Body Cam Program Progresses

IVFP is in the process of choosing a body camera for its officers to wear, hoping to have all officers wearing them later this year.

Nicholas Bogel-Burroughs
Asst. News Editor

Eight Isla Vista Foot Patrol deputies have been testing body-worn video cameras for about a year, and all 16 may be wearing the cameras in the spring according to Sol Linver, commander of the Santa Barbara Sheriff’s Office.

“I'm hoping by the end of next quarter we'll have an idea which [camera to purchase],” Linver said. This would begin the next phase of the body camera pilot program, outfitting all Santa Barbara County deputies who are “not routinely in cars” with one of five potential body camera brands, something Linver hopes to do by April.

The department has been evaluating the use of body cameras over the last year, attempting to determine the most effective camera, select an affordable managing program and server for viewing and storing video and obtain the money to purchase these items.

Police departments across the country have increasingly turned to body cameras amid calls for transparency from activists and politicians after a series of highly publicized and controversial deaths at the hands of police in Ferguson, Mo., Staten Island, N.Y. and Baltimore. Linver said this sudden spike in demand forced camera companies to hastily develop and sell cameras, flooding the market with subpar products.

Now that the initial eagerness of police departments is ebbing.

Gio’s Pizza To Close After 34 Years In Business

Giovanni’s Pizza Restaurant will close this Thursday following a lengthy legal battle.

Juliet Bachtel
Asst. News Editor

Giovanni’s Pizza Restaurant, locally known as Gio’s, will be permanently closed on Thursday, Jan. 14 after seven years under current owner Matt Metzka’s management.

Established in 1982, Gio’s was purchased by Metzka in 2009. Metzka will be permanently closing Gio’s this week after losing a legal battle to renew his lease for the restaurant. The current lease owners have not disclosed their future plans concerning the property, and Metzka is debating opening another business in Isla Vista.

Metzka said the legal battle was quietly “going on for years,” and he wished the situation had worked out differently.

“I wish that there was other opportunities to work with the landlords, but they don’t want me in the building,” Metzka said.

UCSB’s MICHAEL BRYSON
BIG WEST LEADING SCORER VS
THE BIGGEST MAN
IN THE GAME
7’6” MAMADOU NDIAYE
IT’S GAUCHO GAMEDAY

UCSB BASKETBALL
UCSB STUDENTS GET INTO ALL REGULAR SEASON UCSB ATHLETIC EVENTS FREE WITH VALID STUDENT ID

BIGGEST GAME
OF THE YEAR
UCSB VS
FREE TANK TOP GIVEAWAY!
Visionary organ player Cameron Carpenter
Tue., Feb. 9, at 7:00 p.m. at The Granada Theatre

Cameron Carpenter is not your grandmother’s organist. A controversial figure in the music world, Carpenter bucks tradition with a varied and virtuosic repertoire that spans across genres, encompassing Wagner, J. S. Bach, pop music and international film scores. His rock star persona – reflected head to toe by his jet black mohawk, Swarovski crystal encrusted suit tails and bejeweled shoes – is second only to his stunning musicianship. Do not miss this enthralled young artist in his Santa Barbara debut as he dazzles audiences on the International Touring Organ, an elaborate instrument built to his own design that represents a seismic shift in the organ world, and Carpenter’s “unlikely quest to turn one of the world’s most niche instruments into a mainstream sensation” (The Verge).

Adam Grant, influential thinker on business and management, discussing his new book, Originals: How Non-Conformists Move the World, Thu., Feb. 4, at 7:30 p.m. at UCSB Campbell Hall

Renowned choreographer Lin Hwai-min, “the most important choreographer in Asia” (Berliner Morgenpost), created the visually striking Rice in reverence of the land that nurtured “Asia’s leading contemporary dance theatre” (The Times, U.K.).

Free Public Lecture
Thursday, January 21, 8:00pm
UCSB Lotte Lehmann Concert Hall.

John Esposito, Professor of Religion and International Affairs and of Islamic Studies at Georgetown University. This lecture will address the questions: Who are Muslims and what do they believe? What do Islam, Judaism and Christianity share in common? Why does it matter?

Cloud Gate Dance Theatre of Taiwan performing Rice, a multimedia work of human drama and the story of a revered land
Tue., Feb. 2, at 8:00 p.m. at The Granada Theatre

Renowned choreographer Lin Hwai-min, “the most important choreographer in Asia” (Berliner Morgenpost), created the visually stunning Rice in reverence of the land that has nurtured “Asia’s leading contemporary dance theatre” (The Times, U.K.).

Itzhak Perlman, violin
Emanuel Ax, piano
Thu., Jan 21
7:00 PM
The Granada Theatre

Undeniably one of the most beloved violinists in the world, Itzhak Perlman enjoys superstar status rarely afforded a classical musician. Recognized for his charm and humanity as well as his talent, he is a Kennedy Center Honoree treasured by audiences who respond not only to his remarkable artistry, but also to his irrepressible joy for making music.

Salman Khan
Education Reimagined
Sun, Jan 24
3:00 PM
The Granada Theatre

A nonprofit educational organization with the mission of providing free, high-quality education to “anyone, anywhere” in the world, Khan Academy was founded by Salman Khan, a former hedge fund analyst with degrees from MIT and Harvard. Khan is also the author of The One World School House, which explores the potential impact of the web as a teaching tool.

WEATHER

The Weatheruman has been seeing a lot of snaps of people unheeding their jaws at Glo’s to ingest ungodly amounts of pizza for the sake of nostalgia. Ze has no problem with this, except that ze holds an undying flame of jealousy within hir for these people. Ze is poor and hungry and can’t legally buy beer.

Tomorrow’s Forecast: The Weatheruman breaks down and gains lots of weight while losing lots of money.
Duncan Calvert  
Staff Writer

Hundreds of students, faculty, community members and dignitaries attended the grand opening ceremony for the newly renovated UCSB Library Wednesday afternoon.

The main ceremony was held on the library’s front steps and began with an opening dance and drum piece by students from the Theater & Dance Department and Music Department.

Following the performance, Head Librarian Denise Stevens spoke of the library’s central role in UCSB history, noting that the library was the original building constructed on Santa Barbara’s campus in 1954.

“The UCSB library, from its beginning, was meant to be the physical and geographical center of UCSB,” Stevens said.

Stevens said the library renovation focused on technological and educational innovations as well as creating more student and faculty study space.

“More than just a renovation of outdated buildings, we began a reimagining of what resource services could be,” Stevens said. “[It has] bright inspiring resource galleries which provide spaces to study and think ... and a [Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design] certified building which addresses the environmental focus of our campus and of our time.”

Associated Students President Jimmy Villarreal said the library is an “essential” part of UCSB student life.

“UCSB offers so many different experiences and opportunities that it is hard to exactly define what it means to be a Gaucho, but there is nothing more familiar to every student here than heading to the library to work on a paper or study for an exam,” Villarreal said.

Villarreal praised the addition of 1,800 new electrical outlets during the renovation and announced that the UCSB Library’s Learning Commons would be the recipient of the 2016 Senior Class Gift. The gift will come in the form of a combination of high tech study resources including a dedicated 3-D printer.

Chancellor Henry T. Yang highlighted the importance of libraries on campuses, saying the UCSB Library receives over 1.5 million visits a year.

“As a hub of information, a library is a key component of inspiring original thought, creativity and communication,” Yang said. “As we celebrate the opening of this phenomenal building, let us also celebrate the bright future it represents for our campus.”

Executive Vice Chancellor David Marshall said that it was “important this ceremony is being held at the ‘Paseo.’”

“This passage is not a corridor, it’s a vital artery in the heart of the campus,” Marshall said.

Marshall finished on a more personal note, focusing on the library’s role in students’ lives and what it symbolizes to an academic community.

“The library remains a place of learning and teaching, the crossroads of tradition and innovation, a laboratory of discovery and reinvention,” Marshall said. “Our new library offers a safe refuge space for quiet study and contemplation. It’s a place to lose oneself and to find oneself alongside others.”

Following Marshall’s speech, representatives from State Senator Hannah-Beth Jackson and Assemblymember Das Williams’ offices presented Yang and Stevens with a plaque commemorating the opening of the renovated library.

For the full story, see dailynexus.com.
Students Demand Private Prison Divestment

The Afrikan Black Coalition (ABC) is pressuring Wells Fargo to divest its funding from the private prison system.

Josh Ortiz
Senior Staff Writer

Black student leaders across the University of California (UC) increased pressure on Wells Fargo this week to divest from private prisons.

Students from the Afrikan Black Coalition (ABC), an alliance of black student groups on nine UC campuses, released a statement Monday demanding Wells Fargo sell its shares in private prisons and end all business relations with the companies by Feb. 20. According to the statement, if Wells Fargo fails to do so by the deadline, ABC will continue to pressure the UC to divest its $425 million invested with Wells Fargo. ABC pressured UC to divest from private prisons in December, prompting UC to sell approximately $25 million in private prison shares.

Nia Mitchell, UCSC Black Student Union Political Chair and fourth-year environmental studies major, said black students remain upset that the UC invests in Wells Fargo despite selling its shares in private prison corporations. Mitchell said she believes Wells Fargo contributes to private prison funding.

“We cannot be complacent with the fact that our tuition is being invested, either indirectly or directly, to the incarceration of our people,” Mitchell said.

ABC spokesperson Anthony Williams, citing research conducted by Enlace’s Private Prison Divestment Campaign, said Wells Fargo is financially invested in private prison corporations such as Corrections Corporation of America (CCA) and The GEO Group (GEO) in several ways.

According to Williams, Wells Fargo owns 1.5 million shares in GEO and CCA, acts as an issuing lender on CCA’s $900 million line of credit and serves as bond trustee to GEO’s $300 million corporate debt.

“They are funding private prisons,” Williams said. “Wells Fargo is completely complicit in private prisons and what they do and how they treat people, which is horrible.”

According to Williams, Wells Fargo owns 1.5 million shares in GEO and CCA, acts as an issuing lender on CCA’s $900 million line of credit and serves as bond trustee to GEO’s $300 million corporate debt.

Wells Fargo holds no investment in either The GEO Group or the Corrections Corporation of America,” Pulido said in an email. “We have no seat on either company’s board of directors, and we do not dictate their policies or business models.”

UCSB economics professor Henning Bohn said Wells Fargo provides passive index funds for customers to invest in other companies, which is a product that “any random financial firm” would offer to its customers. Bohn said Wells Fargo customers own the shares in private prison corporations, not Wells Fargo.

“From an economic perspective, I would say [Wells Fargo] doesn’t really hold an economic interest because the interest is held by their customers — those are the beneficiaries,” Bohn said.

Bohn said if Wells Fargo were to end all investments in private prison corporations through index funds, the bank would first have to withdraw all index fund products, and would only offer funds investing in companies in which the bank wants clients to invest.

“That’s something that Wells Fargo is probably not going to do,” Bohn said.

Mitchell said she does not believe the distinction between Wells Fargo and Wells Fargo Funds makes a difference.

“It’s still Wells Fargo,” Mitchell said. “You can separate it however you want bureaucratically, but it is the arm of the same system.”

According to Mitchell, black student leaders want UC and other “financiers” to divest from for-profit prisons because of how incarceration oppresses black people.

“Private prisons literally make a profit off of the incarceration of people, who, within a system that’s rooted in white supremacy and capitalism, are for the most part black and brown bodies,” Mitchell said. “Their system of mass incarceration has not helped the black community.”

Williams said the business model of private prisons requires them to lobby for criminal justice and immigration policies to incarcerate as many people as possible. Williams also said these policies generally lead to the disproportionate number of racial minorities in the prison facilities of corporations like GEO and CCA.

“Their business model is getting as many people incarcerated as possible and having contracts, and if they can’t do that, then how are they going to make money?” Williams said.

According to CCA Director of Public Affairs Jonathan Burns, CCA does not take an active stance on public policies affecting incarceration.

“To be clear, CCA does not draft, lobby for or in any way promote policies that determine the basis for or duration of an individual’s incarceration or detention,” Burns said in an email.

GEO Vice President of Corporate Relations Pablo Paez also said he “vehemently refutes these charges.”

For the full story, see dailynexus.com.
Khan Academy
Creator To Speak on
Education Program

Sonia Htoon
Staff Writer

Founder of Khan Academy and the author of The One World Schoolhouse, Salman Khan is coming to the Granada Theatre in Santa Barbara on Jan. 24 to speak about the education offered at Khan Academy. Khan Academy is a nonprofit educational organization that aims to provide free education through online videos and practice exercises. Khan, who holds degrees from MIT and Harvard and is a former hedge fund analyst, created the Academy in 2005 as a tool to help tutor his cousins and expanded the idea into a web-based educational organization.

Roman Baratiak, Associate Director of UCSB Arts & Lectures, said in an email that Khan brings an optimistic message about the future of learning in relation to modern technology.

“Arts & Lectures invited Salman Khan because of his visionary work rethinking existing assumptions about education and his work connecting students to the digital age,” Baratiak said.

Carina Salaiz, a second-year biology major, said Khan Academy videos often pertain to science, technology, engineering and mathematics education (S.T.E.M.) and were integral to her academic journey as a S.T.E.M. student.

“I've used his videos so many times in the past for bio, calculus, chemistry,” Salaiz said. “They're way more extensive and in-depth than other 'how-to videos' you can find them on YouTube and they're completely free.”

Salaiz said Khan's knowledge of technology helped make his program more accessible and understandable than any other educational organizations.

“I feel like other nonprofit [organizations] need to step up their game and use more web outlets to reach out to more people,” Salaiz said. “It's the easiest way and it's cool how Khan utilizes that. I am definitely really inspired by his work.”

Mao Chan Cheng, a second-year political science major, said he appreciated Khan for using modern technology in a user-friendly way to assist students.

“I feel like it’s a really honorable thing to want everybody to be educated,” Cheng said. “There's no better way to reach out to kids struggling in school than YouTube videos and really nicely formatted websites.”

For the full story, see dailynexus.com.

Stakeholders Discuss Parking Problems for I.V. Residents

Siboney Arias
Staff Writer

The Isla Vista Self Governance Initiative held a meeting Tuesday evening in the I.V. Clinic building to discuss solutions to Isla Vista's problematic parking situation.

I.V. has long suffered from overcrowding and a lack of parking, with students and families struggling to find cheap and accessible parking spots. The meeting discussed long-term parking regulations, potential parking permits and affordability for low-income families.

Scott McGolpin, Director of Santa Barbara Public Works Department Transportation Division, said UCSB could restrict first-year residents from buying permits.

For the full story, see dailynexus.com.

Possible solutions mentioned in Tuesday's meeting included parking permits and long-term regulation.

Del Playa, Mountain Side
6512 #A 3bd/2ba $4500 (6)person max
6574 #A 2bd/1ba (4) $2800
6772 #B 2bd/1ba (4) $2700
6772 #A 2bd/1ba (4) $2850
6796 2bd/1ba (4) $2800
6798 #A 2bd/1ba (4) $2800
6798 #B 2bd/1ba (4) $2800
6816 Trigo 5 Bd/2ba (6) $3995

Other Isla Vista Properties
6793 Estero #A 4bd/3ba (8) $4680
6816 Trigo 5 Bd/2ba (6) $3995
6861 Trigo 3 Bd/2ba (6) $4350

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851 Camino Pescadero (Isla Vista)
805-685-3484 or 805-685-6967
Obama Delivers His Final State of the Union
President Barack Obama was optimistic in the eighth and final State of the Union address of his term as President on Tuesday night. The President stressed that Americans cannot ‘scapegoat’ other citizens as frustrations grow about escalating issues such as terrorism and gun control. He readily contradicted the Republicans’ pessimistic view of the State of the Union. People who represent national causes are generally invited to attend the speech, but this time Obama chose to leave one seat empty to represent victims of gun violence, likely in coordination with his recent executive actions on gun control. nytimes.com

Oil Prices Drop to Near 12-Year Low as Domestic Inventories Soar
Oil prices are down to around $30 per barrel after reports show that crude oil inventories were at 234,000 in the U.S. last week. That number was overshadowed by the 8.4 million barrel rise in gasoline and 6 million barrel rise in distillates such as diesel and heating oil last week. This surge represents a build higher than the seasonal norm. Gasoline production was at its highest levels since 1993. Analysts at Morgan Stanley warn that the rise in demand for crude oil may turn out to be lower than previously projected. In response to the surge, OPEC members are calling for an emergency meeting. reuters.com

International Spotlight
Turkey Arrests Five More People in Connection with Istanbul Blast
The Islamic State (IS) was suspected to have been responsible for the suicide bombing in Istanbul that lead to the deaths of 10 German tourists on Tuesday. Over 70 suspected IS militants have been detained since. Turkish authorities have identified the bomber as a Syrian man who had recently entered Turkey. He is suspected to have links to IS, but the terrorist group has not claimed responsibility for the attack. There is no indication that the attack was targeted at Germans. An investigation by the Navy is underway to find out what exactly led to the boats drifting into Iranian waters.

U.S. Sailors Released Quickly After Tense International Incident
Sailors on two U.S. Navy boats drifted into Iranian waters off of Farsi Island and were subsequently detained by Iranian forces on Tuesday. The incident was resolved quickly and the sailors were released successfully and diplomatically. The incident was likely caused by a mechanical issue in one of the boats. In a statement by the Iranian military, they said that the incident was illegal, but also inadvertent and unintentional. An investigation by the Navy is underway to find out what exactly led to the boats drifting into Iranian waters.

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We chose to do the pilot project and do this right before we go out there and spend a great deal of money on cameras.

- Cmdr. Sol Linver

Linver said officials are “starting to slow everybody down” and ask for a camera “that’s going to last — not something that’s just going to go out there so we can say we have body cameras.” Los Angeles officials recently balked at approving a $57 million proposal to purchase more than 6,000 body cameras for the LAPD.

City council members delayed the vote amid critics’ concerns that the city relied too heavily on another county’s pilot program and only tested two camera brands itself.

The Santa Barbara Sheriff’s Department has taken a different approach, independently evaluating five brands of body cameras — VidMic, VidCam, BodyCam, TASER and COBAN — based on durability, nighttime video quality, charging time, battery life, time and date stamping, internal memory, still image quality and charging time, battery life, time and date stamping.

The department estimates that each camera will produce, on average, slightly less than two terabytes of data per year, roughly equivalent to a half a million songs in an iTunes library. Linver said in December that he had just purchased a 72 TB server for $24,000 to store video from car and body-worn cameras.

Linver said he had looked into federal grants — which almost exclusively apply to the hardware, rather than storage expenses — and also plans to explore other means of funding, such as drawing from the department’s general fund or requesting funds from the county Board of Supervisors or Police Foundation.

Matthew West, a deputy at the IVFP station, voluntarily purchased his own body camera in November of 2014 and said he uses it as an aid to write detailed reports and protect himself from potentially unfounded claims of excessive force.

“With perception, sometimes you look at a video and you say, ‘oh, that’s what happened,’” Linver said. “Sometimes they don’t know the things they’re doing are wrong, and we work with training and things to make sure it doesn’t happen again.”

The department’s policy manual also says, “Uniformed members should wear the recorder in a conspicuous manner or otherwise notify persons that they are being recorded, whenever possible.”

Lieutenant Jeffrey Greene said that citizens’ behavior can change when they know they are being recorded.

“I tell them, ‘I’m recording you, so keep up what you’re doing and let the judge or your parents see that,’ and immediately, their behavior changes,” Greene said, adding that this tactic is not as effective in I.V., where unruly students are often “already drunk and typically beyond caring mode.”

For the full story, see daily nexus.com.
Preseason All-Big West Conference Team

RAVEN BENTON
College: LBSU
Position: Guard
Year: Junior

ALYSON DOHERTY
College: UCD
Position: Forward
Year: Senior

MOKUN FAJEMISIN
College: UCI
Position: Forward
Year: Junior

BRITTANY CRAIN
College: UCR
Position: Guard
Year: Senior

ANNELISE ITO
College: UCR
Position: Forward
Year: Senior

ASHLEIGH KARAITIANA
College: Hawaii
Position: Guard
Year: Senior

UC SANTA BARBARA

By Sean White

Since winning the Big West title and losing to Baylor in the first round of the NCAA Tournament in their 2011-12 campaign, the UCSB women's basketball program has struggled to regain their prominence within the Big West Conference. Over the past three seasons, the Gauchos have amassed an overall record of 26-66.

The uncanny decline prompted the hiring of Head Coach Bonnie Henrickson, who had spent the last 11 years coaching at the University of Kansas. In her first year, Henrickson and the Gauchos currently sit at 4-12 overall and 1-1 in conference play, exceeding their total of two wins last season.

Santa Barbara won three consecutive games entering conference play for the first time since the 2012-13 season, on the heels of an eight-game losing streak.

“The record looks like we fell apart,” Henrickson said. “But in those stretches we had opportunities where we played pretty well and put ourselves in the position to win. We didn’t get it done, but we learned and grew from it. From the staff’s perspective, we respect the fact that every day they come back, no matter what the scoreboard says, and try to get it right.”

The Gauchos kicked off conference play with a 78-67 win over Cal Poly before being outmatched by a superior UCR team 83-53 this past Saturday.

Since scoring a career-high 27 points against Pepperdine earlier this season, sophomore guard Makala Roper was placed in the starting lineup and continues to emerge as a primary scorer for the Gauchos. She leads UCSB in scoring with an average of 12.1 points per game. Roper also holds the team-high in 20-point games with three.

Despite Roper’s rise in production, the loss of freshman forward Kali Jones certainly affects UCSB’s presence in the paint. She has missed the team’s last five games and has been ruled out for the season.
**Women’s Big West Conference Preview**

Continued from p.8

...indefinitely ineligible for the remainder of the season. “We’ve got to have somebody that produces at the five,” Hendrickson said. “At the end of the day it’s about production. We have Kendra, MC/Chad, Chaya and Je Zhe Newton at the five, but we just have not got the production that I know we’re going to need to succeed in a league that’s this talented.”

UCSB received the least amount of votes in the Big West women’s basketball preseason poll and is expected to finish last in the standings. Yet, the Gauchos are playing their best basketball in the latter half of the season.

Santa Barbara continues conference play tonight on the road against CSUF at 7 p.m.

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**Hawaii Rainbow Warriors**

The Hawaii women’s basketball team came into this year as the clear favorite to finish atop the conference, collecting 13 of 17 first place votes in the preseason coaches’ poll. The Rainbow Wahine were coming off of a season in which they dominated conference play, going 21-3 overall and 14-1 in Big West, as they won their first regular season conference title since the 1993-94 season.

However, reigning Big West Coach of the Year Laura Beeman and her team have found how difficult it can be to sustain success, even after the successful season. In the next few years, Hawaii has managed only a middling 8-7 overall, 1-1 conference record to this point, sitting at fifth in the conference.

The Rainbow Wahine lost two starters from last year, including their leading scorer guard Shawna-Lei Kuehu — the team’s only double-digit scorer.

This year, they are led by senior guard Ashleigh Karaitiana, a second team All-Big West selection in 2015.

Karaitiana, the team’s top threat from deep, struggled mightily with her shot through her team’s nonconference games, shooting just 17.5 percent on three-point attempts. As a result, she comes in as just the team’s third-leading scorer at 8.1 points per game, behind sophomore center Megan Huff and senior guard/forward Destiny King, who average 8.2 and 9.8 ppg, respectively.

Karaitiana seems to have gotten hot at the right time with conference play starting, as she has made 6-14 (42.9 percent) through the opening two games. Hawaii has not been able to find the rhythm on defense that saw it drop just two conference games in 2015, as it currently ranks fifth in scoring at 60.5 points a night. A big reason for this has been the team’s three-point shooting, which is second-worst in the league at 25.4 percent.

However, its defense has been able to keep it in games, as it ranks first in opponent three-point shooting (25.4 percent) and opponent scoring (61.2 ppg).

While it is still early, the Rainbow Wahine will need to improve if they are going to find a way to repeat as regular season champs and win the Big West Tournament. Getting the offensive going may be the key, as they have allowed just 1.1 ppg more to opponents compared to last year while scoring 7.5 ppg less.

Hawaii plays its third conference game tonight against Cal State Northridge in the Stan Sheriff Center at 9 p.m. PST.

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**UC Riverside Highlanders**

The reigning Big West Player of the Year, senior guard Brittany Crain, is joined by junior transfer forward Rejane Verin at the top of the scorers list, as they lead the team with averages of 19.2 and 17.3 point per game, respectively.

Senior guard Anesilue Io also complements Riverside’s offense as she leads the team in assists at 4.9 per game, is second in boards at 7.1 and third in points at 13.5. These three players account for a majority of the team’s statistics, but Margaritis explains that their success is a complete team effort.

“You can’t just talk about a couple players when you think of this team — you really can’t leave any of them out of the discussion,” Margaritis said. “We have a whole team, and all of our players together are very difficult to play against.”

The Highlanders’ next game is on the road at Hawaii on Saturday, Jan. 16 at 9 p.m. PST.

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**Cal Poly Mustangs**

“Ending last season on a bitter note with a first-round loss to Cal State Fullerton is something that Head Coach Faith Mimnaugh and the Cal Poly Mustangs look to make a deeper push in the Big West Tournament this year with a more experienced squad.

Predicted to finish third in the Big West according to the conference media poll, Cal Poly are still intact,” Mimnaugh said. “Our pieces have changed [this year] and certainly there’s no avoiding the loss of players each year, but our chemistry and our familiarity with one another have made us a more experienced squad.

Certainly, there’s no avoiding the loss of players each season, and Cal Poly has maintained its prominence in the Big West by finishing in the top three or better of the conference for seven straight seasons.

The Mustangs’ combination of Gilbert in the post and Balbierz at guard has been a consistent scoring force, as this year’s team has posted 88.5 points per game, and in their ten victories this season, that figure increases to 88.0 points. Those wins were not only high scoring, but also dominated by Riverside, who has beaten every opponent by an average of 21.0 points.

Both Gilbert and Balbierz have proven to be offensive-minded so far, which has led us to see some of our big wins," Margaritis explained. “Now we are looking to strengthen the defensive end of our game.”

The team’s roster is decorated with three former Big West Freshman of the Year recipients, multiple members of Big West All-Conference teams and last year’s Big West Player of the Year. The all-around talent that this team possesses makes them a very deep and tough unit to break.

Balbierz has finally embraced a leadership role in Cal Poly’s backcourt. Leading the team with 23 makes from downtown this year, Mimnaugh will utilize Balbierz’s shooting ability to spread the floor and give more opportunities for Gilbert down low.

“If she’s been watching her team play the sixth man role during her first two seasons, Munnaugh said. “I see an intelligence on the court that’s been a source for [us]. Both girls have always had the ability to shoot the three, but she added driving and passing skills to her repertoire this year, so we are very pleased with both.”

Gilbert and Balbierz will be central components to the Mustangs’ success this year. The Mustangs will go as far as the two upperclassmen carry their team.

Cal Poly will face CSUF in its conference home opener on Saturday, Jan. 16 at 4 p.m.
Long Beach State

By Antonia Bird

After putting together one of the most outstanding seasons in recent history in 2014-15, the Long Beach State women’s basketball team is eager to make history again. Their 22-10 overall record last season was the team’s best since 1990-91. Moreover, their 13-1 nonconference record last season was the best in school history.

Long Beach is in the midst of another solid start as it heads into Big West play, currently standing at 12-5 overall and 1-2 in conference. The conference’s opening weekend saw the 49ers fall against Hawaii 67-55 before blowing out Cal State Fullerton 82-61 on the road. But, the 49ers would fall again in a 78-60 loss to UCR last night. However, with such an impressive early record, Long Beach appears set to repeat last year’s success and will once again be the team to beat.

The 49ers biggest threats are junior guards Raven Benton and Jewelyn Sawyer. Each are well-rounded players who play crucial roles in the team’s success.

After sitting out the last eight games of her sophomore year due to an injury, Benton has proven herself ready in these first 14 games of her junior season. She leads her team with 13.1 points per game and is second with an average of 5.3 rebounds per game. She is off to a hot start in conference play, averaging 20 points a night while shooting 50 percent from the field and 63.6 percent from three-point range.

Teammate Jewelyn Sawyer is yet another option for Long Beach, as she holds the second best average for points per game with 10.5. She saw an impressive game high of 16 points in the 49ers’ nonconference finale against Seattle two weeks ago. Sawyer’s biggest advantage is her ability to rebound, as she currently leads the team with 6.6 boards per game.

Long Beach’s next game will be on the road against UC Irvine this Saturday, Jan. 16 at 2 p.m.

UC Davis

By Ryan Burns

After its loss in the semi-finals of last year’s Big West Tournament, the UC Davis women’s basketball team has entered conference play with the intent of landing near or at the top of the standings at the end of the regular season.

“We are all competitive and would love to win a championship, but the ultimate goal is to make sure our players are growing,” UC Davis Head Coach Jennifer Gross said.

UC Davis finished fifth in the Big West last season with an 8-8 record (15-16 overall), but most of the team’s stars returned this year. Senior forward Alyson Doherty was named to the preseason All-Conference team prior to this season, and two games into Big West play, she is leading the Aggies with averages of 6.5 rebounds and 1.67 blocks per game. She is also second on the team in scoring, averaging 13.2 points per game.

Alyson Doherty and Celia Marfone have played a lot of minutes for us since their freshmen year,” Gross said. “This year we have asked them to be more vocal on the court and help set the tone with consistent effort for our team.”

Gross has been at the helm of the Aggies’ coaching staff for five years after playing her collegiate career in Davis. After four years with the Doherty-led senior class, the coach believes the team’s upperclassmen are setting a good example for the younger stars.

The Aggies are well respected amongst their teammates and have a strong voice, especially when assisting some of our younger players,” Gross said.

Three underclassmen, including Bertsch and sophomores Peler Gianotti and Dani Nafekh, are among the top five in minutes per game for UCD. If freshman breakout Bertsch is regularly able to put up big numbers, she will be an early contender for the Big West Freshman of the Year.

“This preseason provided us with so many opportunities to grow, and we have improved in a lot of areas, but understand that we still have a lot of work to do,” Gross said. “There is still so much time to improve and I am excited to see where this team can be in March.”

Cal State Fullerton

By Sinead Leon

With Big West play upon us, the Cal State Fullerton women's basketball team is looking to break their 13-game losing streak.

After being voted to finish sixth in this year’s preseason coach’s poll, the Titans finished their nonconference schedule in eighth place with an overall record of 2-12 and have since lost their conference opener to Long Beach State 82-61.

“We are an extremely young team learning the differences between high school and college basketball,” Head Coach Daron Park said. “I think we have the potential to be a very competitive team in the Big West Conference — I just don’t know when that light will click on for them.”

Last year, Fullerton averaged 59.7 points per game, but its weakness was mainly that it lacked defense. It's unfortunate, but we have not been playing well offensively and we cannot score,” Head Coach Daron Oliver said. “Until that turns around, we will not be competitive.”

However, Oliver remains optimistic about UCI’s remaining schedule, maintaining the mindset of taking it one game at a time. Despite Irvine’s struggles during nonconference play and its winless start to its Big West schedule, the hope is that the Anteaters will hit their stride throughout the remainder of conference play.

UC Irvine

By Xavier Cadrenas

The Anteaters were predicted to finish eighth in the conference by the Big West Media Preseason Poll and are experiencing a downward trend since the start of the Big West schedule. Irvine's six-game slump prior to entering conference play has now extended to eight consecutive games after losses to UC Riverside and Cal Poly.

The Anteaters concluded the nonconference portion of their season with an overall record of 3-11, but are now 3-13, 0-2 after the pair of Big West losses. Although they have suffered losses against tough opponents such as USC, UCLA and Princeton, UC Irvine has shown resilience.

“They are a resilient group — we have not played good basketball [during this stretch]. It’s unfortunate, but we have not been playing well offensively and we cannot score,” Head Coach Doug Oliver said. “Until that turns around, we will not be competitive.”

However, Oliver remains optimistic about UCI’s remaining schedule, maintaining the mindset of taking it one game at a time. Despite Irvine’s struggles during nonconference play and its winless start to its Big West schedule, the hope is that the Anteaters will hit their stride throughout the remainder of conference play.

Big West Team Statistical Leaders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points Per Game</th>
<th>FG Percentage</th>
<th>3-PT FG Percentage</th>
<th>Rebounds Per Game</th>
<th>Assists Per Game</th>
<th>Steals Per Game</th>
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<tr>
<td>UC Riverside: 75.5</td>
<td>UC Riverside: 44.8 %</td>
<td>UC Riverside: 36.0 %</td>
<td>UC Riverside: 12.6</td>
<td>UC Riverside: 19.6</td>
<td>Long Beach State: 9.3</td>
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Shiba San Sells Out SOhO

Frank Home Asst. Artsweek Editor

With a silent wish for my bike's safety as it sat locked up outside of 7-Eleven overnight, I hopped onto the crowded party bus headed downtown to see Shiba San light up SOhO Restaurant & Music Club. Lined with kitschy Christmas lights and rows of sloshed Greeks, the bus made its bass-bumping trek along the 101. In the clump of a line clustered around the venue's entrance, Cal Poly third-year Maria Roberts remarked on the blockbusting French DJ she'd traveled miles just to see again. "Shiba San took me back to — whaddya call it with the dinosaurs? — the Jurassic era," she said. "I felt like I was riding a T. rex the whole time."

By the time we got to the front and our names were sharpened off the list, we were ready for the dinosaur ride of our lives. The second opener, We The Beat and SOhO proved to make glee away to catch their Ubers, Lyfts and party buses. We The Beat and SOhO proved to make

As Shiba took the stage he kept the ball right on rolling. The little time between the sets ensured that the lively audience had no time to cool off, and Shiba's massive beats had enough gravity to draw in the minglers around the bar and patio. Under the exposed vents and beams of the SOhO's contemporary rustic roof, hands wristbanded and X-marked alike waved through the air, all spangled with hundreds of glowing green dots from the fragmenting laser hung up above stage.

Shiba augmented his tailbone-vibrating basslines with goofy, looping, animal-themed visuals befitting of his canine persona. Floating cat heads swallowed up and regurgitated smaller versions of themselves and a party-ready zebra served up a pair of wayfarers as it jumped around on the screens. The animal motif was appropri-ate; the floor became a site of primate flow and energy, The mark of any good live musician is their ability to aid their audience in the disposal of inhibitions. Shiba did this easily, a pied piper leading his fans through the groove.

His pull on his crowd was strong enough to get an ample amount of them to hop up onto stage with him. Concertgoers decked out in flashy sequined tops and cropped denim playfully shook their stuff in orbit around the DJ, some nervously approaching him to venture a chat. Nothing could pierce Shiba's focus though, and he continued to spin heavy-hitters with the precision of an artist deeply involved and invested in his work. The audience fed ravenously off this passion, morphing into a whirlpool of blurry bedlam in the throngs of Shiba's international club hit, "Okay."

Thoroughly danced out, the audience staggered away to catch their Ubers, Lyfts and party buses. As Shiba San brought the house down, the party was in full swing, and the crowd's energy was palpable. The atmosphere was electric, and the audience was engaged, fully immersed in the experience. As the night came to a close, the crowd remained on their feet, cheering and dancing to the final beats of the set. The energy was still high as the crowd dispersed, leaving the SOhO Restaurant & Music Club with a feeling of excitement and anticipation for the next big show.
Hearts on Fire

singing and casually spilling their half-full red cups on one another.

Hearts on Fire, as "passionate" and "anthemic." Once again, a catchy synth and drum intro lead to initially calm, ultimately rising vocals by Montgomery and fellow FMLYBND vocalist Braelyn Montgomery. A simple but incredibly fun chorus makes this song accessible for the dedicated listeners and casual partiers alike.

The penultimate "Phoenix," signals a shift from the upbeat, poppy trio that composes the first songs. It opens with some heavy, slightly grungy electrics and moves into a synthesizer riff that moves all over the board, with airy vocals and pained lyrics that almost deceive the listener into thinking this song has dark heart. But FMLYBND's relentless energy makes even this, the least 'happy' song on the EP, a song of energetic redemption.

According to Montgomery, the final track on the EP, "Land of the Rising Sun," is about the Isla Vista tragedy in May of 2014. "Space & Time" follows, complete with FMLYBND's signature style of an unforgettable synth hook, huge drops, easily-recognizable and quickly-learnable vocals and a layer of summery guitar on top. A definite mood booster to shout out the windows on the next drive down the 101.

Montgomery describes the title track, "Hearts on Fire," as "passionate" and "anthemic." Once again, a catchy synth and drum intro lead to initially calm, ultimately rising vocals by Montgomery and fellow FMLYBND vocalist Braelyn Montgomery. A simple but incredibly fun chorus makes this song accessible for the dedicated listeners and casual partiers alike.

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According to Montgomery, the final track on the EP, "Land of the Rising Sun," is about the Isla Vista tragedy in May of 2014.

"That one is pretty much dedicated to the family and friends of the victims," Montgomery said. "The chorus is pretty much an encouragement ... When you feel like you can't go on, all you think about is how they're gone. Someday we'll see them in the land of the rising sun. Which is a place of hope."

This last song, despite the emotionally challenging content, uses gentle, ambient vibes, a light drumbeat and Montgomery's passionate vocals to maintain a sense of positivity and peace. The track, and thus the EP, ends with soaring vocals that leave you feeling satisfied and optimistic, but still yearning for the next album … or maybe just a replay.

Despite consisting of only five songs, Hearts on Fire is anything but small. Everything from the short fills to the precise synthesizer work is intentional. Without a doubt, a start-to-finish run through is the best way to understand the journey that this collection represents for the band.

"It's just a reflection of my life ... so it's kind of letting people into that experience of watching best friends not become best friends, seeing people die," Montgomery said. "It's heavy; in this beautiful paradise there's all this crazy stuff that can go down. It's figuring out how to be the best person you can be, figuring out how to love people, how to love yourself."

Despite the depth of the music, it's not meant to be too heavy, rather it's something to help people come to terms with the struggle of humanity, to celebrate life and enjoy it.

"It's this whole love, mixed with pain, and at the end kind of very triumphant. It's happy, it's love, dark, sad, hopeful," Montgomery said. "It's not a depressing EP, it's not a happy EP. It's all over the place. But it flows as one."

After the launch of this EP, FMLYBND is set to start working on their first full-length album. "We want everything to be out of the box, meaning nothing is made on the computer. Not a synth, not a drum," Montgomery said. "I wanted everything to be 100 percent real, like we tracked it. Epic. Like the sickest synth patches you've never heard because we made them on this analogue synth."

Until the next release, keep your ears peeled in I.V. FMLYBND is just waiting for an open front yard on DP, but stay tuned because you're not going to hear about it until you hear it blasting through the streets.

FMLYBND will be having their EP launch party on Jan. 23 at Velvet Jones. Tickets are available online.

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Have you ever gone to a restaurant and tasted something so magnificent it changed your relationship with food altogether? Well I have. Several years ago, in the early days of my vegetarianism, I tried eggplant parmesan. My first bite of this meal was a religious experience, to say the least. From that moment on, it has almost been guaranteed that if I ever go out for Italian, I will get that dish. It became an obsession and I became one of those loathsome creatures of habit afraid of change in my dietary choices.

Of course, feeding this tantalizing obsession became quite costly because I now required parmesan perfection on a regular basis. It was time to find an alternative solution. Behold, I found it – deep in the pages of my dusty-covered cookbooks was a recipe for none other than eggplant parmesan. This, at first, intimidated me; how could I recreate something so magical and perfect in every way with my average cooking skills? The recipe looked intense, with hand-breading, frying and baking all in one dish. But my obsession left me no other choice; I had to give it a try.

Game time. I began by grabbing all the supplies I needed: milk, eggs, garlic powder, Italian seasonings, bread crumbs, pepper and salt, one large eggplant, a jar of red pasta sauce and one bag of Italian cheese blend equaling a cup. The first step was preparing the egg wash by combining one egg, a cup of milk, salt, pepper, Italian seasoning and garlic into a small, shallow bowl. In another shallow bowl, pour the Italian bread crumbs in so you can dip the washed eggplant in it.

Then rinsed and sliced the eggplant into half-inch-thick pieces. Breading the pieces was actually much simpler than I thought. All you do is soak the individual pieces of eggplant in the egg wash and then transfer to the bread crumb bowl and create a nice even coat.

After all the eggplant is breaded, place a skillet on high heat with about half an inch of vegetable oil. Once the oil is hot, place a few of the eggplant slices in and flip over when each side is crispy and golden brown. Place the cooked eggplant pieces on a paper towel to absorb the oil.

Then, in repeating layers, fill a casserole dish with pasta sauce, eggplant and cheese. After you have the dish prepared, place it in the oven at 350 degrees for 20-25 minutes or until cheese and sauce is bubbling. Remove from oven, allow the dish to cool and serve in squares.

The feeling of accomplishment from recreating my favorite dish was so invigorating and a great way to start off the quarter. It filled my sense of self and my wallet with a new hope, because it showed me I can indulge my obsessions in a more controlled and less expensive fashion. And it proves what Chef Gusteau from “Ratatouille” said: “Anyone can cook!”
Emotional Therapy: Getting Physical

By Natalie Overton

When I arrived at his office half an hour early, the door was open. Sitting comfortably at his neatly paper-laden desk was UCSB Researcher and Sociology professor Dr. Thomas Scheff (or “Doc,” as his students call him). After a brief introduction, I could see that he was used to talking about his work, yet showed no signs of stilted professionalism.

I had come to talk about our feelings — more specifically, our emotions. Contrary to common usage, “feelings” are different from “emotions.” In his recent paper, “What are Emotions? A Physical Theory,” Dr. Scheff explains that emotions are actually physical reactions to an event; the ‘feeling’ part occurs when these physical reactions are delayed.

“Suppose for a moment that some emotions are felt and others are not. If it’s not felt, where is it? And this article says, well, it’s in your body,” Scheff said.

Scheff gave the example of watching someone who seems very angry, but doesn’t register his or her own anger. They aren’t feeling the anger, because it’s being automatically expressed through their bodies.

This isn’t a commonly accepted theory. In fact, very little is known scientifically about emotions. Why? “For some reason they haven’t been really studied adequately compared to perception or cognition behavior. Modern psychology thinks of itself as behaviorism, which kind of leaves out emotions entirely,” Scheff said.

He based a significant portion of his ideas on John Dewey’s “attitude theory of emotion.” Dewey, a big-time philosopher around 100 years ago, introduced this theory claiming that an emotion is a physical, internal predisposition to act that has been delayed.

According to the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Dewey emphasized the fact that not just any action is expression of emotion. Some actions merely “discharge” the emotion on impulse. An example of this would be acting angrily, like yelling or defenestrating heavy objects. While they may get rid of the feeling in the short term, they are not resolving the emotion, and thus are not expressing the emotion. The feeling will come creeping back.

What may seem expressive to an outside observer because it tells us something about the state of the person observed may not be expressive from the standpoint of the subject. Mere “giving way” to impulse does not constitute expression. Expression requires clarification, which for Dewey means an ordering of implication by way of incorporating values of prior experiences. source: Dewey’s Aesthetics

How can we express our emotions … correctly? Apparently, it can only happen at a specific distance. Catharsis, the release of extreme emotions, can help us complete the emotional cycle, but it takes practice. Catharsis only occurs when the subject is just close enough to be in touch with their emotions, but far enough away to avoid losing control. Scheff, like others in the field, refers to this “Goldlocks Zone” as “aesthetic distance,” when “you’re partly in, partly watching yourself happen, then that does the trick — that’s cathartic.”

This happy medium is hard to find, and doing so can be really scary. During an overly-involved emotional episode, Scheff recounted, “For whatever reason, you feel like you’ve lost control. It’s not true — you always have control. But you need to practice these things.”

Societal codes dictate that everyone, especially men, must store these emotions somewhere else to deal with them later. Oddly, the more oppressed men might have it slightly better than the women.

“There’s a bad cry, and a good cry. Men don’t know about bad cries; they’re so repressed that they can only have a good cry,” Scheff said.

It’s rarely appropriate to express one’s emotions immediately, and this leads to unnaturally negative feelings and misplaced anger or aggression. The moral? Express yourself. Or try, at least. As Doc reminds us, “grief is inevitable with human beings because we are dependent on other people, not just ourselves. That’s mammalian. It’s quite physical. grief and attachment.”

National Medal of Technology Recipient, Arthur Gossard

Arthur Gossard, UC Santa Barbara research professor and professor emeritus of materials, electronic, and computer engineering, was recently named one of the eight recipients of the National Medal of Technology and Innovation presented by the United States Patent and Trademark Office. The National Medal of Technology and Innovation is an annual recognition given to individuals, teams or companies whose efforts have made a long-lasting impact on “America’s competitiveness, standard of living, and quality of life through technological innovation, and to recognize those who have made substantial contributions to strengthening the nation’s technological workforce,” as stated by the United States Patent and Trademark Office.

Gossard has contributed to advancing the field of science with his work on molecular beam epitaxy, the growth of quantum wells, superlattices, magnetic semiconductors, and optical elements. One of his most significant contributions was the development of low-dimensional structures. He is a member of the National Academy of Engineering and National Academy of Science.

Newly Elected Members of the National Academy of Inventors

UC Santa Barbara faculty members John Bowers, Craig J. Hawker, Umesh Mishra and Galen Stucky have recently been elected to the National Academy of Inventors (NAI). Created in 2010 as a 501(c)3 nonprofit institution, the NAI recognizes inventors with patents issued by the United States Patent and Trademark Office “for the invention, development and/or commercialization of new technologies and products.”

Bowers serves as professor of ECE at UC Santa Barbara. He is also a member of the Electrical and Computer Engineering Department and the Materials Research Laboratory. Bowers has published 466 journal papers and holds 54 patents.

Hawker’s research lies in macromolecular and thin-film materials. He has more than 200 patents and 34 publications. His primary research focus is in gallium nitride (GaN) electronics, utilizing the wide bandgap semiconductor material to create energy-efficient power devices.

Mishra’s main research focus is in gallium arsenide (GaAs) devices, utilizing the wide bandgap semiconductor material for high-performance electronic devices.

Stucky has over 700 publications and 34 patents. His primary research focus is in drug delivery and cancer treatment.

Interested energy efficiency and optoelectronic devices for the next generation of optical networks, using both electronic and photonic elements on the same silicon-based chip, will be able to operate faster and use less energy. Bowers has published 466 journal papers and holds 54 patents.

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Faculty member since 1990, Mishra is a professor of electrical and computer engineering and a member of the campus’s Solid State Lighting and Electronics Center. He is also affiliated with PowerAmerica and co-founded Transphorm, a power-conversion-based startup.

Galen Stucky specializes in organic/inorganic interface chemistry in the hopes of synthesizing new material based on biomolecular assembly. These complex materials can be converted into desired forms for applications in optics, catalysis, energy storage, energy conversion and separation. Stucky has over 700 publications and 34 patents. His primary research focus is in drug delivery and cancer treatment.

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DAILY HOROSCOPE

Aries (March 21-April 19) -- Today is a 7 -- Favor rational logic over emotions today. Postpone a financial discussion. Talk about practicalities and action. Move group activities forward steadily, and keep the others on course. Clarify instructions. Delegate tasks, and talk about the dream fulfilled. Imagine what it could be like.

Taurus (April 20-May 20) -- Today is a 7 -- Dream up a way to improve earnings. It's a good time to ask for money... express your passion. Start with your inner circle, and then move out. You're in the glamour spotlight, and others are impressed. The competition's fierce. Play full out.

Gemini (May 21-June 20) -- Today is a 7 -- Team projects go well, and dreams are within reach. Organized data and planning provide structure, which comes in useful as your workload increases. Focus on your objective, one step at a time. Money changes hands. Practice your game, increasing strength and endurance.

Cancer (June 21-July 22) -- Today is a 6 -- Change takes place just as you imagined. Try not to get flustered. Money for a lovely household item is available. Listen to your partner without judgment. Allow extra time to resolve any misunderstandings. Peace and quiet go down especially nice today. A sunset walk soothes.

Leo (July 23-Aug. 22) -- Today is a 6 -- Imagine a dream come true, especially with a home project. Research your objective. Friends can be persuaded to help out... provide delicious treats and other entertainments. Apply their expert tricks. Clean up messes as they happen. Double-check instructions before compromising... measure twice before cutting.

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) -- Today is a 6 -- Travel beckons, but take care. No need to rush things. Calm a partner's anxiety. Don't spend before the check clears. Reach out to your group. An imaginative work strategy gets results. Brainstorm and plan itineraries and logistics. Express what a dream might look like.

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) -- Today is an 8 -- Today could get profitable or expensive (or both). Don't touch savings. Try a different approach. Believe in someone who believes in you. Fall in love with a dreamer. Get captivated by a fascinating conversation. Unravel a mess. Pay your eye on the ball. Practice makes perfect. Avoid impulsive spending, or a conflict of interests. Make plans

Scorpio (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) -- Today is a 7 -- Discover something new about yourself today. Record any dream you remember. Indulge fantasies and speculations. Imagine yourself in different roles than what's predictable. You can instigate a change for the better. Achieve distant goals. Believe through bureaucracy. Unravel a mess.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) -- Today is a 6 -- Check for changes and study the situation before setting team goals. Copy the itinerary to everyone involved. Monitor all arguments. Argue with a wise suggestion. Visualize the desired result. Make plans, itineraries and reservations. Hunt for the best deal, and avoid scams. You can find what you need delivered, and write down what gets created.

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) -- Today is a 6 -- Talk doesn't go far today. Benefits are more spiritual than material. Enjoy parties for a good cause. Get involved in a community project. Resist temptation to run away. Bring your partner on board. Friends support your efforts. Refine your pitch. Sexy sells.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) -- Today is a 6 -- Consider a new opportunity. There may be a test involved. Keep your eye on the ball. Practice makes perfect. Avoid impulsive spending, or a conflict of interests. Make plans for castles in the sky. If emotions get triggered, let them flow. Angels guide your actions.

Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20) -- Today is a 6 -- Study, research and do the homework. Check each story from multiple views and catch differences of opinion. Don't argue with a wise suggestion. Visualize the desired result. Make plans, itineraries and reservations. Hunt for the best deal, and avoid scams. You can find what you need delivered, and write down what gets created.

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE:

ANSWER TO MONDAY'S PUZZLE:

SOLUTION TO MONDAY'S PUZZLE:

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

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Uncle Sam and Saudi Arabia: The Most Awkward BFFs Ever

In the wonderful world of friendship, there exist many fun categories. We have our really “good friends” (bless their hearts), our “lifetime friends” (the ones you’ve known for years but only see occasionally), our “regular friends” (the ones you hang out with often but would never discuss anything deeper than your V-neck), our “hobby buddies” (the ones you only do hobbies with but God-forbid you grab a beer together at Woodstock’s Pizza), our “party friends” (you only see them in large social gatherings but have no intention of interacting with them in real life), our “work/office buddies” (minus Toby, nobody likes Toby), our “acquaintances” (also known as “whatever friends”), — they’ll drop out of your life like flies), our “social media friends” (most of which are several steps below “acquaintance” and probably aren’t even real), our “shitty friends” (honestly they suck in so many ways that you question your relationship whenever you’re under the same roof) and of course at the very bottom we have our “friend-zone friends” (no explanation needed for this dark and scary realm). If you’re a sorority girl, you may even be lucky enough to have a “Best Friend Forever” (or BFF, if you will) — I won’t even hide my jealousy because that just sounds awesome! But before my envy gets the best of me, I remember that my citizenship guarantees my membership into the most amazing and intriguing BFF pact in the world — I’m American and my BFF by default is Saudi Arabia!

Uncle Sam and Saudi Arabia have the most awkward BFF relationship in the world. They are like the two weird kids you know from college that spend an absurd amount of time together and have each other’s backs despite all adversity or however much they may bicker at each other, because they share so much in — wait, hold on, that’s right … they share nothing in common!

Uncle Sam and Saudi Arabia are totally weirded out by each other and hate each other’s guts, yet somehow still feel the need to hang out all the time. Even better, their families/friends don’t even get along, so they have to arrange one-on-one meetings as to avoid igniting international outrage. Uncle Sam is a proud, secular venture capitalist who loves to travel, raid his friends’ kitchens, beat up bad guys and set really high moral standards for his entire friend group, which he occasionally chooses not to follow. Nobody really questions him, though, because Uncle Sam can kick their asses (with a big, fat, politically correct smile on his face). Saudi Arabia, on the other hand, is like the old-fashioned trust-fund kid who inherited a fat sum of black money (oil) and loves to tout it in his neighbors’ faces while literally beheading anyone he thinks might snatch it away from him — the target of which is almost exclusively Shia Muslims with certain issues regarding the bigotry of the Saudi monarchy. Saudi Arabia loves tyranny, but Uncle Sam loves nothing in common with his friendship with him more than that.

To put it bluntly, international relations is not conducted in terms of “friendship.” Nations have interests, and that’s pretty much it. If we happen to share interests, we cooperate. If we have opposing interests, we argue extensively about them before ultimately deciding to kill each other to get our way. Sorry not sorry, that’s how the international system has always worked, and despite the self-righteous age of PC Principle, it’s not going to end anytime soon.

This is precisely what makes the close US/Saudi relationship insane — we barely share interests! Our unrelenting love for each other is therefore best described at the level of “Best Friend Forever,” but it is definitely time for the United States to ditch our BFF relationship for something more rational. We don’t need to be hostile to Saudi Arabia, but can we please avoid being so disgustingly friendly? Saudi Arabia is really cramping our style.

While America’s unholy alliance with Saudi Arabia definitely puts a large check on Iran, what the hell is the purpose of a check on Iran if Saudi Arabia is doing the same kind of sketchy theocratic crap that Iran is doing? Why would we ever arm Saudi Arabia to fight their Sunni friends in ISIS if Saudi Arabia is just as fundamentally opposed to peace in the Middle East as ISIS is (though maybe on a less violently messianic scale), especially if those weapons will almost certainly be used against us in the future? We must acknowledge that the interests between the United States and Saudi Arabia have increasingly grown farther and farther apart, largely due to all the shady things that Saudi Arabia does to both its neighbors and its own people. I won’t waste space in this article going into detail about every little example of how Saudi Arabia is a place where theocratic scam-baggery is becoming an institutionalized norm, but I’m sure that a quick Google search on your Internet machine will do just the trick.

I also realize that both nations do extensive business together — as world’s best foreign policy expert Donald Trump said on MSNBC’s show “Morning Joe,” “I would back Saudi Arabia, you know why? We’re a debtor nation. They’ve got nothing but money.” Trump may have a point, but many of our other international partners have money. Our other “friends” also have oil. America’s dependency on foreign oil sucks enough as it is, but it doesn’t help that we are reduced to groveling at OPEC’s feet while Saudi Arabia holds a crossed finger behind their back with every handshake our nation’s leaders make. Easier said than done, but it is definitely time for the United States to ditch our BFF relationship for something more rational. We don’t need to be hostile to Saudi Arabia, but can we please avoid being so disgustingly friendly? Saudi Arabia is really cramping our style.

I think it’s time for Uncle Sam to reevaluate our BFF relationship with Saudi Arabia. And while the whole country gets busy with that, I’ll be busy apologizing to my friends who look at the first paragraph like I reevaluate my personal friendships. Peace in the Middle East, I’m out.

Nik Frey hopes you were able to relate to his non-expert ramble.