



WEATHER TOMORROW

Sex columnist defines a single, a home run and everything in between.

IN ARTS, P. 8



Liberal columnist talks military policy.

IN OPINION, P. 12



Fischback returns to the mound.

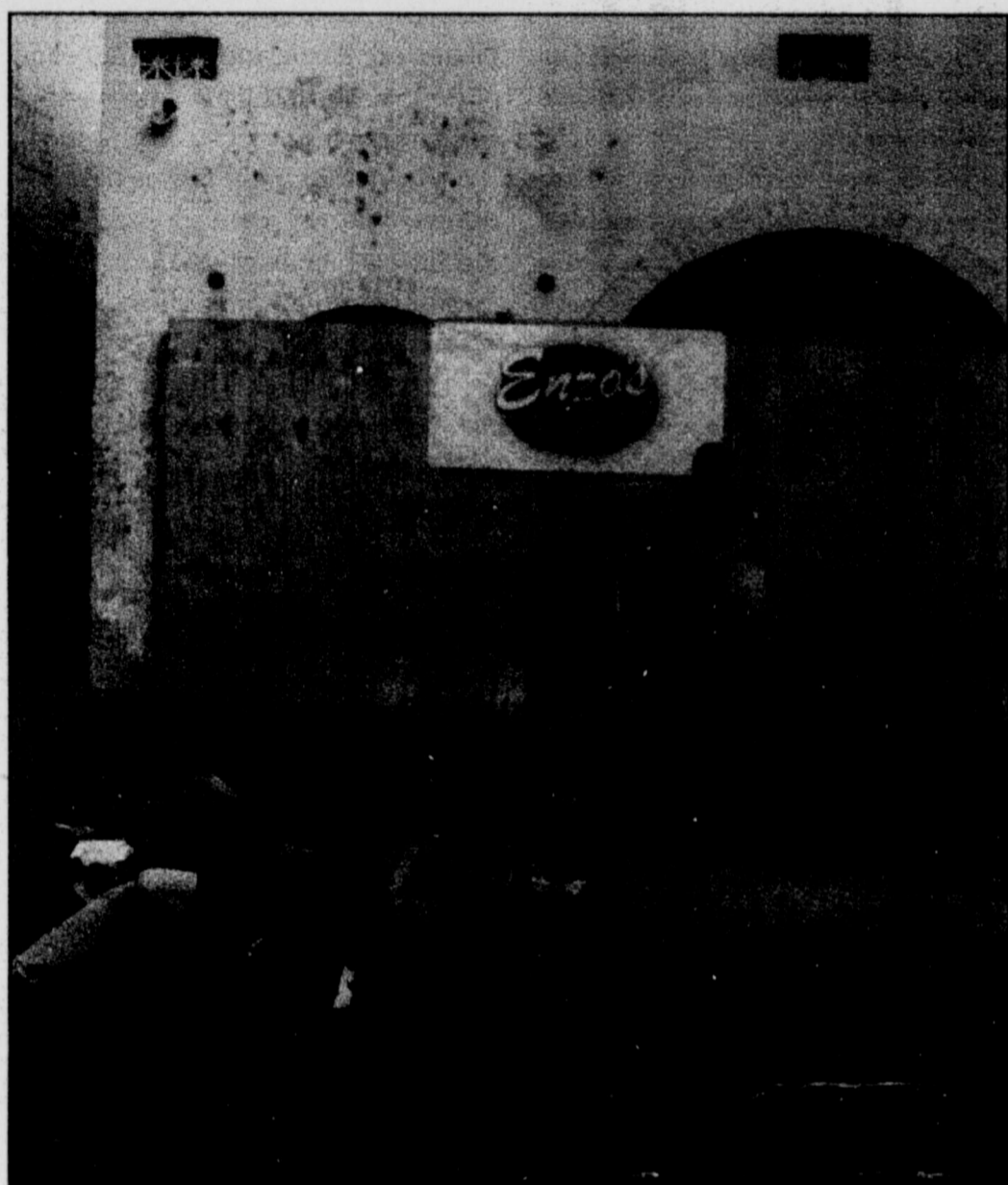
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MANON FISHER MUSTANG DAILY

"Business has not been going well for both of my parents and I definitely know a few people who have lost their jobs," mechanical engineering junior Danny Breslow said about the sluggish economy in California.

Recent closures leave trust in economy shaky

Amanda Sedo
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The recession has officially been over for more than a year now, but economic problems continue to plague the city and surrounding areas of San Luis Obispo.

Over the years, many local businesses have been forced to go out of business. Most recently, the Office of Thrift Supervision closed the San Luis Trust Bank on Feb. 18.

According to the press release, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) was appointed as the receiver of San Luis Trust Bank. The FDIC then entered into a purchase and assumption agreement with First California Bank, meaning it will take control of liabilities from the bank, including all of its deposits. Past members of San Luis Trust Bank are now automatic members of First California Bank.

Jan Marx, mayor of San Luis Obispo, said although her role is

limited when it comes to the economy, she thinks San Luis Obispo can expect things to turn around sooner rather than later.

"There were more car sales here than last year and you can see a generalized economic recovery," Marx said.

While banks are closing, food aid is surging — another tell tale sign of economic problems in the county.

Joyce Fields, from the San Luis Obispo County Department of Social Services, said within the last year or two the applications for CalFresh Programs have gone up.

"We really want to do outreach about (CalFresh) because there are a number of people out there who could potentially benefit from the program but don't know about it," Fields said.

To be eligible for CalFresh Program (the program formerly known as Food Stamps), a household of

see *Economy*, page 3

Firefighters fired up about council decision

Alicia Freeman
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The San Luis Obispo City Firefighters Association, IAFF Local 3523, challenged a city council decision to remove the right of unions to have a third party arbiter make the final decision on labor disputes — called binding arbitration — on Feb. 23. The decision would also remove a city charter section requiring voter approval on an upcoming August ballot to reduce retirement benefits for public safety organizations like the Firefighters Association and the Police Officers Association.

The city council passed the measure with a 4-1 vote Feb. 22, causing the Firefighters Association's attorney, Stuart D. Adams, to send a letter to City Attorney J. Christine Dietrick.

In the letter, Adams stated the San Luis Obispo City Council's actions are illegal because the council had not contacted public service employees first.

Though voters approved binding arbitration in 2000, with budget issues in both San Luis Obispo and California, the council must con-

sider ways to balance the budget. Yet, in Adams' letter, Section 1107 "is designed to resolve disputes over wages, hours and terms and conditions." If the repeal measure were to be passed and then approved on the ballot, both the San Luis Obispo Police Officers Association and San Luis Obispo Firefighters Association would presumably lose the right to negotiate.

However, Dietrick said IAFF's frustrations were a misunderstanding. She said the council did not finalize its decision to put a repeal on the ballot; rather, it asked Dietrick to draft an ordinance for the special election in August as well as draft the "language for proposed measures."

"I would disagree with Adams' as-

essment that the action they took was illegal," Dietrick said. "They didn't take any action to put it on the ballot yet, and they didn't make an ordinance for a special election (yet)."

In a response letter to Adams and Local 3523, Dietrick wrote, "The city values very highly its employees and our culture of open communication and collaboration in working through difficult issues" and the city council purposefully did not pass the measure because they wanted to "accommodate time for discussion with employee groups to occur well before any deadlines for such action."

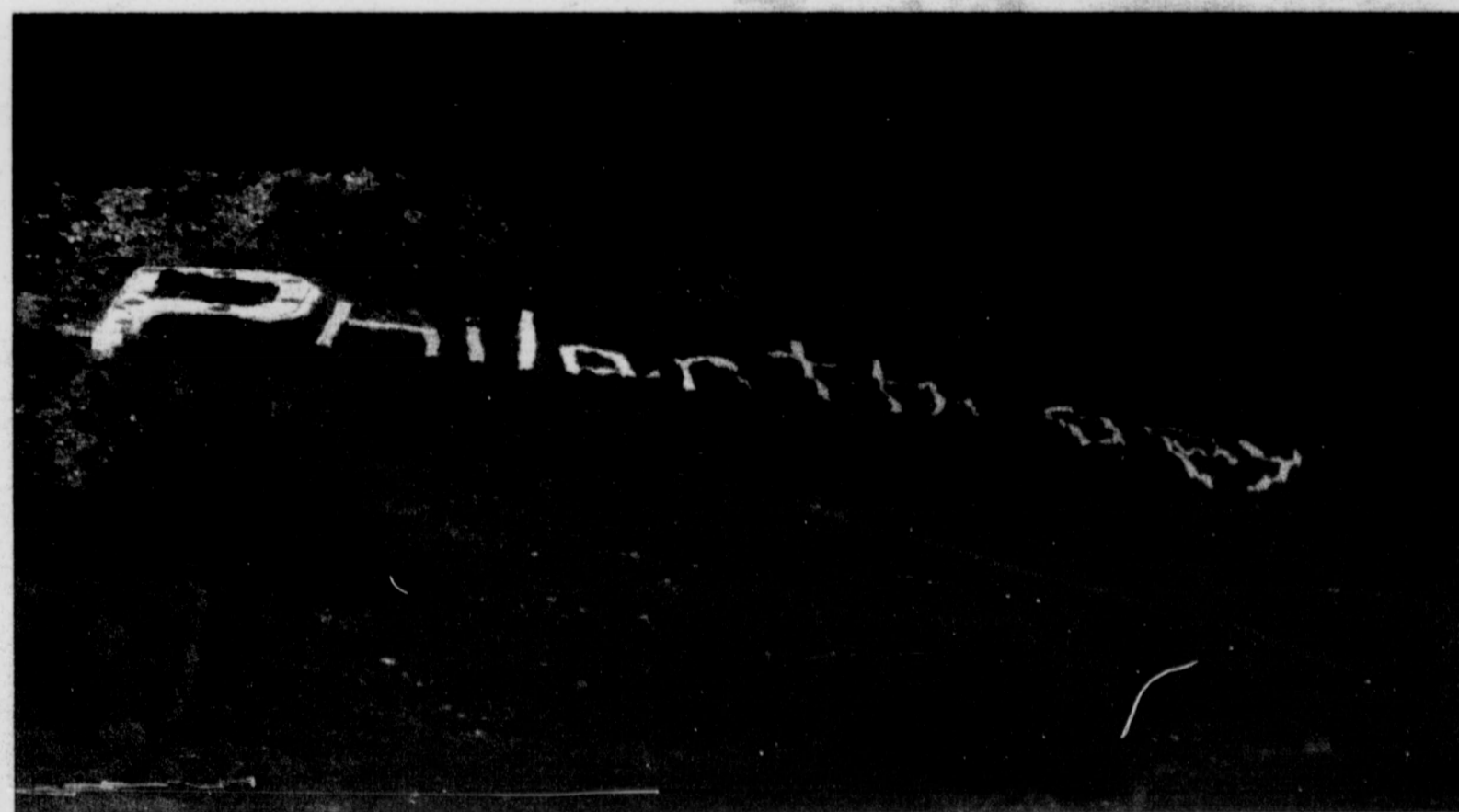
City councilman Andrew Carter

see *Firefighters*, page 2

"This is essentially a legal dispute between the city and our public employees associations."

— John Ashbaugh
San Luis Obispo vice mayor

Cal Poly shows its good will



MANON FISHER MUSTANG DAILY

Cal Poly students were surprised yesterday when they woke up to find the "P" on the hill changed to read "philanthropy" for Cal Poly's annual "Day's of Philanthropy." The event is put on by the Student Philanthropy Council, and takes place today from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the University Union Plaza. Free food and free T-shirts are available.

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History department to add new faculty member

Patricia Berg

SPECIAL TO THE MUSTANG DAILY

The history department will soon have a new starter to add to the faculty lineup, which means the relievers covering General Education (G.E.) classes will get a break.

"I love teaching G.E. classes, my colleagues would say that as well," history professor James Tejani said. "I look forward to the day when we're less short-handed."

History professors are responsible for G.E. Area D1: The American Experience courses, said Andrew Morris, the history department chair.

"We have found ourselves short in offering the same classes to the same number of students, particularly in American history, which is our biggest demand," Morris said.

History professors that are not usually part of the American history curriculum are asked to teach

these courses.

However, faculty members were ready to pick up the slack, Tejani said.

"People are willing to fill in," he said. "We want to provide classes for students. It's a service to the university and to the students."

Most students are usually required to take a course from G.E. Area D1. Others finish AP courses or transferred credits prior to starting at Cal Poly, Morris said.

The new faculty member will concentrate on D1 classes, he said.

"They'll be teaching two sections each quarter of HIST 206 American Cultures (G.E. D1, USCP) or HIST 207 Freedom and Equality in American History (G.E. D1, USCP), and then the third class would be an upper-division (300 or 400 level) U.S. history course of his (or) her choosing," Morris said.

The HIST 206 and HIST 207

classes have about 50 students a section. The new faculty member may teach anywhere between 120 to 150 G.E. students per quarter. The upper-division course of their choosing will have fewer students.

When professors start their career in the department, they teach G.E. courses before moving to specialized courses, Morris said.

A new professor has more students to teach than tenured professors, Tejani said.

After they are here for a few years, they can move onto classes that are part of their specialization. They may range anywhere from political media or U.S. foreign relations.

"That will add diversity to our curriculum because we don't offer those classes very regularly," Tejani said.

They can be intellectually challenging for professors who are used to their specialized American courses. Some find it fun to teach it that

way, Tejani said.

Coming from the department chair's perspective, history professors must be flexible to teach these courses, Morris said.

The chair said there are possible course positions that need to be filled with assistant professors.

"Dr. Morris works very hard to make sure that everyone is teaching what they want to be teaching," assistant history professor Lewis Call said.

The D1 classes allow professors to teach a macro-perspective of America, Morris said.

"When you have a new junior colleague it's fun socially, and it's nice when new people show up and add a new perspective, new ideas and new classes," he said.

The College of Liberal Arts and the history department have put a lot of time into reviewing applications as well as conducting phone interviews

and campus visits.

The search has been such an energizing process because the candidates are so bright, said Linda Halisky, dean of the College of Liberal Arts. Just being able to talk to them about the things that excite them is really enjoyable, she said.

The search for a tenure-track faculty professor started last summer. The department publicized for the position in different historical journals, including The American Historical Association Journal, and posted advertisements on various academic websites.

"The market right now is tight nationwide so we received exceptional candidates," Halisky said.

A total of 253 individuals applied for the position.

The College of Liberal Arts and the history department have extended an offer to a potential faculty member.

Firefighters

continued from page 1

said the city is well aware of its legal rights and mirrored Dietrick's statement that the council instructed city staff to draft the measures for future formal vote.

"What needs to be asked, however, is why does the Firefighters Association want to try to prevent

taxpayers from being able to vote on pension reform and binding arbitration?" Carter said. "In the end, it's the taxpayers who pay for all city salaries and benefits, not (the) council."

If the measure does get approved in future votes, Adams' letter detailed a threat of litigation because of the legality of the vote. According to the letter, "the city cannot make changes to the city charter via city proposed amendments to charter provisions

which effect (sic) terms and conditions of employment without meeting and conferring with Local 3523 and other effected (sic) bargaining unit representatives first" due to the 1984 case, People ex rel. Seal Beach Police Officers Assn. v. City of Seal Beach.

Vice Mayor John Ashbaugh said he opposed the vote, and now feels the threatened litigation puts the city in unfortunate circumstances.

"We are now in the position

where we are facing litigation; this is essentially a legal dispute between the city and our public employee associations," Ashbaugh said. "What I can say is that the city intends to meet fully its obligations under applicable state law with respect to the issues that currently divide our council majority and our public employees."

In Dietrick's letter to Adams, she wrote the council wants to discuss the matter with Local 3523 before the ballot measure is pursued further. Yet, Dietrick said she affirmed Adams would most likely follow through with his threat if the measure did go through.

Baskin said Local 3523 is prepared to fight for their rights with all of the "tools (they) have at (their) disposal."

"We're going to let our team handle things," Baskin said. "The bottom line for us is that binding arbitration protects our staffing levels for citizens, and we're going to do every-

thing we can to prevent its (repeal)."

However, Dietrick said she hoped the issue would be resolved by the city and Local 3523 could come to a reasonable decision, though she said if they could not, "that is what the court is for."

Dietrick did not know what would happen if the measure does get on the ballot and is approved.

"That's difficult to answer," Dietrick said. "We don't know if it will pass or fail."

If the measure does pass, labor relations for public employees may be changed considerably in the future.

Baskin said if the City wants to change binding arbitration, they should do so with the same signature collecting techniques that public safety employees had to use 11 years ago.

"We feel that binding arbitration is a fair negotiation process for public safety employees who don't have the right to strike," Baskin said.



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Economy

continued from page 1

four people must have a combined income under \$1,835 a month.

Fields said the number of people who currently receive CalFresh benefits are at a medium level but numbers have increased since the recession hit.

"Obviously, the economy would cause more people to utilize public service programs like CalFresh," Fields said.

Despite applications for CalFresh going up and businesses struggling, Marx said the local government is doing all it can to help with economic development in San Luis Obispo.

"We have been concerned most with attracting tourism and trying to reduce operating costs," Marx said.

Through specialized taxes like the Transient Occupational Tax, the City of San Luis Obispo is attempting to create a revenue to continue making the city a tourist destination.

Even with the taxes, however, the city government is well over budget. Marx said hearings throughout April will help determine the direction of the city and how it plans to balance the budget.

"Cuts will be done in a public hearing," Marx said. "I want to invite the public and especially Cal Poly students to attend the meetings. The cuts will be sensitive to the priority of the community and residents."

Indeed, students have been feeling

the effects of the economy.

Daniel Breslow, a mechanical engineering junior, said he bikes to class to save money, and is feeling the effects on his education, in addition to his family and friends.

"Obviously the budget cuts throughout the state are affecting the price of our education," Breslow said. "It is harder to graduate on time because classes are being cut. Business has not been going well for both of my parents and I definitely know a few people who have lost their jobs."

Marx said she acknowledges it is a tough time to be a student, but she hopes the city and Cal Poly students can work together to improve the situation in San Luis Obispo.

"Cal Poly is a tremendous asset to the city," Marx said. "Although the city is still hurting financially, having all the students here is a good thing."

Marx said even though officially the recession is over it is not quite showing yet in San Luis Obispo.

"Housing hasn't really recovered, but all of this is just a challenge — it's not an emergency," Marx said. "Compared to other cities in California we are really in pretty good shape."

Good shape or not, students, business owners and residents are still concerned.

"Eventually I'd like to be able to get a job, but it's not looking good," Breslow said.

I want to invite the public and especially Cal Poly students to attend the (city budget) meetings.

— Jan Marx
San Luis Obispo mayor

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Briefs

State

SAN FRANCISCO (MCT) — California Attorney General Kamala D. Harris urged a federal appeals court Tuesday to permit same-sex couples to marry during an appeal of last year's ruling that overturned Proposition 8, the 2008 ballot measure that banned gay marriage.

In arguments filed with the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, Harris asked the court to lift a hold on a federal court order directing the state to permit gays to marry. U.S. District Judge Vaughn R. Walker, who served on the bench in San Francisco, ruled that the marriage ban violated constitutional rights to due process and equal protection.

Harris' argument follows a decision by the California Supreme Court to consider a question in the case that could put off a final resolution in the 9th Circuit for more than a year.

•••

ANAHEIM (MCT) —

Gov. Jerry Brown told hundreds of California's police chiefs Tuesday that curbs on their pensions may be needed to solve the state's long-term budget crisis.

"I didn't take my retirement at 50," the 72-year-old governor told the California Police Chiefs Association in Anaheim.

Many Republican lawmakers have said they would like to see changes to the public pension system before voting to put Brown's plan to extend billions in taxes on a special-election ballot. Brown, too, has outlined some basic pillars of a pension overhaul plan.

However, even many supporters of pension reform for public employees have balked at trimming benefits for police and firefighters.

Brown, by contrast, said Tuesday that he would consider changes to public employee retirement benefits, including a cap, and said law enforcement should not be exempt.

National

ILLINOIS (MCT) —

A Loyola University archaeology professor will serve a year's probation for his part in a scheme to plunder artifacts from an archaeological site in New Mexico, the U.S. Attorney's office there said in a statement issued Tuesday.

Professor Daniel Amick pleaded guilty Friday to violating the Archaeological Resources Protection Act, admitting to removing 17 artifacts, including arrowheads, from public lands on two field trips to New Mexico, according to the statement by U.S. Attorney Kenneth Gonzales.

As part of the agreement, Amick pledged to return the artifacts and help investigators track down others still missing in a long-term scheme under investigation by the Bureau of Land Management. If Amick adheres to the terms of his probation, the judge in the case has agreed to drop the charge.

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WASHINGTON D.C. (MCT) —

The Supreme Court justices, hearing arguments in a closely watched case involving child-abuse investigations at school, took sharp exception to the notion that a search warrant or a parent's consent is required before a child can be questioned at school by a child-care worker or police officer.

Each year, state and local agencies investigate more than 3 million claims of child abuse or neglect. In about one in four cases, the investigators decide that some abuse took place.

The high court has not ruled on whether the Constitution put some limits on investigations at school. However, the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco got the attention of child-care workers nationwide when it ruled that investigators usually need a search warrant before taking a child out of class for questioning.

International

RUSSIA (MCT) —

Not wanting to wait until the last minute, Russian officials Tuesday announced plans to open a new cemetery to house the remains of Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin, 58, upon his death.

The new national necropolis is set for a June opening in Mytishchi, about 20 kilometers northeast of Moscow, reported Interfax, citing the defense ministry.

Lack of grave space, both for prominent Russians and for ordinary citizens, is a regular problem in Russia.

As befits a "national leader," Putin will eventually be interred in Russia's Pantheon, reported Russian media, although no date has been set. Cemetery director Vassily Rudenko said 30 plots have been set aside for national leaders of the next 200 years.

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CHINA (MCT) —

The Chinese Foreign Ministry on Tuesday barred foreign news reporters from a major Beijing shopping district that's been designated on the Internet as the gathering point for anti-government protests.

The highly unusual move — such restrictions usually are applied only to sensitive regions such as Tibet — underscores the concern with which the Chinese government views the protest calls, which have been named the "Jasmine Revolution" after the demonstrations that started in Tunisia and have swept the Arab world.

Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Jiang Yu said the police were forced to move in because the foreign journalists had disrupted the high-traffic shopping area. She also made it clear that Wangfujing now is considered off-limits for reporters without prior approval from local authorities, a departure from previous media guidelines, which required only that reporters have permission from the people or organizations they intend to interview.

Discrimination in job hiring attacked by Supreme Court

David G. Savage

TRIBUNE WASHINGTON BUREAU

The Supreme Court on Tuesday extended the reach of the federal laws against job discrimination, and ruled that employees are protected from illegal bias in hiring not just from a top decision maker, but from other supervisors as well.

The justices said the crucial issue is whether illegal bias was a "motivating factor" in the decision to fire an employee. Companies and public agencies are not shielded from liability, they said, simply because the supervisor who made the decision to fire a worker did so for valid reasons. If other supervisors are biased and influence the outcome, the employer can be held at fault, they said.

For at least a decade, lower courts have been split over whether the workplace civil rights laws should focus narrowly on the single supervisor who makes hiring and firing decisions, or more broadly on the many supervisors who influence the outcome. By a unanimous vote, the high court opted for the broad approach.

"An employer's authority to reward, punish or dismiss is often allocated among multiple agents," said Justice Antonin Scalia. "The one who makes the ultimate decision does so on the basis of performance assessments by other supervisors."

The employer is at fault, he said, if the "discriminatory animus" of one of its supervisors "was intended to cause, or did in fact cause, an adverse employment decision."

The decision restores a \$57,640 jury verdict in favor of Vincent

Staub, an Army reservist who was fired from his job as a medical technician at the Proctor Hospital in Peoria, Ill.

He contended two of his supervisors were biased against him because he was absent on weekends because of his military duties.

They said he put a "strain on the department," and other employees had "to bend over backwards to cover" for him.

The complaints reached the hospital's vice president for human resources. She looked into comments that Staub was "abrupt" with others and was sometimes missing from his work location. She decided to dismiss him.

Staub sued, relying on the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Act of 1994, which forbids discrimination against employees because of their military duties. Scalia said this law is "very similar" to the other federal civil rights laws that forbid discrimination based on race, religion, sex or national origin. Both statutes are triggered if the illegal bias was a "motivating factor" in the employer's decision.

Though a jury ruled for Staub, the 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Chicago threw out the verdict. Its decision discounted the comments of his direct supervisors and said the vice president for human resources acted on her own.

Then-U.S. Solicitor General Elena Kagan had urged the court to hear the case of Staub v. Proctor Hospital and to adopt the broader interpretation of the federal workplace discrimination laws.

They did so in a 8-0 vote, with Kagan not participating.

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Cybersecurity a high threat for the nation

Julie Mianeki

TRIBUNE WASHINGTON BUREAU

Cybersecurity is a potential "nightmare" for the Department of Homeland Security in the years ahead, as well as concerns about homegrown terrorists and intelligence sharing, officials said Tuesday at a seminar at Georgetown University marking the department's eighth anniversary.

"The nightmare that the DHS has," said Stewart Baker, a former head of policy at the department, "is that a very sophisticated hacker, perhaps working for Hezbollah, manages to infiltrate our electric grid and to bring down power to a portion of the United States, not for an hour or two, but for days or weeks. This would create a major humanitarian crisis."

Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano said the rapid pace of change is now the biggest issue with technology.

"The problem with cyber is almost by the time you're talking about something, they're on to the next thing," Napolitano said. "It is really a fast-moving field that, quite frankly, probably none of us are as good at understanding as somebody 20 years old, so this is an area where we're trying to hire people."

"And if there are students in the audience that have any cyber interest, I would ask them to see me after."

Napolitano's predecessor, Michael

Chertoff, said he was most concerned about terrorists born in the U.S.

"Most notable are homegrown terrorists," Chertoff said. "What you see now is greater emphasis on recruiting Americans who are residents in the U.S. to become operatives, and that is challenging the model that we use for security."

And Tom Ridge, the first Homeland Security secretary, focused on the problems of intelligence gathering. The department is a consumer of information, which is a major challenge when facing such threats, he said.

"The agency can only act based on the information it's given," Ridge said. "I still think, eight years later, one of the big challenges is making sure that the Department of Homeland Security has enough information."

Napolitano said one of the department's achievements that helps to lessen the threat of terrorist attacks is increased public participation in the security process, particularly civilians who report suspicious behavior or observations to authorities.

"When you talk about Faisal Shahzad, what a great example of citizen involvement," Napolitano said, referring to the attempted car bombing in Times Square in 2010. "A street vendor sees smoke coming from a vehicle he doesn't recognize ... he immediately notifies law enforcement and we go from that notice, in 53 hours, to the apprehension of Shahzad."

Napolitano also cited improving

international sharing of flight information as another departmental success. She said the U.S. and the European Union share information about passengers as soon as tickets are purchased, rather than after the plane has already taken off, as was the case when Ridge was secretary.

Baker agreed that improved cooperation has been a key success.

"Until very recently, we didn't know if somebody who was presenting himself to enter the United States was a convicted criminal or not in his home jurisdiction," Baker said. "The integration of data systems so that it is risky for terrorists to try to get across our borders is, to my mind, the single success of DHS."

Baker listed the separation of the FBI from Homeland Security, an overabundance of grants leading to funding issues and the lack of sufficient technology at the Mexican-U.S. border as major shortcomings of Homeland Security over the last eight years. Ridge also mentioned technology as a failing in the context of airport checkpoints.

"President (John F.) Kennedy in '62 said, 'We're going to the moon.' We got to the moon in '69 — that's seven years. It's 10 years after (Sept. 11, 2001), and we still haven't figured out the right piece of technology in our airports," Ridge said. "So apparently it's easier to go to the moon than come up with a piece of technology to be a little bit less invasive."

Word on the Street

What's something you plan on doing differently next quarter?



"Spend more time in the library."

— Armando Marquez, animal science junior



"Get more involved — I'd like to join some clubs."

— Rebecca Roberts, English freshman



"Balancing my time better between extracurriculars and studying."

— Samantha Plete, landscape architecture freshman



"Focus more on studies and be better at prioritizing."

— Travis Vant-Hul, architecture freshman



"Study more and devote more time to school."

— Eric Mendonca, dairy science sophomore



"Work harder, not put off homework and start studying earlier."

— Carly Bach, business administration freshman

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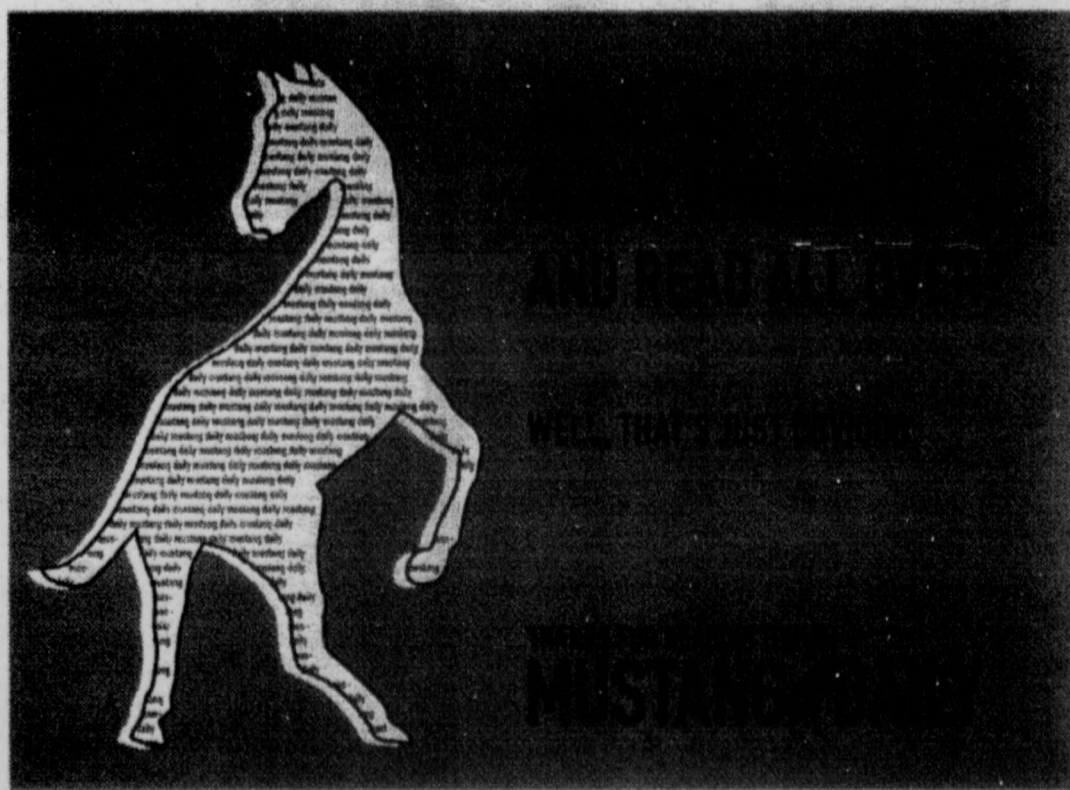
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Violence in Libya increases as conditions grow worse for citizens

Hannah Allam
Nancy A. Youssef
MCCLATCHY NEWSPAPERS

Living conditions worsened in Libya and aid groups warned of a growing humanitarian crisis Tuesday as the battle between rebels and forces loyal to leader Moammar Gadhafi shut down transportation, kept businesses closed and forced people to stay in their homes.

Conditions were particularly dire in rebel-held Zawiyah, a city west of Tripoli where anti-Gadhafi protesters have fought back bloody government counterattacks for nearly a week. Residents reached by phone said pro-Gadhafi forces had set up checkpoints on the city's east and west sides, halting the flow of food and medicine.

A Zawiyah resident who gave only his first name, Tarek, for his own protection, told McClatchy Newspapers by telephone that baby formula and other vital items were in short supply.

"They're trying to starve us to death," he said.

Aid workers also reported dismal conditions at Libya's borders, especially among migrant workers stuck at the western border with Tunisia. TV footage from the Libyan-Tunisian border Tuesday showed hundreds of weakened refugees clamoring for handouts of high-energy biscuits from the U.N.'s World Food Program.

Elsewhere in the Arab world, thou-

sands of protesters took to the streets in Yemen and Bahrain for a fresh wave of demonstrations in the collective anti-government rebellion rocking the Middle East and alarming Western powers.

In Washington, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton warned the House Foreign Affairs Committee not to cut the administration's foreign affairs budget and a senior military commander cautioned that enforcing a no-fly zone over Libya to protect anti-regime protesters "would be challenging" and would have to involve airstrikes on the Gadhafi regime's air defenses.

"You would have to remove the air defense capability in order to establish the no-fly zone. So it — no illusions here — it would be a military operation," Marine Gen. James Mattis, the commander of U.S. Central Command, told the Senate Armed Services Committee. "It wouldn't simply be telling people not to fly airplanes."

Clinton cautioned that the outcome in Libya is anything but clear.

"In the years ahead, Libya could become a peaceful democracy or face protracted civil war or descend into chaos. The stakes are high," she said.

In Oman, thousands of people waving flags and wearing red and green scarves marched around the Grand Mosque in the capital, Muscat, in an emotional parade of support for their 70-year-old leader, Sultan Qaboos bin Said, after days of unprecedented rioting and civil unrest in the tiny sultanate on the Arabian Peninsula.

It was the largest gathering in Oman since smaller groups began calling for government reform two weeks ago. Over the weekend, a peaceful sit-in of about 2,000 people, many of them jobless college graduates, turned violent in the northern port city of Sohar, where young rioters seized control of a central traffic circle.

Several hundred demonstrators burned and looted shops and blocked the entrance to the city's typically bustling port, preventing trucks from reaching it. At least one person was killed Sunday by police.

Oman's widely admired leader responded to protester demands by shuffling Cabinet ministers, offering unemployment benefits and agreeing to study whether to give an elected ad-

visory body more power. Those concessions haven't been enough to calm the discontent, which took many Omanis by surprise.

Oman hasn't experienced such unrest since Qaboos came to power in 1970 in a bloodless coup against his father. Qaboos has used the sultanate's oil reserves to modernize the nation, and many Omanis who've lived through the past four decades express deep gratitude to him.

Nasser al-Qasbi, one of the demonstrators, walked alongside the parade taking video with his cell phone. He said he planned to post it on his Facebook page. A recent graduate of Sultan Qaboos University, the country's flagship college, Qasbi said he'd been unable to find a job.

In Sanaa, Yemen's capital, demonstrations marked the third "Day of Rage" in which protesters called for the ouster of President Ali Abdullah Saleh and condemned the use of force against peaceful protesters. A rival demonstration by the president's supporters erupted nearby, but both camps ended their rallies with no incidents of violence, the Yemeni journalist Nasser Arabyee wrote on his blog.

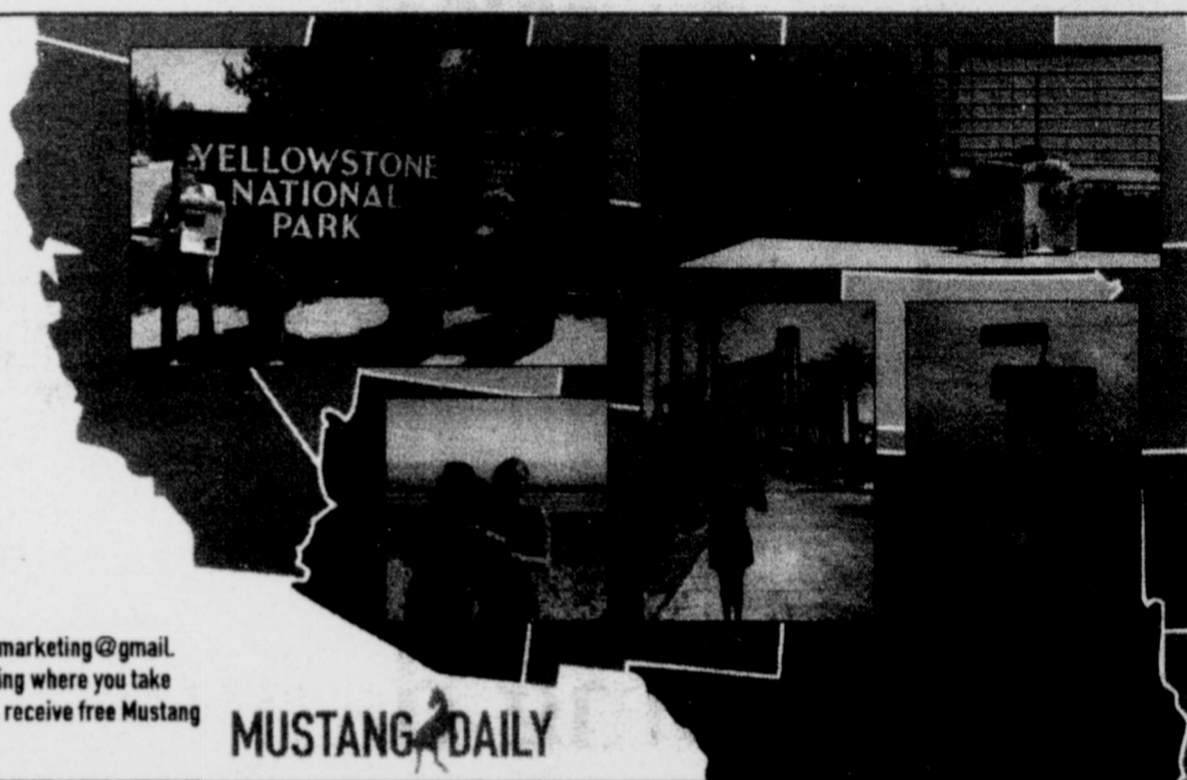
At least 10 demonstrators were killed and many others wounded in the past week's violence in the southern port city of Aden, according to news reports. The president met Tuesday with university students and faculty members as protesters on the campus of Sanaa University chanted slogans against him.

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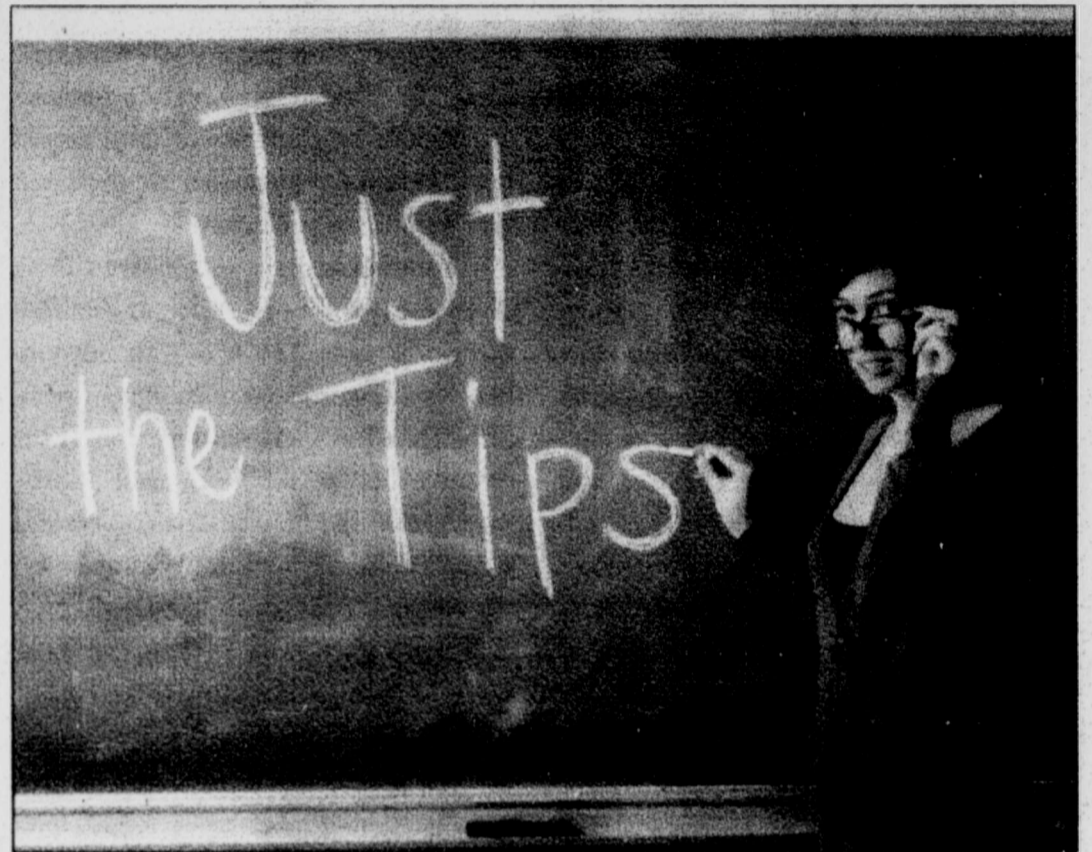
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Caitlyn Harkins is an English sophomore and Mustang Daily copy editor and sex columnist.

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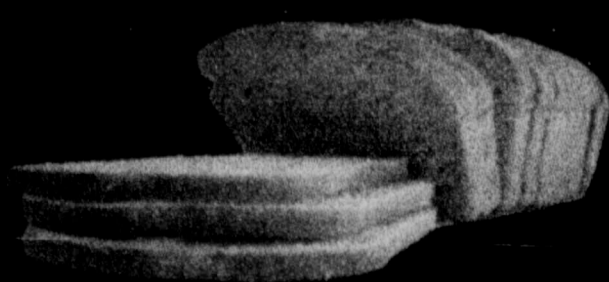
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Nostalgia time. Remember way back in high school, telling your friends that you and that person you've been into forever finally hooked up?

Never mind the vagueness of the phrase "hooked up," your friends wanted to know the dirty details. As they eagerly leaned forward to hear about your rendezvous, they asked, "Did you get to second base?"

I remember the first time I was asked about bases, mostly for the confusion it invoked. I remember thinking, "What the hell does baseball have to do with making out?"

I quickly caught on to the idea though, and spent many late nights with friends debating over which aspects of foreplay belong to third

Lining up to bat
Get your bats ready, ladies and gentlemen. You're warming up for the play.

You two are definitely sitting too close to be just friends. There is a palpable tension in the air, and it's not from the horror movie you thought apt to watch. Your fingers are winding together; maybe an arm is thrown over the other's shoulders. So far, everything is PG. A light kiss — mouth closed — surely qualifies.

You make a move to heat up the kissing, essentially letting the bat make contact with the ball. And with that, you're on your way to first base.

see Bases, page 11

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Playwright brings Ireland to San Luis Obispo

Anieca Ayler

ANIECAAYLER.MD@GMAIL.COM

When David Wallace drives along the California coast, he isn't looking at the cold, crashing waves of the Pacific Ocean or craning his neck hoping to see whales on the horizon. He's looking at the land: the stretches of grassy hills, the jutting rocks, the trees. The local Scottish-Irish playwright of 40 years sees traces of Ireland in the coastal features almost 5,000 miles away.

"The green hills — that's the old cliché about Ireland," Wallace said. "The rolling park look as it moves down to the sea just fires that bell in my brain."

This local imagery inspired Wallace to embrace his Irish heritage through theater. "And the Sea Shall Provide," written by Wallace, is one of two plays put on by Espresso! Chamber Theatre and scheduled for next month in honor of Irish culture, coastal life and St. Patrick's Day.

"The Cat and the Moon" and "And the Sea Shall Provide" are both based on Irish legends. The first, a comedic play which was first written as a poem is about two beggars by the Irish poet, William Butler Yeats in 1926. The beggars — one blind and one lame — are on a pilgrimage to find a supernatural well with healing powers. The question the men face when they reach the well is whether to be healed

in the physical world, or to be blessed in the afterlife.

Yeats wrote the play as a comic interlude in between writing serious tragic plays. He was also heavily influenced by Japanese Noh theater and has integrated its standard use of masks in his play.

The second production, "And the Sea Shall Provide" is an original Celtic musical (featuring live music, but not strictly a musical) that expands on a traditional Irish folktale called "Tom Moore and the Silkie Wife." It focuses on one of Ireland's legendary creatures, the silkie — a shape-shifting seal that can peel off its skin, assume human form and revert back to a seal by putting the skin back on.

"It's like the equivalent of a mermaid in our part of the world," Wallace said.

The play follows a silkie named Fiona and a desirable young man, Tom Moore. Tom's small coastal village of Windling has reacted to an inter-species relationship. The original folktale, Wallace said, is rather short and he wanted to explore the implications of such a relationship on a little, traditional town.

Fiona the silkie will be played by Amytra (who prefers to go by just her stage name), who said she has fallen in love with her character.

"My favorite thing about her is that she's supernatural," Amytra said. "I'm

into science fiction and vampires and stuff, so that was right up my alley."

Any supernatural stuff from seal to human do not happen in the play, though, and no seal costumes are required, since the play takes up in the story after the change.

Amytra said she has been to Ireland to play the village of Windling and to experience Catholic principles in the home of St. Patrick.

"I think San Luis Obispo has a lot of traditional conservative values that are important to most of the people here — community, stick to your faith," Amytra said.

Traditional Catholic and Irish values will be accompanied by traditional Irish music in "And the Sea Shall Provide." A live two-piece band — a violinist and Wallace playing several other instruments — will perform songs originally composed by Yeats along with traditional Irish songs. The play is directed by David Hance, whose background is in traditional Irish music by the Irish Folkways Society.

Hance, the artistic director of Espresso! Chamber Theatre, met Wallace during a reading of Wallace's play called "The Washing Place" at SLO Little Theater last year. The two discovered their similar interests in changing the local theater scene and started collaborating on a new type of theater, one that didn't rely on walls.

"We perform on a portable stage

that's 8 feet by 8 feet, so that we can set up practically anywhere," Wallace said. "We wanted something that would focus on writing, acting and musical performance."

The stage requires no stage lighting because it uses only natural or low stage light and, with short running times (45 and an hour), is especially suited for small and busy venues such as wineries and restaurants.

While Wallace focused on this new traveling format, Hance was more focused on creating a new company that would appeal to more people.

"I was really interested in shorter theater pieces," Hance said. "A lot of theater is too long to attract new audiences."

Coincidentally, Wallace had experience with shorter theatrical pieces, having worked for NPR doing radio plays.

He had some pieces that were for radio originally, but he thought he could change them over to stage plays," Hance said.

"And the Sea Shall Provide" first started as one of these radio plays. After some rewriting, reworking and experimentation, Wallace and Hance — who have both owned theater companies before — decided to use this piece, along with Yeats' play, to launch Espresso! Chamber Theatre in March.

One of the venues for the 75-min-

ute show is Tolosa Winery. The owners are particularly interested in having wineries host their productions, especially those with active wine clubs because, Hance said, they are always trying to offer fun and different events for members and could provide a stable audience base.

Fortunately for Espresso, Hance has connections in the local viticulture scene, including the events specialist at Tolosa Winery. He said he had better luck negotiating with wineries already familiar with him.

"When you're pitching the idea, you don't have to make them like you first because they already do," Hance said.

Two of the 10 pitches to wineries were successful.

Tolosa Winery's marketing administrator, Katie Noonan, who booked the show, was welcome to the idea of having fun, lightheaded and live entertainment for their wine tasters.

"It's something out of the ordinary," Noonan said. "When they approached us, we thought it would be a different audience to draw from."

The two plays will be the first ever live performance at Tolosa.

There are challenges to performing at wineries, restaurants and anywhere else this traveling show performs. With no backstage, curtains or regular set

see Ireland, page 11

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Cal Poly Symphony showcases soloists

Kelly Cooper
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This Sunday, the Cal Poly sym-

phony will accompany four solo musicians in Harman Hall in the Christopher Cohan Performing Arts Center (PAC) — a dream

come true for any aspiring musician. Traditionally, the music department selects a small group of solo-

ists to perform at the symphony's annual winter concert. The students, who audition in front of a group of faculty members, must play the piece they would play in Harman Hall.

If selected, they are put in the spotlight, accompanied by the symphony in the background.

So what talent did the music department choose this year? Celloist and materials engineering senior Jake Wise, trombonist and music senior Maritza Spieller, vocalist and child development and music senior Theresa Riforgiate and vocalist and music senior Patricia Rosas make up the talented four who were selected.

Symphony conductor David Arrivé said the standards for selection to perform are straightforward.

"We figure out, firstly, is it something that works with the symphony, and will they sound great on that solo," Arrivé said.

Arrivé said the faculty has selected different numbers of soloists throughout the years. When it comes down to it, it all depends if those auditioning can sell the performance.

"We had quite a few people — around 20 people," Arrivé said. "And out of that, we thought these four will do a fantastic job. The bar is kind of high. Many people

sound good, in fact many sound great, but to sell a performance in the PAC, that bar is pretty high."

Patricia Rosas, who had auditioned every year for the soloist showcase, recalled her experience in auditioning this year.

"I put on these pants and this ruffly shirt and a vest and really dressed the part," she said. "I thought that would help calm my nerves a little bit. So I walked in and gave it all I could. And I walked out knowing I did the best I could."

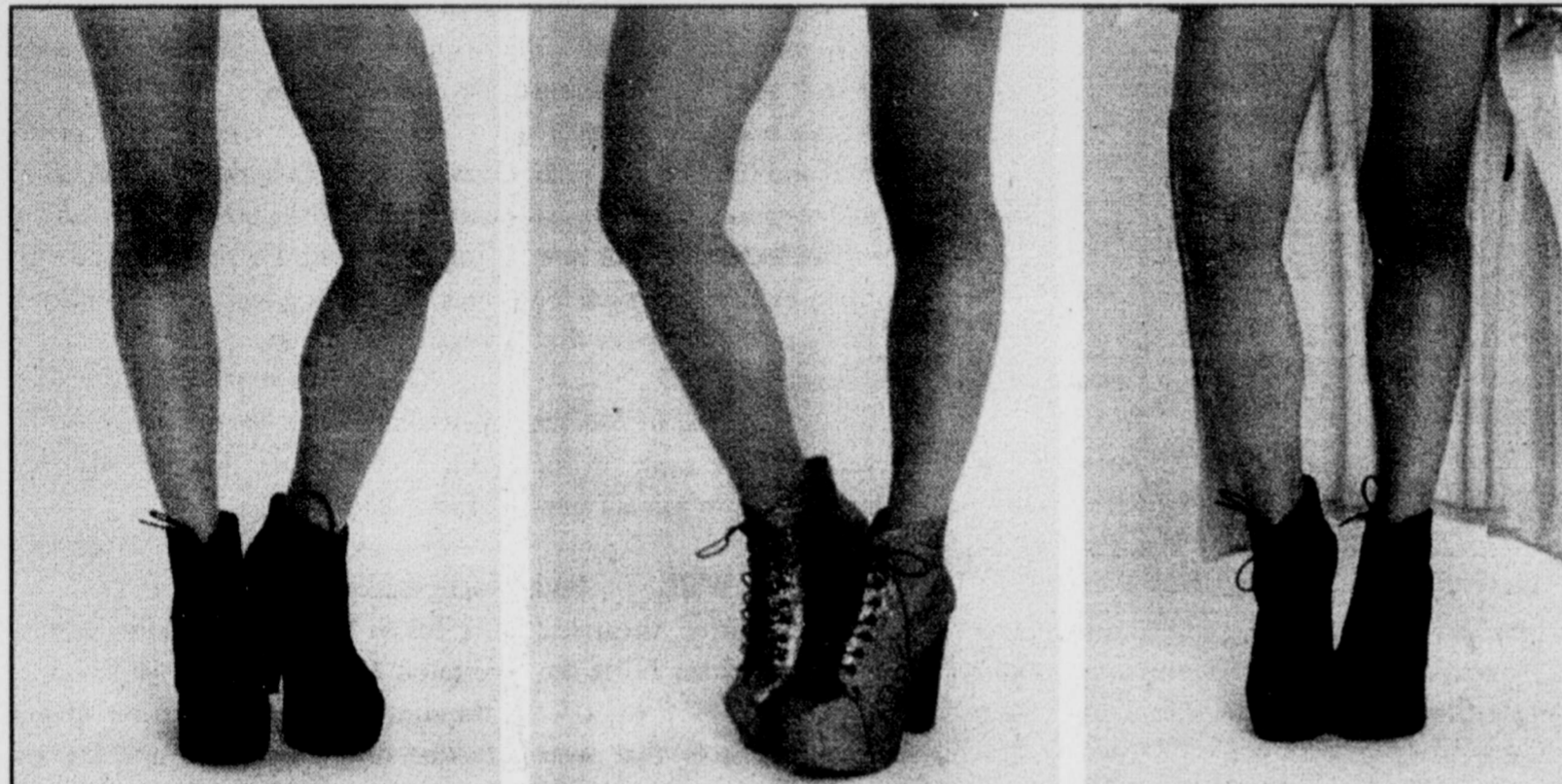
Rosas will sing a German aria "Chacun à son goût" from Johann Strauss' "Die Fledermaus" and said the piece is often referred to as a "pants role."

"I'm the voice type that's called a mezzo soprano, and that's generally the lower range of the female voice," Rosas said. "Back in the day, they used to castrate men, so the voice would have the high notes of a young singer but the strength of a male voice. So they've reassigned mezzo soprano to women singers singing these 'pants roles.'"

Rosas said she's ecstatic to sing with the symphony.

"This is my first time singing solo with symphony with the

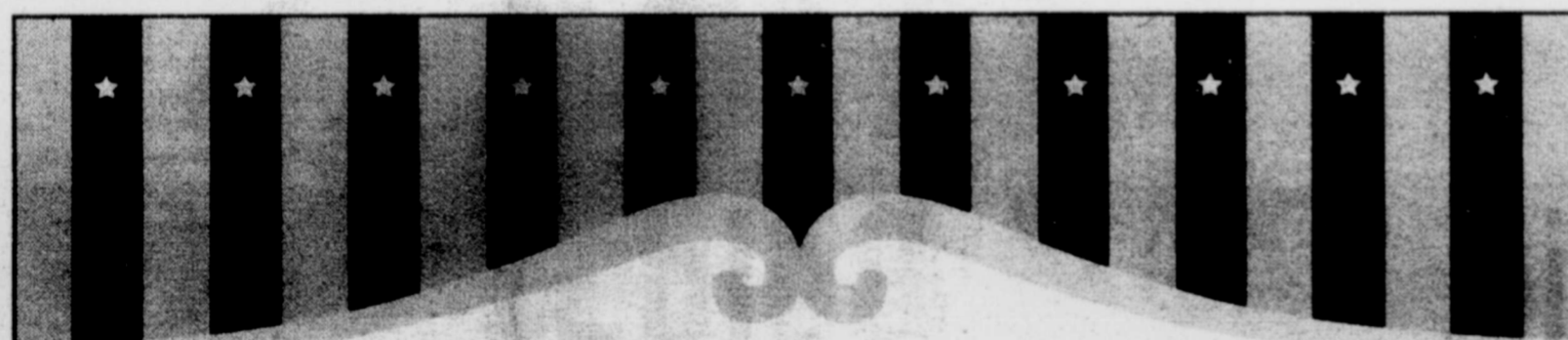
see *Symphony*, page 11



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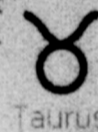
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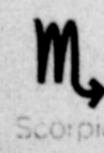
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 2



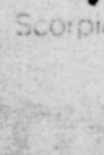
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) — It's a good day to look back and take stock of what you've done recently — not generally but specifically and in detail.



ARIES (March 21-April 19) — You may have to do something you're not at all fond of doing in order to clear the way for something that provides much more pleasure.



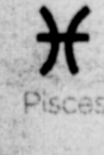
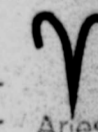
TAURUS (April 20-May 20) — You may not be looking forward to alone time, but it can provide you with the focused solitude you need to get a specific job done.



GEMINI (May 21-June 20) — It's a good time to put plans into motion, but only if you have thought out all possible contingencies. Take no chances right now.



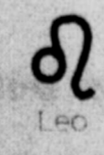
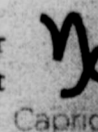
CANCER (June 21-July 22) — Routine aches and pains may be no less irritating to you, but you shouldn't let them get in the way of doing what you have scheduled.



LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) — The stakes are likely to rise considerably, as you make one or two decisions that affect everyone who comes after you.



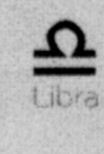
VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) — You can make a difference to someone who is in financial difficulties at this time. Put your expertise to unselfish use, and see what happens.



LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) — Others are waiting to hear what you have to say, but you won't be prepared to say it until you have received all pertinent information.



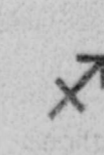
SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) — Don't try to stall for time. Focus on getting things done as scheduled — whether you feel rushed or not.



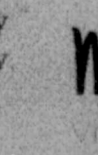
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) — You may wonder who has been trying to contact you recently. No names or numbers have been left, but the messages have been clear.



CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) — An unexpected obstacle arises and may require you to employ your most finely honed negotiation skills.



AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) — Momentum is the key to success; once you get moving, keep moving at a steady pace and you can reach every one of your landmarks.



Ireland

continued from page 9

up, the actors must be ready to adapt to each show. Hance said he loves this aspect and is looking forward to seeing how the actors deal with it.

"My experience is that some actors are comfortable with the flexibility and what turns into a sort of playfulness," Hance said. "It's just a personality thing; to some, it feels somewhat disorganized."

While Hance anticipates a couple of actors to react negatively to the constant changing, Amytra said she has heard and seen nothing but enthusiasm.

"They're really excited to be involved," she said. "It's really neat and challenging for actors in that it's never going to be the same. We'll be in the audience's eye the whole time. It's a challenge but it is also exciting."

An even bigger obstacle for Amytra and the other actors has had nothing to do with the staging at all.

"I think our biggest challenge is the Irish accent," Amytra said.

Espressivo's next production will come in the fall, which will become routine for the company. Ideally, the company will have two to three traveling shows a year with the possibility of a holiday show.

Wallace is optimistic about the growth of the company and thinks its portable set up will make finding venues less challenging.

"Our plays can blow in and blow out; they don't take up much space or a lot of time," Wallace said. "It's a user-friendly approach to theater that can open a lot more venues and opportunities."

The founders are also discussing traveling outside of the county's borders to Northern California and beyond, but Hance admits it is more a dream than a plan.

In addition to expanding the areas to perform, Hance would like to add one or two more people to the core managing members of Espressivo, with a semi-regular pool of actors and room for fresh faces.

"I like to think about it as a band," Hance said. "A mix of members and sometimes we bring in extra people."

But what Wallace is most looking forward to is the chance to share theater and music with audiences.

"The collaborative work in theater — there's nothing else like it," Wallace said. "You form communities that are very tight and very close. There's a great connection among people."

"The Cat and the Moon" and "The Sea Shall Provide" will run from March 9 to March 20 at various venues around the county.

The performance will start at 6 p.m. March 9 at STAX Wine Bar in Morro Bay. The \$15 cover charge will include light appetizers and benefits Slow Food of San Luis Obispo County.

The March 12 performance will begin at 6 p.m. at Sustenance Studio in San Luis Obispo. The \$25 cover includes dinner.

The performance on March 17 will start at 8 p.m. at the San Luis Obispo Little Theatre; tickets are \$15 for general admission and \$12 for students and seniors.

Finally, the March 20, performance begins at 1 p.m., at Tolosa Winery, south of San Luis Obispo. Tickets include a glass of wine and are \$15 for general admission and \$10 for Tolosa Wine Club members.

Symphony

continued from page 10

PAC," she said. "So this is like a life accomplishment. I'm beyond thrilled."

Jake Wise will also perform and will play Gabriel Fauré's "Elegy for Cello and Orchestra." Wise said he didn't originally plan on playing this piece, but his private teacher suggested playing it instead of his original pick.

"I had originally wanted to do part of a much larger piece — a full concerto, which turned out to be too much of a task just to get ready for this concert," Wise said.

Wise said learning the piece wasn't too hard to manage — it was the emotional strength behind the piece he had to tap into.

"It's a beautiful piece full of emotion, and it didn't take that long for me to learn — at least the technical skills involved weren't too advanced for me to learn in time," he said. "But learning how to put the emotion and passion into the piece — that was the real challenge."

Although the soloists are the featured players, the concert doesn't end when the last note is played or sang. Arrivé said the concert is almost two separate shows — one highlighting the soloists, and the other highlights the symphony and Cal Poly Open House theme.

"For the remainder of the program, we try to tie into what the theme will be for Open House," Arrivé said. "The theme this year is Polywood, and that's such a no brainer. There's great movie music."

Arrivé has selected six iconic movie scores for the symphony. However, the movie scores won't be revealed until the night of the show. This is

because the pieces are so recognizable, Arrivé is going to give out an in-concert quiz for the audience to guess the notable tunes.

Since Cal Poly Open House happens approximately three weeks after spring break, Arrivé said the symphony tries to use some of the same repertoire in the winter concert that they use for Open House due to time restraints. Yet he said the preparation has seemed to run quite efficiently so far.

"This one has come together pretty smoothly," Arrivé said. "Most movie music does. When people are making the music, the orchestra is going to play it maybe twice. They'll site read it, then they'll record it and then it's done."

Arrivé said this year's winter concert is a pleasant change for the symphony, who played a more serious repertoire in the fall performance.

"I had the promise out there that we'd play more fun music in the winter," Arrivé said. "It's a nice change of pace."

The show begins at 3 p.m. on Sunday, March 6. Tickets are \$10 and \$12 for general admission, \$8 and \$10 for seniors and \$6 for students and may be purchased online at pacsl.org, at the Performing Arts Center box office or by phone at (805) 756-2787.

Bases

continued from page 8

First base

If you weren't completely facing each other before, you are now. Hands are probably resting awkwardly on each others' arms or around each others' backs because the moment is too fresh for anything more risqué.

The kissing is getting more intense. If someone walked in on you two right now, you would be slightly embarrassed but not mortified. Your mouths are open, and your tongues venture forth into new territory.

Second base

Hands are wandering at this point. Moving forth on the bold front under the shirt, groping generally escalates to the point of removing excess layers of clothing. If you've still got your sweatshirt on at this point, it's probably time to take it off.

Hands are on bare skin, but most likely still above the bra. While pants are unbuttoned, shoes are still on — it's not that serious enough to get down to your business socks yet.

You're both still kissing, but second base is a happy home for roaming hands and exploring. Once the bra comes off, you're starting to creep toward third base. But really, third base exists in the pants.

Shortstop

Right between second and

third base is the moment when you slip your hand into their pants.

Third base

You've been patient, going as slowly or as quickly as both of you are comfortable. But finally, sweet mercy has been bestowed upon you both and pants have been cast aside.

Third base is where things start to get serious. Fingering and other manual stimulation are the name of the game. Depending on the seriousness of you and your partner, oral can be relegated to third base as well. Personally, I find oral to sometimes be more intimate than sex — it wouldn't be unfair to say that cunninglingus or fellatio can be considered home runs (especially when they're so damn good).

Home Run

After a tour of the bases, you've made it to sex. Sex in all its glorious forms can include vaginal penetration, anal, oral, 69-ing, sex toys and many more.

Using the bases as a euphemism is handy if you have curious friends, but don't want to give a full play-by-play of your endeavors. It gives the general impression of how far you went, but not the nitty-gritty details.

However, the bases do have the drawback of not including all types of sex-play. It's hard to categorize sex acts that are kinkier or BDSM, or things like rim jobs.

If you really want to avoid awkwardness, just shoot your friends a wink and let them know it was out of the ballpark.



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Mustang Daily

"Are you Spanish? Are you racist?"

The danger of blind American exceptionalism



Jeremy Cutcher is a political science senior and Mustang Daily liberal columnist.

The last couple weeks have been an historical time for the Middle East. With demonstrations from Tunisia and Jordan to Egypt and Libya, the region is experiencing a mass political uprising against the old regimes notorious for their corruption and oppression. Many have been mostly peaceful (notably Egypt), but some (notably Libya) have been brutal in their suppression of the demonstrations. The violence in Libya has led some to call on the president to take a stronger stance in support of the demonstrators, with neo-con stalwart Bill Kristol calling on the president to use force "when force is used to kill innocent civilians."

Apparently, the blunders of the Bush years have not resonated with many in this ideological camp. And that is precisely the danger of blind allegiance to the ideology of American exceptionalism.

American exceptionalism is a quirky notion. In its most fundamental form it says that God created America to spread liberty and democracy across the world (others leave out God and just believe that America has a purpose to do so). Unfortunately, the ideology doesn't specify if we are to do so by our example and our aid or by force, and many seem to like the control the latter purportedly provides us in determining the outcomes.

We all participate in the ideology to some extent. It's kind of like we're on Team America and we're rooting our team on. And it does

seem like history will remember America as the founding of a new understanding of political relationships, where self-determination and inalienable rights become integral to who we are as individuals. The problem with any fundamentalist interpretation is that it leads to faulty conclusions that are not based on the reality of the situation.

Three ideas characterized the Bush administration: a fundamentalist interpretation of American exceptionalism, a firm belief in the revolution in military affairs (RMA) and the notion that "deficits don't matter." The last one left the American people with huge debts to pay in coming years, while the first two led to a reckless and bombastic foreign policy. The Bush administration, especially Donald Rumsfeld, believed the technological revolution in the latter half of the 20th century fundamentally altered the nature of modern warfare. With new technology such as precision-guided missiles and unmanned drones, the Bush administration believed war efforts could be completed in minimal time with minimal casualties on both sides. This led to the unilateral, rushed and ill-planned (not to mention illegal and unwarranted) invasion of Iraq. The moral compass contained within their fundamentalist interpretation of American exceptionalism pointed to Iraq and demanded democracy at any cost.

Their staunch belief in American exceptionalism also led them to distrust intergovernmental organizations (like the United Nations) and multilateral efforts in foreign

policy. Bush made sure the world understood by appointing John Bolton, noted internationally for his disbelief in the legitimacy of intergovernmental organizations, as ambassador to the United Nations. It would be like sending an anarchist to Congress — the very act seems to contradict itself and lampoon the whole system.

During President Obama's campaign run in 2008, he was criticized for saying he "believe(d) in American exceptionalism, just as I imagine that Greeks believe in Greek exceptionalism and the British believe in British exceptionalism." What Obama meant by this was that he had great pride in America but he did not believe in the more fundamentalist approach to American supremacy that runs rampant in neo-conservatism and was so dominant during the Bush years.

That is why the change of tone in foreign policy is warmly welcomed. I know Obama's foreign policy largely mirrors that of George W. Bush, as is the case with most presidents, but the willingness to simply engage in multilateral talks points to a brighter future. After his speech criticizing Libya's Muammar Gaddafi and the violent suppression of demonstrations, some criticized him for sounding too soft. But only a few days later, the UN Security Council voted unanimously to impose sanctions on Libya with an arms embargo and asset freeze. Thus, however "soft" Obama may have sounded in his speech, his administration, led by UN Ambassador Susan Rice, was actively working to gain UN approval for sanctions in an effort to support the Libyan people oust Gaddafi.

The change in tone has a couple benefits. Forcing democracy on a country like the Bush administration did during the Iraq War can

often backfire. There is a body of literature in international relations about the convergence of political institutions and political culture. Essentially, democracy demands a participant political culture, a culture that understands the political process and recognizes the inherent value in individuals so that citizens see each other as equals. Subject political cultures, which arise under authoritarian regimes, can lead to corrupt politics because civil society has not developed the mechanisms to aggregate interests and hold politicians accountable. However, letting a desire for democracy to develop organically ushers in the transition from a subject political culture to a participant culture because it demonstrates that each person has a stake in their political future. This, along with the empathy that is generated among the people as they unify against a corrupt government, helps usher in the transition to a democratic culture. The other benefit is that it increases the U.S.'s standing in the world when we stand alongside other countries rather than pursuing our own agenda unilaterally.

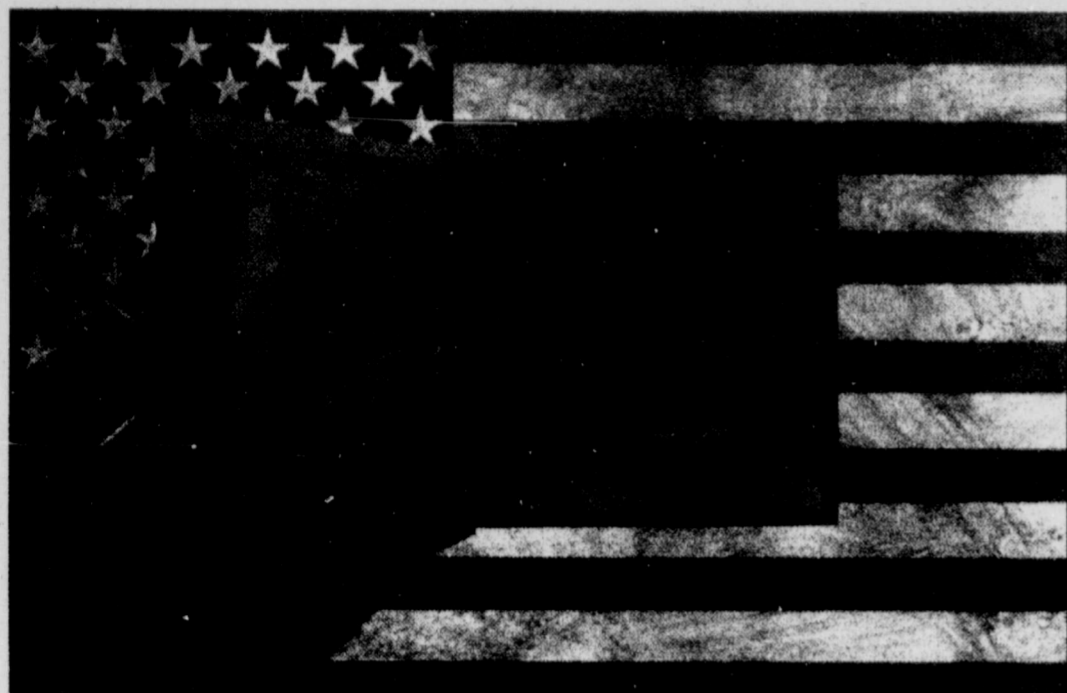
By working collaboratively to spread freedom and democracy, the U.S. has awoken from its Providential nightmare, where fantasies about a moral and righteous purpose absolves us of responsibility for the very real hardship and violence that that very belief generates. The U.S. has stood with the people in all the uprisings in the Middle East and will continue to do so. And the violence in Libya is simply intolerable and inexcusable. But by working with other democracies around the world, not only will we generate better policy, but we will be demonstrating the very values that we believe mark us as "exceptional."

In its most fundamental form it says that God created America to spread liberty and democracy across the world.

— Jeremy Cutcher
Liberal columnist



It's time to find solutions to nation's budget problems



Peter Goldmark, a former publisher of the *International Herald Tribune*, wrote this for *Newsday*.

It takes a lot to get me really mad — but I am deeply angry at the lunacy I see in the halls of Congress on the subject of the deficit. We all should be, for the simple reason that the stakes are so high. The debate on the deficit is really about our economic future. We have a big course correction

to make — and if the loonies in Congress screw it up, our children and grandchildren will pay dearly for generations to come.

Things are seriously out of kilter. We have more than 13 million unemployed and the stuttering recovery isn't reaching them. The deficit is growing. And more than two years after the bubble of phony loans, phony books and deranged derivatives popped, neither the president

nor either party in Congress has put forward a serious 3- to 5-year plan to get us back on course and avoid the economic train wreck waiting if we do nothing.

We need to do what America has always done in the past when in trouble.

We need to reach down for strong solutions, even if they're very difficult. We debate them, pound the table and yell at each other a while — and then we hammer out a compromise and roll up our sleeves and implement it. That's how America works its way out of trouble pragmatically and prospers.

That compromise solution should include steps to create jobs for the unemployed and low-income folks getting pummeled in this recession; restraints on the reckless cost escalation built into Medicare and Medicaid; slight adjustments in Social Security; and a modest tax on consumption to boost federal revenue and encourage people to save and invest rather than buy, spend and borrow.

These steps are hardly radical — and some are practically obvious.

Indeed, they're practically obvious. But is any such plan being put forward? No. Instead we have a new Republican majority in the House congratulating itself for passing a series of tiny, meaningless cuts in a small sector of the budget — cuts that won't create any jobs or have any material impact on the deficit.

These same Republicans voted to repeal the health insurance program with its cost controls — one of the few programs that actually limits long-term spending. But they shy away from cutting \$5 billion in tax subsidies to the oil companies. They savage family planning for the poor and take police off the street — but these chest-thumping budget-cutters don't dare touch huge subsidies for some of the largest and wealthiest companies in the world. And what do these sacrosanct subsidies actually go for? Accelerating the annual flow of nearly half a trillion dollars for foreign oil, a gaping wound that bleeds our economy and endangers

our security.

They won't cut where the budget is growing most dangerously, in the health sector. Instead, the Republicans insisted on extending a need-less tax cut for the wealthiest among us — which won't help the unemployed and will make the deficit a lot worse for all.

Now some of them are talking about letting the entire government shut down. That's like saying: "If you don't do what we want, we're going to shoot both you and ourselves in the head." Shutting down the government in an argument about the debt ceiling would be like holding up a big sign to the rest of the world saying: "Don't Count on Us." In these turbulent times that is not a useful message to be sending one's economic partners and creditors.

You can have the tea party. Its adherents don't seem to have any answers to our problems, and they prefer senseless tirades to thinking and hard work. But if anyone wants a Sanity Party, I'm joining up.

Danger: search engine manipulation gives companies too much power

Edward Wasserman is Knight professor of journalism ethics at Washington and Lee University.

When it comes to directing people's attention, there has never been anything as powerful as today's vast online search engines, and when it comes to search engines, nobody can touch Google, whose sites handle an estimated 88 billion queries a month, roughly two-thirds the world total.

Users don't have any idea how Google decides the order in which it presents search results, and that ranking is the most consequential thing Google does. That's because search engines may look far and wide, but their users do not. If your company doesn't show up at or near the top of Google's results, it's invisible.

A survey last May by the online advertising network Chitika found that the No. 1 search result drew over one-third of all traffic the results generated — twice as much as No. 2, three times the traffic of No. 3. Being on the first page of rankings was critical. Even No. 10, at the bottom of page 1, drew nearly two and a half times the traffic of No. 11, at the top of the second page.

So any retailer that wants to reach customers online cares intensely about its rankings, and is eager for ploys to ensure prominence. Hence the business of SEO — search engine optimization. SEO is focused on figuring out Google's rankings and giving Google what it's looking for. Which is what? Only Google knows, and its search methodology is about as widely shared as the formula for Coke.

What is known is that Google puts great weight not just on traffic flows, but on how well regarded a particular site is, and tries to measure that regard by calculating the number, and to some extent, the quality of other sites

that link to it. Google likes to think it is reflecting some prevailing judgment of a site's value.

But that judgment can be counterfeited. One extraordinary instance, uncovered recently by The New York Times, involved JC Penney, the venerable Main Street retailer. Apparently, for months Penney was the top-ranked site if you searched for terms as disparate as "skinny jeans," "home decor," "area rugs," "dresses," and "table cloths." Penney even pulled more traffic for "Samsonite carry on luggage" than Samsonite's own site.

How come? Penney's success was traced to an SEO consultant who had, essentially, contracted with more than 2,000 web pages that had no discernible purpose apart from linking to sites like Penney's — for pay. Penney's fortunes rose thanks to this virtual ballot-stuffing.

In a second case, The Wall Street Journal reported that retailer Overstock.com had been caught offering discounts to college students and faculty for linking to Overstock from various search terms, among them "gift baskets" and "bunk beds." Overstock's rankings soared because the links came from sites with the ".edu" suffix reserved for schools. Google apparently assigns great weight to .edu sites, since they rarely link to commercial entities and their endorsements are thought to be especially credible.

Google's response in both instances was terrible and swift. It took undisclosed measures that, in Penney's case, led to its average position for 59 search terms plummeting from 1.3 to 52 within two weeks. Overstock had been at or near the top for dozens of keywords, but within days had plummeted to the fifth or six page of results, the functional equivalent of vanishing.

The tales are disturbing on sev-

eral counts.

— First, the vulnerability of the rankings to manipulation. With 300 million domain names to police, Google is preposterously out-gunned.

— Second, the quiet, unchallengeable ferocity of the response. You don't have to support fraud to agree with the Times reader who posted: "Was anyone else spooked by Google virtually eliminating a company from existence by removing it entirely from search results?"

— Third, the non-transparency of the whole search business. What could be more opaque? The retailers' actions certainly seem wrong, but says who? If the principles guiding search shape public awareness in sweeping ways, shouldn't we know what they are? Besides, Google itself routinely features its own spinoffs — Google Product Search, Google News and YouTube — high up on its results. Is that OK? Why do I get three "Google Maps" links on page 1 when I type in "driving directions?"

Now Google is incorporating recommendations from your social media "friends" to personalize the search results you get. Who authorized Google to help itself to that information? And precisely how will your so-called friends' opinions alter the rankings you see?

Google is an extraordinary company, and its credo of "do no harm" is impressive. But it's difficult to think of another private, profit-seeking entity that has ever exercised such vast power over what the world thinks about and pays attention to. That's a profoundly public function, and with it comes an obligation of accountability that Google has so far bungled.



First of all, you say that you researched for domestic issues. What about what is going on in Wisconsin, Ohio, and that region? Secondly, what happens in the Middle East is none of our business; if our oil supply and Europe's is disrupted who cares? These people have been living in poverty and under corrupt governments for too long and when they finally get a revolution started we have the nerve to basically say, do they deserve it? This country fought for what it believed in 200 years ago, let the Middle East fight for what they believe is right. The people of the Middle East should not have to live in poverty, in corrupt governments, or dictatorships for our own benefit.

— Walter
In response to "The domino effect of revolution in the Middle East"

Looks like P90X will be back and strong as ever.

Great, informative article. Answered all my questions.

— Joe
In response to "Recreation Center closing until January 2012"

I find this horribly offensive. You've done a disservice to humanity by insinuating that it could be considered socially acceptable not to engage in reproductive acts. In fact, Caitlyn, our survival as a species depends entirely upon our ability to get down.

More seriously, writing this article was thoughtful of you, but we'd all much rather see you push boundaries. Don't let naysayers get you down. And let's be realistic, it's a

sex column: writing about abstinence is like filling a water bottle with air. No fun. We've already been told why not to have sex by parents, religious figures and high school health classes. It's time someone started helping people to have a healthy sex-life. Abstinence is not a facet of sex, it is the lack thereof.

Next week I hope to see something more controversial than your blowjob article, but please, not as offensive or stomach-turning as this week's.

— Austin Mello
In response to "In defense of abstinence"

Ok so, I just got accepted to Cal Poly for Fall 2011. This is the first article I have read of this Mustang Daily and based on the actual article and the plethora of responses, I am so excited to go to school here!

— Joel
In response to "Blow his mind with a classic blowjob"

Allow me to point out the obvious: Anyone care to guess who the most well-read reporter is at this newspaper?

P.S. Don't let the puritans get you down.

— San Diego PR Guy
In response to "Blow his mind with a classic blowjob"

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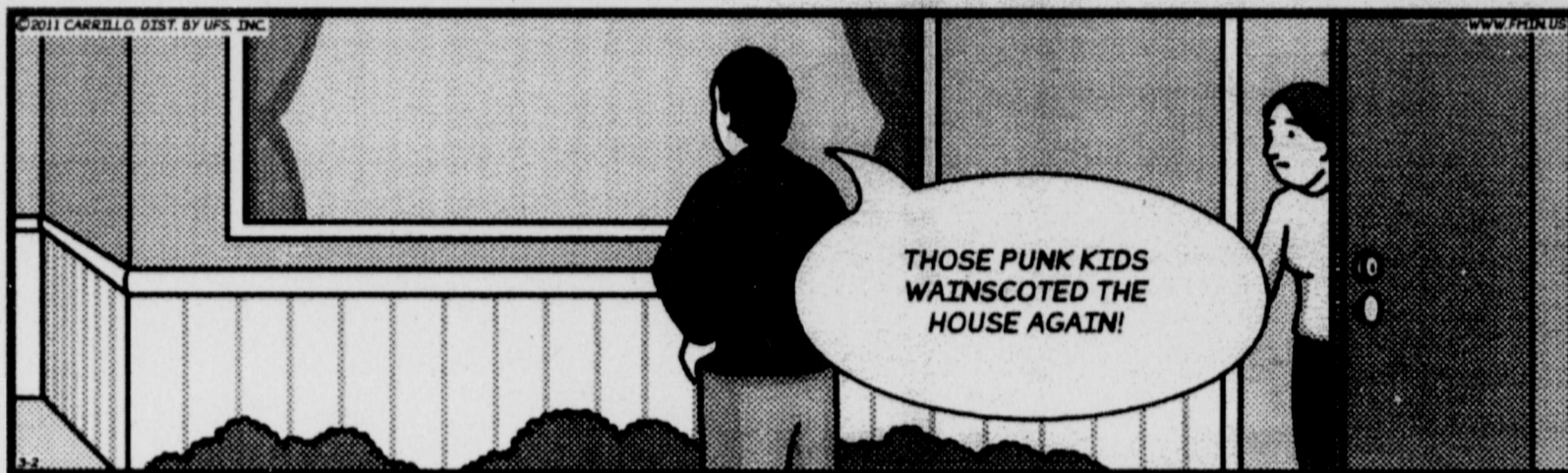
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 - Discharge
 - Monastic title
 - Trunk item (2 wds.)
 - Rifle range needs
 - Sunflower grower
 - Wolfed
 - Partitions
 - Falls softly
 - Bright star in Orion
 - Vain dude
 - Hard to get
 - Mentors
 - Congee
 - DDE's command
 - "Walk Away —"
 - In dire straits
 - Rats on
 - Platoon mems.
 - Soothsayer
 - Like pop and beer
 - Ernie K-Doe song of yore (hyph.)
 - Bronze or iron
 - Lotion ingredient
 - Comics canine
 - Toughen up
 - Steering apparatus
 - Humerus neighbor
 - Wiped out
 - Linchpin site
 - Chair
 - Venetian blinds

PREVIOUS PUZZLE SOLVED

FARCE	DALE	URLS
ORION	IGET	NEAP
GIANT	SHOCK	WAVE
	FRACAS	AIDED
RAPIERS	GPS	
EMINEM	CHAPEAUX	
HERES	AROMA	DNA
ALAS	BLASE	SVEN
SIC	FOIST	SHIVA
HAYWORTH	BIASED	
	ALE	PARVENU
AVAIL	MUESLI	
HOLLYHOCK	ONEND	
ACME	RULE	IGLOO
BEAD	SEAS	NSYNC

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| 28 Installs electricity | 49 — Ingalls Wilder |
| 29 Flu symptom | 50 Leggy bird |
| 30 Grand —, Nova Scotia | 51 Exploits |
| 31 Dist. from the equator | 53 Like gossip |
| 32 Pizarro's quest | 54 La — (weather phenomenon) |
| 33 Pealed | 59 Not even one |

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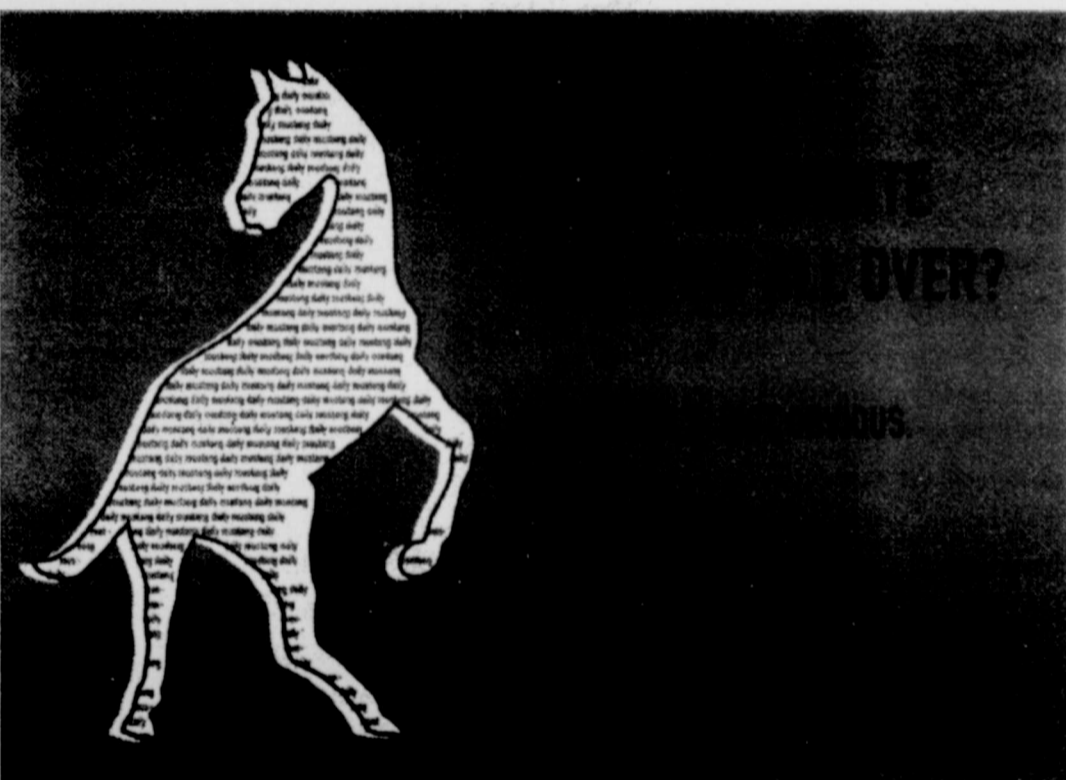
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Woody learns that, while he and Buzz are toys, guns are *not* toys.

Fischback

continued from page 16

back found out he tore cartilage in his chest, where the ribs meet the sternum. No surgery was required, but it did take some months of rehabilitation to get back to the field. When he was cleared to play, he immediately took the field again.

"If you could put a moment on it, that is when it happened," Fischback said. "I started throwing over Christmas break, just on a football field back up north in Walnut Creek ... Long toss, playing catch probably about 100 feet."

In a matter of minutes, Fischback's pitching career came to a screeching halt. After all the years he spent playing baseball, all the innings he pitched to get his Division I scholarship and all the hard work he put in

to getting to this point, a torn labrum nearly wiped the slate clean. He underwent surgery, remaining optimistic his career would still be on track.

But as time went on, his arm said otherwise.

"The doctor said nine to 12 months," Randy said. "If Steven was going to come back, he'd know in nine to 12 months. Well, nine months went by and he said 'It's still sore. I can barely throw' and then 12 months went by and then he just said, 'I don't think I am going to throw again.'"

Serviceable

Randy recalls one specific conversation he had with Fischback, word for word.

Close to the 12-month deadline his doctor had set for him, his arm still felt sore. His fastball still registered in the low 80s and — at this

point — a return to collegiate dominance looked far out of the picture.

"Dad, I would just love to get back out on the mound and just be serviceable," Randy recalls his son telling him. "I would like to get back to the team and just give them some serviceable innings. If I pitched the 6th and 7th inning in a few games, it would just be so fun to get out there again."

Fischback knew the history. Arm surgeries for pitchers pretty much act like brick walls. You either pick up enough steam to get past it, or you simply never do. Not even MLB stars like Mark Prior and Jason Schmidt could work hard enough to revive their careers after arm injuries.

But digit by digit on the radar gun, Fischback aimed for a comeback.

"He went through weeks and months at a time where things didn't get better and we had to shut him down and reevaluate his throwing program," head coach Larry Lee said. "He got to a certain point where progress was very slow and limited."

And despite setback after setback, Fischback kept to it. Velocity remains the hardest thing to regain. Before the injury, Fischback would consistently clock a low 90 mile per hour fastball. During his recovery, he would sit in the bullpen during his recovery and — at best — scrape 81.

Two years later, after hours in the bullpen, Fischback is back to an 86-89 mile per hour fastball, almost 10 miles per hour better than what he was throwing in the fall.

"He has worked really hard and he has been rehabbing," pitcher Kyle Anderson said. "He is definitely putting

in the work and it is his time now, he deserves it."

Don't call it a comeback

Pitching hasn't been Cal Poly's strong suit in recent seasons.

With a staff ERA of 6.75, Cal Poly struggled to a 23-32 record last year. Injuries plagued the Mustangs on the mound, and with relievers filling in for starters, it was hard for Cal Poly to find success. With Fischback now healthy, some of his teammates are hoping they can turn that number around. The better Fischback can do, the better the team will do, Anderson said.

"I think those will correlate pretty strongly," Anderson said. "If he pitches real well, like I know he can, I feel like we can go a long way."

If Fischback does return to the pitcher he used to be, Lee will have a new weapon to work with. With Mason Radeke starting on Fridays, Fischback is expected to pitch Saturdays and provide a 1-2 punch Cal Poly hasn't had for years.

"He is a key component of having a good weekend starting rotation," Lee said. "We're hoping that as the season progresses, he gets better with each outing. He'll be a big part of our success, so we hope that he gets back to where he used to be."

After what seemed to be an improbable comeback to the field this season, Fischback is certainly on that path. Against Missouri, Fischback retired nine straight batters and posted three straight scoreless innings. He then went on to shutout Oklahoma

State in three innings after giving up three runs in the first last Sunday.

"I think as the season goes on, there is no reason he can't get back to what he was doing on the mound as a sophomore," Anderson said.

Still, after a comeback where Fischback showed everybody the things he can do, there are still things he can't. But amidst all the negatives, Fischback sees positives. In the process of picking up the pieces of a shattered MLB dream, baseball has become less stressful. There are no more scouts to impress, and no more stats to pad.

Slowly, this game has become so much more than just a shot at a paycheck.

"Baseball has become a lot more fun," Fischback said. "I don't view it as a future career anymore. I would welcome being drafted after this year, but it has become a lot more about just enjoying my last year and leaving everything on the table."

And for Fischback, that satisfaction is worth millions.

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When Randy Fischback told his sister he was traveling to watch his son Steven Fischback pitch against Missouri, she broke down in tears. After an injury halted Fischback's MLB-gear career close to three years ago, she never thought this day would come.

And at times, Fischback didn't either.

"I remember just being in the bullpen, my arm acting up, throwing 81 and just thinking, 'Wow, when am I going to have to call it quits?'" Fischback said. "I wasn't going to do it until I either hurt myself again or the coach told me I wasn't going to play. There were definitely times where I thought both those situations might arise."

After his sophomore season, Fischback tore the labrum in his right shoulder playing catch — sending what was a career that looked to be steamrolling toward the major leagues in a downward spiral of pain and rehabilitation. One twist of the shoulder benched Fischback for 113 games and left him unable to return to the game he loved for close to three years.

"No one can predict an injury, and when you are the parent of a pitcher, in terms of pitching, that is your worst nightmare," Randy said. "You quickly start hearing about other people's success stories, and then you hear the horror stories. It was a real mixed bag, and after the injury, we just didn't know what to think."

But after three years of hard-fought rehab, Fischback's back. He went 4 1/3 innings and allowed four earned runs to Missouri in his first game back with the Mustangs since May 25, 2008. Last Sunday, he went five innings and gave up

three earned runs against Oklahoma State.

It's hardly the picture perfect return he imagined, but following the blur of bullpen sessions and grueling exercises, not even a few blemishes on the stat sheet could knock the smile off Fischback's face. After all, he has come a long way just to get to this point.

Long toss

Fischback's career was just on its way up, before everything came crumbling down.

After starting just three games his freshman year, Fischback started 14 the next season. He finished with a 4.55 ERA in a team-high 85 innings. He also racked up 75 strikeouts and held batters to a .263 batting average.

"Leaving high school, we thought his career was on a good, solid upward trajectory," Randy said. "He had a decent freshman year, but it was very solid sophomore year, so we thought he would get drafted after his junior year and go pro and all that."

There was a certain hype about Fischback. After his sophomore season and a summer season in the Alaskan Baseball League with the Mat-Su Miners, the MLB scouts started talking. He was tabbed as the 25th-best prospect in College Baseball Top 50 Countdown.

Then, the pain started.

"I threw 85 innings my sophomore year and then I went to Alaska and threw 30 to 40 more, which my body had never done," Fischback said. "It crossed my mind that might do something."

Turns out, it did.

After heading back home following a summer up north, Fisch-

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Fischback's back

After a two-season hiatus from the game, the fifth-year senior is back for a final season



BRIAN DE LOS SANTOS MUSTANG DAILY

Angels' Brandon Wood says he's more mature and confident

Kevin Baxter
LOS ANGELES TIMES

TEMPE, Ariz. — Brandon Wood says he's a more mature player this spring, and not just because he turns 26 on Wednesday.

He also got married three months ago, and then there's what Wood endured last summer when he batted .146 with more than twice as many strikeouts as hits.

No major leaguer with as many as 200 plate appearances did worse.

"I learned a lot, so, yeah, I've matured," Wood says. "And my confidence level is higher that it was at any point last year."

Manager Mike Scioscia hopes so, because the Angels are out of options with Wood. That means they can't demote him to the minors without first offering him to other organizations. Along with time, the Angels also appear to be running out of patience.

"There's a sense of urgency with Brandon," Scioscia said. "He knows that coming off of last season that he's

a better player than he showed.

"The bottom line is this: the experience he had last year, if it doesn't make him a more mature ballplayer, a better ballplayer, then it's really a shame."

Wood gave reason for hope Tuesday when, in his first spring training at-bat, he stroked a two-strike changeup from Cincinnati's Johnny Cueto into left field for a double, sparking a two-run rally that lifted the Angels to a 2-1 spring training victory.

The Angels figure to break camp later this month with 12 pitchers on their 25-man roster. Add the nine starters in the batting order, a backup catcher and a reserve outfielder, and that leaves two spots for three players: Wood, utility infielder Alberto Callaspo and slugging first baseman Mark Trumbo.

That window could open a bit wider if first baseman Kendry Morales continues to struggle in coming back from the broken ankle he suffered last May. Morales, who reported to spring training carrying as many as 15 extra pounds, still can't run without the aid

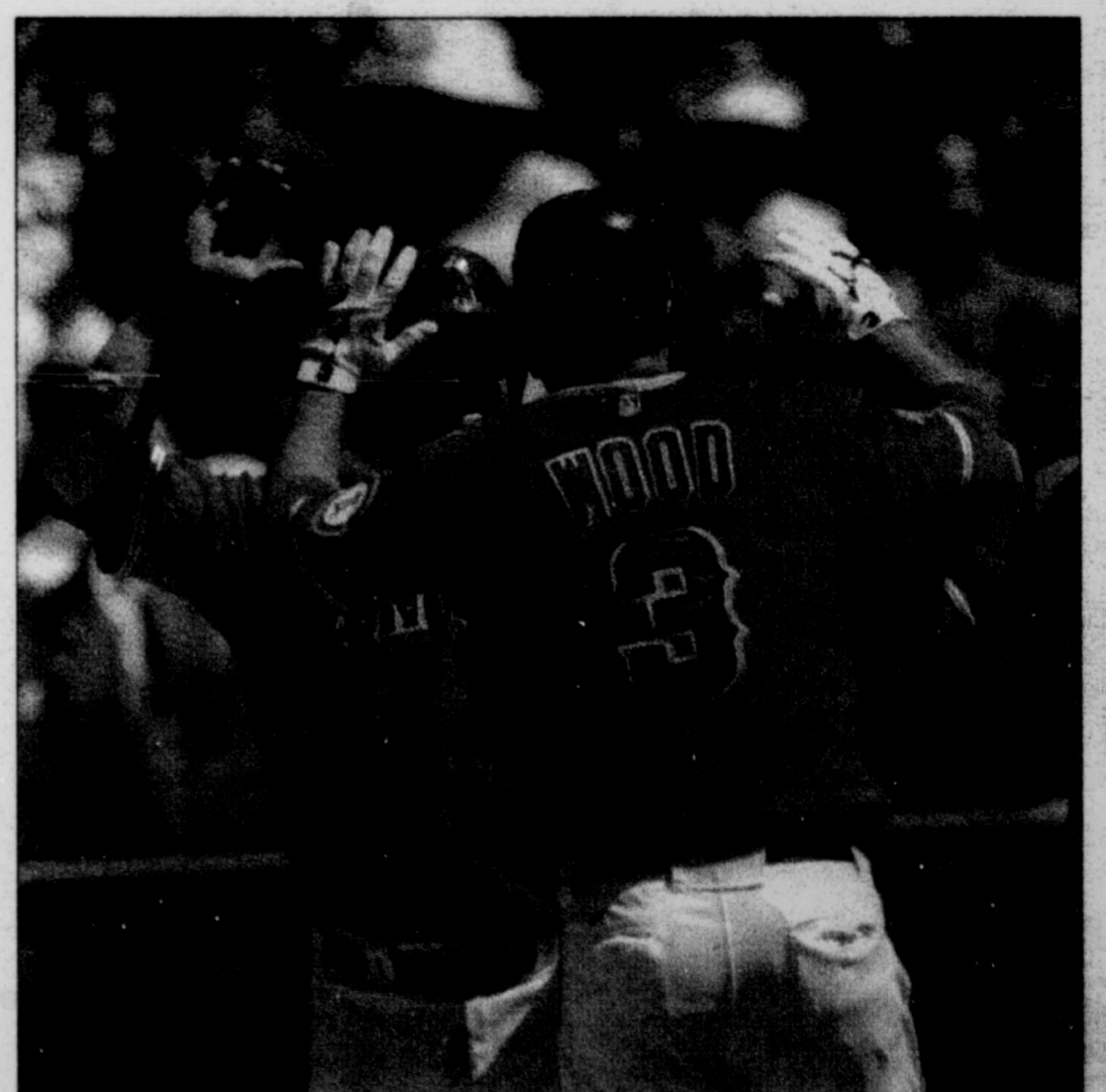
of a special harness that keeps him from placing all his weight on his ankles. Plus, he's missed the last two days with flu-like symptoms and a 103-degree fever.

Wood, who has played third, first and shortstop in the majors, isn't doing any math when it comes to figuring out his role on the team.

"I felt like I was coming in this spring training in a positive direction, more so than I was last year," he said. "I don't feel the pressure of trying to make this club. I don't feel the pressure of trying to make the starting lineup, or the utility role. None of that's in my mind. My mind is absolutely clear."

So, he says, is his swing, which he refined in off-season sessions with Arizona neighbor Kevin Long, a New York Yankees batting instructor.

"I'm so relaxed and not worrying about numbers. I know I can play well enough to be in the big leagues and play every day," he said. "Last year was my low point and it was a great learning experience."



Angels' Brandon Wood hit .146 with 14 RBIs in 81 games last season.