

# The Summit

March 30 2012 Volume 36 Nº 2



## Spring Break 'Staycations'

Favorite spots to visit in San Diego County, see pages 7-10, 15-16



## Grossmont's 50th anniversary festival

pages 5-6

*Seals enjoy the sun at outdoor Children's Pool in La Jolla*  
(Photo by Scott Walters)



GROSSMONT  
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# Variety marks ASGC Vendor Fair

Free sushi, \$1 tacos, bargain goods and music; sounds like the stuff of a fair! In fact it was. Thursday Feb. 23 was the ASGC vendor fair to increase awareness about the Associated Students of Grossmont College, while showing some benefits gained through the \$12 ASGC membership.

With the event being DJed by Griffin Radio, the Associated Students of Grossmont College were present and selling fresh \$1 carne asada tacos.

Fusion Sushi SEI had the biggest draw with a variety of free sushi to taste. Located on 8862 Navajo Rd, Fusion sushi offers 10% off with student IDs and 20% off with an ASGC card.

Other vendors included Buck Jones who asserted, "When it comes to computers there's nothing I can not fix." Jones can be reached at [www.buckjones.net](http://www.buckjones.net). La Dolce Belladonna Salon is offering 20% off with the ASGC membership card for details visit [www.LDBsalon.com](http://www.LDBsalon.com).

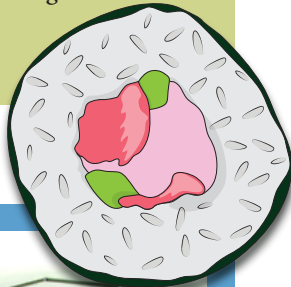
The event had vendors selling everything from jewelry and sunglasses to incense and clothing.

Photos and story  
by Scott Walters

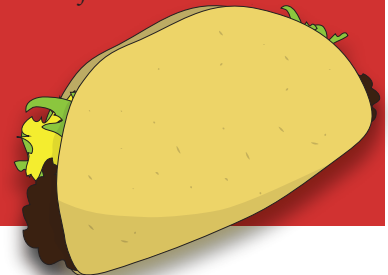
Photo Editor



*A vendor selling incense and clothing*



*Ed Cruz prepares the carne asada for tacos*



*Students gather around to receive their free sushi*

# Math tutors available at Tech Center

Students who need help with courses in math and statistics can find tutors at the Math Study Center on campus.

Shawn Hicks, math instructor, and Kathleen Flynn, lab specialist, and other tutors are available from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. from Monday to Thursday and until 3 p.m. on Friday. The center is located inside the Tech Mall in Room 112 of Building 70.

The procedure is as follows: Students use their Grossmont Identification Cards to log in, thereby providing proof to their math instructors that they used the service, and documentation to state authorities who keep track of usage in order to determine qualification for funding.

Students begin studying by themselves or with friends or other students who seek help. When students raise their hands, they are assigned available tutors. The hours between 9:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. are the busiest, so students needing extensive help are advised by Flynn and Hicks to come to the center later in the day.

"Anything taught here at Grossmont, in relation to math, the tutors can help with," Hicks said.

On any given shift, five tutors work with individual students and one is assigned to work with a nearby class.

Randa Ayyath, who has been tutoring at the center for eight years, stressed that patience is important, "I feel bad when students aren't getting the material and they're frustrated with themselves, I know that all I have to do is to stay patient with them."

Flynn said it was unfortunate that there aren't any tutoring sessions available to students on weekends due to budget cuts. The shortage of time is exacerbated by the fact that the center has grown increasingly more popular, creating more competition for tutors' time.

Tutors are experts in Calculus and Statistics.

Hicks noted that the Center offers workshops in such subjects as algebra, statistics and trigonometry. Also offered are mathematics reviews, needed by biology and chemistry students, Hicks said.

By Dylan Burke  
News Editor

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# Newlyweds met on campus

Their neighboring Middle Eastern countries went to war within recent memory, but Shahad Dawood and Ramzi Ali met at Grossmont College, where they fell in love. Just this month, on March 11, they were married.

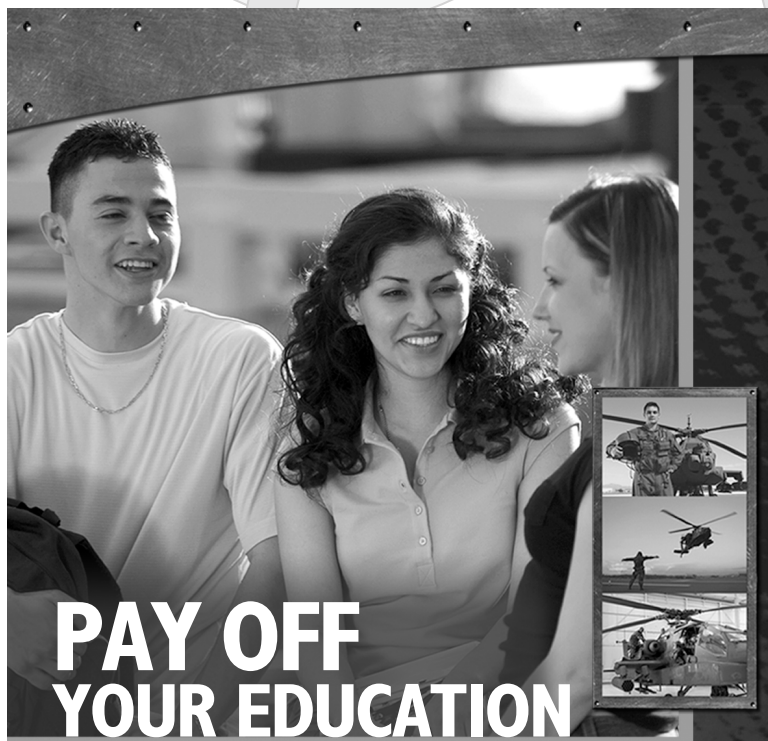
Shahad, 19, is from Iraq, the country that in 1991, invaded Kuwait, where Ramzi, 27, once lived. Though Shahad was not yet born, and Ramzi was only 6 when the war occurred, for many people the wounds have not healed.

Shahad, a business administration major, plans to graduate from Grossmont and continue studying at San Diego State University. "I should have my degree and work to support my husband," she said.

This is different from expectations in the Middle East, where the responsibility is entirely upon the man to pay the family's expenses. Here in the United States, both partners work to pay their bills.

Born in the United States, though living in Kuwait where his father had a job when the war broke out, Ramzi, a graduate of UCSD who now works as a bank officer, says he looks forward to eating home-cooked meals prepared by his bride. "I hate the junk food that I used to eat in the past."

**By Amir Al-Tamimi**  
El Cajon Bureau Chief



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They met when Ramzi accompanied to Grossmont College a relative who needed help registering. When he saw Shahad, he said his heart dropped the height of the Empire State Building. His relative asked around about her, and they met again in a parking lot. The next time, he brought a red flower and told her his feelings.

The bride's parents wanted their daughter to complete her college education first, but eventually the two families agreed.

The couple plans to celebrate their first anniversary on the Grossmont campus.



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# Golden anniversary fete set for April 13-14

A 50-year anniversary doesn't happen every day, so Grossmont College will celebrate its golden moment in history with a blowout weekend of free events for the community to enjoy April 13 and 14 at the El Cajon campus.

Courtesy of Grossmont College  
Public Information Office

Music lovers, foodies, dancers, amateur scientists, artists, CSI fans, poets, fitness and health devotees, theater lovers, techies, gamers, math whizzes – there's something for everyone. So much so that visitors will want to come both days for the hands-on activities and demonstrations showcasing Grossmont's incredible offerings and extensive learning opportunities.

## Students react to gas prices

By Dylan Burke  
News Editor

Rising gas prices are causing students' financial concerns to rise as well.

With the price for regular well over \$4.00, students Karla Martinez, Ashley Jackson and Alicia Rodriguez recently were asked how the price of gasoline affected them.

Martinez said, "I drive a bulky SUV so the price increase sucks! Carpooling has always been an option, especially since the prices change daily."

Jackson said, "I honestly think that these gas prices will affect my social life, considering that I'm not willing to drive without gas money."


"I feel like carpooling is a better option," said Rodriguez. She added that she also would consider taking the bus.

There's another inconvenience as prices increase, gas lines lengthen with drivers wanting to fill up before the next price hike.

"Our faculty and staff are opening our doors and inviting local residents to take advantage of the incredible resources that are available in their backyard," said Grossmont College President Sunny Cooke.

*(Continued on page 6)*

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# Golden anniversary April 13-14...

(Continued from page 5)

"We're hosting a fun-filled, family-oriented festival that will appeal to the community like never before."

Featuring an old-fashioned Sock Hop dance, free samples from a dozen gourmet food trucks, cooking classes, a dedication ceremony for the college's two newest high-tech buildings, and even the opportunity to join in an attempt to set a new world record, the two days will be jam-packed with events celebrating the college's half-century of academic excellence in the East County.

Dubbed "A 50-year Spectacular," the celebration kicks off 6:30 p.m. Friday at the college's Main Quad with student musical performances until 7:30 p.m. of the gospel choir, jazz ensemble and Afro-Cuban ensemble. The celebration will end at 2 p.m. Saturday.

The Sock Hop dance at 7:30 p.m. will cap Friday's celebration with Footloose, a live classic oldies band in the Main Gym for all ages. Free dance lessons in a classroom near the Main Gym will have you doing the twist and the mashed potato in no time to show off at the Sock Hop.

Among Saturday's events: a 9:30 a.m. dedication ceremony for Grossmont's remodeled student center, along with the Student Services and Administration building; a Department Fair from 10 to 11:30 a.m. and from 12:30 to 2 p.m., and the Guinness World's Record attempt at noon in the Main Quad with free T-shirts for joining in.

After working up an appetite, enjoy the low-cost, savory fare of a dozen gourmet food trucks from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

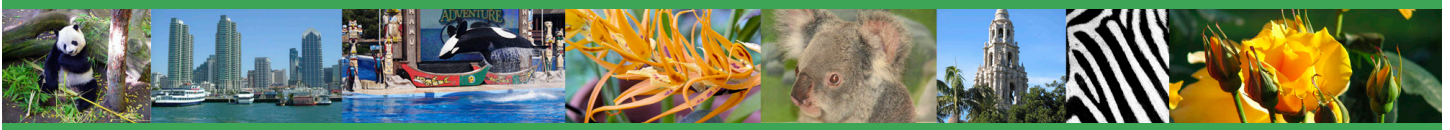
The Department Fair will feature the latest educational innovations and technologies of Grossmont's departments and disciplines, including theater arts, music, health professions, culinary arts, math and English, administration of justice, and exercise science.

## April 13-14 Golden Anniversary Festival events

- Create your own video game, dissect a sheep brain, and make your own lip balm, lipstick and super bouncy balls.
- Draw and paint either digitally or with paints and pencils.
- Compete in a mathematics "Wheel of Fortune" game.
- Take a compass traverse and GPS scavenger hunt.
- See a demonstration of a rooftop telescope. \*Combine a golf cart ride with a math quiz from the Math. An incorrect answer means the ride is over.
- Tour a mock indoor crime scene, blood-spatter room and bullet trajectory demonstration.
- Perform CPR on a mannequin, get an arm or finger cast, and view one's oral bacteria under a microscope.
- Watch student performances at the college theatre.
- Enjoy Arabic dancing.
- Learn job-hunting techniques at the Career Center.
- Get information on enrolling in college, transferring to a four-year campus and making learning affordable.
- Use collage and cut-ups to create a "Zine," or homemade magazine and learn new techniques using popular software.
- Receive tips on baking with chocolate and vegetables and fruit carving from the Culinary Arts department.
- Attend youth sports clinics led by college coaches on football, soccer, basketball, volleyball, tennis and softball.
- Get a free body mass index reading at the Student Health Services office and a demonstration of an ultrasound echo machine.
- Learn about stroke risk, heart attacks, breast and skin cancer prevention, poison prevention, cholesterol and blood pressure control, and get fall-prevention tips at a health promotion fair.
- Receive souvenir snapshots from the Photography Department of yourself in accessories from the college's Theatre Arts Costume Shop
- Hear Grossmont's first-ever Poetry Slam hosted by the English Department.
- Attend other discussions and presentations include the pre-Inca people of Bolivia, competing statewide propositions, student readings of classical philosophy and a professional storyteller in the library.

More information may be found online at [www.grossmont.edu/50years](http://www.grossmont.edu/50years).





## San Diego 'Staycations'

### Balboa Park: Perfect relaxation spot



#### *Botanical building*

A sculpture located in the middle of the village, "The Court Jester" by Yuri Akopov, made me wonder why the sculptor chose that pose, why he selected those colors and why his sculpture is the shape and size it is. All these questions made this sculpture interesting.

I enjoyed people-watching at the large fountain where one day, perhaps, I can bring my own children and watch them run in circles over and over again without a care in the world. Nearby street performers and magicians added to the ambiance.

One performer challenged me to a test if I was worthy of the meaning of the musical-note tattoo that runs down my arm. We gave an impromptu performance. People started to gather and cheer and I learned some new vocal techniques. Street performing is an experience that many aspiring musicians should try one day.

At the end of the day, exhausted but really, really happy; I was so pleased I had decided to visit Balboa Park. Imagine, I used to think Balboa Park was boring and lifeless, but now that I'm older and more mature I am able to see how beautiful Balboa Park is. I am very willing to come back to Balboa Park again.

The Project for Public Squares has ranked Balboa Park one of the best parks in the world. No wonder. It's a nice, calm, gentle place where a visitor can relax and not worry about anything at all. It's a place one can escape the harsh realities, a park where sad, frustrated and worried faces seem to have been banished.

One of the attractions, the Botanical Building, is an indoor garden in which I could just sit for days. If I stood up I was able to see the building's entire interior, with beautiful arrangements of flowers and plants ordered by color and size. If I sat on a bench, I felt like I was in an endless jungle with no exit-- but, then, why would anyone want to exit?

Another attraction that caught my eye was Spanish Village, an area devoted to art studios. They are built around a plaza that looks as if a person threw paint buckets of every color everywhere. The bright colors of the village gave me a warm, inviting, and refreshing feeling; they bade me to enter this other world.

The studios feature artists at work in a variety of media. The artists fashion their creations in public view, inviting passersby to witness the techniques that they use in order to create such beautiful pieces of art. A man painting in his studio caught my eye. I was able to sit down next to him and watch him do what he loves to do. I was able to witness the intent of a man's life in the few minutes I shared with him.

Photos and story  
by Sean Asuncion

Arts Editor



*Fountain between the Natural History Museum  
and Fleet Science Center*



# Museum salutes our U.S. veterans

The Veterans Museum and Memorial Center in Balboa Park is a former Navy chapel that has been transformed into a veterans' showcase. Will Hays, the museum's board chairman, explains that most of the memorabilia donated to the museum has a personal combat or military story tied to it. The museum has acquired many artifacts over the years, and there are even more pieces in storage.

Murals inside the museum depict various events that occurred throughout American history. Hays describes them as "great training aids for children."

Perhaps one of the most interesting pieces in the museum is a flag hanging at what used to be the church's altar. It would make any patriot proud. The tattered flag was the first American flag captured by the Japanese in the Philippines during WWII.

However, a Filipino scout retrieved it before the Japanese occupiers could completely ruin it. The scout buried the flag and, when the fortunes of war were reversed, he came back for it, then transported it to the U.S.

The museum is filled with similar artifacts of the brave men and women who have served their country in the military.

Hays was a Navy captain who served for 34 years and has a plethora of knowledge regarding American History. He urges those interested in learning more to check out what the museum has to offer. Also, volunteers are always welcomed. Yearly memberships are available ranging from \$35 for an individual to \$250 for an organizational membership.

The museum is a great way to remember and recognize the significance of our strong military.

Photos and story  
by Matt Quijas  
Editor



*Mural honors American prisoners of war.  
Signatures include that of John McCain.*

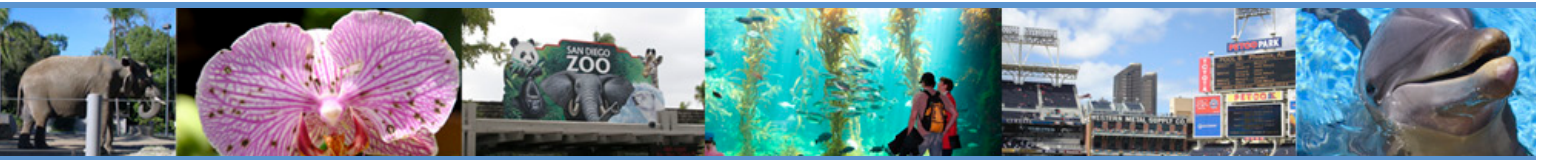


*U.S. flag retrieved by  
Filipino scout*



*Purple Heart Memorial*





# Hillcrest favorites: dining and shopping

Hillcrest, known as the gay part of San Diego, has quite an array of shops and ethnic foods. It's one of my favorite places in all of San Diego and I urge every reader to go for a walk and visit some of the great shops and restaurants. I say walk because that is the only way to take in every wonder this small part of San Diego holds.

Hillcrest is named as such because it is on the crest of a hill that overlooks Mission Valley and flows into Downtown San Diego. The easiest way into Hillcrest is to take the 163 and exit on either the Washington or University offramps.

Whenever I walk through Hillcrest I always find a store or an eatery that I have never before noticed. Recently I discovered The Village Hat Shop. This shop has more types of hats than I realized were out there. You can enter the store from either Fifth or Fourth Avenue off University Avenue.

The first thing you will see, as you walk in from Fourth Avenue is a display showing hats from different parts of the world, including some that were made from trees specific to San Diego. As you walk through this neat and orderly shop you will find hats ranging from the 1920's to those which are popular in today's millinery fashions.

Another place I recommend visiting is a shop called the Glass Jungle, which can be found on the corner of University and Fifth Avenue in the same building as Hollywood Tans. It is a small shop that you will miss if you were to drive past. To be honest I'm not a fan of most reptiles but, regardless of that, this store is still worth looking into. All the animals, which range from chameleons to snakes,

are bred in the store so they are used to being around humans and owners would not have to worry about the animal trying to escape once they took a pet home.

One of the main reasons Hillcrest is known as the "gay" part of town is due to the annual Gay Pride Parade that floats through Hillcrest and ends with a festival in Balboa Park. It is one of San Diego's biggest summer attractions.

If you are staying in San Diego for Spring Break, go and take in the beautiful sites of Hillcrest.



*Numerous original shops can be found in Hillcrest*



*The Hillcrest sign is 25½ - feet long and hangs over University Ave. at Fifth*

Photos and story  
By Jenn Sanders  
Commentary Editor

# Fore-isbee golf popular at Morley Field

Golf has for a long time been a favorite pastime of many as it is considered a challenging game that usually takes place at a picturesque venue. Millions of people enjoy playing it or watching those who can play it at a high enough level to be called professionals.

Similarly, Frisbee playing has been an attraction at recreation spots whether they be beaches or parks. In the not too distant past, a clever person whom some might even describe as a genius, decided to combine the two into one. This decision to unleash Frisbee golf onto society has added a fresh and new way to enjoy yourself in the sunshine.

There are doubters and naysayers, such as are encountered with every new idea. Some sniff that Frisbee golf isn't golf in the classical sense. Others say it will come and eventually go away and is a fad just like sushi.

However, instead of simmering down, the interest in Frisbee golf has become more widespread. There are several Frisbee golf courses around San Diego County and one of the more popular ones is at Morley Field on the east side of Balboa Park. This course is located

very close to the San Diego Zoo. It is open year round from the early morning until darkness.

The prices aren't bad either as rounds range from \$3 on a weekday to \$4 dollars on weekends. There is a pro shop nearby where you can rent golf discs for \$1.50. The ultra thin and light Legacy Rampage is probably your best bet as its considered the best new golf disc out today.

There are also several kinds of snacks and drinks for players before or after their rounds. Monthly tournaments are held, rewarding winners with store credit.

Morley Field is considered such a prestigious place to play that next month the Western Regional Social Championships for Frisbee golf will be held here.

So next time you want to have a great time, Morley Field Frisbee Golf is one of the best bets in San Diego.

By Jimmy Spillane  
Sports Editor

## Benedettis' recital wows churchgoers



*The Benedetti Trio*  
(Photo courtesy of Fred Benedetti)

The Benedetti Trio performed elegantly and inspiringly at the Lakeside Presbyterian Church on March 13th as part of the church's concert series.

The Benedetti Trio is composed of Grossmont Music Department's Co-Chair, Fred Benedetti, playing guitar and vo-

cals, and his two daughters Julia and Regina, on vocals. Fred and his daughters started playing together when a manager of the former Four Seasons Hotel asked Fred if he knew any vocalists when Fred jokingly replied, "well I only know my daughters."

The Trio played everything from Jason Mraz's "I'm Yours" to The Beatles "Come Together" to Frank Sinatra's "Fly Me To The Moon" in what can only be described as the Benedetti twist on popular music.

Benedetti performed an eerie rendition of "The Sound of Silence" that echoed off of the walls and established a pensive feeling in the

audience. His composition of over dubbed guitars stimulated the mind as well as the soul.

Julia and Regina have powerful and contemporary voices that could easily win any TV show vocal competition. Julia's rendition of "Fly Me to the Moon" showed the more mature side of her voice and at the same time exhibited her youthful energy. Regina belted out a beautifully crafted performance of a gospel piece that demonstrated the power in her voice.

As a group you can tell that this family loves performing together. The energy and happiness comes out in their playing and in their singing. The harmonies between them while playing the Beatles "All My Loving" and Jason Mraz's "I'm Yours" were pitch perfect.

The trio ended their set with a wonderful performance of "What a Wonderful World." Their personalities came through and reached out to the audience on this final song.

If you want to catch the Benedetti Trio performing, they play at the Grand Del Mar every Thursday from 7pm-11pm. You may also visit Fred's website at [www.fredbenedetti.com](http://www.fredbenedetti.com) to view his full schedule.

By John Weber  
Managing Editor



# Persian holiday celebrates forces of good

March 19 marked the beginning of Nowruz, a New Year's holiday celebrated at the time of the Spring Equinox in Iran and in neighboring countries such as Iraq and Afghanistan. It's a holiday with roots tracing back to the pre-Muslim era of Persia when Zoroastrianism was a dominant belief in that region.

Students Shamsi Baktyr, originally from Iran, and Rida Alkurdy, who came from the Kurdish area of Iraq, are both students in an English-as-a-Second-Language class here at Grossmont. Last year, the two had a symbolic picnic to mark the Nowruz holiday.

Baktyr said modern Iranians celebrate Nowruz for 13 days. The first few days are spent visiting older members of the family and other relatives and friends. Gifts are exchanged; sweets and feasts will be consumed. On the last day, many people will leave their homes to go to the parks or rural areas to spend a day in nature.

In Zoroastrianism, everything that produced life, or protected and enriched it, was regarded as good. This included all forces of nature beneficial to humans. Earth, water, sky, animals and plants were all good. Justice, honesty, peace, health, beauty, joy and happiness were regarded as belonging to the good forces. All that threatened life and created disorder belonged to the hostile spirits.

Many of the rituals associated with those beliefs are still popular today, notwithstanding the fact that both Iran and Iraq are Muslim countries.

An important aspect of the Nowruz rituals is setting a special table with seven specific items. In the ancient times each of the items corresponded to one of the seven creations and the seven holy immortals protecting them.

The seven kinds of food are; Sabzeh- Sprouts, representing renewal; Serkeh- Vinegar, representing patience; Sombol- Hyacinth, representing the perfume of spring; Seer- Garlic, representing health; Sa-

manu- a pudding like paste made from wheat grass, representing bounty; Seeb- Apple, representing beauty; and Sumaq- pulverized Sumac berries, representing dawn's light (Good) overtaking the night (Evil)

"We used to bring the seven different kinds of food and drinks and now it's the good company instead of old memories," commented Baktyr. "We have to begin our new year with new hope." Commented Alkurdy: "In Kurdistan, we used to wear different colors of clothes and spent our Nowruz day in the green fields of lands and mountains, with special music and debkka (traditional dances) "



*Seven foods of Nowruz are on display*

(Photo courtesy of Wikipedia)

The El Cajon Library schedules a special event each year with Persian music and special folklore to honor the Nowruz holiday.

**By Amir Al-Tamimi**  
El Cajon Bureau Chief

## St. Patrick's Day came early to campus

While Griffin Radio presented a live broadcast Thursday, March 15, in the quad, the advance celebration of St. Patrick's Day included root-beer pong, a spin-the-wheel game and food for sale.

Michael Covington used his, as he described it, "atrocious Irish accent" while spinning the wheel for players who called their numbers in the hope of winning a prize. Those who missed received a pencil as a consolation prize.

Beer (root-beer) Pong was the center of attention at the event. Several students played a game while waiting for their next class to begin. Dominique Jones and Joan Leary were partners in two games. "We play to win," Leary said. "Who likes to lose?" Jones said. This reporter tested their skill and lost to them by one cup.

The game is played generally with four players, two players to a team. Each team throws a Ping-Pong ball into the cups on the other side of the table.

In most games there are 10 cups formed into a triangle. The team to first get their Ping-Pong balls in all the cups win, although rules may vary.

Florita Latimer, an observer waiting for her next class, said seeing (root) beer pong on a community college campus "is kind of strange watching, but it's kind of fun."

Phi Theta Kappa, the international honor society, sold various refreshments for the event.

**By Dylan Burke**  
News Editor

# COMMENTARY

## Does Afghan massacre compromise U.S. mission?

By Matt Quijas  
Editor

Sgt Robert Bales, who is charged with murdering 17 Afghan civilians, may have ruined everything the

U.S. has been working toward in Afghanistan.

Unfortunately this is not something we can go back and undo; maybe it is time for us to start negotiating a withdrawal plan.

Afghanistan is a third-world country with a primitive structure. It may be difficult to explain to the people of that nation that Bales may have been suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) or a Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI). Afghans have been at war all their lives; perhaps they too suffer from PTSD and TBI traumas themselves. Even if they understand the terms, there's no excuse for an American soldier to kill 17 innocent civilians, including women and children.

Unfortunately, it only takes one bad deed to tarnish one's reputation and void all the good that has been done. As a former U.S. Marine who served in Afghanistan, I hate to think that this is what we will be remembered for.

Furthermore, I wonder how many American lives and how much money have we wasted? Has our reputation in Afghanistan been

so tarnished that Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) can no longer serve its purpose?

Coming not long after the Koran burning and riots in Afghanistan, these murders have sabotaged the campaign to win over the hearts and minds of the Afghan people.

Our goal was to build the country as a nation and democratize the country. Is there even a chance of doing that anymore?

Serious questions must also be asked about whether one of his superiors should have spotted Bales as being unsuitable for this deployment. Service members often are hesitant to seek psychological help while on active duty, because it could mean the end of their military careers. Finding employment with another government agency may not be a possibility.

Nevertheless, some superior should have taken notice of the fact that Bales was twice injured in a combat zone and in a financial crisis. Prior to any deployment it is the chain of command's responsibility to ensure their men and women have personal issues straightened out to prevent any unnecessary problems from arising while overseas.

## Chwekun new curator of Hyde gallery

The new curator for the Hyde Art gallery on campus says when he was a little boy his grandma would send him art books that grabbed his interest.

In high school when John Chwekun was around 16 years of age, his art teacher offered him a job building sculptural titles that were installed in a San Diego home. This was a big deal to Chwekun because it was his first art work that would not only be seen outside of the school but in someone's home.

He went to San Diego State for his B.A. where he tried to major in something other than art, but he says "art kept pulling me back" After SD State, he attended Cranbrook Academy of Art in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan.




John Chwekun  
(Staff photo)

He returned to his hometown San Diego where he started his career teaching art. Chwekun worked at SDSU as well as at San Diego Mesa, Mira Costa, and Southwestern College before coming here to Grossmont. The curator said he is willing to go wherever his interest takes him, and he will continue to make and teach art. When asked how he likes it here, he responded: "I really like it, the students are very welcoming".

He suggested that education and art are tied to each other, to know one is to know the other. He will be here to "foster growth and critical thought" for whoever wants to learn. If you are interested in being taught by him or his work you can stop by the gallery on Thursdays or visit the website [johnchwekun.com](http://johnchwekun.com)

By Barbara Boyd  
General Assignment





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# 'Spelling Bee' was h-i-l-a-r-i-o-u-s

By John Weber  
Managing Editor

The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee, which was presented by the Theatre Arts Department earlier this month, is a hilarious adult take on a middle school spelling bee that takes place in a gymnasium complete with a basketball hoop and wooden floors. As the play started the various actors appeared to check in and as they were done checking in, there was an announcement that they were missing some "spellers." These spellers were part of the audience.

The "Bee" has a variety of comedy from poop jokes to highly intellectual jests that are sure to make even the most witty person laugh. The characters themselves are enough to make you laugh.

Jordan Bunshaft played William Barfee (its pronounced BARFEY!), an almost paranoid, schizophrenic, scientific, mother's-boy nerd, who was true to his character the entire time and had an amazing performance. Alex Dunbar who played Leaf Coneybear did a fantastic job channeling his inner Ed, Edd, and Eddy, to perform as a kid who isn't quite there but has a weird brilliance to him. The comfort counselor played by Rafi Cedeño showed his character's rough Latino exterior as well as his soft and kind heart in such a way that the audience could relate.

Olive Ostrovsky, played by Elizabeth Jimenez, had the perfect countenance for a little kid and even stood and moved around like a little kid. There was even a guest appearance by none other than Jesus! (no joke!)

One of the highlights of the play for me, being a guy, was the song about erections. Every guy has had an experience where he has been called up to the front of a class with a raging hard-on and has been embarrassed by it. The song capitalized on this experience and turned it into one of the most comedic lyrics that I have heard. Yes, this play does have a lot of penis jokes, but in a classier way than most.

The music behind the spelling bee was fantastically composed. It has an almost Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory sound to it and expressed the inner feelings of the characters beautifully.

Even though it is mostly a comedy, there were some touching moments in the play. The frustrations of adolescence and the importance of words were emphasized. As the play says "life is chaos." We can all think back and remember how jumbled and crazy growing up was and how rushed and complicated it seemed at the time. Whether it is the high expectations forced upon children by parents, or parents that were never there, the play explores these concepts in a touching way.

"The Spelling Bee" was such a high quality experience for a low-budget production. The acting was wonderful and was executed outstandingly. There was high audience participation. I would recommend this play, whenever it might be performed again, to anyone who is old enough to be in college, even those who are not necessarily into theatre.

# 'Project X' portrays a party gone wild

By Dylan Burke  
News Editor

Director Nima Norizadeh's Project X tells the story of a party thrown by an insecure, popularity-seeking teenager when his parents are out of town. The party in Pasadena quickly gets out of hand to the point of calamity.

Seventeen-year-old Thomas (Thomas Mann) had hoped the party might boost his popularity along with that of his friends Costa (Oliver Cooper) and J.B. (Jonathan Daniel Brown).

But the party grew far beyond the inexperienced teenagers' ability to control it. News, police officers, and the entertainment media such as late night host Jimmy Kimmel even get word of it.

The film is replete with stereotypes about teenagers and such other characters as a Jewish lawyer. Nobody going to see Project X should expect it to be film-of-the-year type stuff, it's just a comedy for kids, nothing like a Shawshank Redemption, it's more of a Hangover and Superbad combo.

Although the script has some funny lines, they aren't always de-

livered well. There are some dramatic moments of "young love" differing somewhat from teenagers anxious for "hit and run" sex.

This observer gives the film a 6 out of a possible 10, and recommends any adult under the age of thirty to spend the \$12 and see the movie. Parents of teenagers may want to skip the movie; it might worry them unnecessarily.

*Project X movie poster*





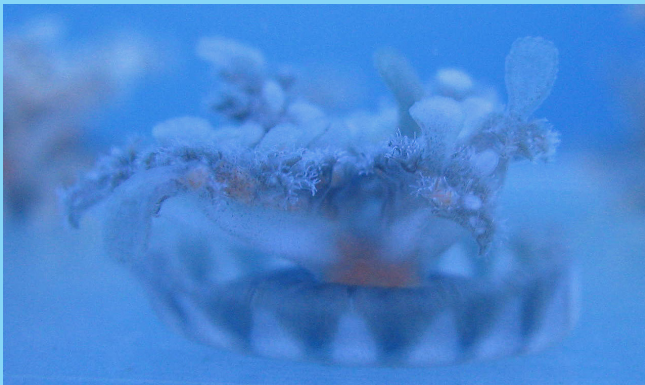
# San Diego 'Staycations'

## Upside-down jellyfish intrigues visitors

Cassiopea is a genus of very small jellyfish known as the Upside Down Jellyfish. It rests on the bottom of shallow waters with its bell up as it awaits food.

The carnivorous species, which feeds on small fish and invertebrates and plankton occasionally, is among the 380 marine species on display at the Mary Birch Aquarium operated by the Scripps Institution of Oceanography.

Photos and story  
by Andi Laurvick  
Features Editor



Cassiopea hunts by moving along the floor in the vicinity of small fish. Its tentacles sting and irritate their prey, making them sink to the floor. Then, using both primary and secondary mouths, it breaks apart its food.

Cassiopea and 379 other species may be visited any weekday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the aquarium at 2300 Expedition Way, a short drive downhill from the UCSD campus. Species range from sharks and other large fish to tiny seahorses.

Birch has been an established aquarium since 1903, originally founded by William Ritter and philanthropist Ellen Browning Scripps.

In 1985, The Stephen and Mary Birch Foundation donated \$6 million to a new facility, which overlooks the beautiful Pacific Ocean and the Scripps Institution of Oceanography campus.

Birch Aquarium is a great place to visit this spring break. The beautiful facility cares for and studies more than 5,000 marine animals. Visitors are welcome to photograph the species while educating themselves about the wonderful and curious life of the ocean.

*(left) A Cassiopea jellyfish at  
Mary Birch Aquarium*

*(below) A captivating seahorse,  
part of the There's Something  
About Seahorses exhibit at the  
Birch Aquarium*



*(above) One of the many  
large tanks within the Birch  
Aquarium that house an  
abundance of aquatic life*



# *San Diego 'Staycations'*

## La Jolla: Riviera of the Pacific



*Seals lounging in the Children's Pool*



*Ocean view from La Valencia Hotel*

You may not be able to make it to southern France this spring break but going to the Riviera is possible. The Village of La Jolla mirrors the feel of the Mediterranean with its countless galleries, boutiques, and restaurants. All this abutting a stunning coast line.

Walking along the bluffs overlooking the ocean you are sure to see people and animals alike enjoying the sea. Enjoying the water is a part of life and La Jolla offers many ways to do so. You may want to get in a kayak and investigate the cliffs and caves or get closer to sea lions trying to figure out what they're always barking at.

Or go snorkeling at the Cove where you can hand feed bright orange Garibaldi (frozen peas work best). Further south from the Cove is the Children's Pool, a small beach protected by a sea wall donated by Ellen Browning Scripps in 1931 so that children would have a safe place to play and swim without worry of being hit by waves.

Controversially, children of another sort now use that beach. It has been taken over by seals (not to be confused with sea lions) and is full of seal pups especially in the spring. Walking on the beach is not encouraged, but walking on the sea wall is (unless large waves have shut it down). Day or night you are guaranteed to see seals there during pupping season.

From the Children's Pool it won't be too hard for you to find a large sculpture of boats jettling off the top of a building. That building is The Museum of Contemporary Art. The museum has an entrance fee but the sculpture garden is free.

Walking north from the museum will bring you into the community of shops, restaurants and more galleries. Don't be afraid to get lost and find the quaintness that is the Village of La Jolla. Eating is a must and the village does not disappoint. Jose's offers San Diego style Mexican food. The crab cakes at Eddy V's are remarkably good.

Make sure to check out the Peter Lik gallery; his photos are inspiring for any photographer, amateur or professional. Across from the Lik gallery is the famous La Valencia Hotel. Built in 1926 its gorgeous decor and stunning villas encapsulate the European Riviera motif, making it a destination for the elite and honeymooners for over 85 years.

The sun sets fast so get your Gelato in time to make it down to the large and open Scripps Park to watch the sunset. Then get back to town and enjoy the night life. All this with no plane ticket.

Photos and story  
by Scott Walters

Photo Editor

