



GREGORY D. COOK / THE RIP

Vaquero Renee Reyes brings his brahmh bull out of the chute during the Fiesta Del Charro Rodeo at the Kern County Fair on Oct. 3.

## PRCA Rodeo thrills fair goers

By Zak Cowan  
Reporter

On Oct. 2 the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association put on the Kern County Fair Rodeo.

The rodeos had roughly 14 different competitions, including a female barrel race, bull riding, and tie down roping.

Mickel Jay, 27, has been coming to the rodeo for 17 years and has participated in the event before.

"It's such an adrenaline rush — one of the best you'll ever have," said Jay. "[The rodeo] is one of the best events [at the fair]; it's always packed with all sorts of stuff."

Jay said that his whole family is into the rodeo and that he wants to enter one of the competitions again sometime soon.

Matt Nauman participated in the tie down roping, where the rider chases down a calf and ties its legs together,



Victor Torres holds on for a wild ride as his bull goes airborne at the Fiesta Del Charro Rodeo presented by the Flying U Rodeo on Oct. 3.

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competing against the clock and the other competitors. "It's probably the hardest competition in the rodeo, besides the [bull] riding," said Nauman.

Roughly 70 men and women participated in the rodeo, with most of them coming from Bakersfield.

The stadium was filled to capacity, and the event that got the most feedback from the crowd was the bull riding.

The fair also held a Latino heritage rodeo on Oct. 3, where a free Corona was handed out to every attendee.



## Tower of Power returns to KC Fair

By Martin Chang  
Reporter

Tower of Power played a high energy set at the Kern County Fair Budweiser Pavilion stage to an appreciative audience.

TOP played to a nearly full audience on Sept. 28. The audience was responding to the beginning of each song by yelling and clapping. At the end of some songs the clapping lasted as long as nine seconds. The audience had a similar response to many instrumental solos and songs they recognized.

For several songs, whole sections of the audience were standing and dancing. The audience laughed at lead singer of the band Larry Braggs' stage banter that included him saying things like "Time to get funky like a bow-legged monkey."

Emilio Castillo, a founding member of TOP, calls the band's music "Urban Soul Music."

They have been around since 1968.

Along with founding member, Stephen Kupla, Castillo has written most of the band's original catalog. Since their start they have been touring consistently.

Of the people interviewed, all mentioned a love of the genre that TOP plays. Some called it "blues," and others called it "funk." Several pointed out the "groove" of the musicians as an attraction.

Raul Duarte, an attendee at the concert, saw their music as innovative and called them "musician's musicians."

He particularly liked the playing of the horn section and the drummer. He has been a long time fan and estimated that he has seen them "20 or more times."

Another attendee, Arlene Taylor, had been vaguely aware of the band, but she did not become a fan until she saw them at the fair last year.

She said, "They had a lot of energy. I like the venue where you can really see the group, because every seat is a good seat here. I like the rhythm and blues style."



Larry "LB" Braggs



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Oakland soul group Tower of Power gives a free concert at the Kern County Fair on Sept. 29. The group, which formed in 1968.

## Dominguez sings to Lucha Libre fair crowd

By Michael Wafford  
Opinions Editor

Hector Dominguez rode into the grandstand of the Kern County Fair on Sept. 26 to dance with horses.

Dominguez, 35, has been performing for 17 years and tours North America performing mariachi while riding atop horses.

"Mariachi is Mexico's heart and soul," said Dominguez, who began singing as a boy. "Dancing horses are a part of Mexico's culture."

Riding in on a strutting Andalusian horse, Dominguez performed for a crowd of around 600, only dismounting to change horses and serenade the crowd on foot.

Dominguez's performance opened up for Lucha Libre and La Internacional Sonora Mariachi Show.

The nephew of ranchera and mariachi singer-songwriter Vin-



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Hector Dominguez serenades fans from the back of his trained Andalusian horse at the fairgrounds Sept. 26.

cente Fernandez, Dominguez accompanied his uncle several times during his youth, helping develop his appreciation and love of mariachi.

Dominguez was accompanied by Mariachi La Voz De Mexico, a band of eight led by band director Juan Cortez, who said, "We work with Dominguez a couple of times a year."

Dominguez was a returning

participant to the Kern County Fair, having performed with his dancing horses before and also participating in the rodeo. "I was a rodeo participant a few years ago. I still do [rodeos]," said Dominguez.

"I'm a cowboy at heart," said Dominguez, who tours the United States and Mexico and plans on returning to the Kern County Fair.

## Gang Unit cracks down during fair

By James Licea  
Reporter

The Kern County Sheriff's Department Gang Unit started up in 1989. Since then, they have been working the Kern County fair every year. Their responsibilities are to try to prevent gang related incidents.

Lieutenant Bart Camps is in charge of the sheriff's department at the fair. He stated that Gang Unit is effective 365 days a year, not just at the fair. They usually patrol in sheriff's cars, sometimes in unmarked vehicles.

According to Camps, Gang Unit came about because gangs were beginning to develop in Kern County. They needed special expertise to deal with these criminal ailments.

"Officers are specially trained in the recognition of gang members and the practices," Camps said. They focus on gang-related crimes and are responsible for targeting gangs who are causing problems.

The reason they are required as fair personnel, according to Senior Deputy of Gang Unit Lauro Cantu, is because people from all over Kern County show up to this event. Being such a popular event, rival gang members often encounter each other.

On Sept. 18, Cantu reported stopping eight to 10 fights. The large amount of people makes breaking up a fight a difficult task. "You're ultimately surrounded by hundreds of people," Cantu said about the mindset of officers while breaking up a fight. "You don't know who they are or what their intentions are."

When an act of violence takes place, Cantu gives an account of the procedure that is followed to try to intervene. "The biggest thing we try to do," Cantu said, "is get the main people who are involved out of the area." This is for the safety of the surrounding people and the sheriffs.

While some people who attended the fair reported seeing no violence, others saw fights that went



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A member of the Sheriff's Gang Unit patrols the fairgrounds Sept. 26.

unnoticed by sheriffs and police officers.

Jennifer Facio, 23, said she attended the fair on Wednesday as well as Friday and saw no violence. Facio said that she didn't notice Gang Unit on both of her visits. She described the fair being more pleasant than her previous visits, "Bakersfield has tamed down since I was in high school."

Nancy Rivera, 22, had a different account of the fair. On Saturday, Sept. 18, she saw two girls standing in line arguing after one girl confronted the other. The girl who incited the argument began punching the other girl until she fell to the ground. After she fell, the girl continued to beat her while she was on the ground.

Rivera said the girl being beaten eventually got up and began running away. The other girl and a group of her friends began chasing her through crowds of people. "I was trying to look for a cop. They were by the games standing around." Rivera explained that, by the time she saw them, it was too late.

## Fair exhibit shows off a Bakersfield artist

By Chrystal Fortt  
Reporter

Tom Bumgarner, who used to take art classes at Bakersfield College, entered 10 pieces in the art section of the fine arts building at the Kern County Fair and won first prize for a picture of a tiger on scratch board and also volunteered for the Bakersfield Art Association.

"I missed a few years, I didn't enter anything. I just didn't have the feeling for art, and then all of a sudden I got a spurt and started in again so this year I entered 10 items," said Bumgarner. "[Art] for me is a hobby, it's just relaxing."

Bumgarner was a little reluctant to admit he won first place, but his wife, Barbara, was proud of his work.

"I've [won first place] before. I enjoy it, it makes it worthwhile," said Tom.

There were many artists that entered the competition that Tom was a fan of.

"I definitely enjoy Patti Doolittle's art-

work, Nancy Ely, her watercolors are fantastic, Shirley Rowles, I love her work," said Tom.

"Mary Lou Slinkard, she does a lot of western, her family are cattle people. Her and her husband use to have a ranch up in Kernville, she's a natural in cows. She can tell you real quick if an artist knows the anatomy of the animal or not just by the way it's painted," said Tom.

Tom and Barbara enjoyed volunteering for the art section of the fair. Barbara checks in pictures, and Tom helps hang them.

"We started last Thursday and helped to Sunday, that's just to get this room ready," said Tom.

There was a lot of preparation for the art room before it was open to the public. "They cover the windows so no one sees the judge go around and judge the art," Tom said.

Besides, every year can be different, you know, it's about their style."



RYAN GEORGE / THE RIP

Carlotta Fondren takes in art exhibits at the Kern County Fair on Sept. 24.

## Organization improvises at fair

By Kristen Blue  
Reporter

For the past 10 years, Habitat for Humanity has been building houses at the Kern County Fair. Last year, they completed a house in 10 days. This year, they will be building children's playhouses that will be auctioned off for profit.

Max Hernandez, who has been the associate director for Habitat for Humanity for a year, said, "This is the first time in 10 years we couldn't get the funding to build a house."

"We still wanted to be involved in the fair and have the community learn about our organization and what we do, so we came up with the idea to build playhouses."

The playhouses are being built at the fair and a live auction will bring in profit for the program. "All profits go to what we're doing," he said. "This is a really good program. We just couldn't pull the funding this year." The auction will occur on Oct. 12 at Modern Office Environments, 830 21st St.

According to Hernandez, the biggest misconception the community has about their organization is people assume the houses are given out for free. "Here at Habitat, we help people who want to help themselves. They purchase the houses from us," said Hernandez.

There's a pre-application process families go through if they're in need of a house. To fill out an application, you can visit the Habitat for Humanity office or visit their website.

Press releases and Facebook are also used to spread the word. The family selection committee then scans through all the applications.

According to Hernandez, monthly payments on the houses range between \$300-\$500. They sell the houses to families for the cost of the materials. "The family we select is required to do 500 hours of what we call sweat equity. Side by side, they help the volunteers build their future house."

Volunteers are always welcome and always needed. "We have an amazing volunteer base here. Everyone works together to help better the community at all."

Hernandez believes it's a good learning experience. "Volunteers just show up. We have a supervisor. If you don't have any skills, people will take you under their wing and show you how to do them."

Economy has changed how Habitat for Humanity operates. "Lately because of the housing industry and market, it's been more cost effective to purchase a house and fix it up," Hernandez said.

Habitat for Humanity in the past built houses from scratch. "These days, we've been purchasing houses and fixing them up," Hernandez said. Time spent working on houses varies. "It depends on how long it takes us to fix it," he said. "The condition of the house plays a huge factor. It's a new endeavor we're working on. Sometimes it can be as quick as two months, sometimes much longer."

## Tricks and stunts



PHOTOS BY NATHAN WILSON / THE RIP

Left: Rich Lopez sticks a hand plant on the half-pipe during a performance by the BMX Pros at the Kern County Fair. Right: Gabe Weed shows off some flat-land skills with a demonstration of balance Sept. 25.

## Turbo Force a high-seek thrill for unsure writer

By BrendaIrene Rodriguez  
Reporter

I never imagined myself riding Turbo Force, a ride that was put together in less than a week, at the Kern County Fair.

As I waited for my friend to get to the fair and ride it with me, I watched nervously as others rode it on their own.

I kept thinking to myself, "Man, I am so glad I'm not going on that thing by myself."

As my friend walked toward me looking at the ride, he decided he did not want to take part in riding it with me, making me more nervous about riding it, especially by myself.

The only reason I rode Turbo Force was because I had to write this story about it for The Rip.

If it weren't for this story I had to write, I would not even have thought twice about risking my life on this ride. I paid \$15 to ride this thing that was probably carelessly put together by some random guys.

I can't believe this ride stands 130 feet high from the ground and goes 60 mph.

I didn't hear screams from the others, so I thought I wasn't going to get butterflies. I was wrong.

My heart raced as I walked toward Turbo Force.

Individuals gathered around with their family and friends to watch me ride this massively huge thing.

I begged my friend to ride it with me before I got on, but his answer was still no.

The man in charge of the ride strapped me in and made sure I was secure. While he did that, I asked, "Is this ride really safe?"

He just looked at me and smiled.

When the ride started going, and I began to rise off the ground, I held on tight to the bars that would hopefully keep me from falling to my death.

As the ride went faster, the butterflies went away. The only scary part about the ride was the first flip when I was in the air.

After that, I felt like I started to enjoy myself. Still I insisted on screaming my lungs out and keeping my eyes closed until the ride was over.

When I did peek for just a second, I saw that birds weren't flying too far away from me. I thought that was kind of cool.

This ride was a thrill, and somewhat enjoyable, especially during daylight, though I wish I didn't have to ride it alone.

I recommend that those who are thrill seekers ride Turbo Force next year at the fair, if it is available.



CARISSA EDWARDS / THE RIP

Turbo Force, an attraction that sends adventurous riders spinning at up to 60 mph looms over the Kern County Fairgrounds on Sept. 28.



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Volunteers for Habitat for Humanity, Cathy McCaffrey (left, inside) and Lynn Lebeu, put the finishing touches on a playhouse sponsored by the Rotary Club of Bakersfield North during the Kern County Fair on Oct. 3.

## Hypnotist takes local crowd on a mental ride

By BrendaIrene Rodriguez  
Reporter

Master hypnotist Tina Marie hypnotized the crowd at the Kern County Fair this year.

Marie is a professional hypnotist from Corpus Christi, Texas who began in the hypnotizing business in 2001.

Marie began her hypnotist career to help those in need of confidence.

"I want to help people by giving them a little push and inspiration," said Marie.

"When I was eight years old I went to Tijuana, Mexico with my parents and I saw everyone begging for money and kids with no shoes on," she said as she began to talk about her childhood.

She went into detail, "Growing up I was poor. My family was on welfare and food stamps, but when I saw those people in T.J., I considered myself lucky and wealthy to know that I had shoes and clothes on my body."

20 individuals volunteered in hopes to become hypnotized and put on a show for the audience.

Marie said that the volunteers would be aware of everything that's going on and that each individual will feel very relaxed.

Marie was successful in hypnotizing most of the volunteers.

She played relaxing music, made the individuals take deep breaths, and used a count down until the individuals were under hypnosis.

"With every word I say, every

breath you take, you are becoming more relaxed. Deeper and deeper relaxed," Marie said to her volunteers.

Those that were not able to be hypnotized were asked to take a seat in the audience.

Marie put on a comedy show using her volunteers, after she successfully hypnotized them.

"It was pretty fun. I wanted to do fun stuff on stage for my kids," said Louie Robinson of Bakersfield.

Some of the volunteers did things they would not usually do on a daily basis.

"After my sister told me what happened, I felt embarrassed," said Richard Moren of Bakersfield. He added, "I don't remember what I did. I wanted to try it out."

"I didn't think anyone could hypnotize me. I wanted to see if it was real or fake. I was so relaxed," said Breann Goodman, a BC student.

"It felt like there was a lot of weight on my arms," said Goodman. "I just wanted to fall. When I woke up I was super sweaty. I still feel relaxed. I can't believe I was dancing on stage. I believe in it now."

Tina Marie will be having an adult hypnotist show featuring comedian Rivest Dunlap at The Fox Theater on Oct. 4 at 7:30 p.m.

For more information and tickets, call The Fox Theater at (661) 324-1369.

Staff Editorial

## The meaning behind the vote: inadequate

It's difficult to look at certain politicians without a political bias, obviously, but there are some that present problems that clash with our values, and we collectively span the gulf across political parties. Such is the case with our editorial staff and one Christine O'Donnell.

When candidates like O'Donnell not only receive national attention but also manage to win a republican primary, it gets a little worrisome. It's not that this woman is conservative—it's that this woman is nuts, and people are actually agreeing with her.

Have people become so fed up with our country that politicians like her can gain public support? This is a woman who has lied about her educational background, has been outspoken against such normal human functions as masturbation, and has made such hilarious erroneous gaffs in public as saying that scientists were growing human brains on mice.

Regardless of political party, no one should be OK with that. The problem isn't just people

like O'Donnell. It's that people can be so motivated by one single cause (say an anti-establishment candidate's stance against the current administration) that they will completely ignore everything that would otherwise stop them in their tracks. It would be like choosing everything based on one rather superfluous detail, like buying everything you ever owned based on the sole quality of it being blue.

We cannot condone such political behavior.

People need to recognize the consequences of electing inadequate and unqualified candidates. Voting should not be some random decision. It should be informed, and the decision should be based upon various points, not just a sound bite or two about how we need to win our country back from the government.

We are concerned by O'Donnell's current political success, not inspired or excited. Most of all, we are concerned with this trend, which fore-shadows uniformed voting and ill-suited political officials.

## Student addresses opinion

Editor:

I picked up a recent issue of The Rip and found a story about how an incident involving a skateboard collision had happened a few weeks ago and that a ban on skateboards is now in effect.

I also read that the student who was hit was deaf. That student was me. I was just walking around, and all of a sudden I fell down. I looked over and saw a skateboard rolling away with no one on it.

About 3-5 seconds after I fell, a person (who I deduced was the rider) came over and was trying to help me. I was so mad and embarrassed that I refused the help and just collected my belongings and walked away (it happened in an area of campus where there were many people).

As I was walking away, out of the corner of my eye, I saw that same person back up on the board rolling away, acting like nothing had happened. Later, when talking to a friend, I realized what fully had occurred.

I thought that I had just fallen down, but actually what had happened was I landed on my left knee with my left leg bent up under me. The skin on and around my kneecap had been ground off and where the skin was before was now a puddle of blood. I had a few road rash marks and blood there as well.

A few minutes after this incident happened, I had just left a class. I had a break after that class for six hours before my night class started. But since I live on the opposite side of town from BC, I have to take the bus at a certain time in order to get home, rest, then come back on

time. I didn't get to do that that day. I ended up having to spend the entire six hours on campus with absolutely nothing to do. It was boring and unfair. I had to go to my night class with bandages all over my left leg.

I never found out the name of the person who did that to me or even found out if they had apologized (I'm deaf, so if they were speaking to me I wouldn't hear it).

Also, I am blind in my right eye, and the board came out of my right side vantage point, from behind, directly in my blind spot. I had no idea it was coming.

In the Opinion section of the paper, when they were talking about the pros and cons of the ban, the writer of the pro section stated that she did not think it was the fault of the rider that this happened.

This greatly angered me, since it brought up the possibility of me being responsible. I am deaf with only one good eye. If being that way was my choice, then I would accept it as being my fault. But it wasn't, so how could it be?

I am writing and sending all of this because I feel like there will be (and probably is, now) a huge amount of speculation and rumoring going on as to what exactly happened and why a ban was put on. I feel like, as the person who basically started all of this, I should tell what happened from my perspective and give the readers the chance to know what really happened instead of guessing and starting rumors.

Chase Toy  
History

# The possibilities of networking

## PRO

By Samantha Garrett  
Copy Editor

All right, sure. It's easy to poke fun of social networking, to break it down and make it out to be a lesser creature, but as a whole there's nothing really wrong with it. When used for its intended purpose, it is a means of communication, either with old friends, new friends, or absolute strangers.

We've all gotten those occasional messages from the random creeper, and we've all had to block an ex-boyfriend or -girlfriend or two, but that shouldn't ruin the entire experience.

Maybe I'm for the whole social networking thing because I've gotten in touch with quite a few friends who, over the years, faded from my life.

You might be thinking, "Well, if they were really friends, you wouldn't have lost touch," but we all know that time and distance can ravage a friendship, and the Internet is that one thing that can span that gulf without a long-distance phone charge.

And there are many friends who I would never get to speak to if it weren't for places like Facebook. Not only is it a convenient forum for what's going on in one's life, but it also allows many people to live chat where differences in messenger programs would otherwise prevent people from being able to do so. Sure, Facebook's chat program is the jankiest one on the Internet, but it gets the job done, and the emotes are pretty cool.

Not to mention there's something a little freeing about it. Sure, sometimes I feel compelled to write something witty, funny, or clever, but most of the time I can use things like Facebook's status update to let people know that I'm just having a bad day.

And checking Facebook in the morning for other's status updates is like checking the weather. You can see that so-and-so is cranky, that one guy is in a great mood, and what's-her-face is in love; when you've endured enough awkward conversations in your life as I have, little cues like the ones Facebook provides are very handy indeed.

Maybe too many people spend too much time on it, but it gives people something to do with their time.

Time wasted? No, I don't think so. I'm pretty sure that, without Facebook, Twitter and MySpace, most people would find something else to do mindlessly. Everyone needs his or her daily-recommended dose of zoning out.

And, if you ask me, wasting time checking in on friends and letting them know you remembered them with a comment here or there is one of the more decent ways to do so.

Plain and simple, social networking lets you stay in touch with people, catch up with what's going on in their lives, and see that, compared to everyone else you went to high school with, you probably ended up the best looking and most successful one. I really can't shake a stick at something like that.



SAMANTHA GARRETT

## CON

By Gregory D. Cook  
Online Editor

A person I met in a history class last semester just had the best steak dinner he has ever eaten. Another person, possibly a friend of my sister, who I have never actually met, thinks her new hairstyle is "da bomb!"

I am aware of these facts because I, like an estimated 250 million other trivial-infomaniacs, logged onto Facebook this morning. Social networking has reached epidemic proportions, and is threatening to replace face-to-face networking.

Back in the mid-80s, some egg-head types managed to circumvent their inability to talk to girls by developing a computer version of the bulletin board. On the boards, they could post messages to their socially challenged peers just like sticking a Post-it note on the refrigerator. Social networking was born and good old-fashioned talking to

one another began packing its bags for the long trip out of style. Sure, social networking can have beneficial uses if you have the time to wade through the trivial details of the lives of your friends and followers to find them. But the occasional story of twins, separated at birth, and now reunited through MySpace can't possibly make up for the time we waste just sitting waiting for someone to "like" our latest clever incites about the movie we saw the day before.

According to Facebook, people spend over 700 billion minutes a month logged on to Facebook. That represents the accumulation of over 13,000 centuries of focus – nearly as long as mankind has walked upright – every month. For that amount of energy we should have something more to show for the effort than knowing that Peanut is the "cutest puppy ever."

Social networking is just another example of how our society is trending toward plugging into the virtual, and withdrawing from the actual. What used to be the simple act conversing is being replaced by a technical interface and yet another small sliver of our humanity falls by the wayside.

So Twitter and sites like it have become the small talk of the party of life. They hold the trivial facts and opinions we would normally keep to ourselves but now submit to our friends, and in some instances the world, for judgment. It can be addicting as well. Facebook Addiction Disorder is an actual form of Internet Addiction Disorder, and is being treated in increasing numbers by physiologists across the nation. And yes, there is even a Facebook group for it.

It's the ultimate example of efficiency. You can get the help you need while you get your fix.

Human beings are social animals, designed to interact with one another face to face.

We have voices, facial expressions and subtle shifts in body language that are completely lost when we hide behind our computer monitors, and the façade of anonymity we feel when we talk to people that aren't right there in front of us.

# Rap has lost its value as a means of expression

By Michael Morrow  
Video Production Editor

"I'm hot and stuff / The sun gives me lots of love / I ain't steppin' on snails but I'm poppin' slugs."

These lyrics come straight from the "rap" artist the New Boyz and their song "Colorz."

I used to love rap, back when it was actually about real lyricism. Now, because of the easy access of music through Internet downloads and increasing ringtone sales – which have led to music executives only extending 360 contracts to artists I am forced to change the radio station every other minute.

The genre of rap has been forever changed.

Now, instead of having the lyricism of rap, the gusto of hip-hop and the style of hipster music, rap fans are forced to hear, "Teach

me how to Dougie," by Cali Swag District. I have a question. What the hell is a "Dougie?"

Mixing of genres is not a new thing.

It's been done before the birth of rap and will continue well into the foreseeable future. Mixing genres has brought us good music like Run DMC and Aerosmith's "Walk this Way," and Eminem and Dido, or Eminem and Elton John's "Stan."

But most of the time you get an individual artist trying to do multiple genres and it's usually a fail.

I could list a million songs, but why should I bother when you already know who and what didn't work out so well.

I'm just tired of these bad attempts of mixing rap with hip-hop and/or hipster music. Keep them separate, because, when put together, we get the Soulja

Boy Tell 'em's of the world. I want rappers to get back to rapping and making songs about the lyrical content.

Between the 1017 Brick Squad members, Gucci Mane, Waka Flocka Flame and OJ Da Juiceman, I haven't heard a decent lyric yet.

"I'm boomin', I'm bunkin', and I'm whippin' up da babies," is an OJ Da Juiceman all-timer.

Waka Flocka Flame's song "Hard in da Paint" has lyrics I couldn't even imagine writing down. And Gucci Mane's slurred Atlanta speech just makes his lyrics on "Wasted," that much worse.

"Magic City Monday / Ball playin' wasted / This one for yo' uncle drinking Thunderbird, wasted / 12-pack wasted / I need more cases / And Gucci's not racist all my drivers Caucasian (Gucci)."

I'm not saying the music is all bad.

The placement is way off, but it's not all bad.

Some of it can even be entertaining at times, but for me music isn't just about entertainment.

Music is a way of life. Music, especially rap, hip-hop and hipster music, is a form of storytelling from a cultural perspective.

If you want to come into the rap game and make entertaining, funny music, it's possible, and I have no problem with that. Weird Al Yankovic has done it successfully and it hasn't bothered me yet. Why? Because it's not classified as rap.

It never once claims to be rap or degrades my culture's storytelling aspect.

People always say rap is dying, and I feel the same. I just wish people would realize why rap is damn near dead.

## 'GADE FEEDBACK "What is your favorite thing to do at the fair?"

Editor's note: 'Gade Feedback is a feature that asks students their opinion various topics.



Sylvia Vigil, Nursing: "Eat"



Chris Vindiola, Film: "Cinnamon rolls."



Josh Guzman, History: "Fat Derrill Hoagie Bun."



Felissa Torres, Criminal Justice: "Mack on boys."



Puricar Boria, Child Development: "Hangout with friends."

Compiled by:  
Rip Staff



Winner of the 2003 and 2008 JACC Pacesetter Award

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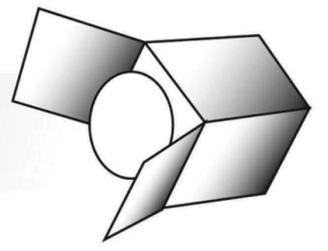
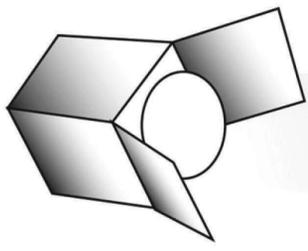
Letters should not exceed 300 words, must be accompanied by a signature and the letter writer's identity must be verified.

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## Culinary student pursues dream

**CULINARY ARTS** | Working to one day become a restaurant owner and chef, Conger learns vital skills in culinary program

By Brian N. Willhite  
Editor in Chief

Making his dreams of becoming a professional chef come true, Bakersfield College student Nick Conger is advancing his way through the Culinary Arts program to earn his degree before taking the next step toward professionalism.

A former student at California State University of Bakersfield, Conger had no idea what career he wanted to pursue, then realized one day that he loved cooking and that it may be his calling.

"I realized that [cooking] is my passion, and why not go to school for it and make it happen," said Conger.

Conger was inspired to pursue cooking at BC by his uncle, a former student that had been through the culinary arts program.

"I saw my uncle go through this program 11 to 12 years ago and it really interested me. So, I decided I wanted to go through it and get my degree and actually do something with it because he

never went anywhere with his," said Conger.

Conger's love for cooking includes all aspects of the culinary field; his love for the artistry is just as important as his love for the business, too.

"I was very interested in learning how to make food and learning how to make it presentable and how the business works," said Conger.

He also discussed his aspirations to earn a business degree to help him in his future goals of owning a restaurant.

Conger explained that there are different positions and specialties a chef can have and that he is still undecided what area he feels fits him the best. In the meantime, though, he is enjoying learning about the diverse areas of cooking, however, there is one area he feels he would like to improve on.

"I'm not that great with desserts, but it's something I'd like to work on," said Conger.

Conger discussed his theory classes and how they help prepare him in his goals of one day being a chef. "The theory classes are where we learn how to pull off all the methods – what to do, what not to do – and how to make something look good. And the intro classes are where you

learn the very basics, learning about different types of cuisine around the world, measurements and the basic stuff about being a chef you need to know," said Conger.

One of the requirements for culinary students is their participation in The Renegade Room, the student-run restaurant on the BC campus.

Conger appreciates the education and opportunities that he receives from his involvement and enjoys the camaraderie with the other students as they work together to reach common goals.

Conger said that the best thing about the interaction with students and instructors is that "you really don't get a chance to do that in your other classes. You really get to know people on a different level than just the gen-ed classes.

"It's amazing how everyone just really wants to be helpful – help pull everything together – and that they're not just in there for themselves.

"It's really interesting to see people do that," he said.

Conger said that once he receives his degree and starts looking for a chef's position, he would like to stay in California but would consider his options to make his dream a reality.



GREGORY D. COOK / THE RIP

BC culinary arts student Nick Conger chops vegetables in the Renegade Room on Oct. 4.

## War veteran turned student, works to become welder

By Michael Wafford  
Opinions Editor

Darren Whiting is a veteran, a father, former business owner and a student enrolled in Bakersfield College's industrial maintenance program.

Whiting, 45, enrolled in the program through employers training resources.

Having retired from the U.S. Army after 17 years of service, Whiting originally wanted to enroll in the welding program, but the program was full.

However, Whiting isn't upset by not getting into his chosen program.

"I've always been into construction. I like to build stuff. I've done a lot with wood; I want to do more with metal. I'd like to build bikes. I like motorcycles," said Whiting.

Whiting is no stranger to construction, having said he has worked in the field several times throughout the years, at one point opening his own construction business and eventually selling it.

Born in east Los Angeles, Whiting was the son of a single mother who had him when she was 16. "Even though I've made several attempts to escape from Bakersfield I always come back," said Whiting who moved to Bakersfield with his mother at the age of 7.

Whiting did not always dream of working in construction.

"I used to want to be a cop for the longest time in my life. And the more I got to know cops the less I liked cops," said Whiting. "Being that I've been in the military for so long. The military's motto is lead by example. You do the right thing, you wear your uniform properly you treat people properly and you display that behavior to your troops – to the people you are leading around. You lead by example – you be the shining star. Show them how you want to behave. Cops don't do that."

Although he no longer desires to work in law enforcement, Whiting said he worked as a correctional officer for the Mesa Verde correctional facility before returning to the military in the 90s.

Whiting said his time in the military not only changed his view on careers. It also changed his view on life.

"I have a different outlook on things than a lot of people do because I've really had to – I think – had to work hard for what I have. I have respect for other people, and I have respect for other people's belongings. That's something you don't see a lot," said Whiting.

After serving for three years in the early 1980s Whiting moved around the country working in a variety of job fields before returning to the military in the 1990s.

Whiting served in Kuwait and Iraq after the September 11 attacks in 2001. "I did three years in tank. I did three years in infantry. Worked as an armor, worked on weapons, worked as a supply

sergeant, went to sniper school, went to medic school. Worked as a medic for the last five years or four years," said Whiting. "My time in the military was fabulous. I loved it. Even when it was the worst it was good."

While a military man for most of his adult life, Whiting has found the time to start a family. A father of three and on his second marriage, Whiting said he has been married to his wife of 11 years, who is currently attending the University of Phoenix full-time as an online student.

Since both are currently focused on education, Whiting said that both he and his wife are unemployed. Whiting is looking forward to returning to the working world. "I got my first job when I was 12 years. I've always felt that nothing's free. There's no free handouts in life."



GREGORY D. COOK / THE RIP

BC industrial maintenance student Darren Whiting works with a lathe in the Industrial Technology building Sept. 30.



GREGORY D. COOK / THE RIP

BC industrial maintenance student Darren Whiting works with a lathe Sept. 30.

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