The drinking-age debate

Business students now preparing free income tax returns

Alisha Assom

It's that time of year again, when many people would rather roll over and play dead than go through the hassle of filing taxes. Luckily, help will soon arrive for Cal Poly students and local low-income families in the form of the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (VITA).

Alisha Axsom

The issue of lowering the legal drinking age from 21 to 18 has long been in discussion. Would there be repercussions in society if 18-year-olds were given the right or would young people accept their new-found freedom and exercise it responsibly? The next installment of ASI Events' True Life Series will explore this very issue when The Drinking Age Debate comes to Chumash Auditorium Thursday at 8 p.m.

Last summer, as many as 100 presidents from some of the most prestigious universities in the country — Dartmouth, Syracuse and Duke Universities to name a few — asked lawmakers to lower the drinking age from 21 to 18. Although President Baker was not among the presidents who spoke in favor of lowering the drinking age, ASI Events wanted to bring the debate to Cal Poly because they think topic is relevant to college students.

Cassandra Kayse

"This recovery plan will save or create more than three million new jobs over the next few years," the president said in a written statement released moments after the House voted. Still later, he welcomed congressional leaders of both parties to the White House for drinks as he continued to lobby for the legislation.

David Espo

WASHINGTON (AP) — In a swift victory for President Barack Obama, the Democratic-controlled House approved a historically huge $819 billion stimulus bill Wednesday night with spending increases and tax cuts at the heart of the young administration's plan to revive a badly ailing economy.

The vote was 244-188, with Republicans unanimous in opposition despite Obama's frequent pleas for bipartisan support.

"This recovery plan will save or create more than three million new jobs over the next few years," the president said in a written statement released moments after the House voted. Still later, he welcomed congressional leaders of both parties to the White House for drinks as he continued to lobby for the legislation.

Charles Dharapak

President Barack Obama shakes hands with audience members as JetBlue Chief Executive Officer David Barger, right, looks on after the president spoke about the economy Wednesday, Jan. 28, 2009, in the East Room of the White House in Washington.

Huge stimulus bill passes House as Obama prods

see Debate, page 3

see Bills, page 2
New program teaches students about police life

Genevieve Loggins  
MUSTANG DAILY  
mustangdailynews@gmail.com  
Thursday January 29, 2009

The University Police Department is holding a new type of training course for students interested in learning more about the role of police officers in throughout the country. The course goes from March 31 to June 2 with classes held once a week. Applicants will practice live action training in course structure, investigation, and domestic violence issues as well as court the county jail.

Completion of S.L.E.E.T will not qualify participants to become official police officers, but it will give them an understanding of the routine and procedures of an officer, said University Police Chief Bill Watson.

He said that this is his first time Cal Poly has offered a training course to students modeled after police faculty or staff member.

To participate, one must be 18 years old or older, a current Cal Poly student, or an employed faculty member of the university.

A routine background check must be completed prior to enrollment. Applicants must have no DUI arrests within the past three years or any felony convictions.

The course will be limited to the first 20 qualified applicants who enroll.

"Those who participate will have the opportunity to see what law enforcement is like through the eyes of a police officer," said Jason Le Clair, the University Police Department officer in charge of the course.

Le Clair started working for the University Police Department about a year ago, and worked as a police officer in the Atascadero area for six years.

His experience teaching different police procedures to younger students gave him the idea to create S.L.E.E.T at Cal Poly.

"I came up with the idea, said Le Clair. Four to six officers from the department will be teaching different information throughout the entire course, helping participants to learn from a variety of incidents.

Hands-on training and detailed explanation as to how the departments works will be the first training programs offered. When I began my training for the California Highway Patrol officer program, I wish I would have known about a program like S.L.E.E.T. in order to gain more knowledge of police departments' procedures," said Dan Likeness, San Luis Obispo resident and member of the CHP program.

The classes will be held from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. and follow a normal class structure complete with power point presentations and short lectures. The main activities will be live role-playing and simulated training, from car collisions to arresting procedures.

The best part of programs like S.L.E.E.T is the assimilated training events that resemble a real life scenario, Likeness said. It believes this will be a big deal, and very big success," Le Clair said.

For further information on how you can join the S.L.E.E.T training course, contact Officer Jason Le Clair at 756-5584, or email at jpleclair@calpoly.edu.

Sushiya

Japanese Restaurant
Sushi Bar · Teppan Grill · Party Room · Karaoke Room

Specials

$1.95 Small Sake or Sake
$2.00 Large Sake or Beer
$5.99 5-8 pieces of mixed Sushi, Sashimi, Tempura, Rolls, or 5-8 pieces of fried Vegetables, Chicken, Beef, or Shrimp

Open all day

[Specials menu]

Happy Hour Special

Everyday 3-5 pm

Specials

11550 Los Osos Valley Rd
San Luis Obispo, CA 93405
805.781.7781

www.mustangdaily.net

Bill  
continued from page 1

Earlier, Obama declared, "We don't have a moment to spare" as congressional allies hastened to do his bidding in the face of the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression.

The vote sent the bill to the Senate, where debate could begin as early as Monday on a companion measure already taking shape. Democratic leaders have pledged to have legislation ready for Obama's signature by mid-February.

A mere eight days after Inauguration Day, Speaker Nancy Pelosi said the events heralded a new era, "The ship of state is difficult to turn," said the California Demo­crat. "But that is what we must do. That is what President Obama called us to do in his inaugural address."

With unemployment at its highest level in a quarter-century, the banking industry wobbling despite the infla­tion of staggering sums of bailout money and states strug­gling with budget crises, Democ­rat said the legislation was desperately needed.

"Another week that we delay is another 100,000 or more people unemployed. I don't think we want that on our conscience," said Rep. David Obey, D-Wis., chair­man of the House Appropriations Committee and one of the leading architects of the legislation.

Republicans said the bill was short on tax cuts and contained too much spending, much of it wasteful, and would fall far short of administr­ator's predictions of job creation.

The party's leader, Rep. John Boehner of Ohio, said the measure "won't create many jobs, but it will create plenty of programs and programs through slow-moving govern­ment spending." A GOP alternative, comprised almost entirely of tax cuts, was defeated, 266-170.

On the final vote, the legislation drew the support of all but 11 Democrats, while all Republicans opposed it.

The White House-backed legislation includes an estimated $544 billion in federal spending and $275 billion in tax cuts for individuals and businesses. The total re­ceived in first nearly until the final vote, due to official re-estimates and a last-minute addition of $3 billion for mass transit.

Included is money for traditional job-creating pro­grams such as highway construction and mass transit proj­ects. But the measure ticks far more for unemployment benefits, health care, and food stamp increases designed to aid victims of the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression of the 1930s.

Tens of billions of additional dollars would go to the states, which confront the prospect of deep budget cuts of their own. That money marks an attempt to ease the recession's impact on schools and law enforcement. With funding for housing weatherization and other provisions, the bill also makes a down payment on Obama's campaign promise of creating jobs that can reduce the nation's depen­dence on foreign oil.

The centerpiece tax cut calls for a $500 break for sin­gle workers and $1,000 for couples, including those who don't earn enough to owe federal income taxes.

The House vote marked merely the first of several major milestones for the legislation, which Democratic leaders have pledged to deliver to the White House for Obama's signature by mid-February.

Already a more bipartisan — and costlier — measure is taking shape in the Senate, and Obama personally pledged to House and Senate Republicans in closed-door meet­ings on Tuesday that he is ready to accept modifications at the legislation advances.

Rahm Emanuel, a former Illinois congressman who is Obama's chief of staff, invited nearly a dozen House Re­publicans to the White House late Tuesday for what one participant said was a soft sales job.

This lawmaker quoted Emanuel as telling the group that polling shows roughly 80 percent support for the legis­lation, and that Republicans oppose it at their political peril. The lawmaker spoke on condition of anonymity, say­see Bill, page 3

Structures under the sun

Students built structures of PVC pipe and string on Dexter Lawn for their architectural engineering class yesterday. The student-designed structures emulate different types of large-scale buildings.

RACHEL GLAS MUSTANG DAILY
LA murder-suicide dad awash in debt

Thursday January 29, 2009  www.mustangdaily.net  MUSTANG DAILY  NEWS

Rosa Bella Senor, of Long Beach, wipes away a tear while paying her respects to the Lupo family in front of their home in the Wilmington section of Los Angeles on Wednesday, Jan. 28, 2009. Police believe Ervin Lupo, 40, killed his five children and his wife before turning the gun on himself. Both adults had recently lost their jobs.

Thomas Watkins

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Awash in debt, behind on his mortgage and recently fired from a job at a hospital, Ervin Lupo was planning on leaving California.

He'd pulled his kids out of their school, packed his sport utility vehicle with snow chains and winter clothing for him and his family and appeared ready for the trip to their deaul mother. In another bedroom, the bodies of his 4-year-old twins, Jaszmin and Jassely, and their 2-year-old boys, Benjamin and Christian, were found in a bed to the his mounting money problems or if the trip would have only been temporary.

Whatever his intentions, Lupo never got to Kansas.

"something happened in the last 48 hours that made him snap," said Detective David Cortez, the lead investigator in the case. "[He saw] no other way, no other direction.

"Whatever his intention, Lupo never got to Kansas."

"He had one of those victim mentalities," Cortez said. "He had a lot of those victim mentalities.

"He went out to get the bodies of his family members.

"He had one of those victim mentalities," Cortez said. "There is nothing yet that says his wife was a willing party.

Cortez told police they thought they heard firecrackers going off between 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. Monday, meaning his family was likely home with the bodies of his slain family for more than 12 hours before he killed himself.

Neighbors told police they thought they heard firecrackers going off between 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. Monday, meaning his family was likely home with the bodies of his slain family for more than 12 hours before he killed himself.

Cortez said he thought the media had rushed to asso­ci­ate Lupo's actions with the stagnant state of the econo­my, when really he alone was to blame for what he did.

"Being there and walking through the crime scene, it's a lot easier to see him as the suspect that did this to other people than the economy did this to him," Cortez said.

"He was one of the brains to the response to the circumstances, he had options." 

Lupo, 40, and his wife Ana, 38, a Guatemalan native who'd been living in the U.S. for at least 17 years, had both recently been fired from their jobs at Kaiser Perma­nent Medical Center West Los Angeles.

Kaiser Permanente spokeswoman Diana Bonta said the couple were fired after an internal investigation found they forged supervisors' signatures. They also misrepresented their income on documents provided to a non-profit agency that provides assistance for child care, she said.

"They were terminated because in the health care field, records are an important part of the process, and people trust us with their health," Bonta told the Los An­geles Times.

Several police officials familiar with the investigation told the Times the Lupos made more than $40 per hour but made appear they got $7 to $10 per hour so they could qualify for a child care assistance program. They spoke anonymously because the investigation is ong­ing.

Lupo fixed a better two-page letter to a local TV news station the morning he killed himself saying a hos­pital administrator told him he "should not even have bothered to come to work" and "should have blown (his) brains out."

Investigators interviewed the hospital administrator, who said Lupo's characterization of their conversation was an out-of-context misrepresentation and she denied saying what Lupo said she did.

In his letter, Lupo went on to suggest it was his wife's idea to end the family members lives. He appeared to have attempted to stuff the body of his wife, 38, into a pillow.

Police found the bodies of Lupo, his wife and five children Tuesday morning. Evidence suggests Lupo probably shot his wife, Ana, first then killed his children.

"It looked liked they were all caught by surprise," Cortez said.

On a bed in an upstairs bedroom, the bodies of two 2-year-old boys, Benjamin and Christopher; and their 8-year-old sister Brittany lay on a matress pad next to their lifeless father.

Neighbors told police they thought they heard firecrackers going off between 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. Monday, meaning his family was likely home with the bodies of his slain family for more than 12 hours before he killed himself. Neighbors told police they thought they heard firecrackers going off between 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. Monday, meaning his family was likely home with the bodies of his slain family for more than 12 hours before he killed himself.

"It's a really good way for students to work hands-on with cli­ents," said the project number and phone number, 7.31-2107 (English and Spanish).

"It's a really good way for students to work hands-on with cli­ents," said the project number and phone number, 7.31-2107 (English and Spanish).
Calif. octuplets said to be ‘amazingly well’

In lieu of names, the babies have been assigned letters A through H, in the order of their birth Monday morning.

Four of the babies — A, B, C and D — were receiving tube-feedings of donated breast milk ever three hours, said Miriam Khoury, clinical director of inpatient obstetrical nursing at the hospital.

The stomach of Baby F didn't absorb the first feeding he was given Wednesday and it was stopped, said Khoury.

Baby G, along with Babies A and C, was being given total parenteral nutrition feedings, or TPN, which delivers fluid, electrolytes, calories, amino acids, vitamins, minerals and fat into an infant’s veins.

The babies still receiving oxygen were E and G. Each was receiving less than one liter of oxygen per hour, a small amount, said Khoury.

The babies were expected to remain hospitalized for several weeks and could face serious developmental problems later on because of their small size.

The mother has begun pumping breast milk in anticipation of eight hungry babies. And with feedings come diaper changes that happen every two hours.

The babies’ incubators were being kept very near one another in the same room, for bonding, said Khoury. Khoury said the addition of eight babies to the neonatal unit had not stressed the hospital, which has handled the labor.

“Every case begets another case,” he said.

His biggest target, by far, is the Oakland Police Department.

Neither Oakland City Attorney John Russo, whose office routinely fights Burris’ lawsuits, nor Oakland Police Department union president Dom Atonzera were willing to share their thoughts about Burris.

Burris has sometimes been in trouble with the law himself. In 2005, a federal judge sharply rebuked him for failing to properly investigate a claim before filing one lawsuit.

U.S. District Court Judge Vaughn Walker fined Burris and another lawyer $10,000 for filing a lawsuit after only a single interview with the clients, who accused the police department of wrongfully killing a mentally disabled Oakland resident who stabbed an officer.

Burris defended himself before the judge by pointing to his long track record of filing successful lawsuits.

“Indeed, Burris’ years of experience and success serve to magnify the egregiousness of the conduct at issue in this case,” Walker said in ordering sanctions.

Burris’ clients hired him in 2007, and the judge filed a complaint to the State Bar last year. Burris said he hired a lawyer to write a letter to the state bar, and that officials there “closed the file” without taking any disciplinary action.

It wasn’t the first time Burris got into legal hot water. In 1998, the State Bar suspended him for 30 days for sending misleading solicitations to victims of mass disasters, which he blamed on overzealous underlings.

Neither Oakland City Attorney John Russo, whose office routinely fights Burris’ lawsuits, nor Oakland Police Department union president Dom Atonzera were willing to share their thoughts about Burris.
Iceland to appoint gay woman to interim prime minister post

David Stringer

Iceland's next leader will be an openly gay former flight attendant who parlayed her experience as a union organizer into a decades-long political career.

Both parties forming Iceland's new coalition government support the appointment of Johanna Sigurdardottir, the island nation's 66-year-old social affairs minister, as Iceland's interim prime minister.

"Now we need a strong government that works with the people," Sigurdardottir told reporters Wednesday, adding that a new administration will likely be installed Saturday.

Sigurdardottir will lead until new elections are held, likely in May. But analysts say she's unlikely to remain in office — chiefly because her center-left Social Democratic Alliance party is seen as unlikely to win a majority in the elections.

After acting as a labor organizer and leader of a junior partner in the previous government, Sigurdardottir was elected to Iceland's parliament in 1975. She served as social affairs minister from 1989 to 1996.

She was the only minister to see her rating improve on the previous year's score, Capacent Gallup said Wednesday. The poll of 2,000 people had a margin of error of plus or minus three percent.

"It's a question of trust, people believe that she actually cares about people," said Olufur Hardarson, a political scientist at the University of Iceland.

The new leader is known for allocating generous amounts of public funding to help the disabled, the elderly and organizations tackling domestic violence.

But conservative critics say Sigurdardottir's leftist leanings and lack of business experience won't help her fix the economy. "Johanna is a very good woman — but she likes public spending, she is a tax raiser," Haarde said.

Iceland has negotiated about $10 billion in bailout loans from the International Monetary Fund and individual countries. The loans are currently being held as foreign currency reserves.

"If the international community needed one more proof that the Sudanese will not investigate and prosecute mass murder crimes committed in Darfur, this is it," she said.

"Instead of collecting evidence, they intimidate, torture or convict anyone they suspect might be willing to give information on the crimes." The spokesman spoke on condition of anonymity, citing court procedures.

"It's a question of trust, people believe that she actually cares about people," said Olufur Hardarson, a political scientist at the University of Iceland.

Iceland's previous conservative-led government failed Monday after the country's banks collapsed last fall under the weight of huge debts amassed during years of rapid economic growth. The country's currency has since plummeted, while inflation and unemployment are soaring.

Former Prime Minister Geir Haarde won't lead his Independence Party into the new elections because he needs treatment for throat cancer.

While Haarde endured angry protests for months and had his limousine pelted with eggs, polling company Capacent Gallup said Sigurdardottir was Iceland's most popular politician in November, with an approval rating of 73 percent.

"She is respected and loved by all of Iceland," Sigurdardottir said Thursday, adding that a new administration would likely be installed Saturday.

Sigurdardottir's actions have "burned the country's political position and its foreign policy," her electors said.

But Sigurdardottir is expected to seek President Omar al-Bashir's arrest on charges of war crimes in Darfur.

"Spying means you give infor- 

mation to a foreign country, but the I.C.C. is not a country," Adeeb told The Associated Press. "It's a court, whether you recognize it or not."

It was not immediately clear if al-Sirri would appeal within the two weeks allowed.

A lawyer familiar with the case said al-Sirri claimed during the trial that he was set up and that the classified documents were handed to him when he went to the Sudanese interior ministry to ask for his personal file.

The lawyer said al-Sirri was arrested with the classified documents in his possession, and that a ministerially appointed prosecutor is also considering issuing an arrest warrant for Sudan's president, al-Bashir.

The cousin of the prosecutor has accused al-Bashir of masterminding attempts to wipe out African tribes in Darfur with a campaign of murder, rape and deportation.

The president is also accused of subjecting militiamen allied with the government to target killings, rather than rebels, in villages and camps.

The Hague tribunal's judges are expected to announce within weeks whether they will issue an arrest warrant for al-Bashir — the first sitting head of state named as a war crimes suspect by the court's prosecutors.

The United Nations says up to 30,000 people have been killed in the six-year-old conflict, which erupted when mostly ethnic African tribes rebelled against militia on al-Bashir's orders.

Sudan convicts spy for war crimes court

Mohamed Osman

A Sudanese man was convicted Wednesday for spying for the International Criminal Court ahead of its expected decision on whether to seek President Omar al-Bashir's arrest on charges of war crimes in Darfur.

Mohamed al-Sirri was convicted Wednesday of collecting and intending to leak police records and documents to the Netherlands-based court and was sentenced to 17 years in prison, Sudan's state-run news agency reported.

He is believed to be the first person anywhere convicted on charges of helping the international court, which is investigating war crimes allegations in Darfur.

Al-Sirri was a volunteer with government troops in Darfur, but no other information about him was immediately available.

Al-Sirri had pleaded not guilty and said he confessed under duress.

A spokesman for the Office of the international court's prosecutor denounced the verdict.

"If the international community needed one more proof that the Sudanese will not investigate and prosecute mass murder crimes committed in Darfur, this is it," she said.

"Instead of collecting evidence, they intimidate, torture or convict anyone they suspect might be willing to give information on the crimes." The spokesman spoke on condition of anonymity, citing court procedures.

The SUNA news agency said al-Sirri was convicted for war crimes by the court's chamber against Ahmed Harun — a Sudanese official who faces an arrest warrant on charges of war crimes against humanity for leading a local Arab militia against ethnic Africans in Darfur.

The United Nations says up to 30,000 people have been killed in the six-year-old conflict, which erupted when mostly ethnic African tribes rebelled against militia on al-Bashir's orders.

Sudan refused to recognize the international court and has refused to turn over Harun.
Dearest Ashley,

WORD ON THE STREET

“What is your opinion on lowering the drinking age to 18?”

“You can fight for our country but can’t have a drink. If you wait to drink, once you turn 21 some people go crazy and that’s not a good thing either.”

Jen Montrose, general engineering senior

“I would say it would be really irresponsible to lower it. Kids at 18 don’t understand the responsibility of drinking and are less in control.”

Angel Valdez, mathematics junior

“I think they should lower it since people I know binge drink more since they do it behind close doors because they can’t have a drink in public.”

Alex Andersen, computer science junior

“These are kids who have more responsible drinkers that are young.”

-Brian Cooper, business senior

Briefs

State

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — The city of San Francisco is accus­ ing health insurers of discriminating against women by charging substantially higher premiums based solely on gender.

The allegations appear in a law­ suit filed Tuesday by city Attorney Dennis Herrera against California insurance and health care regulators.

In the suit filed in San Francisco Superior Court, Herrera alleges that gender-rating practices by health insur­ ers are discriminatory and violate the state’s constitution.

Herrera is asking that current state laws that allow such practices be struck down.

LONG BEACH, Calif. (AP) — California State University says it has halted construction on more than 130 projects in 23 campuses.

CSU officials said Wednesday that the projects are being suspended because the state has stopped distrib­ uting money for university projects, financed by state bonds.

The suspended projects include classroom buildings, libraries, performing arts centers and major infra­ structure. There are about 15,000 jobs associated with the $484 mil­ lion in construction.

Earlier this month, CSU officials announced the university was freezing salaries and hiring to com­ pensate in response to the state’s bud­ get crisis.

National

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. (AP) — An aerial car crash after falling 15 to 20 feet and landing headfirst during a performance in Scottsdale, Ariz.

Authorities were investigating the cause of the incident Tuesday at the 18th Hole golf tournament event that killed 33-year-old Jose Angel Vera of San Diego.

Scottsdale police Sgt. Mark Clark says Vera fell during a Cirque du So­ 100-style performance in which the man unstrapped his body from a saddle while suspended in the air.

WASHINGTON (AP) — The salmonella outbreak spawned one of the largest ever product recalls Wednesday by a Georgia peanut plant where federal inspectors reported finding roaches, mold, a leaking roof and other sanitary prob­ lems.

Managers at the Blakely, Ga., plant owned by Peanut Corp. of America continued shipping peanut products even after they were found to con­ tain salmonella.

Peanut Corp. expanded its recall Wednesday to all peanut products produced at the plant since Jan. 1, 2007. The company is relatively small, but its peanut paste is an in­ gredient in hundreds of other food prod­ ucts, from ice cream, to Asian-­ style sauces, to dog biscuits. Major­ national brands of peanut butter are not affected.

Minister

continued from page 5

she’s never been afraid of standing up to her own party. They see her as someone who isn’t tainted by the economic crisis.

In 1995, Sigurardottir quit the party and formed her own, which won four parliamentary seats in a national election. Several years later, she rejoined her old party when it merged with three other center-left groups.

While a woman has served in the largely symbolic role of president, Sigurardottir will be Iceland’s first female prime minister.

She lives with journalist Jonna Leosdottir, who became her civil partner in 2002, and has two sons from a previous marriage.

Sigurardottir is best known for her reaction to a failed bid to lead her party in 1994. “My time will come,” she predicted in her conces­ sion speech.

~Associated Press Writer Valdar Gunn­ narsen contributed to this report.~

Little Love Notes

Your message will run in a special section of the Mustang Daily on Friday, February 13.

Dearest Ashley, You’re my princess!

Love, Andy

Deadline for all submissions: Monday, February 9 @ Noon

Bring this ad to the Mustang Daily Office: Building 25 from 226 with Check or Exact Change, if submitting a picture please bring it to the office with payment or email the photo to mustangdailyphotos@gmail.com

Restrictions: Keep it clean. The Mustang Daily reserves the right to decline publication of advertising material.

If submitting online, payment must be received by Monday February 9 @ Noon or ad will not run

$5.00

Name

Address

City State

Zip Phone

Message [Max of 26 characters]

Drea r I. w'you're my princess! Love Andy

55.00

Kelly

I love you!

Happy Valentine’s Day Brad.

I love you! Happy Valentine’s Day! Love, Scott

Dear Emily, I love you! Happy Valentine’s Day! Love, Scott

Two Ways to show your love!

$2.00
Riding the wave of life: student combines love of music and surfing

Krizia Torres
MUSTANG DAILY

She smiles and people catch the wonderful disease and smile back. She laughs and the whole world lights up. Whether or not she's aware of her positive impact on people, Cal Poly agricultural business senior and recording artist Hayley Maynard is loving life.

Finding time between juggling 28 units, getting in her daily run and surf, mountain biking, volunteering as a Spanish teacher at Bishop's Peak Teach Elementary School, working at the Cal Poly ropes course, doing evening yoga and spending quality fun time with her roommates, Maynard also writes music.

She has been playing the piano since kindergarten when her parents first enrolled her in lessons. But the first time Maynard picked up a guitar was a more dramatic story:

"I got into a really bad rock climbing accident at the end of my freshman year," she said.

"I fell 15 feet, shattered my leg and was in a cast for eight months. I couldn't do anything and life sucked. So I would crash down to the beach every day and taught myself how to play guitar. I played on the beach every day."

A Laguna Beach native, she just released her first CD titled "Tentatively at Ten." But unlike most albums, the proceeds will go to several foundations protecting the well-known surf spot Trestles.

The idea came to Maynard last year when she spent three quarters backpacking and exploring in Central America. "I just did my own thing," she said about her decision to leave the study abroad program she was enrolled in and travel on her own.

Besides music, surfing took most of Maynard's time in Central America. Spending most of the days paddling around for waves to ride, she looked around at her surroundings and was horrified at what she saw.

"The ocean waters there are so badly contaminated. People were getting sick, the ocean water was so bad," Maynard said.

Since sitting around and doing nothing is not an option for Maynard, she decided to do something about what she saw and combined her love for music with her appreciation for nature to make a difference.

"I picked up her guitar and ukulele, tinkered melodic chords on the keyboard, brushed up on her already fluent Spanish, raised up her soothing, angelic voice and sang.

"I wouldn't like to say I'm like somebody else, but I suppose I could be like Joni Mitchell or Jewel. It's mostly pretty mellow acoustic stuff," Maynard said about her music style.

While some of her songs were written while she was in Costa Rica last year, others date all the way back to Maynard's early high school years. For example, one of her songs, "Extraordinary Girl," took her six years to write.

"It was definitely hard to write because... it means a lot to me. I never wanted it to be in just one form. I wanted it to be expressive of all the emotions I've ever felt anytime I've ever sung it, which is really hard to do. I don't even know if I like it that much," she said.

"I never wanted it to be in just one form. I wanted it to be expressive of all the emotions I've ever felt anytime I've ever sung it, which is really hard to do. I don't even know if I like it that much," she said.

"Language is one tool that Maynard uses in her album. As a Spanish minor, she sings some of her songs in Spanish.

She says she owes her language fluency to her family. "My aunt is from Guatemala and she pretty much raised me when I was growing up. She was super crucial to my Spanish and really encouraged my learning," she said.

One of her favorite songs on her album, "Pas y amor," is sung entirely in Spanish and hits on topics of war and need for balance. The chorus of the song translates to "Where did you learn to fight in a war? Did you learn it at home or did you learn it abroad?" Maynard wrote it a few years ago when the war in Iraq was escalating.

"It just talks about how we need both sides; we need black and we need white and we need there to be harmony and accord in the world for things to work out. How much more are we going to lose in this world before we realize that a harmony does exist?" she said.

"It's just way mellow music that keeps you centered," she said.

With the entire revenues from her CDs going to the cause, Maynard said, "You're not only helping the oceans when you're buying this CD but you're also helping yourself because you get to listen to some cool music."

Maynard's album is on sale on iTunes, in record stores in downtown San Luis Obispo, Morro Bay and Orange County, and she's currently working on a Web site.

And what's in store for Maynard besides the success of her album's efforts and plans to graduate in June?

"If I could, I would surf, run and play soccer everyday. At the end of the day, I would want to just play guitar for the sunset and drink a beer and then just wake up early and do it all over the next day," Maynard said with a smile.
Hooking-up: what the hell does that mean?

"Hooking-up" is the most confusing word to ever grace Cal Poly’s campus. To most people it means kissing, to others it means a little more than that and to some it means sex. To confuse matters more, hooking-up can also be some sort of dating term, like a precursor to an official boyfriend-girlfriend title.

Or it may be used to describe a past semi-relationship that was never titled (OH yes, we need to hook-up). So how is a student to know the exact status of his or her hook-up?

To address this uncertainty I am going to attempt to define hooking-up for the betterment of Cal Poly. There should be one uniform explanation in order to unify our campus communication. To make this expression most efficient it should only be used for situations involving kissing and a little more. If you smooched someone while deary dancing, that’s all you did. You kissed. Don’t try to glorify it with a complicated description. Twerks that do in middle school, so quit confusing people by using the word hook-up.

Kissing and a little more sexual activity is the perfect opportunity to use ‘hooked-up.’ You did something more than kiss, but you didn’t have sex. This leaves a variety of options available, so instead of divulging details, you can simply, and appropriately say you hooked-up. In this context, it is used for convenience. It is much easier to say this catch phrase than to over-communicate. It is much easier to say this catch phrase than to over-communicate.

Before listening to “Exotic Creatures of the Deep,” I could not figure out for what sort of self loathing season I had taken to drinking a seemingly endless supply of Four Loko and wine despite a quite dry drinking past. I assumed, non-contagious illnesses, like colds, and most likely you, would have assumed that it was because I lacked self-respect or something pitiful like that. But that’s too simple and I am an evolved creature. I’m no longer the boy who was going to write about the new Andrew Bird album (great) and talk about how he was my shoulder to cry on in high school. Nope. I’ve matured. Instead of hiding out in my room with my headphones on, sobbing about how hard things are, my friends call me, “I could not believe that you were listening to this album.” Our hero wakes up from a night of drinking and accidentally “hooked-up” with a woman who was “slightly above the age of 60, they look as if they have aged about five years if you compare cover art from the ‘70s. The only difference is that Russell has a haircut and Ron has gone from a toothbrush moustache to a pencil moustache.”

Despite these changes, the band maintains their rock’n’roll attitudes and keeps things saucy and teaches me that God helps those who help themselves.

Just that sounds sad to you, than you need no circumstances to disappoint you, your audience, no matter how embarrassing things get.
Tucked away behind local businesses, San Luis Obispo has its own secret garden which few know about. This hidden hideaway is the organic herb shop owned by Cal Poly graduate Kirstin Sherritt.

Located down a small alley off Garden Street, The Secret Garden is an outdoor shop that sells organic herbs, spices, specialty teas and is home to several local plant varieties. Sherritt also sells local artists' work and other locally produced products.

"Most people are pretty enchanted when they come to The Secret Garden," Sherritt said. "The setting is unusual, being outdoors, and there's the sensual aspect of being able to open jars and smell things. The herbs are so fresh that a lot of people are surprised."

The Secret Garden opened in August 2004 and Sherritt, who originally started the business with a partner, said her personal goal was to create a resource for herbal medicine and plans. Sherritt also wanted her store to be a place where people could support local artists and vendors.

Sherritt specializes in herbal medicinal blends that are used to make tea, and also sells organic black, green, red and white loose-leaf teas. All are pesticide-free and sustainable. Customers buy individual types of herbs and spices or Sherritt creates unique blends to treat headaches, hormone imbalance or to relieve stress.

Tinctures, which are alcohol extracts that are slightly more concentrated than the herbs, can be used instead of making tea.

Sherritt said she prefers to take herbs in tea form but many people like tinctures if they "aren't into the tradition or ceremony of making tea."

Terri Knowlton, of Paso Robles, is a regular customer who likes to wander in to the shop when she drives down to San Luis Obispo every couple of weeks. She usually purchases tinctures but is considering trying some of the various teas offered.

"I've been thinking about getting the bulk tea versus the tea bags because I know that's so wasteful," Knowlton said. "This (tea) tastes better anyway."

The Secret Garden draws in a wide variety of customers, ranging from gardeners, to people who like to use aromatherapy around the house to chefs to people who enjoy cooking at home, Sherritt said.

"I get all ages and both genders," she said. "There's no demographic for herbs."

The only "advertising" Sherritt does is by word of mouth. Once someone discovers the fresh herbs and spices available, they usually become a regular and bring back friends and family members.

Knowlton said she knew the shop was there simply from walking by and seeing the signs. The name of the place drew her in.

"I have the association with the Secret Garden thing," Knowlton said. "I just loved that book as a kid. I identify with that."

Although she graduated with a degree in literature, Sherritt had lots of experience with all different sides of the herb business, from working at health food stores to herb farms in Central America, before she opened her shop. She said she "fell in love" with the whole idea of herbs.

"This is kind of a dream of mine to make a specific store dedicated to herbs," Sherritt said. "You see little sections in health food stores and it's nice that there are resources like that, but it's really nice to be able to specialize in it because the quality is so great."

She has not had any formal herb education and considers herself self-taught, but Sherritt said she has had many teachers over the years.
**Garden**

*continued from page 9*

Being a retail shop owner has allowed her to meet people who already know how to use herbs and they often share secrets and recipes with each other.

“I love herbs, I love to talk about herbs and I love introducing people to herbs,” said Sherritt, who instructs customers on how to use the products they buy if they do not know already.

Sherritt said she goes through phases when it comes to her own favorite herbs, but right now she enjoys Hibiscus, which grows in a few places including mountains, tops. It helps keep a person clear and alert and improves memory and brain function, Sherritt said.

---

**Sex**

*continued from page 8*

phrase than give details about your quarter of a hand job and three-quarters of a blow job situation.

The big reason hook-up should not be used for sex is because if you’re not mature enough to say it, you shouldn’t be doing it. Please don’t use an ambiguous term. It was incredibly awkward phase. It may be a short phase of general togetherness that happens prior to some official and public commitment. It could also be an extensive period of time where there is no label or commitment. The longer the hook-up phase, the more strenuous the relationship becomes. Curiosity lingers, limitations are self-inflicted and frustration ultimately strikes before there is some weird quasi-break-up from your unofficial relationship.

Maybe these definitions are bordering on bitter, but I’m sure everyone has or knows someone who has been a victim of a hook-up miscommunication. It is critical that when talking about hook-up a clear definition is chosen for the context of the story. It is also important that in a hook-up relationship both parties are aware of the expectations of the other. So let’s all try to use hook-up responsibly.

Denise Nilan is a journalism senior and the Mustang Daily’s new sex columnist.

---

**Movie Column**

 Rozanne S. Hays  Mustang Daily

"Rourke's "Wrestler" is performance of a lifetime"

The Wrestler — 2008

**** star rating (highest rating)

Director: Darren Aronofsky

Starring: Mickey Rourke, Evan Rachel Wood, Marisa Tomei

Oscar Nominations: Best Actor (Rourke), Best Supporting Actress (Tomei)

People enjoy a good comeback story. They love seeing a man who was once a hero experience hard times, only to bounce back in top form. If ever there was a movie that merited more deserving of a resurrection, it is Randy "The Ramb" Robinson. A battered, lonely and broken man who in his own words deserves to be ignored. Randy constantly reminds himself that wrestling is basically the only thing he has to live for, despite undergoing a transition from having his face on T-shirts and performing in front of thousands of devoted fans to his current state in a low budget wrestling circuit.

Mickey Rourke, in what will be considered the performance of a lifetime, plays the tragic hero. His portrait has already recently been recognized through both a Golden Globe Award and Oscar nomination for Best Actor. Despite this year’s stiff competition, namely Sean Penn, Rourke may actually run away with the award at the 81st Academy Awards.

One major aspect of the film that makes it so astonishing to experience is the obvious parallel between the lives of “The Ramb” and Mickey himself. If you’re not familiar with his career work, well...get familiar. In the mid-80s, Mickey Rourke was considered to be the next Robert DeNiro through acclaimed performances in films like “The Pope of Greenwich Village” (1984), “Angel Heart” (1987) and “Barfly” (1987). His exuberance and energy on-screen made his work so believable, creating characters that audiences were constantly rooting for. Like his broken down character, Rourke too was once a young star, and experienced fame and respect in Hollywood, only to throw it all away.

Through the alienation of his peers and involvement in a number of difficult situations (DUI charges, spousal abuse), along with a short stint as a professional boxer, he slowly began to fade away. Rourke went from being a leading man with striking physical features, to a has been who only occasionally was granted supporting roles in mediocre movies (his last hit being Sin City), not to mention a change in his appearance to what now reflects an obvious state deterioration.

Darren Aronofsky, who by the way, is a unique and controversial director (Requiem for a Dream), took another major risk by placing his movie in the hands of someone like Mickey, of whom prior to this film no studio would support. Despite the fact that Aronofsky has never made a movie in the past that even resembles “The Wrestler”, he succeeds. His effectiveness in exposing the behind the scenes and backstage aspect to professional wrestling only adds to the movie’s sense of realism.

I deeply cared about Randy "The Ramb" Robinson, maybe even more now. I then I had cared about any other character in the past. I also find myself constantly telling people how much I always did and even more so now do believe in Mickey Rourke.

There are a number of things I like about this film, including the supporting cast (Evan Rachel Wood, Marisa Tomei) and its indie feel. However, the one thing that stands out for me is the evident chemistry between bally director and a desperate actor, who both obviously put everything into this film knowing full well that there was a minimal chance for success.

Alex Pettison is a biological sciences freshman and the Mustang Daily’s new film reviewer.

---
Help Wanted

STAYING IN TOWN THIS SUMMER AND LOOKING FOR A GREAT JOB ON CAMPUS? Conference and Event Planning is Hiring 10-20 staff for summer conference season. Paid training begins in late April. Seeking hardworking, responsible and positive individuals who enjoy working in a fun, fast-paced team setting! Consumer service and cashier experience preferred. Optional on-campus summer housing at highly reduced rate. Flexible hours. PT/FT available. $8.00-$10.00 hour. Great internship opportunity. Applications and job descriptions available in Bldg. 170G (Cerro Vista Apartment Admin. Bldg.) M-F 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. or on Mustang Jobs online. Completed Apps. and resume due by 2/25/09. Call (805)756-7600 for detailed job description to be emailed to you.

Help Wanted

SUMMER OF YOUR LIFE! CAMP WAYNE FOR GIRLS
Northeast Pennsylvania 6/20 - 8/16. If you love children and want a caring, fun environment we need Counselors and instructors for our summer camp. Interviews on Cal Poly campus February 17th. Call 1-213-944-3069 or apply at www.camp-

Houses For Sale

NOW is the time to buy a house! Take Advantage of Huge Discounts and Histori-

Lost and Found

LOST Gold Ring. In the shape of a ROSE on a 01.05. Please call 530.906.5384 with any infor-

About Crosswords

Crosswords for young solvers: nymtimes.com/learning/xwords. Crosswords from the last 50 years: 1-888-7-ACROSS. For answers, call 1 -900-285-5656, SI 49 a minute; or, with a credit

 su|do|ku

© Puzzles by Pappocom

Play by Eric Nathani

Light ratio in astronomy

Prefer with romantic

Like son's silences

Spinners

Pey for lions

College in New

Landing

Bury, Cooper

On the fence

Send your opinions, rants and
tattles in 250 words or less to
mustangdailyopinions@gmail.com

Mail: Dallas, Texas 75201

For answers, call 1-800-285-5656, $1.49 a minute, or with a credit

Home of Fort

Scott National

Wardrobe

Miles

Tennis

The top

For answers, call 1-800-285-5656, $1.49 a minute, or with a credit

Play by Eric Nathani

Age of Robin

In and his

40 Trips through

40 Trips through

360 Diles (out)

64 Embarrassed, genuine

50fold and its

9 Shaders

8/8. If you love children and

want a caring, fun environment

we need Counselors and in-

structors for our summer camp.

Interviews on Cal Poly campus

February 17th. Call 1-213-944-

3069 or apply at www.camp-

waynegirls.com
Opinion

Thursday, January 29, 2009

Editor in chief: Mathew van Romburg
Managing Editor: Giana Magnoli

mustangdaily@gmail.com

Increasing foreign aid is unpatriotic

By Mathew van Romburg

The fact is over and the work has begun on Capitol Hill. In a show of unprecedented bipartisanship, the president met with Republicans Tuesday to hear their concerns over the first major piece of legislation to come from Obama’s administration—and it is a huge proposal.

Obama’s $825 billion recovery plan invests in art programs, physics, green energy, children’s health care, Pell grants, nation-wide infrastructure rebuilding and education—a key elements of Obama’s campaign, plus more.

In truth, the major aspects of this stimulus package are no different from the platform of change that Obama ran on. If Republicans want a definition of the hope and change that America voters for, this stimulus package is it.

For the past two weeks, Republicans have made their objections heard on all of the major news stations in America, pressure-selling us the same old 90’s rhetoric: 60% of the jobs back in the glory days of their Gingrich-Roast banquet.

Representative Jerry Lewis (R-Calif.) sputtered out his concerns over whether some of the proposals will actually stimulate the economy, and on whether the stimulus package is it.

On Sunday’s “This Week” she said, “The states are in terrible fiscal budget crisis now and part of what this particular leveling of our society is removed, the gap between the rich and the poor will become even more suffocating. We must ask ourselves as citizens in the coming years if we can support a government whose agendas are constrained with defending the general welfare and dignity of the American people."

Colin McKim is a journalism junior and the new Mustang Daily political columnist for Thursdays.

Republicans reluctance to get with the agenda shows they’re behind the times

By Mathew van Romburg

There are over 12 million students in the United States to whom the stimulus package is a huge proposal.

Emmanuel expressed surprise that the increase in Pell grant funding would be flagged as an area of concern because he said, “the ability to provide the people the opportunity to go to college in a era of instability is what you learn is human capital investment.”

Without the commitment of financial aid, the promise of an education means nothing, and once that particular leveling of our society is removed, the gap between the rich and the poor will become even more suffocating.

With the California budget still in crisis and the strength of the California State University system hanging in the balance, Republicans questioning the necessity of increasing Pell grant funding should feel of embarrassment when they realize the strength of the California State system comes from a Republican Representative from our very own state."

Speaker Nancy Pelosi addressed Republicans’ reluctance to get with the agenda shows they’re behind the times, Congresswoman Pelosi said in 2007, a sentiment that has permeated politics. But, Mr. Obama, America is neither beholden to foreigners nor U.N. budgets. As a sovereign nation bound by the laws of the U.S. Constitution, Americans must stand up against any Republican obstructionism, that is likely to befuddle the general welfare and dignity of the American people.

Colin McKim is a journalism junior and the new Mustang Daily political columnist for Thursdays.

The Conservative Constitutionalist

by Colin McKim

Last week, President Obama posted his new administration’s official agenda on the White House Web site. Much spending is planned in an attempt to stimulate the U.S. economy, but apparently Obama thinks he can stimulate the world economy as well through his plan to double foreign aid. The new administration’s agenda states that they plan to “…embrace the Millennium Development Goal of counseling, testing and treatment by 2015 will set all the world in half by 2015, and they will double our foreign assistance to achieve that goal. This will help the world’s weakest states build healthy and educated communities, reduce poverty, develop markets and generate wealth.”

The American president has substantial influence over the country’s foreign aid agenda through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), an executive branch agency founded during the Kennedy administration. U.S. federal aid has continuously increased over the decades to where it currently stands at $25 billion annually.

Considering the historical and current situations surrounding foreign aid, increasing federal donations to foreign nations and the global United Nations to accommodate the growing global problems is likely to be fruitful in mediocre success at best.

More importantly, the policy of federal foreign aid contradicts the American people.

At a time when the national debt stands at over $10.5 trillion and many Americans are feeling the pinch of the current economic downturn, an agenda which promotes continuing current or future generation’s tax money to foreign people is downright unpatriotic.

Obama said in a speech on his foreign aid spending plan that the spending would be increased to $5 billion annually over a five-year span. A $5 billion plan would equate to one-tenth of the projected 2009 federal discretionary spending budget for defense.

Stopping the spread of HIV/AIDS is foremost on Obama’s foreign aid agenda. Recently a HIV reporter in South Africa found teenagers smoking anti-retroviral HIV/AIDS drugs to get high. Should Americans work hard and pay taxes so that Africans can get high off these drugs, donated in large quantities by programs such as USAID? The U.S. government is being paid a $2.5 million party for the Ugandan Ministry of Health instead of gloves and basic medicines, a $2.5 million party for the Ugandan Ministry of Health instead of gloves and basic medicines, a $2.5 million party for the Ugandan Ministry of Health instead of gloves and basic medicines, a $2.5 million party for the Ugandan Ministry of Health instead of gloves and basic medicines, a $2.5 million party for the Ugandan Ministry of Health instead of gloves and basic medicines.

A system in which one government steals from its citizens to give to a government who in turn gives the rug and the nation-vvnde infrastructure to the country. In fact, the principle author of this stimulus package is the U.S. government pension and charity aid inadequate to live on.

Many basic problems need to be solved at home and basic medicines, a $2.5 million party for the Ugandan Ministry of Health instead of gloves and basic medicines, a $2.5 million party for the Ugandan Ministry of Health instead of gloves and basic medicines, a $2.5 million party for the Ugandan Ministry of Health instead of gloves and basic medicines, a $2.5 million party for the Ugandan Ministry of Health instead of gloves and basic medicines.

Without the commitment of financial aid, the promise of an education means nothing, and once that particular leveling of our society is removed, the gap between the rich and the poor will become even more suffocating.

With the California budget still in crisis and the strength of the California State University system hanging in the balance, Republicans questioning the necessity of increasing Pell grant funding should feel of embarrassment when they realize the strength of the California State system comes from a Republican Representative from our very own state."

Speaker Nancy Pelosi addressed Republicans’ reluctance to get with the agenda shows they’re behind the times, Congresswoman Pelosi said in 2007, a sentiment that has permeated politics. But, Mr. Obama, America is neither beholden to foreigners nor U.N. budgets. As a sovereign nation bound by the laws of the U.S. Constitution, Americans must stand up against any Republican obstructionism, that is likely to befuddle the general welfare and dignity of the American people.

Colin McKim is a journalism junior and the new Mustang Daily political columnist for Thursdays.

The fanfare is over and the work has begun on Capitol Hill. In a show of unprecedented bipartisanship, the president met with Republicans Tuesday to hear their concerns over the first major piece of legislation to come from Obama’s administration—and it is a huge proposal.

Obama’s $825 billion recovery plan invests in art programs, physics, green energy, children’s health care, Pell grants, nation-wide infrastructure rebuilding and education—a key elements of Obama’s campaign, plus more.

In truth, the major aspects of this stimulus package are no different from the platform of change that Obama ran on. If Republicans want a definition of the hope and change that America voted for, this stimulus package is it.

For the past two weeks, Republicans have made their objections heard on all of the major news stations in America, pressure-selling us the same old 90’s rhetoric: 60% of the jobs back in the glory days of their Gingrich-Roast banquet.

Representative Jerry Lewis (R-Calif.) sputtered out his concerns over whether some of the proposals will actually stimulate the economy, and on whether the stimulus package is it.

On Sunday’s “This Week” she said, “The states are in terrible fiscal budget crisis now and part of what this particular leveling of our society is removed, the gap between the rich and the poor will become even more suffocating. We must ask ourselves as citizens in the coming years if we can support a government whose agendas are constrained with defending the general welfare and dignity of the American people."

In fact, the Governor created a new position with a six-figure salary for former Assemblywoman Nicole Parra just last week.

For one I will take a much closer look at who I vote for the next time California législators are up for re-election. You can bet I won’t be voting for the incumbents.

However, we can see this crisis improve with the passing of Obama’s recovery plan. Almost a third of the money that Obama seeks as part of economic stimulus plan is going to the states, and I think that if the California budget gets some help from the fact that we belong to a global team, we are likely to fund education at all levels and the grants that would otherwise be delayed.

The new Republican concern over Obama’s recovery plan I saw was legitimate was the extrava­

gant funding for Planned Parenthood, but President Obama seems to have got the message out the fund­

ing for that on Tuesday. Aside from that, the Rep­

publcans’ arguments are proving to be contorted efforts to hinder the positive process of Change in America, an annoying, unexplainable whirling in your car engine.

What happens regarding Obama’s recovery plan, Republicans just need to trade in their 1980’s pipes for talking points from this epoch, otherwise they will just be the latest victims of the states’ culture of rhetoric while Obama, free-thinking Republicans, Democrats and the vast majority of Americans speed ahead in our 2010 Honda Hybrid Insights.

Stephanie England is an English junior and Mustang Daily political columnist.
The ultimate college debate: should the U.S. lower the drinking age?

Young men ages 18 to 20 self-reported driving while alcohol-impaired more than any other age group... there is a reason our insurance rates are so high.

New drivers + new drinkers = more alcohol-related deaths

OK, before I get massive amounts of hate mail, I want to say that I know there are plenty of responsible 18-year-olds who work hard and deserve the option of coming home to a frosty pale ale beer after a long day. No one deserves this more than the women who put their lives on the line to protect this great nation from threats: the brave men and women of the armed forces, who of course can be drafted at age 18.

But to lower the drinking age to 18 will only induce more binge drinking, which will result in more deaths. No what ifs, ands or buts about it. Just think about it. How many times were you left dry when someone of age wasn’t around to buy it for you? If millions more get access to alcohol legally, there will be a spike in underage drinking and more drunk drivers.

Many people drink before they’re of age — I did — but to use this as an argument disbelief, a personal ignorance of how the world operates. All you need to do is talk to police officers, doctors, nurses and family members who see the aftermath of irresponsible drinking by teenagers.

Believe me, I’ve heard every reason why the drinking age should be lowered. Here are some of my favorites:
1) The rest of the world drinks at 18 or younger.
2) How are we going to be responsible if they were to make us responsible?
3) If we can the fighting for our country at 18 then why can’t we drink at 18?

This is why the truth is that we are not like the rest of the world.

In France, England or Mexico for that matter, where most people’s modes of transportation are bicycles, buses, trains, subways, rabs and cabs, a lowering drinking age can work. But in America, the most recent National Transportation Safety Administration statistics show that there are 765 motor vehicles per 1,000 people, it means that more intoxicated young people will result in more deaths on the road. It is that simple.

Even President Barack Obama agrees. Love him or hate him, he understands what will happen if more young people are allowed to drink.

“T know it drives you nuts.But I’m not going to lower the drinking age,” Obama told a young veteran on MTV, and referenced the drop in deaths due to alcohol when the age was set at 21 in 1984.

Still don’t believe me?

According to the Department of Transportation National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, in 2006, alcohol-impaired driving accidents accounted for nearly one-third of all traffic accidents in the U.S.

Young men ages 18 to 20 self-reported driving while alcohol-impaired more than any other age group.
What does that tell us about how responsible we are? There is a reason our insurance rates are so high.

And the argument that we can volunteer to fight and die for our country would make sense... if people age 18 to 21 are volunteering to drink.

The truth is we’re not so change it for the rest of us is just plain selfish. The reality is that there is no draft in place or the likelihood of a draft soon.

Let’s be grown-ups and admit that we have not fully matured. Even if you think you have, statistics show that we are the least responsible age group, from voting to driving. So unless our lifestyles, society and transportation options change, we’re stuck waiting three more years before we can head downtown for pint night.

Omar Sanchez is a journalism senior, news page designer and Mustang Daily reporter.

Kids know that it is illegal to buy alcohol but have absolutely no problem consuming it. In fact, having the drinking age set to 21 adds to the mystery of drinking.

Teenagers will drink anyway — take away the mystery

In the U.S., people can legally smoke cigarettes, serve in the armed forces, vote, get arrested, have sex and gamble in some casinos at the age of 18 yet they cannot drink.

The National Minimum Drinking Age Act, which required all states to enforce a minimum drinking age of 21, was signed into law by Ronald Reagan in 1984, with the strong urging of Mothers Against Drunk Driving.

The purpose of this legislation was to take the right to drink away from young adults and thus reduce the number of drinking-related accidents. The problem is that current alcohol-related statistics involving teenagers do not look good.

Sixty percent of all teenage automobile accidents are alcohol-related. About 70 percent of all teenagers drink alcohol, including one in 10 between the ages of 12 and 13, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Wait — does this mean that 70 percent of our country’s future leaders are committing crimes regularly? Is the U.S. breeding a generation of criminals? Not quite. The problem is that in our society, kids know it is illegal to buy alcohol but have absolutely no problem consuming it. In fact, having the drinking age set to 21 adds to the mystique of drinking.

Teenagers are going to drink no matter what and the statistics prove this. The problem with not being able to legally drink until the age of 21 is that kids are under a zero tolerance, “alcohol is evil” policy for their entire lives and then, randomly, after 7,665 days of life, they are told to drink up and it is one big happy celebration. With this social mindset, problems occur.

First, teenagers do not learn about drinking in moderation. In the U.S., about two-thirds of teenagers do not engage in binge drinking, which is defined as drinking five or more drinks in a few hours. The movie “Superbad” portrays the teenage drinking mindset very well. Teenagers are desperate to get their hands on alcohol and when they do they drink as much as they can, as if it's a precious resource.

Secondly, when teenagers do turn 21, they tend to go nuts. In a survey of 2,518 college students, 34 percent of men and 24 percent of women surveyed reported consuming 21 drinks or more on their 21st birthdays. This is a dangerous trend. Of college-aged deaths that made news in 2006, 11 died celebrating their 21st birthdays.

When a teenager becomes an adult at the age of 18, it is a bitter sweet day. For all intensive purposes they are adults, yet, for whatever reason they cannot legally drink. America should at least be consistent with its laws. If we’re going to deny people the right to drink, we might as well just raise the age of all adult responsibilities to the age of 21.

The U.S. should seriously consider adopting an alcohol policy similar to that of the U.K. Lower the drinking age to 18 but don’t enforce it too heavily. Make it legal for kids to have an alcoholic beverage with a meal. Young adults will start to see consumption of alcohol as a normal aspect of society instead of a deviant, reckless act. Alcohol-related deaths and accidents will potentially decrease, (but will always happen to some degree no matter what) and 18-year-olds will be able to call themselves adults with no asterisk.

Chris Jagger is a journalism senior and Mustang Daily reporter. . . .
New men’s basketball tournament celebrates mediocrity

Andrew Greif
ORANGE COUNTY TIMES[ORANGE]

There is much rejoicing today in college towns across America that feature mediocre college basketball.

Have you heard? There will be not only three men’s postseason basketball tournaments this March, but a fourth postseason basketball tournament has been created to give 16 more teams a chance to put in their 2009-10 media guide that indeed, they placed in the postseason.

So we can’t get a football playoff, but now basketball tournaments pop up every year? Now they’ve just tantalized us.

Let’s take a moment to collectively scream like Dick Vitale.

America, are you really ready to watch 129 teams play postseason basketball? Let’s rephrase that: America, do you actually want to watch nearly a third of Division I college basketball teams (there are 343) play in the postseason?

There are some teams out there that truly don’t belong in a postseason tournament. Some might even agree and defer to their local high school team. Most of the fans from these seasons have already sat through an entire season poorly enough. Why make them suffer more?

This is all happening because last season the College Basketball Invitational debuted. They invited 16 teams, so they will again this year. It begins March 17, and its best-otherwise-than-championship series could last until April.

Tulsa won last year. If you didn’t know that before reading this, this is the one thing you have learned today.

The fourth — the CollegeInsider.com Postseason Tournament — has emerged. It, too, will select 16 teams and will last from March 17-30.

Didn’t know that? Neither did the CBI.

“We’re kind of like, ‘Oh really?’ said Doug Loney, a media contact for the Gazelle Group, which runs on other college basketball tournaments around the nation during the preseason.

There are some teams out there that truly don’t belong in a postseason. tulsa’s Jerome Jordan is bounded by defenders. Tulsa won the inaugural College Basketball Invitational last year.

Us too, Dan.

Sure, there are a handful of teams with legitimate grips about being left out of the NCAA Tournament, which invites 65 teams to its bracket and crowns the national champion of college basketball at its finale.

But those teams that get left out go to the 32-team National Invitational Tournament. That’s it. That’s the way it should be. Two tournaments is enough. Three was OK. The CollegeInsider tournament can’t even compete with the other three in the best-abbreviation category. For the record, we’ll go with C.I.T. Also, there’s no issue, it seems, with who gets to choose which teams. The C.I.T. says it gets to choose after the NIT and NCAA get their picks, while Loney said, “I don’t think there’s going to be a pecking order.”

He also said he had serious doubts both tournaments would choose one or more of the same teams.

I’m not sure ... North Dakota State will be hard to pass on.

But really, for all our sakes, stop the four tournament Madness. Otherwise you’ll be inviting teams that don’t belong to be on the floor come March. According to the current NCAA Ratings Percentage Index, which combines several factors and is a major component for the NCAA Tournament selection committee, those teams on the “bubble” for the C.I.T. include Portland (13-7), Texas A&M Corpus Christi (11-9), Iowa State (12-7) and Akron (10-8).

North Dakota State is No. 117 and Oregon State (12-7) and Akron (10-8).

The CollegeInsider tournament claims it would choose one or more of those teams.

We’ve got plenty to distract you from those textbooks.
Race
continued from page 16
just two games behind fourth place Cal State Northridge. Cal Poly can cut that gap in half if they host the Matadors at 6 p.m. on Saturday in Mont Gym in a game that will be nationally televised by Fox Sports Network-Prime Ticket.

A main source of the Mustangs’ resurgence has been the recent play of junior guard Lorenzo Keeler.

After a week in which he averaged 22 points, 4 rebounds and 1.5 assists per game, Keeler was named Big West Player of the Week.

I thought he did everything extremely well,” Bromley said of Keeler’s performance. “He’s always been a competitor. He really did it all over the entire weekend.”

Bromley said that senior forward Titus Shelton was also a big component to the Mustangs’ recent success. “Titus was the man (last weekend),” Bromley said. “He did a great job on (Pacific senior forward) Anthony Brown. The officials just let them play and it was so physical. When you saw those two it was almost like, ‘This is a collision sport.’

Cal Poly will likely need the inside presence of Shelton and the hot shooting of Thomas and Keeler to beat the Matadors (7-10, 4-3) despite Cal State Northridge likely being without leading scorer Deon Tresvant after he was arrested along with the son of Matadors’ head coach Bobby Brawsell and two others for allegedly stealing more than $6,600 in merchandise from a Best Buy in Porter Ranch, Calif. earlier this month.

Still, Bromley said that while the Matadors haven’t played their best basketball this year, a wounded animal is more dangerous. “Obviously they’re disappointed early,” Bromley said. “They had a pretty tough schedule early on and didn’t play very well. Then the thing with (Brawsell’s) son and Tresvant has been a distraction. But it didn’t look like it (last weekend). They beat Irvine pretty handily.”

The Matadors may be recovering their swagger at the right time. At the Big West media day in October, coaches overwhelmingly picked Cal State Northridge to win the conference championship. “We teased (Brawsell) in the Big West Conference meetings this year,” Bromley recalled. “We said, ‘Well, we’re going to pick you to finish first and second in the conference this year because you should beat everybody so badly.’”

Long Beach State is the current Big West leader.

Bromley acknowledged that Saturday’s game is important but they’re loving the game inside presence of Shelton and the hot shooting of Thomas and Keeler.

“I’m playing this game and living this life to the fullest,” the quarterback said. “I’m playing this game and living this life to the fullest.”

So is Clark, who in addition to all-most knocking himself out in the hit on McGahee has some medical issues of his own. Only 29, he has a trait of sickle cell anemia, and had to have his spleen and gall bladder removed in 2007 after his left side began hurting in a game against Denver.

Concussions don’t concern him. If he’s worried about anything, it’s that the NFL will begin to clam down on the kind of hits he’s become known for.

“If they do anything else, we’re not going to be able to tackle people,” Clark said. “I’d like to see them stop talking about it on TV so much. It gets so much press when you see things like (his hit on McGahee). People are beginning to believe it’s a barbaric sport.”

People may be right.

— Tim Dahlberg is a national sports columnist for The Associated Press.
Dav id Beck ham considering staying with AC Milan

ASSOCIATED PRESS

MILAN, Italy — David Beckham is enjoying his stay with AC Milan so much that he is considering remaining in Italy after his two-month loan expires.

“Playing here is the dream of every footballer,” Beckham said in an interview, which was published in the Italian daily Corriere della Sera on Wednesday. “But deciding isn’t easy. It’s a question that takes time.”

Beckham’s loan from the Los Angeles Galaxy expires March 8, after which he is due to return to Major League Soccer.

“I’m under contract and I have a lot of respect for the Galaxy. But the chance to play for Milan is something special,” Beckham said in the interview, which was published in Italian. “I knew I would enjoy it, but I didn’t expect to enjoy it this much. But in terms of character, I’m a very respectful person.”

Milan vice president Adriano Galliani said Tuesday the seven-time European champion was prepared to pay a fee to keep Beckham, and would meet with his representatives in the next few days.

“I find (Milan) very similar to Manchester United. It has that tradition that only the great clubs have,” Beckham said. “At Milan, like at United, it’s a very particular atmosphere wherever you go, from the training pitch to the stadium.”

The former United and Real Madrid player scored his first goal for Milan in Sunday’s 4-1 victory over Bologna.

His second came on Wednesday from a free kick 33 minutes into a match against Genoa, with England coach Fabio Capello looking on.

The sharp-angled shot taken from the left of Genoa’s area put Milan ahead 1-0.

Beckham started in Milan’s three previous matches, and the Rossoneri did not lose, drawing with AS Roma and beating Fiorentina and Bologna.

Beckham hopes to be called up by Capello for a friendly against Spain on Feb. 11 and equal Bobby Moore’s record of 108 England appearances for an outfield player.

His ultimate goal is to make England’s team for the 2010 World Cup in South Africa, and moving back to Milan may hinder that bid.

Capello was the one who suggested playing in Europe, sometimes it was frustrating playing in certain games. But every now and then, moving from one start to another, I also enjoyed myself!”

Two nights later, the Mustang trailing by 16 points with nine minutes remaining, completed an improbable comeback to beat UC Davis 77-75 on two 3-point field goals from senior guard Chaz Thomas in the final 1:30.

Not only did the Mustangs avoid falling by the conference wide, they climbed back into the conference race.

“I want to be in a coffin right now and I want the coffin to open up and set me up and go, ‘See we’re alive! We’re back from the dead,’” Bromley joked.

The Mustangs (5-12, 2-5 Big West Conference), who were in danger of missing the conference tournament a week ago, are now.

**BIG WEST STANDINGS 1.29.09**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TEAM</th>
<th>BIG WEST</th>
<th>OVERALL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Long Beach State</td>
<td>5-1</td>
<td>.833</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific</td>
<td>4-3</td>
<td>.571</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UC Davis</td>
<td>4-3</td>
<td>.571</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cal State Northridge</td>
<td>4-3</td>
<td>.571</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UC Irvine</td>
<td>3-3</td>
<td>.500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UC Riverside</td>
<td>3-3</td>
<td>.500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cal State Fullerton</td>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>.429</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UC Santa Barbara</td>
<td>2-5</td>
<td>.286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cal Poly</td>
<td>2-5</td>
<td>.206</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>