

The Disruption

May 4, 2011

THE DOWNER TOWNER

TALES AND TRAPPINGS OF THE GRIMY UNDERBELLY IN DOWNTOWN BAKERSFIELD FROM THE MIND OF ONE OF ITS DIRTBAG DWELLERS
STORIES AND PHOTOGRAPH BY MATEO M. MELERO

I am waiting for the nocturne to start down on the streets below. All the machines and animals that operate them have gone to sleep and now only a faint rushing sound resonates through the hollow streets.

It acts as a strange adagio for all the creatures that inhabit this corner of downtown. They creep from the Greyhound station. They crawl from behind the Mason building. They ooze from the alleyways and burst from the corners and crevices to make their mad decree.

Howling a hymn of aberration, they come from their holes to claim the night and take heed of the silence in the hopes that their song could be heard while the machine sleeps. They bellow from the sidewalk in incomprehensible consonants and vowels entangled in their insanity. And this lunacy always has a source, packaged neatly in some sort of consumer product. Some sip it from brown bags, some suck it from glass pipes, and others have been consumed by it long ago, but no matter the terms of their neurosis, they all seek some sort of buoy in the storm.

My stoop is a soapbox here in downtown Bakersfield on F Street, nestled between 20th and 21st. There is always some deranged fool looking for an even bigger one to bum, leech or just rant to. Sometimes, it's not always the street creatures looking for some sort of interaction.

Night after night I have been pulled into some unforeseen adventure. Whether it was merely a decadent night of regrettable inebriation or some long drawn descent into oblivion. They all share a similarity in that some souls seek a shut mouth and open ears. I am usually this voiceless recording device. I listen intently to them ... in a bar sipping Tappist beers, on the corner chain-smoking cigarettes ... lost, in some brick labyrinth smoking sorrow and wishing for a woman. No matter the situation, there is something about the gravity of this place that always draws out the suffering human inside us.

But after a while, when all you have done is play the confessional booth, your soul begins to beg for some kind of release other than that of the blank page. You crave an interpersonal divulgence, someone to rap madly about the entire spectrum that is the human condition. You become one of them.

The problem with this condition is that it releases its self in strange ways. You recruit people for a moment of unrestrained, severely personal divulgence who are left shaken and too un-stirred to ever want to talk to you again. I've absorbed too much of the crazies and have been irresponsible in releasing it properly. But nonetheless, I persist.

There is no hiding here in the downtowner. In living here, you will eventually find yourself in some act of personal decadence. And though you can hide yourself away, there is no escaping it. You can hide during the day as the great traffic leviathan roars all the folks with suburban symptoms to their place in the hamster wheel. But during the night the rhythm that echoes through the streets will eventually grasp you.



There are a thousand stories here, a million strange occurrences. I find that it is best that you listen to it all, and hold as tight as you can when it engulfs you – downtown, the bleeding heart of Bakersfield.

It was like God was contemplating the flood again, during those strange days in December when the rain beat down with merciless tenacity and all the bums came stinking out of their asylums like worms from the mud, hoping for mercy, but knowing the rain had too, washed all hope of that away. I stayed inside.

Divorced from the machine, I grew stale smoking and strung-out from strenuous thought, I began to mutate. Feeding off the madness in the streets below, inventing enemies and bedding with misery. The world became a great life-sucking ghoul and it was my mission to slay it before it consumed me. My blood became mercury, my lungs gulped poison, my skin cold lead and my heart beat discontent and loathing. In this I was secure.

I pitied no one during these days. Watching from my window all I see is all the sad hopeless creatures below huddled and humbled in that purging rain, I felt nothing. "Too long I have played the saint," I thought. "To hell with all these leeches and blood suckers, void of life and

BLISS

desire, too scared to dare for anything better they seek out hearts so that they can forget that they have lost theirs."

I had grown tired of charity. The world was strictly Darwinian and I intended to survive. The professional world was no better, merely cutthroat self-serving predators. They greeted with one hand and gutted you with the other. Perhaps this is how it always has been and the delusion of childhood serenity was fading away and the cold reality of adulthood setting in. So I boarded up my heart with no intent of ever opening it again. It was all a chess game now.

It was in a moment of curiosity that I dared from the security of my cave. Creeping down the stairs with a ghoul-like disposition like some sort of nosferatu, I brought my nicotine love affair out to the haze of the day to observe the strange weather. It wasn't long before Bliss came

strolling my way. Bundled, I noticed her head bob in my direction. Scoping me out, I knew I was once again going to be wormed for something. With wide eyes, she neared my stoop.

"Can I have a drag of your cigarette?" Saying nothing, I began to pick her apart. Loose drabs for clothes, bloated backpack, burnt leather skin, coarse voice, illusion-loving lips – street child!

"I can go get you one."

"No, I'm trying to quit. I don't want a full one."

Another long stare, "OK" I say. She smokes the rest of it.

She breaks the silence as she indulges. Like instantaneity of creation all the elements of this character burst out in one long decree. I listen.

"My name is Bliss, I'm twenty years old, I smoke heroin, my boyfriend is an asshole, he says I'm fat and ugly. He doesn't have sex with me. I want a new boyfriend. I'm a good cook. I live with him behind BHS ..."

"Are you hungry?" I say. She shakes her head.

"Do you want some tea?"

"Yes." We make the climb and upon entry into my apartment I apologize for the mess. She doesn't mind. She tells me she is good at keeping up a home. I put the pot on the stove and try to make conversation. There is a \$10 bill lying on my desk.

"Would you like to see some pictures I have taken?" We flip through the albums on my computer. She likes the nudes I've taken and tells me that she can do that. She tells me she has a curvy body and lifts up her shirt to prove the statement. She does.

I prepare the tea and we converse in my kitchen casually. The whole time she is pitching her interest and aspirations. It is strange to me, to see someone so chained and bound to misery – defeated – but yet they rise and rattle the chains in excitement. I sense no anger in her.

"I'm a writer, or at least I try to be," I say.

"Really, whom do you write for?" She asks.

"Everyone and anything."

We chat leisurely for a few hours about aspirations

and dreams. She shows her bones and I am not thwarted by it at all. I show her mine. "I'm trying to get some money to move out," she says. "I just been roaming around bumming. I ran into this guy the other day and he said he'd give me \$60 bucks if I fooled around with him in his car. He kicked me out afterwards and didn't fucking pay me."

It is strange to me now, how secure people claim to be in any position or outlook. How absolute their opinion is. How and why it should be seen as pure truth. How much energy people put into to convincing others. Why this is and why it was born with Bliss I feel I can never adequately explain but it always appears when I think of her. Maybe it's because I listen too much. Nothing is definite because everything is fluid, constant and subjective.

My kitchen sink has been long clogged and the one in my bathroom has taken its place. It is chalked full of food bits and hair doodles from shaving. I explain this to her as she asks to use the bathroom. It wasn't until after she left that I saw that she had

cleaned it. "It's cool how you just have \$10 dollars chilling on your desk. Most people would hide it when a stranger is in their home."

"You've given me no reason to believe that you would take it."

"Thank you," she says.

Around 4:30 p.m. she says, "I have to go. My boyfriend will be home soon and I have to let him in."

"OK. Let me walk you out."

We end where we started. As we smoke a parting cigarette there on my stoop, I am not sure if I will ever see her again. I say goodbye and she clenches my torso firmly, sliding away from it hesitantly as she disappeared back into the street.

The irony of all this is clear to me now. How powerful we are. How strange this downtown is. How hard I fight at times to distance and deify myself above them all. I now know the word for it all, it rises out of my lungs like the creation of some primordial god ...

"Human."

The Adventures of HAWKBOY

Like the center of the galaxy, downtown too, acts like an infinite void that holds everything else in place, but if you get too close you run the risk of spiraling downward into oblivion. I have seen the effects of this first hand.

The Captain and Hawkboy are two individuals I know very well. They are both mirror animals, The Captain sails a ship across the divide of morality and madness and Hawkboy is always in constant flight, rarely landing – motion is his life force. One night, they ventured too close to the center of the universe.

"What is it?" said The Captain as he stared at the green pill in Hawkboy's hand.

"Just take it," Hawkboy said.

"Ehhh ... I don't know man. What is it?" says The Captain.

"Just take it."

"Alright."

"So where do you want to go, man?" says Hawkboy.

And with a sure gruff about his face he replied with one word, "Everywhere."

Grinning with a sly look in his eye, Hawkboy approvingly nodded and said, "Alright. Let's do it."

So from 20th St. the pair ventured deeper into the bowels of downtown, unknowing headed into the hazards of the void.

"I'm getting mad stares from these cops," says Hawkboy as the meat-headed, red necked, liberal eating cops that make up the bulk of the Bakersfield Police Department streaked by in their street sharks, giving the duo hard glares and bad vibes.

"Well, look at us man. I got a

and The Captain

purple bandana on, butt tight jeans and a far-ol-ol looking alpaca sweater," said the Captain in a tone that sparked some kind of insane confidence.

"I really like this sweater man, did I tell you that?" said the Captain, "By the way, how long does it take for this to kick in?"

"It is a sweet sweater, and it takes about 30-45 minutes," says the avian.

"Awesome."

So, after a visit to a Mediterranean dive where the pair were denied a handout of hummus and pita bread from an employed friend, the two headed out to Mill Creek Park where the sailor and the bird decided to warp into other dimensions.

Dimethyltryptamine (DMT) is a naturally occurring psychedelic that puts the user in a dream-like state. In order to ingest the drug properly, the user must sprinkle the yellow powder down into the sphere of a crack pipe, rolling the pipe gently back and forth as he inhales.

Behind a tree at the park, Hawkboy says, "Can you help me out?"

"Why surely I can, good sir," so The Captain cups his hands while Hawkboy inhales.

"Anything?" asks The Captain.

"Ehh ... no. A little buzz, but no tamale."

"Damn. Let me try," says Captain, but after a fiendish attempt, he finds himself unsuccessful. So they migrate across the street and

try their luck behind a dumpster to avoid the wind and the passing cars.

"Oh shit, wait ... damn, nothing."

"Let me try."

As The Captain ingests he is suddenly hit with a moral epiphany. He felt that they've gone too far down the rabbit hole – possibly to hell – and in this he hands the pipe back to the Hawk, saying, "I'm done with that."

With an eyebrow inquisition Hawkboy says, "Yeah?"

"Yeah, I'm not digging the crack pipe man, and the dumpster, and the fiend like attempt it requires. Let's bail."

Walking back to the center, Hawkboy feeds off

effect now and they bleed psychedelic bliss to total strangers, beating booze in their chest. Strange conversations and di-

lated dialogues, inside the bar, receiving a text message the pair are told of a party somewhere far to the east and they ditch downtown.

They pick up a vagabond and his guitar on the way and when they arrive, they receive some gruff for their gypsy-like nature. For it was a metal-head gathering and with The Captain and the bird came changing winds.

The vagabond was silenced for his songs, The Captain was criticized for his friends and the bird

The Captain's decision and tosses the pipe in a trashcan. They stop for beers and search for something to do. The green pill is in full



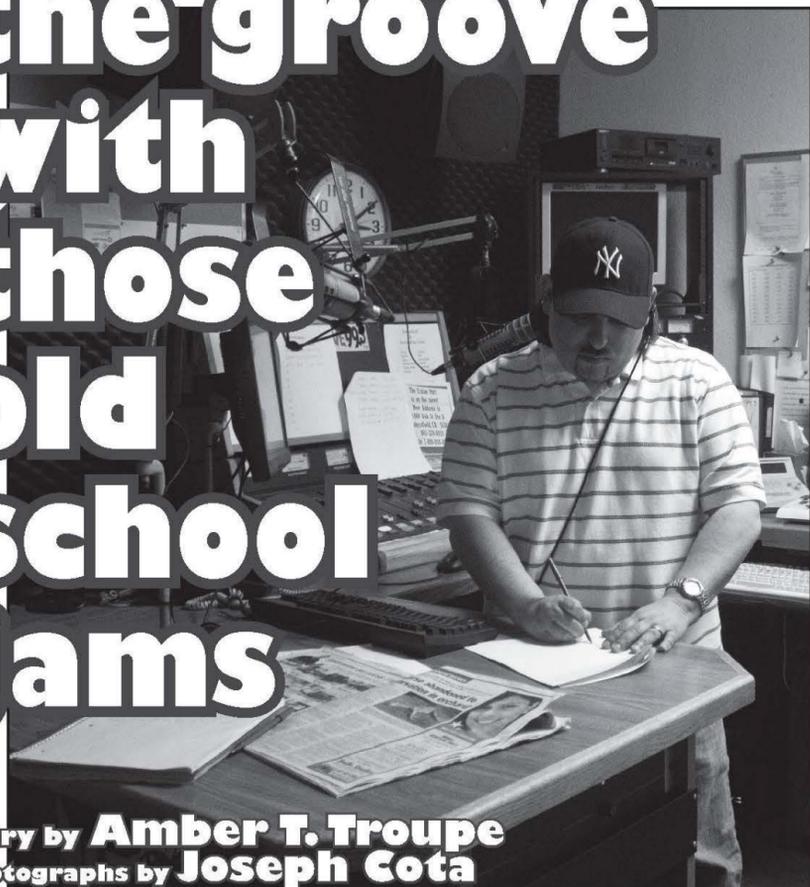
Photograph by Annie Rose Stockman

The Dissent ̄ruption

May 4, 2014

Spinning to the groove with those old school jams

Story by **Amber T. Troupe**
Photographs by **Joseph Cota**



Most people listen to radio of some sort, whether it be for musical pleasure or informational, but a lot of people don't think about how or who it is that makes it all come together.

The radio disc jockey is the person whose voice you hear over the airwaves as well as part of the team that creates content and plans what goes on the air. Bakersfield's Groove 99.3 is a local oldies radio station hosted by a small but exceptional team ran by Louie Cruz, the Program Director and weekday DJ.

Cruz has been a part of Groove 99.3 for the last five-and-a-half-years and has brought with him an almost uncanny sense for old school music with 20 years of radio experience. But Cruz is more than just a DJ, too, he grew up on his parent's music listening to Motown artists and hanging with his friends jamming to low-rider oldies. Cruz is originally from Northern California and was given the opportunity at the age of 16 to attend the Columbia School of Broadcast.

But Cruz's real spark of interest in radio started when he was 10 years old. He used to watch a show called WKARP with Dr. Don Rose, which Cruz credits to how he got into radio. Once Cruz began attending college, he interned with KSFM radio in Sacramento for about three months in which he had to commute from San Francisco to Sacramento. He was hired permanently as a mixer for the station where he had interned and worked for five years. As Cruz climbed the ladder, he worked his job to the point where he had his own full time show before he left.

Around 1999, Cruz was contacted by a station in Portland, Oregon about a new position with a start-up radio station, and was offered a job at KXJM to work full time. Cruz looks up to the ceiling as he reminisces on the job he took outside of California.

"I got a job in Portland, Oregon as a DJ at the only station in town at that time, and I was playing Hip-Hop and these guys had never heard West Coast Rappers like Ice Cube and Snoop Dogg yet, so it was unique to them. I used an innovative approach," Cruz said.

Cruz spent a large amount of time in Portland until he was contacted by someone in Bakers-

field regarding a new radio station coming to town. He began telling his true reason for this career move to Bakersfield in 2005.

"I was contacted by somebody here and they had just put on this new radio station, The Groove, which was old school, and I had been doing old school already a few years up North for Clear Channel [Radio]. So, by the time they called me here, I just had a baby, she was brand new and I was ready to concrete things. They gave me complete control here, which I didn't have before, I had like 85% and I wanted total control."

Although Cruz is a DJ, he says that there's way more to it than what meets the eye. He explained how the shows have to be prepped, which each DJ is responsible for presenting.

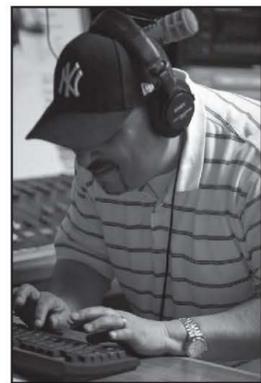
"I program the show and let them know what the overall focus is going to be," he said.

Cruz explains that, "Sometimes, people think that continuously talking is hard, which it is, if you're not prepared. You never want it to get quiet. I write liners, you know like talking points to give them something to go on."

Another thing he said that people misconceive is the money that radio disc jockey's make.

"It's way less than what people think," Cruz said with a smile.

Contrary to what listeners may believe, being a DJ is not in the field of journalism and people interested in music or engineering can become one. Cruz is technically a recording engineer by trade but he is mostly known as a local radio disk jockey in Bakersfield.



The Long Road Home

One student's personal and emotional confession as a recovering addict

To those who knew my secret, after this, it is no longer one.

To my dear friends that encouraged me through the hardest times of my life, and to my dear family who never knew at all, here I am exposed and ready to tell you the whole story.

Finally, the therapy has begun on my path to sobriety.

To begin, first things first: public admittance of a problem. So, with that stated, to my Mom, Dad, Grams and Gramps, and all of those who never knew, including you, the reader, whom I will more than likely never meet or hear from, I am an addict.

I'm sorry I hid the fact that I was having problems, but this is my self-help therapy: writing out my confession for the world to see – including the lies I've kept hidden within. I'll start by saying I'm sorry I disappointed you all. The repercussions of my actions may be dire, but I have to get this off my chest. Whatever consequences may happen in the end, I'll accept.

At this point, celebrating nine months clean and sober, I never thought I would be sharing my story with you, my family whom I love, and anyone else I come across on my path as I traverse in this life.

I was 17 and stupid, and for a night of fun I smoked weed for the first time. I figured, "ah, no big deal, I won't be an addict, you can't, 'it's pot!'" I thought it would be a one-time thing, not like I would use it regularly or anything. So I lit up, took a deep breath, filled my lungs with the smoke from a flavored cigar blunt and lost all control for a few hours.

Wow, I sure was misguided in that thought.

Next thing I knew, an ice cold aluminum can was in the palm of my hand – a Four Loko – an energy

drink with 12 percent alcohol volume was slowly being sipped down the same tube the smoke did. From then on, I wasn't sure what was next for me.

Getting cross-faded (which is being high and drunk at the same time, for those readers who have no idea what the slang terms of the unfortunate street users are) was absolutely amazing. Sitting there in my friend's living room without a care in the world and not even sure if I could walk a straight line – let alone walk at all – wasn't crossing my mind. But the next memory of that first night's high wasn't the most pleasant one. My head hovering over the toilet as I spewed my guts upon her bathroom floor, leaving the mess for her and her family to clean up. Mom, you should remember this night, picking me up at around 11 p.m., saying I ate a bad orange. You saw through that lie, but never did anything about it.

After that night, the next year and a half is mostly a blur.

I remember using on and off, but when I realized I went without ganja or booze for nearly two months, I needed to end the habit for good. I burned so many bridges doing this, after burning so many blunts and cigarettes and chugging endless bottles of booze with those very same people.

All I know now, after nine months of slow and pain-staking sobriety, after two close call relapses, one of those times going as far as buying a "dime sack" (approximately \$10 worth of weed) and another Four Loko, which became my drink of choice, awaiting my opportunity to screw my life back over. One phone call encouraged me enough to not smoke or drink anymore.

This short recognition is to those who were willing to help me through the hardest moments of my life, specifically Felycya and her fiance Sean

(congratulations, by the way you two), being one of the strongest supporters of my sobriety, my dearest "Seester".

To Erinn and her young daughters Ashlyn and Chloe, a close friend who even physically slapped me around, brought me back to church and to the program I stood by for prayer and encouragement, and all the others I don't have space to mention. Everything you ever did for me, I love you all for putting up with me. I'm sorry for the bullshit I was putting myself through, and thanks for telling me no when I needed it most.

I sit back now, trying to remember those endless nights, but I can't recall much. In an ironic manner, I thank God I don't remember. I don't want to know what I did for that kind of money to support that kind of habit. For all I know, there are crimes with my fingerprints at crime scenes I don't remember ever being at.

That thought scares me much, but it is one I am debating on searching out more information.

My Seester, Felycya, wrote me several letters of encouragement, which I hope she continues to do; it was one of the only things I hold so close to my heart, besides my sobriety coins. Those letters show her heart and what she saw in me through all of this: "...I just wanted to tell you that I'm so proud of you, Ryan. Six whole months clean and sober! I knew you could do it. You are such a strong person whether you choose to believe it or not." I never truly did, not until my last near relapse, which I described earlier.

I know some of you reading this are wondering why it became a one-time thing to a year and a half long addiction. Well, in short, it was depression. Weed took my mind to a new place, one I thought it would never see without a drug circulating my

system. It became my anti-depressant, just like beer and alcohol did.

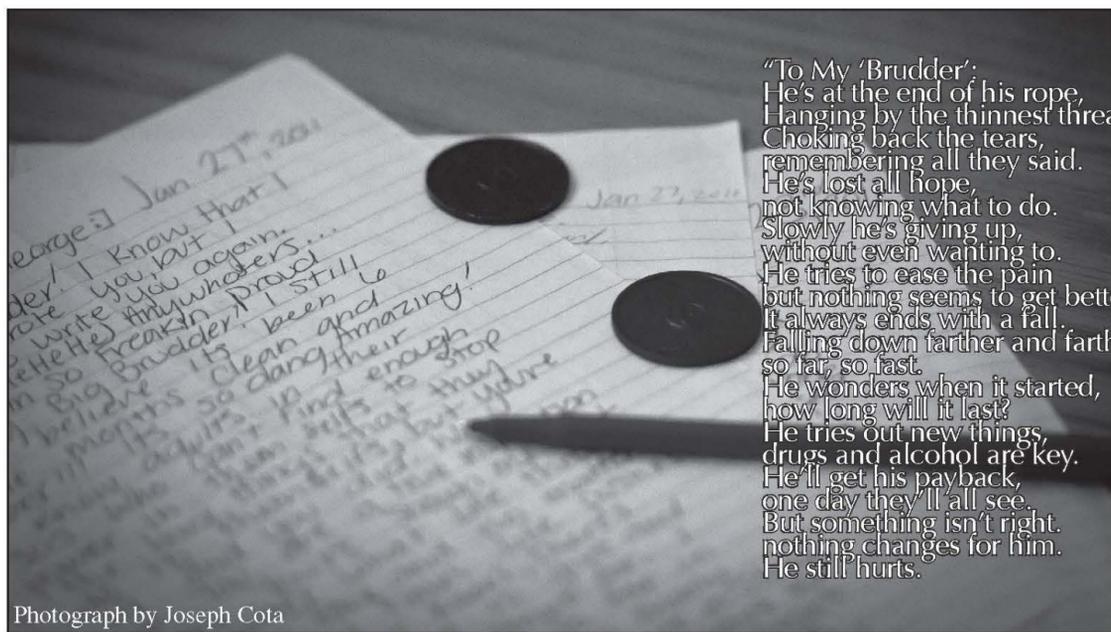
In the end, I wanted to say this for two reasons. One is obvious, to finally admit I am an addict. Even though I was only an addict to such a minor drug, it is still an issue to so many across Bakersfield – let alone the world. If you're disappointed that I wasn't a cocaine or meth addict, then that's on you for putting your hopes up and tearing apart others that are. I have been praying for all of those who need help, with anything from weed to meth, from booze to sex, there is one person that cares and hopes you come out strong-willed, not only for yourself, but for others as well.

I am not a Martin Luther King, Jr. trying to inspire a nation under one cause, but if I can inspire one person to make that very difficult decision to sober up once and for all, then my work here is done. If you're searching for a place to start, find a local chapter of Narcotics Anonymous, Alcoholics Anonymous, or whatever addiction anonymous you may need to be apart of, or simply do what I did, find a church that offers drug counseling of some kind.

In closing, this is what finally made me realize what I was doing for myself, an untitled poem written by my Seester said it all and more. I hope you may find that final push to get the help you need.

Written by

Ryan George



"To My 'Brudder':
He's at the end of his rope,
Hanging by the thinnest thread.
Choking back the tears,
remembering all they said.
He's lost all hope,
not knowing what to do.
Slowly he's giving up,
without even wanting to.
He tries to ease the pain
but nothing seems to get better,
it always ends with a fall.
Falling down farther and farther,
so far, so fast.
He wonders when it started,
how long will it last?
He tries out new things,
drugs and alcohol are key.
He'll get his payback,
one day they'll all see.
But something isn't right,
nothing changes for him.
He still hurts.

He knows the trouble he's gotten in.
This isn't what he wants.
He knows what this means.
He wants to stop it all.
He wants to come clean.
He smiles to himself,
and throws it all out,
and with all the pain and trash,
he throws away all doubt.
He's a new soul.
He's a new spirit.
His life will change,
He knows. He feels it.
He's got the hope he lost.
He's looking toward a happy ending.
His broken heart, is slowly mending.

I love you, Ryan,

Your Lil' Sis,
Felycya

Moore's shot puts him atop meet



MEGAN LUECKE / THE RIP

Manual Vargas attempts to make a 13-foot vault in the men's pole vault during the WSC Finals on April 29.

By Esteban Ramirez
Reporter

Bakersfield College hosted the Western State Conference finals in track and field on April 29.

Citrus College, Glendale College, College of the Canyons, Ventura, Allan Hancock, Moorpark, Santa Barbara, West L.A., Cuesta, L.A. Valley and BC were the schools that participated. The BC men's team ended up placing fifth with the women placing eighth.

The meet was split into two weeks. The first week was mostly field events and the event on April 29 was mostly track events.

BC has 18 individuals that are going on to the Southern California Meet. The men that have qualified are Robby Harris, the conference champion in the high jump; Craig Ferris, who got third in the conference in the 400-meter hurdles; and Darien Moore, who got first in both the hammer throw and the shot put.

Some notables for the women's team are Serena Underwood, who got second in the pole vault and Breann Goodman who got second in the hammer throw.

Myren Moore, freshmen, said, "I thought I did good seeing how I missed the first six weeks of track and to be running at this level right now. I missed those six weeks because I wasn't sure if I wanted to come out. It was a tough decision because the track and field team is different in college than it is in high school. I thought I was really prepared because the coaches were working with me."

Dave Frickel, head coach of the men's track and field team, said, "As Myren was making his last turn on the 400-meter he ended up getting a blister on the side of his foot because he runs so hard on the turns, so he got a blister or a heat spot, but he is such



MEGAN LUECKE / THE RIP

Blanca Perez competes in the women's 1,500-meter dash during the WSC Finals on April 29.

a good competitor, doesn't accept losing and that's what helped him get fourth."

Craig Ferris, a freshmen, said, "I thought I could've done better by staying in better form at the end of the last turn. For some reason it just got messed up." He ended up getting third in the 400-meter hurdles on Friday and ended up in third for the conference.

Harris, a sophomore, said, "It felt good because it was my goal to get first place in the high jump as a sophomore and what made it even more special was that I was one of the only sophomores out there. Since it was

mostly freshmen out there I just felt since I was a sophomore I deserved it more."

Harris also said that he wants to keep doing the high jump when he transfers to either Fresno Pacific, Northridge or some of the other choices that are close to home.

"I want to do well in the Southern California Meet and to jump 6-10 to 7 feet," said Harris.

Moore, a sophomore, said, "I wasn't happy with my technique I just think these past two weeks my technique has been off. Getting first place in the hammer throw and shot put and hopefully I can do it in the Southern California Meet."

"If I actually get first in that meet it means my training paid off, but not just that, it also means that it would be great. Not just for me but for everyone that has supported me. I really want to continue doing this when I choose to transfer to a different college and hopefully I can compete in the NCAA."

"This meet there weren't many competitors competing in races and in some events none at all," Frickel said. "But the reason for that was we didn't have anyone who can compete in certain events because they are not able to adjust from high school to college. I haven't had the luck to have a lot of athletes that can handle that change."

"The reason for having two weeks for this conference final is to help the athletes who do more than one event so they don't destroy the athlete, I think it's a great idea," said Frickel. "This year has been full of surprises and this meet was no different. I expected it from Darien, but Myren surprised me. Serena and Breann also surprised me. I was hoping more individuals could qualify and hopefully they can survive. Track and field is like the show Survivor: you got to see what you got from week to week."

Club receives a free rafting trip

By Brian N. Willhite
Reporter

The Bakersfield College Sports Club will be beating the summer swelter with a white-water-rafting trip on the Kern River May 8.

The adrenaline-pumping, wave-crashing event will serve as the club's annual outing for its members, and it will also be free.

The complimentary cruise down the river was made possible by Eagle Rafting in Kernville, which donated two rafting trips – with 40 seats – to the BC sports club.

Dominic Kirkendall, secretary of the sports club, is excited about the donation and feels that it's a great opportunity for students to get outdoors and experience something different while enjoying what nature has to offer.

Kirkendall and members of the sports club were figuring out what to do for their group outing this year.

Last year the club went hiking and was looking for fresh ideas when Kirkendall brought

up the river-rafting idea. Kirkendall was familiar with the company because of his friend, Andrew Wood, who works as a river guide for the company.

"We started talking about doing a rafting trip and everybody was interested so we decided to ask [Eagle Rafting] if they would comp us, and they said they would," Kirkendall said.

Wood, who is also a student at BC, likes the outdoors and thinks that the trip is a perfect way to get to know the surrounding Lake Isabella areas.

"What I started to realize is that we have such an available recreation area up here, and I actually got involved with rafting through a friend of mine. He got me into it and then I just got addicted to it," Wood said about passion for rafting and the outdoors.

His favorite aspect of the job and what he does is helping people experience the joys of white water rafting.

"Being able to go out on the river and attack those big, gigantic waves and guide a whole group of people safely down the river is thrilling ... you make



JOSEPH COTA / THE RIP

Bakersfield College student Mayra Villegas, 22, airs up a raft in an attempt to win a free rafting trip April 27.

people's memories daily, something that they won't forget," said Wood.

Eagle Rafting's manager, Janet Sharpe, was on campus for the "Fit and Fun" event hosted by the BC sports club and said that they wanted to get involved with the club as well as show students how rafting can be a fun and thrilling way to stay active no matter who you are.

"Not only is it an adrenaline rush and an adrenaline thrill, but it's also fun for families and younger kids," Sharpe said.

The adventurous members of the club will traverse through a mild portion of the Kern River that is appropriate for beginners without any prior experience. They will also be provided with proper safety gear, according to Sharpe who added that the section they'll be rafting through is referred to as the "lickity split."

During the "Fit and Fun" event, Eagle Rafting also gave away free rafting trips to students who competed in a contest to see who could blow up an inflatable kayak the fastest.

Fit and Fun day held to spread awareness

By Kevin Foster
Reporter

On April 26 and 27 the Bakersfield College Sports Club put on a Fit and Fun day on the BC campus

The members of the club are: President Elizabeth Samaniego, Vice-President Sarah Elliot, Secretary Dominic Kirkendall, and Treasurer Riki Suzuki and two other people.

"Fit and Fun day was to encourage students to get healthy and active by having some fun," Elliot said.

"The sports club is about creating friendships by enjoying healthy activities."

There were pineapple and tamarindo slushies on sale for two dollars as well as corn on the cob for two dollars with toppings and condiments such as: butter, mayonnaise, Pico de Gallo, and salt. The food was sold both days.

There was volleyball and a couple games of flag football going on simultaneously during the event.

On April 26 there was a six-on-six volleyball game with the winners receiving free slushies. On that same day there was two different games of flag football

where the sports club was creative and used strips of toilet paper for flags.

On April 27 the net was up around 10:30 a.m. and wasn't taken down until 5 p.m. There was only one game of football that day but there were two of the six on six volleyball games with the free slushies being offered to the winner.

During the events, the club also had a kayak on display from a local rafting company.

Anyone who could use a hand pump and pump up the raft without stopping would get a free rafting trip for one on the Kern River.

The club made more money that day making \$39.

"The money will go toward future Fit and Fun days we have to plan.

"The extra expenses ... bought around \$150 worth of stuff, was worth raising awareness about having fun to get healthy," Elliot added.

Elliot had some words for the people who don't know about the sports club.

"They should catch a game with us in the free speech area and find out how much fun and great times we have," she said.

Three Renegades make their way to regionals

By Tyler McGinty
Reporter

Bakersfield College's women's tennis team may be done with their season, but some of the individual members are still in the running.

On April 15 and 16, BC sent eight members of its team to the Western State Conference Individual Tournament to compete. The eight players played in singles rounds as well as part of a doubles team, giving BC a total of 16 chances to make it to the regional tournament. In order to make it to the regional tournament, a player or doubles team must make it to the quarterfinals.

Out of these 16 chances, three of them made it.

Denisa Hromadkova got to the quarterfinals in the singles competitions, as well as in the doubles competitions with Stevie

Lincoln. BC's other representative at the regional tournament is the doubles team Katja Thacker and Kasandra Beadle.

Hromadkova took a bye in the first round, and played against Anna Slyutova of Santa Barbara City College in the second round. Hromadkova defeated Slyutova 7-5, 6-3.

Hromadkova made her way to the quarterfinals by defeating Hanna Satcher of Santa Monica College 6-2, 6-3. This was her last match, and guaranteed Hromadkova a spot at the regional tournament.

Hromadkova earned another spot at the regional tournament with her doubles partner, Lincoln.

Hromadkova and Lincoln also had a first round bye, and played their only match against Katy Carlson and Victoria Ramirez from Allan Hancock, defeating them 6-0, 6-1.

Thacker and Beadle, like all of the BC representatives at the regional tournament, had a first round bye, and played their only match against Jessica Hinds and Katie Power of Ventura College. Thacker and Beadle won their sets 7-5, 6-2.

The other BC representatives at the tournament were not quite able to make their way into the quarterfinals.

Jaylene Chan lost her second round match against Criss Rodriguez from Santa Monica, one of the top seeds of the conference, 6-1, 6-0. Her sister, Jennifer Chan lost her first round match against Carolyn Morris from Ventura 6-1, 6-0.

Lincoln, although making her way into the regional tournament as a doubles team with Hromadkova, lost her third singles match against Katerina Mozolyuk from Santa Monica 6-0, 6-0.

Thacker and Beadle also didn't

make their way into the regional tournament on their own in singles matches, even though as a team they were able to enter the regional tournament.

Thacker lost in her second round against Jutta Collet from Santa Monica 6-2, 6-3 and Beadle was defeated in her second round by Niccolette Yvanovich of Santa Barbara 6-0, 6-0.

Jacqueline Prieto was defeated in her second round by Layne Gallimore of Ventura, 6-0, 6-0.

Kathryn Burford was also defeated in the second round by Sevana Zargarian of Glendale College 6-1, 6-1.

Even though all four singles matches got a first round bye, two of the doubles teams lost on their second round.

The team of Chan and Chan lost against Gallimore and Ariel Berghold of Ventura 6-0, 6-0 and Burford and Prieto lost against Zargarian and Samantha

Sismundo of Glendale 6-1, 6-1.

Since everyone who makes it to the quarterfinals advances to the regional tournament, they do not play the quarterfinal matches. This is done in order to prevent any chance of injuries and to conserve energy for the regional tournament, according to Coach Gene Lundquist.

The Southern California Regional Tournament will be held May 5-7 at Grossmont College in Le Mesa.

In addition to the Western State Conference Individual Tournament, the team also sent three representatives to the 111th Ojai Tournament, which was held April 28 to May 1.

The Ojai Tournament has 128 contestants and has players from schools all across the state.

BC sent Hromadkova, Beadle and Lincoln to represent them in the tournament.

Beadle lost in her first round

against Tori Bohart from Palomar College 6-3, 6-1.

Lincoln was defeated her second round by Lauren Shafer of American River College 3-6, 6-2, with a 10-6 tiebreaker.

Hromadkova once again had a bye in her first round of the tournament, and faced off against Jordan Belisle from Mission College in the second round. Hromadkova won her first match of the tournament 6-0, 6-1. Hromadkova played her third match against Gabby Fortunata from San Diego Mesa, beating her 6-2, 6-2.

Hromadkova got her last victory against Tina Young of Irvine Valley College, the fifth ranked player in Southern California. Hromadkova defeated her 7-6 (with a 7-1 in the tiebreaker), 6-0. Hromadkova was able to make it to the quarterfinals, but lost in the fifth round against Kelsey Chrisco 7-6, 7-4, 6-3.

Swim teams finish season strong

By Mateo M. Melero
Reporter

Returning from the state meet with an overall placement of 14th in the men's and eighth in the women's, the Bakersfield College Swim Team has shown a substantial improvement over last year's state meet.

"That's our highest finishing since I've been here," said BC swim coach Charlie Pike.

Held at East L.A. College from April 28-30, Pike explained the overall feeling felt by the team at the meet.

"They were pretty nervous, but it was a big indoor venue, and it had the whole championship deal to it which was really nice," he said.

BC's Franchesca Wyatt took home four medals for the women's team, including placing six in state in the women's 1,650 freestyle with a time of 18:13:41 seconds.

Women's captain Brigette Alexander took sixth in the 100-yard butterfly at 1:00:24, seventh in the 50-yard butterfly at 27:36, and eighth in the 50-yard freestyle at 25:24.

Alexander also placed in the top eight in the 400-yard freestyle relay with Wyatt, Katie Lopes and Brandelyn Storms.

Alexander said concerning the meet, "It was a huge deal to

do even better at state than we did at conference."

The men's results ranked them 14th at the meet, with Brian Collier placing fourth in the men's 200-yard breaststroke at 2:04.54, and 1:51.31 in the men's 200-yard individual medley, which placed him third in the race.

BC swimmer Matt McDonnell said concerning the meet, "It was an indoor pool which always has its problems with ventilation, but it's still a pretty good pool.

"State was a little lackluster, I was a little tired," said McDonnell about his conditioning. "I guess my taper didn't hold on as long as I wanted it to.

"I held right around my best times," said McDonnell.

Orange Coast College took first in both the men and women's meets.

Pike commented on the Orange Coast team.

"They have a pretty big crew there," he said. "They're traditionally one of the stronger teams, they came through again. They got a lot of kids coming from all over the place there, I think they have a lot of four-year transfers that were coming to JC this year. It was good for our kids to see that, too."

At the Western State Conference meet April 21-23 at LA



PHOTO COURTESY OF JARED P. MEYER

Bakersfield College's Brian Collier breaks the WSC 100-yard breaststroke record with a time of 56.99 at the conference finals at East L.A. College on April 22.

Valley College, BC placed second in the men's competition and the women finished fourth. During the state swim, BC beat all of its conference teams.

In the men's 200-yard individual medley, Collier set a new school record with a time of 1:52, and a new school and conference record in the men's 100-yard breaststroke.

"The kids swam awesome. I have no complaints. We had huge time drops," said Pike.

"Every single one of our kids scored a point at conference. Every one of them made it back in at least one event at night."

In its fourth year since reinstatement by Jan Stuebbe and Charlie Pike, the BC team consists of local Kern County swimmers.

Pike has refrained from the type of recruiting seen at some of the larger schools, and concentrates on finding local talent. "To me this whole thing has

been more about coaching than recruiting, and that's the way I'm trying to view it. If I wanted to be a recruiter I'd go look for a Division I job somewhere," said Pike.

"The kids in the community are starting to figure out what we got going on up here," continued Pike.

"I am really trying to build on just the local high school kids and not going out of the area to recruit."

Baseball team whiffs chance for playoffs

By Julian Moore
Opinions Editor

The Bakersfield College baseball team lost back-to-back games to Glendale College, bumping the Renegades out of the playoffs.

BC came into the final two games of the season tied with Glendale for one of the two playoff spots available in Western State Conference. Coming into the game, five WSC teams all had viable playoff hopes with four of the five playing each other in season-ending series.

With both teams needing to sweep the two games to lock down a spot, Glendale won the first game 1-0 behind the arm of Ryan Sherriff who pitched a complete game shutout. Sherriff had 12 strikeouts in the game as well.

Head coach Tim Painton summed up the opposing left-hander Sherriff's performance as "outstanding."

After the first loss to Glendale, the Renegades still had a chance for postseason after LA Pierce College lost 5-2 to Citrus College.

Heading onto the final game on April, BC was now in a three-way tie for second in conference with Canyons and Citrus.

The Renegades scored two runs in the second game and looked to have a chance, although they were still down a run. But in the bottom of the eighth, Glendale secured its own postseason plans with a grand slam by Sako Chappian off of freshman relief pitcher Phillip Valos.

"Woodward did enough to keep them in the game and they have probably the best bullpen guy in the conference; they brought him in and shut the game down once they got a lead," said Painton.

"Offensively, they did a great job at their place to break the game open with a grand slam late. And they're deserving to be where they're at," he said.

Sophomore David Pennington felt the team still had a chance.

"Well the grand slam was just a small part of the game and I believe they hit it in the seventh so that put them up five so we still had two more at-bats, so all hope wasn't lost yet. Even though it seemed like a big deal it was only one play and

that kind of stuff is a part of the game," he said.

That loss dropped the Renegades to 11-10 in WSC play, as Citrus, LA Pierce and Canyons all finished tied with a 12-9 record and will be three of the four teams in a play-in game for the final two spots in the SoCal Regional.

Pennington said the team knew the situation they were in going down the stretch. "We knew what we had got ourselves into going into the last week of the season and we knew that if we wanted a for sure spot in the playoffs we had to win both games," he said.

"The last two weeks of the season is a grind and all the teams are tired mentally and physically, so we tried to keep each other to try and get the best result possible."

He went on to discuss the season as a whole, "From a baseball standpoint we didn't quite accomplish what we wanted to, but our team chemistry was higher than you could ever ask for.

"I loved being around every single one of those guys out there every single day

and we are together so much we are just a big family. We may have lost a couple games, but what I gained from this season is so much more than playing a game."

Painton said of the season that it was an overall positive experience throughout.

"It wasn't a disappointment. I think anytime you go into a season and you go down to the last day of the season and you have an opportunity for a playoff spot you've done a pretty good job," he said. "We ended up short of where we wanted to be. That last week kind of did us in, but Glendale was playing very well at the time."

He also felt it was a positive learning experience for the freshman.

"I think going into this season we knew pitching was going to be our strength. We knew offense was something we had to try and develop as the season went along. We showed flashes of not having any offense."

"All in all, we had the opportunity to put some freshman on the field that gained some valuable experience. Hopefully, that bodes well for the future."

Column

Stay out of football's business America

Open Mike | A column about the everyday happenings in sports.

During a time where countrymen are shouting "USA, USA, USA," with patriotism flowing through the vein of the nation and most are rejoicing at the killing of Osama bin Laden, I started

thinking of an American institution that has its own turmoil going on right now.

The National Football League and its Players Association or the decertified version of what's left of it, has its share of problems.

The lockout was over. Everyone rejoiced.

Or so we thought. Until the U.S. government got involved. Sure, it was because the players asked for mediation, but you and I both know that the government was just waiting for a chance to stick its nose in someone else's business.

Players went in to workout and were sent back home, and before we could even finish the first round of the draft, the lockout wasn't over.

Then the players were told it was OK to go back, so they did and again, the lockout was over.

But after an Eighth District Court makes a decision on upholding or repealing the ruling made by U.S. District Judge Susan Nelson, the season could be on hold again and again.

Now I won't side with the players or the league, but the most normal of American things makes me think, what really is American about a business not being able to operate under its own merit?

The most successful American sport is being told how to run its own business. That, to me, makes no sense.

Obviously, they've been doing it right for several years now. American government, they don't need your help.

Whether or not the players chose to decertify just to take their fight to the court is irrelevant.

As fans, we want to see week one through the Super Bowl, but as an American, it just seems a bit ridiculous that a business lockout will be determined by the court system.

The NFL commissioner Roger Goodell and the team owners have some ridiculous demands without a lot of gain for the players, and I understand their gripes.

For starters, the league wants to add two games to the schedule while taking an extra \$2 billion away from the amount that would be revenue shared.

They also want to pay incoming rookies on a much cheaper scale, and also take away retired players benefits.

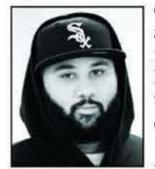
I get all of that, I really do. But what the players and court systems aren't understanding is the fact that they make enough money to save for their own benefit packages, rookies shouldn't be paid as much as experienced veterans, and if I were an owner, I would want the extra money to cover my butt just in case they didn't earn as much in revenue as they usually do.

Who are they to tell me how to run a business?

If Anheuser-Busch decided it wanted to lockout employees until they came to an agreement about a pay scale and retirement benefits, would the government step in and force the company to allow employees back to work?

No, the government wouldn't tell them to keep making beer.

Besides, it would just be un-American to try to control an alcoholic beverage company, just like it's un-American to try to control the NFL.



Michael Morrow

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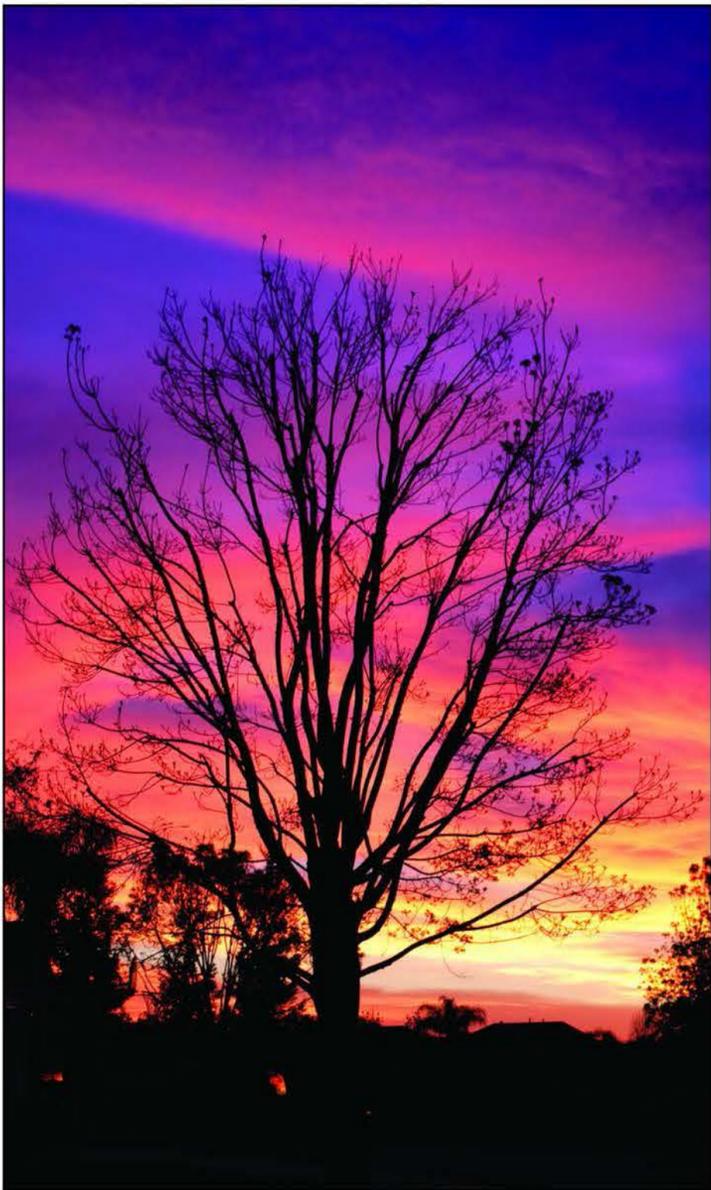

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Spring brings wonderful things



MEGAN LUECKE / THE RIP

A spring sunset turns the western sky into a majestic display of color.



KAYLA BROADHAG / THE RIP

BC's second baseman Enrique Meza attempts to make a double play by tagging out Saddleback's Jeff Butler, and then firing to first April 21.



GREGORY D. COOK / THE RIP

Young Monarch butterflies perch on a girl's hands at Delano's Relay for Life on April 16.



BRANDON BARRAZA / THE RIP

A red house finch perches on a limb near the Student Services Building on May 2.

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Apply for :

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Inquire in Student Activities in Campus Center 4



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