More than 10,000 feared dead after Myanmar cyclone

A bicycle taxi driver moves through a damaged area of Yangon Sunday following cyclone Nargis.

SAN DIEGO — The FBI said Monday that it is looking into whether a pipe bomb attack at a downtown federal courthouse is linked to a blast at a FedEx office last month.

The courthouse explosion early Sunday spread nails and shrapnel as far as two blocks, and someone could have been killed if they were in the way, said Keith Slotter, special agent in charge of the FBI's San Diego office.

Slotter said surveillance video shows "some individuals" in the area shortly before the explosion, but declined to elaborate. Authorities have not identified any suspects and no one has claimed responsibility.

The FBI is determining whether the attack is related to a bomb that shattered the glass door of a FedEx building in San Diego around 2 a.m. on April 25.

Authorities found a second bomb in the FedEx parking lot and detonated it.

"We are looking at that obviously very closely," Slotter told reporters.

"We have not reached the point where we can say the two were connected... I think we're way ahead of the game to characterize something like this as a serial bomber."

More than one pipe bomb — it's unclear how many — were left outside a building on the second floor, Slotter said.

Debris was found lodged in a window about eight stories up the AT&T building across the street. The courthouse is located near the Gaslamp Quarter's bars and nightclubs.

"This was a pretty powerful bomb," Slotter said.

The courthouse was scheduled to reopen Tuesday, said Mark Owen, acting chief deputy of the U.S. Marshal's Office for the Southern District of California. There was no estimate of property damage.

About 40 investigators are working on the case and federal authorities are treating it as a top priority, Slotter said.

Evidence was flown Monday to FBI labs in Quantico, Va.

Slotter said the motive for the attack was unclear.

"Is it (someone) trying to make a statement to the government? To the justice system?" he said. "Who knows?"

Brent Morei leads the Cal Poly baseball team while considering his prospects for a professional future.

More than 10,000 feared dead after Myanmar cyclone

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"Gashole," a film showing the oil industry's coarser, unrefined aspects, plays at the Paim Theatre tonight.

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WEDNESDAY'S WEATHER

SUNNY

High 66°/ Low 46°

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More than 10,000 feared dead after Myanmar cyclone

Brent Morei leads the Cal Poly baseball team while considering his prospects for a professional future.

Online ASI voting begins tomorrow

Online ASI voting begins tomorrow

Raiza Canel

This year, voters don't have to stand in line and wait to check off their choices for Associated Students, Inc. president or Board of Directors; ballots will be cast online directly through the My Cal Poly portal.

Because of last year's run-off election and having to hold another ballot casting, we decided to re-examine how the ballots are tallied, so now it will be instant run-off instead," Election Committee Chair Amanda Rankin said.

Instant run-off will enable students to rank the candidates by choice. If no candidate has the majority of votes, the candidate with the least amount of votes will be disqualified. If your choice receives the least amount of votes, your second choice will automatically get your vote.

"It is important to vote because we are shaping what's going to happen for next year and who we want representing our colleges and our school," Rankin said. "If you don't vote, your voice is not heard on how you think our school should be run."

Rankin explained that any computer can be used to cast a ballot, whether it's located on or off campus.

"Even a student studying abroad can cast their votes for the election," Rankin said.

There are computers available for student use in the University Union, Kennedy Library and in each department. Students can vote through eVote links on the My Cal Poly portal, Cal Poly Web site or ASI Web site.

Students can also cast a paper ballot at the Student Life and Leadership office in the UU.

The voting process for the Board of Directors races will be slightly different because there are more choices. Students will pick their top five choices, and the number of representatives chosen will depend upon the population of each college. There will be three to five members for each college.

Elections will be held from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Wednesday and Thursday.

Information on the candidates for ASI president and voting process is also available on the ASI Web site at http://www.asi.calpoly.edu.
Cyclone
continued from page 1

people reported missing in a single delta town, Bogalay, 60 miles south of Yangon. However, Foreign Minister N win Win told Yangon-based diplomats the death toll could rise to more than 10,000 in the region, which sits barely above sea level, according to Asian diplomats who attended the meeting.

Hundreds of thousands were left homeless and without clean drinking water, said Richard Horsey, a spokesman in Bangkok for the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

The diplomats said they were told by Myanmar, also known as Burma, welcomed international humanitarian aid, including urgently needed food, medicines, water purifying tablets and mosquito nets. The first 10-ton shipment was scheduled to arrive from Thailand on Tuesday.

The appeal for outside assistance was unusual for Myanmar's ruling generals, who have long been suspicious of international organizations and closely controlled their activities. Several agencies, including the International Red Cross and Doctors Without Borders, have limited their presence in a consequence.

Allowing any major influx of foreigners could carry risks for the military, injecting unwanted outside influence and giving the aid givers rather than the junta credit for a recovery.

However, keeping out international aid would focus blame squarely on the military. It should fail to restore people's livelihoods.

Although relief talks with the government were still ongoing, the U.N. has said it appeared the U.N. had the "green light" to send in a team to assess the storm's damage as early as Tuesday, and would pull out all the stops to send in food, clean water, blankets and plastic sheeting.

In Washington, first lady Laura Bush said the U.S. Embassy in Myanmar had authorized an emergency contribution of $250,000 to help with relief efforts and was prepared to provide more if the government allows a U.S. disaster assistance response team to enter the country to assess needs.

"Although they were aware of the threat, Burma's state-run media failed to use a time-sensitive warning to citizens in the storm's path. The response to this cyclone is just the most recent example of the junta's failures to meet its people's basic needs," she said.

Washington has long been one of the ruling junta's sharpest critics for its poor human rights record and failure to hand over power to a democratically elected government.

The cyclone came just a week before a crucial referendum on a military-backed constitution, and the government's ineptful warning system and inefficient effort to recover from it so far, could sway angry voters to reject the charter.

"The combination of the cyclone and the referendums within a few days of each other makes an ugly, population anger and vulnerable and makes the political situation more volatile" it has been since massive pro-democracy demonstrations last September, said Montse Skidmore, a Myanmar expert at Australian National University.

The government apparently made little effort to prepare for the storm, which came bearing down from the Bay of Bengal late Friday. Although warnings were broadcast on television that 120-kph winds and 12-foot storm surges were predicted, no guidance was given about taking shelter.

In any case, the electricity supply is so spotty in Myanmar that few households, especially in the poor rural areas that were worst hit, would have been aware of the televised warnings.

The government has given no explanation for the high death toll, but most people in the worst-hit region live in fragile bamboo homes with thatch or zinc roofs, which would have been swept away in the storm by the surging flood.
More than 3.5 million new voters, AP survey finds

Mike Baker

Voter excitement, always up before a presidential election, is pushing registration through the roof so far this year — with more than 3.5 million people rushing to join in the historic balloting, according to an Associated Press survey that offers the first national snapshot.

Figures are up for blacks, women and young people. Rural and city South and North.

Overall, the AP found that nearly one in 65 adult Americans signed up to vote in just the first three months of the year. And in the 21 states that were able to provide comparable data, new registrations have soared about 64 percent from the same three months in the 2004 campaign.

Voters are flocking to the most open election in half a century, inspired to support the first female presidential candidate, the first black or the oldest ever elected.

Also, the bruising Democratic race has lasted longer than anyone expected, creating a burst of interest in states typically ignored in an election year.

Some Democratic Party leaders bemoan the long battle, with two strong candidates continuing to underrate each other. But there are clear signs that the registration boom is favoring their party, at least for now.

"This could change the face of American politics for decades to come," said Democratic Gov. Kathleen Sebelius of Kansas, predicting permanent gains for her party. Republicans, concerned at least somewhat for 2008, say these surged come and go over the longer term.

While detailed data are available from only a handful of states, registration seems to be up particularly strongly for blacks and women.

Among the new voters in North Carolina is Shy Ector, 25, of Durham. She favored Massachusetts Sen. John Kerry while a student at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill four years ago, but never actually took the time to make sure she was registered to vote. Barack Obama's candidacy was enough to make sure she did this year, she said.

"I was like 'Oh, now this is a reason to vote: This is different,'" Ector said. "I was inspired and I was excited."

New voters are generally less reliable. So there's no guarantee this year's newcomers will stick around in years to come — or even cast ballots in November if their candidate doesn't make it.

"I will be very disappointed, and it will take me some time to recover," Ector said of an Obama loss to Hillary Rodham Clinton. "I'm not going to say I'm just going to write off politics for good, but it does make you feel like you're doing all this work for nothing, and nothing's coming to fruition."

Even if some discouraged new voters drop off the numbers are striking.

Consider Pennsylvania and North Carolina — where the primary elections hadn't been expected to matter because they occurred so late in the nominating process.

New voter registrations favored Democrats in North Carolina, which holds its primary Tuesday.

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**State**

**RICHMOND (AP)** — Authorities briefly issued a shelter-in-place warning to 3,500 homes Monday after a chemical leak in this area.

The warning was lifted by about 3 p.m. after they determined the chemical, a solvent called toluene, wasn't a danger to residents, said Contra Costa Sheriff's Department spokesman Jimmy Lee.

**SAN FRANCISCO (AP)** — California's beachgoers soon will learn about rip tides and other dangers on Spanish as well as English when 1,900 educational signs appear on public access points along the coast.

The signs, planned to go up over the next few months, will alert visitors to potential dangers along the shore.

State officials say drowning is one of the leading causes of death in state parks.

**VALLEJO (AP)** — A man was arrested for allegedly punching a camel on a dare at Six Flags Discovery Kingdom.

Vallejo police say 24-year-old Christopher Allen was dared by a friend to enter a restricted at the theme park where the camel was kept, and punch it.

He did, police say, and got arrested for his troubles.

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**National**

**ST. MARIES, Idaho (AP)** — Part of the eagle Beauty's beak was shot off several years ago, leaving her with a stump that is useless for hunting food. A team of volunteers is working to attach an artificial beak to the disfigured bird, in an effort to keep her alive.

"For Beauty it's like using only one chopstick to eat. It can't be done" said biologist Jane Frink Casswell, who operates a raptor recovery center in this Idaho Panhandle town. "She has trouble drinking. She can't preen her feathers. That's all about to change."

**NEW ORLEANS (AP)** — The way the warden sees it, the more than 400-pound black bear living in the middle of the sprawling Louisiana State Penitentiary is an extra layer of security.

"I love that bear being right where it is," Warden Burt Cain said Monday. "I tell you what, none of our inmates are going to try to get out after dark and wander around. We don't have a big old bear. It's like having another guard at no cost to the taxpayer."

The bear was first seen by an inmate crossing a road in the prison on Friday.

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**International**

**CAIRO, Egypt (AP)** — Saddam Hussein feared catching AIDS or other diseases during his U.S.-supervised captivity, a leading Arab newspaper said Monday in publishing excerpts of his prison writings.

The London-based Al-Hayat said the comments came in portions of Saddam's prison diaries that it obtained from U.S. authorities. The U.S. military confirmed some of the late Iraqi leader's writings had been released.

When Saddam found out his U.S. military guards were also using his laundry line to dry clothes, he wrote that he demanded they stop, according to the excerpts.

**MOGADISHU, Somalia (AP)** — Troops fired into tens of thousands of rioting Somalis on Monday, killing two people in the latest eruption of violence over food prices around the world.

Wielding thick sticks and hurling stones that smashed the windshields of several cars and buses, the rioters jammed the narrow streets of the Somali capital, screaming, "Down with those suffocating us!"

In Mogadishu, protesters including women and children marched against the refusal of traders to accept old 1,000-shilling notes, blaming them and a growing number of counterfeiters for rising food costs.

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**Jeffrey D. Stulberg**

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celebritynews

Prince Becomes an Author

Prince the musical auteur is becoming an author.

"21 Night," a "photographic essay" that offers "a rare glimpse into the life, lyrics, and music" of the maker of such hits as "’99" and "Purple Rain," will be published worldwide come fall, according to Atria Books, an imprint of Simon & Schuster.

Uma Has a Stalker

Jack Jordan, 37, is on trial in state New York Supreme Court in Manhattan on charges of stalking and aggravated harassment; he faces up to a year in jail if convicted.

The celebrity-obsessed loser "terrorized" Uma Thurman by flooding her with phone calls and e-mails, ringing her doorbell at all hours and threatening to kill himself if he couldn't meet her, a prosecutor said Monday in closing arguments.

"This isn't about love for Uma Thurman," Assistant District Attorney Jessica Taub told jurors. "This is about self-absorption."

No Death for Movie

Will "Sex and the City" have a "Death in the City"? It's been a persistent rumor in cyberspace as the buzz kicks into overdrive for the film opening later this month.

If you want the rumor to remain in play, stop reading now.

But director Michael Patrick King is ready to free us from some of our worst fears. Namely, that Mr. Big, Carrie Bradshaw's longtime, on-and-off love played by Chris Noth, will somehow kick the bucket.

"Kill Me, Mr. Big! I would have been chased around the planet by women with torches," said King, who also wrote the film and produced it along with its star, Sarah Jessica Parker.

Kylie Gets an Honor

France honored Kylie Minogue on Monday, making her Knight in the Order of Arts and Letters for her contribution to French culture.

The 39-year-old Australian singer received the prestigious title the day before kicking off a world tour for her album "X." Past recipients include Ella Fitzgerald and Bob Dylan.

Engaged Duo

Scarlett Johansson and her boyfriend, Ryan Reynolds, are engaged.

The 23-year-old actress and the 31-year-old actor have not set a wedding date, Johansson's publicist, Marcel Pariseau, said Monday.

"I think it will make more voters and give people more flexibility as to when they can vote."

-Lindsey Soll, kinesiology freshman

"I think people are going to get lazy and they aren't going to do it. I'll probably forget.

-Giancarlo Altamura, wine and viticulture freshman

"I think it will help, but it won't change the interest in voting on campus."

-Neven Samara, art and design and graphic communications senior

"I think it will make more voters and give people more flexibility as to when they can vote."

-Lauren Olerich, statistics junior

Prince

Prince

"How will electronic voting affect the ASI elections?"

Compiled and photographed by Dustin Stone

Electronic voting will help make this year's election decision more representative of what Cal Poly students truly want.

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Prince

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Death, despair and Hitler ripped through Europe in World War II. We have all heard the story from every vantage point we thought possible — the Jewish side, the Nazi side and those it touched that fell into neither category. However, the side of Death is not one we hear often.

The Grim Reaper obviously must have been busy during the Holocaust, but how often do we think about what it would have been like to have that job? Markus Zusak’s “The Book Thief” explores the life of one German girl through the storytelling of Death. Now that’s a story Hollywood doesn’t go near.

It is a story about a German girl, Liesel, who cannot help but swipe books from anywhere possible. She learns to read them at night with her foster father. Due to an event in his past, the family takes in and hides a Jewish man, Max. Throughout the whole book, Death tells the story and adds his own narration and editorial remarks along the way.

Zusak builds the characters in a way that makes the reader feel for them. Liesel is this girl that keeps living through fascinating events, some on her own accord and some she cannot prevent. Her foster mother is a loud, mean lady that nobody likes, but she has a secret, more intimate side that her family sees. In turn, the reader sees this side and even respects her.

Then there is Max. He is running from the Nazis and the only person he can rely on is a man that was his father’s best friend in the army years before. Throughout the story, things happen to him that make the reader waiting. There is this constant need to know how he’s doing and know that he’s alive.

It is even easy to know Death. The idea is one most people fear every day of their lives, but by the end, it is easy to be sympathetic and really understand that the job of the Grim Reaper is one that not even he wants. The most interesting thing to look for is the color in the sky every time he takes a life from earth. And yes, he will note it every single time.

Not only is the character development unbelievable, but the writing style is also excellent. The whole story just flows. There are no hiccups or bumps in the road where Zusak has confused the reader. It is just there, laid out for everyone to read. The story is broken up by little chapters that make it easy to keep reading. The “I’ll just read one more chapter” mentality leads the reader to the end much more quickly than imagined.

“The Book Thief” is the new definition for thought-provoking and heart-wrenching. The terms may be over-used in general, but they are the best ways to describe the tale. Yes, most everyone believes that time was a horrible one, but there is no way to understand how it felt to be involved. However, if there is one book to get us one step closer, it is this one. At the end, you find yourself in the middle of it all, and when it’s over, you don’t really know how or when you got there, but feel one step closer to understanding the horror that occurred to Liesel and those around her.
There was a time, not too long ago, when the price of a gallon of gas was cheaper than a Slurpee from 7-Eleven. A few years ago used to say 91 cents per gallon, and now people would freak out if it was to be that low again.

Global oil prices have soared past what anyone thought gas would be. The problem is there are too many factors contributing to the crisis, and there aren’t easy solutions to it either.

Two guys from Los Angeles — Scott Roberts and Jeremy Wagener — have taken the question of why the technology is not advancing is because of the oil industry and the auto-manufacturers unwillingness to invest in alternative sources for transportation, "The duo thought the story of how the oil industry got to this point is amazing and challenging, One, because we were almost entirely self-financed, and two, it was hard to get people to talk to us," Roberts said.

The experience of making this documentary was amazing and challenging. One, because we were almost entirely self-financed, and two, it was hard to get people to talk to us," Roberts said. “‘What happened to that patent and why don’t we know anything about it?’ "

Roberts then told the story about Shell Oil tried to shut down its plant in Bakersfield because they claimed it wasn’t making money or producing enough oil. Later, the Attorney General opened its books and found that the Bakersfield operation was making more money than any other oil producer in the state.

"The experience of making this documentary was amazing and challenging. One, because we were almost entirely self-financed, and two, it was hard to get people to talk to us," Wagener said. "The intention when we started out was not make another one," said Roberts, 37. "That got me thinking, ‘What happened to that patent and why don’t we know more about it?’"

Roberts and Wagener bounced around the idea of the documentary for a while before they actually started filming. "We wanted to take this movie on tour because it opens up a lot of dialogue and the art of debate. People will be able to voice their ideas in an open forum," Roberts said. "If people are interested about the rise in gas prices, they’ll want to see this documentary."
Has pop music suddenly taken a silver De Lorean back to the '80s? It seems that way with the onslaught of drum machines, under the direction of that leech Timbaland. If the beeps and ticks of a soundboard haven't brought us back to the tube socks and winged hair, a new album by Madonna certainly will.

"Hard Candy" is a shot back to the days of old just as the artist herself is. Ironically, however, the once queen of sexuality and raging hormones is at her most metaphorical, with sexual innuendoes more veiled than anything else this year.

Thanks to a collaboration with musical midas Justin Timberlake on her single, "4 Minutes," Madonna ushers in the 21st century better than she did with Britney Spears duets. A collaboration with Kanye West should also win her points with the general public.

Madonna's vocals are relatively simple compared to today's other female singers. She doesn't have the power of a Christina Aguilera or an Alicia Keys, but the fact that she never tries to overexert her voice is a refreshing change of pace.

Unfortunately, the music is as simple as the vocals, making the album boring. Listeners are used to hearing Madonna above a sea of soundboard effects and keyboard strains. This is the sound that is natural to her, a sound she has mastered since the days of "Like a Virgin."

Since she has mastered that sound, it would be nice to see her come out of her comfort zone. If she were accompanied by, say, a piano instead of a keyboard and a guitar rather than a soundboard, it could be a welcome change.

Even when she tries a new genre, like on "Spanish Lesson," it sounds the same as the rest of the tracks. The title alludes to some sort of Latin flair but lacks any semblance to Spain's style, except the tiniest likeness in the drums.

As is often the case with Madonna (and most pop music today), the three remixes at the end of the album are unnecessary. All the tracks on the album sound like remixes, even the original "4 Minutes" that is remixed twice.

There is nothing extraordinary about "Hard Candy." It is a disappointment compared to the revolutionary strides Madonna took in the heyday of her career. "4 Minutes" can't stand up next to "Justify My Love," "Papa Don't Preach" and even "Material Girl" (though "Sesame Street's" version, "Cereal Girl," is possibly more enjoyable).

With the solid reputation Madonna has created for herself, she can easily hold her own in today's pop music scene, especially since she was one of the founders. But for a legend like Madonna, holding her own is not enough.
Kramer can shape new Poly

Every other week, about 30 student representatives convene to spend their Wednesday evenings discussing important bills, upcoming events, how money should be doled out to student clubs and much more. These students are the very ones you chose to represent you and your college, and will have the opportunity to choose once more in the next few weeks. But as the school year progresses, many of these students only occasionally exercise their rights to debate and their attendance becomes more infrequent.

That said, there is one person who continues to stand out and raise her hand when the rest of the room remains silent. And it’s not just in UU 216 where she inquisitively raises her hand — it’s everywhere.

Every year, the Mustang Daily editors take the time to discuss which Associated Student Inc. presidential candidate we feel would best serve the university in the coming year and leave a lasting impression for years to come. Several members of the student editorial staff met with the candidates in the interest of deciding which candidates would make the candidates with the candidates met with the candidates on one-on-one at their booths or by researching their platforms and stances on issues.

Some had even previously interacted with them in a class setting. But after a week of active campaigning, there wasn’t a whole lot of doubt among the 14 editors. With one editor supporting Arvand Sabetian, one supporting Melissa Lenza and one undecided, the majority of the staff agreed that Angela Kramer is the obvious choice for the 2008-09 ASI president.

While the two other candidates both show great experience and ambitious agendas for the position, Kramer truly embodies a new future for ASI and student involvement in general. It should be noted that the Health Center is certainly an example of a student service that could stand to be improved, and Sabetian’s idea to provide safe transportation to the students living in Poly Canyon Village next year is a great idea that should be pursued by whom ever is elected president.

But the role of ASI president is so much more than that. Don’t think of this as the U.S. presidential election that promises to accomplish specific tasks that will fix or change everything; this is about setting a tone and most importantly, implementing a vision that will last for years to come.

And Kramer’s vision is a particularly green one — one she calls “a realistic dream.” Her campaign says it all and sets an example of the ideals for which she stands. Few students in ASI are pushing as actively in their college environment or an ASI Board of Directors meeting, Kramer doesn’t accept being spoon-fed information.

Whether it’s in a classroom environment or an ASI Board of Directors meeting, Kramer doesn’t accept being spoon-fed information. Instead, she asks pertinent questions when no one else will.

And she takes the time to answer questions as well. Who would make a better ASI president than someone who has already been actively representing the university as a PolyReps and an ASI board member? Her passion for this position is unparalleled and even the most polarized of student organizations can’t help but be inspired by her. Kramer truly holds the potential to transform Cal Poly into a university where students are involved, unafraid to ask questions and care about their campus and its future. Given her passion for the position, her outreach to student organizations and her ongoing campus involvement, we believe she has the persistence and motivation to start paving such a future.

Unless you live under a rock, you’ve probably seen Angela Kramer before — she is everywhere. She stood megaphone in hand proclaiming “Homophobia has got to go!” at the Pride Alliance’s Same-Sex Hand-Holding Day in February and, along with her peers, smeared coal on her face in support of clean power at Focus the Nation in January. From the last-minute Chelsea Clinton speech to the controversial Saudi Arabia forum, she is always present and always asking questions.

Whether it’s in a classroom environment or an ASI Board of Directors meeting, Kramer doesn’t accept being spoon-fed information. Instead, she asks pertinent questions when no one else will.

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Even in classes, she proves that she is motivated and focused, but also engaged and respectful of her peers’ opinions.

So, regardless of whom you may lean toward for your president (or whether you’re leaning at all), take the time to get to know the three candidates. But in our opinion, it’s Angela Kramer who can shape a new and effective student government on campus, while inspiring and reminding students why they came to Cal Poly.
Make up or break up?

Are you feeling under pressure? Is your significant other overstepping boundaries? Are they picking out your underwear? Are they just plain psycho? Maybe it’s time to break up.

5. A gift is a gift. Don’t ask for it back after you break up.
6. Don’t try to keep tabs on what the other person is doing post-breakup.
7. Don’t bring other people into the breakup mess. Keep it between the two of you.
8. Be civil if you see the other person. Don’t act like a jackass.
9. Respect the other person’s opinion and feelings. This may be the reason you are breaking up in the first place.
10. There is no good time to break up. You are just prolonging the inevitable.

Sure it sucks to be in a breakup situation, but if one person is unhappy the entire relationship cannot work. It takes two people to make a relationship healthy and continue; take one person out and you no longer have a bond, just two people bound by a socially constructed trite. It’s never healthy to keep someone in a position they no longer want to be in, this will only strain the already rocky foundation of the connection a couple once had. If you believe in fate, this situation can only lead to the person you were really meant for, and if you don’t, maybe this will better the social life you once had.

We date for a reason: to find a person that we’re compatible with. Incompatibility can only result in a breakup, and though, as painful as it is, it can only lead us to better people and better things.

Jessica Fend is a journalism senior and Elizabeth Yi is an animal science senior. Fend and Yi are the love, sex and dating columnists and can be contacted at tendelsmithbailey@gmail.com. Last week’s winner of the pick-up line challenge was Luke Aver with “I may not be Fred Flintstone, but I can still make your bed rock.”

Holiday without the history

By the time you read this, most of you will be finished nursing your Cinco de Mayo hangovers and are back to the grind. A few of the particularly dedicated may still be staggering slightly — tequila can lie pretty rough on your system after all.

Cinco de Mayo, or the fifth of May, is the day commemorating the Battle of Puebla, when 4,000 Mexican soldiers staged an victorious against the French army more than twice its size on May 5, 1862.

So why do people, especially college students across the United States, celebrate this date, which is not even a Mexican national holiday? It’s an excuse to drink, of course.

After all, when downing Coronas and margaritas, how many college students actually think about the reason behind the celebration, other than the obligatory “Viva Mexico!” they may shout as they stumble.

“Well, to find out, this reporter attended a “Fiesta de Mayo” party (so named due to logistics, i.e. no one wanted to wait until Monday to party; we actually celebrated it on May 5) and attempted to find out.

Survey says, only three people actually knew what Cinco de Mayo was. A few offered up the common misconception of “Mexican Independence Day?” and most just looked at me rather blankly. Now, maybe I just hang around rusty people, or maybe its indicative of a wider social unawareness, I suspect it’s the latter.

It’s not just Mexican culture we appropriate however. I was in downtown San Luis Obispo on St. Patrick’s Day having dinner with a couple of friends, and all around me was a sea of college students adorned in disgusting amounts of green, heading to the bars. (By the way, who ever decided it’d be a good idea to don a green felt hat in the shape of a shamrock?)

Saint Patrick’s Day, held on March 17, is celebrated primarily in Ireland to celebrate its patron saint… Saint Patrick! College students commemorate this Christian saint by downing Guinness beer and Bailey’s Irish Cream. If they really want to show their devotion, they might even drop the beer INTO the Irish Cream and call it an Irish Car Bomb! No better way to celebrate a saint than by referencing a tactic used by the Provisional Irish Republican Army during a long, bloody struggle against Britain after all.

The German festival, Oktoberfest, is a celebration to commemorate the marriage of Crown Prince Ludwig (later King Ludwig I) and Princess Therese of Saxe-Hildburghausen way back in 1810. Did any of you know that? I sure didn’t.

What I did know was that it was an opportunity to drink large amounts of imported beer and speak in funny German accent while watching movies such as “Beerfest.”

Again, without knowing any history behind a holiday, Americans have successfully popularized it, as long as the occasion called for alcohol and partying. (As of now, I haven’t heard of any American students celebrating Germany’s Penitence Day, or National Day of Mourning.)

There’s nothing wrong with alcohol and partying. The problem lies in the assumption that we are “celebrating” a cultural event, usually a holiday of minor significance, because it’s an excuse to party.

Americans, frequently accused of arrogance and ignorance toward other cultures, do nothing but help perpetuate this notion when our only understanding of a culture’s holiday is the type of alcohol used to celebrate them.

So next year, while toasting your friends with lime-topped Coronas, appreciate Cinco de Mayo for its historical significance to Mexico, not only for the half-priced drinks.

Rachel Glas is a journalism junior and a reporter for the Mustang Daily.
The New York Times Crossword

Edited by Will Shortz  No. 0325

Across
1 Philadelphia 31 Smokestack emission
5 Fiesta Bowl site 57 Notwithstanding the fact that, briefly
10 Tortilla sandwich 58 Messenger
card .
14 Bring in from the 36 Traditional
tests .
15 ___ squash 39 "I M OFF"
16 Brecon greeting 40 Spend an afternoon in a hammock, e.g.
17 Gallic girlfriend 41 Musical beat
18 Blood-group of 42 Exam for a future affy.
directors? 43 It can get under your skin
20 5. 7. 9. etc., for 44 Under way
juvenile diseases. 45 "Let's one in the comic
22 Dallas-to-Des 46 Slowing, in mus.
Mones dr. 47 Composer
23 Change 48 G et arms
24 TV radio, newspapers, etc. 49 "Running*
26 Double or triple, 50 Headliner
say. 51 Heel and
28 Tournist, e.g. 52 Excludes
29 Head Quickly 53 Bothered a lot
30 Hebrew leader?
32 Mormon State
33 Mooing group of cattle
34 "Pomp and _
35 "Twister"
36 Traditional
37 Key passage?
38 Light in a light show
39 Unaccompanied
40 Spending, in mus.
41 Musical beat
42 "Rhythm"
43 "Twister"
44 Under way
45 "Let's one in the comic
46 Slowing, in mus.
47 Composer
48 G et arms
49 "Running*
50 Headliner
51 Heel and
52 Excludes
53 Bothered a lot
54 Caribbean
55 Exclude

Down
1 "I M OFF"
2 Bare, clubbed, or short
3 Amoebic
4 Farm-grown
5 "Running*"
6 Methamphetamine
7 "Rhythm*" amount
8 Business sub.
9 Wake of dawn?
10 Pump
11 Player next to a tackle
12 OH in 
13 Laso
14 Lew who played Dr. Kildare
15 Mexican father
16 Breezy greeting
17 Gallic girlfriend
18 Blood-group of directors?
19 Where spirits run"nonsensically"?
20 5. 7. 9. etc., for juvenile diseases.
21 " ... boom hit!"
22 Dallas-to-Des Moines dr.
23 Change
24 TV radio, newspapers, etc.
26 Double or triple, say.
27 Kind of artery
28 Wafers south of town
29 M egret
30 Hebrew leader?
31 Smokestack emission
32 Mormon State
33 Mooing group of cattle
34 "Pomp and _
35 "Twister"
36 Traditional
37 Key passage?
38 Light in a light show
39 Unaccompanied
40 Spending, in mus.
41 Musical beat
42 "Rhythm"
43 "Twister"
44 Under way
45 "Let's one in the comic
46 Slowing, in mus.
47 Composer
48 Get arms
49 "Running*"
50 Headliner
51 Heel and
52 Excludes
53 Bothered a lot
54 Caribbean
55 Exclude

Tried by Steve Salmon

The Toothfairy, Bigfoot, and the Easter Bunny exact their revenge on the "Myth Busters."
Morel
continued from page 12

schedule that comes with playing more than 50 games a season.
"I enjoy just being able to play
every day," he says.
In fact, Morel's baseball idol is Cal Ripken Jr., who holds the Maj-
or League Baseball record for most games played in a row.
But the liberal studies major ad-
mits the grueling schedule can make
tough to study.
"It can be difficult to balance," he says. "You're on the road a lot
every week or you're playing five games a week, so you just
hope that your teachers under-
stand.
Juggling so many responsibilities
seems to embody professionalism
that Morel intends to carry into a possible
MLB career.
"Ideally, I want to continue to
take good grades and get drafted at
the end of my season--then go start
my professional career," he says.

This year

Bryant
continued from page 12

as Dirk Nowitzki won the award and two-time MVP
Steve Nash finished second.
Bryant averaged 28.3 points, 6.3 rebounds, 5.4 assists
and 1.8 steals while playing in all 82 games despite tear-
ing a ligament in his right pinkie finger in February. A
hand specialist recommended surgery, but Bryant
decided to put it off until after the Olympics this summer.
Bryant is expected to return to NBA play.

Wednesday night from commissioner David Stern before
the Lakers face the Utah Jazz in Game 2 of their best-of-
seven second-round playoff series. The Lakers won the
opener 109-98 on Sunday.
Bryant, second in the NBA in scoring behind Cleve-
land's LeBron James, would be the first member of the
Lakers to win the MVP award since Shaquille O'Neal
won a near-unanimous choice in 2000. Other previous
Lakers to win the award during back to back years when it
was first presented were Kareem Abdul-Jabbar and Magic
Johnson, who won it three times each. Abdul-Jabbar also
won three with the Milwaukee Bucks.
Bryant and O'Neal led the Lakers to three consecu-
tive NBA championships, from 2000-02, and a berth in
the finals in 2004. The Lakers didn't win a playoff series
since then until sweeping the Denver Nuggets in the
first round last month.

Kobe Bryant, shown Dec. 9, 2007 against the
Golden State Warriors, led the Los Angeles
Lakers to the NBA's best record in the Western
Conference during the regular season.

Announcements

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HELP WANTED

ENGINEERING INTERNS
The City of Novato Public
Works Department is recruit-
ing 2 Engineering interns to
work this summer in the
Engineering Division. One
position will be in Private
Projects/Engineering and the
other in Capital Improve-
ment Projects. These
positions are suitable for
students with a background/
experience in Civil
Engineering and/or
computers. Rate of $12.35/
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Novato Application, avail-
able at www.ci.novato.ca.us.
Applications Accepted Until:
May 29, 2008. For further
information, contact
415-899-8962 or
pvaldivi@ci.novato.ca.us

HELP WANTED

Kids' Summer Camp
Counselors - The City of
Morro Bay is hiring
Counselors for their
Summer Kids' Camp
program. This is a
part-time position, 20-40 hr/
wk, beginning June 16th and
running thru August 15th.
$8.76-$9.12/hr. Staff is
responsible for children
as well as preparation and
providing age appropriate activities
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the City of Morro Bay at
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Deadline to apply: 5/23/08.
Visit mustanddaily.net/class-
fieds to see photos, links, and
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ad today!

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College models needed
College Girls Calendar, Central
Coast 2009 is looking for
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costal town to model in this new
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To the Girl (Tara?) in the silver/
grey Tacoma-looking truck with
the camper shell. I would like
to thank you for giving me
a ride to my car when I
sprained my ankle last
quarter. It was such
a kind and generous act, one
of those that reassures my
faith in the human popula-
tion knowing that there are
people like you in the world.
I wish I had done this earlier. **If you
are this Tara/ Tara, please email
mustangdailyclassifieds@gmail.com
and we know you got this.

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Kobe Bryant, shown Dec. 9, 2007 against the Golden State Warriors, led the Los Angeles Lakers to the NBA's best record in the Western Conference during the regular season.

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Kobe Bryant, shown Dec. 9, 2007 against the Golden State Warriors, led the Los Angeles Lakers to the NBA's best record in the Western Conference during the regular season.
Morel powers Mustangs into home stretch, considers pro future

Cal Poly junior third baseman leads team in batting average and RBI

Rachel Glas

Brent Morel learned the three Rs: playing baseball — but not the ones you might think. Thanks to baseball, the Cal Poly junior third baseman and voter became reliable, rounded and respected, all key to a successful playing career.

For the Mustangs, who have won four straight and completed their first sweep of the season Sunday against UNLV, Morel boots a .370 batting average and .514 on-base percentage double teams.

"We're having a lot of guys stepping up," Morel says. "He's certainly been one of them."

The 6-foot-2, 220-pounder also has a team-high four triples and is second in runs (42), doubles (16) and home runs (six).

Recruited by UCLA and USC, among others, the Bakersfield native simply preferred Cal Poly.

"I just liked the atmosphere of San Luis Obispo, the philosophy of the coaching staff, plus it's a good school," Morel says.

Although the 21-year-old played shortstop throughout high school, he switched to third base his sophomore year at Cal Poly. He went on to earn an All-Big West Conference honorable mention after hitting .333 in 2007. "It was just a better fit," he says.

Cal Poly's head coach, Larry Lee, knew Morel would be important regardless of where he fit in.

"He's just all-around good," Lee says. "He's a clutch offensive player and a solid defensive player with a strong arm."

Morel says he enjoys the packed weekend.

see Mond, page 11

Bryant likely to be named MVP today

John Nadel

LOS ANGELES — The NBA has scheduled a news conference today at a Los Angeles hotel, where Kobe Bryant is expected to be announced as winner of his first Most Valuable Player award.

Neither NBA spokesman Mark Broussard nor the Lakers would discuss the subject of the news conference, although the league did refer to it as an NBA Awards Announcement.

The Los Angeles Times reported last Friday that the 29-year-old Bryant had won the award. League spokesman Brian McIntyre refused to confirm or deny the report on Saturday.

"I didn't know if it was going to come in my career, but to have the moment come now is special, especially to share it with the group of guys we have here," Bryant told reporters Saturday. "We talked about (how) winning this MVP is extremely special because that means I'm doing good. I'm making my teammates better, putting them in a position to win."

Bryant, who entered the season as the league's two-time defending scoring champion, had finished as high as third in the MVP voting twice — after the 2002-03 campaign, when he averaged 30 points for the first time, and again last year, when Dal-

by Bryant, page 11

Cal Poly wins team competition at Wildflower

Sara Wright

About 1,000 Cal Poly volunteers watched nearly 7,500 athletes compete with enthusiasm inspired by their remarkable dedication and vigor — or with languor inspired by 80-degree heat and no shade — at this year's Arista Wildflower Triathlons over the weekend.

The courses sprawled around Lake San Antonio in Bradley, along various roads lining the lake, and including hills that competitors had a hard time with.

Around 80 Cal Poly triathletes competed, most in the collegiate races Sunday. Their difficult training and painful racing paid off as they won the award. League spokesman Brian McIntyre refused to confirm or deny the report on Saturday.

see Wildflower, page 11

Wildflower 2008 featured a number of well-known and amazing athletes, including Sara Reinertsen, the first woman to finish the Ford Ironman Triathlon World Championships with a prosthetic leg. She is also a spokesperson for Challenged Athletes Foundation (CAF), for which funds were raised at the races over the weekend. Dozens of races for The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society's see Wildflower, page 11

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