The Cal Poly Poly baseball

team is off
to a hot
start.

IN SPORTS, 12

The Cal Poly deal to develop an engineering program with Jubail University College (JUC) in Saudi Arabia is far from being finalized, even though Cal Poly sent JUC a signed contract over six months ago.

The controversial deal hit another snag in December when attorneys for the Saudi Royal Commission formally rejected the university's latest proposal and returned the contract unsigned with fundamentally different terms than the one signed by Cal Poly President Warren Baker in July.

As the Mustang Daily reported on Oct. 30, the changes to the contract included precursory clauses, such as those used in hiring private contractors. These clauses dictate that certain amounts of work are to be done by set dates, and if not completed by deadline, funds will be deducted from the university's $5.9 million contract. Cal Poly administrators are currently renegotiating these new terms.

"Universities cannot operate under the terms of a procurement contract," said Susan Opera, Dean of Research and Graduate Programs. "We don't work like that. We can't do it. We work on a best efforts basis. We're an institution of higher learning—

that's our mission."

"These financial penalties we couldn't live with," she added. "We can't take any significant financial risk, and there hasn't been part of the negotiation all along."

Though the revised proposal sent back to Cal Poly in December had been altered in financial terms, according to Environmental and Civil Engineering Department Chair Greg Ferg, who reviewed the new proposal as principal investigator in program management, the terms of work the university will do in developing JUC's curriculum and assisting with facility has not changed.

"The scope of work I've seen has stayed consistent with the original proposal," Ferg said. "The university is now concerned with the details in that we are capable of doing what we said we were going to do."

The contract has been back in the hands of the university for nearly two months, and after the Feb. 16 death of Cal Poly's Engineering Associate Dean, Ed Sullivan, who played a key role in the deal since its inception, the entire department is reorganizing, creating another delay in the process.

"The contract right now is in review by upper management," said Xenia Bixler, Director of the Grants Development Office, on Wednesday.

"It's not quite to the president yet. It's actually with the Cal Poly Corporation employment, the legal council for the corporation as well as the executive staff and Dean Opama."

"The next step is when we—we the executive staff and the president—are happy and satisfied that the risk is bound to the university at an acceptable level, we will return that contract to the Saudis. At that point, we will see if they accept that or not. It really has to say," she said.

Boiler said she will try to get an

see Contract, page 2

A former advisor to an Israeli prime minister spoke last night in an attempt to prove that Israel, a country whose policies have been embodied in controversy lately due to its conflict with Hamas, is actually "the champion of human rights in the world."

He began the evening by explaining to an audience of more than 50 students and community members why Israel sometimes holds policies such as instituting roadblocks and checkpoints in Gaza, that critics say aren't democratic.

"All democracies occasionally have to resort the freedoms we take for granted in the interest of pursuing some higher goal," he said. "For example, we Americans consider the right to privacy sacred. But if we forfeit our right to privacy every time we go onto an airplane. Opening our suitcases, our private property is forfeit our right to privacy every time we go onto an airplane."

He also tried to refute the claim that Israel is degrading the Palestinian right to self-determination. He said that according to international law, no people have the right to self-determination, including countries he says have a greater claim to independence such as the Kurds.

"Definitions have been warped by the casual use of that term in ways that aren't legitimate in real discourse based on law and international relations," he said.

The bulk of his speech concentrated on arguing that in the area of warfare, Israel is a leader in human rights. For example, he compared the way the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) conducts warfare with the way the United States military does.

"Did Americans drop flyers on the Afghan village?"

see Speaker, page 2

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"Did Americans drop flyers on the Afghan village?"

see Speaker, page 2

Knowledge gives power to Change the Status Quo

Samantha MacConnell

Cal Poly students and community members concerned with different societal issues will have the chance to become better informed on their issue of choice and discover how to take action at the 7th Annual Change the Status Quo, "A Student's Role in Shaping Society.

"A lot of people know what they want to do, but they don't know where to start," said social sciences sophomore Michelle Fox, who is one of four directors involved in coordinating the event with Student Community Services. "This is a good place to start. It's a student's role in shaping society."

The two-day event kicks off Friday evening with a preview of the presenters from all 28 of Saturday's workshops. Presenters will discuss multiple issues, promote discussion and provide students tangible tools to take action on campus.

"I think it's an awesome place to meet people that are passionate and willing to actually put ideas into action because sometimes it's hard to find people like that," said Jared Gam, a biology senior and a director of the conference.

Slam poet Sonya Renee, who many say has redefined what it means to be a woman in slam poetry, will conclude the evening with her poetry, which discusses her social activism and advocacy for women's rights.

"It's such a huge honor to have her because she is just absolutely amazing," said Melody Shirazi, art and design senior. "Her words are articulate and she just moves you with how she flows and her energy montage is kinetic."

Friday's event for the Status Quo Conference takes place in Chumash Auditorium at 5 p.m. The preview is free and open to everyone.

Registration for the second day of the conference, which is the day of the workshops, costs $10 for students and $20 for non-students. The price buys students an optional yoga session, breakfast, lunch, a T-Shirt and the chance to be a part of a maximum of four workshops.

"Something different we did with our workshops this year is we re-

see Conference, page 2
other signed contract sent to the Saudi Royal Commission within the next two weeks, but admitted that time frame may be overly optimistic.

The proposed partnership between Cal Poly and JUC has faced numerous obstacles both at home and abroad since its initial proposal in late 2007. On campus, students familiar with the deal, however, much of the controversy stems from misinformation.

"All the information won't out there for everybody to know and be on an equal level," Bleder said. "So that created some controversy. I think as more people know exactly what's coming and they understand it, it becomes less controversial."

Though the engineering program at JUC will initially only be open to men, Cal Poly officials say the Saudis have told them that they plan on creating parallel programs for women. In addition, they assert that Cal Poly faculty selection to oversee the development of the department at JUC will abide by all U.S. anti-discrimination laws. They note that faculty will not be teaching at JUC, but instead play a supervisory role in developing curriculum and facilities.

"We can't discriminate, and once again, the law prevents us from discriminating against anyone," Opazo said. "It's my understanding that that part of the contract remained intact. I know that was a big source of concern but we think that's covered."

Regardless of promises of social progression on the part of the Saudis, many students and faculty continue to question whether Cal Poly and its mission of diversity in higher learning should be associated with the Saudi regime. Many also wonder if the deal is worth the trouble of such a prolonged set of negotiations.

"When you have the opportunity to go into a country like this, do you have the opportunity to affect change," Opazo said. "I know people disagree with this. But we've seen histories of that when you isolate countries, they don't get any better, they get worse."

"Who's going to say what we can do?" she asked. "As long as we have a dean of a college and faculty who want to do a project, we have to be very careful. I mean, where do you draw the line? It's a very slippery slope, in my opinion."

College of Engineering Dean Mohammad Noori declined to comment on the yet-to-be-finalized contract.

contract
continued from page 1

Conference
continued from page 1

required an action piece that all of the workshops have something tangible you can use," Fox said. "Sometimes after a conference, momentum dies. Here, we want to actually do something that day and if you want to continue with it, you have the opportunity."

Last year, approximately 300 students and community members attended but the number is expected to be higher this year.

The conference brings people together who are passionate about issues college students and future leaders should be aware of while giving information and an avenue for action, said Jacqueline Chan, microbiology senior and a director of the event.

The keynote speaker will be Spencer Brodsky, a 17-year-old Maryland student who created a program that makes and sends stoves that burn 70 percent less wood to Darfur. The program, called Stoves for Darfur, creates a more sustainable environment and less work for women in gathering wood. He will begin the event with a presentation after breakfast.

"We chose him because of his grassroots organizing," Fox said. "This one person did this really cool thing, so therefore you guys could do this really cool thing and all the workshops could lead to this change."

Speaker
continued from page 1

As someone with two children currently serving in the IDF, Green said, "I am not at all certain that it was the right move by my government. They could've bombed the hell out of the camp just as NATO did in Bosnia and just as America did in Iraq."

"It happens, it's part of war. But those 23 soldiers died for one reason alone: they died to protect the women, children and men in that refugee camp. If there is a better example in society, that holds the right to life as the fundamental right I've been yet made aware of."

Green also cited examples of Israel's progressive stance on civilian rights.

Israel established six universities in West Bank and Gaza. There are more publications and more freedom to publish and criticize the government. Muslim society, women's rights even gay rights were both introduced and protected by Israeli administration," he said.

He said he sympathized with the plight of the Palestinians.

"If we care for the Palestinians, if we want to help them live a better life, we must demand democracy for the Palestinians," he said.

Not everyone was convinced by his speech. One audience member said she "appreciates (his) arguments about the definition of human rights." She countered by saying that both Israel and the United States practice and defend state terror, which simply highlights the fact that "all of us need to perform better because calling this human rights issue the standard around the world."
WORD ON THE STREET
"What's the best meal you make for yourself as a busy college student?"

“I love cooking fajitas, with chicken and bell peppers. It’s pretty easy and tastes really good.”

-Alan Tonissen, architecture engineering senior

"We cook dinners in my sorority, Gamma Phi Beta, and usually make tacos bars, tostada pizzas or spaghetti with tomatoes and basil."

-Elizabeth Allison, kinesiology junior

"I get ground turkey, and make turkey burgers on the George Foreman grill."

-Kyle Shoemaker, business management junior

Oyster farmer sues state for leaking restrooms

An oyster farmer is suing California because sewage from Morro Bay State Park restrooms allegedly leaked into the bay and contaminated oyster beds. The Tomales Bay Oyster Co. alleges in last month’s San Luis Obispo County Superior Court lawsuit that a faulty sewage lift station serving two county Superior Court lawsuit that a leges in last month’s San Luis Obispo into the bay and conuininated oyster ma because sewage fix > in Morro Bay coliform bacteria into Morro Bay.

Pasta — I like penne with parmesan cheese.”

-Carmi Telesco, journalism sophomore

"Heck, I'm not even going to go there."

-Jimmy Kimmel, host of "Jimmy Kimmel Live!"

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DINING AND PROFESSIONAL ETIQUETTE

Good manners are always in style! You represent your company image wherever you go—during business hours and afterward. Always remember that you are an extension of your organization and the way it conducts business. It is likely you will have either a “food” interview or you may attend a more formal dining event through your employment.

Here are some dos and don’ts to make sure you will be a success!

• Turn OFF your CELL PHONE!
• Your goal is to make people feel comfortable and respected at the meal
• Remember, it’s not about the food, it’s about how you present yourself
• Sit when your host sits, wait for them to put their napkin on their lap first
• Avoid ordering food that drips, squirts or slips
• Your bread plate is always on the left, your water glass is on the right
• Order food in the mid price range
• Avoid ordering food that drips, squirts or slips
• Your bread plate is always on the left, your water glass is on the right
• Work from the outside in with your utensils
• Always pass the salt and pepper together (they are a pair and should not be separated)
• Don’t ask for a doggie bag
• Don’t apply lipstick, comb your hair, blow your nose or speak with food in your mouth
• Relax and be yourself!
The New Mentawais
A fresh take on one of the premiere surfing destinations

Will Taylor
Special to the Mustang News

A surfer expedition to the Mentawai Islands would be a dream destination for anyone who loves riding waves. Many months before, there had been whispers by members of the Cal Poly Surf Team about a trip to the islands led by two of surf journalism’s leading professionals. Those whispers grew to meetings then to plans. The trip came with a hefty price tag but there was just no way that I could justify not going; it sounded like everything a surfer and a journalism student could want.

We would ride aboard the boat D’Ybor for two weeks with Matt and Sam George, long-time writing and editing forces behind Surfer Magazine. They would give us insight into the world of surf journalism while surfing and earning three college credits. To round it out, the trip included humanitarian aid on the island of Australia were aspects of surf travel that I never saw coming.

The Last Mile

The sun has barely fought its way through the thick mangroves as I searched for salmon crocodiles in the study corners of the canal. The journey with our group on two small dinghies seemed to take ages, but soon we were docked in Siber, school supplies and soccer balls slung over our shoulders searching out the schoolhouse. It wasn’t a long search; screaming children, kids hanging out windows and teachers in militaristic uniforms led us to our destination.

The classrooms bustled with excited kids as we distributed packages of pencils, erasers, notebooks and other assorted school supplies. The kids yelled, cried and smiled. One of our crew asked in choppy Indonesian if they wanted to play some soccer. No matter the culture, one thing students will always have in common is their love for recess. The children came flying in that schoolhouse like bees from a disturbed hive. For the next half hour I received high fives in both soccer and volleyball. My shirt soaked with sweat from the intensity of the muggs, tropical air, I set to take a break next to one of my colleagues, who asked “How awesome would you think this was if you were a photographer?” A beach of Ewing’s show up unannounced give you things you will actually use, you give an unsupported recess and play with you?”

The question was answered by the smiles on the kids’ faces and the chaotic schoolyard.

Damp Departure

In the port city of Padang, D’Ybor is hard to make out the boat in the rain and the dark. It is a moated Panisi, an Indonesian fishing boat, with a wooden hull and gunnels that run down from each end forming what looks like an 80-foot smile.

Five of my teammates from Poly Surf Team board the boat along with a surfer and surfboard shaper from Washington D.C., a photographer from British Columbia and an all-Indonesian crew none of whom speak English.

Our surf guides are two American ex-patriots and rounding out our group are two female Muslim interpreters.

The next morning, it is still dark when I reach the top of the level of the island椐 to me there. As I feel the cool, humid air slowly move across my skin, I hear music (or maybe words) come out from over the city. It takes me a second before I realize it’s a Muslim prayer. It almost seems the prayer, not the river, is carrying us out into the ocean.

The boat slowly moves past the streets and houses that are quiet save a few dogs and a woman washing her face in the muddy water.


cal Poly Causes

A bi-weekly series

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The question was answered by the smiles on the kids’ faces and the chaotic schoolyard.

CRANKING CLASS

For most of my college career I’ve fought the urge to skip classes and go surfing. During our floating class, things were different. Class could occur at any time during the day, revolving around what the waves were doing. We would have meetings after the dawn patrol, after dinner or while having a beer.

During class on the boat, it was hard to evenly split my gaze between the George brothers and barnell. While Matt’s classes were exploratory and abstract, Sam’s teachings were more regimented and direct.

The surf students were also unique since students cared and took pride in responsibility in their actions whether it be in life or in the classroom. Every assignment that we did on the boat, we read in front of the class. It forced us not only to be critical of other’s work but of our own as well. No one lacked, no one blew off assignments and no one skpped class to go surfing. We didn’t have to.

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Mustang Daily

Thursday, February 26, 2009

BRADY CLARKE

Freelance photographer

BRADY CLARKE, top, is greeted by Indonesian students. Left, journalist Junior Will Taylor rides a wave on the Indonesian trip.

Peace On Panisi

The waves were coming in two perfect sets at Rag’s Rights, a fairly famous break. As we watched them from our anchor point, people started to gravitate towards the lineup, despite its inconsistent and shallow manner. Our blinc interpreters had somehow been talked into talking to surfboards behind the skill and a crew had joined them in that mission.

Soon, I was the last remaining English speaker not enjoying the ocean. Instead of joining in, I grabbed a Bintang beer, an issue of Surfer Magazine and a Beng Beng, a popular local candy bar. I opened my beer and took in the view from the top floor of our Panisi.

In that moment, I felt no desire to surf. Instead, I felt an odd contentment with being in that place at that moment. Two Islamic women were taking turns touting on surfboards behind the skill with our crew’s only female student. It was something that they wouldn’t have dreamed of a couple of weeks prior. Four of the guys made up the cheering section while rest of the students were out in the lineup picking off a few good waves. One of the crew was floating just off the shoulder fishing with a hand line and as we would discover later, was making a killing.

I felt like I was in the center of a merry-go-round. There were so many good experiences happening all around me and I was priviledged to be able to see them all. I watched people making memories, talking friends and making the most of an incredible trip while giving back to the Indonesian people.

As the sun set that night, the sky turned into a swirling watertoclor. Shades of orange, red and purple reflected onto the ocean from the evening sky like a massive mirror. A diner of fish caught a few hours earlier was served and I couldn’t help but smile; this trip had been different.

Will Taylor is a journalism junior and a Mustang Daily guest writer. For information on this year’s journey, go to landscapetrips.com.

EDITOR’S NOTE: Cal Poly Causes will be a new bi-weekly series written by students who want to share their experiences about service learning at a local, national and global level. Please send submissions to mastonediotips@gmail.com.
Tragedy and love mix in student production of famous Lorca play

Chelsea Bieker

Written in 1933 by famous Spanish poet Federico García Lorca, "Blood Wedding," or "Bodas de sangre," is a tale of unrequited love, honor, tradition and passion.

Inspired by an Andalusian newspaper article, this intricately woven tale of a love triangle gone wrong features both dialogue and poetry phasing seamlessly from English to Spanish.

Josh Machamer, director of Cal Poly's theatre and dance department, said Lorca's play showcases the story of a bride and groom interrupted on their wedding day by the bride's previous lover proclaiming his feelings for her.

"The story itself is fairly simple," he said. "Guy meets girl; girl still loves guy; they run off together; two guys kill one another — like a Spanish 'Romeo and Juliet.'"

Machamer said that because of Lorca's strong poetic background, the play intertwines poetry and music to the rural Spanish backdrop.

"He is a poet first," he said. "What is apparent is Lorca trying to infuse poetry and dance from a flamenco perspective.

The setting of the play is simple, "a stripped-down world," as Machamer described it; a stark, almost barren stage with a projector screen in the back center. The furniture is all made of basic wood and the costumes will be monochrome, allowing actors to move through scenes, their clothing absorbing the color of the lighting.

"It's creating a living painting," Machamer said. "It highlights these artistic images for each scene. The actors move most of the props around during scenes, and that is all part of the style the designer wanted to add to the production.

"The costume and lighting designers complemented that style," he said. "The lights push each scene to the specific color range they want."

Theatre junior and stage manager Melanie Marshall said that rehearsals have been getting progressively better as the actors are able to connect with their lines.

"It's very impressive to see people go from reading lines and then four days later they sound flawless," she said. "They know what they are saying. The actors find more every time."

Marshall said that the story is a familiar one that everyone will be able to relate to, but is told in a very original way.

"What do you do when you don't end up with the person you see?"

The cast of Cal Poly's production of Lorca's "Blood Wedding" rehearse for their upcoming performances in the months of February and March.

The Reader
Fri: 4:00, 6:45, 9:15
Sat: 1:30, 4:00, 6:45, 9:15
Sun: 1:30, 4:00, 6:45
Mon-Thurs: 4:00, 6:45

Slumdog Millionaire
Fri: 4:00, 6:45, 9:15
Sat: 1:30, 4:00, 6:45, 9:15
Sun: 1:30, 4:00, 6:45

The Wrestler
Fri: 4:00, 6:45, 9:15
Sat: 1:30, 4:00, 6:45, 9:15
Sun: 1:30, 4:00, 6:45
Mon-Thurs: 4:00, 6:45

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Wedding

continued from page 5

want to be with?” she said. “It’s the idea of regretting things that could have been, and wanting to rebel against society.”

Marshall said that the simple props and costuming go along with the theme of a lack of individuality.

“It’s very cohesive and it allows for changes and mood based off the lighting,” she said. “Each scene has its own color. It is about an individual fighting against a regressive society.”

Theatre sophomore Natalie Roy plays the bride, a leading role. She said that her character is very psychologically deep because of her ties to tradition and her urge to break away.

“It has been interesting to play,” she said. “But it’s been kind of hard. There is always the struggle to do what’s right and the struggle to do what your heart is leaning you towards.”

Roy said that along with an intense rehearsal schedule, the actors are also brushing up on their Spanish-speaking skills in order to be at one with the production.

“All of the poetry that is involved is really difficult to wrap your mouth around,” she said. “It has been nice because we are learning about the culture and how to pronounce words, and learning about Lorca.”

Roy said that the play is not in a traditional A-B, A-B conversation format, which adds to its unique qualities.

“It has really beautiful language, she said. “It sounds beautiful. It’s probably not what a lot of people are expecting. It’s very deep and very romantic, dealing with an ex coming back into your life wanting to get together with you. I think anyone can relate to that.”

Theatre junior Redzuan plays the role of Death in the play, and through his experience has learned to see death in a new way.

“I think it’s partly a commentary on how there are bad things that can happen when you follow what you want to do,” he said. “It deals with duty and honor and what happens with passion.”

Redzuan said that everyone should come to the live production.

“People should see theater because there is something about live performances,” he said. “It deals with death and it will draw people in and hopefully stir something in them.”

“Blood Wedding,” is the second show of three as part of the theatre and dance department’s 2008-2009 Mainstage Season.

All performances will take place in the Spanos Theatre at 8 p.m. Feb. 26 to 28 and March 5 to 7. A matinee performance is scheduled for 2 p.m. Saturday, March 7. Tickets are $10 to $12. For ticket information, call 756-2787.

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(Chorro Street)
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**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

Libertarian column was simplistic and offensive

In response to Jeremy Hicks' column "Symbalos lives with promise of instant gratification":

I found this column offensive, as well as replete with fallacious arguments and devoid of any logical arguments. As an appeal to emotion, however, it is outstanding. To refer to people, usually women and children, who find themselves in unfortunate circumstances and needing temporary assistance as "parasites" and "muggers" is arrogant, cruel and lacking in compassion.

Hicks' opinion expressed a simplistic black and white view of our society, and creates a "them or us" mentality at a time when mutual building would best serve us. He claims the majority of us lack the intellectual tools to understand the current recession, and are "a prejudiced, self-centered set". And because I'm a Democrat, I'm "weak and wishful-minded". If this is his conclusion about our society, I think he needs to find a better class of people to hang out with.

The only thing that keeps Hicks' column from being laughable is its plain-spiritedness and failure to make any critical thinking skills whatsoever.

Linda Stark
Cal Poly advancement services

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**A NEW MOVEMENT FOR SOVEREIGNTY**

The states' rights movement is gaining steam once again as the central government prepares for the latest round of power-building.

The movement of states declaring sovereignty in regards to the Tenth Amendment has created quite a stir among constitutional conservatives lately. Although not widely reported, thirteen states currently have legislation pending to affirm their states' rights as defined by the Tenth Amendment. Several states, including California, have passed similar resolutions in the recent past. These resolutions symbolically demonstrate the framers' intent to subject to the states and people the federal laws that constructivists view as unconstitutional.

For those readers familiar with the Tenth Amendment, it reads: "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people." The Tenth Amendment, along with the Ninth Amendment, powerfully affirms the limits of the United States government and directs a strict interpretation of the Constitution. Alexander Hamilton and his Federalist followers urged states to ratify the Constitution despite Hamilton's opposition to the Bill of Rights. But Hamilton's principle argument against the Bill of Rights was that it was unnecessary, and that once certain rights were affirmed, others assumed to be held by the states and people would be at risk of being excluded.

Hamilton asked in Federalist Number 84, "For why should any state not be disposed to say there is no power to do this? Why, for instance, should it be said that the liberty of the press shall not be restrained, when power is given by which restrictions may be imposed?"

But over the years, courts including the U.S. Supreme Court have held many federal infringements of state sovereignty through their loose interpretation of clauses in the Constitution. For example, the Commerce Clause of Article I, Section 8 states "The Congress shall have Power... to regulate commerce with foreign nations, among the states, and with the Indian tribes." This clause has been used to justify federal laws ranging from the illegality of certain drugs to gun-free zones around schools, criminalizing actions even when they do not cross state boundaries. Originalists, such as those politicians supporting the states resolutions, claim such laws are invalid.

American tax policy is a principle cause of the federal government becoming so involved in the micromanagement of the states and individuals. As I discussed last week, a consequence of the Sixteenth Amendment has been the growth of centralized government power. The federal government now takes so much money from its citizens, that any tax increase by a state must just be the break that breaks the back of that state's economy. When states let budgets get out of hand — a condition that the states of California — states then go begging to the federal government for a budget bailout. Whereas the federal government has been granted authority to make all content decisions send letters as an attachment. Please submit your letters to Mustang Daily after it has been subjected to editing for grammar, spelling and style.
The arbitrary ‘A’

The Times-Picayune

by Stephanie England

Thursday, February 26, 2009

www.mustangdaily.net

MUSTANG DAILY

POLITICAL COLUMN

OPINION

Obama's speech offers visionary solutions

by Stephanie England

He told Congress that the crushing cost of health care bureaucracy in America every 30 seconds, and that his plan will "invest in electronic health records and new technology that will reduce errors, bring down costs, ensure quality and safety.

He said of energy policy, "I ask this Congress to send me legislation that places a market-based cap on carbon pollution and drives the production of more renewable energy in America."

He continued saying, "To support that innovation, we will invest $15 billion a year to develop technologies like wind power and solar power, advanced biofuels and more efficient cars and trucks built right here in America."

I urge those who missed the president's speech to take an active role in the debate and the details of his proposals online.

Tuesday night, as Gov. Jindal (R-LA) gave the rebuttal to President Obama's speech and my eyes glossed over during each of his meaningless anec­dotes, my meditations drifted to the infinite wisdom of the pundit who warned me beforehand that the Republican response would be a major buzz-kill.

I did not hear any new ideas from the Republicans on reforming energy and healthcare policy or ending the recession. In fact, I didn't hear any new ideas at all. They only rattled off their talking points: increasing the taxes will ruin the economy and the stimulus package will expand the power of the federal government. It doesn't really matter what Republicans say anyway. In the Times' poll previously mentioned, the majority of those polled said they would rather Barack Obama stick to his policies than work with Republicans. I agree. We need visionary solutions and Republicans aren't even in the business of solutions.

Stephanie England is an English junior and a Mustang Daily political columnist.

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Do you ever feel like an "A" grade is arbitrary, intimidating and possibly even impossible to achieve? I mean, what is a letter grade anyway? Think of it this way: if you are in the 90 percent range in a class and the kid next to you gets a 90 percent, is that an "A" student? Not if someone's top grade is over 95 percent. Of course they forget that 95 percent? Of course they forget that 95 percent was not out of reach, but the fact that I could have a 94 percent and still be deemed average really freaked me out.

I could not call my professor, whom I really like and respect, and ask him why that was his policy. "All of you are too hung up on letter grades; just do the work and show me that you care and you will be fine." The professor realizes that the student is working hard, attending office hours, wants to improve, etc. then the student's participation portion of the grade will raise or be sustained. Those who choose to sleep, drink and party their way through college will definitely be burned by this system, and rightly so.

Lindsey Point is a columnist at the Arkansas Traveler at the University of Arkansas, where this was originally published.

Yesterday in New Orleans, seven people were injured in a shooting in broad daylight on the main parade route. Now, as appalling as that may be, do you think the great city of New Orleans will shut down Mardi Gras next year? No chance! The majority of people will still know how to behave themselves while having a good time and respecting traditions. In fact, there is no tradition to learn from; they won't even know where to begin when it comes to celebrating something like Mardi Gras. The essence of Mardi Gras is surprise. It is to be a celebration of life, that's it, nothing more. You don't need a bar to have an event or a parade to celebrate. People can celebrate in their own way.

On every list of "Ways to succeed in college," "go to class" is number one. Those who participate aren't really reflect a student's intelligence.

What about all of those kids who are really working hard and are well versed in the material and are are just making ends meet. I think that under his administration, banks will have proper oversight. He also said that we don't do our problems and escape into a greater crisis that will then cost even more.

He addressed Republican concerns over spending when he vowed to cut the deficit in half by the end of his first term. He said his administration has gone through the budget line-by-line to "eliminate the no-bid contracts" in Iraq, stop funding Cold War weapons America no longer uses, remove the waste and fraud in Medicare and end tax breaks for big corporations that ship jobs overseas.

President Obama also spoke very clearly about specific issues he will emphasize in his forthcoming budget proposal, such as health care and energy.

Kudos Jeremy for writing the only article worth reading in the opinion section! You never disappoint and I always look forward to Wednesday's Mustang Daily solely for your insight.

-- Annice Azredd

Response to "Mardi Gras riot"

The words "the Mardi Gras riots" should never be muttered in the same sentence. I wasn't in SLO and I have no hard feelings about it, but, as with most riots, I'm sure it was just two crowds trying to outdo each other's overreactions.

Throughout history, some of our greatest scientists weren't exactly "A" students. Einstein's grammar school teacher quoted as saying, "now I will get anywhere," and Isaac Newton once pulled a horse's bridle for miles before he realized there was no horse in it. These are two of the most influential scientists and they didn't fit the "A" student mold, so why should we follow it? I suppose we have to have some reason for our students and, obviously, the letter grade system has been around for a long time.

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Steroids
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Fehr may not have been shooting players up himself, but he did everything in his power to shield them from being caught. And for that he deserves at least equal blame, if not more, with Selig for defrauding fans with a bogus product and making the sport's most hallowed records little more than a joke.

Now he wants us all to move forward. He declared the steroid problem fixed, and expects us to believe that is all there is to it.

It's not, of course.

The spectacles surrounding the greatest players of their time will go on for years, as will the debate over the records set by just a few players. Every Hall of Fame election will be a referendum on who may have used and who didn't.

Fans, meanwhile, will still have doubts about just how clean today's players are. A-Rod may claim he hasn't used anything since 2003, but his credibility shrinks with almost every new day, and with 103 names still out there, everyone is still suspect.

Never mind that the testing is better, because it's still not good enough. Not only are there not enough tests and not enough random tests, but there is no test for human growth hormone. And, if recent history shows anything, it's that cheaters have always found a way to stay one step ahead of those chasing them.

Sure, Fehr wants everyone to believe it's time to move on. It's in the interest of his clients to do just that. Believe it, if you will. I'm more inclined to go with words once said by someone who has done more for the game than Fehr will ever say, a scrawny catcher who kept winning championships without the aid of anything stronger than a cup of coffee.

Yogi Berra wasn't talking about steroids, but he could have been. Because it ain't over 'til it's over.

—Tim Darvell is an associated press national sportswriter.

Baseball
continued from page 12

lose," he said.

Members of the team credited the surge in confidence prior to the season to the preseason preparation and were quick to point out that anything can happen.

"In baseball, a team can lose to any given team," Smith said.

"Fresno State has always seen a solid team."

Yesno State surprised many last year to win the series over the Georgia Bulldogs.

Their opponents thus far have been top-25 teams; Rice has won 13 consecutive conference titles, made College World Series appearances the past three years and won the 2003 national championship.

With wins over that kind of competition early in the year, confidence is high for the Mustangs who now know they can compete with the elite programs in the country.

"From what we saw with Fresno State, I can see us doing that," Dorrell said.
Fehr declares steroid crisis over, but not so soon

OMAR SANCHEZ
MUSTANG DAILY

Fresno State shocked the basketball world last year when they rode a wave of momentum to a national championship. Early in the 2009 campaign, the Cal Poly basketball team looks like they now have the momentum following three consecutive victories over top-notch competition.

The Mustangs (5-1) swept then-No. 3 Rice in a doubleheader Saturday then defeated defending national champions Fresno State Tuesday night in a game that marked the team's resilient nature.

"We proved that we can come back," said senior outfielder Ryan Lee. Indeed they did, when they overcame 4-1 and 11-9 deficits against the defending champs 13-11 in Fresno in what turned out to be a hitter's paradise.

Lee punished the Fresno State pitching staff, grabbing two hits and scoring three runs for the Mustangs.

"To go to their place and come out with a win, that's big for our program," he said. Junior catcher Wes Dorrell and freshman outfielder Bobby Crocker contributed three-run home runs Tuesday night to improve the Mustangs 3-1.

Dorrell noted that the freshmen this year came in with expectant confidence, adding a much-needed boost to the team.

His teammates agreed.

"The way they were playing, you wouldn't know they were freshmen," infielder Kyle Smith said.

The Mustangs face another non-conference foe when they host Sacramento State on Friday at Baggoo Stadium and Lee said the team isn't taking the Hornets lightly after beating two prominent teams like Rice and Fresno State.

"Wins like that give us a lot of confidence early in the season, but we can't get over confident," Lee said.

In their final contest against Rice, the Mustangs came from behind to pull off the 7-6 win over the Owls.

Lee was quick to point out that wins against high competition aren't meaningful if the Mustangs can't defeat the teams they are supposed to.

"Wins against (Rice and Fresno State) don't mean anything if we can't win these games," he added.

The Hornets went 24-34 last season, a record similar to the Mustangs, who finished 24-32 a year ago.

Smith said that the team wouldn't take a team's record from a year ago into the equation, knowing how much different his own team is this season.

"Last year we sort of fell off, but this season we're playing to win as opposed to we're playing not to win," Lee said. see Baseball, page 11

Cal Poly junior pitcher DJ Maudlin throws during the Mustangs' 10-3 win over Rice on Feb. 21.

**Mustangs fall to late Bakersfield rally**

Cal Poly freshman forward David Hanson (34) contests a shot from Cal State Bakersfield senior guard Terrence Johns during the Mustangs' 57-52 loss to the Roadrunners (8-20) on Wednesday night in Mott Gym. Johns led all scorers with 18 points. Senior guard Chaz Thomas (16) led Cal Poly (7-18) with 13 points, four rebounds and three assists in 38 minutes. The Mustangs continue their homestand at 7 p.m. Saturday against Pacific.