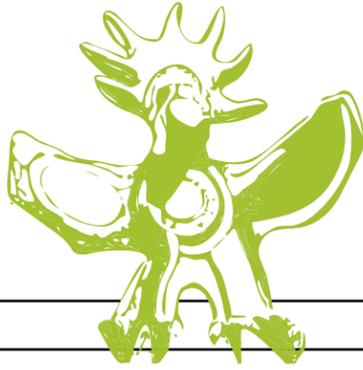


THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO GUARDIAN

www.ucsguardian.org

Thursday, May 29, 2008

The Student Voice Since 1967



Four Campus Eateries to Close Their Doors

By Christina Homer
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

Beginning this summer and extending through next school year, Sierra Summit, El Mercado and Plaza Cafe will be temporarily shut down for extensive renovations, while Club Med will close permanently.

Although UCSD's Facilities, Design and Construction department has not yet set a firm date, the John Muir College dining halls — Sierra Summit and El Mercado — will close during the summer so that renovations may begin on Stewart Commons. Following the completion of Muir's renovations, construction will begin on the Revelle College dining hall, Plaza Cafe.

Club Med, the Medical School dining facility, will be closed for good and torn down at the end of August to make space for a new medical school building that will be erected on the dining hall's current site within the next 22 months.

"The renovations are needed to replace the 40-year-old facilities that are becoming costly to continue to repair," Associate Director of Dining Services Steve Casad said in an e-mail. "Both facilities are also being designed for [the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design] certification."

The L.E.E.D. Green Building

See **EATERIES**, page 9



ANDREW RICCI/GUARDIAN

Top: Revelle College senior Rachel Williams works the cash register at Plaza Cafe. Bottom: Sierra Summit, along with Plaza and two other dining facilities, will close next year for renovations.

SUN GOD RETROSPECTIVE

University Centers Protests Festival-Day Alcohol Policies

In unanimously approved resolution, board members claim they were grossly overlooked in planning of new festival.

By Charles Nguyen
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

One of the campus' key facility boards unanimously approved a resolution protesting new policies that regulated operations of University Centers businesses and alcohol sales during the Sun God Festival.

Members of the University Centers Advisory Board, which oversees central campus areas such as Price Center and Student Center, stated in the resolution that A.S. programmers and administrators bypassed them when composing and implementing policies for the festival's new format.

Former UCAB Chair Matthew Bright, who authored the document before he vacated his position last week, said that the board was never informed of or included in discussions regarding new policies, which this year included

early closing times for Price Center and restrictions on alcohol sales at Porter's Pub and Round Table Pizza.

"It's upsetting that UCAB was not consulted at all about topics directly related to its responsibility as the board that manages University Centers," Bright said. "It's not too much for UCAB members to expect simple consideration."

The policies enacted a two-drink maximum and prohibited the sale of pitchers at the two campus eateries. Bright said he had no qualms about the nature of the policies, but decided to present the resolution in protest of how policies were implemented.

The Sun God Planning Report, which programmers and administrators used as a touchstone in creating the event's new structure, posed a number of recommendations that included early closure of Price Center.

Bright said that there were several instances of non-communication with UCAB, including one where members were made formally aware of the policies only two

See **SUN GOD**, page 3

REGENTS CREATE NEW STUDENT-LIFE COMMITTEE

By Diana Tith
STAFF WRITER

At its May meeting, the UC Board of Regents approved the creation of a new committee aimed at addressing student affairs, concerns, and questions, introducing what student Regent Ben Allen hopes will be a new, more efficient mode of communication between the regents and students.



Ben Allen
Student Regent

The newly established Special Committee on Student Life and Alumni Affairs seeks to bring to the forefront student and alumni issues that Allen feels have been less-than-adequately

See **COMMITTEE**, page 3

UC Seeks Restraining Order Against Union

By Jesse Alm
ASSOCIATE NEWS EDITOR

The University of California has filed a request for a temporary restraining order with the Public Employment Relations Board against the union that represents the university's roughly 20,000 patient-care technical and service workers in an attempt to bar a two-day strike that employees overwhelmingly supported in a vote last week.

University officials announced Tuesday that the union — the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees — has failed to bargain in good faith in the last 10 months, and that the workers it represents are crucial to public health and safety at the university's five medical centers.

"The university continues to be available for any further discussions to achieve an acceptable compromise," said Howard Pripas, UC executive director of labor relations. "However, we are obligated to take this action to protect our patients and the communities that rely on UC medical centers for vital services."

Nicole Savickas, human resources and labor coordinator for the UC Office of the President, said the strike would compromise the hospitals' level of patient safety in case of an emergency.

"It's a drain on our resources," she said. "We know how important both our patient-care technical and service employees are to the functioning of the university, and the big concern is that if there is some kind of an emergency, we'll need our patient-care technical employees on site at the medical centers."

AFSCME Local 3299 President Lakesha Harrison agreed that patient-care technical employees play a vital role in the university's workforce, but urged university officials to shift their focus to the long-term effects of below-market wages, which she said have produced dangerously low worker retention rates.

"It's interesting how all of a sudden we've become very important to the university," she said. "If they really value our work, they need to give us the contract. If they really care about patient care, they will try to retain workers for the long haul."

Negotiations between AFSCME and the university regarding contracts for patient-care technical and service staffs have lasted 10 and seven months, respectively. UC patient-care technical employees have been without a contract since September 2007, while service workers' contract expired in January.

Savickas said the strike will not influence contract negotiations.

"The fact of the matter is the strike

is just going to have negative effects on patients and communities," Savickas said. "It's not going to affect bargaining. In order to effect change in bargaining, we need to continue to meet with the union."

Bargaining teams representing both worker units met with UC officials late last week and AFSCME attended a mediation session with the university on Monday, but the union has still refused to accept any of the university's contract proposals.

According to Savickas, the university's most recent offer — which includes nearly \$25 million in combined wage increases in the first year of the contracts — would bring wages for patient-care technical workers up to market-level.

But Harrison questioned this calculation, calling the figure insufficient.

"They neglected to say what \$25 million means," she said. "It means nothing. We're always ready to talk and negotiate, but we're not going to accept anything that's not going to provide what we need to provide for the patients, that's not going to retain the workforce, that's not going to get our workers out of poverty. We have to have a contract that accomplishes these things."

Harrison cited a May 23 statement released by UCOP, which said the university has contingency plans in place

The Road to Progress

August 14	Patient-care tech worker contract negotiations begin.
October 4	Service worker contract negotiations begin.
May 19-23	AFSCME workers vote to authorize strike June 4 and 5.
May 27	University requests restraining order against AFSCME.

for strikes.

"They said they have the basics covered, and they put out information saying, 'We have a plan; it's going to run smoothly,'" she said. "So, do they have a plan or not?"

She added that patient-care protection teams on the strike lines will be prepared to enter medical centers if additional assistance is required.

"We're right outside," she said. "If it's a true emergency, we'll know about it."

PERB is expected to respond to the university's request for a restraining order by the end of this week.

Readers can contact Jesse Alm at jessealm@gmail.com.

HIATUS Who's That Knocking?
Review: "The Strangers" wants to be a slasher flick but can't stomach its own moronic characters.
PAGE 6

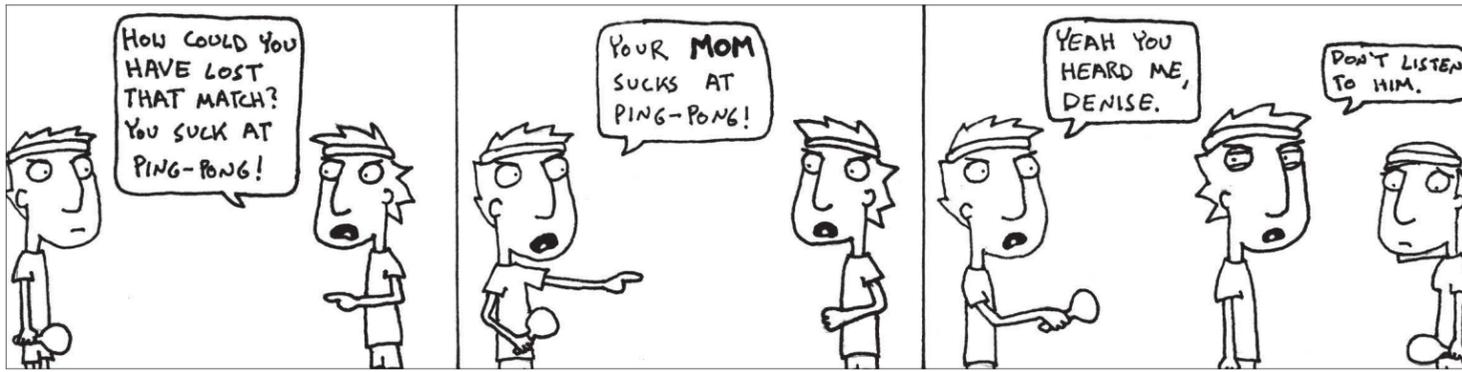
SPORTS Tennis' Ace in the Hole
Profile: Senior Eric Rubens has been a key asset to the Tritons tennis team for four years.
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WEB EXCLUSIVES FULL DETAILS PAGE 2
The Hiatus Podcast: This week, editors talk Sun God reactions and the box-office revival of Indiana Jones.
An Inside Look: Photo Editor Will Parson takes his audio slideshow to the Earth Day Trash Sort Extravaganza.

POORLY DRAWN LINES

BY REZA FARAZMAND



CURRENTS

Two UCSD Graduates Found Dead in Home

The bodies of five family members were discovered inside their San Clemente home this past weekend including two UCSD graduates, their parents and grandmother.

Authorities found twins Grace and Margo Ucar, 21, both of whom graduated in March with bachelor's degrees in biology, and Fransuhi Kesiosoglu, 72, in the first-floor bedroom. Manas Ucar, 58, and Margrit Ucar, 49, were found near two handguns and may have been dead for up to three weeks, which made the bodies difficult to identify, police said in a statement.

Autopsies began this week, but officials will not establish a cause of death until toxicology test results are completed. Deputies found no sign of a struggle inside the home, said Lt. Erin Guidice in a statement.

Quitting Smoking May Improve Social Health

A new study conducted by researchers from UCSD and Harvard University suggests that cigarette smokers are increasingly left out of social groups, and the decision to quit smoking prompts family members and friends to collectively give up the habit.

UCSD associate professor of political science James Fowler and Nicholas Christakis from

Harvard Medical School analyzed changes in smoking behavior from 1971 to 2003 in a social network of 12,067 people.

The researchers show that smoking behaviors are subject to social-network effects, and quitting smoking spreads through the network like a house of cards collapsing.

"When you look at the entire network over this 30-year period, you see that the average size of each particular cluster of smokers remains roughly the same," Fowler said in a statement. "It's just that there are fewer and fewer of these clusters as time goes on."

UCSD Extension Director Named Regents Adviser

The University of California Office of the President has elected Edward L. Abeyta, the registrar and director of academic services at UCSD Extension, as next year's staff adviser-designate.

The staff adviser position will represent campus staff and non-Senate academic employees by participating in open sessions of the UC Board of Regents committees.

"Given the numerous challenges currently facing the UC system, the staff advisers play a critical role," Abeyta said in a statement. "I look forward to serving as an ambassador between the regents and staff as we work together to evolve UC to continue to serve the needs of the state of California."

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FOCUS

Audio Slideshow:
An Inside Look
Photo Editor Will Parson documents the Earth Day Trash Sort Extravaganza.

OPINION

Web Poll:
Do you believe the A.S. Council's new budget provides enough funding for next year's Sun God Festival?

HIATUS

Blog:
The Mixtape
Hot tracks reviewed weekly. This week: indie hip-hop cuts from Bilal, Jay Electronica and Quelle.

The Hiatus Podcast:
Episode VIII
This week's talk includes editors' reactions to the Sun God Festival and their final verdict on Indiana Jones.

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Low: 54
- May 30
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High: 69
Low: 56
- May 31
Partly Cloudy
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Low: 57
- June 1
Sunny
High: 71
Low: 58

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BREAKING NEWS!

The startup company Imagination Infinity Inc. has developed a new website called **PostYourTest.com**. Due to high cost of tuition and other college fees, the website facilitates information exchange between students and faculty members for free.

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Penny Pinching Aside, Council Approves Pool Party

A matter of social conscience figured prominently in last night's A.S. Council meeting, although the idealism later gave way when attention shifted to the grim reality of financial restraint.

The council considered a resolution condemning the May 15 U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement raids in which federal agents detained workers from a local bakery and searched a graduate student's on-campus apartment. The language of the resolution focused on preserving human rights for "all people in the San Diego community" and urged Chancellor **Marye Anne Fox** to endorse the resolution's conclusions.

Thurgood Marshall College sophomore **Yuki Murakami** implored the council to pass the resolution during public input.

"We need to remember that the law doesn't necessarily represent what is best for humanity," he said. "This is just a new form of discrimination."

The resolution, the first to come out of this council's Committee on Campus and Public Affairs, was met with strong council support but contained some grammatical barriers that needed to be reckoned with first.

After councilmembers sifted

through botched capital letters and rogue quotation marks, they passed the resolution to applause. They later considered a finance bill, the discussion of which revealed one of what will likely be many questions throughout their term of funding philosophy.

The council debated the appropriateness of allocating a few hundred dollars to partially fund a pool party that the Freshmen Council will be hosting this weekend. Freshman Senator **Eli Pessar** said the event needed additional funding from the A.S. Council because college councils had been reluctant to each fully fund one-seventh of the event.

The reasoning behind the financial reluctance of the college councils was oddly reminiscent of language from last week's budget meeting. According to Pessar, since the Freshmen Council is part of the A.S. constitution, the college councils wanted the A.S. Council to fund a larger portion of the event.

Compare that to last week's meeting, when the council eliminated the funding of college festivals, down from \$21,000 the year before. The reason, many councilmembers argued, was that college festivals were the responsibility of individual col-



New Business

Michael Bowlus

m bowlus@ucsd.edu

leges, and not an A.S. obligation.

Decreased funding to college councils will likely make them less able to fund events for student organizations, although the situation at last night's meeting made it clear that the A.S. Council itself can also expect less in return from the councils.

Whatever the cause, Pessar made it clear that the event, with a total budget around \$1,500, would need more support from A.S. That led to a surprising amount of debate when some councilmembers at last night's meeting donned their cost-reduction goggles and searched for unsuspecting hot dogs and beach balls to cut.

"Can we just fund them, please?" said an exasperated All-Campus Senator **David Ritcherson** after growing weary of the debate.

The question put the debate in perspective and cleared the way to the council's eventual funding of the event.

UCAB Chair: Communication Nonexistent

► **SUN GOD**, from page 1 weeks before the festival.

In addition, Bright said he was unaware of Price Center's early closure until he walked past it the day of the festival and found it empty. In the planning report, released in October, programmers recommended that the facility close at 6 p.m. to improve security management.

However, Bright said he was never contacted about the new policy or invited to any of the debriefing and steering committee meetings that followed the report's release.

Bright said that some UCAB members were upset by the policies' impact on the pub and graduate students, who compose a major portion of the eatery's patronage.

Festival admission for graduate students was \$35 — the same charge for alumni, staff and faculty admission. Combined with the restrictions enforced on UCAB facilities such as Porter's Pub, the price of festival admission was a large deterrent on the pub's alcohol sales further alienated graduate students.

Festivals Coordinator Garrett Berg did not respond in time for comment.

Readers can contact Charles Nguyen at charles_nguyen@sbcglobal.net.

UC Committee Founded to Facilitate Student Input

► **COMMITTEE**, from page 1 addressed in the past.

Allen, who proposed the creation of the committee, found that matters concerning students and alumni rarely made it to the regents' table. He referred to the recent student outcry over the board's decision to raise student fees, saying that when it came time for budget cuts, issues concerning student leaders and alumni usually sat uncomfortably high on the chopping block.

"I'm hoping that this committee will create an environment where student affairs, campus life and student and alumni questions are prioritized by the regents," Allen said.

According to Allen, before the committee was established, students were only able to voice their concerns to the regents during the public opinion phases of the board's meetings. At such forums, students are typically given only a limited amount of time to speak and interact with the regents. Allen said he believes that the introduction of the new committee will remedy this situation by giving a small group of regents the task of handling student life and therefore allowing for more meaningful interaction between regents and students.

"The committee will provide a less antagonistic form of student engagement," Allen said. "I hope that the committee will be a way for us to build a more healthy student and administrative relationship."

Allen also said that the committee will focus on creating a loyal alumni base. According to Allen, the universities that have the most engaging and loyal alumni are often the universities that have actively dealt with and worked to improve the issues concerning student life and experience. By engaging current students on a more personal level, Allen hopes that the committee's actions will provide incentives for alumni to give back to the university in the future.

Although the committee has yet to show whether it can fulfill its goals, UC Student Association President Louise Hendrickson said she thinks the committee is a step in the right direction.

"The goal of the committee is to prioritize student issues, such as mental health, academic prep and funding, which has always been supported by the UCSA," Hendrickson said. "Someday, I hope that the committee will become a full standing committee with decision-making powers."

The committee is scheduled to convene for two years, during which it will serve as an advisory committee with the student regent acting as an advisory member. After the two-year term has passed, the Committee on Governance will consider recommending the committee to be established as a permanent body.

Readers can contact Diana Tith at dtith@ucsd.edu.

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Muir Renovations to Relieve Area's Crowded Foot Traffic

► **EATERIES**, from page 1

Rating System is a standard used to judge the sustainability of a particular building. In keeping with UCSD's goal of environmental sustainability, the dining halls are being improved to meet this standard.

Muir Provost Susan Smith said the Stewart Commons renovation is necessary to relieve the area's problems with foot traffic during busy hours.

"My understanding is that the principal goal is to ease the congestion that students now experience during busy times in the Stewart Commons," Smith said. "Without the renovation, that congestion would be expected to worsen when the new Muir apartments are built, adding approximately 275 resident students to the Muir campus."

According to Casad, the Muir renovations will take 12 months to complete. The construction in Revelle is estimated to take up to 16 months.

Casad said he does not foresee any major problems with the closure of these dining facilities.

"As in the past, the other residential dining and retail facilities will have the ability to absorb the meals," he said.

Casad added that dining services will also add three temporary retail locations during the renovation period at Foodworx, North Campus, and Thurgood Marshall College in order to handle increased business.

Since large crowds at the remain-

ing dining halls could potentially lead to bottlenecks, Casad said that the Revelle construction will not begin until Muir renovations are completed.

"We are very confident that we will be able to handle all of the students on meal plans' needs during this process," Casad said. "Dining Services went through this same process with the renovation of OceanView Terrace in 2000."

Many students are not that worried about the impact the approaching changes might have on their dining routines, but feel that the effort

may be better directed toward other improvements.

"Although it's always a pain to be inconvenienced by these kinds of things, I don't particularly mind Summit being closed," Muir freshman Dan Shapiro said. "That being said, I wish Housing and Dining

Services would spend more of its time and resources restructuring the system so that we get food that's faster, cheaper and, more importantly, better."

Shapiro added that the presence of other nearby dining options should lessen the strain of losing Sierra Summit.

"Honestly, I don't think I'm going to be that affected," Shapiro said. "Plaza and OVT are still pretty close."

Readers can contact Christina Homer at chomer@ucsd.edu.

We are very confident that we will be able to handle all of the students on meal plans' needs."

— Steve Casad, associate director, UCSD Dining Services

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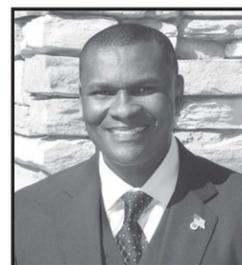


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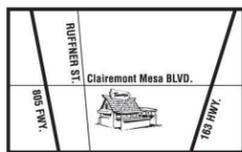
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3rd HERITAGE LANGUAGE PROGRAM FILM FESTIVAL

SATURDAYS APRIL 19 - MAY 31

The Linguistics Department's Heritage Language Program offers classes in communication and culture in five languages: Arabic, Filipino, Korean, Persian (Farsi), and Vietnamese. These courses are intended for individuals who have grown up hearing or speaking these languages to some degree and who would like to improve their command of the language. To highlight this program, we will be showing a feature-length film in each of five Heritage languages for the next several Saturdays.



Secret Sunshine

(in KOREAN with English subtitles)

This 2007 film by Korean director Lee Chang Dong details the life of a grieving woman who moves

to her deceased husband's hometown and befriends a local auto mechanic. The issues of religious faith and forgiveness emerge when the woman's son is murdered.

Saturday May 31 11:00 am

All films will be shown in room 4301, Applied Physics & Mathematics Building (take main elevator to fourth floor, exit right, first room on right), Muir College. Refreshments will be provided! Free parking in Lots 206, 207, and 208.



Props to a San Diego County grand jury for pushing local community colleges to rethink their ethical standards, following recent scandals at three colleges including Southwestern College.

Flops to university officials for poisoning an already bitter fight with service and health workers by filing an injunction declaring a looming strike illegal.



EDITORIALS

Feds Knock On Wrong Door, Shoot Themselves in Foot

University property became the latest hotspot of the national immigration debate, after Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents stormed the apartment of a graduate student pursuing a tip that a suspect had fled there following an earlier raid of a pastry shop in Pacific Beach.

Authorities came up empty handed at graduate student Jorge Narvaez's residence at the nearby Mesa Housing complex, but the Pacific Beach raid was a small part of a bigger picture; the 18 workers detained by authorities at French Gourmet Bakery were only some of the 900 arrests made across the state as part of a sweeping, systematic crackdown. The three-week I.C.E. operation targeted criminals and violators of court orders, leading to the deportation of half of those arrested.

The unwarned intrusion of federal authorities onto campus grounds, and subsequent violation of policy requiring universities be notified with a warrant, speaks to their brash fervor in the larger campaign. With or without a warrant, the complete failure to notify any campus-related entities about the raid leaves I.C.E. agents at fault for provoking a rightfully shellshocked and angry community. It may be true that the world of

law enforcement precludes extended communication, but not even federal agencies should be above the simple courtesy of advance warning. Anthony Valladolid, director of Student Policies and Judicial Affairs, publicly offered a best-case collaborative scenario: university police could have detained any student suspects before releasing them to I.C.E. officials. Valladolid's example is a far cry from the way agents ultimately conducted the raid.

The scandal has roused the community, with faculty, students and locals uniting in organized protest of federal mistreatment of campus, student and immigrant rights. The debate over U.S. immigration policies is a fight to be had another time — in this case, the community needs to focus on improving university oversight and supporting student privacy.

As a college campus, UCSD will naturally be home to a diverse community. And if prostitution, fraud and drugs are ever substituted for immigration as a nationwide "issue of the week," will federal authorities decide to bypass all relevant parties to break down the dorm door of alleged class-by-day, street-by-night prostitutes? Or barge into a programming class to nab an alleged credit-card scam-



mer? Or launch a raid off a tip that a drug dealer is operating on campus? Considering the multifaceted I.C.E. operation has incited the invasion of on-campus property using a false lead, Narvaez and his supporters have a right to be concerned.

UCSD officials are thankfully backing on-campus safety and privacy. But when they are completely excluded, they are useless in representing student interests. Federal authorities did not offer the least bit of consideration to the university in their recent raid, a ridiculous affront that damages student rights and security.

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Students the Biggest Losers in Council's Bad Fiscal Picture

The A.S. Council has exactly \$1.21 worth of breathing room. That amount is what was left unallocated by councilmembers in an excruciatingly tight budget forged from hours of back-and-forth debate. With many organizations still clamoring for money, councilmembers concluded that they will most likely be forced to dip into the traditionally untouched reserves fund.

It's a dark day for the council, which at this time last year was rejoicing in its unexpected discovery of a \$200,000 surplus. Unfortunately, this year's misfortune seems just as unexpected. Vice President of Finance and Resources Naasir Lakhani lauded the ease of the council's new online funding application system, which ultimately made the process so seamless that the council found itself unable to support the increased volume of student organization requests. Lakhani's budget funds only about 30 percent of funding applications from last quarter and cuts \$6,800 in funding to student organizations.

Programming for student organization events face some of the most damaging cuts. The council's finance office fielded more than \$156,000 total in requests from organizations to support their programming. The budget ultimately recommended spending a total of \$65,000, a staggeringly smaller figure that does irreparable damage to some student organizations. The Undergraduate Investment Society will receive about \$800 less than requested, meaning they will have to find financial support for their networking conferences. Student Health Advocates will get a whopping \$3,000 less than requested. The Vietnamese Student Association will get over \$4,000 less than they wanted, the bulk of the recommendation weighing on the organization's annual Vietnamese Culture Night. In on way or another, students will undoubtedly and unfortunately feel the effect of the council's financial problems.

The budget also saw funds for college councils shrinking, with councilmembers eliminating the \$21,000 line item for college festi-



vals. This will put even more pressure on the council to support student organizations that would have otherwise sought support from college councils for events such as Muirstock.

Considering the long series of cutbacks to student interests, the A.S. Council needs to re-evaluate the amount of financial dedication it pays to staffing positions — funds

that could have gone to college festivals were used for a staff programmer working through the University Events Office (at a \$40,000 salary) and other increases in staff salaries (costing \$13,500 total). Councilmembers' decision earlier this year to create the events manager position is now proving rash as they find themselves scraping the bottom of their budgetary barrel.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Festival Planners Need to Rethink Programming Ethics

Dear Editor,

I enjoyed the Sun God Festival. But I enjoyed it far less than I should have. And that's A.S. Vice President of Programming Kevin Highland's fault.

I ran for A.S. president in 2005 on a platform of creating two Sun God festivals. In the process, I learned about the festival's history and the behind-the-scenes scheming of the administration and the student government. For 25 years, the upper administrators have wanted to shrink the Sun God Festival. And for 25 years, the students have stood up to them — until 2008, with Highland's heinous reign of terror.

Corralling students like cattle onto RIMAC Field, postponing the Junkyard Derby, draining the Price Center fountain, selling too few wristbands, allegedly installing radio-frequency identification chips in the wristbands to track our movements (according to one A.S. senator), charging some students \$35 to attend a festival they already paid for (but putting Highland's friends on a free "guest list") — these are inexcusable.

Also inexcusable was the \$1 fee charged for credit card transactions at the Price Center Box Office. Although retailers are allowed to offer a discount for cash purchases, charging a fee for using a credit card is a violation of California Civil Code Section 1748.1. Highland sent out some half-hearted e-mails trying to portray the difference in price as a "discount," but the Web site — and the facts — say otherwise. I repeatedly explained this to Highland and University Centers Director Paul Terzino, but they ignored all constructive input, as is the custom at UCSD.

Students are legally entitled to a refund of the credit card fee. But they're also morally entitled to their old Sun God Festival. I expect the new A.S. Council — and the new guy in charge of programming, Garrett Berg — to remedy both.

— Daniel Watts
UCSD alumnus '06

► 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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All-Guardian Sun God Awards 2008

After this year's Sun God Festival, columnist Hadley Mendoza chose her most valuable players of the event. Now, Guardian staffers join in to offer more insight into the highs and lows of the new festival.

Best Holdover Tradition from Old Sun God Festivals:

Koala slip-and-slide at Sun God Lawn
The last bastion of the Sun God Festival took form midday when campus publication the *Koala* finally evaded security long enough to drag their tarp over Sun God Lawn and spray it slippery. Eventually, a crowd of wily near-nudes gathered at the top of the hill to launch face-first in drunken merriment; the heat increased, the group grew and more clothes flew off. Clad in a camo speedo, *Koala* member Kris Gregorian took great pleasure in spraying down stu-

dents with a hose and shoving wary sliders over the edge. Eventually, I relinquished my shoes, socks and valuables to the Sun God and dove Superman-style in enchanted glee. Again and again, dozens of enraptured students sprinted up the hill to lose themselves to the slosh tarp of joy. To my damp comrades, I salute you.

— By Chris Kokiousis
Senior Staff Writer

Scariest Account of Bad Security:

Authorities errantly send student to detox

It seems rather pointless to add to the rant surrounding the terrible structure of this year's Sun God Festival. Don't get me wrong — I am in full agreement that programmers destroyed arguably the only tradition other than studying that we at UCSD hold dear. Something more important happened that night, however, though it went sadly unnoticed.

Enter a friend of mine, a graduate student here at UCSD. He had a good time on Sun God, and was even lucky enough to experience being handcuffed and thrown in detox for four hours.

The catch? He wasn't drunk.

That's right — there was not a drop of alcohol in his system, a fact that he repeatedly pointed out to the numerous officers present, thrice (thank you, college!) demanding a breathalyzer test to prove it. He was refused every time.

Now, as a critical reader, you are probably wondering why he was detained in the first place. According to the resident adviser at the Eleanor Roosevelt College dorms who called the police, he was "breaking curfew" since it was 1 a.m. Excuse me, but ... what?

Welcome, friends and neighbors, to our new Sun God Festival. Have a good time, just remember to check your civil liberties at the

gate. Oh, and feel free to drink as much as you want — you'll end up in detox anyway.

— Brendan Hanrahan
Contributing Writer

Best Pre-Festival Rumor:

Tie, pillar of fire and Papa Roach

Part of Sun God fun comes before the festival, when countless whispers swirl around campus about which bands could be possible acts. The title of "best" in this category could mean the most outrageous, hilarious or outlandish rumor spit out of the campus.

Papa Roach at the Sun God Festival proved to be one of the few rumors that was outrageous, hilarious and outlandish — all at once. Students flooded message boards and facebook walls with the possibility that the modern-day grungers were bringing new-age metal to UCSD.

See **FESTIVAL**, page 5

Columnist Ends Bot-Life at UCSD

This year, yours truly will be yet another Triton leaving the sea to pursue endeavors outside the comfortable predictability of UCSD. Like a fish out of water, I will graduate as an anxious junior looking forward to ventures outside the often narrow-minded walls of the college where I have been learning for the past three years.

Yet I think I would be remiss not to reflect on my stay here and arrive

My freshman and sophomore years were pretty much the same. I was cramming in economics classes and finishing arduous general-education garbage, from which I gleaned nothing. Yet upon completing those pesky lower-division courses, I felt as if I had finally reached the crest of Mount Rundle.

Meanwhile, my summers were thrilling experiences; summer "vacation" took upon a whole new

some of my GE courses. I was, in essence, a note-copier, a student not necessarily learning anything but merely reciting information like all the rest.

If it weren't for my fortunate preoccupation with the world's economy, more specifically with monetary policy and the Gordon Growth Model, then I think I might have actually felt as if becoming a Triton was a complete and utter waste of resources.

Although the majority of my tenure here was a drab and perhaps ruthlessly plain waste of time, the fact of the matter is that I have, paradoxically, gained more from my dull experience here than I could have imagined.

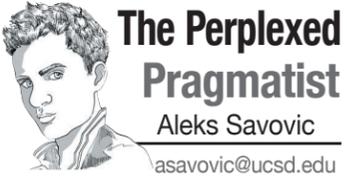
Immediately following my graduation, I will be employed in an arena that I find to be especially challenging and intellectually rewarding. It is a profession that hones in on the intricate relationships found between the fields of economics and the financial markets. Needless to say, I am quite excited about this endeavor because I will be able to do what I passionately love to do.

Nevertheless, for you newer Tritons, I wish you the best of luck. Though we both attend a rigid education system that stifles learning and promotes the birth of drones, at least some of us emerge out of this centrifuge fully knowing what we want to do for the rest of our lives.

"I felt as though I was a drone taking some of my GE courses. I was, in essence, a note-copier ... not necessarily learning anything."

meaning now that I was a student at this school.

Starting in the first quarter of sophomore year, I couldn't help but wonder why I was still studying here. Perhaps it was a result of my internship, which dealt with real financial issues that I viewed as more important in nature than my useless study of Francis Bacon's butt in philosophy class. Moreover, I felt as though I was a drone taking



The Perplexed Pragmatist

Aleks Savovic
asavovic@ucsd.edu

at some conclusion as to how my vaunted "college experience" went. So here is my share of most memorable moments; freshmen, you've been warned.

The collective experience of "Aleks as a Triton" started on a warm summer day in 2005. It was then that I decided to participate in the requisite "freshman orientation." I seriously considered skipping this summer-shortening event altogether but I was persuaded to attend nonetheless. And I appreciated my friends for scolding me into attending, because it was at orientation that I ultimately learned that I was in this for the long haul.

Heavy Metal, Pyro Tower Rumors Spice Up Festival

► **FESTIVAL**, from page 4

But just as outlandish were programmers' early plans to install complex pyrotechnics on RIMAC field, described to *Guardian* reporters as a "pillar of fire." When they first publicized the festival's new format, programmers were throwing everything but the kitchen sink into their plans.

It was obvious that they would not be able to include all of the features due to financial and staffing constraints, but the "pillar of fire" was by far the most exciting prospect. Now that would have made for a hot Sun God.

"[T]he 'pillar of fire' was by far the most exciting prospect. Now that would have made for a hot Sun God."

— Richard Choi
Senior Staff Writer

Strongest Evidence That the New Sun God Still Has Soul:
Living Legends' performance

If there is to be one act that comes to mind when thinking of Sun God 2008, it most certainly has to be Living Legends. As students threw their hands up in the air in appreciation, Living Legends tapped into the collective spirit of the crowd, allowing students to let loose and

really enjoy their Sun God experience. The Legends reminded us of the uniqueness of any music festival: that there is something powerful in the collective experience of live music, of bodies moving to a singular rhythm and the occasional wafts of marijuana smoke that filled the air from time to time. With

few altercations in the crowd and relatively lax security, the Legends served as a reminder of prior Sun God festivals, where security was more relaxed and where students, indulging in varying degrees of inebriation, could enjoy uninhibited fun.

And so, while the Legends may not have been everyone's top choice in terms of who was to play at Sun God this year, they certainly knew how to get the job done. Students disappointed that their favorite band wasn't booked for Sun God found solace in the Legends' easy-going act, where the music — along with the good times — can flow so freely.

—Deepak Seeni,
Staff Writer

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UCSD Student Research and Information Office

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arts/entertainment

THURSDAY, MAY 29, 2008



THE BEST SONGS
IN HIATUS
THIS WEEK

Spiritualized

- "Death Take Your Fiddle"
- "Sitting On Fire"

Usher

- "Love In This Club Pt. II"
- "Something Special"

FLAT-FRIGHTS AND LAME LIV MAKE FOR AN ENDLESS NIGHT

It's impossible to intellectually critique "The Strangers" since critical analysis of garbage often proves futile. Reviews, in some sense, are supposed to help elevate or debase a film based on its pros and cons. But when you're already at the bottom rung and swimming in the celluloid sewer, there's really nowhere to go, not even down.

For the most part, audiences try to remain reasonable. Essentially, the film follows a couple terrorized by unknown, masked assailants. For the first 20 minutes, the movie makes a big deal of describing the relationship between the two victims: James (Scott Speedman) has

proposed to Kristen (Liv Tyler), who, not ready for marriage, rejects him. Now both are left to spend the night together in James' summer home, where they're to pout until morning.

Unfortunately, they're visited by masked crazies and are forced to spend the night fending them off. That's about it, really. The rest of the movie is just the pair defending themselves.

At no point does the couple's relationship become a factor. The movie could've just as well started right before the assailants mount their attack. Considering that there's no significant semblance of plot, any rational critique based on the film's storytelling immediately flies out the door. Its hollow narrative leaves us to believe that any critique of the movie should be based on its "oh shit" moments.

The movie starts out well enough with these, managing to genuinely surprise the audience a few times with moments of "oh

shit, I see a guy in a mask in the corner of the house" or "oh shit, there's a masked girl standing randomly on the street." But these moments get old real quick. The first "oh shit" instances are shocking because 20 minutes of impossibly boring and pointless character development would leave anyone craving for any action.

But once the shock and awe becomes a regular affair, the film stops being amusing and quickly becomes formulaic, leaving us

wishing the victims would just die already.

While "Strangers" makes noble efforts to make the victims relatable, it's hard to relate to characters too moronic for us to root for. If it's 4 a.m. and you're alone in the house, it would probably be sensible to lock all the doors. Then maybe serial killers, burglars or "strangers" wouldn't crawl in so easily.

See **STRANGERS**, page 7

the strangers play a sadistic hide-and-seek that touts slash but lacks substance

by philip rhie + staff writer



COURTESY OF UNIVERSAL

druthers

HIATUS PICKS
THE WEEK'S
BEST BETS

Swervedriver & Film School

For some newfound nostalgia, look to the Casbah on Friday night and witness the reunion of a hearty dream-pop group from the early '90s that you've probably never heard of, Swervedriver.

After capitalizing on their nascent cult status by showcasing old tracks at Coachella, the pensive Brits have embarked on a full tour. Their repertoire ranges from textured shredding with the pop mindset of Pablo Honey-era

THE CASBAH / MAY 30 / 9:30 P.M. / \$20

Radiohead ("Ejector Seat Reservation") to a moodier Oasis template ("The Other Jesus") that banks on big chord changes and electric thickness.

The comparably youthful Film School share the stage with their own derivation of Interpol's modern angles mixed with a little California flair. Check out "Lectric," a dark surfing hymn that rides on an ominous bassline and indiscernible phrases. (CK)

"The Fall"

LANDMARK HILLCREST / OPENS MAY 30

Filmed in 2006, the notoriously trippy and fantastical "The Fall" has finally gotten its big international debut. It tells the story of an injured 1920s stuntman spinning myths with a little girl, fact and fiction meshing right before their eyes. Unsure of how magnificently weird this tale will be? Think "The Cell," the 2000 sci-fi flick that saw J.Lo running inside the mind of a schizoid serial killer.

"The Cell" director Tarsem Singh helmed "The Fall," along with R.E.M.'s "Losing My Religion" music video (if that counts for anything), and is renown for not giving a fuck about story if it gets in the way of showing awe-inspiring images. With finals looming, this mindbender might do the decompressing trick. (CM)

exit strategy

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ON CAMPUS

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Price Center Gallery A
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FREE

HAN HAN CHO

Mandeville Center
May 29, 8 p.m.
FREE

COLIN ARMSTRONG

Porter's Pub
May 30, 12 p.m.
FREE

"LAGAAN"

Price Center Theater
May 30, 7 p.m.
FREE

TEAM AWESOME, IJI & MORE

Che Cafe
May 30, 8 p.m.
\$5

"SECRET SUNSHINE"

AP&M Rm. 4301
May 31, 11 a.m.
FREE

TRAGEDY, BLOWBACK & MORE

Che Cafe
May 31, 6:30 p.m.
\$10

7 GENERATIONS & MORE

Che Cafe
June 1, 7 p.m.
\$6

The Anatomy and Tragedy of Video Games

As a fan of the first three Grand Theft Auto games, I should have naturally been excited for the release of Grand Theft Auto IV, which promised to outdo previous titles with a more engaging storyline, more precise gunplay, better melee combat and more interactive environments. Yet I couldn't get myself hyped, no matter how hard I tried.

Of course, after playing the game I realized that it's probably one of this generation's best releases. But I was bummed. I've mentioned before on our weekly Hiatus podcast that, similar to the release of GTA IV, I also felt little or no excitement about the impending releases of the new Metal Gear Solid and Resident Evil, franchises that (like GTA) have been very dear to me. I thought that maybe as a gamer I've become jaded. Perhaps I've been playing games for so long that I could no longer appreciate the innate joy that accompanies a blockbuster release.

More

recently, having caught Game Informer's exclusive story on the new Prince of Persia title, I became genuinely excited. Although Prince of Persia: the Sands of Time is my all-time favorite game, I hated the sequels with a burning passion. The latest attempt promises a return to what made Sands of Time so special: a charming, mystical story and exotic, fresh art direction.

Reading the preview, I suddenly understood what was wrong. What got me excited for this new Prince of Persia was that, aside from everything that's attributed to the namesake (mainly invigorating platforming mechanics), the game stands alone, with a brushstroke art direction not unlike Okami and influences of traditional Persian folklore to set the tone.

Now I realize that I haven't become completely jaded, I've just grown tired of the generic sequelitis that's plaguing our industry.

Video games today are not what they were 20 years ago. In fact, they're not what they were five years ago. The industry is constantly moving in new and exciting directions, gradually becoming as engaging as other media, like films and graphic novels.

However, due to the industry's evolution, it now costs about as much to make a next-gen game as it would a film. The high cost devoted to game development exposes new and dire problems: reliance on existing franchises and the deprivation of creativity. With climbing costs, both pub-

lishers and developers have become more cautious. Instead of taking creative risks, they tend to fall back on proven franchises with tried-and-true mechanics. This boils down

to an alarming number of sequels and blatant copycats.

Does anyone else find it rather ridiculous that Metal Gear Solid is now in its fourth iteration? Or does anyone recall Dark Sector, the recently released third-person action game that is Gears of War mimicry at its worst? Just the other day I saw some videos of a new survival-horror franchise called Dead Space that looked exactly like Resident Evil 4 in space. If games are merely building upon existing concepts, each a carbon copy of the last, is there really anything new to play or to be

See **CRITICAL**, page 7



Critical Hit!



PHILIP RHIE
prhie@ucsd.edu

Spiritualized Songs in A&E

FONTANA UNIVERSAL

★★★★

Having battled with a lethal bout of bilateral pneumonia in 2005, Spiritualized's frontman Jason Pierce (aka Jason Spaceman) makes an ethereal recovery with

Songs in A&E, taking after Pierce's prolonged intensive-care stay in the Accident and Emergency ward.

Throughout the hourlong LP, Spiritualized's mesh of edgy psychedelia, trance rock, gospel tropes and ragged blues is powerfully harrowing and an eerily authentic impression of the disease-ridden singer on his deathbed.

Transcending the subject matter of illness and mortality in "Death Take Your Fiddle," the prescience of convalescence opens up with slow, heavy, respirator-induced breathing — an ingenious cognitive trick that immediately triggers images of a cold, forsaken hospital ward.

While tackling the Herculean task of simple breathing, Jason laments, "Think I'll drink myself into a coma ... death take your fiddle/ play a song

for me," evoking a certain heaviness as though our own blood is clogged with "morphine, codeine, whiskey."

The acoustic mainline and backdrop of otherworldly instrumentals in "Sitting On Fire" is another beautifully provocative contemplation of life.

Most impressively, the string quartet enters mid-song and soars in contemplation, underscoring Jason's raw emotion with the line, "There's an old flame that still burns in my heart." Interspersed throughout *Songs in A&E* are also brief harmonies and interludes of driving percussion and gospel singers that reach into the dark, lonely corners of our hearts.

Although Spiritualized may have been inspired by heartrending tales of failing potency, *Songs in A&E* is blanketed with a renewed existential vigor that combats the mysterious sense of spiritual forlornness.

— Nichole Aquino
STAFF WRITER

this week's

best new music

COURTESY OF VALVE

Make Games, Not Movies



► CRITICAL HIT, from page 6 excited for?

It's this cold reality that makes me wish Gears of War never existed. Having popularized the over-the-shoulder perspective and cover mechanic, now everybody and their mother thinks it's a good idea to cop the same fucking ideas in their games. Other games are even mimicking Gears of War's drab and depressing art direction; today I see more gray in games than I do on the ass of an elephant.

Thankfully, a few developers still take risks, and there are a number of fresh games to look forward to. Aside from the aforementioned Prince of Persia, there's Mirror's Edge, a title that essentially promises to take the best elements of parkour (i.e. urban freerunning) and integrate them into a first-person experience.

Then there's Left 4 Dead, a zombie-survival

cooperative game that looks to bring back the joys of retro co-op (think Contra) to a whole new generation. There's MadWorld, a mysterious game in the works from the creators of Viewtiful Joe and Okami. Taking into account their divorce with Capcom due to Okami's poor sales, these developers have always been more inclined to take creative risks, which is reason enough to be excited for any games in their lineup.

If there are plenty of games to be excited for, why the hell am I bitching? Unfortunately, the games I've just mentioned are only a handful among the long list of generic MMOs and first-person shooters.

Assuming these aforementioned games don't sell well, publishers will no longer attempt to create new and exciting intellectual properties; it simply costs too much. Instead, what will be left is a large number of independent studios creating wacky and inventive games, which I support completely.

However, if the industry moves toward that direction, with big budget games taking less risks and smaller studios taking more, will we ever have refreshingly epic games like Metal Gear Solid was when it was first released? Perhaps we're moving in a direction where gaming is becoming more engaging, more cinematic, and telling better stories, but are we willing to see more and more games sacrifice creativity

Horror Throwback Mistakes Cliche For Scary Innovation

► STRANGERS, from page 6

Also, when do the characters fight back? Three unarmed individuals, two of whom are frail women, and you have no desire whatsoever to attack any of them? Really?

And did I mention the characters don't lock their doors? It becomes rather painful to watch when the psychos dig through the victims' garage and start to terrorize them with their own axe. Oops.

"The Strangers" is supposed to be a

throwback to early 1970s slasher movies. That would be a legitimate statement, had the movie actually been a slasher flick.

Any killing that occurs (at least by the assailants) happens at the end of the film, so throughout the entire duration, you're essentially watching a game of tag between three clowns and two screaming morons.

It's supposed to be scary, but it's not. It's not even campy. The film is "Peek-a-Boo" and "Scream" taken all too seriously.



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recordings

Death Cab for Cutie

▪ **Narrow Stairs**

ATLANTIC

★★★

After signing with Atlantic Records, releasing their 2005 album *Plans* and being shoved into stardom's spotlight, Death Cab for Cutie was keen on shedding the commercially tainted feel of their "Soul Meets Body" melodic pop for something more meditative. And their latest release is exactly that. Swapping earlier tunes of dreamlike croonings for sobering songs of empty relationships and a restless life, frontman Ben Gibbard drags his piercing voice across *Narrow Stairs* with bleak deliberation — but trips over a few steps on the way.

The album's debut single, "I Will Possess Your Heart," opens with a four-and-a-half minute mid-tempo section scattered with distorted guitar chords before Gibbard teaches an anticlimactic lesson on patience: "You got to spend some time love/ you got to spend some time with me/ I know that you will find love/ I will possess your heart."

The problem is that Gibbard can't even possess our attention, let alone our hearts — after a long-winded buildup that misses its energetic peak, his droning vocals just blur into the song's dreary remainder.

But what some songs lack in instrumental

energy, they make up for with poetic lyrics. In "Grapevine Fires" Gibbard's words wrap through somber piano keys and organ whispers to envelop listeners in his experience of the 2007 Southern California wildfires and invoke a surrendering reflection on the ruin's hollow beauty ("And the news reports on the radio/ said it was getting worse/ as the ocean air fanned the flames/ But I couldn't think of anywhere I would have rather been/ to watch it all burn away") that reaches a powerful emotional ambience.

While songs like "No Sunlight" and "Long Division" still maintain the catchy drum-drenched choruses reminiscent of past albums, they bear dark undertones that match *Narrow Stairs'* affective maturity and force us to face a Death Cab that's downplayed the cute and pumped up the death.

Although *Narrow Stairs* is harder to swallow than Death Cab's past poppy pills, its eloquent intricacy is proof that the band has uncovered a new depth to its body's soul after all.

— **Alyssa Bereznak**
SENIOR STAFF WRITER



Scarlett Johansson

▪ **Anywhere I Lay My Head**

ATCO

★★★

Scarlett Johansson's debut album, *Anywhere I Lay My Head*, features a medley of lackluster Tom Waits covers with what can be presumed to be Johansson's own vocal twist. Despite an incredible amount of mockery prior to the record's release, Johansson isn't a total dud behind the mic.

Each song has a slightly eerie, near-gothic touch, with pleasing melodies consisting of twangy guitars and slow beats that manage to hold the tracks together. The instrumentals fulfill the "indie" aspect of a Waits cover without too much effort, and with such a dreamy sound and a talented backing vocals (David Bowie joins on a few songs), these should be hits, but the snag is Johansson's own pipes.

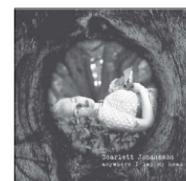
A throaty, deep-voiced Johansson plunks through each verse in a manner reminiscent of a teenage boy singing Britney Spears in the shower, awkward and lacking the proper amount of spunk

to sell itself. Johansson's dulled voice leaves the songs sounding monotonous, despite the large amount of effort put into the production prior to her vocal additions. Waits' gravely growl certainly doesn't garner the kind of vocal praise exhibited toward American Idol contestants, but he brings an essence to his lyrics that Johansson can't begin to touch.

The major sinker in the collection is "I Don't Want to Grow Up;" having been successfully covered once by the Ramones, Johansson's version has quite a bit to live up to. Her take imagines the track as an '80s techno-pop throwback, with over-synthesized vocals and sounds that can only be described as "different."

The album finishes where it started, with a soothing melody and a detached Johansson. At the very least, we can be thankful she didn't cover Black Sabbath.

— **Neda Salamat**
STAFF WRITER



Usher

▪ **Here I Stand**

JIVE

★★★★

Much was said about Usher's *Confessions* four years ago, particularly about the R&B sexpot's real-life extracurriculars while bedding TLC's Chilli. The talk helped heat up the singer's now multi-platinum album as the genre's second coming — its success was even credited with turning the tide of floundering U.S. album sales.

But now, Usher returns from his four-year hiatus to a R&B scene packed with wannabes, where a twittering singer like Ray J scores a long-lived hit and Chris Brown runs wild with dancing that weak-knees the ladies. So what's the returning King of R&B to do, improve on classic style or one-up the rookies?

Usher's fifth album *Here I Stand* does a little of both. What stays of classic Usher is his all-encompassing voice, widely tuned to both pluck the heartstrings in bouncy ballads like "Something Special" and drain the lungs in power anthems like "Moving Mountains." If one thing is certain, it's that Usher knows love. The trick for the new father and husband is to get a handle on life after romance. Most of *Here I Stand* feels like the honeymoon, with Usher staying between the sheets to profess all kinds of airy, cuddly adoration.

But Usher manages to pad down all the fluffiness with classy sheen, led by the recently released single "Love In This Club." The two-parter sees Ush and Beyoncé Knowles overcome by their libi-

dos, with Young Jeezy joining in on regally elevated keyboarding. Critics have panned the ditty as simplistic, one-note trash, but for whatever overproduced club-friendliness hurts *Here I Stand*, the album recoups with smooth R&B authenticity that recalls the good ol' lovin' of '90s Babyface.

Even R&B singers, it seems, have to grow up. The Casanova of Crooners has vacated — this all-new Usher is an older, wiser softie.

— **Charles Nguyen**
SENIOR STAFF WRITER



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Covering Triton Softball Leads to Change of Heart

► **BLANC**, from page 12

of my T-ball days, but with more and more games under my belt as a softball spectator I realized that it actually made the game harder. Whenever playing third base in baseball, I was always a bit nervous having to play so close in to the plate, so I couldn't imagine playing the hot corner in softball where you are given zero reaction time to make a play. The same goes for the middle infielders, and senior second-baseman Danielle Lukk, who showed off her best Chase Utley impression with a slew of diving stops.

Ditto for outfielders, who don't have the luxury of time to track down fly balls and camp under them to make an easy out with such close fences. So when I saw freshman Katrin Gabriel slide headfirst into the leftfield fence to make an out, it only made me wish that ESPN cameras could have been there to let her grab some airtime on Baseball

Tonight's Web Gems.

I've been told that a 60 mph pitch in softball is the equivalent to 90 mph in baseball, and as a pitcher who topped out in the mid 80s, I was blown away by seeing these girls hit off of pitches that, would seem to me like 95-mph sharp cheddar. Over the course of the season I was treated to a hitting clinic from the likes of senior Jenny Maze, juniors Allison May and Jenni Habib and freshman Sarah Woofter.

In my prime I was known for my quality rubber arm and led my team in innings pitched, and even then the thought of pitching complete games on back-to-back days makes my elbow throb, forcing me to reach for the Icy Hot. It's not uncommon for softball pitchers to throw both ends of a doubleheader and take the mound numerous times in a weekend series. Softball games go quicker than baseball, meaning that the pitchers

have even less recovery time and always have a four-game series played over two days. For every catcher out there, two consecutive doubleheaders is beyond a nightmare, yet sophomore backstop Nicole Saari showed athleticism that rivals anything in baseball by catching all but four innings over the whole season.

Although the Tritons' season ended in the NCAA West Regionals, they still had a phenomenal year and recruited at least one new fan. Whereas the arrival of spring has always meant the start of baseball season for me, I guess I can now tack on one more sport. It is almost cruel that by studying abroad in France next year, I won't be able to watch the softball team so soon after having been introduced to the game. One thing's for sure; next time some jock tells me that I throw like a girl, I'll be sure to thank him.

Replacing Rubens Impossible, Says Head Coach Steidlmayer

► **RUBENS**, from page 12

2-3 at the top spot and 8-8 at the No. 2. His terrific play at the top of the Tritons' lineup helped lead UCSD to a third consecutive appearance in the Sweet 16 of the Division-II National Championship tournament.

"Our team had to deal with so much adversity throughout the season, and I'm glad we were able to make it to Houston for the team championships," Rubens said. "Every year, my goal is for the team to get to nationals and have an opportunity to play with the best teams in our level. I was so proud we were able to do it all four years I was here."

Over the course of his tenure, Rubens went 102-57 combined in singles and doubles, demonstrating

his versatility in both formats. Last season, Rubens was named an ITA All-American for his outstanding doubles play, where he went 20-4, including 19-4 with Meister, who was also named an ITA All-American. His graduation will leave a huge hole at the top of the singles and doubles ladder for the Tritons, something head coach Eric Steidlmayer is very aware of.

"Eric Rubens will not be replaced," Steidlmayer said. "In his time at UCSD, our team made the national tournament all four years, he won the Division-II doubles National Championship and was a fine player."

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

Women's Tennis Has Talent to Extend Streak

► **W. TENNIS**, from page 12

ognition, earning the ITA/Arthur Ashe Award for Leadership and Sportsmanship. Fonte was 12-8 in singles and 12-11 in doubles and was nearly impossible to beat in conference play, going 6-0 in singles and 7-1 in doubles with three different partners.

Dao was named CCAA Newcomer of the Year after putting up a 12-1 record in conference play. Overall, she had a 22-14 record, including 10-5 in singles and 12-9 in doubles. LaPlante expects Dao and six other freshmen to lead the team in coming seasons.

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

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HOW TO THROW LIKE A GIRL AND BE PROUD OF IT

You throw like a girl!" Every kid who grew up playing baseball is accustomed to this playground taunt. Kids are cruel, plain and simple, and on the sandlot there were always a few players whose lack of athleticism and coordination never went unnoticed. These young ballplayers could not escape the verbal wrath of their teammates and had their every move mocked, constantly being reminded that they played "like a girl!"



Blanc on Base Jake Blanc

jblanc@ucsd.edu

To be honest, I can't remember which type of kid I was. I was a decent little slugger from an early age, so chances are that I leaned more toward the taunting than the receiving end of having my skills emasculated. Baseball was always a mainstay in my life, moving from fall ball to the official spring season to summer club leagues year in and year out. Anyone who has ever played baseball as seriously as I did, or even anybody who has ever known a ballplayer can probably attest to the fact that an inflated ego tends to go along with playing the sport.

That ego ran parallel to how we viewed other sports, thinking that the skill and finesse needed to take an outside fastball the other way or to chase down a sinking line-drive in the gap made our sport superior. This meant that we couldn't help but look down on the savagery of football and the individuality of tennis and golf. And yes, this also led us to view our fellow diamond comrades, the female softball players, in a pretty condescending way.

So when I received my assignment to cover the UCSD women's softball team this winter, I couldn't help but have some of my childhood prejudices carry over, regardless of how much I think I've matured over the years. Still, covering the softball team was my first choice and I was excited to cover a sport so similar to my beloved baseball.

Even then I still had my assumptions about softball. The field is so small, the base paths are so much shorter and, let's be honest, each team's roster is filled to the brim with women. Not to mention the fact that my buddy and I play homerun derby on the softball field left-handed and still knock some dingers out of the yard. How hard could softball be?

I learned just how impressive the sport is the very first time I watched a Triton softball game. As an ex-All-City pitcher, offense isn't exactly what catches my eye, and when my first softball game ever saw senior southpaw Melissa Ward throw a one-run, seven-strikeout complete game against Chico State, I knew I hadn't given softball its due credit. I might have shrugged off the sport if that first game had been a slugfest, but the fact that it was a classic pitcher's duel made me realize that having to time a pitcher who is throwing from only 43 feet away and hitting a ball that is trying its hardest to disprove gravity by actually rising must be pretty damn hard.

As the year went on, I only saw more and more reasons to tip my proverbial cap to the hardworking women of UCSD softball. The smaller dimensions of the field at first reminded me

See **BLANC**, page 11

Senior Honored for Leadership



ANDREW RUIZ/GUARDIAN FILE

Senior Eric Rubens was awarded the Intercollegiate Tennis Association Senior Player of the Year after going 16-7 in doubles.

By Neil Joshi
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

Eric Rubens has made quite a mark in his final season for the UCSD men's tennis team. As a result, the senior has received many honors since the season concluded.

Rubens was named the Intercollegiate Tennis Association Senior Player of the Year in the West Region as well as the ITA/Arthur Ashe Award for Leadership and Sportsmanship. According to ITA, the Arthur Ashe Award is given to the player who has exhibited outstanding sportsmanship and leadership as well as scholastic, extracurricular and tennis achievements. Rubens was one of eight players around the country to be honored.

Entering the 2007-08 season, Rubens was honored as the ITA's Player to Watch in the West Region and responded by putting together a banner season in his final one as a Triton. He began the year by earning a spot in doubles with fellow senior Blake Meister to the ITA Indoor National Championships, a prestigious tournament in which Meister and Rubens were the only Division-II pair involved. The duo qualified by beating out some of the best doubles teams in the nation at the ITA Small College Super Bowl in October.

"[The season] started off so great," Rubens said. "I mean, making it to the ITA National Championships at the start of the year was just so difficult. Beating the D-II, D-III and NAIA champions just to get there required a lot of luck and required so many tough matches that had to go tiebreakers."

As recipient of the Arthur Ashe Award, Rubens said he will now take pride in the sport for the rest of his life.

"The sportsmanship award is definitely the one that will mean most to me," Rubens said. "Out there on the court, you want to display character to all the other guys on the team. Being recognized for that is such a great honor, something I will never forget."

Rubens served as the captain of the men's team, which recently finished the year No. 18 in the final national rankings. But a humble Rubens gave credit to his teammates when asked about his leadership on and off the court.

"I may have been captain, but other guys like Alex Whitmore and Ramesh Thondapu did a wonderful job in being good examples for the young kids," he said. "I try my best to just lead by example."

During the year, Rubens continued his dominance in doubles, going 16-7 in that department, while serving as the No. 1 or No. 2 singles player for the Tritons in every match. While playing singles, he went 10-11 overall, going

See **RUBENS**, page 11

Coach, Players Earn Awards After Another Strong Season

By Neil Joshi
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

WOMEN'S TENNIS — Head coach Liz LaPlante has compiled a truly magnificent resume during her 29 years at the helm of the women's tennis program. Over the course of her career, she has led UCSD to national championships and incredible winning streaks, as well as earning individual honors. LaPlante added another award to her long list after being named the California Collegiate Athletic Association's Coach of the Year for the fifth straight year.

The 2008 season also marked the fifth consecutive year UCSD won the CCAA title after going undefeated in conference play, extending its conference win streak to 48 matches.

"I am proud of that streak, but it's the NCAA postseason play that has the most significance," LaPlante said.

LaPlante has had success at that level, too, leading UCSD to four Division-III National Championships, most recently in 1994. The closest Tritons have gotten at the Division II level was Elite Eight appearances in 2002 and 2005. In 2007-08, the Tritons put together a 14-10 record before succumbing to the best team in D-II, Brigham Young University-Hawaii, in the tournament's second round.

LaPlante wasn't the only Triton to be recognized for an outstanding effort this season. UCSD had five women make the All-CCAA First or Second Team, further demonstrating the stranglehold they have over the conference. Freshmen Kimmie Dao and Natalie Varnay and seniors Justine



ERIK JEPSEN/GUARDIAN FILE

The women's tennis team, led by CCAA Coach of the Year Liz LaPlante, had its fifth-straight undefeated CCAA season and has won 48 straight conference matches.

Ang Fonte and Molly Sullens were named to All-CCAA First Team, which exemplifies the great balance of youth and experience LaPlante had this year. Freshman Dalya Perelman was named to All-CCAA Second Team.

"It has been so great to have Justine and Molly on the team all four years," she said. "They have played a significant part in our success and I will really miss them. Both of them are so competitive and have worked

extremely hard, and been great examples to this year's team. Justine was team captain and made it her mission to make sure the freshmen understood the importance of team unity for our success and it all wouldn't have come together without her."

LaPlante has just as much to say about her young freshmen.

"I've never had a stronger or more talented group of freshmen and it's been great to see their progress, their

improvement, the friendships that have evolved and how close they have become as a team," she said. "It was challenging in the beginning just getting everyone and get to know one another, but it's amazing how they all came together. I'm really looking forward to the coming years to see how this group continues to improve."

Fonte received additional rec-

See **W. TENNIS**, page 11

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Tuesday, May 27th Crossword Solution

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

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