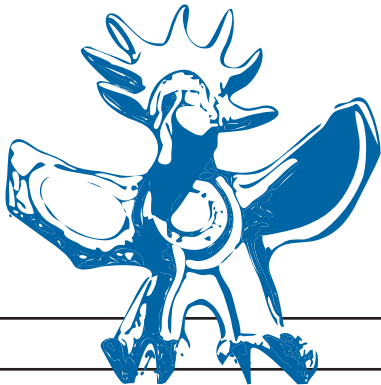


THE



UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO GUARDIAN

www.ucsdguardian.org

Thursday, February 19, 2009

The Student Voice Since 1967

A.S. COUNCIL HESITATES TO FUND NEW GROVE EVENTS

Councilmembers cite cafe's financial instability in debate over allocation of \$14K for revamped events planning.

By Reza Farazmand
NEWS EDITOR

Following an extended period of income fluctuation, the Associated Students-funded Grove Caffe reported a net loss of more than \$10,000 over the last two months, prompting a number of A.S. councilmembers to question the merits of approving a hefty new funding request from Grove employees at last week's council meeting.

The Grove's request for \$13,750 — which would fund a number of self-sponsored programming events — was initially denied at the meeting amid widespread criticism from councilmembers who called attention to the cafe's continued failure to report any significant profit. The Grove is now an estimated \$109,214 in debt, a figure that was compounded by the cafe's substantial January setback.

Student employees from the Grove plan to attend next week's council meeting to resubmit their request, this time with a comprehensive outline of the events planned for the cafe.

Associate Vice President of Finance and Resources Naasir Lakhani, who voiced his support for the measure at the meeting, said he feels the Grove should be given the opportunity to attract new interest — both for its own benefit and that of the surrounding Student Center community.

"Some people just didn't want to spend any more money on the Grove," Lakhani said. "That doesn't make a lot of sense to me, because A.S. does a lot of programming in Price Center and a lot of programming in the colleges, and we give the student orgs money for programming — so why not have programming in the Old Student Center where it will not only attract attention to the Grove, but also to the cops and all the other businesses that are operating over there?"

Grove student manager Autumn Hays said that, if approved, the new funds would be used to host frequent events at and around the cafe — such as hookah nights, open-mic nights, comedy and art shows, live music and sports barbecues.

"What we really want to bring UCSD is a great place to spend

See GROVE, page 3

Lit. Community Reacts to Cancer Cluster, Calls for Action



Demonstrators stage vocal protest over admin's allegedly lax response to report.

By David Harvey
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

Residents of the Literature Building, home to a suspected cancer cluster — including eight cases of breast cancer since 2000 — staged a demonstration Feb. 17 in response to the university's slow reaction to a report linking abnormally powerful, electromagnetic fields generated by the building's elevator system to the high rate of cancer in longtime employees.

The protest, organized by professors John D. Blanco, Dennis Childs and Luis Martin Cabrera, led nearly 100 department affiliates from their classrooms and offices across campus, past Geisel Library, to arrive at the office of Chancellor Marye Anne

Fox. There, demonstrators delivered a petition — signed by more than 1,300 concerned citizens — that called on Fox to take immediate action.

Blanco read the petition's introduction directly to the chancellor.

"We know the administration is capable of doing the right thing," he read aloud. "But until the administration takes action, many of us cannot in good conscience disavow the crisis of safety in the Literature Building, which has led to a fundamental crisis of confidence in your leadership."

In July 2008, responding to a study conducted by epidemiologist and UCSD professor Cedric Garland, the university vacated areas with risk of exposure to high EMF levels, and later replaced elevator motor devices and fluorescent light fixtures with equipment to reduce these levels.

Still, protestors expressed dissatisfaction with anything but a comprehensive facelift of the building — or

See CANCER, page 2



JOSEPH HO/GUARDIAN
Top: Demonstrators gathered in front of Geisel Library Feb. 17 to listen to literature professors Dennis Childs and Nina Zhiri criticize campus administrators for their delayed reaction to the literature building cancer cluster. Bottom: The protest included a march down Library Walk.

Researchers Develop Smirking, Speaking Einstein Robot

By Christina Homer
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

Software developers at UCSD's California Institute for Telecommunications and Information Technology have unveiled the latest in artificial intelligence: the Einstein Robot, a model head installed with specialized software that allows it to interact naturally with humans.

Designed by Hanson Robotics President David Hanson, the robot is capable of both recognizing and mimicking facial expressions and can respond accordingly.

Calit2 also equipped the robot with character engine artificial intelligence control software, allowing the robot to hold a conversation with humans.

"In the short term, Einstein is being used to develop computer vision so we can see how computers perceive facial



ERIK JEPSEN/GUARDIAN
Facial-recognition software designed by Calit2 scientists allows the Einstein Robot to naturally interpret and mimic human facial expressions.

expressions and develop hardware to visually react," said Javier Movellan, a research scientist at the Machine Perception Laboratory in Calit2. "This

robot is a scientific instrument that we hope will tell us something about human-robot interaction, but also human-to-human interaction."

The robot's facial-recognition software was designed by Movellan and

See EINSTEIN, page 2

HIATUS Scuffin' the Red Carpet

Hiatus picks the snarkiest, stupidest and downright sexiest cinematic moments of 2008 for the annual Anti-Oscar awards.

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SPORTS Cracking the Top 10

Men's volleyball: Bolstered by a tournament victory at the Morgan Classic, the Tritons move up to No. 10 in the nation.

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ONLINE

Poll: Do you believe the campus administration has been adequately transparent in its handling of the cancer cluster developments?
Tell us at www.ucsdguardian.org.

WEATHER

Feb. 19 H 71 L 45	Feb. 20 H 69 L 48
Feb. 21 H 68 L 51	Feb. 22 H 71 L 52

SUNNY-SIDE UP

BY PHILIP RHIE



Admin. Offers Residents Use of EMF Detection Equipment

► **CANCER**, from page 1
 permanent relocation — at a presentation held Feb. 10 by epidemiologist and UCLA professor Leeka Kheifets, who was selected by the university to perform a follow-up investigation on the building's potential dangers.
 "Give these people a new building," said Stan Melad, son to a former staff member who passed away after being diagnosed with breast cancer. "These people just want to work somewhere safe; let's not drag this out."
 Childs — concerned about Kheifets' affiliation with the Electric Power Research Institute, an independent nonprofit organization funded in large part by companies in the electric utility industry — questioned her funding sources. However, Kheifets insisted on the organization's independence and emphasized that without the work of the EPRI, there would be scarce, if any, research on the connection between cancer and EMF.
 On Feb. 12, the two elevators suspected of causing elevated EMF levels were shut down by administrators

from general use, and on Feb. 17, after the demonstration, the elevators were blocked by a mock coffin wrapped with pink ribbon and quarantined with caution tape by protesters.
 According to Environment, Health and Safety Director Steve Benedict, the university is making EMF-measuring equipment available to anyone entering the Literature Building.
 EHS is also hosting a Web site, blink.ucsd.edu/go/EHS-LIT, where all related documentation — as well as a selection of studies on both EMF and breast cancer — is posted.
 The Web site is part of the administration's effort to increase the investigation's transparency, Benedict said.
 Graduate student Soren Frohlich, a member of the department committee tasked with representing residents' interests in regard to the study, said that while transparency is important, it doesn't mean much if the university isn't taking the right actions.
Readers can contact David Harvey at dharvey@ucsd.edu.

Hanson: Intelligent Robots to Display Empathy, Compassion

► **EINSTEIN**, from page 1
 a team of Calit2 graduate students through analysis of over one million facial images. The software uses a series of computational algorithms that allow Einstein to identify a wide range of emotions, as well as facial movements that reveal gender and age.
 "When a robot interacts in a way we feel is human, we can't help but react," Movellan said. "Developing a robot like this one teaches us how sensitive we are to biological movement and facial expressions, and when we get it right, it's really astonishing."
 By programming it to respond to sounds that are normally heard in an educational setting, such as clapping, creators hope the robot can eventually serve as a teacher.
 The robot could also be used to teach foreigners about normal interactions within American society.
 "Some scientists believe strongly that very human-like robots are so inherently creepy that people can never get over it and interact with them normally," Hanson said. "But

these are some of the questions we're trying to address with the Einstein Robot: Does software engage people more when you have a robot that's more aware of you?"
 Robots like Einstein are currently available for purchase for approximately \$75,000, but developers hope to bring the price down to \$500.
 Hanson emphasized the importance of creating robots that will serve a constructive purpose in society.
 "It's very important that we develop empathic machines — machines that have compassion, machines that understand what you're feeling," he said. "If these robots do become as intelligent as human beings, we want this infrastructure of compassion and empathy to be in place so the machines are prepared to use their intellectual powers for the good of civilization, rather than in ways that undermine the stability of civilization."
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SPRING BREAK/TRAVEL ISH MON MAR 2

Council Gets the Dig on the Wedge, Hears Dreary Outlook for Campus Finances

Verbose presentations from Social and Environmental Sustainability and Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs Penny Rue took up the duration of last night's A.S. Council meeting.

During public input, SESC Committee representative **Fran Avendano** gave a presentation that detailed the current status of a piece of land settled between Eleanor Roosevelt College and North Campus known as the Wedge.

Development of the Wedge into an environmentally sustainable plot of land was previously divided into four phases, three of which have been completed. However, the last phase has been shelved due to insufficient funds. The land is now being used as a temporary parking lot.

SESC recommends that phase four of the Wedge be completed with a sustainable concept design as an alternative to paving the lot. This alternative would prevent storm-water pollution, provide a model for natural water filtration, encourage alternative transportation and reinvest in open on-campus educational spaces.

Stephanie Usry and **Sam Solomon**, who serve as part of the committee organizing UCSD Cares Week 2009, stepped up to the microphone to tell the council about the event, which will take place in May. The week of philanthropy and community engagement will culminate with the university's first-ever dance marathon.

Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs **Penny Rue** took the council floor and gave a lengthy special presentation that began with commendations on the way councilmembers handled the activity-fee referendum and then discussed the

changes the university's unprecedented financial situation will bring, as well as recent and upcoming projects her office has undertaken.

"We're making some difficult choices, and we're trying to make the process as transparent as possible," Rue said. "It's important for us to continue in new directions. We're continuing to look at ways to move forward; sometimes it requires reallocation of funds, sometimes it requires some creativity."

Rue welcomed questions from the council after her presentation, and Associate Vice President of External Affairs **Lisa Chen** asked about the chancellor's attitude toward the alleged cancer cluster in the literature building.

"If the chancellor believed that there was an actual risk, then they would have moved very quickly to find alternative arrangements," Rue said. "It has received the highest levels of attention from the chancellor and it remains a very high priority at the chancellor's table."

During reports the finance committee went through a laundry list of allocations, most of which were approved with little to no obstruction.

A funding request for \$13,750 for programming for the Grove Caffè once again made an appearance before the council, despite the fact that the same request was shot down last week.

Vice President of Finances and Resources **Naasir Lakhani** motioned to table the item after Associate Vice President of Enterprise Operations **Chelsea Maxwell** explained that she needed more time to meet with Grove employees to discuss the type of events that would be held at the venue. The motion was tabled.



New Business
Connie Shieh
cshieh@ucsd.edu

Council Requests More Detailed Plans for Grove Events

► **GROVE**, from page 1
time, meet people and enjoy exciting events, coffee and the atmosphere of the Grove," he said. "The Grove has been at UCSD for over 23 years, and is a big part of our community."

Hays added that the cafe has already sponsored a number of similar events throughout the year.

"We hosted many at our cost so far this year, including bands, open mics, art shows, comedy nights and more," Hays said. "We want to continue this, but we need help on funding the events. None of the employees at the Grove want to see it go. We honestly love the place, and we are working hard to keep it alive and growing."

A.S. Associate Vice President of Programming **Garrett Berg** sided with the council majority, expressing his disapproval of the funding allocation and asserting that the release of any programming funds to the Grove should be at least partially overseen by his department.

"It doesn't seem responsible to hand over another \$13,000 to a business that has been falling deeper and deeper into debt," Berg said. "Because of this, the A.S. Programming office seemed like the most appropriate entity to oversee these events. We would of course work closely with Grove employees on these events, just as we work closely with the Loft curator."

Berg added that if given authority to manage Grove programming funds, his department would work to develop attractions specific to the cafe's atmosphere and interests.

"Many of the events that the Grove staff suggested are duplicates of events going on elsewhere," Berg said. "My staff would work to bring unique events to the Grove to really drive attendance."

A.S. Arts and Humanities Senator

Sam Jung also rejected the funding request, reasoning that it would be inappropriate for the council to release the requested funds, given the Grove's lack of a comprehensive plan for the events.

"I didn't find it responsible for me to vote for [the funding] when we put a higher level of scrutiny on student organizations that only get a maximum of \$200 per week for their events, even with an itemized budget," he said.

“It doesn't seem responsible to hand over another \$13,000 to a business that has been falling deeper and deeper into debt.”

— Garrett Berg, A.S. Associate Vice President of Programming

In an effort to implement tighter council oversight of the Grove's daily operations, councilmembers — in conjunction with Student Center officials and Grove management — established the Grove Advisory Committee last year, a body that has not once met in the last two quarters.

Meant to serve as a forum for councilmembers to touch base with Grove employees and to keep track of the cafe's financial situation, the committee's meetings have largely been replaced by informal correspondences between Lakhani, Grove manager **Cleveland Thomas** and A.S. Associate Vice President of Student Enterprises **Chelsea Maxwell**.

"There's still that connec-

tion between A.S. and the Grove, and there's been that connection throughout the year," Lakhani said. "I know people have been critical of the fact that the committee hasn't met, but for me, I think that the purpose of the committee is just to make sure that the Grove and A.S. are always in communication with each other. So there's that communication between me and [Maxwell] and [Thomas]."

Jung said the council's continued support of the Grove should depend on a greater understanding of the cafe's place in campus history.

"The council needs to have a comprehensive briefing about the history of the Grove and what led it up to this point," Jung said. "It needs to rediscover why the Grove was so successful in the first place, and try to get back to the roots of that success."

Jung added that his experience as a former student manager and longtime employee of the Grove has made him wary of the cafe's current condition.

"As a student who worked there when it was student run, before the construction, during the time when A.S. tried to shut it down, and after when A.S. hired an outside manager I know that what made the Grove special was the atmosphere, the unique people, the welcoming environment," Jung said. "In short, it had that 'it' factor. Not a lot of that is there anymore, so if saving the Grove means converting it into a co-op, or at least making it student-run, or working with the Rady School of Management, I would be all for that. I know for a fact, though, that the Grove is not sustainable the way it is being operated."

Readers can contact **Reza Farazmand** at rfarazma@ucsd.edu.

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Props to college freshmen, who are more politically engaged than they have been in 40 years, according to the American Council on Education.

Flops to the S.D. Unified School District for addressing budget cuts by offering teachers early retirement incentives, potentially expanding class sizes.



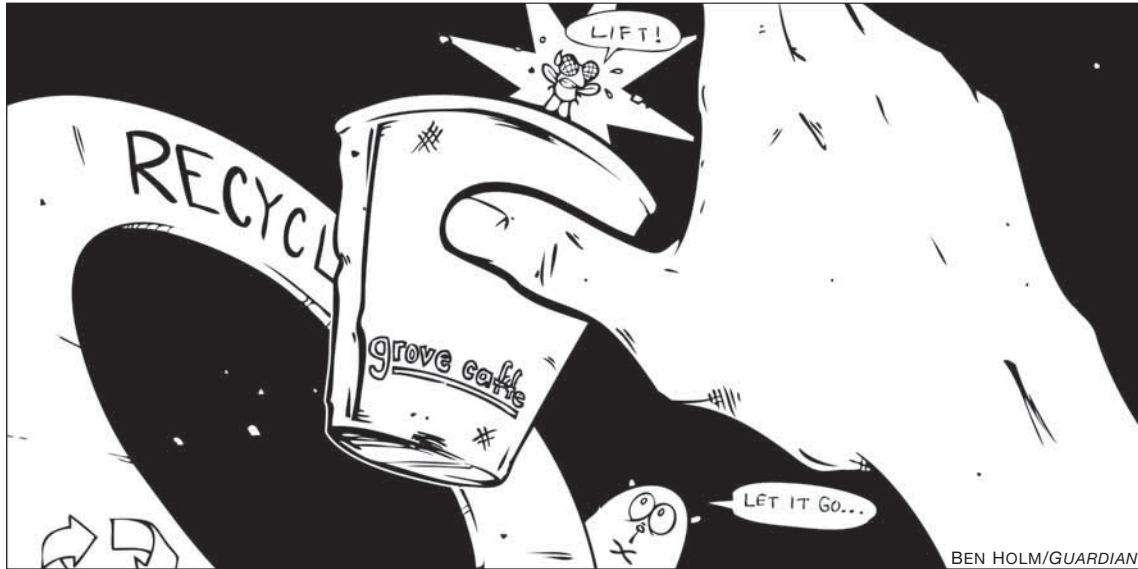
EDITORIALS

Time to Leave This Failing 'Landmark' in the Past

The A.S. Council is scheduled to discuss a \$13,750 Grove Caffe funding allocation at its meeting next week, despite the enterprise's exorbitant and ever-growing debt. Now \$109,214 in the hole — about \$10,000 of which was amassed in just the last two months — the cafe has illustrated a complete inability to manage funds. Rather than arguing about the necessity of an outlandish allotment for ill-planned evening programming, councilmembers need to stop the bleeding and finally put an end to the Grove.

Every time the cafe's troubles come before council review, students are left hearing the same pleas: The Grove's a landmark, a piece of UCSD history! And irresponsible council after irresponsible council responds the same: OK, we'll give you just one more chance.

The most drastic of these last chances came in spring 2007, when an oblivious council woke up to find its little coffee shop about \$20,000 in the red. The council threatened closure, but after a dramatic outcry from the 10 or so Grove employees at the time, the issue was hijacked by self-important councilmembers who added the enterprise to their failing re-election campaign. At the start of the 2007-08 academic year it seemed like the Grove might get some actual help, as the council hired outside manager Cleveland Thomas, formed an oversight committee, gave employees a year to turn the cafe around



BEN HOLM/GUARDIAN

and the Student Center underwent substantial renovations. But a year and a half later the debt has more than quintupled, the oversight committee has yet to do anything and the council has apparently abandoned its one-year ultimatum.

Although the Grove is paraded as a part of the school's history, the blatant truth is that the cafe's history — at least for the last decade — is one of continual debt perpetuated by a failing business model. For years this editorial board has called upon councilmembers to give their enterprise the attention it deserves, but now it's painfully clear that every option has been exhausted: Councilmembers have proven time

and time again they are unwilling to commit the necessary support and oversight to pull the Grove out of the hole; managers have illustrated atrocious business practices, pushing the cafe deeper and deeper into irreversible debt every month; and the enterprise has received massive hierarchical and structural reform, menu overhaul, tremendous new publicity efforts and a host of customer-seeking activity planning. But in the past year the Grove has only plunged farther into the red.

The upcoming funding request is a slap in every UCSD student's face, making it undeniably clear that the A.S. Council must take swift action to close this enterprise once and for all.


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Politicians Could Take Tips from Down South

It has been my longtime habit to read the newspaper, but lately, news of the global financial meltdown and rants from leaders who have little idea how to solve it have made me dread my daily fix. If there's nothing about our financial woes, I will most likely come across a political scandal involving bribes, sex or some twisted form of corruption brought to light from the back alleys of our nation's capital. And if all else fails, no newspaper forgets weekly



State of Disunion

Brent Westcott

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death counts in developing countries around the world. Needless to say, my faith and trust in politicians wanes as I scan the headlines every morning. But last week, I sat down with the *New York Times* expecting another depressing read, and after trudging through the usual doom and gloom my hope in politicians was instantly renewed when I set my sights on an article about Mexico City Mayor Marcelo Ebrard.

Ebrard is not your typical mayor. Mexico City is one of the most densely packed cities on the planet and suffers a host of problems that we La Jollans cannot even fathom. As of 2007, 31.8 percent of Mexico City's population was living in poverty and the Mexican government offered little hope to its citizens. Despite these challenges, Ebrard has remained positive, concocting nifty ways to enrich his citizens' lives without fancy economics or foreign policy. For starters, Ebrard closes the city's major streets every Sunday, transforming them into gigantic bike paths to encourage exercise and reduce pollution. This Valentine's Day he exceeded an event called Besame Mucho, in an attempt to break the record for the world's largest mass kissing party while raising awareness for domestic violence.

However, these policies pale in comparison to one of his medical initiatives — a program that promises a variety of male-enhancement drugs, free of charge, to citizens who meet certain medical qualifications. Singlehandedly, Ebrard created his own stimulus package in the form of Viagra, Levitra and Cialis. Although Mexico City may not necessarily be suffering from a mass impotence epidemic, Ebrard and other supportive colleagues created the program to enhance senior citizens' quality of life while hoping to convince them to get help for other ailments from which they may be suffering. The program may seem silly, but it has undoubtedly benefited and made countless Mexicans happy.

Ebrard's unconventional policies got me thinking about the role of our own politicians here in the United States. Are my elected representatives really doing anything to enhance my life's quality beyond the bureaucratic drudgery that has become a requisite of their jobs? The Declaration of Independence emphasizes life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, but it seems that many politicians have forgotten about this last part.

See **DISUNION**, page 5

Tight-Lipped Admins' Silence Causes Greater Uproar

"Cancer" is one of those hot-button words, especially in a higher-education setting — like "bomb" in the airport security line, or "shark" on a scuba trip — that can't be thrown around without causing some degree of freak-out, most often of the irrational variety. When vague, pretty-please-don't-use-me flyers were posted on the Literature Building elevators a couple months ago, in response to a study that suggested the elevator power systems were a probable source of the abnormally high level of cancer cases among long-time employees, malignant rumors abounded — of, predictably, the irrational variety.

Seeing as neither the administra-

tion nor the lit. department released any additional information on the results of the study or levels of electromagnetic fields in different parts of the building, as soon as the "cancer" bomb dropped — keep in mind, this is almost 10 months after the cluster was first identified, not to mention probably 10 years after it truly began — instructors and students hit Library Walk, hysterical about the prospect of ill-causing evils in their building, pickets in hand, to express their anger over the university's apparent apathy in the face of a deadly ailment.

Unfortunately for their cause, the activists appeared largely uninformed; a motley crew marched to the chancellor's complex demand-

ing a new building altogether and emphasizing that they came to the university to obtain a degree, not cancer, while the vague elevator warning was replaced with a reactionary coffin and equally vague "We want an answer, not cancer!" flyer.

Considering the university is actually doing more at this point than at any point up until now — administrators have quietly chartered multiple reports of the building, moved staff out of offices in possibly harmful zones and have recruited the services of a specialist, who held a largely under-publicized informational Q&A — it's a little late to get mad.

So, more than anything, the

recent protest in fearful reaction to the Literature Building's cluster has highlighted, once again, the need to make transparent all information relevant to the situation. Ironically, in an effort to avoid unnecessary panic, administrators have caused a department-wide frenzy, fueled by those who were informed only second- and thirdhand of the threat and therefore do not understand the possible steps they could take to personally avoid any danger (which, at this point, is technically very minimal). A simple mass e-mail to the department, and ideally the entire campus, providing up-to-date information on identified problem areas and potential solutions, could easily quell the fireworks.

Campus' Antiquated Budget Solutions Don't Fit Modern Crisis

By Alyssa Berezna
OPINION EDITOR

STUDENT LIFE — Last week, Chancellor Marye Anne Fox addressed UCSD's \$16 million deficit at a town-hall meeting, proposing cuts to a slew of campus programs to tighten spending. Among promises to maintain academic excellence, campus health and diversity initiatives, Fox offered short-term reduction solutions that included a voluntary employee buyout program, suspending academic enrichment programs and reducing recruitment and hiring.

While administrators said UCSD's immediate cuts are almost identical to those made during past economic hardships, few concrete long-term solutions have been determined.

"What do we do if this carries on for another year or two?" Senior Vice Chancellor Paul W. Drake said at the meeting. "We're going to need

more innovative, probably system-wide solutions to continue to cope with it."

Although recent proposals may come from a list unearthed from UCSD's emergency-recession kit, our campus' current financial difficulties won't mimic those from previous downturns. In a historic state financial crisis and a failing world economy, the deficits presented to administrators are not brief hiccups in our system's funding. Saving methods by which administrators hope to salvage our campus' most important programs shouldn't be considered temporary, nor should they rest on outdated plans.

One of the university's most specific plans to reduce costs is by offering a voluntary Staff and Academic Reduction in Time program in which employees can reduce their working hours and corresponding pay between 10 percent and 50 percent. While the S.T.A.R.T. program that ran from June 2003 to July

2006 provided \$41.9 million in systemwide savings, it was offered in a healthy economic climate. Credit and mortgage markets weren't collapsing and California's employment rate hadn't reached a 15-year high of 9.3 percent. With a much more serious threat to personal financial stability, fewer employees are likely to participate in the program.

Because the university's lack of funds prevent it from offering early retirement to remove employees from payroll, it should consider severance packages. Rather than expecting financial woes to fizzle, UCSD must avoid rushed dismissals when the going gets tougher and begin a comprehensive analysis of which positions can most easily be eliminated to avoid haphazard action. Consolidating responsibilities so there are more employees under one supervisor and cutting smaller administrative assistant positions may cause initial strain, but encouraging direct communi-

cation within departments would streamline administrative efforts and remove bureaucratic middlemen.

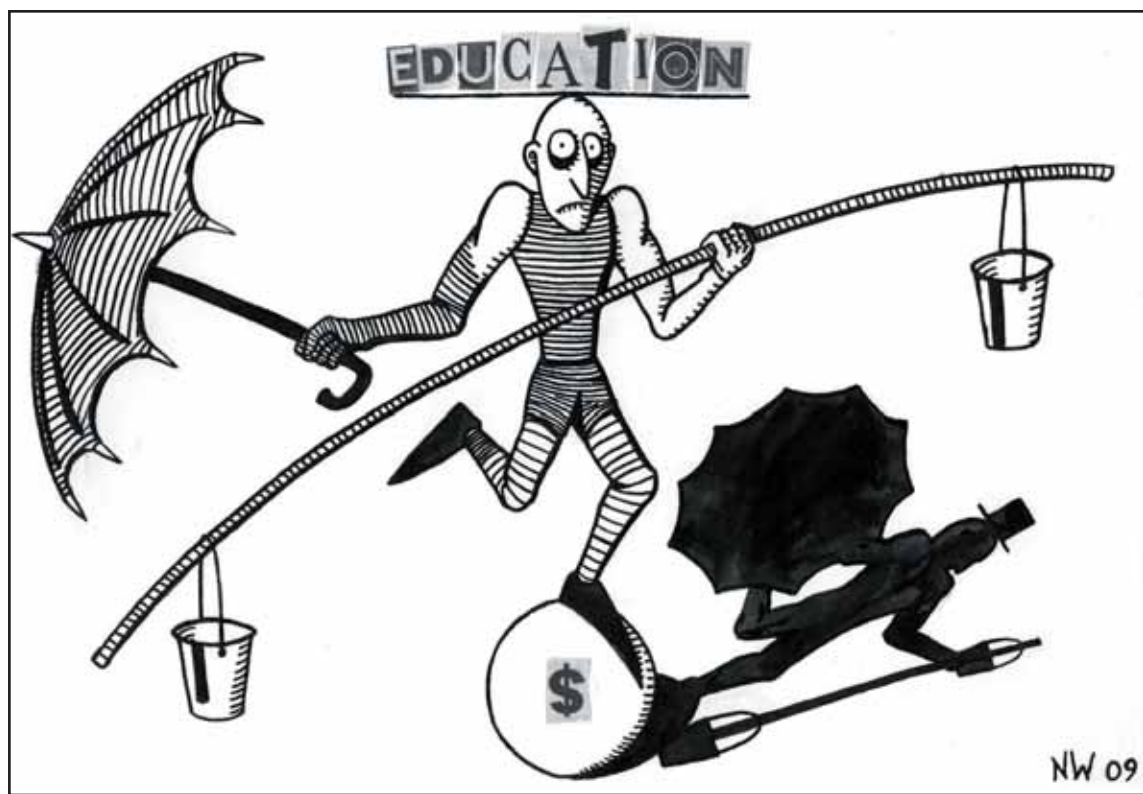
To prevent reactionary cuts that come with recurring financial instability we should consider a permanent budget evaluation program to assess departments biannually. UCSD is currently involved in reducing energy costs through sustainability efforts and integrating resource conservation into each individual department would create energy and administrative efficiency.

It's no doubt UCSD is quickly reducing department expansion, but there's a difference between halting growth and slashing the resources we're comfortable with. If we can expect any sort of stable future for our campus, we're going to have to brace ourselves and take a lasting step out of our comfort zone.

Readers can contact Alyssa Berezna at aberezna@ucsd.edu.

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE COIN

By Niven Wilson



Stimulating Stimulus Plan Would Satisfy Community

► **DISUNION** from page 4
Imagine if the city of San Diego put on massive BBQs at La Jolla Shores a few times a month or sponsored free art exhibitions on Mount Soledad in the summer. Programs like these can help build the traditions many American cities are lacking and help bring our communities together at a time when we need it most. Although the expense of these programs might be seen as wasted funds during a time of economic crisis, mere hundreds or thousands of dollars wouldn't make a difference at a time when politicians are committing trillions to imperson-

al plans that may not directly promote community cohesiveness. Creating traditions may not go a long way toward solving the global financial crisis or stabilizing the housing market, but it would allow people to forget their problems for at least a few hours. I think it's about time that our elected officials stop being solely concerned with the hot topics in Washington D.C. or Sacramento and start thinking about creative ways to enhance the lives of the people who put them there in the first place.

Like any politician, Ebrard certainly has his detractors. With mid-

term elections approaching in June, his opponents have painted his new health program as a ploy to win votes while wasting government funds. And maybe Ebrard must turn to these types of programs because he lacks the resources to tackle the rampant crime and poverty plaguing Mexico City. But that doesn't mean our politicians can't learn from Ebrard and attempt to craft policies that bring joy into our lives and our people closer together. I'm not saying we all need a mass kissing party, but after reading the headlines in the newspaper today, I could go for one.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Initiative Fails to Address LGBT Inequality

Dear Editor,

I was very interested to read about Ali Shams' proposed compromise on gay marriage in the Jan. 29 article titled "UCSD Senior Pioneers Domestic-Partnership Initiative." However, I do not believe the compromise fully addresses the discrimination felt by the LGBT community when their relationships are denied the validity of marriage.

U.S. citizens are guaranteed freedom of religion but not to the extent of infringing on others' political rights. Imagine if the federal government had told the suffragettes of the 1920s that women would be granted the right to vote in local and state, but not national, elections because if they were given too many rights the misogynists would be offended.

Shams's compromise implies that as long as gay couples enjoy the same legal rights as heterosexual couples it doesn't matter if their unions are called "marriage." However, creating the separate category of "domestic partnership" for same-sex couples implies that they are so different from the rest of us they can't possibly merit equal treatment. The message of *Brown v. Board of Education* is as applicable today as it was in 1954: Separate is never equal.

—Amanda Woods

John Muir College freshman

Groups Call for Solution to Health-Care Woes

Dear Editor,

Eighteen-thousand people die each year because they do not have medical insurance, and of those

patients over one-third say they or someone in their family went without needed care, including recommended treatments or prescription drugs in the last year, because of cost. The fact that people are dying simply because they can't afford to live is truly disturbing.

This American health-care system is sick. The cost for health care is constantly rising, yet wages stay the same — and with unemployment on the rise, the number of people who are uninsured will continue to rise as well as the unnecessary deaths.

Ninety percent of Americans believe the American health-care system needs fundamental changes or needs to be completely rebuilt. Two-thirds of Americans believe the federal government should guarantee universal health care for all citizens.

Something truly needs to change and we need to fix this broken system. If you'd like to hear more join CalPIRG, Amnesty International and the College Democrats at "A Prescription for Progress" on Feb. 19, at Student Services Center Multipurpose Room (next to Yogurt World).

—Louisa So

Thurgood Marshall College sophomore and CalPIRG Member

► The Guardian welcomes letters from its readers. All letters must be no longer than 500 words, typed, double-spaced and signed with a name and applicable title. Letters must also contain a phone number. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Letters may be dropped off at the Guardian office on the second floor of the Student Center or e-mailed. Send all letters to:

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IN THE GUARDIAN ADS TODAY

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Guardian Travel Issue: MON MAR 2nd

"The Dark Knight" Soundtrack

- "Always a Catch"
- "Like a Dog Chasing Cars"

"Tropic Thunder" Soundtrack

- "U Can't Touch This"
- "The Pusher"

THE SEVENTH ANNUAL

ANTI-OSCARs

In the grand tradition of blowing raspberries at Hollywood, Hiatus unearths the best and worst of last year's dead clowns, hormonal vampires and cocky starlets.



COURTESY OF THE WEINSTEIN CO.

STRAIGHT OUT THE OVEN:

STEAMIEST
SEX SCENE

"The Reader"

"The Reader" serves as a vantage point from which to voyeuristically lust after both of Kate Winslet's Golden Globes, in a display of exhibitionism (as former SS officer Hanna Schmitz) that borders on expensive pornography. The tasteful dosage of nudity is a performance enhancer for Winslet, who got her beginnings as a stripper-bare muse for Mr. DiCaprio himself. Through the peephole, Winslet now manages to define a new portmanteau: the sexinazi.

Artsy cinematography can't mask "The Reader's" kinkiness. Winslet's breasts float just below the milky bath surface at "au natural" angle, pre-perked so as to reveal the orbs of her nipples. They later make a glorious comeback, barely hiding behind her wet bra at lakeside.

Directing 15-year-old Michael Berg in the art of fucking, Hanna Schmitz assumes the missionary position, exposing her PTSD for all the world to see. The recurrence of Winslet's naked flesh in her films suggests a clear strategy — no critic would deride an actress with the gall to flash the world. But an impeccable restraint, coupled with unbridled passion, easily renders Winslet bona fide Oscar material. Then, indulging in the phantasmagoria of illicit sexual escapades, the film climaxes with the groans of conviction at Hanna Schmitz's Holocaust crime trial.

"The Reader" avoids adding to the robust canon of apologetic WWII films. With its lascivious underpinning, the film instead exudes the romp and lewd intercourse of a mentally askew, guilty murderer, leaving us hardened in more ways than one.

— Leila Haghighat
STAFF WRITER

WORST
PICTURE

"Twilight"

The vampire premise and preteen buzz alone was enough to give "Twilight" a push through the door, so it's a wonder how Catherine Hardwicke managed to fuck it up so royally. Leading lovebirds Kristin Stewart and Robert Pattinson recite their lines like they'd much rather be choking on them — considering the amount of times Pattinson half-swallows, we assume that he tried at some point — and their sulky supporting cast carries not even half as much gusto.

Midway through attempting a plot, the film gives up and goes to prom instead, in quite possibly the ugliest ruffled blue dress on the planet. Basically, the novel-based romance consists entirely of two awkward pale sci-fi nerds eyeballing each other — despite the fact that they have the chemistry of two slugs colliding in delicious, gooey slow motion.

Let's face it: "Twilight" was made so that followers of former model Edward Cullen could squeal and sigh their pants off. For those of us who don't count ourselves into the overactive-



COURTESY OF UNIVERSAL

pheromone fan club, though, the boy-toy filler leaves us cold as starfish. Besides, if sleepover-ready ogles could see beyond the dreamy fangs, they'd realize that all the heavy petting is actually major creeper status. Cullen sneaks into Bella's room at night — every night — for a "couple of months," merely because he's fascinated by her sleep. Are you serious? Break out the fucking pepper spray.

— Hannah Kang
STAFF WRITER

MOST OVERRATED

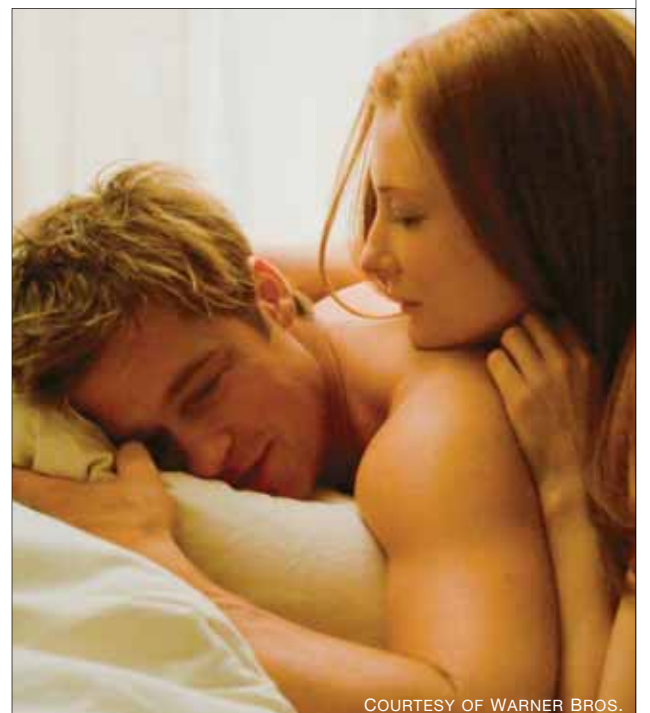
"The Curious Case of Benjamin Button"

Although "Benjamin Button" managed to rake in 13 Oscar nods (second best in the history of the awards), its parts are all too familiar. An ordinary life under extraordinary circumstances? Persisting childhood romance in wartime tragedy? Apparently, Eric Roth was feeling uninspired, dug up his precious muse from 1994 and switched up the names — Forrest Gump, meet Ben Button.

Button's wheelchair and walking canes fill in for Forrest's leg braces; Daisy is replaced by Jenny (though the under-the-sheets smooching feels a lot creepier in an old-folks home than it did on the branches of a willow tree); the impersonal Captain Mike assumes the role of endearing Lt. Dan and the shrimp boat gets traded in for a tugboat. There's even a hummingbird in place of the opener's floating feather. Double yawn.

Not quite living up to Forrest's endearing "Life is like a box of chocolates", Button's pithy, ambivalent one-liners leave us lukewarm, and his hospital room is stuffier than that famous bus-stop bench. Clearly, the film falls short of its prototype — and watching five different period pieces jammed into one is just plain obnoxious, even if Brad Pitt looks hot driving a motorcycle. Word to the wise Mr. Roth: Even if you manage to snag the hottest heartthrob alive, there's no guarantee he'll bring along the heart.

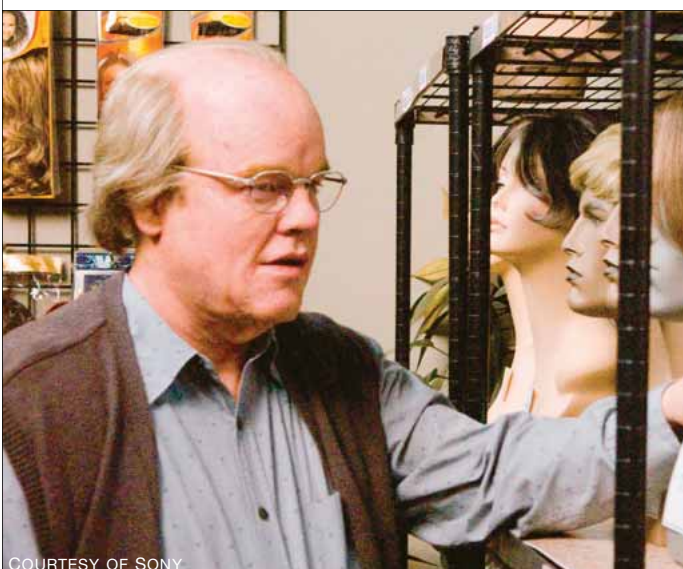
— Chris Reade
CONTRIBUTING WRITER



COURTESY OF WARNER BROS.

MOST
UNDERRATED

"Synecdoche, New York"



COURTESY OF SONY

While most of us need help pronouncing its name, let alone interpreting its transcendental density, there's no doubt writer-turned-director Charlie Kaufman came out with a visionary film this past fall. And yet, media reception of "Synecdoche, New York" was tough to watch, as critics ruthlessly deemed it an idiosyncratic, overreaching morass of epic themes.

For all its ambition and audacious gall — baited in off-beat comedy — Phillip Seymour Hoffman and the rest of the film's gifted cast (Michelle Williams, Tom Noonan, Catherine Kener, et al.) round out a brazenly original project that courts human insignificance with artistic redemp-

tion. Exploring new narrative structures, genre tactics and the creative limits of screenwriting, "Synecdoche" basks in a hyper-baroque style that exaggerates and exhausts its own architecture with intellectual craft.

While many films of 2008 tamed relatively modest plots for the sake of aesthetic polish, Kaufman managed to reach both visual and literary summits. If the flick begs more than one viewing, it only takes one glance to recognize that "Synecdoche" went as underappreciated as it was unseen.

— Edwin Gonzalez
ASSOCIATE HIATUS EDITOR



COURTESY OF WARNER BROS.

BEST POSTHUMOUS ACHIEVEMENT

“The Dark Knight”

FYI: Heath Ledger was a badass chess player. After sodomizing Jake Gyllenhaal (so hot) and hamming it up as a psycho, mass-murdering clown (hella artsy), Heath overdosed on sleeping pills (so in right now) and bit the dust — a fucking brilliant career move. Immortalized forever as a tortured actor on the cusp of glory, the former junior chess champion joined the VIP list of early-death superstars: James Dean, Marilyn Monroe, Bruce Lee ... and now our favorite, 28-year-old Australian man candy.

Forget that he was the most convincing clown ever, licking his caked-up lips in the freakiest of snakelike fashions (after all, making even the burliest bro piss his pants doesn't make a man). It's what happens after — hundreds of tribute videos from love-struck fans, thousands of Facebookers in Joker paint, millions made in box-office bills — that truly grants Ledger a rank among legends.

As for other Oscar nominees? He's the checkmate from hell.

— Allie Cuervo
ASSOCIATE HIATUS EDITOR

BEST WHITE GUY PLAYING A WHITE GUY PLAYING A BLACK GUY

“Tropic Thunder”



COURTESY OF PARAMOUNT

Robert Downey Jr. has no equal. His performance as an egotistical, Academy Award-winning Australian star, who then masquerades as a black soldier, made movie-within-a-movie “Tropic Thunder” as satirically hilarious as it was politically incorrect. Downey Jr. delivers the flat-out best performance by a white guy playing a white guy playing a black guy to ever gift the silver screen. Major props are due to those stuffy, white-haired movie critics on the gold-statue-giving committee for going against precedent, by awarding a nod to a character whose most memorable line was, “I'm a lead farmer, motherfucker!”

— Imran Manji
STAFF WRITER



COURTESY OF PARAMOUNT

MOST LIKELY

TO OFFEND YOUR ANCESTORS

“The Love Guru”

The last thing any Indian needs is another white-guy imitation. In “The Love Guru,” Mike Meyers craps out an SNL-style comedy, proving that — unless he's doing voice-overs for Dreamworks — any movie starring the retired Austin Powers is pretty much guaranteed to lose more money than General Motors, principally by recycling every bathroom joke and drama-school accent in his limited bag o' tricks until they're dry as dust (and as lame as Timberlake in “Le Coq”). Come on — do we *really* need another quip about how teeny Verne Troyer is?

— Edwin Gonzalez
ASSOCIATE HIATUS EDITOR

MOST SHAMELESS REMAKE

“Indiana Jones”

In a year where brilliant scientists transformed into green hulks of muscle and orphaned demon-babies saved the world from armies of golden robots, no film came close to the epic levels of shameless mysticism that “Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull” wore like a badge.

Instead of giving fans more of what they wanted, George Lucas surprised us by ditching the series' trademark peril and adventure, instead creating a glorified live-action cartoon. Though sometimes embarrassingly make-believe, nothing is more magical than Shia LeBeouf transforming into a monkey. It's one of the film's pivotal scenes: Seeing Mutt save his comrades by traveling vine-by-vine through the jungle to reach them, and summoning his monkey friends for good measure. Maybe for the next pending sequel, LeBeouf can turn into something even cooler — like a dolphin, or an electric eel.

— Philip Rhie
STAFF WRITER

Where ya goin'?



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COURTESY OF WARNER BROS.

WORST CASE OF DEJA VU

"Yes Man"

How many times can a man experience divine intervention? Following up the cloud-parting "Bruce Almighty" and cutting and pasting from "Liar, Liar," the guy who can't tell a lie becomes the guy who can't say no — ditching the wife and kid for quirky Zooey Deschanel and ridding himself of that stuffy lawyer job for salesman threads. Only this time, with less of that off-the-wall energy that made him so big in the '90s.

— Amanda Martinek
STAFF WRITER

Come on, Will — enough with the morally upright hero roles already. Why don't you play a crackhead, rapist, murderer or voracious, money-devouring CEO-type for once, at least giving us time to pick up the shattered pieces of our self-esteem? After "The Pursuit of Happyness," we got it, man — you're carved of equal parts ethnic justice, chocolate-chip cookies and God, ranking you number-one harmless, role-model black celebrity (perhaps brought on by your "Fresh Prince" days). But this is just ridiculous.

So, after ending the lives of seven different people (including your own wife) by texting at the wheel, anyone would seek repentance. But suffering the painful penance of butchering yourself into seven charitable pieces? It's one of the most terrifying public service announcements ever: "Don't text and drive — you might murder the person you love most and commit yourself to a two-year suicide." But come on, Will — you're a natural-born badass. Get off that high horse and go back to shucking and jiving like you did in "Bad Boys," letting every inner-city kid feel like they could make a difference with a 9mm and a juvenile sense of humor. And hey, if you need a fix of those warm fuzzies that bad, throw some change at the homeless paparazzi outside your Miami mansion.

— Omar Khan
STAFF WRITER

BIGGEST WASTE OF BADASS

"Seven Pounds"



COURTESY OF COLUMBIA

MOST MASTURBATORY ROSTER OF

A-LISTERS

"Burn After Reading"



COURTESY OF UNIVERSAL

After being handsomely rewarded by Oscar in 2007 for Best Picture "No Country for Old Men," the Coens apparently deserve a break. Accordingly, their newest stunt in self-enchanted child's play would be better off broken into little pieces and swept under the rug. The five-way caricature collision — over an unidentified computer disk — follows one philandering marshal (George Clooney), two airhead fitness-club employees (Brad Pitt, Frances McDormand), an imperceptive ex-CIA suit (John Malkovich) and his frigid wife (Tilda Swinton) in a breach of comedy's First Commandment: Thou Shalt Not Try So Hard.

Blinded by cockiness, the clueless D.C. residents scramble in exhausting confusion for an hour and a half, until finally we reach a frustrating epiphany — the film's point is, in fact, a study in pointlessness. Its all-star actors get lost in the same character (a middle-aged, narcissistic nobody), and since that nobody doesn't mean much to the Coens, it's unsurprising when we, too, lose all interest. A void of any substantial interaction between multiple pawns leaves us wondering if the actors, like their characters, are talking just to hear how awesome they sound. Lacking that magical Judd Apatow humor, the brothers fail to direct a film starring their buddies that's as fun to watch as it probably was to make. Though the duo has, in the past, successfully critiqued a faulty world with straightfaced irony — see "O Brother, Where Art Thou?" — their latest is told as one big, pretentious inside joke. And no one's laughing.

— Jenna Brogan
STAFF WRITER

exit strategy

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TUESDAY FEB. 17 Crossword Solution

B	O	M	B	S	O	B	I	E	A	L	D	A
A	P	A	R	T	D	A	R	N	C	A	I	N
R	E	T	I	A	D	R	A	B	C	O	S	T
B	R	I	D	G	E	S	B	E	L	U	S	H
S	A	N	G	E	R	E	U	R	O	S		
			E	D	I	T	S	G	R	A	H	A
F	A	S	T	C	A	T	O	A	L	E	T	A
I	L	L	P	H	O	E	N	I	X	F	A	R
G	O	U	D	A	S	V	E	N	F	L	A	X
S	T	R	O	D	E	E	L	D	E	R		
			G	R	O	S	Z	I	C	E	B	A
A	F	F	L	E	C	K	B	A	L	D	W	I
R	A	R	E	E	I	R	E	A	D	A	M	A
C	R	A	G	N	E	A	T	S	I	N	E	W
H	E	Y	S	E	D	G	E	S	E	A	R	S



GUARDIAN SUDOKU

Level: **1** 2 3 4

	2			5	8			
6				3			4	1
	3					7	8	
8				2	3			6
9			8	7				2
	4	3					6	
1	7			9				
			1	4			5	

Complete the grid so each row, column and 3-by-3 box (in bold) contains every digit, 1 to 9. For strategies on how to solve Sudoku, visit www.sudoku.org.

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Find the SUDOKU solution in next Monday's Classified Page.

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Ehrman Earns MVP Honors

► **VOLLEYBALL**, from page 12

Three Tritons were named all-tournament players: Bannan, senior libero Eric Leserman and Ehrman. UCSD had more players named to the all-tournament team than any other squad at the Hall of Fame Morgan Classic.

The Triton win boosts the team's confidence, as UCSD heads into the beef of its season against MPSF opponents.

"Hopefully, we can keep building on our success and use the momentum we got from this past weekend's victories over George Mason and Saint Francis to win some more matches," Bannan said.

The Tritons' recent success has led to their highest national ranking ever at No. 10.

"We are happy with the higher ranking, but we do realize that the meat of our season is coming up," Ehrman said. "We have a lot of conference games coming up and those are the ones we need to focus on. Our eyes aren't necessarily on the playoffs right now. We simply want to get through this weekend and continue to put ourselves in a good spot for the rest of the year."

The Tritons travel to Provo, Utah, to take on a familiar MPSF opponent, No. 9 Brigham Young University. The teams will square off on Feb. 20 and Feb. 21 in the Tritons' seventh and eight consecutive road games. The Tritons are 0-29 all-time against the Cougars, including two losses last year at RIMAC Arena, when the Cougars were ranked No. 1 in the nation.

Readers can contact Cameron Tillisch at ctillisc@ucsd.edu.

Tritons Travel to Monterey Bay for First Conference Series

► **BASEBALL**, from page 12

get back to second base before the ball arrived, ending the inning.

The next two innings proved tough for the Triton starter as St. John gave up two runs in the third and one in the fourth before getting pulled. Redshirt junior reliever Sean Greer allowed two more runs — one was charged to St. John — giving the Wolves a 7-2 advantage.

Desperately trying to avoid falling behind 0-2 in the series, UCSD battled back in its half of the fourth, anchored by a one-out triple from Fung that plated two Tritons. UCSD's bullpen held the Wolves scoreless over the next three innings, keeping the Tritons within striking distance.

Burke, the first of eight Tritons who came to the plate in the seventh, hit a leadoff double to spark a UCSD rally. The Tritons got three more hits and an RBI walk to score three runs and tie the game at seven and send it into extra innings. Sophomore reliever Guido Knudson preserved the tie by pitching a scoreless eighth and earned the win after junior first baseman Devin Powers-Davis' walkoff double ended the game in the bottom half of the inning.

Following the dramatic victory, UCSD hoped to keep its offense alive heading into the second doubleheader on Sunday.

"It wasn't like we wanted to go out there and score two runs in the second and three runs in the fourth — there weren't any numerical values involved," Shibuya said. "We just wanted to go out there and beat them big."

Redshirt junior starter Matt Rossman took the mound looking for his second win on the season, but was met by fierce competition in Western Oregon's Jacob Pettit. Junior catcher Kellen Lee got UCSD on the board first, doubling in Fung,

who earned a one-out walk in the second inning.

Both pitchers kept the game scoreless until the top of the eighth inning when the Wolves hit another late-inning homer — a two-run shot — that cemented the 2-1 win for Western Oregon in game three of the series. It was almost exactly the same story as the Tritons' first game of the series, as Rossman did not get enough run support to avoid being the hard-luck loser.

"We're not working hard enough on offense — I think the players will agree," head coach Dan O'Brien said. "I've been impressed with our pitchers and their presence on the mound. They are coached exceptionally well."

Needing a win in the final game to salvage a split, UCSD got off to a slow start, with senior starter Trevor Decker allowing a run in the first inning. The Wolves tacked on another run in the second and two more in the third off another long ball. Senior outfielder Tim Mort plated Albitz with a single in the bottom of the third, but the Wolves got the run right back in the fourth inning, giving them a 5-1 lead.

UCSD was not able to repeat its late-game offensive heroics from the day before in the final game, eventually falling to Western Oregon 6-2.

"We were getting a number of runners on base, but not executing in getting them in," Leake said. "We had chances but we weren't taking advantage of them."

UCSD had eight runners left on base compared to Western Oregon's five.

The squad hopes to find its offense when the Tritons start conference play on the road this weekend against Cal State Monterey Bay.

Readers can contact Janani Sridharan at jsridhar@ucsd.edu.



DANIEL CADDELL/GUARDIAN
The Tritons chase a Western Oregon baserunner in their series against the Wolves last weekend. Although UCSD's defense and pitching were strong, the offense was cold in the Tritons' three losses.

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Air Squids Place Second at Home Tournament

By Janani Sridharan
SPORTS EDITOR

CLUB SPORTS — Playing host to the annual President's Day Tournament from Feb. 14 through Feb. 16, the men's ultimate Frisbee club team placed second in a field of 20.

Entering the tournament on Warren Field as the second seed, the UCSD Air Squids won contests over the University of Southern California, UC Berkeley's B team, University of San Diego and Cal Poly San Luis Obispo on Saturday. Continuing strong play, UCSD opened up the second day with a 13-11 victory over UCLA, a team that defeated the Air Squids earlier in the season.

"I was really disappointed," senior captain Mark Johnston said of the previous defeat. "I felt like we should definitely be better than UCLA and we really wanted another shot at them."

UCSD posted wins over Chico State University and the University of North Texas, advancing to the finals against UC Berkeley. Originally slated for Monday, the final was moved up to Sunday to dodge stormy weather.

The Golden Bears of UC Berkeley proved to be the Air Squids' toughest competition, using their quickness to wreak havoc on UCSD's defense.

"[The Golden Bears] move the disc really fast, so it's hard to track them on the sidelines, which is what we were looking to do," Johnston said.

Cal's offense never let up, claiming victory on UCSD's home field. The Tritons will be back in action March 7 and March 8 at the Stanford Invite.

"The Stanford Invite is the biggest tournament with the best teams competing," Johnston said. "Our goal is to have a winning record in the tournament."

Roller hockey

The UCSD club roller hockey team

suffered its first loss in the regular season's last game against Saddleback College in Corona, Calif., last weekend. Entering their final tournament undefeated, the Tritons posted victories over Cal Poly Pomona, University of San Diego and University of Southern California before their loss to Saddleback, finishing the regular season with a 16-1 record.

"Saddleback beat every Division-I team they faced and we're in Division II, so it was a stretch for us," senior Ben Yeaton said. "They play a different style than we've seen before and we didn't play to their level."

UCSD barely missed an opportunity to play in the National Championship game last season, finishing in third place. Since the majority of the team has played together for the past three seasons, a championship may be within reach for the Tritons this year.

"We've progressively done better at nationals," Yeaton said. "Three years ago, we were in the top eight, two years ago we placed fifth and last year we placed third. If any team I've been on has the potential to win, it is definitely this year's team."

Badminton

The Tritons are looking to add another national championship to the program that won back-to-back titles in 2004-05 and 2005-06. The Tritons finished their regular season 7-0, winning close contests at UCLA and against UC Irvine. The perfect mark was UCSD's first undefeated season since the 2004-05 campaign. The Tritons will begin their quest for a title at the College Nationals on March 21 and March 22 at Irvine Valley College.

Readers can contact Janani Sridharan at jsridhar@ucsd.edu.

Conference Title at Stake on Spirit Night

► **SPIRIT**, from page 12

ects that attendance could surpass 4,000.

"The growth of this event has been tremendous to watch," Hall said. "Each and every year, our student body seems to be more and more interested in supporting our athletic program, which has made this one of the most exciting nights of the year."

Revelle College snagged the Spirit Night Trophy at last year's event, edging out the other colleges in eight spirit events, ranging from a game of musical chairs to attendance and spirit at the games. In this year's competition, Eleanor Roosevelt College (12 points) has jumped to an early lead, with Revelle College (10 points) and Thurgood Marshall College (seven points) trailing behind.

Due to the women's basketball team's tremendous success, this Spirit Night could rise to even greater heights. Senior forward Michelle Osier and the Triton women might seize the of the California Collegiate Athletic Association title with a win over the Gators.

"We really appreciate the opportunity to play in front of a packed crowd, and Spirit Night gives us that chance," Osier said.

At 22-3 and an amazing 15-1 in CCAA play, the No. 12 Tritons are in the midst of one of the program's best years. Their quest for another league title gives fans at RIMAC a reason to get hyped.

Although the Triton men have not had as much success this season (13-9, 10-6 CCAA), they are coming off a victory over formerly first-place Cal State San Bernardino. The Tritons will attempt to push their momentum through the Gators game on Friday night.

Readers can contact Neil Joshi at nejoshi@ucsd.edu.



CHING WU/GUARDIAN

The men's and women's basketball teams will face San Francisco State at RIMAC Arena on Spirit Night on Friday. Close to 4,000 fans are expected to attend the event, which begins at 5:30 p.m.

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The sophomore outfielder was torrid from the plate in six games last week, hitting for average (.619) and power (.905 slugging) including one home run.



Tritons Capture Hall of Fame Morgan Title



JOHN HANACEK/GUARDIAN

Junior opposite Frank Fritsch had a sensational game in the semifinals of the Hall of Fame Morgan Classic, registering 17 kills to help the Tritons beat St. Francis. UCSD went on to take the title.

By Cameron Tillisch
STAFF WRITER

VOLLEYBALL — The Tritons traveled to Springfield, Mass., last week to compete in the Hall of Fame Morgan Classic with Saint Francis University, George Mason University and Springfield College. UCSD (6-6, 2-5 Mountain Pacific Sports Federation) advanced to the semifinals at Blake Arena and trumped Saint Francis University of Pennsylvania with scores of 30-20, 33-25, 30-27 and 30-18 on Feb. 13. The Tritons then faced down George Mason University in the championship game on Feb. 14, coming out victorious and taking the crown with a 30-18, 30-21, 30-15 sweep.

MSPF's Most Valuable Player and redshirt sophomore outside hitter Will Ehrman led the Tritons in the championship match, notching 14 kills and 13 digs. UCSD struck gold in the championship match, hitting .469 as a team and paced by Ehrman's outstanding individual performance. The MVP's 14 kills came at a .481 hitting clip, tacking on two aces in the win.

"This weekend was the best team volleyball we have played this year," Ehrman said. "We were solid in all areas of the game, and it definitely showed."

Starting the season unranked with a 1-4 record, UCSD has climbed steadily back up to .500 and gained the No. 10 ranking.

"After this weekend's wins, we have a boost of confidence going into the rest of our league matches," sophomore setter Phil Bannan said. "If we can take care of BYU this upcoming weekend and take a few matches from other teams in the conference, we have a good shot at making the playoffs, which is one of our main goals."

In the Tritons' semifinal match against Saint Francis University,

UCSD again controlled the majority of the game in a dominating victory. Ehrman led the strike, exploding with 18 kills to complement .571 hitting. As a team, UCSD hit at a blistering .463 clip. Junior opposite Frank Fritsch took a whopping 17 kills, while Bannan carried the offense with 62 assists and seven digs.

The first set was neck and neck before a Fritsch kill put the Tritons ahead, leading to a run that got UCSD to 22-15. But the Saint Francis University Red Flash would not go down without a battle, cutting the lead down to five points. The Tritons, however, ended the set strong behind an ace and kill from Spangler and Bannan respectively and block assists from Ehrman, Fritsch and Guthals to take the set 30-20.

The second set was a back-and-forth grudge match — a classic nail-biter. UCSD trailed by three points before tying it up several times throughout the match. With UCSD trailing 16-14, the set was tied at points 17 through 25 before Guthals came through with a kill, followed by a solo block to give the Tritons a 27-25 lead. Saint Francis University would score two straight to tie the set at 29 before Fritsch ended the run with a kill for a 30-29 lead. After a kill and block by the Red Flash, Saint Francis University took the set at 35-33.

The Tritons controlled the third set early on in the game before Saint Francis University pummeled within 29-27. After UCSD called a timeout, a Saint Francis University service error gave the Tritons a win at 30-27.

UCSD jumped out to an 18-10 lead in the fourth and final set and never looked back, cruising to the championship match after a 30-18 win.

See **VOLLEYBALL**, page 10

ON DECK

Swimming & Diving

at Pacific Coast Swimming
Conference Championships
Feb. 18 to Feb. 21

After failing to defend their 2007 championship titles last season, the swimming and diving teams travel to Long Beach, Calif., seeking to reclaim the men's and women's Pacific Coast Swimming Conference crowns from Cal Baptist and Loyola Marymount, respectively. Cal Baptist is once again the team to beat, as the Tritons fell 165-118 to the Lancers earlier this season. The Triton women, on the other hand, look extremely strong going into competition, having already crushed the defending-champion Lions this year.

Women's Track & Field

vs. Cal Poly Pomona, Cal State
Dominguez Hills & San Diego State
Feb. 21

The Tritons kick off their season with a home meet against Cal Poly Pomona, Cal State Dominguez Hills and San Diego State on Saturday. The women's team is fresh off its best-ever performance at the Division-II level, finishing fourth at last year's NCAA Championships. Junior hurdler Christine Merrill and senior thrower Sarah Hendy are returning All Americans. Meanwhile, the men's team will attempt to improve on its 46th place finish at last year's national championship tournament.

SPIRIT NIGHT TAKES CENTER STAGE AT RIMAC THIS WEEKEND

By Neil Joshi
ASSOCIATE SPORTS EDITOR

One of UCSD's most festive occasions commences this week, as the 15th annual Spirit Night takes hold of RIMAC Arena. The event begins with the Spirit Rally on Feb. 19 at Price Center, followed by UCSD's version of homecoming. On Feb. 20, Triton basketball teams host San Francisco State in a women's and men's doubleheader starting at 5:30 p.m. A fireworks show at RIMAC Field is scheduled to follow the men's game.

"Spirit Night is always one of the athletic department's most eagerly anticipated celebrations," Associate Athletics Director Ryan Hall said. "It brings out students from all six colleges and is by far our most attended sporting event of the season. It's been a thrill to watch our student body exhibit such Triton pride at this event the past few years, and we expect another tremendous showcase."

Last year, Spirit Night had its most successful turnout in history, with 3,906 spectators attending the festivities. This year, Hall proj-

See **SPIRIT** page 11

UCSD Drops to 25th With Loss to Western Oregon

By Janani Sridharan
SPORTS EDITOR

BASEBALL — Coming off a strong start to the season, the Tritons fell flat in their first series of the year on Feb. 14 and Feb. 15. UCSD dropped three out of four games to Western Oregon University, sliding from the squad's all-time high No. 2 ranking to No. 25.

"I think there were some early-season jitters and expectations because of the high rank," assistant coach Ryan Leake said. "The series was a good wake-up call for us."

In the first game of a doubleheader on Saturday, the Tritons were unable to score enough runs to support sophomore Tim Shibuya — who was making the second start of his career — falling to the Wolves 3-1.

After two scoreless innings, UCSD looked to go down 1-2-3 in the third. Junior shortstop Vance Albitz kept the inning alive with a two-out single that sparked a Triton rally. Singles by junior outfielder Robert Sedin and sophomore third baseman Evan Kehoe plated Albitz to give UCSD a 1-0 lead. With two on and two out, senior first baseman Matt Cantele popped out to end the short-lived rally.

Shibuya and Western Oregon starter Blake Keitzman held the offenses in check for the next four innings before the Wolves turned to their bullpen, hoping to stay within striking distance. Western Oregon had a chance to get on the board in the eighth with two on and nobody out, but Shibuya started a double



DANIEL CADDELL/GUARDIAN FILE

The Tritons place a tag on a Western Oregon baserunner attempting to score in the second match of a four-game set. UCSD eventually fell to the Wolves 3-1.

play on the next at-bat that helped him out of the inning.

Kehoe walked with one out in the bottom half of the eighth and advanced to second on a balk. After a popout, Kehoe advanced to third on a single from senior second baseman Garrett Imeson. Attempting to get a head start at home plate, Kehoe's large lead cost him as he was picked off at third for the final out.

The ninth inning was dicey from the start as Shibuya, attempting to pitch a complete game, allowed two quick singles. Things went from dangerous to disastrous for the Tritons when, with one out, Western Oregon outfielder Justin Speer hit a three-run bomb that

gave the Wolves a 3-1 lead they never relinquished.

The Triton offense only mustered one run on five hits, while Shibuya allowed three runs in 8.2 innings on six hits, taking the loss.

"Our job as a pitching staff is to hold the other team to one less run than we score," Shibuya said. "In the first game, we scored one run, so our job was to shut them out. It's really on both of us. On offense, we need to execute better and put up more runs."

In the back end of the doubleheader, junior hurler Kirby St. John, who struggled in his first start of the season, had no better luck the second time around. St. John skirted

trouble in the first inning, allowing two singles to lead off but escaping unscathed. UCSD found its offense as hits from Albitz, Sedin and Imeson and a sacrifice fly ball from Cantele translated into two runs. The Wolves answered back with one run in the second, but UCSD minimized the damage by tagging out a runner at home plate.

The Tritons had an opportunity to score in the second as the leadoff hitter, junior outfielder Chris Fung, was hit by a pitch and advanced to second on a sacrifice bunt. However, senior outfielder Nick Burke's line drive was caught and Fung couldn't

See **BASEBALL** page 10