Gaza conflict comes to campus

Matt Fountain

Students gathered Thursday morning at the University Union Plaza to voice their opinions about the ongoing conflict in the Middle East between Israel and Hamas militants in Gaza.

The late morning rally, which was organized by the Students for Justice and Peace in the Middle East (SJPME), was in response to Israeli air and ground offensive against Hamas dubbed “Operation Cast Lead” by the Israeli military. The operation was launched Dec. 27 in response to Hamas rocket attacks that have hit Israeli targets as much as 24 miles away from the Israel-Gaza border.

The Israeli military has since shut down the Gaza border, and up until a brief ceasefire Wednesday, effectively blocked U.N. aid and foreign journalists from entering.

SJPME president Ara Kiri said prior to the demonstration, “We want to bring attention to the humanitarian crisis that’s going on in Gaza right now.”

“They’re running out of food,” she said. “They have no water, the hospitals are really limited in terms of supplies and space and everything. It’s just terrible what’s going on right now.”

The U.S. has given Israel a lot of money and weapons, and I feel that that’s partially my tax money and I don’t believe it should be used to go against (Gaza)... people think that they can’t do anything about it, but we want to give them a forum.

To counter the roughly 40 SJPME demonstrators at the rally was a group of about 30 members and supporters of the Israel Alliance, a Cal Poly organization led by President Jacob Kory.

“We’re here to denounce Hamas terrorism,” Kory said shortly before the rally began. “I don’t think enough people realize Hamas is a terrorist organization. We’re really here to show our support for Israel.”

Walsh to replace Ellerson as football head coach

Former Army offensive coordinator spent 14 years as Portland State coach

The Cal Poly football team will name former Army offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach Tim Walsh as its new head coach for the upcoming season, it was announced Thursday.

Walsh would bring 18 years of collegiate head coaching experience to Cal Poly, including 14 years at Bowl Championship Subdivision (formerly Division I-AA) Portland State.

Walsh began his head coaching career at Sonoma State where he led the program to a California Collegiate Athletic Association championship.

After four years in Sonoma, Walsh was hired as the head coach of then-Division II Portland State in 1993.

Walsh guided Portland State for 14 seasons compiling a 90-68 record. His career college head coaching record is 117-82.

Cal Poly has been without a head coach since Rich Ellerson took the head coaching job at Army on Dec. 26.

The Mustangs were 56-34 in Ellerson’s eight seasons as head coach, including two trips to the Division I-AA playoffs.

In Ellerson’s final season at Cal Poly, the Mustangs finished ranked eighth in the nation with an 8-3 mark, hosting the school’s first ever Division I playoff game.

It remains to be seen whether any of Ellerson’s former assistants will resume their positions on the new staff.

Fatal police shooting sparks Oakland protests

Oakland Mayor Ron Dellums called for calm. “Even with our anger and our pain, let’s still address each other with a degree of civility and calmness and not make this tragedy an excuse to engage in violence,” he said. “I don’t want anybody hurt. I don’t want anybody killed.”

Extra police were posted Thursday at BART stations, and a group of angry demonstrators smashed storefronts late Wednesday, set fire to cars and clashed with officers equipped with riot gear and tear gas in downtown Oakland. More than 100 people were arrested.

Transit police officer Johannes Mehserle was initially placed on paid leave. He has not spoken publicly about the incident.

Oakland Mayor Ron Dellums has directed the city’s police department to investigate
Protest

continued from page 1

and the actions they’re taken.”

Although the two-party protest was peaceful and ended without incident, dialogue often became heated from members of the SLO chapter of Code Pink, a national group for women whose stated mission is to protest the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan— as well as the formation of all new wars who joined the Palestinian demonstrators.

“I was a little concerned to see the Code Pink ladies start to come within our ranks and sell us,” Kory said after the protest. “This was supposed to be a peaceful rally, and I don’t think anyone was trying to get in our front line. I’m an American representative of this, and I’m supposed to be here to protect everyone.”

Despite many counter-protesters, most demonstrations expressed sympathy at the outside. “It seemed like a peaceful event,” captured the national group for women who joined the Palestinian demonstrators.

“My feeling is that it’s good to have the things like this because it gets people interested,” said Cal Poly statistics junior Michelle Shaffer, who came to the rally to support peace demonstrations.

“I feel like a lot of people just don’t know (about the situation) here or are looking at just one side of it,” she said. “So now I think a lot of people will go and research more about what’s going on and why the United States cares.”

Calif. appeals court rejects lawsuit to block tax hikes

Judy Lin

SACRAMENTO (AP) — An attorney group appealing a lower court’s decision to dismiss a lawsuit seeking to block tax hikes passed by Democrats in the state Legislature has asked the appeals court to consider new legal action.

The group attorneys would file a new lawsuit in federal court because the vote violated the constitution rights of the Republican majority members.

“We are still looking at this case for potential appeal because we believe this issue needs to be resolved,” he said.

Schwarzenegger vetoed the $12 billion budget last week, but a new lawsuit in federal court because the vote violated the constitutional rights of the Republican majority members.

“We feel like a lot of people just don’t know about the situation yet,” Shaffer said. “So now I think a lot of people will go and research more about what’s going on and why the United States cares.”

Oakland

continued from page 1

Several protesters lie face down on the sidewalk near the intersection of Broadway and 14th Street, on Saturday, Aug. 7, 2009, in Oakland, Calif.

Grant’s killing as a homicide, antiblack cop to face trial

Grant’s killing as a homicide, antiblack cop to face trial

An attorney for Mehserle did not immediately respond to requests for comment Thursday.

Grant’s family has filed a $2 million wrongful-death claim against BART, the San Francisco Bay Area’s commuter rail system, and relatives want Mehserle to be criminally charged.

“They want justice, but they don’t want any more violence,” said John Burris, an attorney for Grant’s family. “That officer hasn’t been prosecuted yet. There’s people who have confidence in the system right now.”

Local African-American leaders expressed outrage Thursday at the shooting. “It is a tragic day in our city’s history,” said John Hurst, president of the NAACP in Oakland.

They argue that the police department’s recent actions are a case of potential appeal because we believe this issue needs to be resolved,” he said.

Reports of police officers arriving shortly after midnight on New Year’s Day at the Fruitvale BART station following reports of young men fighting on a train. Grant was one of several who were ordered off the train, questioned and then restrained by Mehserle and other officers.

Seventeen were shot in the back, but not unhealed. In a transfers, the shooting unfolded in front of a dozen train passengers, who were returning home after New Year’s Eve celebrations.

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Israel may have second threat with Lebanese rockets fired

Mattie Friedman

Residents of this northern Israeli town awoke Thursday to one of their country's worst nightmares: Rockets from Lebanon, and the possibility of a second front in a battle that has raged for two weeks in Gaza.

No armed group claimed responsibility for the two Katyusha rockets that lightly injured two Israelis. But the most likely suspects were small Palestinian factions operating in southern Lebanon and known to possess Katyushas.

The Lebanese militant group Hezbollah, which fought a 34-day war with Israel in 2006, denied it was behind the attack. But the most likely suspects were small Palestinian factions operating in southern Lebanon and known to possess Katyushas.

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Briefs

Wrestling vs. Cal State Bakersfield - 6:30 p.m.
Mott Gym

Men's Basketball vs. UC Irvine - 7 p.m.
Mott Gym

National

HOUSTON (AP) — Chevron Corp said Thursday the huge drop in crude prices at the end of 2008 will be a big blow to its fourth-quarter earnings, a sharp reversal from the favorable market conditions that fueled record profits earlier in the year.

After peaking above $147 a barrel in July, oil prices spent the remainder of 2008 falling dramatically. When the fourth quarter began on Oct. 1, crude was trading at around $100 a barrel. Three months later, on Dec. 31, it settled at $44.60, a decline of nearly 60 percent.

WASHINGTON (AP) — Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid will be distributing inauguration tickets to at least 33 Nevada chosen by drawing numbers from a hat. It's a hat-tip to his home-state industry.

Most Senate offices got only 33-40 inauguration tickets apiece to hand out, but Reid got considerably more. His office declined to specify how many, but he has enough to pick 33 numbers from a hat, match them with names of some of the thousands of Nevadans who requested inauguration tickets, and hand out one or two tickets to each person selected. Reid plans to draw the first seven numbers himself in his Senate office Friday morning.

A photo of 4-year-old Ayah just herbio sticking out from the rubble of her home, covered many of the Arab world Wednesday after President-elect Obama presented her with a lifetime part in the United States.

Said Foreign Minister Saud al-Faisal and Secretary David Miliband announced the agreement wordings of the resolution two-hour closed-door meeting.

The diversity of not only U.S. but also cultures is expected to focus on the past as something was so sacred that something was too sacred to work. Campbell's new quilting, "From 1845 to 1910" with 45 other quilts is a Campbell's quilt is diverse.

Admission is FREE for Cal Poly Students for all home Athletic
The Mustang Daily staff takes pride in publishing a daily newspaper for the Cal Poly campus and the neighboring community. We appreciate your readership and are thankful for your careful reading.

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The Mustang Daily reserves the right to edit letters for grammar, profanity and length. Letters, comments and cartoons do not represent the views of the Mustang Daily. Please limit length to 250 words. Letters should include the writer's full name, phone number, major and class standing.

The Mustang Daily is a "designated public forum." Student editors have full authority to make all content decisions without censorship or advance approval.

The Mustang Daily is a free newspaper; however, the removal of more than one copy of the paper per day is subject to a cost of 50 cents per issue.

Let's get the negative out of the way first: this year I drive a Mercedez-Benz S600. It is more famous than me, because I resolve all my life problems with my car. That may not be the most right thing to do. But I resolve my life problems with my car. I sell my Spanish, accept that I am a nice shade of white, and go on a bad trip through the world of dance, music, and other things.
I don’t know if Islamic terrorists are foolish enough to actually believe they could achieve the “destruction of Western civilization” or not. What I do know is that you are fools for thinking they might actually achieve such a thing. Their goal is to scare us into tearing ourselves apart and the fact that good folks like you are now condoning torture is sad evidence that they have achieved some measure of success. And, by the way, torture does not work; intelligence used to locate and inaccuracy terrorist ring leaders has come overwhelmingly from rapport building and not harsh interrogation techniques. In addition, the majority of suspected terrorists captured over the past four years (college students from Darnas, merchants from Saudi Arabia, flock henders from Pakistan) have cited U.S. torture of Muslims as the main reason they joined terrorist organizations. Plus, who knows how many innocent people were held (and are possibly still being held) or tortured out of mere suspicion? If the answer to that question is more than zero, all of us are fooled to shame, for we have allowed the terrorists to drag our great nation down to their level. It’s not okay simply because we are the good guys and they are the bad guys. If we truly want to see “freedom and democracy” (take root elsewhere in the world, we must lead by example. Our goal, therefore, should be righteousness — not SELF-righteousness. And you, Ian, could start by expanding your field of vision beyond your current narrow ideology.

— Eric Bolstad

Response to “Appointment of Panetta is one giant leap in the wrong direction”

You claim, “Having known terrorists in custody away from concentrations of civilians in one centralized location is a good thing.” I don’t think anyone would argue against this claim, but it’s becoming obvious that many people in Guantanamo were in the wrong place at the wrong time. What really disturbs me is your claim, “Civil liberties shouldn’t matter when it comes to terrorism if they are not citizens.” Are you saying that domestic terrorists should get civil liberties but foreign terrorists shouldn’t? More to the point, the Supreme Court ruled in 1986 in the case of Yick Wo v. Hopkins that constitutional protections apply to all persons within the U.S. and its territories. (Yes, that includes illegal immigrants too.) Who knows the White House was packed with activist judges! Sadly, torture in real life doesn’t work like it does on “24.” Many interrogators have said the most effective way to get information from someone is to build trust and common ground — something torture can’t accomplish. The U.S. used to be able to claim moral superiority, but after the past eight years — and people who think like you do — we cannot claim this any more.

— Scott Grandis-Hill

Response to “Islamo-fascism: One of the greatest dangers facing America”

Editor’s note: Comments were slightly edited for length. View the original comments online at mustangdaily.net.
**SPORTS**

**MUSTANG DAILY**

**Sproles working to put stuttering behind him**

Bernie Wilson  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

SAN DIEGO — Words don’t come easily as yards and touchdowns do for Darren Sproles, the exciting little running back for the San Diego Chargers. Yet in the runoffs and days after he helped carry the Bolts into the divisional round of the playoffs, there was nothing fast about the media horde until Sproles’ first career start.

“Like the more reps you get, you feel more comfortable back there. More confident. You get like in a little rhythm,” Sproles said. “Eventually, I’m sure he’ll get even more comfortable with it,” said Sproles’ agent, Garry Wichard. “I know Bill Walton overcame that years ago. Now you can’t get him to shut up.”

Wichard, who said Sproles is similar to Walton, who lives in San Diego, said, “Is he just a kick returner? Is he just a runner? He’s a lifetime stutterer. He’s so shy of media attention that he’d had to clear that hurdle. He had to do it,” Sproles said. “I just want to do it. I just want to do it.”

Sproles was so shy of media attention that he’d literally scramble away when he’d see cameras. Over time he decided that it was OK to stop and talk.

“I just want to do it. I just want to do it. I just want to do it,” said Sproles, who’s been a spokesperson for The Stuttering Foundation.

Sproles has had big games before, but he’d never gone to the interview room to face the media horde until after Saturday night’s thrilling 23-17 overtime wild-card win over the Indianapolis Colts.

Sproles had plenty to talk about, particularly his winning 22-yard touchdown run and his 28 all-purpose yards, the third-most in an NFL playoff game.

“It was just one of those things I had to do,” Sproles said. “I just wanted to hurry up and get through it, but you just have to work at it. Once you work at it then you get comfortable with it, you actually can do pretty good at it.”

Sort of like what he’s doing on the field. Known mostly for being a talented return specialist, he stepped up after LaDainian Tomlinson was forced out with a groin injury that could sideline him for Sunday’s game at Pittsburgh. If Tomlinson can’t go, it will be Sproles’ first career start.

“Like the more reps you get, you feel more comfortable back there. More confident. You get like in a little rhythm,” Sproles said.

San Diego Chargers running back Darren Sproles scored the winning touchdown in overtime during an NFL AFC wild-card football game in San Diego.

There are times when he appears to get pounded. “It’s not really bad because they really don’t get a clean shot on me all the time,” he said. “It may look bad, but it ain’t really bad.”

Usually, defenders are too late. He’s more like a bloodhound. He’s more like a bloodhound. He’s more like a bloodhound.

“’He’s a powerful built guy and one of the strongest guys on the team,’ Turner said. ‘Daren is short; there is nothing small about him.’

If Sproles needs to lower his shoulder on a defender, he will. Otherwise, it’s Sproles’ slashing, make-the-most-play that allows him to survive in a game full of 300-pounders.

Sproles is listed as 5-foot-1, 180 pounds. His NFL tape shows that once he sees an opening, he has hit them as fast as he could. More confident. You get like in a little rhythm.

There have been questions about how Sproles will hold up if he keeps touching the ball as much as he has.

Houston Texas defensive tackle Travis Johnson, though, remembers Sproles outweighing him and Shawn Merriman as the three worked out prior to the 2005 draft.

Johnson said he bench-pressed 365 pounds two or three times. He remembers Merriman — the Chargers’ linebacker who’s on injured reserve — doing six repetitions and Sproles, 13. “That was the craziest thing I’ve ever seen,” Johnson said. “I was thinking, ‘This guy’s small.’ I was in awe. It made me a believer. If he’s 5 foot 9 1/2, he might have been the first pick in our draft. No questions asked.”

Sproles will be an unrestricted free agent after the season and stands to make a lot of money.

“We would love to keep him here, and from what I understand he would like to stay here, so that certainty is a fact at the beginning,” general manager A.J. Smith said. If Sproles signs elsewhere, “We’d be extremely disappointed,” Smith said.

Wichard, who said Sproles is simply doing what he did at Kansas State, later spoke with the Chargers in July and they decided to talk again after the season.

“It was kind of a year where I wanted to see what Tank was,” Wichard said. “He’s just a kick returner? Is he more than that? Let’s let him get defined. It’s a lot easier to negotiate adjusting who he is, and fortunately we’ve had this opportunity now.”

AP Sports Writer Alan Robinson in Pittsburgh contributed to this report.

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**Cal Poly falls to Cal State Fullerton on ESPNU**

Florida defeated Oklahoma 24-14 to capture the BCS National Championship on Thursday night. Gators running back Percy Harvin (not pictured) rushed for 122 yards and a touchdown on nine carries. Florida quarterback Tim Tebow (not pictured) threw for 231 yards and two scores.

DENIS POROY  ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE PHOTO

The Mustangs (3-10, 0-3 Big West Conference) fell to Cal State Fullerton (7-8, 1-2) 86-82 in Mott Gym in a game that was nationally televised by ESPN2. Cal Poly senior guard Chuck Thomas led the Mustangs with 23 points. Titans senior guard Josh Akognon led all scorers with 26 points. Cal Poly returns to action at 7 p.m. Saturday night when they host conference foe UC Irvine. Go to mustangdaily.net for a full recap.

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**Gators win BCS National Championship**

Cal Poly senior guard Chuck Thomas led the Mustangs with 23 points. Titans senior guard Josh Akognon led all scorers with 26 points. Cal Poly returns to action at 7 p.m. Saturday night when they host conference foe UC Irvine. Go to mustangdaily.net for a full recap.

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**San Diego quarterback Tim Tebow (not pictured) threw for 231 yards and two scores.**

DENIS POROY  ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE PHOTO

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**SPORTS EDITOR:** Scott Silvey  
mustangdailysports@gmail.com