Pipe Break, Flooding Close Sherman Hall

Underground water pipe rupture causes GSU's Sherman Hall to Flood.

Phoenix Photo by Trio Martinez

By Krystal Lang
Contribution Writer

Extensive water damage in the E-wing's Sherman Music Recital Hall has prompted several plays, performances and other events to be cancelled, postponed or moved to other campus locales. The university sent out a notice of the hall's temporary closing Feb. 17. That week, wet carpet and hoses snaked from one side of the hall to the other as maintenance crews responded promptly when they learned of the flooding.

"We had the carpet and other surfaces professionally cleaned and have scheduled an investigative team to send a camera into the pipe to determine the point of pipe break," said Rakstang.

Sherman Music Recital Hall has been an important part of GSU for decades. There have been many plays, cultural events, lectures and speeches held in Sherman. This Hall was the turning point for GSU's Fine Arts program and has an interesting history that follows.

GSU President Chats With Students

By Krystal Lang
Contribution Writer

With everyone worried about the economy and their own future, GSU Elaine Maimon gathered with students and some of her top administrators to answer questions on a variety of topics from students and faculty during an informal chat session earlier this month.

The atmosphere was relaxed and informal with pizza, popcorn, cookies and coke, which Dr. Maimon declared her favorite foods as she opened the initial discussion. There was a modest group of students, student representatives and faculty gathered in the cafeteria annex for the talk. The GSU Strategic Plan, was one of the main topics discussed by Maimon. She assured all in attendance of the positive progress GSU has made and will be making by 2015 as demonstrated in the GSU Strategic Plan.

"As a nation we're confronting financial difficulties, but we're in good shape," Maimon said referring to GSU, "We're in unchartered waters in challenging economic times."

The Strategic Plan, available on-line at www.govst.edu under the About link, is a strategy of institutional goals that GSU hopes to accomplish by the year 2015. The plan addresses continued academic excellence, high quality of faculty and staff, social ethical and environmental responsibility, and financial growth and sustainability.

Strengthening the connection with community colleges and expanding dual admissions simultaneously with GSU to avoid student difficulties dealing with two bureaucracies is another issue Maimon discussed.

Enrollment is on the rise, she noted, and GSU is looking into possibly offering more classes during the day and making it easier for students from other schools to take summer classes.

Maimon also addressed issues involving increases in student fees. A future student trustee raised the question of why technology fees have been increased but no other fees were increased.

Maimon said they decided to keep student fees as low as possible so that is the reason they only raised the technology fee which was increased by seven dollars.

In 1970, Dr. Alfonso Sherman joined the GSU faculty and helped formulate the first fine arts program and staffed it with outstanding faculty. Sherman was the first dean of the College of Cultural Studies at GSU. Sherman was one of the main contributors to what GSU's fine arts program is today.

In 1987, the Board of Governors of State Colleges and Universities agreed to name the Music Recital Hall at GSU in honor of Dr. Alfonso Sherman.

GSU's then-President Leo Goodman-Malamuth noted, "In the course of the universities development he was instrumental in the conception, design and furnishing of the Music Recital Hall, the facility that is to be renamed in his honor."

Dr. Alfonso Sherman died in 1980. At that time Goodman-Malamuth said, "Naming the Music Recital Hall after him is an appropriate honor for an individual who contributed so much to the university and its fine arts program in particular."

Had it not been for the contributions of Dr. Alfonso Sherman, Sherman Music Recital Hall may not have existed.

See 'President Chat' page 2
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PHOENIX

The Phoenix is Governors State University's student newspaper. It is published twice monthly during the fall and winter, and monthly during the spring/summer.

We welcome articles, suggestions, photos, commentary, cartoons, and letters to the editor on topics that concern you or the greater GSU population.

We reserve the right to edit submissions for clarity, legality, and interest to our GSU readership.

All submissions should be signed, and include the student, faculty, or staff member's ID number, department, and phone number.

PHOENIX

OUTLOOK

Editorials & Opinions

03/19/09

Just Like McDonald's, I'm Loving It

By Sarah Silhan
Editor

When you first decided on the career or major you chose, was it that inspired your decision? Was it a wish to fulfill a childhood dream? The desire to work with children? A yearning for a six-figure income? No matter what inspired you to pursue your course of action, how can you be sure that you will still be happy with your choice years down the road? I asked myself all these questions when I decided to quit my corporate job a few years ago and return to school to become a high school English teacher.

Honestly, I questioned whether or not I was making the right decision. Maybe I just wasn't giving my cubicle enough credit. Or maybe I just wasn't with the right company yet. Maybe my "dream job" was downtown, on Michigan Avenue. Or maybe it was in another city.

So I took a chance. I applied to GSU, got accepted, and started slow, taking only two classes in the fall of 2007. After graduating in 2004 from St. Ambrose University in Davenport, Iowa, it had been awhile since I'd been in the classroom, but something told me I was doing the right thing.

As I see the light at the end of tunnel of the Winter 2009 term, I am more confident than ever before that I made the right choice. I've spent many hours microteaching (the step before student teaching) at Rich Central High School and Crete Monee High School, and I can honestly say that nothing in my past life as a corporate minion was as gratifying - or as exhausting.

But there is a feeling of contentment and self-worth every time I leave the students I'm teaching. When I teach something and they "get it," there is absolutely nothing better. When a student tells me, "That was so cool, Miss Silhan! I finally understand!" I can't tell you the overwhelming feeling of success I feel.

In 2007, I questioned whether or not I was making the right decision, but now, in 2009, I am sure that I have. As I near the end of my last term of heavy classwork at GSU before I student teach in the fall, I hope that all of you feel the same connection and fulfillment in your career path that I do.

I write this editorial because I hope that if you haven't found something to inspire you or to test your commitment to your chosen field, now is the time. Don't wait until you've spent four years crying in the parking lot of your company parking lot because you "hate your job" to decide to make a change.

Your classwork at GSU is an indication of the kind of work you will be doing for years after graduation. If you love it, congratulations! Finding the "perfect career" isn't always easy, but if you leave your classes, your internships or whatever it is that is preparing you for the "real world" that awaits with a true feeling of joy, then you've already got your answer.

For now, maybe now is the time to talk to your advisor, visit the career center or consider making a change.

Though it may seem like a daunting task, you'll be so very glad you took the steps to achieving your career goals.

As for me, I can't wait to get into a classroom in the fall and begin to make a difference in the lives of young people. But until then, I've got to practice writing my lesson plans.

'President Chat' cont. from page 1

Maimon said the Jenzabar system controls all technology for the college and may need upgrades or repairs.

But with the economy being what it is and Jenzabar being a small company there could be a chance that they may suffer and if they experience difficulties staying in business that puts the GSU technology system at risk of being shut down.

So Maimon said to protect the school and the students she would rather increase the technology fee as a back up to any possible problems and if we have to replace the system we have to show a fee that covers that debt. If we don't have to replace the system with technology for the college and may need upgrades or repairs.

At the end of the questions, Maimon and a staff member headed to Springfield for budget discussions where they planned to lobby for using federal stimulus monies to renovate the E and F wings, a project that has been on hold for years during to a lack of funding.

Maimon noted that authorities are looking to use those funds for "shovel ready" projects. "What could be more shovel ready than a project we've had ready for seven years?"
Who's Who @ GSU
Ting Jie Wang

By Michelle Hulett
Staff Writer

Ting Jie Wang (otherwise known as TJ) has had nothing short of an extraordinary life. To see the full picture, however, we must look back to 1953, as Chemists at a West German pharmaceutical company worked to produce an anti-histamine.

Accidentally, they stumbled across a new tranquilizer, which they began marketing in 1957. Hailed as a "wonder drug", Thalidomide was sold in 46 countries including Taiwan, where Wang was born. In 1961, an Australian obstetrician made a connection between the birth of disabled babies and the use of the drug. Though the drug was recalled in 1962, there had been at least 12,000 victims, only 8,000 newborns surviving past the first month of life. But Wang is one of the survivors.

"When my mother was pregnant with me," Wang explains, "a local pharmacist in Taiwan gave her the drug to ease her severe morning sickness." Wang was born with short arms that lack wrists and elbows. His left hand has two fingers, his right hand has three fingers, and neither hand has a thumb.

"I could not independently carry out activities of daily living until I was 12 years old," Wang did not let his disability hinder him, however. He says he can "use chopsticks, write, type, ride a bicycle, swim, play table tennis and pool, and drive an automobile without any modifications." He can also cook and do Chinese calligraphy as a trade name.

Further, Wang has won trophies in competitive table tennis. He began playing table tennis when he was a teenager. "I played table tennis for about 2 years because of peer pressure", he explains. "At that time, I did not really enjoy playing the sport because of my disadvantages due to my short arms." However, he won third place in the Second National Handicapped Table Tennis Championship in Taiwan.

Twenty years later, while writing his Ph.D. dissertation in Seattle, Wang took up the sport again at a community club. "Since then, I have been playing table tennis once a week for about 2-4 hours for 11 years," he says.

Wang has established three clubs thus far; TTC at University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Shorwood TTC, and TTC at GSU. He has also organized many tournaments and workshops. Never allowing his disability to control his life, Wang has truly become an inspiration to all.

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Physicians increasing concern for politicians and their constituents as evidenced in the recent presidential election and the daily news headlines.

On Feb. 25, Dr. Quentin Young, the CEO of Physicians for a National Health Program and longtime health care activist, gave a lecture on the issue of public healthcare and the need for change.

The lecture, titled “Empowering Community to serve Public Health,” is part of a lecture series sponsored by GSU’s university honors program. Every year the program chooses a theme for the lecture series. This year’s theme is “Empowering Community from self-service.” The theme was chosen to reflect GSU’s new goal called Strategy 2015: Inspire hope, realize dreams, and strengthen community. One particular goal of the university is the recommit itself to civic and community engagement.

As a result of this plan this lecture and future lectures in the series are open to the public and are taped and aired on the universities cable access channel.

In the lecture, Dr. Young discussed the need for a national healthcare system, providing health insurance for everyone. He is an advocate for what is called Single Payer National Health Insurance. Single-payer health insurance is where a single public agency handles health financing, but the healthcare remains private.

The Physicians for a National Health Program or PNHP is an advocacy group that is working to achieve this goal. Under the current health system about 45 million people in the United States have no insurance and another 50 million have poor insurance. About 66 percent of people in the United States filing for bankruptcy file due to unpaid medical bills.

The United States also has the most expensive healthcare system compared to other industrialized nations. The current cost of healthcare is about $7,129 per capita; other nations spend half that on healthcare. In the United States, $2.5 trillion goes to healthcare. Despite the higher cost the U.S. has poor life expectancy, infant mortality rates, and immunization rates compared to these countries.

According to the PNHP website, www.phhp.org the reason healthcare costs more in the U.S. is not because of better services but administrative fees. About 32-38 percent of all healthcare costs go to these fees. Included in these costs are for profit insurance companies and CEO retirement funds.

Currently, if one has insurance a co-pay is usually required and there is a cap on how much you can get. Plus, most insurance companies don’t cover “pre-existing conditions.” The U.S. has already begun taking steps towards a national healthcare system. Medicare is an example of this system. However, it is only available to individuals over 65. Medicaid is another example but many doctors will not accept Medicaid, mostly because they aren’t getting paid in a timely manner. These doctors have to pay their bills as well.

Dr. Young stressed, “The poor get sicker and the sick get poorer.” Healthcare is costly in the United States; it’s also costly to become a doctor. Many medical students are looking at specialized fields because they pay more. Not only is the prospect of higher pay enticing it has also become a necessity.

Many medical students have student loans to pay back, these loans total up to $150,000 or more. Family practice or primary care physicians are in demand because of the lack of interest. With a national healthcare system primary care physicians will benefit and many specialists will begin to receive pay similar to their colleagues in family practice.

Many hospitals are also in economic trouble. This is especially true for the poorer sections of the United States. Dr. Young used the southside of Chicago as an example when he discussed how the University of Chicago hospital has cut its medical student admissions along with emergency room activity by half.

The hospital implemented the emergency room policy because many uninsured or poorly insured go to the emergency room because the hospital has to provide care regardless of what type of insurance if any the patient has.

The University of Chicago hospital has seen a jump in emergency room visits in part because Michael Reese hospital has shut its doors. The situation may only get worse as Dr. Young stated, “other southside hospitals are suffering acute financial and economic hardship.”

These healthcare system issues are why 59 percent of doctors in the United States are for Single Payer Insurance. This plan is not socialized medicine, where physicians are paid by the government. Single payer health insurance pays for the services not the salaries of the healthcare professionals, which will be paid by hospitals or practices they work for.

Services covered under this plan would be any service provided by a licensed healthcare professional. The plan would also regulate the cost of medications as well. If people have health insurance they are more likely to receive preventive care thus lowering their healthcare costs as preventive medicine catches health problems before they become serious, Young said. For profit insurance companies and pharmaceutical companies are opposed to this plan and are lobbying to stop the bill in congress. There are roughly 650 lobbyists working for the drug companies on Capitol Hill, which is more than there are members of Congress, at 535.

The federal government is looking for a new healthcare system, but at this time single payer health insurance has been put at the bottom of the list. Dr. Young urges the public to be heard over the big drug and insurance companies. Make your congressman take notice. Currently the government pays for 60 percent of all healthcare costs, while employers pay 20 percent and the patient pays the remaining 20 percent.

Dr. Young and PNHP are calling for the public to write their congressman in support of House Bill 676 and their state representative on State House Bill 311. Currently House Bill 676 has 92 sponsors and House Bill 311 has 25.

If interested in this cause you can look at PNHP’s website at www.pnhp.org or call 312-782-6006.

Future lectures in the series are: “Bringing in the Community to Serve Juvenile Offenders” by Sr. Catherine Ryan, Executive Director of Maryville Academy, on March 25; “Community Development” by Mary Houghton, President of Shorebank, the first community development bank in the country on April 1; “Promoting Civic and Community Engagement” by the Honorable Abner Mikva, Federal District Court Judge, former state representative, legal council to the Clinton White house, and sponsor of the Mikva Challenge, a grant given to schools committed to community service on April 15.
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If you take a walk through the Visual Arts Gallery at GSU, you'll see something new. The University is hosting the 2009 Illinois Community College Juried Art Exhibition, which includes student paintings, drawings, printmakings, photography, digital media, sculptures, and ceramics from seventeen community colleges.

Jeremy Biles juried this year's exhibition. Biles is an instructor and graduate student adviser at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago as well as the editor of the visual art journal Prompt. He has also taught philosophy, religion and art courses at several institutions, which include the University of Chicago and DePaul University.

Biles is an author as well as an editor. He has written articles for such journals as the Journal of Religion, Janus Head, and the Journal for Cultural and Religious Theory. In 2003, he curated the "Zounds" show for the Hyde Park Art Center for which he also wrote the exhibition catalogue. In 2007, Fordham University Press published his book Ecce Monstrum: Georges Bataille and the Sacrifice of Form.

The exhibition will run until Friday, April 3 when a closing reception will take place from 1-3 p.m. in the E-Lounge. At that time, Biles will announce the merit award winners. The awards will go to the selected best works of the exhibition and will include monetary prizes totaling $1000.

The following students are competing for the awards: Hartland Community College: Chasiiy Logan and Laura Meador; Illinois Central College: Zak Harvey and Danielle Brown; John A. Logan College: Pakaphon Viriratana; John Wood Community College: Steven Stoll; Joliet Junior College: Heather Cookman, Maureen Catterson, Anna Dankova, Anastasiya Dankova, Ashley Dodin, Sam King, Marianne Nelson, Eric M. Rektorski, Steve Sainsbury, Brandon Swartz, and Amanda Watson; Kankakee Community College: Patricia Paris Cheffer, Analea Hooper, Helen Kupferer, Peggy Miller, Greg Ralang, Alex Shea, Christopher Sheets, Emily Snider, Mary Weeks, Shane Wells, and Erin E. Williams; Kishwaukee College: Peggy S. Klass and Zaneta Taylor; Lewis and Clark Community College: Sean Williams; Lincoln Land Community College: Jeff Miller and David Murray; McHenry County College: Robert Jordan, Andy Lechner, and Richard Neubauer; Morton Community College: Gini Lange and Kathryn A. Budd; Oakton Community College: Jude Kitts and Andy Harris; Parkland College: Anora Johnson, Judy Selen, siti Mariam Sullivan, Brian Sullivan, and Alena Yakimova; Prairie State College: Kristin Borda, Michelle D. Cox, Irene Gans, Diana Gudowski, Leonard Ferris, Bruce Peesoon, Charles Rober, Zachary Sala, Stephanie Socchi, Lisa Marie Stevens, Kevin Stewart, and Margaret Welting; South Suburban College: Maria Carrillo, and Alix Metcalfe; Triton College: Nicole M. Reichel; Waubonsee Community College: Emily Joy.

While some of the photographs included in this issue of The Phoenix were taken in the Visual Arts Gallery, all of the works can be viewed online at: http://gsuvisualartsgallery.blogspot.com.

The gallery hours until April 3rd are from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Thursday. The gallery is generally closed on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays.

Everyone is invited to view the exhibition and is welcome to attend the reception. Admission is free.
Puzzled by Art? Let GSU Graduate Student Art Exhibition Piece it Together

By Margie Glass-Sala
Contributing Writer

A remarkable group of twelve GSU Graduate art students, including both curators and visual artists, will display individual, limited scale exhibitions of artwork at various locations around the University from March 30 through April 20, 2009.

These exhibits, all under the blanketed title Puzzled Together will showcase examples of experimental and traditional photography, compelling process works incorporating smoke as an art medium, digital imaging, mixed media work, large-scale paintings, ceramic mosaic, and various forms of new twists on traditional drawing.

Informative lectures on each art exhibit will be given by the student curators and artists for three consecutive Monday evenings, April 6, 13, and 20 beginning at 7:30 pm. in the F-Wing, room F1622. Night owl tours of the campus-wide exhibitions will follow the evening's lectures, with a closing reception following the April 20 lectures.

Puzzled Together offers everyone a chance to see and learn about several types of artworks by the GSU emerging visual artists, historians, and curators placed throughout the campus. The art showcased in Puzzled Together includes visual artists Peter Bosy, Michael Costanza, Monique Doyle, Sarah Ogren, Parry McWilliams, Joyce Speechley, Elizabeth Farnesi, Margie Glass-Sala, the curatorial skills of Traci Ores and Rene Riley, along with Rachel Pendergast who is presenting the works of artist K.Ler, and Silvia Melby who is presenting the works of artist James S. Crews.

Under the direction of GSU Printmaking Professor Heather Page, the group of Graduate art students has come together during her current course on professionalism in the arts. Page herself an internationally shown visual artist, wanted the students to all have a chance to not only learn, but to experience just what it takes to organize and participate in a professional art event. In doing so, each student has the opportunity to could showcase their talents, and work as a team.

They chose the title for their multi-faceted art exhibit due to the fact that they all were "puzzled" as to how they would all be able to display such a wide array of artwork, but still remain a group. Group member Elizabeth Farnesi came up with the "puzzle" idea and collaborated with another of the twelve artists, Peter Bosy, on designing an announcement to represent the group.

The Puzzled Together Graduate art students hope for the rest of the GSU community and visitors to enjoy the artworks and lectures, with a few hopes for the University to continue to embrace more visual art, and display it on a regular basis.

To learn more, please visit the Puzzled Together site and blog: http://gsuart.blogspot.com or contact Professor Heather Page: h-page@govst.edu.

Maps of the Puzzled Together art exhibitions and the campus will be available at the Info Desk located inside the main entrance of the University.

Criminal Profiling at GSU

By Renee Wiechman
Contributing Writer

If you enjoy watching CSI and The Mentalist—or you have a real career in law enforcement—you might want to check out this summer's criminal profiling workshop to be held on four Fridays in June.

The course will cover a variety of topics. Students will learn about interview and investigation tactics, personality descriptions of criminals, and behavior of offenders after the crime. The instructors will also discuss how the behavior of victims may lead to being targeted by criminals in important in recognizing and profiling criminal conduct. Students will also be able to recreate a crime scene and build a profile on the offender.

The workshop will be taught by former FBI Special Agents Timothy Eley and Eileen Schmidt. The workshop is open to all students and GSU tuition does apply, as this is a two credit hour course. The course will also be available for non credit if police departments are interested in brushing up on their criminal profiling skills.

For more information and to register for this course, CJSU 510 QA, call (800) 478-8478, extension 3983 or visit www.govst.edu/schedule. If interested in GSU's Criminal Justice Program or other courses related to forensics and criminal justice please call 708-534-4100 or visit www.govst.edu/cas.

GSU Extends Recycling to Community

Governors State University is extending an invitation to surrounding communities to join its commitment to recycling and preserving the environment. With the placement of two large collection containers on campus, GSU is asking people to bring their recyclable paper products for deposit.

"GSU already has an extensive recycling program within the university. Some local communities, however, do not have curb side recycling and some of our faculty and staff were looking for a place to recycle paper products from home," said Peggy Schincher, Supervisor of Housekeeping. "These large containers provide a great solution."

The university has contracted with Abiliti Bowater, North America's largest newspaper manufacturer and newspaper recycler, to pick up and reuse the paper products collected in the bins. Newspaper, magazines, catalogs, mail, office paper, and paperback books are accepted. Cardboard and phone books are not recyclable at this location.

The bins are located in the Wagoner House parking lot, on the south side of Stuckel Road, adjacent to the railroad tracks, and in the E parking lot off University Parkway. For more information, call 708-534-4515.

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Puzzled Together art exhibitions and the campus will be available at the Info Desk located inside the main entrance of the University.
Scientists Create First Synthetic Ribosome

By Helen X. Yang
U-WIRE: Harvard Crimson, Harvard

Harvard researchers have successfully constructed an essential cellular component responsible for synthesizing proteins—a discovery that marks a major stride towards creating artificial life, according to the lead investigator behind the project.

The first man-made ribosome was announced to an assembly of Harvard alumni Saturday afternoon in a symposium titled "The Future of Life," by George M. Church, the lead investigator of the project and a professor of genetics at Harvard Medical School.

"[Ribosomes] are the catalytic core of the cell," said Michael C. Jewett, a research fellow who worked with Church. "The advantage of building them [in a lab] is that you can manipulate the system directly. It's like opening the hood of a car and having direct access to the machination."

Although their work is "a milestone...towards artificial life," according to Jewett, both he and Church emphasized that they have not yet created any synthetic life, nor is it possible to evolve ribosomes to produce unique proteins for compelling advantage of building them [in a lab], which is resistant to antibiotics and other protein additives.

Labs have created functional models of ribosomes in the past, Jewett said, but never in a way that so closely mimicked life itself. "We've shown for the first time that we can actually carry out ribosomal synthesis, assembly, and protein synthesis in one compartment," said Jewett.

"It's always been a very difficult thing to do," Szostak said. "It opens up many interesting experiences where you make something useful. It's a step in a long pathway to creating artificial life."

Fast Food Proximity a Factor in High School Obesity, Study Finds

By Tomer Ovadia
U-WIRE: UC-Berkeley

A fast food restaurant being in close proximity to a high school increases the obesity rate among its freshmen, according to a recent study by UC Berkeley economists and a Columbia University researcher.

The study, released in January, found that freshmen who attend high school a tenth of a mile from a fast food restaurant have an obesity rate at least 5.2 percent higher than their classmates.

Additionally, there was "no discernible effect" on obesity for high school students who live within a half mile of a fast food restaurant within a quarter mile or half mile, or with non-fast food restaurants nearby. "What we found was basically that only very close fast-food places matter," said Vikram Pathania, a researcher in the study who recently received his doctorate from UC Berkeley. "And if it's not a fast food restaurant then it does not lead to a spike in obesity."

The study looked at data from 3 million California public school freshmen, who are all required to take a fitness test in the spring. The study also found that pregnant mothers who live within a half mile of fast food outlets have a 2.5 percent increased chance of gaining 44 pounds or more.

Pathania said this discovery can be used to argue for stricter regulation of fast-food locations. "There are all these zoning restrictions in place now. For example, LA has been trying to stop the opening of new fast food places," he said. "And so there's also interest into whether you can use zoning laws in intelligent ways to reduce the exposure to fast food."

According to the 2007-08 California Physical Fitness Report, only 14.1 percent of Berkeley High School freshmen met all the criteria of a fitness test, compared to the statewide rate of 35.6 percent. A Round Table Pizza restaurant is located approximately 0.3 miles from the school, and there is a McDonald's restaurant 0.4 miles away, according to Google Maps. Berkeley High Parent Teacher and Student Association President Mark van Krieken said although there are many local healthy options, students can be tempted.

"Ideally parents raise their kids properly and tell them, 'you don't eat fast food at home with us, don't eat fast food when you're off on your own at lunch,'" he said. "But the bottom line is a lot of kids are doing that anyway."

Matt Rogers, co-executive director of the Society for Agriculture and Food Ecology at UC Berkeley, said people tend to cut what is convenient and available.

"The fact that researchers are seeing these correlations just shows that we need to redouble our effort to expand farmers' markets and expand consumer education so that consumers know what kind of food to get their hands on to avoid the obesity epidemic," he said.

For many students, the study's findings stated the obvious.

"[That's] hardly surprising. Humans tend to act on emotional impulse. Fast food is fast, flashy and teenagers haven't developed much of a palate yet," said Jon Kelvey, a graduate student in cognitive neuroscience.
Caffeine May Prevent Skin Cancer

By Emma M. Benintende
U-WIRE: Harvard Crimson, Harvard

That cup of coffee you picked up before your 9 a.m. class may prevent more than just sleep during lecture.

A team of researchers—led by Paul Nghiem ’86 of the University of Washington Department of Dermatology—released a study last week that determined that the topical application of caffeine may prevent the some types of skin cancer.

The research—published in the Journal for Investigative Dermatology—provides a biological explanation for recent clinical studies that have shown a negative correlation between caffeine intake and the risk of developing non-melanoma skin cancer.

According to the study, caffeine appears to reduce the risk of some skin cancers by interrupting the ATR pathway, causing apoptosis or cell suicide of these damaged and potentially cancerous cells.

ATR is a protein kinase that is responsible for facilitating the replication of DNA, especially in damaged and dividing cells. While ATR plays a minimal role in normal cells, recently damaged and precancerous cells need the function of ATR, Nghiem explained.

The researchers determined that low levels of caffeine have no effect on normal cells. The study specifically addressed the preventative effects of caffeine for cases of Squamous Cell Carcinoma—the second most common type of skin cancer in the United States.

It has not been proven to have a similar effect in reducing the risk of melanomas or other varieties of skin cancer, said Rachael A. Clark of the Harvard Skin Disease Research Center.

In addition to the oral intake of caffeine, the topical application of caffeine may also help to reduce the risk of skin cancer.

One possible application Nghiem and his team are considering is its addition to sunscreen.

Even though caffeine is not opaque, it absorbs UV radiation, and as an additive, would increase the efficacy of a sunscreen.

In addition, once UV damage has been done, putting topical caffeine on mouse skin and in human cells has the effect of increasing the rate of cell suicide by 100 percent, thus decreasing the risk of cancer, Nghiem said.

"From a skin cancer perspective, I think it is a great idea," Clark said, though she added that she believes that more research needs to be done concerning the topical application.

This research has only been conducted in mice and human keratinocytes, and any human application is still years away, according to Nghiem.

"By no means are we suggesting that people change their drinking habits, but if you drink coffee, this is a another reason to feel good about it," he said.

Researchers Seek Good Uses for Tobacco

By Michelle Chan
U-WIRE: The Diamondback, U. Maryland

Even though tobacco is associated with negative stigmas, such as cigarettes and cancer, researchers at the University of Maryland are working to find positive alternative uses for the plant.

Martin Lo, the head researcher of Alternative Uses for Tobacco and an associate professor of food science at the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, said their goal is to help revolutionize the way tobacco is grown and used with the goal of helping the economy adjust to changing times.

The ingredients recovered from tobacco will have applications in food, chemical and fermentation industries, Lo said. However, exact uses for the tobacco plant could not be revealed due to pending patents.

The researchers conduct experiments on raw tobacco plants, extracting proteins and finding uses for them in alternative fields.

"We here at the university are the troubleshooting team," Lo said. "This [research] expands the horizon.

Another aspect of the research, according to Lo, involves finding more efficient processing methods after the plant has been harvested.

Currently, the tobacco leaf is preserved, but the new method would involve chipping up the leaf, effectively decreasing labor and production costs.

The findings in the study could also have an economic impact on southern Maryland, according to Lo. The research they have done will impact the farming community, which gives their discoveries an economic ripple, Lo added.

Farmers can gain revenues of $400 per acre of tobacco, so the project aims to provide similar benefits to farmers through their new methods, Lo said.

The Alternative Uses for Tobacco research team consists of professors, graduate students, research assistants and undergraduates.

"For me, it has been a learning experience," said Ansu Elizabeth Cherian, a second-year master’s student. "Apart from the usual stigma attached to tobacco, we can find good uses for it.

Research assistant Sandra Catalina Rodriguez said that while at the Library of Congress, she explained the Alternative Uses for Tobacco project to a group of Fulbright Scholars. Many of the people were surprised at possible alternative uses for the crop.

"People are getting sick from tobacco and cigarettes, and now you can try to find something different," Rodriguez said. "That was a really nice experience, just mentioning that. The learning process is very open field.

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A Moment With Nona Frazier

By Patti McGoldrick
Contributing Writer

It could potentially be difficult to find a person who looks forward to going to work each day, but Nona Frazier of the GSU Fitness & Recreation Center not only looks forward to work, she genuinely "loves her job."

Frazier has worked at GSU since January 2004. She has worked with students and faculty in weight loss coaching and personal training as well as teaching aerobics and meditation classes. Currently she teaches the "Next Level Exercise" class on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 12:15 p.m. to 1 p.m.

She holds certificates from the Aerobics and Fitness Association of America (AFAA) as both an Aerobic Aerobics and Fitness Association of America (AFAA) and a Neurolinguistic Programmer (NLP), which is basically encouragement and understanding. Essentially the client does "all the work themselves."

According to Frazier, the biggest obstacle for people in losing weight is themselves. She believes those that struggle with weight loss "get what they focus on."

In other words, focus on what you want to be, rather than dwell on what you are not. Then you will be the healthy person you envision.

Although constantly striving to educate herself and stay on top of health trends, Frazier still finds time for some rest and relaxation. She enjoys theater, salsa dancing and motorcycles.

When asked if she would leave her job if she could, she surprisingly answers "no."

"I enjoy working with people, being of service seeing instant results and sharing the journey and victory with people," she explained. "I'll be here until I'm not here any more."

Nona Frazier is certainly one of the most interesting people on the GSU staff. She is currently trying to get "Reiki" into the class schedule at GSU.

Another holistic healing technique she has been working with is the Lifeline Technique®, which is supposed to heal your body and mind in the process of “acceptance, forgiveness and being grateful for all parts of oneself,” according to Infinite Love & Gratitude, Inc. (www.infinitelevendgratitude.com).

A lifelong resident of the Southwest suburbs, Nona has one grown daughter. In addition to her busy schedule at GSU, she also works for the Village of Park Forest and St. James Health & Wellness Center.

Q & A: Slumdog's Predecessor an Award Winner As Well

By Michelle Hulett
Staff Writer

Winning eight Academy Awards, Slumdog Millionaire, the 2008 film directed by Danny Boyle, has achieved critical acclaim and worldwide box office success.

However, like most movies, few people realize it was based on a book. Q & A, written by Vikas Swarup, is the novel behind Slumdog Millionaire. Translated into 34 languages, it won South Africa’s Exclusive Books Hoke Prize 2006, and was voted one of the Most Influential Book of 2008 in Taiwan.

Q & A tells the story of Ram Mohammed Thomas, a Mumbai waiter who wins the jackpot on the show "Who Wants to be a Millionaire?" Unable to believe a poor, uneducated man from the slums could ever answer all twelve questions correctly, Ram is arrested for fraud and tortured by the police.

Smita, a mysterious woman, comes to his aid and offers to act as his lawyer if he can convince her he won the game fairly.

What follows is Ram's story; each chapter documenting the events in his life that led to his ultimate success. Though the prose is somewhat flat at times, it is nonetheless a timeless tale of survival and the triumph of good over evil.

Vikas Swarup was born in India. He attended Allahabad University, studying History, Psychology, and Philosophy. Joining the Indian Foreign Service in 1986, Swarup has a passion for international relations. He is presently serving in South Africa.

Book Review

Crossword & Sudoku found on page 12.
Ill Communication: 15-Year Anniversary of a Beastie Boys Classic

By Amy Beth Porter  Contributing Writer

As most people under age 30 already know, the Beastie Boys are an iconic representation of hip hop in an earlier experimental and risk-taking hey day. Members include Adam “MCA” Yauch, Mike-D (Mike Diamond), Adrock (Adam Horowitz), and DJ Mix Master Mike.

Their 1994 release, Ill Communication, remains seminal and ambitious. The twenty-track album juxtaposes a self-aware style of old school hip hop with several instrumental tracks that smack of the disco era. Thematically speaking, this album reads a lot like a motivational speech, touching down on topics ranging from women’s rights and cultural unity to self-actualization and Tibetan awareness.

Always upbeat, this collection manages to be dead serious, sensitive, sexy, and absurd all at once. What is even more impressive is that this album consistently communicates (no pun intended) a sense of gratitude toward life and the hip hop community’s family members who guided this group along the way.

The opening track, Sure Shot, is an instrumentally eclectic classic that aspires to “send [their] rhymes out to all nations.” Rough Guy has a punk edge, and the lyrics are yelled at a frenetic pace. B-boys Makin With the Freak Freak is muddled and has a layer of unpretentiousness (“I’m getting into, not talking nonsense.”) I’ve made up my mind, not sitting on the fence.”

Bodhisattva Vow is a promise to behave better unto self and others, has remarkable sensitivity and depth: “We need other people in order to create/ The circumstances for . . . learning.”

Sure, they may curse like sailors, they may carry on like sex-crazed adolescents, and their voices may come off whiny sometimes, but it’s impossible to not feel refreshed and validated, even 15 years after the debut of Ill Communication. My advice is to roll down your windows and crank it up.

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Nina Simone: High Priestess of Soul Jazz Masters 17: Nina Simone

By Amy Beth Porter  Contributing Writer

It would take a lot more than this tiny space to fully and justifiably glorify Nina Simone. Born Feb. 21, 1933, Simone began playing the piano at the tender age of four, with the early intention of becoming a classical pianist.

In her teenage years, she was hired at an Irish bar in Atlantic City that failed to mention that she was expected to sing for her pay. She continued to sing in bars until she was recognized for George Gershwin’s famous ballad from Porgy and Bess titled, I Loves You, Porgy.

Nina Simone aimed to break barriers of race, sex, and class, as evidenced by her catalogue of jazz, gospel, folk, blues, pop, and African chanting hits. In this 16-song collection, the full breadth of her expansive music career is highlighted.

The first track, Black is the Color of My True Love’s Hair, is operatic, wistful, and wholly self-sacrificial. I Put a Spell on You is a mesmerizing and layered by jaunty piano, swelling strings, and a saxophone solo (“I don’t care if you want me/I’m yours right now.”)

Considering the ultimate inherent to this next song, Love Me or Leave Me, its delivery is oddly lighthearted (is there a cheeky way to say, “There’ll be no one unless that something?”)

Little Girl Blue strikes a familiar chord; it plays to the tune of the Christmas Carol, Good King Wenceslas, but this time with very different words. By way of an uncharacteristically happy-go-lucky detour, My Baby Just Cares for Me shows high esteem for unpretentiousness (“Lil Taylor is not his style, or even Lena Turner’s smile.”)

I Loves You, Porgy marks Simone’s career breakthrough from pub-chanteuse to opera diva. The locomotive force of her voice is nicely rendered in Work Song, an emphatic tribute to those who are “tired of being hungry and poor,” Sung entirely in French, the heart-wrenching sentiment of Non Me Quine Pas still translates loud and clear.

Perhaps the most lyrical gorgeous songs on the album, however, is the oft-imitated Wild is the Wind — “Like a leaf clinging to a tree, my darling, cling to me.”

A woefully overlooked and critically disregarded song, See Line Woman resonates long after it’s over. Simone’s rendition of the jazz standard, Strange Fruit, is darkly brooding. Private Jetty, also operatively based, runs the full gamut of emotions despite its brevity.

Four Women was banned from the airwaves in 1966 for its allegedly insulting overtures toward African Americans (ironic, no?) Mississippi Goddamn was released in response to a 1963 event in Birmingham in which four black children were killed in a church bombing.

Her frustration lives on in Don’t Let Me Be Misunderstood, which protuded the more popular take from The Animals by a year. The fundamental message in Hold No Grudge is, “you can go ahead and hurt me, but there’s no going back.”

One of seven children brought up in an impoverished rural Southern home, Nina Simone’s acquisition of worldly wisdom and eventual freedom is chronicled in this compilation album. Go ahead and draw your curtains on a rainy day, play this CD, and get ready to rue life and love.

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Color Me Green Crossword

Across
1. Bands (abbrev.)
5. The Emerald _
9. Girder
14. Dynamic prefix?
15. Image of a famous clinic
16. Brief fight
17. Stream
18. Who's calling?
19. Portion in the Iliad
20. Famous Joyce novel (sans apostrophe)
23. GMT minus 5
24. Chase after
25. Took a breather
26. Stir up
27. Took food
28. Stir up
30. Tripod
33. Off-the-wall comic Philips
34. Big bird
36. Start of a whole game
37. La Douce
38. When to paint the town green
42. Sop up
43. -Aviv
44. _ nuff (indeed!)
45. Flange
46. Seawall
48. Pre-beta
52. More plentiful
54. Propeller?
56. Cereal
57. Slogan for March 14th
61. Posts
63. Seal's and porpoise's nemesis
64. Aware of
65. Arm bones
67. Stanch
68. Spinal parts
69. Not so much
70. Auld Lang _

Down
1. Bloopers
2. Put a house back on the market
3. Without delay
4. Plant
5. Adult insect
6. Barbaric
7. French city noted for silk
8. Geological times
9. Zion
10. Bills
11. And so on
12. Took food
13. Up-to-date (slang)
21. Swelling, to a doctor
22. Totals
26. TV award
27. Got to a hosp.
28. Saved
29. Saved
31. Leaning
32. Urge a dog to attack
35. Mouths
37. Paragon
38. Thim
39. County (home of Cornell Univ.)
40. Soak
41. Lambchop's Lewis
42. Bikini part
46. Owen & James
47. Holy Cow, in the Bronx
49. Like toes on cowboy boots
50. Expedites
51. In
53. Pale purple
55. Hoard
56. Work hard
57. Common crossword bird
58. Work hard
60. Betsy the banner sewer
61. Rainy day hazard
62. "The Greatest"

THE ECONOMIC CRISIS TAKES ITS TOLL