursday.

The second-seeded men play in the semifinals at 9 p.m. Friday on ESPN against one of the teams seeded Nos. 3-7. They depart Thursday.

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Poly triathlon to host event this month

Samantha Freitas

**Mustang Daily**

The Cal Poly Triathlon Club is preparing to host and compete in the March Triathlon Series at Lopez Lake in Arroyo Grande on March 31.

The series is comprised of the sixth annual March Warm-Up Triathlon and the second annual March in Motion Olympic Distance Triathlon. March in Motion is also the championship race for the West Coast Collegiate Triathlon Conference.

"There will be between 300 and 400 college students competing in the race," race director and mechanical engineering senior Ryan Weeks said. "There will probably be more college students racing this race than there will be at Wildflower."

The West Coast Collegiate Triathlon Conference is a collective group of West Coast schools, most of whom host their own student-run triathlons.

"The conference provides competition between West Coast schools that is individual of nationals," Weeks said. "The championships can be seen as mini-nationals for the West Coast schools."

Cal Poly is expected to do well in the race. Weeks said the team's biggest competitor will likely Cal.

Last year, in Morro Bay, the Series fell on the same weekend as an unusual storm that brought up to 30 inches of snow to San Luis Obispo. The freezing temperatures made the race exceptionally difficult.

"We didn't have many finishers last year," team member and journalist senior Evan Rudd said. "I was surprised we had even half of the people that started that race finished."

The event is put on entirely by students, so the Triathlon Club is looking for student volunteers, typically to help on the course at the finish line or by directing traffic.

"We would love to have any volunteers who are willing to come out," Weeks said. "We're offering free camping, prizes, food and entertainment. It should be similar to Wildflower, just a little more low-key."

The March Triathlon Series is one of two races the Cal Poly Triathlon club hosts each year, the other being the Chains of Love run that was held in February, and is its main fundraiser.

"We're not getting paid anything, but we do these races so we can subsidize and make racing triathlons less expensive for our team," Weeks said. "Fundraising that we do for this race will help decrease costs for racing nationals in Alabama and Wildflower."

Cal Poly placed fifth overall at the event. See Triathlon, page 10.