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THE DAILY AZTEC

San Diego State University's Independent Student Newspaper since 1913

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Why do some women feel it's necessary to sterilize themselves to preserve the environment?

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College students move past box wine to learn how to detect a delicious glass.

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TODAY @ SDSU

Sneak Preview Film – 'The Kite Runner'

6 p.m., Montezuma Hall

View a sneak preview of this new film, followed by a discussion with one of the film's staring actors. Tickets are free, but seating is limited so be sure to get there early. This event is sponsored by CASE. Visit *www.kiterunner-movie.com* to view the trailer.

For more of today's headlines, visit:
www.thedailyaztec.com

TODAY'S WEATHER

Partly cloudy
High: 76°F
Low: 55°F

TOMORROW

Mostly sunny
High: 72°F
Low: 54°F

FRIDAY

Mostly cloudy
High: 70°F
Low: 56°F

TODAY'S SURF

2-3 ft., fair conditions
WATER TEMP 60°-63°
TIDES 12:40 a.m., 3.59 ft. high
4:36 a.m., 2.76 ft. low
10:55 a.m., 5.78 ft. high
6:39 p.m., 0.50 ft. low

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SPORTS

SHINING ALL SEMESTER

Photo Editor Glenn Connelly *captured the action of the game. See which SDSU male athlete kept composure and out-performed expectations through the semester.*

see **SPORTS** *on page 6*

World AIDS Day observed

Tabling, speakers, demonstrations today on campus

Alanna Berman
ASSISTANT CITY EDITOR

AIDS has killed more than 25 million people worldwide since 1981 and continues to be one of the most destructive epidemics in history. World AIDS Day, officially Dec. 1, is a time to remember those lost to the disease, focus on awareness and prevention, and fight prejudice.

Today, several San Diego State student groups, in association with the Office of Intercultural Relations/Cross-Cultural Center, will observe World AIDS Day in various demonstrations across campus, including an AIDS Quilt Project, tabling, speakers, demonstrations and a candlelight vigil.

A spokesperson for the Cross-Cultural Center said the events are part of an awareness campaign to get students involved in what they can do to clear misconceptions about the disease.

"Observing World AIDS Day is important because everyone is affected by HIV/AIDS in some way," said Ben Cartwright, director of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender resource center.

The American Medical Student Association's San Diego State chapter and Peer Advocates for Total College Health will each be tabling at 10 a.m. in Aztec Center.

"The reason behind it all is to promote awareness and education and to initiate action," Chris Mullin, AMSA chapter treasurer, said.

Mullin said this is one of the biggest involvement levels he has seen for World AIDS Day events at SDSU, with four student organizations working together to observe the holiday.

AMSA will host two speakers at the event tomorrow, including SDSU Professor Jim Zians, who does research on the effects of HIV/AIDS in specific communities. AMSA's Global AIDS Fellow will also speak today.

While AMSA observes World AIDS Day each year, this year, the "call to action" campaign is one of the biggest focuses. AMSA members will be asking students to call their congressional representatives to get behind government funding for HIV/AIDS research through The President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief.

"PEPFAR is the single most important bill implementing the U.S. fight against HIV/AIDS," Mullin said.

Mullin said every five minutes, 27 people across the world die from AIDS.

"People in our generation are complacent," Cartwright said. "They think it can't affect them, but AIDS is still killing people."

At about 7 p.m., the LGBTSU will hold a candlelight vigil near the Free Speech Steps to honor those lost to AIDS. LGBTSU members will provide candles and red ribbons to participants in the vigil before proceeding down centennial walkway and back.

"A lot of college students haven't been hit by AIDS the way they were even 10 or 15 years ago, so this is still important," Cartwright said.

First observed in 1988, World AIDS Day began after an international summit of health professionals sought greater tolerance and exchange of information about the disease. Each year, the day serves to strengthen global efforts to address the challenges of the AIDS epidemic.

Visit *http://www.sa.sdsu.edu/intercultural/index.html* for more information.

CAMPUS CRIME

Fire breaks out on Interstate 8

A fire broke out at about 2:40 p.m. Friday on the south side of Interstate 8 between Waring Road and Fairmount Avenue, according to University Police.

University Police Lt. Lamine Secka said police are not exactly sure what caused the fire. He said what often happens is that a car will break down on the freeway and overheat, causing the brush on the side of the freeway to ignite.

The fire was quickly contained with no injuries and no reported structural damage. After 24 minutes, the fire was put out, Secka said.

Police ask suspicious persons to leave library

University Police confronted two different suspicious persons Saturday at the Malcolm A. Love Library.

The first person was described as a man, about 5 feet, 5 inches tall with a slim build. He was wearing all red clothing and carrying a notebook and a backpack. According to the person who reported the suspicious activity, the man was crouching behind trash cans and then jumping out at people, Secka said.

The man was not a San Diego State student and was advised by police officers to leave campus immediately.

The second incident occurred when a female student reported to police that a suspicious man approached her inside the library. She reported that the man invaded her personal space and then touched her on her back, according to police.

The man was described as being an adult Asian in his mid 30s. He was about 5 feet, 3 inches tall and weighed approximately 130-140 lbs, according to Secka. He had black hair, brown eyes and wore a striped gray sweater and jeans. He was carrying papers but no backpack.

The man was spotted on the third floor of the library in the "D" section of the stacks, according to police reports.

"There's no legal way to restrict or limit people from coming here to SDSU," Secka said. "However, once a person begins to disturb students or the academic process, then they may be asked to leave."

Because the man was disrupting others, he was asked by police to leave.

According to police, the victim reported that she had previously encountered the same suspicious individual on Nov. 21 in the same area of the library.

Secka said this was the second time the suspect had been contacted by police officers. According to penal code section 626.6, a person can be ordered off a public campus only for a period of seven days, after which the individual is permitted to return.

"If an individual returns within that period of seven days, after officers have ordered him off campus, only then can he be arrested and convicted of trespassing," Secka said.

Police arrest five non-SDSU students on alcohol-related charges

SDSU police officers arrested five people, all non-SDSU students, for alcohol-related charges during separate incidents that occurred Saturday and Sunday near campus.

The individuals were arrested on suspicion of driving under the influence, public intoxication and having a blood alcohol level of .08 or above.

"These type of crimes are a weekly battle," Secka said. "We try to target it as best we can."

Secka said campus activities such as concerts can cause an increase in the amount of alcohol-related incidents.

"Concerts do bring a lot more non-affiliated people to the campus and a lot of these people don't know that you are not allowed to drink on campus," Secka said. "The majority of these people don't wind up in any trouble, but the people who go to excess do wind up in trouble."

–Compiled by Staff Writer Wendy Fry

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JOHN P. GAMBOA

Sterilization endangers the purpose of life

The 2006 film "Children of Men" expertly portrays a world of an empty, sterilized human population. The people were on the brink of self-annihilation through war and panic of the ensuing end. The world was in disarray because everyone knew that environmentalism would be pointless without people.

Some people, however, are actively pursuing their own sterilization for the conservation of the environment.

Reproduction is the fundamental tenet of life. These women who are choosing to be sterilized believe having a child is "selfish" and detrimental to the planet because it isn't eco-friendly.

Toni Vernelli, profiled on Nov. 21 in the *Daily Mail* was interviewed, along with other women, about choosing to sterilize themselves. These women believe that one of the best ways, if not the best way, to help the environment is to not have children because they use up a lot of resources from the earth. Babies' consumption of water, food, land and trees harms the environment, Vernelli said.

But couldn't Vernelli stop the consumption of all of the same resources if she did not use them by choosing to end *her* life?

It sounds very pretentious to decide that her own efforts to help the environment will supersede any possible advancements made by a child of her own. It doesn't put a lot of faith in mankind's abilities when someone could not trust her own offspring to help the environment.

While there is nothing wrong with not having children for personal reasons, the decision to do so for the sake of the environment seems inherently illogical.

Adoption, as mentioned in the article, is an equally admirable decision in lieu of having children, as well as helping the environment. But sterilization and calling people selfish for having kids is counterproductive.

If overpopulation and the extreme overuse of natural resources becomes a problem for the environment, exterminating mass amounts of people would not fall from similar rationale, because the environment would be spared the ravenous effects of mankind.

Issues of overpopulation should be dealt with education of preventative measures of accidental pregnancy. Birth control education could make greater strides in lessening the burden of humankind on the earth, not the scolding and self-righteous act of making oneself sterile.

The overuse of resources such as birth control would be best taught to people. Halting the use of resources through this method offers no end.

It's not made clear whether these women feel sterilization should be practiced by all people because that would be impractical. The reduced carbon footprint by not having children can be easily offset by a large family or someone spiteful enough to have another child to counteract these particular people.

Sterilization seems almost like a cop out. This idea says that you gave up on mankind's efforts to help the environment and decided to take the easy way out. At least by having a child, small carbon-footprint education and rearing of your child could yield a far greater benefit for all people. Having an educated child would be far more friendly and welcoming to people than the somewhat overbearing attitudes that are associated with announcing to the world your natural urges, that every single living creature on Earth, is detrimental to the planet itself.

At least these people won't have any kids to pass down their crazy ideas.

–John P. Gamboa is a pre-journalism junior.

–This column does not necessarily reflect the opinion of The Daily Aztec. *Send e-mail to* letters@thedailyaztec.com. *Anonymous letters will not be printed – include your full name, major and year in school.*

The State of Mind section of *The Daily Aztec* is currently accepting applications for columnists. If you enjoy voicing your opinion about politics and social issues and have prior writing experience, apply today.

www.thedailyaztec.com

LAUREN ENGLEHARDT

Weakening dollar, weakening spirit

I participated in Black Friday last week. For those not familiar with the term, this means I braved the crowds and went shopping on the day after Thanksgiving.

This dark nickname actually stems from when businesses typically turn their books from the "red" (meaning in debt) to the "black," thus finally marking profits.

It's true that in a slowing economy, having businesses finally turn a profit is a good sign, no mater who is doing the buying

I'm from the Bay Area, so my family decided to hit San Francisco to take in the holiday splendor at Union Square with the rest of the crowds. But this year we noticed something a little different than past years – an increased presence of foreign shoppers.

San Francisco is an international attraction and that must account for some of the tourists, but there might be another reason to enjoy a San Francisco shopping spree: America's weak currency.

For those who have ignored any recent business headlines, the dollar has recently hit an all-time low. To put this in perspective, the Canadian dollar now beats the U.S. dollar in exchange rates.

I guess we can no longer make fun of the Canadians because now they can use our stores as sales racks.

The dollar's decline has been a long time coming. For a nation that has had a savings rate of next-to-nothing and a habit of spending far more than it should abroad, the U.S. has gotten itself into an economic mess.

Some economists aren't fretting over the dollar's decline, citing the argument that a weak dollar makes American-made goods cheaper overseas, stimulating exports among hard-hit manufacturing industries.

That might be an outcome, but the negatives far outweigh the positives.

For young Americans, growing up in a country of economic decline is an unsettling feeling. A currency decline can hit hard on the psyche of citizens as well. Seeing European travelers venture to America to partake in a bargain vacation doesn't make Americans very proud. It makes people question the state of our nation.

For college students, the cost of travel is becoming a real concern. With the dollar down 40 percent against the euro, venturing on a semester abroad might only be reserved for those whose parents are willing to fork over a lot of money.

And for anyone who enjoys foreign designer products, those imports will cost even more than usual.

I guess my dream of owning Italian designer clothing and a German-made BMW just got a little more out of reach – not like it ever was too close on a student's budget.

Plush designer imports aside, our declining currency will have an adverse effect on many facets of society.

It has made many manufacturing products more expensive to produce, and one cannot forget the rising price of gasoline. Currently, a barrel of oil is nearly $100, and that price increase will be felt at the pumps.

With Americans spending more on fuel, this leaves less spending money in circulation in other sectors of our economy. When citizens spend more than $40 on a tank of gas, they won't be able to go shopping or out to eat.

Those who know about the weakening dollar are practically in denial about it, but many pop culture icons are not. It has been reported that supermodel Gisele Bundchen prefers payments to not be in U.S. dollars and rapper Jay-Z flashed euros in his latest music video. With prominent public figures starting to take notice, it leads me to wonder when the rest of the country will wake up.

Citizens need to insist that this is an issue that must be tackled. The U.S. cannot be thought of as the world's discount mall.

Voters need to put pressure on political candidates to make the dollar's decline a priority issue for the future. America needs to get out of this huge deficit and give foreign investors confidence in its currency once again.

How much further down are we willing to let it fall?

–Lauren Englehardt is a communication senior.

–This column does not necessarily reflect the opinion of The Daily Aztec. *Send e-mail to* letters@thedailyaztec.com. *Anonymous letters will not be printed – include your full name, major and year in school.*

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No Equiv	COMM 120	1852	Interpersonal Communication	8am-11:15	B253
No Equiv	COMM 120	1858	Interpersonal Communication	12:30pm-3:45	B253
COMM 103	COMM 122	1861	Public Speaking	8am-11:15	B262
COMM 103	COMM 122	1863	Public Speaking	8am-11:15	F407
ECON 101	ECON 120	0641	Principles of Macroeconomics	12:30pm-3:45	F702
ECON 102	ECON 121	0643	Principles of Microeconomics	8am-11:15	F620
RWS 100	ENGL 120	0770	College Composition & Reading	8am-12:25	B269
RWS 100	ENGL 120	0781	College Composition & Reading	8am-12:25	B271
ENGL 220	ENGL 122	0785	Introduction to Literature	8am-11:15	F614
RWS 200	ENGL 124	0738	Advanced Composition	8am-12:25	B360
RWS 200	ENGL 124	0799	Advanced Composition	8am-12:25	B365
No Equiv	ES 200	1518	Condition & Injury Prevention	5pm-8:15	D100
No Equiv	ES 207	1519	Adv Tech/Stategies Basketball	2:30pm-4:45	D100
No Equiv	HED 120	0874	Personal Health & Lifestyles	Web	Web
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No Equiv	HED 120	0875	Personal Health & Lifestyles	Web	Web
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HIST 101	HIST 101	0947	Modern World History	8am-11:15	F512
HIST 109	HIST 108	0956	Early American History	9am-12:15	F514
HIST 110	HIST 109	0960	Modern American History	1pm-4:15	F512
No Equiv	MUS 115	1169	History of Rock Music	8am-11:15	B301
PSY 101	PSY 120	1652	Introductory Psychology	8am-11:15	F507
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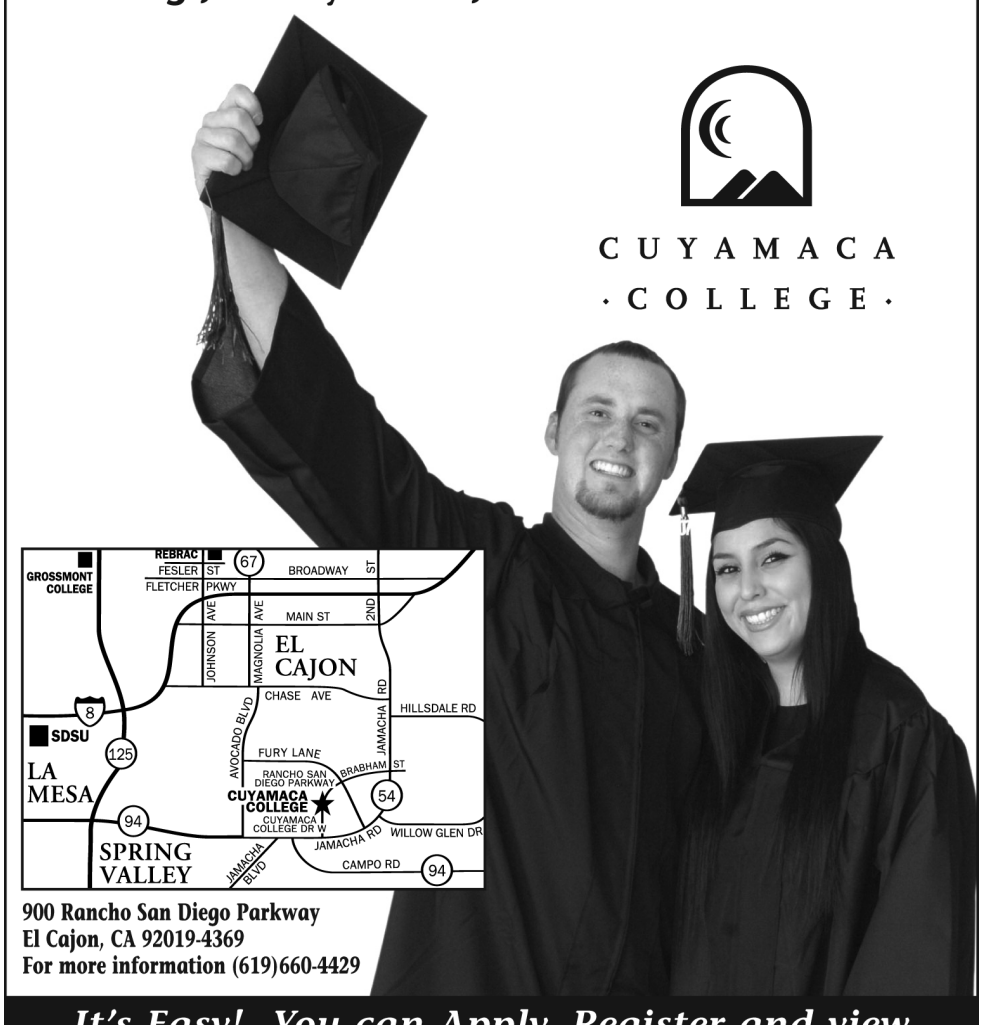

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Heaven in a wrapper but not in your wallet

ALEJANDRA GARCES
CONTRIBUTOR

On your way to the local Rite Aid where you're used to paying 99 cents for an ice cream cone, you pass a new trendy business that offers what are supposed to be the most amazing cupcakes. They're so amazing that even Oprah mentioned this dessert in her latest show.

Maybe it's time for a change from cheap ice cream to a simple cupcake, but the line to purchase the little treat travels outside the shop. As you wait outside, you try to decide which flavor you'll choose. When it's finally your turn to order, you notice the price that rang up on the cash register could have paid for a whole meal at McDonald's.

The trend for high-priced foods and desserts has become an obsession in everyday life. People crave highly priced goods and food is no exception. Markets and businesses exploit anything from a piece of meat to a cupcake.

The cupcake craze is one of the most recent and popular trends to arise in the dessert industry. Sprinkles Cupcakes is a bakery that only sells cupcakes. It began as a small business in Beverly Hills, and today it has five locations, the nearest location to San Diego in Newport Beach.

There have been many contributions to the success of these tiny creations, one of which is the media. "The Oprah Winfrey Show" and "Good Morning America" rave about these cupcakes. Celebrities are also enthusiastic about these desserts. Celebrities such as Marcia Cross and Jake Gyllenhaal don't mind purchasing a single cupcake for $3.25 or paying $36 for a dozen.

Other bakeries, such as Montecito Confections Bakery in Santa Barbara, sell cupcakes for as much as $5 a piece. It seems that the cupcake craze has taken a different perspective when people think about this tiny dessert.

These cupcakes have become an artwork with delicate decorations and expensive ingredients. Plus, they remind customers of favorite childhood treats.

Desserts such as ice cream and chocolate have always been comfort foods that tend to make people feel better. Godiva Chocolatier offers a variety of chocolates and truffles at a high price.

Ben & Jerry's has also been made popular by movies such as "Bridget Jones's Diary."

People crave what celebrities wear, drive and, now, eat. So people are trying the latest fad just to say they had the same cupcake that Katie Holmes also loves.

However, the difference is that celebrities can afford a $2 piece of chocolate or a $3.25 cupcake, even though this could take a toll on the average person's wallet.

But the craze for these high-priced desserts has become standard for those who live in the neighborhood of one of the cupcake bakeries.

People crave chocolate, ice cream and now miniature cakes. Cupcake lovers argue that the price is inexpensive for the delicious taste of this small luxury.

Courtesy of Sprinkles Cupcakes

Quickly becoming a popular trend of the rich and famous, gourmet cupcakes take childhood treats and transform them into a luxury. Combining a mixture of delicate decorations and expensive ingredients, these cupcakes make taste buds water, but at a hefty price.

Wine tasting can be a valuable experience

BEAU RUSSELL
STAFF WRITER

Two-buck Chuck and Franzia are usually the only wines college students have a nose for. Instead of asking about the legs of the wine, most wonder how drunk they can get by finishing a whole box.

Having a well-centered knowledge of wine is not a necessity for the average college student. It's like a good golf game: something that is nice to have for the real world or for business, but not that applicable to college life.

However, gaining that knowledge is not difficult or expensive. The only way to gain an appreciation for wine is to get out there and taste. And the fastest way to accomplish this at an affordable rate is to hit up the various wine bars around San Diego or head to local wineries.

Wineries can be bias to their own products, so wine bars are a safer option for new wine lovers.

Wine bars such as Tango Wine Company in Little Italy and Wine Steals in Hillcrest offer a wide selection to start off the night.

Walking into the bar can be intimidating, but if you admit your lack of wine knowledge and ask questions, the staff is more than willing to educate you.

The staff at the wine bars are enthusiastic about their wines and ready to share wisdom. Ask them and they will take you under their wing and walk you through the steps of the wine making process, differences in the varieties and how to pair wines with different foods.

The Tango Wine bar is a great place to start your expansion of wine knowledge. With an unassuming location in Little Italy, it offers tastings on Friday nights, with three tastings for $5.

However, a single night of wine tasting is like trying to understand football by looking at a picture of LaDainian Tomlinson.

"You need to be constantly tasting and looking to learn more," said Jose Villar, a wine consultant who runs tastings at the Tango Wine bar. "There is so much wine out there."

Along with Tango, Wine Steals in Hillcrest offers cheap deals and equally knowledgeable staff who can lead you through Pinot Noirs, Chardonnays, Cabernets and other wine varieties. Most of the basics include variety, color, how to taste and the appropriate terms to use while describing wine.

As with any new hobby, it's all about getting out there and practicing. It's the same with wine – constantly sampling and developing a taste for good quality is what wine tasting is all about.

Tasting can be a fun and cheap way to mix up a night out or simply have a few drinks before heading to the clubs. There's plenty of knowledge out there for students who want to move past box wine and onto a classy glass.

MCT Campus

'The only way to gain an appreciation for wine is to get out there and taste. And the fastest way to accomplish this at an affordable rate is to hit up the various wine bars around San Diego.'

MEN'S BASKETBALL

SDSU ready to rebound

ERIC SHANNON
ASSISTANT SPORTS EDITOR

In a grueling 30-game season, losses are inevitable.

Still, they're neither easy to cope with nor simple to forget.

While the San Diego State men's basketball team won't get a chance to avenge its Saturday afternoon loss against Cal, a defeat that ruined its previously perfect 5-0 record, it will get a shot at the next best thing.

SDSU faces two familiar opponents this week in Loyola Marymount and Western Michigan, and it will likely engage in entertaining battles with both teams.

At 7:05 tonight at Gersten Pavilion in Los Angeles, the Aztecs will take on the Lions, whom SDSU has defeated three of the previous four times the teams have met. However, the trio of victories all came within the comfort of Cox Arena. The Aztecs lost the last time they visited Los Angeles.

Both teams play an up-tempo style – the Lions (2-4) and SDSU (5-1) average 76.7 and 73.8 points, respectively – and the game will be the first action the Aztecs have seen since coughing up their halftime lead against the Bears.

"(LMU is) a team capable of scoring points and we've got to make sure we don't give them a whole lot of easy points," head coach Steve Fisher said.

Meanwhile, Saturday night's game against WMU is likely SDSU's most important home non-conference game of the year.

The Broncos come to Cox Arena at 7:30 p.m. and they'll bring along a 4-2 record as well as a highly esteemed mid-major reputation. WMU was the preseason favorite in the underappreciated Mid-American Conference, and it has caused problems for the Aztecs in the recent past.

Last season, the Broncos defeated an SDSU squad that had been unblemished through eight games. Before losing that contest, the Aztecs were off to their best start since the 1970-71 campaign.

"We went there last year undefeated and they beat us like a wet rag," Fisher said. "Hopefully, we will remember that."

This year, WMU will be no easier to beat than it was in 2006. The Broncos' two losses are both respectable – against Pacific and No. 12 Oregon – and they recently beat No. 25 Davidson, 83-76. The Wildcats returned all of their starters from last year's 29-5 team and are widely recognized as one of the best small programs in the country.

WMU shot 59 percent in that game and have been led all season by sophomore guard David Kool and senior center Joe Reitz, both averaging a shade over 14 points per game.

SDSU's defense was sound through its first five contests, but its holes were revealed against Cal. The Bears netted 50.9 percent of their shots against the Aztecs and outrebounded SDSU by five.

Junior forwards Lorrenzo Wade and Kyle Spain have led the Aztecs statistically, combining for 27.9 points and 8.3 rebounds per night, but SDSU's defense will be the deciding factor in this week's games.

"(Defensively) I'm always concerned," Fisher said. "(In) lay-ups and free throws, (Cal) had 27-9 on us in the second half. You can't expect a guy to miss a lay-up and you can't expect a guy to miss a free throw."

News and notes:

- Freshman forward Tim Shelton, originally expected to miss three weeks of playing time because of arthroscopic knee injury, will miss the remainder of the season because of cartilage damage, according to Fisher.

AT A GLANCE

WHO: The San Diego State men's basketball team

WHEN: 7:05 p.m. tonight and 7:30 p.m. Saturday

WHERE: Gersten Pavilion in Los Angeles and Cox Arena

WHAT: SDSU's opportunity to rebound from its first loss of the season

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SDSU MALE ATHLETE OF THE SEMESTER

Setting the scene for Aztec football

DAVID BIDERMAN
SPORTS EDITOR

In his day, San Diego State football head coach Chuck Long was a Midwest gunslinger. He led the Iowa Hawkeyes to the Rose Bowl in 1986 and, though his team lost the game, he finished his collegiate career with more than 10,000 passing yards, 74 touchdowns and a second-place finish in Heisman Trophy voting.

Of course, Long had five years to learn and perfect a system under legendary head coach Hayden Fry. He was relatively injury-free and played for an established program in the Big Ten Conference.

Kevin O'Connell hasn't had the same luxuries.

O'Connell's been thrown through a gamut of coaching changes, injuries – to himself and his supporting cast – and he's played for a struggling team in front of dwindling crowds.

Not that those things have made SDSU's senior quarterback any worse for the wear.

"It's really marvelous what he's done," Long said. "He's just now coming into his own where he can really control things.

"The difference (between us) is that I had five years in a system and he's only had two. That's a credit to him and his study habits."

Let's not get ahead of ourselves and call O'Connell the Aztecs' postseason ambassador. SDSU is just 4-7 (3-4 in Mountain West Conference play). Its bowl-eligibility this year is non-existent.

The Aztecs haven't defeated a strong team in two years and O'Connell has started many of those not-so-successful games.

Still, there are signs of improvement. SDSU has bettered its 2006 win total and has shown traces, some smaller – OK, much smaller – than others, of a maturing team.

"We've done a lot of good things this year," O'Connell said. "Maybe there's a couple of times when you look back and you would've done things differently, but for the most part we've taken major strides.

"From last year to this year, we're light years apart."

The overall offense has improved. The Aztecs average 378.5 yards per game, a pedestrian 71st in the nation, and have limited their turnovers to just 15 in 11 games.

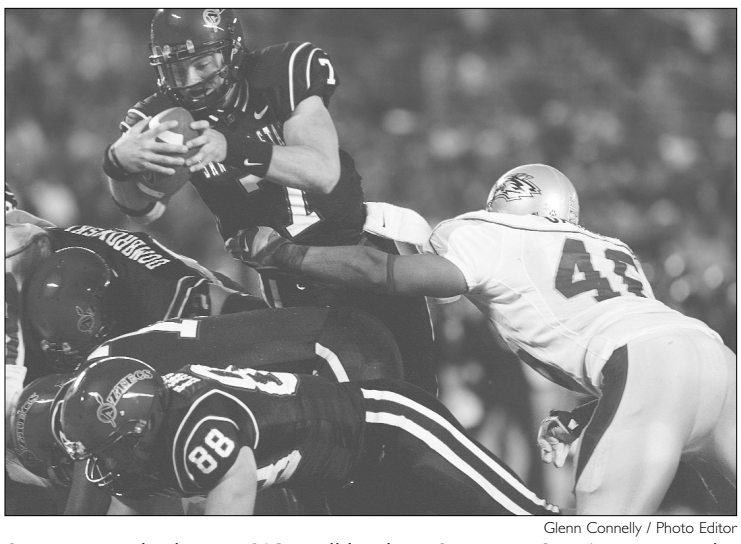
And statistically, O'Connell has been a bundle for opposing defenses. The 6-foot-6 running threat has nine rushing touchdowns and has passed for 2,775 yards with a 127.4 efficiency rating.

His speed and size alone make him at least a blip on NFL scouting radar screens.

"That's definitely one of those things you start to think about," O'Connell said. "We still have a season to finish, but you know the opportunities are going to come."

Added Long, who was the 12th overall pick in the 1986 NFL Draft: "The last few games he has really thrown the ball well. He's been showing the type of stuff that will catch the eye of the NFL scouts."

But it's not just the numbers that show how much O'Connell has added to his game. It's his poise. It's the way the younger players have begun contributing and how they've felt like a part of the program – not like a little, too-often-beat-up younger brother.



Glenn Connelly / Photo Editor

Senior quarterback Kevin O'Connell has been San Diego State's premier male athlete this semester. He's helped lead SDSU through an often difficult 2007 season.

Freshman wide receiver Vincent Brown and redshirt freshmen defensive back Martrell Fantroy, linebacker Andrew Preston and running back Brandon Sullivan, among others, have all played significant roles for SDSU this year and their development, direct or indirect, streams partially from O'Connell's guidance.

"People follow the quarterback," Long said. "He has to be a strong leader, if not the strongest leader, and he's grown in that department.

"He's taking care of the young guys, too. (He) brings the weakest link along (and) doesn't just hang around with the guys who have been productive in the program."

So, does his development mask the Aztecs' ugly and ever-growing streak of missed bowl games and below .500 seasons? No.

But does it hide some of SDSU's bigger blemishes and cover some of its smears and scars? Sure.

He hasn't turned around a moribund program, but he's breathed some life into it.

And with only one game remaining, on Saturday against MWC beast BYU, that'll have to be enough.

"Getting to a bowl game was the ultimate goal this year," O'Connell said. "But if that doesn't happen, you've got to look at the other things on the list. We've been healthy, we've gotten better, the young guys have improved.

"If people can look at the team in a better way now than when I got here, then I'm proud of that."

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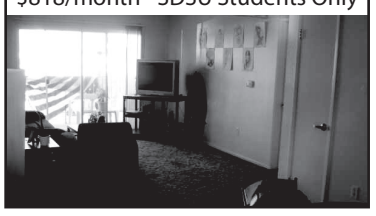

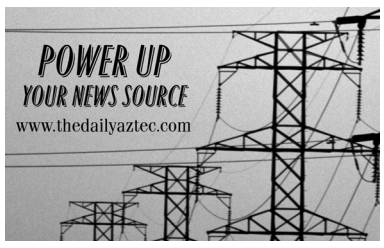

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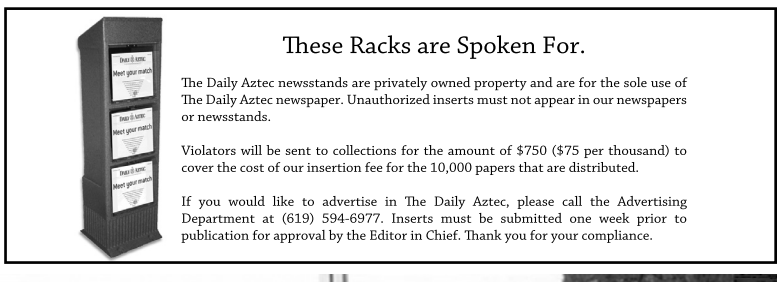
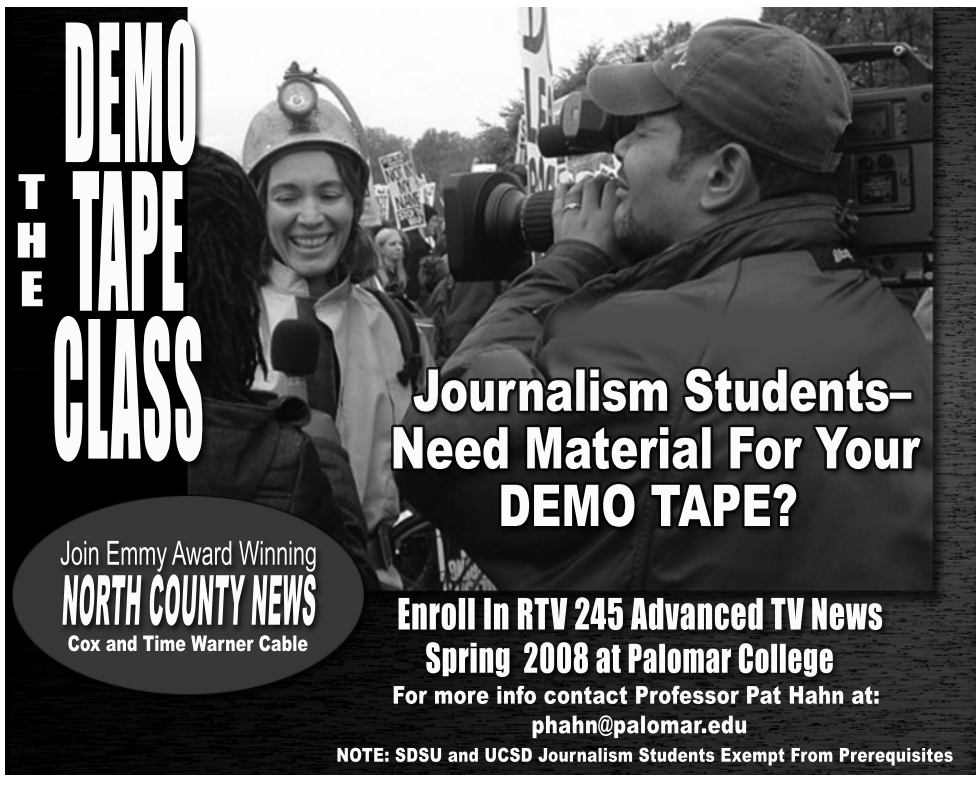




CURIOUS HAPPENINGS OF A HOPELESS OPTIMIST

A bottle of airport hassle

MELISSA JOHNSON
STAFF WRITER

Airports have a knack for creating fantastic stories. Something about the congregation of people from all walks of life who are forced to mingle in extreme conditions of annoyance seems to brew interesting accounts of the interaction.

I, too, have my very own tale about the turbulence and trepidation of travel.

In my opinion, people who work at the airport have way too much power. Security can pat you down and even force you to strip to make sure you don't have a machete taped to your inner thigh. (I have to admit, I might abuse this power if the right person came along.) Even the pilot gets in on the action by telling you when you can tinkle.

On one particular trip, it was the bag checker who committed the crime of having an overly huge ego. I had just gotten back from my first trip wine tasting, so I had to check my bags because I was bringing back some of the wine. When the time came to return to San Diego, I had to figure out a way to make sure that I didn't end up with booze-soaked clothes.

It was a brilliant game plan: simply wrap the bottles in a garbage bag, then proceed to wrap your clothes around the bottles so there is a built-in cushion. Genius!

Turns out, not so much.

I get up to the "self check-in" and wait for someone to put the tag on my bag, which kind of cancels out the "self" in self check-in, but who am I to argue? A woman comes up to the counter to make sure that the name on the tag is correct.

Then I open my big mouth.

"I don't know your policy, but ... "

I proceed to tell her my apparently dumb plan of wine wrappage. Suddenly, she drops my bag back onto the platform and snaps her head back in an upright position.

"You have wine in here? You're going to have to show me. Take it out right now."

It was in that very moment that I realized that some things are worth fighting for, and not flashing the entire airport my underwear suddenly became my number one priority.

The more I protested, the more she threatened me, until I said something I've never said in my entire life.

"May I please speak to your supervisor?"

It was my "Mommy, Wow! I'm-a-big-kid-now" moment of a lifetime. That morning I put on my Pull-Ups, and I was ready to take names and cry to her supervisor.

It was a giant breakthrough in sticking up for myself.

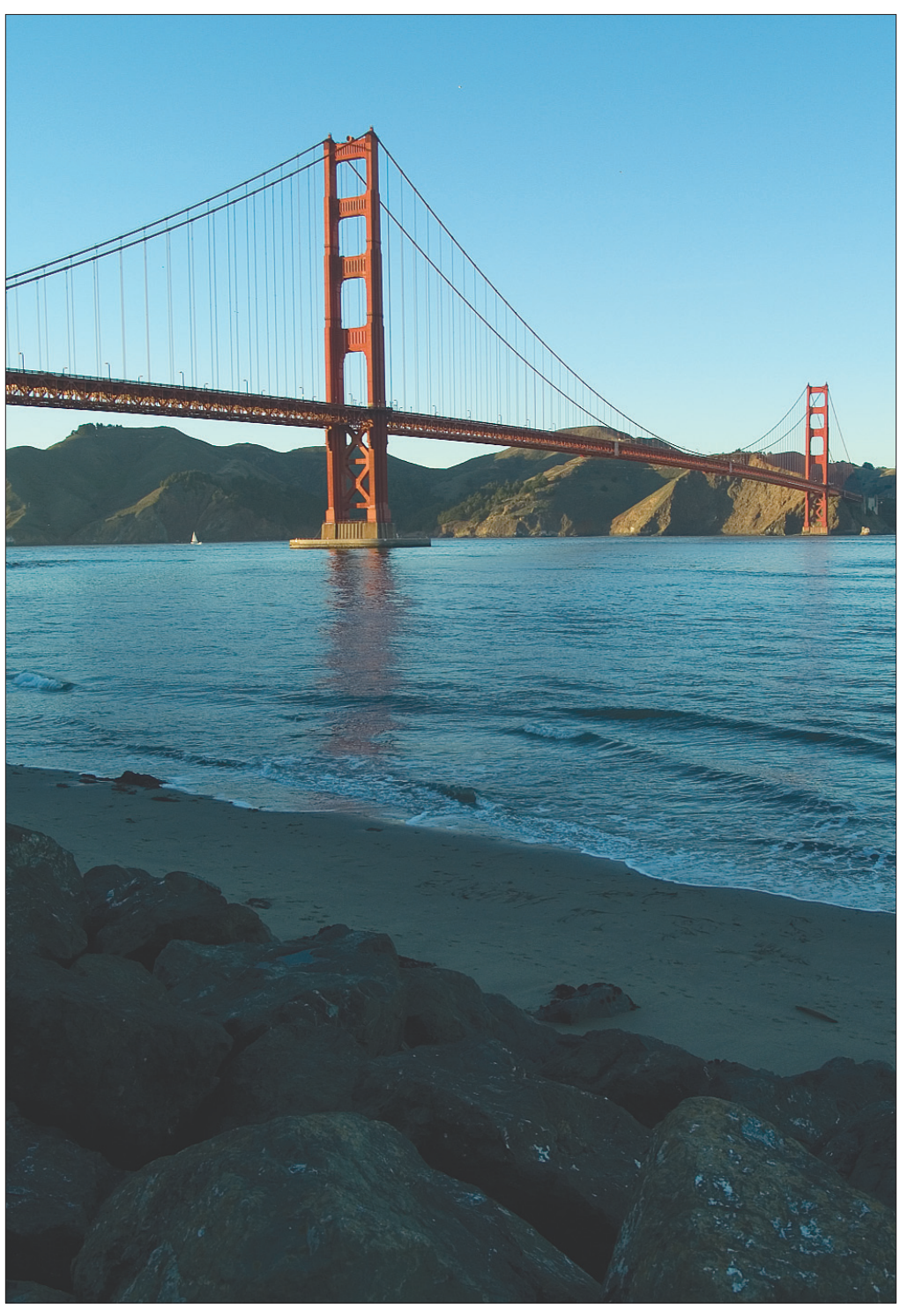
OK, so I might have cried and mumbled something about her being a meanie head, but it was a breakthrough nonetheless.

In the end, I had to take out all of my clothes anyway and buy bubble wrap that cost as much as the wine. But hey, at least I stood up for myself.

–Melissa Johnson is an advertising senior.

–This column does not necessarily reflect the opinion of The Daily Aztec.

LOOKING THROUGH OUR LENS



GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE

ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR DAVID J. OLENDER *captured this calm and serene moment in San Francisco Bay just as the sun was about to set over the iconic Golden Gate Bridge.*

DAILY HOROSCOPE BY LINDA C. BLACK, TRIBUNE MEDIA SERVICES

Wednesday, November 28, 2007

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (11-28-07) You'll be wanting to travel this year, and you can make it happen. There will be complications, but nothing you can't handle. Be tough.

ARIES (March 21 - April 19) - Today is an 8 _ Be careful what you say, especially if you're keeping secrets. It's not a good day to gamble, get tattoos or make romantic promises.

TAURUS (April 20 - May 20) - Today is a 6 _ Make sure the information you've found gets to the right person. That would be the one who can make the changes you have in mind. No need to tell anyone else.

GEMINI (May 21 - June 21) - Today is an 8 _ You're full of ideas, but not all of them are going to work, you know. Run tests and discard the ones that will cost you more than they bring in.

CANCER (June 22 - July 22) - Today is an 8 _ As if by magic, when you let people know what you want, things start happening to help you get it. Be forceful, assertive, direct and precise.

LEO (July 23 - Aug. 22) - Today is an 8 _ Don't believe a spiteful rumor. Consider the source. Listen, but maintain an objective stance until you check it out.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 - Sept. 22) - Today is a 6 _ You're starting to notice a couple of things that really should be done. Sure, you could put them off for a while, but would that really be wise? No, it wouldn't.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 - Oct. 22) - Today is an 8 _ Friends want to know how you achieved your recent victory. No need to tell them. Keep your hidden advantage.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 - Nov. 21) - Today is a 6 _ An older person wants you to prove you know what you're talking about. This ought to be easy. Ace the test and advance your career.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 - Dec. 21) - Today is an 8 _ Get your plans settled so you can take a little bit of time off. Even a few hours will rejuvenate your spirit. A few days would be even better.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 - Jan. 19) - Today is a 6 _ Don't let financial worries get you into a dither. That's a waste of valuable energy. Another source of income's nearby, so it's a waste of time, too.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 - Feb. 18) - Today is an 8 _ Important people know you are a force with which to be reckoned. Beneath that cool exterior beats the heart of a lion.

PISCES (Feb. 19 - March 20) - Today is a 7 _ Wouldn't you know it? Just when you think the hard part is over, you find there's more work to be done. Actually, the hard part is over.

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SUDOKU BY MICHAEL MEPHAM

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

Level: 1 **2** 3 4

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

Solution available online at www.TheDailyAztec.com

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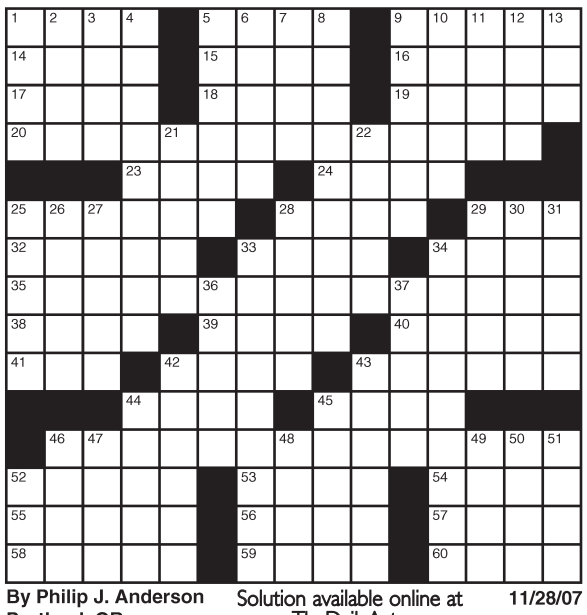

ACROSS
1 Genesis character
5 Opposite of fem.
9 Chubby, and then some
14 Medicinal fluids
15 Singer Fitzgerald
16 Convened again
17 Sharp taste
18 Con job
19 Saudis
20 Perry Mason's admission?
23 "The Virginian" author Wister
24 Govern
25 Impassive
28 Rhine tributary
29 Roast hosts, briefly
32 Imminent danger
33 "My Friend __"
34 Flue collection
35 Aesop's admission?
38 Dove sounds
39 Privy to
40 Actress Eve
41 Raggedy doll
42 Garbage vessel
43 Magician's word
44 Recipe directive
45 Hunter's quarry
46 Captain Bligh's admission?
52 Villain's look
53 Ditch around a castle
54 Astronomer Sagan
55 Bare
56 Take apart
57 One-celled plant
58 Color shades
59 Observed
60 Antique autos

DOWN
1 __ Spumante
2 Fizzled out
3 Florence's river
4 Flowering trees
5 Engaged, as gears
6 Old highway to Fairbanks
7 Eastern European
8 Film set employees
9 Delphi attraction
10 "Mr. Television"
11 Biblical twin
12 Kemo __
13 UFO passengers
21 Tough fabric
22 Surrounding glows
25 Virgo star
26 Grand __ National Park
27 "Citizen Kane" director Welles
28 Traffic director
29 Sulking periods
30 Ajax competitor
31 Shorthand, for short
33 Know-nothing
34 Public conveyance
36 Lawful
37 Destiny
42 Baby birds?
43 Running-back Walter
44 One cubic meter
45 Open space in a forest
46 Division word
47 Nasty
48 Unaided
49 Bargain basement event
50 Cogito __ sum
51 Ruer's word
52 Mach+ jet

By Philip J. Anderson
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