

# THE



# UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO GUARDIAN

www.ucsdguardian.org

Thursday, January 10, 2008

The Student Voice Since 1967

## FBI Arrests New Bomb-Hoax Suspect



WILL PARSON/GUARDIAN

UCSD's School of Medicine complex was evacuated on Dec. 5 due to a hoax bomb threat, for which the FBI has arrested two former employees. The first was released on Jan. 4.

By Matthew L'Heureux  
NEWS EDITOR

The FBI made a second arrest last week in connection with December's bomb threat against the Leichtag Biomedical Research Building, after determining that the original suspect was not involved in the hoax.

On Jan. 4, members of the Joint Terrorism Task Force arrested 54-year-old Richard Sills Jr., a temporary Leichtag employee. Officials also dismissed all charges against 50-year-old former lab technician Timothy Bryon Kalka, who was arrested for the crime on Dec. 8.

Sills is charged with conveying false or misleading information and engaging in hoax activities pertaining to explosives. He was scheduled to appear before a judge on Jan. 8 but did not show, said Debra Hartman, media liaison for the San Diego U.S. Attorney's Office.

Hartman said that Sills is currently a patient at Alvarado Hospital in East County, but could not disclose any other details. He is now expected to appear before the court on Jan. 14, she said.

Associate Vice Chancellor of University Communications Stacie A. Spector said that Sills was a temporary

worker whose most recent employment began in May and was slated to end in the spring. He also worked at UCSD for two months in 2006.

The hoax device was discovered in Leichtag on Dec. 5 at 10:26 a.m., and employees reportedly received a call shortly afterward threatening its detonation. The entire School of Medicine complex was evacuated for seven hours while the Metro Arson Strike Team secured the device and rendered it safe.

Earlier that day, university officials received a letter claiming to be from

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## Petition Deadlocks City Council Ban on Beach Booze

### LOCAL NEWS

By Serena Renner  
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

All in favor of champagne-infused sunsets and suds in the San Diego sun may be in luck. An organization opposed to recently approved ban prohibiting alcohol on all of the city's beaches turned in nearly 46,000 signatures to the City Clerk's Office on Jan. 4, halting the prohibition pending a citywide vote.

The group — Ban the Ban 3 — had 30 days to meet the 30,209-signature threshold to force the City Council to either repeal its November sanction of a one-year trial ban or to initiate a referendum to appear on the June or November ballot.

Volunteers and paid signature gatherers aimed to round up 75,000 signatures protesting the ban but fell short because the 30 days fell over December, when many beach-area residents and college students were out of town for the holidays.

The group's ability to collect 46,000 signatures despite the cold weather and holiday-related restraints shows the support of local San Diegans, said Ban the Ban 3 organizer Jacob Pyle.

The City Clerk accepted the petition the same day the ban was to go into effect. The signatures were then sent to the county Registrar of Voters, which has 30 days to certify that signers are registered to vote in the city of San Diego. If enough signatures

are deemed valid, the petition will be sent to the City Council, which will have 10 days to decide its next move.

Ban supporters expressed disappointment that the opposition did not give the trial prohibition a fair shot. They cited other areas from Imperial Beach to Ventura County, Hawaii, Florida and many urban beaches along the East Coast with similar measures as good examples of cities that have addressed public safety concerns arising from beach alcohol consumption.

"These cities have all made the decision that public safety requires an alcohol-free beach policy and, to my knowledge, none of these cities put public safety to vote," said Scott Chipman, a spokesman for the Web site [www.safebeaches.org](http://www.safebeaches.org).

Chipman also mentioned the alcohol-free policy at La Jolla Shores, which was implemented 17 years ago without generating a referendum.

Ban the Ban 3 members fought the regulation because they did not think it addressed any of the relevant issues, Pyle said. He called the measure overly punitive, without establishing parameters or responding to the recommendations set forth by the Beach Area Alcohol Task Force commissioned by Councilman Kevin Faulconer after the Labor Day skirmish that motivated the initiative.

"You don't take the most punishing step first," he said. "Let's punish

See **BAN**, page 2

# UC Struggles to Resolve Dual Union Negotiations

By Jesse Alm  
ASSOCIATE NEWS EDITOR

As wage and benefits negotiations between the California Nurses Association and the University of California carry into their ninth month, grievances from another union, the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, regarding a contract for the university's 11,000 patient-care technical employees have further exacerbated the statewide debate over the university's treatment of its medical workers.

The three-year contract, which will establish both wages and medical benefits for PCT employees — which includes dental hygienists, respiratory therapists and nursing aids — has been on the bargaining table since July 2007. Until recently, the university was reluctant to declare an impasse, claiming that there was still progress to be made.

"We felt that we had more to bargain over," said Nicole Savickas, human resources and labor coordinator for the UC Office of the President.

AFSCME Local 3299 President Lakesha Harrison, a licensed vocational nurse, said that if university officials were interested in making progress, they would have made it already.

"We have been there for months, and they have not made one significant pro-

posal," she said.

Harrison said the wages for almost every job classification in her unit at UCLA are at least 25 percent below market level, creating a disturbingly high turnover rate.

"Every time [new employees] come, I have to train them," she said. "They are there for six months to a year, and then they say, 'OK, now I can go to Kaiser.' It is potentially dangerous to patient care when people are coming and going like that."

Among AFSCME's initiatives are a \$15 state minimum wage for PCT employees, the elimination of pay cuts for health care and pension and the implementation of an annual automatic step system, which would inform employees up front of their scheduled raises for the duration of their contract.

Savickas said it would be fiscally irresponsible for the university to implement these initiatives, which, according to a recent press release, would cost UC medical centers more than \$75 million over the course of the contract. She said that many of the university's other financial responsibilities, such as maintaining and improving current medical facilities and equipment, are often overlooked.

"We have our different budgets, and those have to be allocated across a bunch of different budgets," she said.

Harrison criticized the university's priorities, saying that employee conditions

should be considered before the facilities in which they work.

"It's really bad to have a great facility and nobody to work there," she said.

Local AFSCME representative Celene Perez said that even when minimal raises have taken effect, they have been undermined by hikes in separate areas such as health care and parking. She cited a recent UCSD proposal to raise the staff parking fee from \$81 to \$100, a move she said illustrates the disconnect between the university and its staff members' basic needs.

"If you look at the top administration, they're not really sure what's going on," Perez said. "They don't understand how certain things need to be restructured to make things better."

Jessica Agost, a surgical technologist at the UCSD Medical Center's Thornton Hospital, said she is disappointed that after providing students with such an outstanding education, the UC system fails to retain them as professional employees.

"They don't understand that the patients are the ones who suffer," she said.

The California Public Employment Relations Board has approved the declaration of an impasse, and a state-appointed mediator is scheduled to meet with both parties at the end of this month.

Readers can contact Jesse Alm at [jessealm@gmail.com](mailto:jessealm@gmail.com).



WILL PARSON/GUARDIAN

Students on Library Walk protest for increased AFSCME patient care technical employee wages at a Dec. 6 rally. Negotiations between the union and UC administrators have lasted five months.

### HIATUS

## Out of the Shadows

A review of the supreme sounds and surprising films that made 2007 groundbreaking.

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### SPORTS

## Stomping the Slugs

Men's volleyball opened its season with a four-game win over UC Santa Cruz on Jan. 4.

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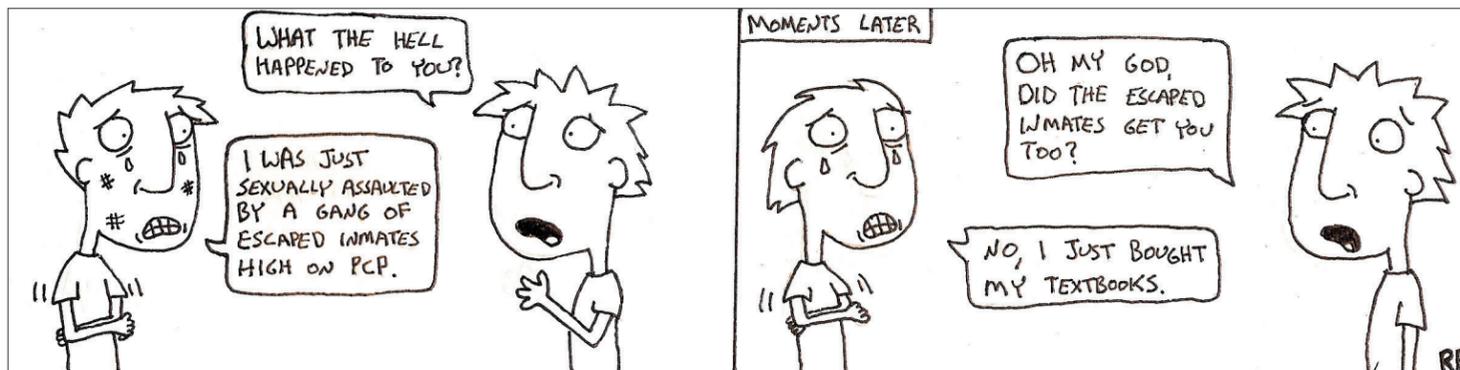
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# POORLY DRAWN LINES

BY REZA FARAZMAND



## City Council Has Tried, Failed Twice to Implement Full Ban

► **BAN**, from page 1

the 1 percent of people causing problems, not the rest of the law-abiding citizens, enjoying the beaches as they are ... they're not just interested in beach alcohol, they have a bigger agenda."

Pyle argued that the majority of issues brought up by ban supporters — such as urinating in public and DUIs — don't revolve around beach alcohol. He attributed the public urination problem in Pacific Beach to the fact that there are only six operating toilets at the site, and he said that most DUIs occur during late-night hours when beach alcohol is prohibited.

Proponents of the ban, however, note that people are increasingly coming to Pacific and Mission beaches to be a part of the "alcohol scene" that takes place there, said Chipman, who served on the Beach Area Alcohol Task Force. While beer bong, alcohol luges and drinking games are not permitted at bars or nightclubs, they are commonplace at the beach, where there is no one to regulate if someone is binge drinking or when underage kids try to join the games, he said.

"Unfortunately, there is no practical way to allow one person to drink responsibly without letting many others drink irresponsibly," Chipman said.

The Ban the Ban 3 petition echoes efforts of previous years, in which two other trial bans were successfully defeated.

In 1991, the City Council approved a one-year trial ban but rescinded its decision when opponents gathered enough signatures for a referendum. The city compromised by restricting drinking between 8 p.m. and noon.

In 2002, the council attempted to impose an around-the-clock trial ban on parts of Pacific and Mission beaches, which failed by a slim 3-percent margin.

While the prospective success of a ban may look dismal when considering past efforts, times have changed, according to Chipman. He added that problems are worse now than ever, diverting city resources and forcing law enforcement to "babysit" drinkers at the beach rather than protect city streets.

The idea that people need to be babysat is precisely the problem, according to Pyle, who maintained that drinking-related problems occur within a small two-block stretch, and that the majority of San Diego locals enjoy their liberties responsibly without necessitating police intervention.

"I think the bigger principle is that San Diegans are sick of the nanny state our government is making us live in," Pyle said. "Heck, if they had their way, we'd each have a government-assigned nanny following us around to correct everything we are doing wrong."

Readers can contact Serena Renner at [srenner@ucsd.edu](mailto:srenner@ucsd.edu).

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### HIATUS

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Hot tracks reviewed weekly.  
**This Thursday!**  
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Other takes on HBO.  
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### FOCUS

**Slideshow: How Things Work**  
The campus' intricacies broken down.  
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### OPINION

**Web Poll: Do results of the university audit affect your opinion of the Preuss School?**

### SPORTS

**Schedules & Standings:**  
*Coming Soon!*

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## CORRECTIONS

A focus article published on Jan. 7 titled "Tick, Tick, Boom" incorrectly identified the executive director of the Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation in Washington, D.C. as Jason Isaacs. In fact, his name is John Isaacs.

The Guardian corrects all errors brought to the attention of the editors. Corrections can be sent to [editor@ucsdguardian.org](mailto:editor@ucsdguardian.org).



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**General Editorial:** 858-534-6580  
[editor@ucsdguardian.org](mailto:editor@ucsdguardian.org)  
**News:** 858-534-5226, [news1@ucsdguardian.org](mailto:news1@ucsdguardian.org)  
**Focus:** 858-534-5226, [features@ucsdguardian.org](mailto:features@ucsdguardian.org)  
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The UCSD Guardian  
9500 Gilman Drive, 0316  
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## Council Adopts Instant Runoff Voting, Prepares Two Members for Catwalk

The A.S. Council reconvened for its first meeting of the new year without the tension and heated exchanges to which it was accustomed in 2007.

In the two meetings leading up to the break, members argued vociferously over funding college-specific events and the council's failure to show up for the La Jolla Christmas Parade.

Last night's 45-minute meeting, the shortest yet, did little to address these lingering issues. Perhaps the eggnog and good cheer from the three-week vacation have yet to wear off.

**Amy Ifurung** of the Women's Commission began the meeting during public input to update the council on the philanthropic efforts of the Kappa Alpha Theta sorority. The sorority was seeking two dashing A.S. Council models to be immortalized in a fundraising calendar.

At the previous meeting, Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs **Long Pham** and Vice President of External Affairs **Dorothy Young** walked away with the council's nominations for calendar models, but Pham declined the offer and Young was unable to participate because of a scheduling conflict.

Although Muir College Chair **Dave Payne** volunteered to model, the council held a second vote to nominate Associate Vice President of College Affairs **Tanya Piyaratnanaphipat** to fill the remaining spot.

Former council president **Harry Khanna**, now a graduate student at Johns Hopkins University, also spoke during public input. He urged council members to resist a recommendation from last year's Sun God Report to move the festival from mid-May to

late April.

Khanna said that discouraging students from nearby schools from attending Sun God by moving it further away from summer would also make it harder for alumni to attend.

Khanna also spoke in favor of an amendment to implement instant runoff voting for council elections, a method that allows students to rank multiple candidates when voting on TritonLink, instead of choosing only one candidate.

In an e-mail sent to councilmembers in December, Khanna wrote that IRV will

help prevent elections from merely turning into competitions between two slates of candidates.

In its only substantive action of the night, the council passed the IRV amendment without objection.

Thurgood Marshall College Senator **Kyle Samia** kept his "fabulous parade" pet project alive by suggesting the creation of a parade planning task force to investigate potential routes and participants and formulate a report for next year's council. However, the fabulousity remains far off in the horizon.

Facing a dearth of important business, councilmembers exchanged the usual tidbits of oddball information during open forum.

Eleanor Roosevelt College Senator **Stephanie Usry**, either to update computer-less students or to taunt the blind, promoted the recent redesign of the UCSD Web site and TritonLink.

Catering to the council's closet gamers, Sixth College Senator **Micah Jones** plugged this weekend's video game competition, Winter Gamefest. Jones did not indicate whether he would participate in the "pwning" himself.



### New Business

**Michael Bowlus**  
mbowlus@ucsd.edu

## Suspect's Animal-Rights Ties Unknown

► **ARREST**, from page 1

animal-rights activist group the Animal Liberation Front, which demanded the release of all research animals in campus laboratories. If the university did not comply, the letter said, multiple explosive devices would be detonated.

Jerry Vlasak of the Animal Liberation Press Office, an organization that fields anonymous messages from ALF members and publicly advocates for animal-rights reform, said he did not know if the incident was committed by an ALF affiliate.

"We know there are animals being tortured at UC San Diego, and we know there are people willing to risk their lives and their freedom to stop it," Vlasak said. "Whether this was perpetrated by ALF, we don't really have any firsthand knowledge."

Vlasak said the threat initially appeared to be the work of ALF members, but the recent emergence of "disgruntled employees" made him uncertain of its authenticity.

He also said that ALPO does not know the identities of ALF members, but that Sills is not a known animal-rights activist.

Kalka was arrested based on tips from individuals who listened to recorded television and radio broadcasts of the threat, along with a concurrent JTTF investigation, according to an FBI press release. He had been terminated from his position on Nov. 30 after working at UCSD for eight years.

However, further investigation exonerated Kalka and implicated Sills, according to the FBI.

No evidence linking Sills to ALF has been released to the media.

Readers can contact *Matthew L'Heureux* at mlheureu@ucsd.edu.

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Props to Ban the Ban 3 for attaining enough protest signatures to stall the San Diego City Council's invasive beach booze ban.

Flops to TritonLink admins for misjudging the influx of traffic, which forced parts of the site to malfunction and prevented students from checking schedules.



## EDITORIALS

## Preuss Struggles to Make Grade Following Preventable Scandal

Had this been just another failing urban school, no one would have made these accusations."

When Preuss School Board of Directors Chair Cecil Lytle made this comment defending the integrity of UCSD's nationally recognized charter school against allegations of grade tampering, he was also inadvertently exposing its Achilles' heel. Since its inception in 1999, the school has stockpiled accolades, including recent slots in *Newsweek* and *U.S. News and World Report's* lists of the top 10 high schools in the nation. However, judging by the results of the recent UCSD audit of the school's operations — which unearthed multiple instances of administrative mismanagement, including altered transcripts suspiciously missing the initial grade entry forms — it's clear that the abundance of acclaim was accompanied by an unhealthy dose of managerial complacency.

Even if none of the 427 grade alterations were deliberate — a very unlikely scenario, according to the auditors — it doesn't retroactively absolve Preuss administrators for allowing these problems to go unnoticed for many years. As a self-proclaimed model for urban education, the school's leaders should have reasonably foreseen the dangers of lax management, particularly regarding their students' grades. Lytle was correct in acknowledging that charter-school skeptics are a dime a dozen — all the

more reason why there should have been double- and triple-checks in place to ensure that there were no closeted skeletons that the reporters flocking around Preuss have now uncovered.

Ex-Principal Doris Alvarez, waging a media campaign against the auditors for implicating her in the grade-changing process, has inferred that the university's post-audit disciplinary actions may not have happened at a time when the school was less visible on the national radar. However, UCSD's strong stance against documented cheating is the only acceptable recourse for such reprehensible actions.

Had Preuss administrators periodically performed their own internal audits, or even just kept a closer eye on their lower-level employees, the scandal never would have snowballed into such a public-relations nightmare. Instead, a former registrar was allowed access to her son's transcripts, which she later admitted to altering. Instead, Alvarez chose to terminate Jennifer Howard, an ex-teacher who was testifying in the ongoing audit at the time her contract was up for renewal. Instead, the Board of Directors allowed Alvarez to take the wheel, failing to realize the implications of these decisions until the university's audit was all but inevitable. By turning a blind eye to its own operations, the Preuss School did its bright, hardworking students an undeniable disservice.

Now that the captain of the wayward ship has resigned, however, Preuss



ILLUSTRATIONS BY MICHAEL CAPPARELLI/GUARDIAN

is making strides in the long process of rebuilding its national standing and the community's faith. Alvarez's successor will have undoubtedly learned many lessons from this unfortunate situation, but perhaps the most important moral is the necessity of constant internal vigilance — even when nothing appears to be amiss. Preuss is not a failing urban school, but a successful educational prototype that has been temporarily derailed from its upward track. While it is unfortunate that the university must uphold its dedication to integrity and personal responsibility through punitive measures, continuing to adhere to these values is the only way that UCSD can return Preuss to the high regard that it could — and should — occupy.


 THE GUARDIAN

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## Presidential Elections a Long-Awaited Letdown

I can't believe that I am about to vote in a presidential election for the very first time in my life and honestly, I'm not really all that excited about it. Yeah, democratic participation is great and I like voicing my opinions via ballot box, but I can't seem to shake this feeling of resigned pessimism.



### Seasoned to Taste Jake Blanc

jblanc@ucsd.edu

After watching the fraudulent unfolding of the 2000 election from the sidelines as a curious but contently ignorant seventh grader, I decided to take a more active role in 2004 and campaigned for the Democratic Party. At the time, I had the moral dilemma of supporting a party that stood in contrast to many personal beliefs, but justified it by focusing on the need for any type of political change away from those first four years of the Bush administration. Imagine the horrible feeling of a high school junior after he reluctantly campaigned for a candidate he didn't truly want who ended up losing anyway.

It was in that moment that I formed the belief that the next four years in our country were doomed, but would hopefully result in a public so discontent with recent politics that it would clamor for a new wave of change to sweep over American society. Although public opinion of the current administration, the Iraq War and the president are at an all-time low, the overall sense of creating profound change in our country is not apparent in the 2008 presidential hopefuls.

From the point of view of running a nation, most presidential candidates are still relatively inexperienced, which leaves them no option but to dumb down their policies and filibuster in hopes of being elected. It is ironic that the only candidates on both sides of the political spectrum who are unrelenting in sticking to their beliefs are those who honestly have no hope of even making it past the primaries. The sad state of our current two-party political system leaves the prospects of the 2008

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## Technology Snags College-Aged Voters in New Hampshire

After examining the results of this week's New Hampshire primaries and last week's Iowa caucuses, it's easy to see why many media outlets have dubbed this year's contest the "Facebook election."

Historically, it's not a big secret that the under-30 crowd is often noticeably absent from the nation's voting bloc. It's also no secret that candidates tend to court issues that relate to older voters, which is why older voters have always dominated the polls.

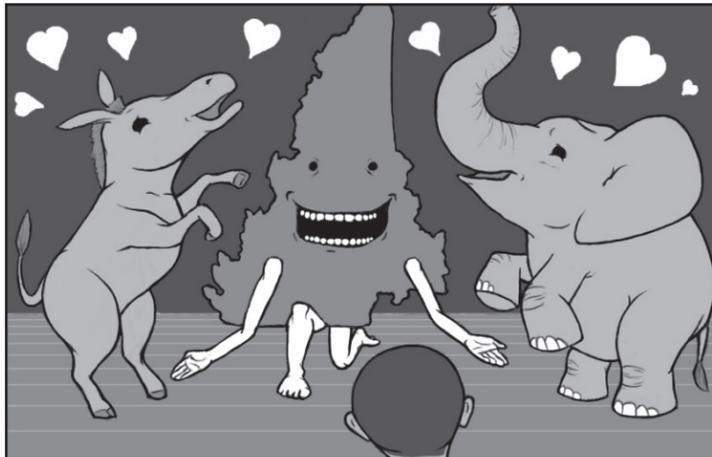
But with this year's presidential election being the most open contest for the White House since 1928 — the last time there was no incumbent president or vice president seeking a nomination — candidates, both Democratic and Republican, have made it a priority to tap into the youth vote.

Thanks largely to popular social networking site Facebook, which

teamed up with ABC News to sponsor televised presidential debates — even displaying its very recognizable logo on candidates' podiums — young voters have turned out in droves in both the Iowa caucuses and New Hampshire primaries. As a result, their participation has been crucial to propelling candidates to victory.

According to exit polls, in New Hampshire alone more than 72,000 voters between the ages of 18 and 30 took part in the state's primaries, which is about double the number who voted four years ago. And in Iowa, about 65,000 young voters participated in the state's caucuses, about three times the number who participated in 2004.

But Facebook's influence hasn't been confined solely to the podium. The Web site also offers debate forums where users can discuss candidates' key issues, as well as real-time news and video streaming from the campaign trail. In addition, the



site features profile pages specific to each candidate, where users can publicly display support.

Facebook's sponsorship of the election process has undoubtedly given young voters a chance to mobilize active political engagement,

and by reaching out to young voters with familiar technology, candidates have finally given them a reason to become excited about the political process. As the race for the White House narrows, these efforts must continue.

## Facebook Profiles Have No Place in Social Science Research

Scientists employ contentious methods to collect student data from Facebook for their social science experiments.

By Marissa Blunski  
ASSOCIATE OPINION EDITOR

**NATIONAL NEWS** — With its status as the sixth most visited Web site in the United States with over 58 million active users, Facebook has become one of the most widely used networking sites on the Internet.

But in addition to connecting users from colleges across the country, allowing friends to share messages, photos and videos and enabling students to compare movie and music tastes with the click of a mouse, this popular social tool has also become a

Petri dish for research scientists across the nation. This means that any current Facebook users who haven't activated certain privacy options could easily find themselves under the scrutiny of a researcher's microscope.

Psychologists, political scientists and sociologists from universities nationwide, including Harvard and UCLA, have been eagerly testing traditional theories in relationships, identity, self-esteem, popularity, race and political engagement using Facebook — taking advantage of the candidly honest and unprotected profiles of thousands of students.

In a recent issue of the *New York Times*, Nicholas Christakis, a Harvard professor currently using Facebook to research social relationships, hailed the use of the popular social networking tool in studies.

Though professors may be excited about their newfound ability to pry into students' online profiles, many of

their subjects haven't been as equally thrilled. Moreover, if it weren't for certain students' neglect to adjust their privacy settings in the first place, many professors still would not have access to that information today.

With the exception of a few schools like Indiana University, which has strict policies barring academic research without the permission of students, many Facebook users who are under analysis have absolutely no idea that their profiles are being studied. But, according to Facebook's terms of use, this is completely permissible. Currently, there is no policy prohibiting scholars — or virtually any person for that matter — from studying the profiles of users who haven't activated the necessary privacy settings.

Predictably, using students' thought-to-be personal information as public data strikes many students as disreputable, especially considering that in many cases, these students are

not even informed that their information is being used in the first place.

Not every student has the common sense to keep their personal information off the Internet, but this doesn't mean they are willing to participate in experimental studies of which they have no prior knowledge.

"Conducting research without the user's consent is unethical," said D.M. Hallowell, who holds a master's degree in higher education from and updates his fellow scholars in his journal "Educational Theory and Pedagogy," concerning educational theory. "[Terms of security] agreements have nothing to do with it."

Besides the issue of collecting information without a user's consent, researchers are also at fault for using information that was not intended to be employed for investigative purposes to begin with.

"People who participate in Facebook do so for social [and] per-

sonal reasons," Hallowell said. "There is no intent that their information will be used in any other way."

Since many students don't realize they are signing up to be research subjects by neglecting to privatize their profiles, more schools should follow Indiana University's example and enforce stricter policies for academic researchers. Without consent from students, universities should not allow researchers to use students' profiles for their studies.

Although others may argue that once information is available on the Internet, it becomes fair game for anyone to use, this is not a worthy standard for researchers. Simply because a student has an online account does not imply that their information can be used for purposes of investigation.

If privacy and ethical issues aren't big enough deterrents for Facebook-

See FACEBOOK, page 5

# Electoral System Stifles Thrust of Democracy

► **TASTE**, from page 4  
election much more nerve-wracking and worrisome than I could have ever imagined.

The way I see it, the 2008 presidential election leaves me with three choices of action, all of which frustrate me to no end: I can “throw away my vote” on a fantastic liberal candidate who has less chance of winning than Stephen Colbert, I can go against everything that I stand for by voting Republican or I can sell my soul by voting for one of the leading Democratic candidates.

A few months ago I had the opportunity to hear Democratic presidential hopeful Dennis Kucinich speak at a small event hosted by a UCSD professor. There, a small group heard the representative from Ohio give an impassioned speech detailing his views on the necessity of complete political change, and the truth that he is the only candidate advocating such a necessary transformation in American society. Hearing Kucinich attack the war, HMOs, anti-labor laws and restrictions on public education inspired me to want to vote for him, but it also depressed me, knowing that he was only this generation’s Ralph Nader — a man with great intentions and heart, but no chance of ever winning the White House.

Is it that candidates like Mr.

Kucinich, Cynthia McKinney and Leonard Peltier are simply morally superior to their opposition, believing in policies that are more genuine and more beneficial to society? Or is it that their inherent role as the underdog gives them an unobstructed opportunity to voice their opinions? If Barack Obama were the little guy of the Democratic Party, would he stop contradicting himself on issues of foreign policy? Would he have been more anti-war from the get-go of his political career? Why is it that in order to have any hope of political success, a candidate must abandon the majority of his or her core beliefs? Sadly, for any of the honest feelings lurking deep down inside all presidential candidates, the static two-party system that America has adopted allows for no wiggle room or distinctiveness, and politicians are forced to either meander along party lines or lose.

Fortunately, as a liberal citizen of California I am allowed to play a card that my fellow progressives in other parts of the country cannot: I can use the racist Electoral College system to my advantage. Under our current system, which was originally implemented to appease the slave-owning Southern states, my vote does not matter. Instead, all that matters is the way the majority of my state votes. This means that we blue-staters can safely

assume our electoral votes will all go to the Dems, giving us full license to vote for whomever we please. This strategy eases our conscience without changing the election.

But voting in this manner feels like a concession, and will anger many people, reviving the popular chant of “a vote for Nader is a vote for Bush.” That’s bullshit.

While our administration is currently forcing democracy on countries all around the world, it is unbelievably hypocritical for our own citizens to be denied that same democracy. To me, democracy means a government that serves the people, not the other way around. Forcing people to capitulate their vote only proves that our government and current political systems are the true bosses of the American public.

So to hell with how we’re “supposed to vote”! Don’t think about any outcome of your vote beyond the immediate tally for your candidate. Vote for whichever politician appeals the most to you, regardless of party affiliation, race, gender or predicted chance of victory. This is America, and we are a proud, stubborn and passionate country, so let your voice ring loud and hold your head up high on that glorious march to the ballot box, where your vote will be a perfect reflection of nothing but yourself and all that you stand for.

# LETTER TO THE EDITOR

## Loft Could Bring Unique Spin on Campus Social Life

Dear Editor,

I am writing in regard to James Yoon’s article “Despite Lofty Ambitions, Upcoming Campus Nightclub Misses Mark,” in which he degrades the Loft as being “overly artistic and mature” for undergraduate students. Rather than presenting an eloquent argument, Yoon contributes to the “apathetic” and “socially dead” campus climate he criticizes. Such hypocrisy is inherent within the article, as Yoon begins by describing “the administration’s earnest effort to respond to concerns over the lack of an on-campus community.” He complains about how the “extremely small” space for 130 people, along with the possibility of having an interactive iPod jukebox, wine bar and LCD screen, would undermine the on-campus undergraduate experience. Rather than “alienating and possibly irritating students,” the intimate setting of the Loft would encourage true social dialogue. The opportunity to converse with the people who are playing their music or even share one’s own is great for meeting new people. Having experienced the small house concerts hosted by Sixth College in which students can take turns sharing their favorite music, I know that the programs available at the Loft would encourage a cultural exchange and foster new friendships.

“The overly artistic and mature environment of the Loft also poses an issue as it fails to serve diverse audiences ... too fancy and over-the-top for many college-age undergraduates,” Yoon argues. He adds that the Loft would only serve a specific niche of the undergraduate population, when in truth it has the potential to provide a plethora of eclectic programming (one only has to look at the ArtPower! 2007-08 season to see the artists that are already scheduled to perform). I

believe that the undergraduate years are the most important time to take advantage of the myriad of cultural events that are available here at UCSD. Yoon’s assumption that the undergraduate population is too ignorant to enjoy such a venue is offensive and invalid. The undergraduate population will continue to view the Loft as “too nice,” if they are unable to enjoy the upcoming events. Yoon represents the quotidian bourgeois who become unsettled when something new comes along outside materialistic values or conventional attitudes.

The Loft will be a new space on campus unlike anything UCSD has ever seen. It is important that students not only enjoy what the Loft has to offer, but also the multitude of events put on by A.S. Programming and other campus organizations. UCSD is a university that requires the student to be actively involved in discovering what he wants to engage in. Yoon’s article, and opinions like it, contribute to the negative stigma of UCSD being moribund. Enjoy the Super Smash Bros. tournaments as I look forward to socializing with my fellow students at the Loft.

— Micah Jones  
Sixth College Senator

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# Facebook Falsities Lead to Flawed Data

► **FACEBOOK**, from page 4  
based research, scientists should also consider the skewed data that online profiles provide. Because it is a social tool, students often aren’t completely sincere in their profiles. Inside jokes, embellishments and fake marriages are just a few of the phony statistics that researchers would be incorporating into their studies if they were to treat typical Facebook falsehoods as

facts. Unlike traditional data collection, online social profiles are being studied without users’ consent and are employed for purposes other than those that their users intended. It is far more acceptable for researchers to continue with traditional means of gathering information, rather than prying into college students’ online social networking tools where their

statistical scrutiny is unwelcome. Professors and researchers should stick with paid surveys and case studies when it comes to social science — just because Facebook is an easily accessible pool of data doesn’t mean that unwitting student users should be exploited for experimental purposes.

Readers can contact Marissa Blunsch at mblunsch@ucsd.edu.

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**Panda Bear**

- "Take Pills"
- "Good Girls/Carrots"

**Radiohead**

- "Weird Fishes/Arpeggi"
- "Nude"

CHRIS MERTAN + ASSOCIATE HIATUS EDITOR

## Best Movies of 2007

**D**id anyone else feel like this year was 1996 all over again? Except instead of "Independence Day," we had "Transformers," "I Am Legend," "Spider-Man/Pirates/Bourne/Potter sequels," "The Simpsons" (someone put an end to this spider-pig crap, already) and just about every multi-million dollar franchise imaginable that gave us the explosions and car chases we've pined for this entire decade.

But while the average audience's intellect sunk with every new release, there were more than a handful of great nuggets to feast on. Established directors like Todd Haynes and Martin Scorsese explored new territory, while others, like Paul Thomas Anderson and David Fincher, completely reinvented their styles.

Depending on your taste, 2007 was either the year with something for everyone, or an artistic rite of passage for the new-century filmmaker. Here are the top 13 films of that hypocritical year. Why not 10? Thirteen is just a better number.

13

### THE KEY TO RESERVA

It may be sort of a cop-out to include a short film that's technically a wine commercial, but when Martin Scorsese controls the action, it's no normal ad. The Oscar-winner goes for laughs as he films "lost Hitchcock material" in Alfred's style — stark Technicolor, dizzying music, blonde bombshells and a million allusions to the master of suspense's most famous scenes. It's not a Scorsese film, per se; rather, it's a Hitchcock film by Scorsese.

12

### THE LOOKOUT

Having penned ambitious screenplays for the likes of Stevens Spielberg and Soderbergh, it seemed only natural that Scott Frank would embark on his own directorial adventure at some point. That his freshman vehicle would be the psychological noir "The Lookout," a film laden with hidden motives and betrayals in the midst of Midwestern frostbite, shows signs of good things to come. Even

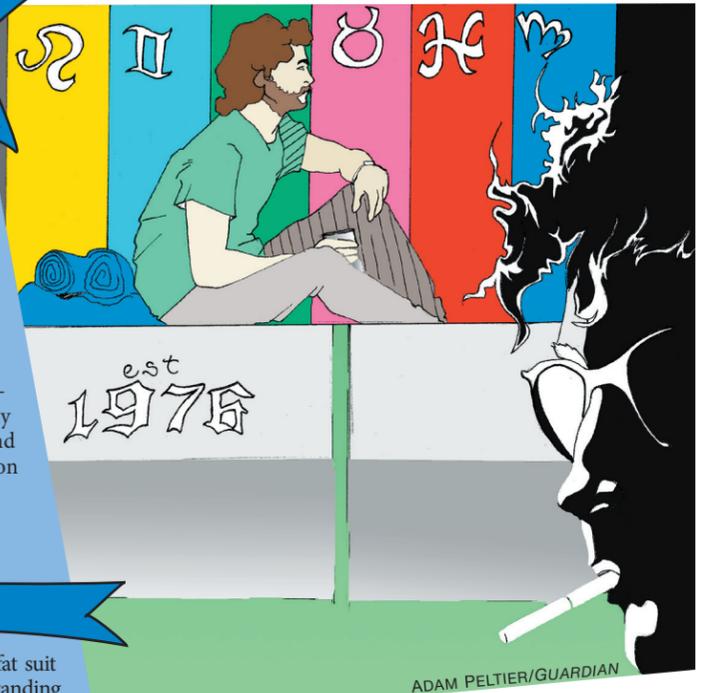
more revelatory is Joseph Gordon-Leavitt, who plays the mentally challenged protagonist tricked into a bank heist, keeping his character distanced just enough for us to sympathize with his helplessness. In a genre notoriously full of cheap gimmicks and quick fixes, the story relies on pure tension.

11

### THE TV SET

Not even Eddie Murphy's fat suit or Dane Cook's frat-guy grandstanding could keep Judd Apatow from usurping this year's comedy throne, with two major grand slams ("Knocked Up" and "Superbad") and one minor strike ("Walk Hard"). But no one remembers the other Apatow-produced biting network television satire from early on — Jake Kasdan's "The TV Set." A bleeding-heart writer (David Duchovny) watches his pas-

See **MOVIES**, page 7



ADAM PELTIER/GUARDIAN

## 2007'S BEST ALBUMS

CHRIS KOKIOUSIS + ASSOCIATE HIATUS EDITOR

## CHARLES NGUYEN + SENIOR STAFF WRITER THE SHOWDOWN

A real music critic might tackle critiques with a sit-and-listen session. But the common listener considers an artist's whole package. A bit tasteless, sure, but pop culture demands different parameters than professional musical criticism: dance ability, fashion sense and fine-ness are the guidelines for slapdash reviewers like me. I mean, jeez, who solely relies on talent anymore?

### 1. Diva of the Year — Rihanna vs. Beyonce

Beyonce stumbled into 2007 after a well-publicized episode of "Dreamgirls" drama. Co-star Jennifer Hudson outshined and out-sang the Texan darling all the way to Oscar stardom before Beyonce, along with her R&B stock, took a literal diva-sized dive onstage during her global tour. Rihanna has shown more finesse than that this year, especially on tabletops, where she put the fattest cherry atop Chris Brown's rowdy performance at the MTV Video Music Awards. From table to table, the dancehall diva looked damn fine trotting and grooving to "Umbrella": those lace-trim baby shorts, off-center hat and nude-color fishnets sealed a *Good Girl Gone Bad* image that had every DJ screaming "-ELLA, -ELLA, -ELLA."

**Verdict:** Rihanna, for not eating stage pavement.

**Up Next:** Watch that rear view, Rihanna. Beyonce's third studio album is slated for 2008, with several tracks backed by producing credits from the untouchable Timbaland. If he does for Knowles

what he did for Justin Timberlake, a veteran like Beyonce should rip her 19-year-old rival with a comeback.

### 2. A-Town Rap Refrain — Yoou! (Soulja Boy Tell 'Em) vs. Aaaay! (The-Dream)

Up from the South come a couple of 2007's most shamefully addictive buzz-sounds. Soulja Boy Tell 'Em and The-Dream, both Atlantan musicians, made their pop-radio hits infectious, the former with "Crank Dat" and the latter with "Shawty is Da Shit." As expected, there were no musical epiphanies to be had: The songs were either overly silly (See: "Crank Dat" dance) or borderline insulting (The-Dream sings: "If she fix you eggs and grits in the morning/ Man, you should tip her"). Nah, these songs' biggest draws were their relentless refrains, weaved in, out and through both artists' albums: The-Dream's "Love Hate" and Soulja Boy's self-titled effort. What's a song without a hard hook for every car-riding fan to stupidly imitate?

**Verdict:** Aaaay!, for sounding slightly less annoying.

See **SHOWDOWN**, page 9

## exit strategy →

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## A YEAR FOR GLOBETROTTERS & SLOW-BURNERS

### #1 Panda Bear — *Person Pitch*

Animal Collective appendage Noah Lennox's saccharine sample collage takes the number one spot for a few reasons: No other record this year captured warmth and honest innocence with such labored craftsmanship. The Beach Boys redux vocals, gobs of reverb, saturated hand claps and milky dub reggae beats reach a state of classic pop mantra. Layers upon layers of thunderous field recordings fade in at pivotal moments throughout the album to heighten its themes of friendship, not thinking too much and being comfortable. Delayed melodies bubble into the foreground and disappear just as quickly. By the record's end, we've forgotten that it was made by one person on a computer, fully immersing ourselves in the playful, sentimental wall of sound. All our worries melt away.



### #2 Radiohead — *In Rainbows*

Finally Radiohead muster up the courage not to hide behind lumbering electronics, instead embracing their accumulated musical wisdom to craft a naturally gorgeous record, stripped to its bare essence. It seems the Oxford five-piece laughed about heavy next-album pressures, had themselves a tea break, and got down to the creative process. *In Rainbows* is more about collective groove than singular virtuosity; guitar noodling is largely put on the back-burner, save for "Bodysnatchers," and instead the band members lose their defined roles in an effort to emphasize tension and mood,



See **ALBUMS**, page 8

## druthers

HIATUS PICKS  
THE WEEK'S  
BEST BETS

### "The Diving Bell and the Butterfly"

LANDMARK HILLCREST / NOW PLAYING

Who would've predicted that a movie about a bed-confined stroke victim would sweep the prestigious Cannes Film Festival off its feet, scoring awards for both director Julian Schnabel ("Before Night Falls") and cinematographer Janusz Kaminski ("Schindler's List")? A largely visual take on the life-defining paralysis of *Elle* magazine editor Jean-Dominique Bauby.

"The Diving Bell and the Butterfly" is praised as one of 2007's best foreign films, a sweeping drama that is acutely realistic: neither attempting to sugarcoat with the assurance of a happy ending, or overload with hyperbolic displays of tearful sulking. Instead, it extracts a moving portrait of one woman's pain and creativity amid her utter isolation. (CM)

### Blue Man Group Rock Tour

SAN DIEGO SPORTS ARENA / JAN. 11 / 8 P.M.

As the wise Dr. Tobias Funke once said, "I just blue myself," and now you can too because the Blue Man Group (not the support group) is drumming its way to the SD Sports Arena. In this incarnation of their live act, the group embarks on a "fist-pumping rock-concert journey," wearing flashy outfits and wiling out to an eight-piece backing band. For those who aren't familiar with their typical shenanigans, the blue boys demonstrate

their percussive abilities on a variety of makeshift PVC instruments and other odd devices. Some may write them off as a gimmick, but their day-glo Stomp show captivates crowds with sensory overload and cool tones. Bespectacled DJ Mike Relm warms up the peeps with his genre-mixing scratch set, accompanied by spazy cartoon background visuals. Children under the age of two are free if sitting on lap. (CK)

# Villainous Epic Bleeds Brilliance



By Chris Mertan  
ASSOCIATE HIATUS EDITOR

Sitting with eyelids yanked back and muscles paralyzed at the image of Daniel Day-Lewis collapsed at a bowling alley, you feel foolhardy to even attempt to wrap your mind around "There Will Be Blood."

There's a sense that you've experienced something brilliant on a cosmic scale, and yet it will take days, even weeks, to begin understanding this tightly coiled epic. You will compare it to Kubrick's "2001" for its breadth, then Coppola's "The Godfather" for its subtleties, Orson Welles' "Citizen Kane" for its themes, and countless other masterpieces before realizing that to liken Paul Thomas Anderson's new, ambitious tale of madness to any cinematic forefathers defeats its genius. Every way you turn to describe, or categorize, or even summarize, morphs into a dead end. You're back at square one: the film.

Adapted from Upton Sinclair's minor novel "Oil!" "There Will Be Blood" finds Sinclair's portrayal of cut-throat greed intact and its overly socialist underpinnings ditched in favor of a duel between the Almighty and the almighty dollar. Day-Lewis ("Gangs of New York") is Daniel Plainview, a self-made oil tycoon who travels the West at the turn of the century, swallowing up townships to increase his growing taste

for all things with a price tag. When he arrives at Little Boston, a small community with oil prospects, Plainview is faced with young nemesis Eli Sunday (Paul Dano, who casts off the indie shackles of "Little Miss Sunshine" to shine as a bona fide actor), the town's seemingly humble preacher, hiding his own thirst for power and money behind the cross and a self-proclaimed ability to heal.

There's no saving grace to Plainview, no Achilles heel that explains his bitter, miserly pathos, which, as he acknowledges, puts in him a competition against everyone. Of course, almost no one else sees this when Plainview, in public, puts on a kind, fatherly face, painting himself as a "family man" (thanks to his adopted son, H.W., remarkably realized by newcomer Dillon Freasier) and a businessman who respects small town values.

Behind the scenes, he's an astute oil shark able to steer clear of his superiors' cons while using the same tactics to swindle the everymen below. Anderson spends the screen time building up Plainview's layers (and Sunday's, to a lesser extent), either masking or revealing the insanity within. One brilliant choice he made to achieve this is the classically abstract score by Radiohead's Jonny Greenwood, which teeters on Kubrick homage yet serves primarily as a peek inside Plainview's mind.

Ultimately, the film is a grand exercise for Anderson, breaking away from his past soul in "Boogie Nights" and "Magnolia" without sacrificing his signature style, in what seems to be a new quest for a great American film.

The years will probably be good to "There Will Be Blood." Like our number two on the list of best films of the year, "No Country For Old Men," this sprawling period piece will be revisited and studied by future students of cinema, general cinephiles, and historians interested in what America was like today. See it once, and you'll be blown back in your seat. See it multiple times, and you start to comprehend some core philosophy Anderson only begins hinting at. The problem with printed reviews is that once the ink hits the page, there's no turning back. The initial ideas have been set in eternity. But films like "Blood" are fluid, always changing to the naked eye and remaining relevant as our cultures shift. It's a testament to everything that's great about the movies.



## Cinematic Outsiders Emerge from the Wild

► MOVIES, from page 6

sion project fall to pieces at the hands of executive Sigourney Weaver's demographics marketing and commercial tinkering, displaying the prime reason why Apatow is the giant he is today: words.

**10. Before the Devil Knows You're Dead:** The premier "actor's director" Sidney Lumet has been out of the limelight for some time but returned this year to prove he could still pull a masterstroke like he did in the 1970s with "Serpico" and "Dog Day Afternoon." With Kelly Masterson's tightly tuned screenplay, the old salt spins a crime-drama of two brothers (the slimy Philip Seymour Hoffman and the dunce Ethan Hawke) who plan to rob their parents' jewelry store. Lumet milks every scene for character drama in a way that would make a rookie filmmaker shrink in his seat.

**9. Into the Wild:** Every year you run into films that seem to annoyingly plead for awards, like this year's "Reign Over Me" and "American Gangster." In this category, Sean Penn's "Into the Wild" serves as the dark horse, a film that should have ended up a bloated flight of pretension, but was woven well enough that we left our cynicism at the door. The dramatic retelling of doomed idealist Chris McCandless frames him both as glowing martyr and as a young man lacking perspective, expertly captured by up-and-comer Emile Hirsch.

**8. Alpha Dog:** Maybe guys thought that Justin Timberlake would challenge their heterosexuality, and maybe girls thought Nick Cassevetes' next film after "The Notebook" wouldn't be as tear-jerky. For whatever reason, the astoundingly dramatic "Alpha Dog" never found an audience, and now seems destined for a long run on HBO. Sad, since the true story of a preventable kid-on-kid murder paints a drug and ego-fueled scene of suburban youth most people don't know to acknowledge.

**7. Hotel Chevalier:** Wes Anderson's humor may be an acquired taste, but it's getting more and more difficult to ignore his highly articulate style; symbolic colors and slow-motion panoramic tracking shots that permeate his newest work. "The Darjeeling Limited" combined visual cues with a newfound sense of philosophical drama, but the real trans-



COURTESY OF PARAMOUNT VANTAGE  
Emile Hirsch treks across the Alaskan wilderness in Sean Penn's "Into the Wild."

formation for Anderson was the 11-minute short "Hotel Chevalier," a subtle and uncomfortable glimpse at a one-sided relationship of emotional abuse between Jack (Jason Schwartzman) and an unnamed lover (Natalie Portman).

**6. I'm Not There:** Biopic saturation continues unabated, especially in the wake of the "Ray"/"Walk the Line" phenomenon. Thankfully, 2007 yielded some of the more bearable ("Talk to Me," "Rescue Dawn") and innovative ones, like the black-and-white Joy Division tale, "Control." It was Todd Haynes who stole the show, though, with his wildly off-the-cuff, surrealist dive into the enigma of Bob Dylan. Using six actors to portray the persona-shifting star, Haynes' manic adventure is at once a tribute, an expose, a satire and an art film.

**5. Zodiac:** Criticized for being "too long" or "not as cool as his earlier stuff," David Fincher's crime procedural "Zodiac" found a new pace for the man who made the cult smash "Fight Club" almost a decade ago. Jake Gyllenhaal and Mark Ruffalo play the journalist and cop, respectively, who discover themselves as psychological victims of the notorious Bay Area murderer, driven by their quest to solve the crime. No other film last year handled anxiety and fear as aptly as "Zodiac," Fincher's coming of age as a director of controlled ambition.



COURTESY OF FOX SEARCHLIGHT

See MOVIES, page 9

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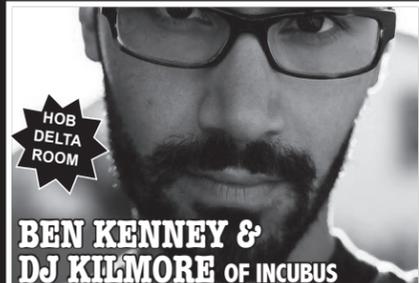
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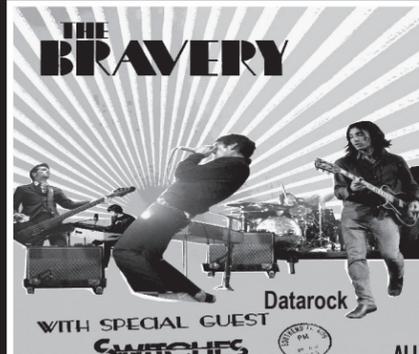
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**FEBRUARY 13**



**BAD RELIGION**

**MARCH 7**



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## The Best Strawberry Jams and Spirit Lovers Among Last Year's Weirdos

► **ALBUMS**, from page 6

crescendos and murmurs. Honed orchestra sweeps and organically toned arrangements take the edge off the impending dread detailed in Thom Yorke's lyrics. The paranoid Brits may have finally settled down.

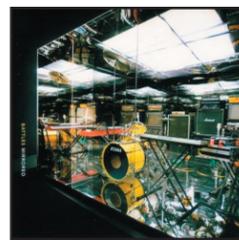
### 3. Deerhoof — *Friend Opportunity*



The fearsome Hoof trio melds computer wizardry with the raw power of classic guitar blasts; sometimes on *Friend Opportunity* they forgo stringed instruments altogether for summoned beat orchestras and sailing synth pads, blanketing their experimental backgrounds onto the three-minute pop formula.

Greg Saunier's spastic jazz-improv drumming is always brilliantly on and off the beat simultaneously, and while Satomi Matsuzaki's shrill singing will turn some people off immediately, those who enjoy her chirpy range will find much more to love in the group. The 12-minute suite "Look Away" closes the record, originally composed as a film soundtrack but now a perfect experimental jab of noise to punctuate an otherwise concise series of intricate pop baubles.

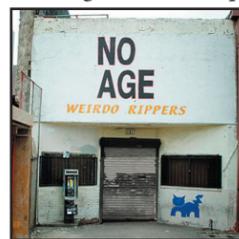
### 4. Battles — *Mirrored*



Don't call it math rock, call it a space jam. Battles manage to intertwine barbed instruments in complex layers without any numbing technical wankery — no eight-minute prog keyboard solos here, only military precision.

Thanks to effects pedals, Tyondai Braxton can warble like a chorus of gifted chipmunks and it doesn't seem absurd, just unapologetically modern. On standout track "Atlas," sharpened, lightly distorted keys duel over rock-steady clacks, building to a catchy, charming, and prophetic uproar.

### 5. No Age — *Weirdo Rippers*



Dudes, thanks for growing up the punk scene. Dean Spunt and Randy Randall introduce the perks of the ambient drone world to the fuzz-zone of Husker Du with an L.A. skate-rat mentality.

It's like the first time you ate a peanut-butter-and-Nutella sandwich. *Weirdo Rippers* alternates between ethereal instrumentals and harrowing anthems from a pair of best friends who grew up with the Smell, a downtown L.A. club staple. As poster children for that scene, they are the first to break into greater fandom, and deserve props for their tone-deaf yet euphoric tinkering.

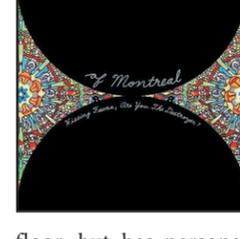
### 6. M.I.A. — *Kala*



Where else this year could you find a Bollywood throwback, aboriginal Australian kid rappers, London grime, and gunshot choruses on one album? Maya Arulpragasam succeeds wildly with

third-world beats and politically charged club phrases, operating in her own post-everything global war zone of culture. She bounces around like a spunky kid when addressing controversial subjects like being refused a U.S. visa, and celebrates interracial musical commingling. Nothing is off limits, and her approach is liberating.

### 7. Of Montreal — *Hissing Fauna, Are You the Destroyer?*



"Most Openly Depressed Album of the Year" goes to Kevin Barnes' opus *Hissing Fauna*, a record dressed in disco glitz that wants to lose it on the dance floor, but has personal issues to deal with first. Insect synths and a pristine production contrast with Barnes' lyrical catharsis, tackling subjects like antidepressants, lost love and a desire for the divine marred by logic. It culminates with the 12-minute stream-of-consciousness "The Past is a Grotesque Animal," where Barnes' psyche and the listener reach a voyeuristic intimacy.

### 8. Animal Collective — *Strawberry Jam*



Prepare to be psyched — the Collective has returned with far-flung sample constructions and newfound vocal bite. In contrast to the group's previous work, *Jam* shines like a precious metal, with each element popping out of the mix in Technicolor. Noah Lennox further proves his wholehearted songwriting chops with the strongest tracks on the record; "Chores" revisits bouncy tribal ground and "Derek" bookends the album with a sweetly shifting ode to a canine.

### 9. Sunset Rubdown — *Random Spirit Lover*



The "Dense but Rewarding" award is left for Spencer Krug's (also of Wolf Parade) other outfit, where the songsmith has free reign to prance around like a Renaissance fair balladeer. Very

few moments on the album allow for breathing room, as the foursome tend to pack as many yodels, keyboard flourishes and tuneful guitar exercises in a single song as possible just before they reach freak overkill. After listening to so much mythical indie, you may want to go live near a great kingdom and fight wicked beasts yourself.

### 10. Jens Lekman — *Night Falls Over Kortedala*



Jens, don't be sad. You came out with one of the year's snappiest indie-pop collections, filled with witty quips and pillaged snippets from old vinyl. From the hilarious lesbian cover-up "A

Postcard to Nina" to the soulfully awkward crush in "Kanske Ar Jag I Dig," Jens managed to mix the right amount of wry sweetness with a palette of finely aged samples. Sweden ought to be proud.

## Cream of the Crap



» Boyz II Men — *Motown: A Journey Through Hitsville USA*

» will.i.am — *Songs About Girls*

» Linkin Park — *Minutes to Midnight*

» Ashley Tisdale — *Headstrong*

» Bratz — *Fashion Pixiez*

» T-Pain — *Epiphany*

» Tila Tequila — *Sex*

» Kelly Clarkson — *My December*

» R. Kelly — *Double Up*



## Hate That We Love Them

► **SHOWDOWN**, from page 6  
**Up Next:** If The-Dream can make the “-ella, -eh, -eh” of “Umbrella” somehow charming, he works more miracles than Moses. Expect another miraculous saying in the coming year, considering he has penned ditties for every artist from Rihanna to Mary J. Blige.

### 3. R&B Royalty — *The-Dream vs. Ne-Yo vs. T-Pain vs. Chris Brown*

If 2006 saw the musical rise of the South, 2007 is claimed by a new-age, four-way court of R&B royalty. But this set of crooners has seen major problems this year, from T-Pain making off-color comments about Ray-J's penis to The-Dream starting a spat with Chris Brown to Ne-Yo suing music's most prominent pisser R. Kelly for ousting him from a tour.

But away from the scandals, all four have gifted R&B with some ripe talent: Ne-Yo and Rihanna formed one of the year's most electric boy-girl pairings with “Hate That I Love You,” Chris Brown's “Exclusive” showed sexy-fied maturity and The-Dream's writing credits were as ubiquitous as T-Pain's guest spots. But toward 2007's end, it was only by the grace of Chris Brown and T-Pain that the year's hottest dance track was born: “Kiss Kiss.” It has permeated airwaves with swift abandon, proving that even the self-proclaimed “nappy boy” and “pretty boy” can dig out a pleasurable hit from a string of keyboard notes.

**Verdict:** Chris Brown & T-Pain, for partnering to make the ridiculously danceable “Kiss Kiss.”

**Up Next:** Usher comes to reclaim his rightful crown as king of R&B with a March album release.

## Celluloid America Aights 2007

► **MOVIES**, from page 7

### 4. *The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford*

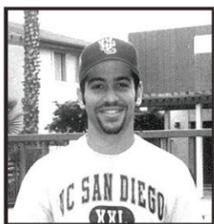
**Ford:** The resurrection of the Western movie was one of the true novelty acts of 2007, with shoot-'em-up “3:10 to Yuma” and beautifully subdued “The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford.” If that title was a wallop to your eyes, so is just about everything else — from the sweeping landscapes to the childlike gaze of Casey Affleck's Robert Ford looking at notorious Jesse James (Brad Pitt) with wide-eyed fanaticism. It's a somber dissection of American mythology, and reminiscent of the closing line from the classic western “The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance”: “When legend becomes fact, print the legend.”

**3. *This is England*:** There's no way to describe just how “This is England” sneaks up on you. It's a film so oddly heartfelt that you can't ignore Shane Meadows' most personal project. Taking place in early 1980s England, the melodrama follows the friendship between young Shaun and a group of older skinheads. When the militant, racist Combo arrives to take the reigns, he sends the impressionable boy into uncharted territory. Navigating somewhere between an indictment of Margaret Thatcher's Britain and Francois Truffaut's “The 400 Blows,” “This is England” leaves you stirred even through the credits.

**2. *No Country For Old Men*:** To even try to recap the sheer breadth of this film in a paragraph would undermine everything the Coen brothers orchestrated. Josh Brolin is the man without an escape plan, Tommy Lee Jones is the witness to great evil and Javier Bardem is the angel of death that links everyone together. “No Country For Old Men” is perhaps the most critically acclaimed film of the year, and for good reason; it speaks numbers about the ambivalent, apocalyptic culture we live in.

**1. *There Will Be Blood***  
 (See page 7 for full review.)

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**Berries Beans**  
**Desert Lounge** Pg 7

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**Friday, January 12**

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**Thursday Night**

### UCSD Wind Ensemble

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7:00-9:50

**Saturday, January 19**

### March in the Martin Luther King Jr. Parade

Meet at Sun God  
8:00 AM

**Tuesday, January 15**

### Triton Jam RIMAC

Begins at 7:00PM

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# Women Lose Close Contest to LMU

► **SWIVE**, from page 12  
Andy Islip, freshman Brandon Maryatt and senior Evan Hsiao finished second in 2:09.76, falling behind Air Force by only .09 seconds.

The women's swim team lost a close duel with conference rival Loyola Marymount University on Jan. 5. Although both teams won seven events each and the Tritons came away with both relay wins, the Lions snuck past UCSD with a three-point win in the overall competition.

"It was a tough loss against LMU because they are our conference rivals," junior Aubrey Panis said. "We worked through it, and hopefully we will be able to build off this meet to improve in future meets."

Despite the loss, there were some outstanding individual and relay performances. The Tritons started the meet by winning the 400 medley relay with Panis, junior Kendall Bohn, junior Jennifer Sims and junior Erinn Deters in a time of 4:02.06. Sims also won the

200 butterfly in a time of 2:08.02 and the 100 butterfly with a time of 58.84. Freshman Anju Shimura won both of her events as well, taking the 100 backstroke in a time of 1:00.07 and winning

and Shimura. Going into the last leg of the relay, LMU had nearly a 1.5-second lead over the Tritons, but Shimura swam a speedy 52.55 in her leg of the 100 freestyle, catching the competition and bringing the Tritons the 400 freestyle relay title.

"We swam well considering we haven't had a meet in two months," Sims said. "Anju catching up and winning the last relay was motivational and inspiring. We are ready for our next meet."

With some excellent individual and team performances these past few weeks, the Tritons are ready to compete again and improve on their previous meets. With only a few meets left before the conference and then national championships, they will be looking to improve on their times and dives and qualify as many athletes as possible.

**We worked through [the loss to LMU], and hopefully we will be able to build off this meet to improve in future meets."**

— Aubrey Panis, junior swimmer

the 200 backstroke in 2:10.83.

The final event was the 400 freestyle relay, and the Tritons swam a relay team that consisted of junior Shannon Simonds, senior Lauren Forbes, Panis

Readers can contact Casey Armstrong at [carmstro@ucsd.edu](mailto:carmstro@ucsd.edu).

## UCSD Fencers Eager to Face Stanford

► **FENCING**, from page 12  
facing Stanford," coach Runyan said. "They are a strong school, but we match up well against them and can take them if we are fencing sharp."

After the competition in Colorado Springs, the Tritons will look to their meets at the North American Cup in Atlanta on Jan. 18 and the Northwestern tournament in Chicago on Feb. 2 in order to start qualifying their fencers for NCAA Regionals.

Readers can contact Jake Blanc at [jblanc@ucsd.edu](mailto:jblanc@ucsd.edu).

## UPCOMING HOME GAMES

**M. VOLLEYBALL**  
**vs. Brigham Young University**  
The men's volleyball team will face its first real test of the early season when it faces the top-ranked Cougars for two straight games at home.  
**Jan. 11 @ 7 p.m.**

**M. Basketball**  
Vs. Cal State San Bernardino  
**Jan. 19 @ 7:30 p.m.**

**W. Basketball**  
vs. Pomona  
**Jan. 18 @ 5:30 p.m.**  
vs. Cal State San Bernardino  
**Jan. 19 @ 5:30 p.m.**  
vs. San Francisco State  
**Jan. 25 @ 5:30 p.m.**

**M. BASKETBALL**  
**vs. Pomona**  
The Tritons will have their first shot at establishing a new winning streak when they face the Cal Poly Pomona Broncos in RIMAC Arena.  
**Jan. 18 @ 7:30 p.m.**

**M. Volleyball**  
Vs. Brigham Young University  
**Jan. 12 @ 7 p.m.**

**W. Swimming**  
vs. University of San Diego  
**Jan. 18 @ 3 p.m.**

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## Revelle

Resident Advisor deadline: Feb. 4, 4pm  
Orientation Leader deadline: Feb. 1, 4:30 pm



## Warren

Resident Advisor deadline: Jan. 18, 4pm  
Orientation Leader deadline: Jan. 25, 4pm



## Muir

House Advisor deadline: Jan. 16  
Freshmen Orientation Leader deadline: Feb. 1  
Transfer Orientation Leader deadline: Feb. 20



## Roosevelt

Resident Advisor deadline: Jan. 22, 9pm  
Freshmen Orientation Leader deadline: Jan. 29, 4:30 pm  
Transfer Ambassador deadline: Jan. 16, 4:30 pm



## Marshall

Resident Advisor deadline: Jan. 18  
Freshmen Orientation Leader deadline: Feb. 8, 4:30 pm  
Transfer Orientation Leader deadline: Feb. 29, 4:30 pm



## Sixth

Resident Advisor deadline: Jan. 25 by 4pm  
Orientation Leader deadline: Feb. 29 by 4pm



The senior took gold over L.A. International's Kelly Lundgren at the 12th annual Bladerunner Tournament on Jan. 5 and 6 at UCSD.

# Fencers Go Solo at Bladerunner Classic

Team format dropped for individual scoring as the Tritons tune up for the NCAA West Invitational on Jan. 12.

By Jake Blanc  
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

**FENCING** — As the final warm-up before starting the official NCAA competition, UCSD fencers hosted their annual Bladerunner meet on Jan. 5 and 6. Unlike most meets, Bladerunner was not a team contest but instead an open competition, where fencers represented themselves and their scores counted only toward their personal finish. This style allowed for UCSD to face off against other fencers that they would not normally see in intercollegiate play, providing preparation for the NCAA West Invitational coming up on Jan. 12-13 in Colorado Springs, Colo.

Head coach Heidi Runyan said she thought that the unique challenges in the open competition created a more unique aspect to the meet.

"Many of the opponents have more experience than the average collegiate fencer and there are direct elimination bouts that go to 15 touches, instead of the usual five," Runyan said. "Fencing smart and being in good condition are even more important to success."

Sophomore Sean Blum, who finished sixth in epee, welcomed the new format and said that it would challenge

him and his teammates while allowing them to fence without worrying about the team's overall performance.

"Because Bladerunner was an open event, it drew tougher opponents than we have had to fence in the SoCal intercollegiate conference, especially in men's and women's epee," Blum said. "We have to fence a lot of strangers, which brings some nervousness, especially when the strangers are world-class fencers from Europe like Benoit Bouysset and Andrea Rentmeister."

The fencers that Blum alluded to are two of the fencing world's top names, with Bouysset hailing from France and Rentmeister from Austria. Having this added level of elite competition helped stoke a fun but aggressive atmosphere at the meet, according to some of the participants.

Senior Emily Lipoma took first place in women's foil out of 20 fencers, most of which were highly rated as either B- or C-tier fencers. In men's saber, freshman Zach Jones notched a fantastic rookie performance with his first-place finish, with fellow Triton sophomore Bryan Kim taking third.

The NCAA West Invitational in Colorado this weekend will be the first serious road trip of the season for UCSD, and will be a good transition from local meets to the competition that the Tritons will eventually be seeing at the National Championships in Columbus, Ohio, in March.

"Traveling will certainly be a change," Lipoma said. "The competition that we will face when we travel [to



WILL PARSON/GUARDIAN

The UCSD fencing team hosted an individual competition, which included some of the world's top fencers, at the Bladerunner Invitational on Jan. 5 and 6.

Colorado] will be much stronger than the competition we see in our Southern California conference. However, we will be traveling with a fairly seasoned team and traveling shouldn't pose too much of a problem."

Sophomore saberist Anne Marie Schneckner, whose only loss at Bladerunner was to the eventual tournament champion, also said that the

road trip will not hinder the team's growing momentum and success.

"With fencing, there is not really all that much advantage to fencing at home as opposed to fencing away, so I don't think that Colorado will be too much of a challenge for us," Schneckner said. "I heard ... that it is pretty hard to breathe there because of the high elevation, so I think that could be the only

difference. Besides that, I really think that we'll do well at the meet."

Runyan is looking forward to facing off against some of the toughest schools in the country, a chance that is not often presented to her team in the Southern California Conference.

"We really are looking forward to

See **FENCING**, page 11

## Swimmers, Divers Looking to Qualify Tritons for Nationals



ERIK JEPSEN/GUARDIAN

The UCSD men's swim team hosted the Air Force Academy on Jan. 4 and was blown out of the water by a final score of 37-76. However, the rest of the swim and dive teams did quite well over winter vacation.

By Casey Armstrong  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

**SWIM & DIVE** — UCSD had a busy winter break in the water, first traveling to Las Vegas to compete in the UNLV Winter Invitational on Dec. 15 and 16. Next, the swim and dive teams split up as the men's team returned home to face the Air Force Academy 4 and the women's team took to the road again to take on Loyola Marymount University. All teams struggled in their separate competitions, but there were some outstanding individual performances that proved that the Tritons are ready to finish strong before the NCAA Division II Championships begin on Mar. 12.

At the UNLV diving meet, senior Andrew Skewes notched a fourth-place finish in three-meter diving and an eighth-place finish in one-meter diving. The men had the most success as a team in the three-meter diving event, as Skewes was followed by sophomore Kevin Sullivan in eighth, senior Jeff Bryant in 17th and senior Aaron Cantu in 19th place. In the one-meter event, Bryant finished 13th and was closely followed by Sullivan and Cantu, who finished in 15th and 16th, respectively.

The women's diving team had success as well in the one-meter diving competition, with senior Nicole Stasio

finishing 11th, followed by sophomore Jennifer Lappe in 14th and senior Amanda Mason in 18th.

With winter break's meets in the books, team is now focusing on qualifying for postseason competition.

"We had a decent showing at Las Vegas, but after a long week of finals, we did as well as could be expected," Bryant said. "Now that we're coming up on the end of the season, we're trying to qualify as many divers for nationals as we can."

The men's swim team hosted a relay meet against the Air Force Academy on Jan. 4 but fell by a final score of 37-76, managing to win just one event out of seven against the formidable Falcons. The lopsided score may have been partially due to the fact that the Falcons fielded several relay teams, while the Tritons only swam a single team for a majority of the events.

The relay meet featured a variety of uncommon swimming races, such as three-person 225 stroke relays and a six-person 150 freestyle relay. The Tritons won the 225-meter backstroke relay with a team of junior Adam Jones, junior Steven Hardy and sophomore Scott McCoid in 1:57.28. The 225-meter breaststroke relay of sophomore

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## Tritons Open Season With Win

By Matt Croskey  
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

**M. VOLLEYBALL** — The Tritons took care of business in their season opener on Jan. 5 against UC Santa Cruz, winning in four close games, 28-30, 30-28, 30-24, 30-26. Three players finished with double-digit kills, and the team improved after each successive game.

"For the first game and a half we played tight," head coach Kevin Ring said. "We were disappointed with how we started but we kept our composure and the guys off the bench really boosted our play."

Sophomore outside hitter Jason Spangler led the offensive attack against the Banana Slugs, recording a double-double with 22 kills and 15 digs.

Feeding Spangler and the other hitters were freshman Phil Bannan, who recorded 37 assists, and sophomore Billy Arnold, who added 20. After the two spent the fall practice season competing for the starting position, Arnold got the nod against the Banana Slugs and Bannan came in off the bench.

Ring and his staff record statistics at every practice and made their decision based on those numbers. But nothing is definite early in the season, as Bannan entered during the second game and outperformed his counterpart.

"Billy had the better overall numbers, and that's why he started," Ring said. "It wasn't that he was performing poorly — our team was. But we didn't want to go down 2-0, and so we made the change to Phil. He started connecting with our middles, and we pulled out game two."

UCSD appeared a little jittery in the season's first home game, falling behind 16-9 in game one. But the teams rallied and pulled within two points after an ace from sophomore opposite Frank Fritsch. Kills by Fritsch and freshman middle blocker Tyler Kern brought the Tritons with-

in one, but they couldn't finish the comeback, and the Banana Slugs took game one.

In game two, momentum continued in favor of the Banana Slugs, who built a 21-16 lead. But the Tritons used a 6-1 run to tie the game at 22. Spangler and Fritsch continued UCSD's tear, sending down kills to give the Tritons the 30-28 win.

Despite struggling early, Ring was pleased with the team's passing and transition.

"We played poorly in that first game and started poorly in the second," he said. "The subs elevated our game when we needed it and our passing and transition games were excellent. We didn't hit the panic button and started playing well."

The Tritons jumped out to a 22-17 lead in game three and closed the deal 30-24 after senior outside hitter Russ Hardy put down the final kill.

Missing from the initial roster, Hardy rejoined the team after being absent for fall practices.

According to Ring, Hardy is a returning starter from two years ago, because he studied abroad last year. Regardless of the hiatus, Ring was impressed with how well Hardy served and passed.

"He came in and made a difference," Ring said. "We're still trying to get his jumping legs back, but he played well for not competing at this level for awhile."

The fourth game was hotly contested, and saw nine ties before the Tritons were able to pull away. Tied for the final at 22, UCSD scored five of the next six points to take a comfortable lead at 27-23. Spangler finished his impressive night with a game- and match-clinching kill to give UCSD the season-opening victory.

With the win under their belt, the Tritons now turn their attention to No. 1 Brigham Young University on Jan. 11 and 12. Ring knows that the team will need to improve its play to compete against the best team in the nation.



ARASH KESHMIRIAN/GUARDIAN FILE  
Last year's setter Brooks Dierdorff played in all 97 games of UCSD's season before graduating in June, leaving this year's team with a rotating lineup to fill the setter position.

"It's really a night and day difference from UCSC," he said. "BYU is more athletic and taller but we can be competitive if we serve tough and get bigger at the net. We have to find a balance of aggressive and smart."

The team will focus on establishing its presence at the net against the Cougars and try to force mistakes. Ring said he will look to get Fritsch and Spangler more involved in the offense as well as keep a balance of running the middles in transition.

Readers can contact Matt Croskey at mcroskey@ucsd.edu.