LOS ANGELES — It's been 16 months since Eugene and Patricia Harrison last paid the mortgage on their Perris, Calif., home. Eleven months since the notice got slapped on their front door, warning that it would be sold at auction.

A terse letter from a lawyer came eight months ago, telling them that their lender now owned the house. Three months later, the bank told them to pay up or get out by the end of the week.

Still, they remain in the yellow ranch-style home they bought seven years ago for $128,000, with its views of the San Jacinto Mountains. They're not planning on going anywhere.

“We're kind of on pins and needles, but who'd want to leave when you put this kind of energy into a house?” said Eugene Harrison, 70, gesturing toward a bucolic mural of mountains, stream and flowers the couple painted on the living room wall.

Throughout the country, people continue to default on their home loans — but lenders have backed off on forced evictions, allowing many to remain in their homes, essentially rent-free.

Several factors are driving the trend, industry experts say, including government pressure on banks to modify loans and keep people in their homes.

And with a glut of inventory in places like Southern California's Inland Empire, Nevada and Arizona, lenders are loath to depress housing prices further by dumping more properties into a weak market.

Finally, allowing borrowers to stay in their homes helps protect the bank's investment as it negotiates with the homeowners, said Gary Kirshner, a spokesman for Chase bank, a major lender.

“If the person's in the property, there's less chance for vandalism, and they're probably maintaining the house,” he said.

Economists say the situation won't last forever, but in the meantime the "amnesty" may allow at least some homeowners to regain their financial footing and avoid eviction.

In the Inland Empire, an estimated 150,000 homeowners are living rent-free, according to economist John Hwang, who based that number on the difference between loan payments and the market rent for those homes.

see Evictions, page 3
College couples shack up

Jessica Barba

Kit Schimandle, a former Cal Poly student, met her boyfriend during the first month of school, and by May they both decided it would be a good idea to live together the following year. By June they had broken up but still remained friends, and for the next months, their relationship was on-and-off.

"I started dating someone else so it was really awkward, and then I brought a boy home and he got really pissed. I avoided all full quarter, but it was hard talking to my boyfriend with him around, and I didn't want to move," Schimandle said.

They put two beds in the room they shared in their Mustang Village apartment, but when the situation became too uncomfortable for Schimandle, she asked her parents to pay for the rest of her lease and move into Polo Canyon.

"Now I don't know why we both thought it was going to last," she said. "We never did get along, and living with him was already like having a roommate, so it would be like living with a friend rather than someone random," Axson said.

They had been dating for a little over a year when they decided to live together. Santoianni said the idea came up casually, and despite having had a bad experience co-habiting with another girlfriend, he knew the time was going to be different. Axson agreed.

"I was nervous at first 'cause I'd never lived with a boyfriend, but for our part it just felt natural just coming home, having him be there. It made it a lot easier to have our separate lives 'cause we knew we would be coming home to each other," Axson said.

When asked if the couple had any problems since moving in, she said they didn't try to get out of it, "For some reason, banks are being more lenient with homeowners who are behind on their loans," Sharga said. "Whether it's a strategy to try and slow down the volume of foreclosures or simply a matter of the banks being able to keep up with volume is something that banks only know for sure.

Lenders say the trend reflects their efforts to work with borrowers to modify loans to avoid foreclosure. Bank of America "continues to exhaust every possible option to qualify customers for modification or other solutions," spokeswoman Joanna Barra said.

"Some lenders are making it a policy to partner with delinquent borrowers," Critelli said this month that it would let borrowers on the brink of foreclosure stay at their homes for six months, whether or not they make payments, if they turn over their property deed.

Such policies may partly reflect the fact that lenders can't keep up with all the foreclosures, some say.

"The mortgage lenders are so backlogged that some people are able to slip through the cracks," said Kathryn Davis, a real estate agent at America's Real Estate Advocates in Corona.

That was apparently the case for the Harrisons, who were told at various times that their house had been sold that it belonged to someone else and that it was empty.

"It's been frustrating, a real major pain in the butt," said Eugene Harrison, a nondomesticated minister with a clipped mustache and a sudden laugh.

The Harrisons missed their first payment in October 2008, shortly after Patricia Harrison, 57, lost her job as a healthcare aide and her husband's part-time towing work dried up. They said they applied for a loan modification with Countrywide Financial (since acquired by Bank of America), but were told that they couldn't receive one until they were three months behind on their payments.

In April 2009, they received a notice warning them that their property "may be sold at a public auction." They said they applied for a loan modification with Countrywide Financial (since acquired by Bank of America), but were told that they couldn't receive one until they were three months behind on their payments. So they stopped paying.
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A day in the life of a city's homeless camps

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. — Some days, Michelle Mead waits in line for two hours for a shower at Economical Social Ministries. If she has to wait two hours so she can stand under the warm water and try to wash away the campfire odor that has attached itself to her clothing and her hair, she will.

It's not as if she has a lot of options. Homeless and unable to find a job, she relies on a network of social services to provide her with most of life's necessities: food, water, clothing. But homeless campers say there aren't a lot of places where a person can just drop in and grab a fast shower. It's just not that easy.

In fact, little seems easy about living in the camps — despite help from at least a dozen agencies and churches, and an unprecedented outpouring of direct donations of food, clothing, firewood and other items to the campers.

"Being homeless is a full-time job," says Cindy, a 45-year-old who has been camping near America the Beautiful Park since August.

It's not just about getting a shower. It's about walking long distances in the bitter cold for a meal at the soup kitchen or Springs Rescue Mission — and having to eat on the street.

The similarities in how the campers live from day to day are striking, starting with shelter. Like a small, portable house, a tent can provide a haven to people who want to be left alone, while others foster a sense of family.

There's the guy with the beautiful lawn and the well-kept house, while three doors down is the person with nothing but dandelions and an old beater in the driveway. It's just not that easy.

First Things First

Almost every neighborhood has an eclectic mix of people and personalities. There's the guy with the beautiful lawn and the well-kept house, while three doors down is the person with nothing but dandelions and an old beater in the driveway. It's just not that easy.

It's about tracking down birth certificates to get an ID so they can compete for one of the scarce jobs in town. It's about trying to find a shower between grabbing peak and showers to even look for a job.

Mead, most sleep in tents, though some are tidy — or as tidy as they can be — and others foster a sense of family. The fewer you can paint the camps and the people who live in them with one brush.

But the similarities in how the campers live are clear. Mornings start with showers. Some, however, have created a virtual condo. Stephanie Roberts, 21, lives in a big tent with her boyfriend. Inside is a full bed, chair and propane heater.

They've decided not to go to the soup kitchen or Springs Rescue Mission — and having to eat on the street is the generous woman who always brings platters of brownies or cookies, but whose cluttered yard looks like a 24/7 garage sale.

Almost everyone who lives in the camps - despite help from at least a dozen agencies and churches, and an unprecedented outpouring of direct donations of food, clothing, firewood and other items to the campers.

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Homeless
continued from page 5

"We've got one of the best fire pans around," Miss Kitty says proudly.

Miss Kitty and several other campers have an extra tent for storage. She uses hers to keep firewood dry. Others pack extra blankets, food and clothing in storage tents.

The campers get their tents, sleeping bags, propane heaters and other accouterments from a variety of sources: social service agencies, friends, friends of friends, other homeless campers and people from the community who come to the campground with donations.

Charles Henry Donnell owns the blankets, Coleman stove and lawn chairs he brought to his roadside camp when he became homeless, but he had to borrow a tent from a friend.

At Miss Kitty's camp, where Michelle Mead also lives, there's also a lot of sharing.

"We all have to take care of each other. We share blankets and food," said her 59-year-old neighbor, Earl. "If we don't watch out for each other, no one else is going to."

The Day Begins

From the moment they wake up, many campers have one sure destination in mind: the Marian House soup kitchen. Those with grills or propane stoves might heat up some instant coffee first or grab a snatch from whatever food they have stockpiled in their camps.

But most rely on Marian House for their first real meal of the day, and most will walk there regardless of the weather.

"I go there to get a balanced meal," said Mead, who walks from her camp to the soup kitchen.

The soup kitchen doesn't open until 10:30 a.m. on Sundays, so Mead walks her dog, Jake, takes care of some errands and puts in volunteer hours that are required for her food stamps. She used to get up at 4:30 a.m. to look for day labor jobs, "but there isn't no work," she laments. It's a common refrain among campers.

"Others have had better luck at din labor centers," Mead gets up at 5:30 a.m. most days to get to Apprentice's Personal training for an assignment. During a recent spell of better cold weather, he got work at Memorial Hospital near downtown — a job that required him to get up at 3:30 a.m. so he'd have time to walk the five miles to the hospital and get to work on time.

"I'm known as "Tramp," who lives in a tent just south of the one Miss Kitty and Mead call home, starts his morning scraping — riding his bike with a small trailer behind it, and picking up cans and other metal — before going to the soup kitchen.

At one camp near the westside Sarsoda, several of the people start their morning going to the store: bathroom, use the toilet, shave and clean up at the sinks. Then they'll clean up their camp from the night before. Because they're too far to go to the Marian House, they get provisions from the Westside Care LINE pantry or Sarsoda, then cook the food over a fire.

"If you go hungry in Colorado, you're homeless, you're stupid," says Bob, a 58-year-old former Marine who has been homeless since October.

Afternoon Arrives

After lunch, some of the campers head to Pennrose Library to get warm, read the paper and hope on the computer to check e-mails or look for jobs.

Bob says he's been plugging away at the library looking for a job as a mechanic but hasn't had any luck.

"You can't let it get to you," he says. "You've got to keep positive."

Mead says his job search is hindered by a lack of transportation. She's gotten bus passes from social service agencies, but said a person has to have an appointment with a clear destination before getting a pass. That means she can get a pass for a job interview, she said, but not for other applications.

Another poor Marian House destination is the nearby Ecumenical Social Ministries, which is about "the only place in town where people who aren't in shelters or long-term programs can bath. But only two stalls are available, and the hours are limited: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday-Friday. Even with a 15-minute-per-person limit, the lines can get long — especially in winter, because campers wait to shower until later in the day when temperatures warm up. EMS officials say only about 34 people a day can get a shower.

For Mead, walking to the Marian House and waiting for a shower "takes up a good part of the day" and eats into time she might spend looking for a job interview, she said, but not for other applications.

Those who can't get a shower at EMS might use a bathroom at a park, convenience store or other location.

At Thomas' camp, a good Samaritan will sometimes drop by, round up a few campers and take them to his house to clean up.

Evening Settles In

At many camps, a certain camaraderie builds when the sun goes down and people gather around a roaring fire.

Some people cook over the fire; others just hang out to stay warm and catch up with camp mates. A camaraderie builds when the sun goes down and people gather around a roaring fire.

At Wayne Garrett's camp near America the Beautiful Park, they'll even join in a sing-along.

"We're like a family," Garrett

see Homeless, page 7

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manager

See Homeless, page 7
FDA recalling dips, dressings and soup mixes over salmonella fears

Andrew Zajac

WASHINGTON — The Food and Drug Administration Thursday announced a potentially massive recall of foods made with a commonly used food additive that may be contaminated with salmonella.

The additive, hydrolyzed vegetable protein or HVP, is used in thousands of foods but so far has not been linked to any illness and currently presents a low risk to consumers, according to FDA officials.

But the agency isn't taking any chances. It has asked food producers to check inventories for products that used recalled HVP and has established a searchable database for what it produced would be a growing list of recalled foods.

Only a few specific brands of chip dips, salad dressing, soup mixes and other foods have been recalled since the contamination was discovered last month, but “we expect this to get larger over the next several days to several weeks,” said Jeff Farrar, FDA associate commissioner of food safety.

The tainted HVP was made at a plant operated by Basic Foods Inc. of Las Vegas and was discovered when a company customer noticed a batch of the additive and reported finding salmonella.

FDA inspectors subsequently discovered salmonella bacteria on plant equipment. Basic Food subsequently announced a recall of all past and powdered versions of HVP manufactured since Sept. 17, 2009.

Company president Kami Patel did not return a telephone call seeking comment.

The FDA identified the salmonella's genetic fingerprint, enabling the Center for Disease Control and Prevention to confirm that this strain has not caused illness so far.

Salmonella causes infections marked by diarrhea, vomiting, fever and abdominal pain. Healthy people generally recover without treatment, but salmonella can kill the very young, the elderly and people with weak immune systems.

Officials said the HVP was shipped in batches of 50 pounds or more but they didn’t know how much tainted product the company shipped. Farrar said most of the tainted additive would not be harmful because it was used in food preparation processes involving high heat or other procedures that would kill the salmonella bacteria.

Additionally, the ingredient, which is made of soy, corn and wheat, typically appears in very small quantities in individual food items. The lack of illnesses traced to the contaminated additive points to a relatively low risk, Farrar said.

But understanding the potential seriousness of the outbreak, both FDA Commissioner Margaret Hamburg and the agency's No. 2 official, Joshua Sharfien, spoke at a telephone news conference.

Sharfien said FDA reacted quickly, but he said Hamburg told the incident highlighted the need for passage of pending food safety legislation that would give the agency more tools to prevent outbreaks instead of reacting to them.

The legislation has been stalled in the Senate since last fall. It would give FDA the power to order recalls on its own authority, instead of pressuring firms to do so.

Robert Brackett, chief science officer for the Grocery Manufacturers Association, a leading food trade group, lauded FDA for acting with a sense of urgency.

The FDA has left it up to the food industry to determine if a particular product has been made in a way that would kill salmonella contamination, Brackett said.

In addition, it'll be up to companies to decide whether to keep a product on the market if the consumer preparation process, such as boiling of a soup mix, would kill salmonella, he said.

EDITORS NOTE: Under most circumstances, The Gazette insists that sources provide their true, complete names for inclusion in news stories. Anonymity is permitted only in limited cases.
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The bank sent a notice by FedEx in October demanding $3,500, and when the Harrisons called to discuss this notice, they were told they had four days to vacate the house. Panicked, they arranged to stay with family in New Mexico and started packing their things, filling their garage with boxes of books, camping equipment and art. But no one came to kick them out.

"We were afraid to leave the house, afraid the sheriff was going to come," said Patricia Harrison, an amateur painter.

After contacting consumer advocates about their situation, the Harrisons decided to stay put. Soon after, two men in a white pickup truck showed up at the house and peeped in the windows, telling the Harrisons that they thought the house was abandoned.

The Harrisons suspected they were planning to move in themselves and chased them away.

The couple don't want to leave but are in the midst of a running dispute with Bank of America about the terms of their loan modification. The bank says it mailed them documents this month.

As they wade through the red tape, the Harrisons can't imagine abandoning a house where they've left their mark in the goldenrod and potpourri rose walls, the new fixtures and stenciling in the bathrooms, the fruit trees planted in the yard.

Although the Harrisons' future is uncertain, industry observers agree that the rent-free life can't last forever. As home values climb, banks will find it financially advantageous to foreclose on delinquent borrowers and sell their properties.

"In many cases, particularly in California, people own a boatload of payments, and no bank is going to forgive that," said Guy Cecala, editor of Inside Mortgage Finance, a trade publication.

In Diamond Bar, the Fragueres family is finally moving on after living rent-free for 18 months. Job loss and other setbacks prevented them from paying their mortgage, but they say they didn't hear anything from the bank, First Franklin, until a real estate agent showed up at their door last month saying she was going to sell their house.

Sandy Fragueres wasn't surprised that it had taken the bank so long to ask them to move.

"I don't think they really knew what was going on or who was there," she said.

Next step for the Fragueres is a hotel, where they plan to stay for two weeks until their apartment in Chino Hills is ready for them to move in. Their dogs are being boarded and their belongings stored until they can retrieve them someday. Their children, ages 8 and 9, are being steel for more instability.

The Fragueres have started saying goodbye to their neighbors, adding yet another empty house to a block that has already seen two other families forced to pack up and leave.
WASHINGTON — In a patch of bright news for the economy, the East Coast snowstorms that paralyzed transportation and shut down thousands of businesses last month did far less damage than expected to the nation’s labor market, allowing the unemployment rate to hold steady at 9.7 percent.

Some economists had forecast that the blizzards would result in a setback on the jobs front, with unemployment jumping and payrolls falling by 75,000 or more. Certainly, the recovery remains slow and uneven after the worst recession in more than a half-century. And by any standard, the number of people out of work for six months or longer remains high: 6.1 million workers, fall into this category.

But in February, the nation’s payroll fell by only 36,000, the Labor Department reported Friday, and some analysts said the economy actually might have added jobs were it not for the bad weather that shut down businesses and transportation for several days in the mid-Atlantic region.

Revised data said the economy shed 26,000 jobs in January and 199,000 in December, when the unemployment rate was 10 percent. Including February, payrolls have fallen in 25 out of the past 26 months.

"The job market appears to be on the mend, even though it’s a fairly slow process," said Gary Burtless, a former Labor Department economist and now senior fellow at the Brookings Institution.

Burtless was encouraged that the unemployment rate was 10 percent, up from 9.8 percent in January. Tax credits and other government programs are supporting business and consumer spending, he said. But the government's support is not enough to turn around the jobless rate.

The housing market has tailed off after a burst of sales in the fourth quarter. But most of the gains have been in homes that were on the market for more than three months.

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"In terms of self-sustaining growth in the economy, it's hard to see how you can do that without creating jobs," said Dean Baker, director of the Center for Economic and Policy Research in Washington. Despite the better-than-expected employment report for February, he noted, the economy needs to add some 125,000 jobs just to keep pace with the labor growth and hold the jobless rate from rising.

The United States has lost 8.4 million jobs since December 2007. Last month, the construction industry dropped another 64,000 jobs. Analysts viewed many of those as victims of the weather. The Labor Department's payroll jobs data are seasonally adjusted, but those statistical adjustments are based on past average fluctuations, and last month's snowstorms were hardly normal.

But Ken Simonson, chief econ-
The storms had not paralyzed industry would have lost about 20 percent in the coming months," he said. "We're not yet at bottom."

Friday's report did reveal some positive trends. Manufacturers added 48,000 jobs in February, bringing to 284,000 the number added since September. This survey, which includes self-employed people, showed 308,000 more people working in February than the previous month. Analysts regard the payroll data as more reliable. But both sets of data have weaknesses, especially at turning points in the economy. Forecasters are projecting the unemployment rate to rise in the coming months. A separate Labor Department measure of unemployment and underemployment that includes part-time workers who want full-time jobs, rose to 16.8 percent last month from 16.3 percent in January.

Melody Boyd, of Los Angeles, has been officially out of work since August 2008. Her unemployment benefits expire near the end of the month. But next week, Boyd said she has an interview for a job in the accounting section of a health care firm. It's her first interview in months. "I have a spark of hope," she said.

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WORD ON THE STREET

“What are your plans for housing next year?”

“Graduation! I am going to live at home with my parents and share a room with a dog half my size.”
Scott Bailey, architecture senior

“Kind of a loaded question. I don’t know if I am staying where I am or if my family is finding renters.”
Jessica Sherbon, electrical engineering senior

“I am staying where I am in Murray Station.”
Lindsay Goodrich, business administration junior

“I am going to be moving off campus.”
Justin Finch, business administration junior

“I have no idea. I have three months to decide but maybe Chicago.”
Matt Delmanowski, graphic communication senior

“Probably going to stay in Poly Canyon.”
Chris Lao, aerospace engineering freshman

“One of the apartments in Poly Canyon. Right now we are in a dilemma though.”
Yravav Ramaswamy, computer engineering freshman

“I believe we are looking into Poly Canyon.”
Sarah Brown, architecture sophomore

“I am still scrambling; it is hard to find a devoted group to stick together through the application process.”
Kate Ahee, architecture sophomore

“I am moving possibly to the L.A area.”
Brianna Loudmouth, nutrition senior

* Compiled and photographed by Jessica Barba

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FRESNO (MCT) — A trial began this morning for a Fresno man accused of killing another man in what the Fresno County Superior Court judges have to decide whether Man­sheriff's investigators that he may have penetrated the girl twice when they were playing "bowls," but said he didn't rape her, according to the District Attorney's Office. Pro­secutor Greg Dcest negoti­ated the plea agreement that led to the sentence with defense attorney Michael Adams Lealcalderon plead­ed no contest to the felony crimes of committing a lewd act on a child younger then age 14 and sexual penetration with a child younger then age 10. 

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white, silver or gold and display in a vase or large urn as indoor decorations.

3. OLD MAILING TUBES, NEW WINE RACK

ReadyMade, a savvy do-it-yourself magazine, suggests making a wine rack with mailing tubes and an old milk crate from your college dorm years (or a box that’s at least 12 inches in depth). Measure the depth of the crate and cut the tubes to this length with sharp scissors. Stack the tubes in the crate and turn the crate on its side on a flat surface. Each cubby hole can fit a wine bottle. Be sure to store the crate in a dry, cool area.

4. OLD PENS, NEW SILVERWARE

Forks, spoons and knives with broken handles can get new bodies from old pens, according to Aspal Marwah and Sarah Hunt of Vancouver. They’re winners of ReadyMade’s MacGyver Challenge, a monthly contest that challenges readers to find innovative ways to reuse common objects. To make their pen cutlery, discard everything inside the pen except its tube and cap. Fill the tube with hot glue, shove in the heads of the cutlery, and let dry.

5. OLD SHOWER CURTAIN, NEW GRILL COVER

Got a stained or tired shower curtain? Baird suggests using it as a waterproof cover for outdoor furniture or a grill.

6. OLD PAPERWORK, NEW DOG BED

Shredded paperwork from your home or office shredder, small rugs or bath mats, and old towels can be donated to local animal shelters. The paper and bath mats make beds for dogs and cats, and towels are needed to wash animals.

7. OLD BINDER, NEW CD CASE

Watch this: Three-ring binders from yours or your children’s old school days can house CDs or DVDs that’ve lost their cases. “Don’t Throw It Out” says to store them in album refill pages for 5 x 7 photos.

8. OLD SOCKS, NEW ORNAMENT SAVER

Now old socks or ones that’ve lost their partner can store delicate Christmas ornaments. You can also use socks to stuff the middles of shoes so they don’t lose their shape in storage.

9. BROOM

Revitalize an old broom by covering the bristles with ruined pantyhose. Cut a piece from the leg, and stretch it over the broom’s bristles. The nylon’s static will attract lint and small dust particles as you sweep.

10. OLD BOOK, NEW SAFE

Make a safe out of an old hardcover textbook or outdated encyclopedia.

“Don’t Throw It Out” suggests opening the book to a spot at least one inch from the back. Prop the book open with a paperweight. Use a pencil and a straightedge to mark a rectangle in the middle of the page. Cut out the rectangle with a craft knife—score the edges heavily, and you’ll be able to cut through several pages at a time. Repeat until you’re about to cut into the back cover. Place a piece of cardboard or a thick piece of scrap paper over the cover so that you don’t cut into it.

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Poly wine and vit finds success through students

Rhiannon Montgomery

Cal Poly wine and viticulture students are working to keep the ancient celebration of fermented fruit alive.

The relatively new program has turned students from 'cellar-rats' into successful winemakers rivaling programs at Fresno State and University of California, Davis.

Nick Davis, 2007 wine and viticulture graduate and co-owner of TWINPOMS wine, said with the connections to the local industry, Cal Poly offers unique opportunities in the wine-making business.

"Cal Poly will be the top-notch facility in the next few years because of the experience opportunities," Davis said.

Davis said the programs at Fresno and U.C. Davis don't have the local trade to support a large number of students looking for work or internships. There are more than 4-H wineries in San Luis Obispo County, giving students the opportunity to work in their major.

Anthony Youton, Davis' former classmate and the owner of Kinero Cellars wine, said Cal Poly's internship requirement gives students a leg up in the industry. He said the university gets support from local wineries like Orcutt Road Cellars where Cal Poly wine is made.

"You hit the ground running. You can walk into the winery knowing how to do everything," Youton said.

The programs' three concentrations encompass all aspects of wine production and management. Enology is about the science of winemaking, viticulture focuses on the vineyard and the agribusiness concentration highlights the ins and outs of working in the wine industry. Jeff Onysko is vice president of the Vines to Wines club and a wine and viticulture senior. He said the program emphasizes what it's like to be in the real-world industry.

Part of that real-world experience comes from learning from professionals who have worked in the wine business, Onysko said. He said teachers have the knowledge to take students from "grapes to glass." Davis, Youton and Onysko said they believe the hands-on experience and connections are what make the program special.

Youton and Davis said they took those connections and the learn-by-doing philosophy with them and used it to start their own businesses. They both said they didn't have the capital to be traditional wineries. These small start-ups don't have their own wineries, tasting rooms or major distributors. They buy their fruit from growers and make the wine at established crushing facilities.

Youton said he still keeps his day job as winemaker at Dernier Cellars, but was able to start his own label in the summer of 2008 when a friend at Villa Creek offered to let him make wine at their facility, where he started as a cellar-rat after graduating.

He isn't alone in finding success outside the box in the short time since he graduated from the program. Davis said he and co-owner Brian (also his twin brother) took a chance to find their niche in the industry so they could be standouts.

With more than 1,200 facilities making wine in California get...
Unconventional dormmates:
Campus families break the norm

While most dorm rooms are reserved for individual students, some campuses have family dorms for couples and their kids.

Eric Ferreri
DURHAM, N.C. — Maeve Cook-Deegan will have plenty of new experiences when she heads off to college this fall. But dorm life won’t be one of them.

Maeve, a 17-year-old Durham Academy senior, has already spent six years living in a Duke University residence hall as the daughter of one of the university’s 13 faculty-residence professors.

Which means she’s already had her “crazy college kids” moments.

Exhibit A: “I walked out the door yesterday and there was a guy with his shirt off.” Maeve recounted recently. “And his friend was reading what people had written on him the day before.”

Such is life in Alspaugh dorm on Duke’s East Campus, Maeve’s home.

see Dorms, page 19

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Dorms

continued from page 17

since she was 12. She lives there with her parents, Bob and Kathryn, and their dog, Oshie, a friendly mutt named for a Swiss lake.

For Maeve, Duke dorm life was a dramatic change from the suburban bliss of Antioch, Ill., where the family lived before Bob Cook-Deegan was recruited away from a Stanford University program in Washington. She left a neighborhood where her best friend lived next door and moved into a cramped room at the back of the Cook-Deegan compound, a retrofitted apartment fashioned from several standard dorm rooms.

The apartment is long and narrow, with a spacious kitchen, a cozy living room, two bedrooms, two bathrooms, and a giant dog bed for Oshie. For Maeve, life has been one slow transition. When she moved in at age 12, she got funny looks from students who may have mistaken her for a resident's little sister. As she grew, she began to fit in more. Now 17, she's just a year or two younger than her classmates.

Still, she doesn't mix with them much. In fact, the most interaction she has with students is during fine arts clubs, which often come on weekends or late at night.

"This year hasn't been so bad," said Maeve, who will enroll at the University of Edinburgh in Scotland this fall. "They've learned how to use the system." Dorm life can be frustrating at times. It's hard to direct friends to her dorm, which is tucked away in the back of the campus. And when they do visit, they risk a parking ticket from the campus cops.

A Few Seaside Perks

There are bonuses, though, such as campus-wide events, use of the campus gym, and the quiet that comes with summer break. That's when Maeve has the run of the place, so she and her friends can enjoy the noon and its flat-screen televisions — and pool and foosball tables.

Bob Cook-Deegan is a public policy professor and director of Duke's Center for Genome Ethics, when he was recruited to Duke, he insisted on living with his family in a dorm, in an attempt to recapture the experience he had as an undergrad at Harvard, where faculty members live in "houses" with students and act as advisors. The idea is to eliminate barriers between faculty and students and enhance the academic experience.

"I figured this would be the most efficient way to learn this new universe," he said. "I learn a whole lot more about the students hanging out with them and then eating breakfast with them."

The faculty-in-residence model is not common at Triangle universities, though N.C. State started a program this year aimed at bringing a faculty member to live in a residence hall.

Round-The-Clock Job

In exchange for free housing, utilities and wi-fi, Cook-Deegan is both a formal and informal adviser to the 120 students who live in Alspach. The formal: He helps organize dorm events, outings and educational activities, though he has no official disciplinary duties. The informal: He becomes a crisis counselor on occasion when an overstressed student hangs out on the door in the middle of the night.

It's an arrangement he likes. He routinely chats with his students, and when they camp out in Kresge-krivke for weeks to score coveted basketball tickets, he brings them coffee, donuts and anything else they need.

"I'm not one of the gang," he said. "There's a definite disconnect between the student and the faculty. Every year, I do have very close friendships with students, but it's not the expectations."

Connie Chai lived in Alspach as a freshman and enjoyed having a faculty member living among the students. Chai, now a senior, said she was nice to have an adult advisor close by, and seeing a professor outside the classroom set students at ease.

"You're seeing him in a different setting, and you meet his family and his dog," she said. "We'd be eating pizza in the common room, and Oshie would come in and try to get a piece of pizza."

Drapes

continued from page 18

Drapes: looking ready-made draperies.

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House decorations that won’t break the bank

Raquel Redding

Moving out of the parents’ house means a blank slate. A whole room, or house open for interpretation is exciting, but a lot of house décor can be expensive. From Ross to World Market, this is a guide to decorating on a budget.

Students and non-students go through a process of gradually accumulating items throughout the years. From old roommates’ furniture to the mirror found on the street with a “free” sign, picking up random items is inevitable. Making the random work to create a cohesive living room, or an eclectic bedroom can depend on a few good pieces to tie them all together.

There is a wide range of shops in San Luis Obispo. There is the expensive World Market, and there is the less pricey Ross.

Starting with World Market, which is located off of Madonna Road, there is a wide array of décor from couches to candles. Store manager Gillian Mote said that World Market tries to have a wide variety of eclectic pieces to choose from.

“We shop the world so consumers can enjoy the product and feel like they are on vacation,” Mote said. “Unique, authentic, affordable, and many other countries. From rugs, pillows, candles to lighting, the market has one of the most thorough selections to choose from. Cal Poly double master student Fritz Light said he likes to shop at World Market after a holiday or sale.

“I like to be a year behind in stuff. I don’t want to be with the Jones’. I’d rather buy items when I generally like them, not when they are cool,” Light said.

Light, who is double mastering in biology as well as agriculture, said that budget has a lot to do with how he picks and buys things. Price and personal budget was a common factor that students took into consideration when purchasing items.

I like to be a year behind in stuff, I don’t want to be with the Jones’. I’d rather buy items when I generally like them, not when they are cool.

—Fritz Light
Cal Poly graduate student

Owning a pet in college is sometimes easier said than done

Erin Hurley

Owning a pet in college is often hard for students. Dogs such as this German shepherd are often hard to keep due to their large size.

Some Cal Poly students feel that a house just isn’t a home without a pet. However, having the comfort of a pet is often easier discussed than obtained. Many San Luis Obispo houses and apartments do not allow renters to own pets, and students usually have to choose between giving up the pet or giving up the house.

When Cal Poly students make the move from the dorms to off-campus housing, many of them are excited at the chance to own pets, which is forbidden in the dorms. Many house and apartment leases, however, do not allow pets either. Some students will accept the condition so they can move into the house or apartment they want. Others get more creative.

If students really want to own a pet once they move off-campus, they can try to make other ar-

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Pets

Molly Wagman, a nutrition senior, was willing to make sacrifices to keep her beloved cat. In her search for a house last spring, Wagman began by only looking at houses with leases that allowed pets. This severely limited her choices, and they were forced to move. "I would have been willing to move on Buchon Street that allowed her to keep her cat. However, Wagman said she would not have let a restrictive lease keep her cat out.

"I would have been willing to live with a cat if I hadn't found a lease that allowed pets. I definitely choose my cat first," Wagman said. Sometimes hiding a pet works, and sometimes it doesn't. A small pet can be easy to hide from a landlord, but a more conspicuous pet like a cat or a dog that needs more space can be difficult to keep hidden. It's a landlord discovers that renters are keeping a pet in secret, they may terminate the lease and leave the renters without a place to live.

Keeping a pet off-campus can be extremely rewarding, but it can also prove to be costly. Pets need many of the same things as students: food, shelter, medical care, and social contact. Students with pets have packed with classes, sports, jobs and social activities often find it hard to give pets what they need. Many students also do not have much extra money for pets after groceries, rent and other costs.

According to PetEducation.com, the initial cost of buying a puppy can be up to $1,000, and the costs of taking care of and raising the dog for an average lifespan of 14 years can range from $4,000 to almost $59,000. The cost of owning a cat over an average lifespan of 14 years can range from $4,500 to over $18,000.

One Cal Poly student who owned a puppy that was 25 pounds at the time they first rented their apartment, but the puppy soon grew too large, and they were forced to move. Jace Koppen is hesitant to make a commitment to an apartment that could threaten her living situation.

"The rules for owning a pet are a little extreme, and I'd really like to have a pet, but personally, I wouldn't break the lease rules unless I really wanted that kind of pet," Koppen said.

Owning a pet is also a concern for students who are about to make the move off-campus. Environmental management and protection sophomore Molly Nisson is in the midst of searching for a place to live off-campus next year. Nisson said that owning a pet would depend on the lease.

"I wouldn't have allowed pets, I'd definitely consider a cat," she said. "If it didn't, I don't know if it would go to all the trouble of taking care of a pet and hiding it. It's a lot of work.

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Being a good tenant requires common sense

Rachel Redding

Being a good tenant can mean a lot of things, like paying your rent on time and being quiet, but there are other qualities that are sought by renting companies. It's a place where it's critical to make a commitment to a place that you can live at.

While these are not exactly rules, it may be helpful to follow these guidelines. Mustang Village general manager Kathy Baker said being a good tenant goes beyond paying rent, although that certainly helps.

"Be respectful of those who live around you and the impact your actions have on others. For example, from having a party and being loud, to a giant empty parking spaces, can affect other tenants," Baker said. "We forget those kind of things sometimes, these moments.

Baker is not alone in emphasizing respect for neighbors and other people. Child development senior Heather Hiramin said to be conscientious of others, and be present about the space you're living in.

If on the top floor, don't make a lot of noise or jump around, and if you have to use the stairs, don't look into other peoples' apartments," Hiramin said. "Have a good system. Take care of things. Do the basics.

The basics, according to Hiramin and fellow student, mechanical engineering sophomore Jorge Angel, are cleaning and being clean — for example, taking out the trash when it's full. Angel currently lives at Poly Canyon, and he said one of the biggest concerns for him is "Produce low noise levels at night, because people could be studying or going to bed." Angel said.

Bothering neighbors is not the only thing that Angel worries about. Since Poly Canyon comes furnished, he said that taking care of the furniture is something that also makes a good tenant.

"Taking care of the apartment and making sure not to disturb any of the furniture or walk, Angel said. "The better you leave it at the end the better it is for you.

Getting the deposit back is an occurrence to be a good tenant because the damages done to the apartment are a part of the deposit. Baker said a good tenant communicates well with the manager and keeps them informed of what's going on.

"If there is something wrong with the apartment, let them know so we can fix it," Baker said. "A leak under the kitchen sink could turn into mold or not proper food, which would turn into a major repair that could have been prevented. Good management is a chance to fix a problem."

California West, Inc. property supervisor Elle Malykont said she expects a certain amount of respect from the students when it comes to the apartments or houses being rented out.

Have a good system. Take care of things. Do the basics.

— Heather Hiramin
Child development senior

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— Heather Hiramin
Child development senior

"A good tenant pays their rent on time, complies with the rules of the rental agreement, is responsible and considerate to their neighbors and doesn't cause their property manager any grief," Malykont said. "I expect my tenants to live in their apartments or houses the same way they would live in their parents' house."

For Malykont, respect is something that goes both ways in the renting process. She said 99 percent of their tenants are students and Cal-West tries to meet all their tenants with respect as well.

At some point in their lives, most people will have to rent a place to live. At Baker said, renting is a part of being in the real world, so you might as well have a good tenant's history.

"Basically, if you don't give us a reason to come after you, you're a good tenant," Baker said.

Friday, March 12, 2010
Johnny Depp gives another memorable performance in “Alice in Wonderland”


Rick Bentley

LOS ANGELES — No actor working today has so many oddly costumed, world-looking and strange characters as Johnny Depp. There may be a slight madness to his method of creating such memorable roles as Edward Scissorhands, Capt. Jack Sparrow, Willy Wonka and now the Mad Hatter in his new film, “Alice in Wonderland.” But Depp’s soft-spoken and unassuming manner makes people feel comfortable and believe in him.

Veteran producer Richard Zanuck, for example, says he sleeps well before shooting a film with Depp because he can count on the actor setting a positive tone on the set.

Depp’s unpretentious demeanor is apparent in how he views his career. Despite more than $5 billion in tickets sold for his films, Depp says he is amazed he’s still a working actor.

“My whole experience on this ride, since day one, has been pretty surreal,” Depp says. “I’m still completely shocked I get jobs and am still around. It’s been a kind of Wonderland and I have been lucky. I had no idea where anything was going. I thought after I had done ‘Cry Baby’ with John Waters and ‘Edward Scissorhands’ with Tim (Burton), I thought they were going to cut me off at the point that I’m still here.”

“Alice in Wonderland” is his seventh collaboration with director Burton.

One reason Burton says he enjoys working with the three-time Oscar nominee is the actor’s dislike of seeing himself on screen. That means the director never has to worry about his star getting tempestuous about how a scene was shot.

Each time Depp agrees to star in a Burton film, his biggest fear is that he won’t be able to come up with a character that’s different enough to please the director. This time, their collaboration was on creating a key player in the mad tale: the Mad Hatter.

Zanuck compares Depp’s way of creating a character to a factory, in that he puts together an assortment of what appear to be unrelated elements to create a product the public longs to buy. For the Hatter, Depp did watercolor drawings of his idea for the character’s look, which were almost identical to what Burton had in mind — a result of sharing so many collaborations.

Instead of his Hatter just being a hyper-nutty character, Depp plays him as someone who has extreme emotional swings that can go from light-hearted levity to dangerous rage.

Demp remembers reading the Lewis Carroll classic when he was a boy, and had just re-read it before getting the call from Burton for the latest film version of “Alice in Wonderland.”

“What I took away was these strange, cryptic nuggets he threw in there. I became fascinated by them because they were asking questions that couldn’t be answered or making statements you quite don’t understand,” Depp says.

Decorations

continued from page 21

that offers decor. Ross Softlines Manager Julie Woosley said Ross has many students in the store buying anything from sheets to towels, the basic necessities.

“Ross is great because you cannot find anything we have cheaper anywhere else,” Woosley said. “If you have something specific in mind though, chances are you are not going to find it, you have to have an open mind.”

Having an open mind comes easily for some more than others, but architecture junior year Brendan Eberhardt defines what it means to be open to ideas. Eberhardt said that he mainly does things himself, running Home Depot as one of the stores he frequents for his home.

“I like to make my own things, working with different woods and metals to create pieces,” Eberhardt said. “Money is a concern and is a factor, when I build my own stuff, it’s cheaper than buying from a store.”

Another store that offers a do-it-yourself as well as already-made decor is Beverly’s, located downtown. Beverly’s is a fabric and craft store with a wide selection of furniture. Beverly’s cashier Carly Schneider said that she sees all types of students come into the store, from fraternity and sorority members to students buying posters and paint.

“We have a lot of students come in here to create their own things,” Schneider said. “Canvas and paint is a big buy, but it’s not every day that we sell the furniture.”

From the inexpensive do-it-yourself to the authentic, yet more expensive, each store has something different to offer.

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Tacos have become a universal food

Lee Sivitak Dean

You can find tacos in outer space; in Mongolia, Amsterdam, Adas Ababu, and Australia — even in outer space, the latter thanks to NASA. They have, in fact, become as ever-present to the hamburger.

And that's the rub. They no longer seem Mexican, but American. As Jeffery Pilcher, a University of Minnesota history professor who will give a talk about "Planet Taco" on Tuesday.

Indeed, the taco revolution spread globally — and extraterrestrials — via entrepreneurial Americans and U.S. companies, not Mexicans. That might explain why, in part, the rest of the world looks at this overstuffed hard-shell taco spilling over with lettuce, tomatoes and Cheddar cheese and thinks “American.”

Namely, incidentally, Mexican immigrants almost never went to the U.S. Pilcher noted: “Americans had no trouble with their taco. They saw he would be offering a very different history lesson.

Fifty years ago, Mexican food could be found only in Mexican California or the Southwest, including small roadside stands where tacos were sold. Los Angeles phone books from 1950 reflect the abundance of these taco spots. These were the very early days of food franchises. (Ray Kroc started the McDonald’s chain in 1954.)

Glen Bell, the founder of Taco Bell and a fellow Californian, had an idea. Today we think of tacos as the lowest common denominator of Mexican food — well, maybe that would, or should, be nachos — but he was cutting-edge at a time when the rest of America was drowning in tuna casseroles, mac-and-cheese, and cream of tomato soup.

Today, foodies may sniff their noses and think “Taco Bell named Mexican food,” but Pilcher says the chain simply transplanted it. For all those arched eyebrows and com­ments that Tex-Mex isn’t real Mexican, well, the taco shell came out of the U.S. — and extraterrestrial — via entrepreneurial Americans and U.S. companies, not Mexicans.

So why did the taco become so popular? One reason Pilcher notes is the discovery of authenticity.

In a 1980 study, Wilbur Zalinski, a history professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, wrote, “The Mexicans brought American supermarket. So the beef needed to be cooked either quickly (as in fajitas) or slowly (for mole). By the early ’70s, fajitas were served in Laredo, Texas, before the recipes headed across the country.

Then there are nachos, found in theaters in Russia or at barbecues in Anchorage, USA. Who does this matter if we nibble on our stuffed taco?

“People will forget that tacos are Mexican just as pizza is from Italy,” said Pilcher. “We tend to become part of that culture figures spread the taste of tacos throughout the world as they traveled, often in need of work. And they did what immigrants often do: when they land in another country, open a restaurant. In Australia, it was a hippie with a work visa who needed to self-supporting and started the Pacifico Cafe with tacos galore. In Queensland, Australia, the oldest Mexican restaurant — Taco Bell — started by another Californian who brought with him a tortilla press and the knowledge of how to use it. U.S. companies added to the globalization, with Old El Paso as the leader. After all, you need the ingredients if a dish is to become popular.

He 1971 Diana Kennedy, a cooking authority on Mexican food, was the first to recognize Tex-Mex food as authentic.

“We forget that Texas was part of Mexico, but really, it was just another region of Mexico,” said Pilcher.

“Most people think that they’re a Texan invention, but really, it was an American thing. They were self-supporting and started the first taco restaurant. Now we have, in fact, become as ever-present to the hamburger as the hamburger is to pizza.”

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Roger Ebert gives tea parties thumbs down

Scot Collins

LOS ANGELES — Who’s this biggest scourge of the tea party movement these days? It might be film critic Roger Ebert, who lately has been showing brickbats at Sarah Palin and other right-wing politicians in between rendering verdicts on the latest movies.

Over the last few weeks, Ebert has used his busy Twitter page to give the tea party belittling nicknames, predict it will quickly fade and opine that “a loud movement is not the same as a mass movement.”

“I write about the TeaPee because it’s so sad how they’ve been manipulated to oppose their own best interests,” Ebert said in an overall, using his latest epithet for the tea party followers, “I am a liberal.”

His thoughts have earned him scorn from conservatives who accuse him of elitism and trashing ordinary Americans. More notable is the public spat, though, is what it says about the rapidly evolving media and Ebert’s place among them. Because of his decades of TV appearances, including with his late partner Gene Siskel, Ebert is perhaps the only critic in America who really has a household name.

But due to complications from cancer surgery in 2006, he has been unable to speak. The story of his recovery battle, along with a jarring portrait that revealed his surgically created mouth, has been tossed brickbats at Sarah Palin and other right-wing politicians in between rendering verdicts on the latest movies.

Now the 67-year-old reviewer finds himself at the center of the debate over whether he is a mainstream journalist — who have typically labored in silos of specialization and avoided anything that called into question a pose of objectivity — or an iconoclast, a critic who takes the risk.

For years Ebert was never far away from a microphone, his voice the center of his critical battle with the tea party followers. But Ebert was never far away from a microphone, his voice the center of his critical battle with the tea party followers. But Breitbart adds that the current, tweets ultimately prove how much power has started to flow from the small to the mainstream media. Many, many large news-gathering organizations, including the Los Angeles Times, have rules governing reporters’ and editors’ use of social media. Facebook, Twitter and other applications.

Some experts say the time may be ripe to rethink such restrictions. “In an era in which newspapers are in decline, any journalist who attracts attention in any area should be welcomed,” said Paul Levinson, a professor of communication and media studies at Fordham University who is also an active Twitter user. “The restrictions that keep reporters penned into a small area never made much sense. The great journalists and writers were always Renaissance men and women, able to do many tasks.”

Andrew Breitbart, publisher of several influential conservative blogs including Big Hollywood, defends Ebert the political thinker. Breitbart says that Ebert’s Twitter posts reveal a patronizing view of tea party adherents that serves as a “caricature of the liberal mind-set” and that the critic is belittling with “raw contempt for Middle America.”

What especially irked some conservatives was that Ebert used a nickname for tea party followers that has also long been slang for a sexual act. When Ebert tweeted that he was unaware of the term’s pornographic connotations, Big Hollywood countered that he had referred to such a context in past movie reviews.

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“Having said more than once ‘I am a proponent of Roger Ebert using Twitter to express his point of view,” Breitbart said. “It’s a testament to the new media. Where he is having a bigger impact, in the Twitterverse or doing his reviews in print.”

Ebert admits he was slow to appreciate Twitter but is now a fan.

“Toward the end of every column, I’ve recently added a Twitter link,” he said.

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Dining out may contribute to increased calorie intake

Jeannine Stein
ARTS; FRIDAY, MARCH 12, 2010

Americans are eating out more and more. According to the National Restaurant Association, 49 percent of every food dollar in the U.S. is now spent in restaurants, up from 25 percent in 1955.

What that means is we have less and less control over just what goes into our food — and the numbers, now available per laws in states including California, are sometimes shocking.

Even healthful-seeming selections can pack a calorie, salt, sugar or saturated-fat punch.

Salads, long touted as a virtuous choice, are a prime example.

At IHOP the grilled chicken Caesar salad has 1,210 calories, far more than the patty melt, which comes in at 750 calories. At Baja Fresh, a chicken tostada has 1,140 calories and 14 grams of saturated fat.

If you figure that the average person needs 2,000 calories a day, it's sobering to learn that more than half that amount can easily be consumed in a restaurant breakfast alone. And don't forget sodium. The recommended daily limit is 2,400 milligrams a day (1,500 milligrams for those who are middle-aged, are in certain ethnic groups or have conditions such as high blood pressure). Many restaurant dishes contain more than you should have in a whole day.

Some chain restaurants have begun to create lower-calorie items or are highlighting their existing more-healthful items. Restaurant executives stress that this has been prompted by customer preferences and shifting dining trends, not by existing or pending menu labeling legislation. (Some nutrition experts suspect that new laws and the possible federal mandates waiting in the wings are more influential than companies want to admit.)

The Cor Ar Bakery Cafe recently listed 100-plus combinations of menu items that come in at less than 600 calories, such as an Asian wonton salad and cheddar broccoli soup, or a tuna salad sandwich and Caesar salad.

Applebee's has its new "Under 550 Calories" menu, offering grilled shrimp and island rice, asparagus pepper corn steak, and grilled dijon chicken and portobello.

Starbucks lately began touting its "skinny" drinks, which are less than 100 calories, such as the skinny vanilla latte and the skinny cinnamon dolce latte, plus its new under-400-calorie hot panini sandwiches.

Cheesecake Factory has a few "weight management" dishes that are lower in fat and calories, and the company recently introduced a small plates and snacks menu, with smaller-portioned items such as mini corn dogs, shrimp scampi crostini, arugula salad and crispy fried cheese — not all of those, however, are low in calories.

Romano's Macaroni Grill chain was dinged by the consumer advocacy group Center for Science in the Public Interest years ago for its heavy sauces and fatty, meat-centric entrees, but since Chief Executive Brad Blum came on board in 2008, the chain has cleaned up its act.

Yes, the Alfredo is still there (the sauce alone is 610 calories and 31 grams of saturated fat), but so is a honey balsamic chicken at 540 calories and 3 grams of saturated fat (side dishes included) and a scallop and spinach pasta at 550 calories and 5 grams of saturated fat. Some favorite dishes have slimmed down: eggplant Parmigiana went from 1,270 calories to 800.

It's not clear what see Calories, page 25
Krysten Cary keeps softball close to her heart

America Ayler

Senior first baseman Krysten Cary and her teammates have finished pre-game warm ups. Fans are filling the stands and the game is starting in a few minutes, but she doesn’t feel quite ready. Something is missing. She turns on her orange iPod nano and selects the four-song playlist that has become essential to every pre-game warm up for the last four years.

Through her earphones, Luc- daces tell her to shake her money maker, and three songs later, it’s game time.

Cary says she only feels comfortable stepping on the field after listening to the “cheesy” music line-up she created her freshman year.

“It’s part of my routine now,” she said. “It’s like, ‘OK, now I’m ready to play.’”

Last year, Cary led the Big West with 14 home runs and a .619 slugging percentage, all are statistics that mean little to her.

“I don’t look at numbers; I don’t keep track of that kind of stuff. Whatever I can do to help the team is what I’m most concerned about. If that means getting a walk, that means getting a walk. Or if it means making a play, throwing it to first — if that’s what they need me to do, that’s what I’m going to do.”

Cary’s mother, Vicki, has supported her daughter through her long-term commitments to softball and said she admires the focus she dedicates to whatever she wants to do.

“She’s a really good friend,” said Vicki. “She’s a really good friend, Vicki. She’s a really good friend.”

Cary has created a strong connection to pitcher Anna Calm, who is going into her third year on the team. Calm said this connection has brought them closer both as teammates and as friends.

“She’s been there to help me calm down if I’m not doing too well,” said Calm.

Now in her last season of Cal Poly softball, Cary feels like the “mama duck” as the oldest member of the team that is largely made up of underclassmen. Calm said Cary’s leadership qualities and quiet confidence have been very important after losing last season’s seniors.

“She’s really been there and she’s someone that you can come and talk to if you have a problem,” she said. “She’s also an amazing softball player and just all around a really great person.”

As an outgoing, friendly, fun and caring person, according to her mother Vicki, people are naturally drawn to her.

“She’s a really good friend,” she said. “I feel like she’s a good friend to me and I’m a mom.”

When she’s not conditioning, practicing or playing, Cary makes as much time for her friends as possible. With her friends and three roommates, Cary spends her time shopping downtown or watching movies like her all-time favorite “The Sandlot” and romantic comedies, her most recent obsession. She enjoys the quiet, homely feel she says San Luis Obispo possesses, which is different from her home in Orange County.

Cary’s love for the game solidified around the age of 10, a few years after she first started playing. Her favorite part of softball, the mental aspect, took its toll on her as she began starting for Cal Poly.

“I think I was four and my dad was playing wiffle ball with me on the front lawn — they always tell me this story because they think it’s hilarious. My mom asked me, ‘What position do you want to play?’ And I said, ‘Catcher!’ I love to hit. I think because hitting has a lot of the mental aspect.”

Away from the plate Cary plays first base, where she says she relies solely on instinct.

“You get to to think about it at practice, but when you’re in game situations, it’s all reactionary and I love it,” she said.

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Cary continued from page 27

ball, horseshoes and hiking, she also uses it to relax and lay down with a book.

At home, Cary likes to make family-style dinners with her roommates, usually of Mexican food.

“We always do family dinners as much as possible, which sounds so funny because you’d think that doesn’t really happen with college students since we’re always on the run,” she said. “But, as soon as I get home from practice at 6, we’re making dinner together and we sit down at the table and eat together.”

Cary also likes to arrange similar dinners and activities like hiking to encourage team bonding.

“I love getting people together and just hanging out,” she said. “Just to get away from the softball field and chat about life and boys and whatever else.”

She, Cahn and other girls from the team occasionally get together and make “Juicy Lucy’s” - a cheeseburger with cheese melted into the meat, inspired by the TV show “Man v. Food.”

“They’re just really delicious cheeseburgers and we make them and hang out sometimes,” Cahn said.

Cary looks back on her experience at Cal Poly with teammates and friends with nothing but gratification as her collegiate life comes to an end.

“They say time flies when you’re having fun, and I’ve been having so much fun,” she said. “It’s kind of crazy because it’s not like I’m coming back in the fall to finish up school, I’m done with school and I’m done with softball. I think that’s the most nerve-racking thing — that it’s all coming to an end, but I couldn’t have picked a better place to spend these four years. I love it here, and I love the team.”

After graduating in June with a degree in kinesiology, the exact path of her future is undecided, but said she knows softball coaching will undoubtedly be a part of it. She and her friends will spend some time relaxing and traveling following graduation, after which she looks toward becoming a high school health teacher or obtaining a master’s in public health and either returning to Orange County or San Luis Obispo.

Vicki acknowledges that finding employment is difficult for anyone. She is certain that Cary will find something she can be happy with.

“She hasn’t defined her focus so narrowly that she couldn’t take advantage of another opportunity because it’s not directly applicable to her degree,” Vicki Cary said.

“Mama duck” leaves Cal Poly softball behind with an optimistic attitude and the same passion that has enabled her to dedicate herself so completely to the game. But not before she has three last months of more challenges, more victories, more losses and more time playing what she calls her second love.

“We’ll miss it,” Vicki said. “It’s been such a great positive experience over the years that she’s going to finish her college career without any regrets.”
The economic troubles of the last year had many consumers looking to escape with a glass of wine. But they wanted to imbibe on a budget.

Wine makers and importers gathered this weekend for the South Beach Wine & Food Festival said Friday that while the volume of bottles sold remained relatively constant in 2009, the average price per bottle declined.

"It’s the mix that has changed," said Mel Dick, president of the wine division at Southern Wine & Spirits, the festival’s sponsor. "People were definitely trading down at all levels to more of a comfort zone. There was great success at the lower prices and much less success for the higher-priced wines."

In 2009, sales of wines priced at $25 and above dropped 30 percent nationwide, according to Nielsen. While global wine sales increased, California wine shipments fell for the first time in 16 years.

Dick and others agree that strongest demand was for wines at $10 or less a bottle.

That was a boon for brands like Gnarly Head, which saw business jump 30 percent in 2009, said Jeffrey Lubin, brand manager. Gnarly Head is best known for its Old Vine Zin, which sells for about $10 a bottle at retail.

"The brand was growing already, but the economy really helped ignite it," Lubin said. "It’s got a flavor profile that is designed for the masses. It’s very easy drinking."

To appeal to that budget-conscious consumer, all of the wines that importer Frederick Wildman and Sons is showcasing at this weekend’s festival are under $15, with most under $10. But the selection includes wines from France, Argentina and Italy.

"Before consumers would spend money on expensive wines just because they loved it now that’s only on special occasions," said Odila Galan-Noel, assistant vice president with Frederick Wildman and Sons out of New York.

"We figure today that people want to explore something they can drink on a daily basis."

The good news for 2010 is that many industry professionals see early indications that consumers are feeling a little more confident about the economy and are willing to fork over a few more dollars. That’s inching up demand for wines between $30 and $15 a bottle at retail and helping to bring back wine sales at restaurants, hotels and bars.

"In January we started to see a nice shift," said Brin Kuzan, sales director of fine wines in Florida for Constellation Wines. "Restaurants are seeing much more foot traffic, which helps sales."

Winemakers like Eros Sposotti from Italy also have found that in this competitive market it takes increased creativity to find ways to differentiate themselves.

That’s why Sposotti hired a Disney artist to do colorful labels for several of his more affordably priced wines like Gihu Pinot Grigio and Gru Montepulciano.

"At the end of the day, most of the wines on the shelf from Italy look boring," Sposotti said. "We were looking for a way to make the bottles more appealing to the consumer and be able to compete against the California and South African wines."

Sposotti believes the new labels have helped.

The number of bottles his company Cuoremosso Vintners sold in 2009 was flat, although his dollar volume was down about 30 percent.

"With the same money that they used to buy one bottle," he said, "now they’re buying two."

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Why not make the switch?
Jerry McDonald

Forty-niners general manager Scott McCloughan isn’t losing any sleep over what will likely be a dramatically different NFL financial landscape.

Teams with older stadiums and smaller revenue streams, such as the Raiders and 49ers, could in theory be outspent by teams with deeper pockets. McCloughan can barely stifle a yawn.

“We’re going to go forward as if there is a cap,” McCloughan told reporters at the recently concluded NFL scouting combine in Indianapolis. “We’re not considered to be a big free agency team, anyway. It’s not going to change our spending one way or the other.”

The Raiders, meanwhile, are silent on the matter, but they are operating much the same as they did last year when a $128 million cap was in place.

They locked up their two most significant unrestricted free agents, using the exclusive franchise tag on defensive lineman Richard Seymour at a cost of $12.38 million and signing kicker Sebastian Janikowski to a four-year, $16 million contract with $9 million guaranteed.

A year ago, they spent big to retain cornerback Nnamdi Asomugha (three years, $45.3 million) and punter Shane Lechler (a contract nearly identical to that of Janikowski).

Going with known commodities came a year after an ill-fated spending spree that included the signings of Gibril Wilson and Jawon Walker and a trade for DeAngelo Hall.

Neither Bay Area team is expected to make a serious run at the big-ticket items in unrestricted free agency, Carolina defensive end Julius Peppers and Arizona linebacker Karlos Dansby.

The talent pool thinned considerably because of changes in free agency resulting from the uncapped year. Instead of players being eligible for unrestricted free agency after four seasons, they now need six.

That means 212 players who were hoping to be unrestricted free agents as of 9 p.m. Thursday are now restricted free agents, going from their clubs the right of first refusal and draft pick compensation depending on the level of contract offered.

Denver, for instance, issued a first- and third-round tender to linebacker Elvis Dumervil, who led the NFL in sacks with 17. A four-year veteran, Dumervil would have been an unrestricted free agent in previous years, go­ing to the highest bidder with no strings attached.

But in this uncapped year, Dumervil can solicit offers from other teams to bring back to Denver. The Broncos can either match the offer or accept first- and third-round draft picks in return.

The 49ers retained linebacker Ahmad Brooks with a second-round tender and kept David Baas, a guard and center, with an original-round tender, which means the second-round pick in 2005 would bring a second-rounder in return if the 49ers don’t match the offer sheet.

While restricted free agents have rarely moved in past years, the dearth of unrestricted free agents could bring some offer sheets if teams target a specific player they think is worth more than the draft pick they’d lose to get him.

Expect most teams to be conservative as they survey the new landscape.

“You always see some teams going with known commodities,” McCloughan said.

“The dollars of other teams, specifically the Bay Area teams, will be interesting to watch. You look at what the Raiders are able to do to hold their own. We’re not considered to be a big free agency team, anyway. We’re going to go forward as if there is a cap.”
Jim Peltz

TEMPE, Ariz. — Scott Kazmir spoke in a voice soft and low, but the feelings his words revealed were unmistakable.

"It was very frustrating, very frustrating," the Angels pitcher started and said of his sub-par performance in last year's American League playoffs. And after the Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim lost to the New York Yankees in the AL Championship Series, "I came into the off-season, frustrated," the 26-year-old left-hander said. "I was the Angels, prepared to open this year's spring training season Thursday against the Chicago White Sox. "I felt like I let the team down."

But that frustration lasted only a couple of days, Kazmir said, after which he decided to devote the rest of his off-season to a redoubled work regimen aimed at preventing another such letdown.

It was a decision that "was almost immediate," even before the Yankees had finished off the Philadelphia Phillies in six games to win the World Series, he said. "I felt like in certain situations, if I had done what I was capable of doing, it would have been a different outcome."

The outcome sought by the Angels and Kazmir, of course, was for the Houston native to bolster their pitching for the last, and immediate, even before the Yankees had finished off the Philadelphia Phillies in six games to win the World Series. That's why the Angels traded three players last Aug. 28 to acquire Kazmir, an All-Star in 2009, and the team down."

So Kazmir, already armed with a 94-mph fastball and a well-regarded curveball, added that just like last fall, "we expect big things from him." Kazmir said, "It's not like I never worked in this off-season, but it was there, it wasn't there."

"I changed quite a few things in the off-season by how I approached my workouts and prepared for this season. I'm a lot stronger. I'm more focused. It's going to help me out in this game," Scioscia said. "There's no question about that." Kazmir is getting help from Anaheim's pitching coach Mike Butcher, who also guided Kazmir in 2006, when Butcher was pitching coach for Tampa Bay.

"Part of the process of pitching is thinking about what you did in the off-season," Butcher said. "If you feel good about what you did, you put the lay in the barn, so to speak, now you go out there and perform." Kazmir said there's no harm in losing up to 15 mph in spring training as an incentive to try harder.

"There's all sorts of aspects of how you deal with disappointment in this game," Scioscia said. "There are guys who use it for motivation. Some guys turn the page."

But I don't anticipate anything lingering," Kazmir said, adding that just like last fall, "we expect big things from him."
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