

SGA: Peterson vows to put students' best interest first

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and has lived most of his life in Bakersfield. He attended Bakersfield High School, and worked in the community in retail management and the trucking industry before the economic downturn saw him laid off, and he returned to BC.

"Originally, I was just going to come back for a semester just to keep busy, keep my mind active while I looked for work," he said. "But there just wasn't anything out there, so here I am."

Peterson's interest in becoming SGA president began with him inquiring about becoming a senator.

"I wanted to be a voice for the students," he said. "And when I went in to see about becoming a senator, I decided to go for it; go for president. I thought maybe I could do more for the students as president."

Peterson realizes he is taking office at a time when the college is facing potentially devastating budget cuts and vows that the SGA will do everything within its power to protect students.

"I understand that most of these cuts are coming directly from the state, and we just don't have any control with that," he said. "But there are little things that we can do to help the students."

Peterson pointed out that programs such as the Renegade Pantry are vital to students and pledged the SGA's continued support of such programs, as well as opposing a rumored parking price increase.

"It's just a rumor at this point, but if it they do want

to raise it. We'll fight that for sure," he said.

The office of president was the only SGA office in the election that was contested, with Peterson beating out Richard Heath and Jose Gurrola. The candidates for the other offices ran unopposed. Genise Wallace is the new vice-president and Toccarra Bird is the new secretary. Ivan Mendez will be the new activities liaison and Nick Acosta will be the new general counsel. Richard Heath, in addition to coming in second in the presidential campaign, was elected treasurer as a write-in candidate.

This year, 953 people took part in the voting, a slightly higher number than last year's 941-voter turnout.

"I wish they would go back to the physical ballots," said Tawntannisha Thompson, current SGA president. "We had much bigger turnouts back

then."

She attributes the overall low voter participation to students being unfamiliar with the Inside BC portal.

"Students just don't know how to log on, or sometimes you say 'Inside BC,' and they just say, 'What's that?'"

The elections also contained a feedback poll which allowed voters to express their opinions of the SGA's performance.

The majority of voters rated the job the SGA is doing as "average," and rated the Renegade Pantry as the most valuable thing the SGA does. When asked what the least valuable activity the SGA sponsors, voters responded resoundingly with "homecoming."

BC votes no smoking

By Keith Kaczmarek
Reporter

During the Student Government Association elections that happened on March 20-21, there was an extra poll about changing BC's smoking policy and students chose overwhelmingly for a tobacco-free campus.

"I think it's a great thing," said Tawnya Steele, 19, a biology major and a non-smoker who specifically voted so that she could be part of the poll.

"I'm personally not a smoker, and I believe everyone should have freedom and all that, but I don't like walking across campus and getting a face full smoke." Steele has allergies.

"We've had a lot of complaints and animosity from smokers and

non-smokers alike," said SGA general counsel Derrick Kenner.

"The student body has spoken," he said, later adding, "When you ask me about it, it's about what the school wants."

"This is something like a dream that has plagued BC for several years.

"This issue, this plague, needs to die for us to move forward.

"This is a huge step for BC and I'm proud to be a part of it."

Kenner has been heading up the B-COUGH program on campus, an anti-tobacco initiative looking to exploit the passage of Senate Bill AB 795 that took effect this year and allows California campuses to enforce smoking policies by levying citations and fines.

The poll consisted of three

policies.

They were "100-percent Tobacco-free campus" with 442 votes, "designated-smoking areas" with 295, and "No Ban on Smoking" with 156.

A total of 953 students voted in the poll, and the vote was extended for two full days so that faculty would have more time to vote.

Even with these results, several more steps have to occur for any changes to school policy to actually happen.

The actual poll is non-binding, and BC administrators are under no obligation to actually change the policy from the current policy which follows state regulations requiring smokers be at least 20 feet away from doorways or hallways while smoking.

SERRANO: District prepared for worst outcome

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as many students as possible, that we'll be able to really provide a clear pathway for students to come in and transfer or move into the workforce, and that we really can come together and get this done."

Burke said that the reserves are a big reason why KCCD can take the time to assess the economic situation.

"[The reserves] are going to allow us to go into a two-year process where we can take some sizeable hits to our revenue," he said.

"But instead of reacting in a kneejerk way, we can take the time to plan out the changes appropriately and in the most efficient and effective manner and to try to minimize the reactions while at the same time trying to maximize the number of students that we can serve."

Burke said that a lot of districts in the state are not in the position to take the time to assess the situation, and could make rash decisions.

"They're going to have to make changes in a very short period of time, and what happens operationally when you have to do that in very quick order is you get a lot of unintended consequences downstream," he said.

"The leadership of this district, the chancellor, the board, the college presidents and their management, have really done an outstanding job to help build that reserve, recognizing the magnitude of the economic downturn and the length it was going to be."

Burke is staying attentive with the situation in Sacramento and said that the most recent news is, "that the projected revenues for February didn't meet expectations."

Burke said that most recent development affirms the projections of the LAO's report.

"We expect another update after taxes in April," he said. "Then, we'll have a better idea in terms of revenue to the state, which is why we wait for a May revise to make some final determinations to budget."

Gov. Jerry Brown's tax initiative, if passed in November by California voters, will help ease the strain on community colleges, according to Burke.

The initiative will increase the state income tax enforced on those with annual earnings over \$250,000 for the next five years, and raise the state sales tax by 5 cents.

Burke said that the reason California's economic situation has gotten to this point is that lawmakers in Sacramento have deferred dealing with the problem and thrown "gimmicks" at the problem.

"Those things have run out, and that's why it's coming to critical mass at this point," he said.

"There is a structural imbalance in California's budget that has been perpetuated for longer than a decade where the legislature has had expenditure levels exceeding its revenue levels and has actually incorporated what should have been short-term revenue and treated them as on-going revenues," he said.

Burke said that most of California's revenue "used to come from sales tax, which is an ongoing, very predictable stream," instead of capital gains which is extremely variable.

"It's flipped now," he said. "The bulk of California's revenues are coming from capital gains, and now you have a revenue stream that has a higher degree of uncertainty because now it's relying primarily on a stream of revenue that's very uncertain. It essentially goes the way of Wall Street."

BC bookstore embracing change

By Breanna Fields
Reporter

The Bakersfield College bookstore has embraced the latest social networking trends by providing online updates for products, sales and giveaways via Facebook and Twitter.

A number of changes have been made since Barnes & Noble became the new owners of the BC bookstore. In an effort to reach out to students and offer those on a tight budget affordable snacks and supplies, regular discounts and sales are posted on the BC Bookstore's official Facebook page.

A sign on the front counter encouraging students to "Like" their Facebook is just one of the many ways that the bookstore is trying to reach students on a personal level and provide their services to a broader range of people on campus.

With over 1,300 "Likes" and counting, the popularity of these deals has increased due to word

of mouth and flyers posted on the bulletin boards in an effort to spread the word.

"We're much more technology savvy now," said Alex Aguilar, 24, who has worked as a bookseller even before the store changed ownership.

Aguilar explained that the product sales are designed specifically to appeal to BC students and bring them into the store to see all of the products available.

"We'll do a flash-sale so the students are aware of what we have to offer," he said.

One-day-only flash-sales are a regular feature on the Facebook page that allow students to find deals that are posted at random times.

They are eligible to receive these special discounts and buy-one-get-one free deals when they mention it to the cashier.

The bookstore has also implemented a nationwide sweepstakes online where students can enter to win \$150 for their college bookstore to aid in purchas-

ing books and other supplies.

Aguilar explained that some of the other prizes given away include sweaters, headphones and backpacks.

"It all depends on what we have to offer and what our company sends us to also give out as promotions," said Aguilar.

After walking into the bookstore to make a purchase, film major Taylor Akins noticed a basket of Energy Sheet samples on the counter.

"I wasn't sure what they were at first," said Akins. "I tried a sample and was pretty impressed."

Energy Sheets are small, flavored sheets that contain caffeine to provide a temporary energy boost.

"I really can't afford to buy Starbucks every day, so this was a good alternative," said Akins, who hoped to see the product for sale in the future.

Students can check the website for updates and information on discounts in the store.

JENSEN: Narrowing down to core classes begins

Continued from Page 1

on the chopping block. "We are going to narrow our offering."

"What the chancellor has asked us to do is look at our core mission," he said. "We're looking at the breadth."

Jensen noted that they are not just looking at the core classes that people need to transfer, but trying to see what they can do to reduce waitlists for required classes.

"If we drop programs that aren't graduating or transferring, then why are we offering those classes as majors?" he said.

"We can no longer be all things to all people," Jensen later added.

The easy cuts have already been made, in his opinion. "We've already cut all the low-lying fruit," he said.

Many other schools in California are in a worse position financially with many having to make mid-year cuts.

"Most schools would love to be in our position," he said.

That being said, he's not entirely comfortable with a situation where students can't take classes that sound interesting, and in that process, discover what truly interests them.

"This is the antithesis of everything I was schooled in," said

Jensen, noting that he was used to a system where coming to college would "expose [students] to everything."

Still, Jensen thinks the process of pruning classes and programs is necessary considering the alternative is to keep cutting good programs instead.

"If you come in and make cuts every year for five years, none of [the programs] are worth it," he said.

It would be a "death by a thousand cuts," in his opinion.

Jensen also spoke about how even cutting administrative costs and everything not related to classes wouldn't cover the budget shortfall.

"If you don't touch the classes, even if you get rid of everything, it still won't do it."

Jensen also noted that BC spends too much time serving students who take up slots in classes and then eventually drop the classes.

"A lot of students aren't ready and shouldn't be students," he said. "Do you reward them or do you reward students who did what they needed to do?"

"We need to do better with those students," he said regarding unprepared students.

Jensen spoke of adding requirements to some classes in

order to make sure that students are prepared enough to complete the courses.

"We haven't raised the bar and that's an issue."

Jensen sees education of these students not only as a local issue but a national issue about the future of American education.

"How can the US compete in the global market with an unskilled workforce? It's a knowledge-based economy."

Despite the hard choices being made, Jensen remains confident.

"People have been great. It's a great college.

"Students, staff and faculty are very supportive. There is a lot of pride in this college. Their children and grandchildren have gone to BC."

Jensen had this to say to students: "Speak up and tell us what the priorities are. This is critical. Students are going to be impacted."

"You are the end-user. It's your college. I hope students are thoughtful and assertive.

"If we are going to make cuts, what should they be?" he said.

He also commented on student government.

"I would really encourage student government to get involved. There is a time and a place to stand up, and this is it."

FACULTY: Trying to keep cuts away from students

Continued from Page 1

ing center had its funding reduced because of the state's budget problem.

"Students should be concerned about class size [increasing]. Students should also be concerned about cuts to student services," said Cornelio Rodriguez, political science professor and Academic Senate president.

Rodriguez then went on to explain that the Academic Senate is doing everything they can to work with the district and help students during this time.

"One thing we are concurrent on is keeping cuts away from students," said Rodriguez.

At the last Academic Senate

meeting Rodriguez was put in charge of organizing a forum for faculty and administration to come together to share information and opinions. The Academic Senate has already discussed solutions to the district's money problems. One option being looked at is adjusting BC's reserve funds.

California requires each community college to keep a reserve fund of at least five percent. BC is currently above the state guidelines at a 10 percent reserve. The idea of dipping into these funds until the current budget crisis is over and the economy stabilizes is popular among professors and hasn't been met with opposition.

"We're looking at all options," said Rodriguez.

Changes are also being made on the state level. One option California is looking at is raising the academic placement standards. By requiring students to meet higher standards in basic skills tests, colleges could eliminate lower-level required classes and free up money to use for other programs. This would certainly affect faculty at BC.

Going along with changes already made to the "W" grade, academic planning and financial aid, raising academic standards would put BC on a course that Rodriguez calls shifting from "access to success."

News Briefs

BC ready for some wine

The Bakersfield College Foundation is presenting their "Red & White Wine & Food Festival" with a series of events on April 12-13. A winemaker dinner, seminar and panel discussion, and the grand tasting in Renegade Park will be featured in this year's expanded event. Information is available at 395-4800 and on www.bcfoundation.net, and the tickets are sold on the site.

Transferring seminars

Spring seminars to learn about transferring to another school have been set up and schedules are available on the BC website. For more information, contact transfer services counselor Sue Granger-Dickson at 395-4664 or in SS37.

Come get some drama with your yogurt

The Theater Club will be performing theater games in front of Daddy O's Yogurt and Gelato Shoppe in the Albertson's shopping center on Mount Vernon on March 29, from 5-9 p.m., and anyone purchasing yogurt or gelato will help the club.

Treasure Hunters

The Treasure Hunters Roadshow is coming to Bakersfield. Bring your collectibles to the Four Points Sheraton at 5101 California Ave. on March 28 to April 1, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Wednesday through Friday and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday. Call 217-241-3170 for more info.

Poetry Month

April is National Poetry Month and a number of events will be held locally and listed on tinyurl.com/april-poetry. A partial list includes Don Thompson and Gerald Haslam on April 1 from 3:30-6 p.m. at Russo's Bookstore on Ming, a workshop entitled "Slam and the Power of Concentrated Expression" on April 7 from 1-4 p.m. at The Foundry on 20th Street, and a Spoken Word and Slam Competition on April 13 from 7:30-10 p.m. at the Empty Space Theater.

Campus forecast

The Renegade Rip		Wed. March 28	Thurs. March 29	Fri. March 30
		Hi 71 F Lo 52 F	Hi 75 F Lo 51 F	Hi 78 F Lo 54 F
Mon. April 2	Tues. April 3	Wed. April 4	Thurs. April 5	Fri. April 6
				AVERAGES
Hi 66 F Lo 49 F	Hi 76 F Lo 50 F	Hi 78 F Lo 50 F	Hi 75 F Lo 52 F	Hi 72 F Lo 48 F
RECORDS	RECORDS	RECORDS	RECORDS	RECORDS
Hi 97 F Lo 33 F	Hi 95 F Lo 33 F	Hi 98 F Lo 30 F	Hi 96 F Lo 35 F	Hi 96 F Lo 35 F
Mon. April 9	Tues. April 10	Wed. April 11	SOURCE: weather.com Gathered by: Rip Staff	
AVERAGES	AVERAGES	AVERAGES		
Hi 73 F Lo 49 F	Hi 73 F Lo 49 F	Hi 74 F Lo 49 F		
RECORDS	RECORDS	RECORDS		
Hi 97 F Lo 33 F	Hi 95 F Lo 33 F	Hi 98 F Lo 30 F		

Candidate's faith affects decisions

By Keith Kaczmarek
Reporter

Religion needs to be a part of politics for the simple reason that we need to know which issues a candidate is going to be irrational about.

For example, Republican voters are probably grateful to know that Rick Santorum wants a government-led war on pornography, turning a vast majority of American men into criminals and creating a black market for pornography with all the associated crime that comes with black markets.

That's useful information to know when picking a candidate.

Religion, for good or bad, leads to people holding to beliefs despite evidence to the contrary. That's why religion is such a great comfort to people in the midst of suffering. It is something to hold onto when the world makes little sense.

Religion allows people to take

idealistic positions as often as repressive ones, and the public needs to know exactly where it is affecting a candidate's judgment.

The list of terrible government programs inspired by religion range from the hilariously harmful abstinence education push that actually creates more teen pregnancies than no sex-ed at all, to the simply pointless opposition to gay marriage that government money is spent resisting.

Money will be wasted on these tiny crusades in the culture wars, and the public needs to know what it is getting into when it picks a deeply religious candidate.

It's not always negative.

For example, knowing if a candidate believes in the Catholic Church's position on social justice would only be a positive in my mind.

It's when a candidate takes the Catholic Church's positions on birth control that you run into trouble.

I mean, according to Guttmacher Institute, 99 percent of American women and 98 percent of Catholic women who have ever had sex have used contraception of some kind, and I think they'd be upset to have that choice taken away by a politician.

In fact, it would even be important to know if a candidate is an atheist because the voters would then need to know what philosophy that candidate uses as his moral compass.

For example, are they a strict utilitarian who's going to create the most good for the most people, or do they hold to Ayn Rand's ideal of rational self-interest, basically the most offensive form of selfishness?

Just knowing the answer to the theoretical question above is going to be the difference between knowing if your tax rates for your bracket are going up or down. Protip: Randians want to tax the poor and give the money to the rich.

Religion is not alone in the irrational dogma department.

Economic theories like the Austrian school for economics prides itself on not being supported by evidence. This theory is preeminent among the libertarians currently infiltrating the Republican Party.

People need to know if the politicians in charge want to ruin the economy because they believe that gold-backed currency is somehow more stable and creates more growth than fiat paper money, despite almost a hundred years of evidence to the contrary.

For better or worse, we choose our leaders based on our perceptions of their character.

We choose them because we hope that they will act in a way that does not displease whatever modern version of the tribe we are using these days.

And let's face it, politics is about pleasing the tribe as much as rational decision-making.



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Rick Santorum is a Republican primary candidate who has expressed religious beliefs.

Avengers narrative confusing

By Jackie Gibson
Reporter

Hitting theaters in early May is the much awaited and anticipated action-packed superhero "The Avengers" movie. With any new movie, you can expect to see new toys, collector's items

COMIC REVIEW

★★★★☆

Going into reading the new "Avengers Assemble #1", I felt a little ping of nostalgia. Brian Michael Bendis, who wrote other issues of "The Avengers" as well as this one, has finally found his niche after a substantial period of bleakness.

It made me want to be 13 again, waiting outside of my favorite old comic store, which sadly is no longer around. Illustrations were done by Mark Bagley and I love how he was able to capture the essence of comic drawings from years long past.

To me, this was the most noteworthy attribute to this comic book. There is nothing like picking up a comic book and feeling like that nerdy kid I used to be.

You will recognize most of the characters from the movie in this issue, and I am sure that is no coincidence.

Wanting to stay in league with the movie, this book was primarily made to ride the coattails of the cinematic version. Characters in this comic include Captain America, Iron Man, Thor, The Hulk, Black Widow and all original Avengers.

One of the things that make this comic great is that it's by Marvel. Being a huge Marvel fan this last year or so has been great. It is a smart move on their part.

With the releases of many of their titles in theaters, it only makes sense to put six of the most highly recognized comic book characters in history on a cover that is geared to the movie that will soon be arriving in Bakersfield.

As for the not-so-awesome parts of this comic, I would have to say that in the past, Marvel



COURTESY OF MARVEL.COM

The "Avengers Assemble #1" is a comic book meant to promote the upcoming summer film "The Avengers." The comic features such popular heroes as Captain America.

dutifully tried to give an old-fashioned feeling to their comics that aficionados could sink their teeth into, giving them a thick storyline with spectacular freshness, but this comic seems to lack the luster that Marvel used to have.

Marvel readers are quite confused, including me. The book doesn't specify where the action actually takes place. In previous Avengers comics it was clear what was going on and where. Not in this one.

It just mentions references. Iron Man and Captain America mention the Avengers Tower being leveled. There is no information on how these events transpire. Bendis was truly an idol to me, especially when he started working on the Avengers franchise in 2004. In this comic

the Avengers form a zodiac. This to me is a disappointment. They don't explain why the zodiac is formed.

Another question that formed is why does Cancer (a nefarious member) promise power to his team of bad villains? Why does a caravan go through the desert carrying an unknown parcel in a land that is not named?

When you get to Latveria, the two dominant female superheroes Hawkeye and Black Widow stake out a target, yet the target is completely unknown. They see an odd happening on the other side and that too is not described, along with the Taurus that really has an attitude and for no reason apparently, as it is not disclosed either.

A rag-tag storyline doesn't make for a good read.

Other than the fact that this is a Marvel comic with Bagley and his reminiscent art of when comics were in its heyday, I found this issue to be lacking in story line and leaving tons of questions unanswered.

Perhaps it's an opener for Avengers 2, or maybe it really was rushed and they just want to make money from the movie franchise.

I truly feel that regardless, it's a publication that is highly recognized and should do well either way.

I will probably still collect the series for the simple fact that it is by Marvel, who is known to be the godfather of comics. If you are a fan of the Avenger characters or comic books alone, it is worth checking out, just be ready to put your thinking cap on.

Lotion works as promised

By Crystal Sanchez
Reporter

Spring is upon us and it is just a matter of time before girls start driving to the tanning salons to get that perfect summer tan.

If you're anything like me, saving money for college and summer break is definitely

PRODUCT REVIEW

★★★★☆

top priority, which is why I decided to save myself some money and try Jergens Natural Glow Daily Moisturizer.

I'm not going to lie, at first I thought this product would never live up to the hype. How could a lotion give you a natural glow and moisturize your skin? Well I must say that after using this product for a week I have noticed a difference in my skin tone.

Let me start off by telling you the not-so bright side of this product. First, the tedious process of applying the lotion and having to wait 10 minutes for it to dry was not the most fun, but it's better than staining your clothes.

The lotion does have a distinct smell that makes you wonder if people around you can smell it too. However, on the bright side, it did give me my desired tan look in about

seven days for the small price of \$8.50.

This lotion, if applied as directed, will definitely last you a long time, so you get your money's worth. If you want to look like Snooki however, I might suggest buying in bulk or just going straight for the spray tan.

To discuss the precautions of using tanning lotions and other tanning methods I decided to consult dermatologist and local philanthropist Norman Levan.

Side effects like rashes and itchy skin can sometimes occur when using lotions or solutions on your skin.

Levan said that it's because there are various agents in the product that can be irritating to certain people. He said if this occurs to stop using the product immediately.

When asked if he believes tanning is a good idea he said no.

"It's not good to get a tan because it ages your skin," he said.

He does believe, however, that spending time outside and having fun at the beach should not cause people to fear the sun.

Whether you plan on spending your summer at the beach or in summer school, Jergens Natural Glow Daily Moisturizer will help you achieve that perfect summer tan.



Jergens Natural Glow Daily Moisturizer is a lotion meant to give your skin a natural glow and also moisturizes your skin at a price cheaper than the more expensive alternatives.

MEGAN LUECKE / THE RIP



Winner of the 2003 and 2008 JACC Pacesetter Award

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The Renegade Rip

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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.

The Rip reserves the right to edit letters, however, writers will be given the opportunity to revise lengthy or unacceptable submissions.

If an organization submits a letter as a group, it must be signed by only one person, either the leader of the organization or the letter writer. Pen names are not allowed and anonymous letters will not be published.

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Staff Editorial

Time is now for BC to stand up

Bakersfield College students are about to take a major hit when the next budget comes around, and it's time that we start speaking out to our leaders in Sacramento. The outlook doesn't look good, with nearly \$300 million in cuts recommended by the Legislative Analyst's office, but we can do something about it.

Kern Community College District's associate vice chancellor of governmental external relations Michele Bresso is urging students to stand up, and we agree with her 100 percent.

"In the situation that California is facing, and the California community colleges in particular,

nobody is more important in that situation than students," Bresso said. "And nobody is feeling the pain like students are feeling."

We can put a stop to this, but first we are going to have to eliminate the apathy and get involved.

Sign petitions. Call your representatives. Or just talk to your friends about the budget.

If there is anything we should be afraid of in this scary economic time, it's the fact that students are not involved at this point.

Bresso agrees that students' voices are heard in Sacramento, and even though she is fighting for us, they'll listen to us a lot

more. If students can't stand up for this, but Kony 2012 can garner millions of hits in just a few hours, then our outlook looks bleak. Don't let this be the story of our time.

Not only could the budget refrain you from graduating by making it nearly impossible to get the classes you need, but the tradition of our school could very well be gone come next year. Athletics are on the chopping block, as is everything that isn't "core" education, as KCCD chancellor Sandra Serrano has said, including the newspaper you hold in your hands.

If our federal government can spend over \$500 billion on defense, and our state government can spend \$65.4 billion on high-speed rail, then they can save the desks we sit in. We just have to demand it.

Nothing can sway a legislature's vote more than thousands of his constituents demanding the same thing.

If all 17,000 of us from BC called, emailed or simply signed an advocacy letter, the situation would change extremely fast.

The problem is, none of us are doing any of this, and that has to change.

Those in Sacramento will say

Let your voice be heard

Call your legislators:
 Assemblywoman Shannon Grove: 661-395-2995
 Assemblyman David Valadao: 559-585-7170
 Senator Jean Fuller: 661-323-0443
 Senator Michael Rubio: 661-395-2622

Talk to legislators' representatives:
 Grove and Valadao send field reps to BC once a month. Next visit: April 19 at 10 a.m.

Send a pre-prepared advocacy letter to you legislators:
 Use the FACCC website to fill out an automatic form that gets sent automatically.

that the only objective of a community college is to transfer the students out. Say that to the veteran learning how to put together a college-level essay, or to the mother of two slowly working for her nursing degree one night class at a time.

If our stories become known to our legislatures, things will change, and they will change quickly, especially if they think they'll be run out of the capitol come November.

So stand up Renegades, and let your voice be heard.

Column

Molded by the city around me

AS MY BRAIN EXPLODES | One man's take on people and culture

There's a unique beauty to this town, and it has shaped the person that I am.

In between the dusty air, the cracked streets of downtown, the brown vista of oil derricks looking over Panorama Drive, the orange and purple sky distorted by pollution, a mood emerges.

A mood that is not necessarily happy or picturesque, but it's a landscape that creates a lyrical, bittersweet feeling that I know other people feel.

This feeling is developed from the contrasts in this town, the fake facade of suburbia and housing developments set against cramped trailer parks, the way this town can seem like a bustling city in one place, then seem like an empty, open world the next.

Mike Ness, the singer and songwriter for Social Distortion does not live here, but he only had to be here for a moment for him to feel something from this town. In the Social Distortion song "Bakersfield," a story of lost love is told. I wasn't surprised that he would use our town to tell that story.

It's because feelings like that are just more potent here, that feeling of being "So close, yet so far away", as it says in the song, just seems to be in the air here. It's a feeling that I find comforting as I live my life here.

It is a feeling that has shaped me. The songs I write, the way I see the world, my favorite bands, a lot of it comes from the strangely poetic backdrop of Bakersfield. I don't even know what I would be expressing if it weren't for this town.

This feeling that I'm speaking of awakens a fiery creative spirit in the artists and creative people here. I see it in my fellow journalists here at The Rip. I see it in Gita Lloyd's brush strokes. I hear it in the local bands that play to anyone who will listen.

This town makes us want to say something. It makes us want to tell the stories that live and breathe here. We know that this town has a story to tell that is unique and special.

In turn, for those that want to listen, we learn from those stories that it is okay to be different. This unique landscape can teach us that this world is more than black and white, the shades of brown and orange teach us that. The rocks of Kern Canyon teach us that. It teaches us that beauty can be more than a beach. That's what this town has taught me, and while I don't love this town, I will always remember its strange beauty. And wherever I go in life, when I need that creative spark, that creative kick in the pants, I somehow know that my mind will float to Bakersfield, California, the town that shaped me into who I am.

Bakersfield sound back with Austin's 'Dozen'

By Breanna Fields
Reporter

Local musician Stephen David Austin has made it clear that he is determined to carry on the vision of country western music through the legendary sounds of Buck Owens and Merle Haggard.

The allure of fame as a country musician in Bakersfield began with Owens, whose talents

ALBUM REVIEW



drew more than one hopeful to town with the hope of success.

Austin makes a valiant effort at revitalizing the scene to its glory days on his solo album featuring a handful of seasoned session musicians with impressive resumes of their own, ranging from work with Bruce Springsteen to Stevie Nicks.

His debut album, "A Bakersfield Dozen," involves a number of old-timey, Americana-flavored tunes that cleverly incorporate pedal steel, dobro, a resonator guitar, and fiddle. The sound of the album comes across as safe, but for those looking for a sound heavily influenced by Owens and Haggard, look no further.

The album opens with the humorous, "Best Ex I Ever Had," a fitting track with an exaggerated sense of past relationships that don't turn out how we would like them to. Even those who aren't avid country fans can appreciate some of the humor and get into the realistic nature of the songs.

The fifth track off of the album, "Back to Bakersfield" is a tale of Austin's grandparents moving to town from Oklahoma during the Dustbowl. While it makes for an interesting story, younger audiences might have a hard time connecting, due to the fact that they may not share the same vision of the simple life; sitting on the back porch drinking ice cold beverages.

Apart from the more mature feel of this tune, the album makes a good effort at reaching a broad audience with songs like "Myspace" and "Bad Dog," which feature a vocal cameo by his grandson.

"Heroes and Heroin" makes brief references to Charlie Parker, Gram Parsons and Jerry Garcia who were all musicians that tragically died due to substance abuse.

The Lennon/McCartney cov-



GRIGORY D. COOK / THE RIP

Artist Stephen David Austin has brought back the Bakersfield sound with his debut album "A Bakersfield Dozen."

er, "Baby's In Black" appears to be out of place on the album, which is something that Austin has admitted himself. It was included on the album by the request of a friend. Although George Harrison was influenced by the sound of country music, it may not have proved

to be the best choice of song to cover on the album.

Audiences can't help but make a comparison to the original when a well-known group like The Beatles wrote and performed it.

"The Day Buck Owens Died" is one of the more relevant tracks

on the album. It tells the tale of Owen's life; an important part of Bakersfield history that residents should be aware of, from humble beginnings to his rise to fame and eventual death. This song gives a general idea of one man's perspective on the hall of fame musician that left behind

the Crystal Palace and created music that changed the history of the genre.

Whether you're a fan of country music or not, there's bound to be something you can take away from this album full of catchy tunes and realistic imagery.

'The Hunger Games' is a classic story of good versus evil

By Hannah Breeland
Reporter

In a game of life and death, an extraordinary girl with no magical powers or training must find a way to survive. With the world

MOVIE REVIEW



watching, Katniss is challenged with family loyalty and doing whatever it takes to stay alive, even if that means destroying the one person who helped her in her time of need.

In "The Hunger Games" there is a futuristic world where North

America is destroyed. In a nation called Panem, there is the Capital and 12 surrounding districts. In the early years, there was a rebellion. The then 13 District rebelled against the capital. The capital regained control, and the 13th District was destroyed.

As punishment, they created the Hunger Games. Every year, each district has to offer up a male and a female called "tributes." The process in which they are chosen is through a lottery. Once they are chosen, they are taken to the capital where they will fight in an arena to the death.

There is only one winner. The story follows Katniss Everdeen

from District 12. She volunteers to take her little sister's place.

Jennifer Lawrence plays Katniss and is the perfect person for the role. She's as close to what I imagined Katniss would be like. As a big fan of the books, I was very nervous it was going to be a flop, but I find it hard to find something I didn't like about the movie. There were some small changes and a couple things left out that honestly isn't as noticeable as I thought.

I think everyone would like it. There was action, romance and good old-fashion good versus evil. To keep it interesting, there were plenty of plot twists



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Katniss is the protagonist from "The Hunger Games."

that would even have Sherlock guessing. It's not another Twilight.

Gary Ross the director didn't make the mistake of making the main theme a love triangle.

Although I would advise seeing it in IMAX, the action scenes are a little shaky and it's 10 times worse so it can give one bad migraine. Besides that, the movie is enjoyable.

Levan donation yet to be released

By Breanna Fields
Reporter

A year ago, Norman Levan donated nearly \$14 million to Bakersfield College to provide funding for previously existing programs and scholarships.

Students have been wondering how this donation will be used on campus.

There is a common misconception that has led students to believe that these funds can be used for any purpose.

This is not true in most cases, which includes Levan's most recent contribution.

Mike Stepanovich, the executive director of the BC Foundation, said that Levan stipulated that these funds are to provide scholarships for those who major in humanities as well as Hispanic and Native American studies.

"He believes very strongly that those are the foremost areas in terms of human development," said Stepanovich.

BC will not have access to these funds until Levan has passed.

Holding these funds is a common practice when dealing with donations of this amount.

Levan selected BC as the recipient of the donation, along with St. John's College in New Mexico and University of Southern California.

Although he was not a student at BC, Levan took a strong interest in the vision of BC's program and its effort to provide higher education for students of all ages.

Levan's belief in serving the community and providing students with the opportunity to explore humanities led him to make his initial donation of \$5.7 million in 2006.

These funds went toward the creation of the Levan Institute for Lifelong Learning, and the construction of the Levan Center for Humanities.

The Levan Center is currently an active facility on campus that hosts regular lectures that are open for the public to attend.

Stepanovich feels that these humanitarian lectures are pertinent to those who aspire to be better human beings.

"The lectures are designed to make people pause, reflect and think," said Stepanovich.

The Levan Institute for Lifelong Learning is a program designed specifically for the interests of those ages 55 or older who would like to continue their education and seek to enroll in courses that will benefit the quality of their life.

The courses offered include a variety of creative instruction such as photography and art. As well as intellectual subjects like philosophy and sociology.

Although the target audience is primarily seniors, these classes are open to all adults.

"Levan is a deep believer that learning is a lifelong endeavor and he wants to make those opportunities available to the citizens of Bakersfield," said Stepanovich.

Originally from Ohio, Levan moved to California after high school where he attended University of Southern California and went to medical school.

After graduation he served in World War II as a doctor for the army.

He then entered into the field of medicine and tended to a number of clients from Bakersfield.

One of his patients was John Collins, the former president of BC who recently passed away.

Collins introduced Levan to BC where he had the opportunity to visit the campus and experience the daily routine of community college students in Bakersfield.

This was what influenced his decision to make the donation.

"He could see for himself the good work that was going on here at BC," said Stepanovich.

Atlantis Project provides abroad program

By Angie DelGado
Reporter

The Atlantis Project is a grant-funded program that allows students to study abroad and to become educated on other cultures while doing so. It is a partnership between Bakersfield College, Cal State Dominguez Hills, a university in Spain and a university in Italy.

The project is limited to one

semester per student. In order to become eligible to apply, students need to complete 12 units in the child development program and apply during the spring semester a year before they want to attend. Students who fill out the application are interviewed by faculty and selected to be a part of the program.

Hamid Eydgahi, dean of Career and Technical Education and head of the Atlantis Proj-

ect at Bakersfield College said, "It's a great opportunity for our students to learn about Child Development and learn about different cultures. It's essential that they have good knowledge of other cultures."

The Atlantis program is not funded by BC, it is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education and the European Commission. The purpose of this program is to have students

learn about child development programs in other countries and to learn about cultures through courses taken at the universities that they attend abroad.

"The courses that these students take will be counted for school credit," said Eydgahi.

Last year 30 students applied and eight were selected to participate. Out of the eight selected, four become ambassadors and four are selected to study

abroad. The students who participate abroad will have a stipend to help them pay for their airfare, rent, textbooks, tuition and fees.

The program is funded for three years and it allows four students to travel abroad and four students to become ambassadors and mentors. The ambassador students staying at BC will help the four students that come to study here from Europe.

Cultures gather together

By Hannah Breeand
Reporter

The third annual Cup of Culture took place on March 21 inside the Fireside Room. It was presented by Bakersfield College international students and co-sponsored by the Equal Opportunity/Diversity Advisory Committee. International student counselor Shohreh Rahman started off with a speech of how the United States is a big melting pot before introducing the countries.

The nine countries that were represented were Libya, Saudi Arabia, Bosnia, Iceland, Burma, Venezuela, Poland and Mexico. The event started off with a slide show and music.

Each student that presented shared information on their home country and the story of how they came to America.

The most popular question of the night was "Why Bakersfield?"

"It's not that bad here. It's still California and its nothing like back home," said Bosnian native Elmar Okanovic.

He went on to explain how different the countries were, while other students went into more detail of how they liked their schooling.



ANGIE DELGADO / THE RIP

Students and professors attend Cup of Culture March 21.

Saudi Arabia native Somaya Harb recalled her personal challenge of learning English.

"I hated all my English professors," admitted Harb. She has been in the United States since 2006 and in less than a year learned English.

She said movies and television shows are what helped her the most.

"Malcolm in the Middle was one of my favorites," she said.

BC has 39 exchange students from 20 different countries.

The presentation continued with the students sharing fun facts, like how Venezuela has the cheapest gas in the world, and Bosnia has the cleanest water. Also, Poland's number-one sport is soccer and is where the world cup will be hosted next year and, last of all, Iceland has been named the world's number one for nightlife entertainment.



ANGIE DELGADO / THE RIP

Somaya Harb, from Saudi Arabia, gives some insight into what it is like living in her country March 21.

Crowd gathers like zombies for speaker

Nicholas Sparling
Reporter

The promise of zombies nearly filled the Fireside Room on March 13 for a presentation put on by the STEM program, featuring Jennifer Ouellette, an award winning Mathematics and Physics Author. Ouellette gave her presentation titled "Dangerous Curves: Or how I learned to stop worrying and love the calculus" covering the history and practical application of math study.

Jennifer Ouellette's qualifications include being the Director of the Los Angeles-based Science and Entertainment Exchange, and the Journalist-in-Residence at the Kavli Institute of Theoretical Physics at UC Santa Barbara. She has written for the Washington Post, New Science, Discover, Salon.com and Nature.

Her presentation began with the history of calculus, from Roman to Arabic influences, and the question "What is calculus? And why should I

care?"

Afterward she taught about the practical applications covering comparative shopping, surfing, construction, drying cloths and even exercise. Extensively covered was the use of calculus in relation to rides at Disneyland. Unfortunately zombies were only a small portion of the presentation.

A college professor from Canada actually used math to find out the rate that a zombie infestation would spread, and how to best deal with a zombie apocalypse. The answer of how to survive is to hit them hard and hit them fast before the outbreak can spread. The header of the email sent out about the event was "Want to survive a zombie attack? Win at craps? Beat a zombie at craps?" and so little of that was talked about.

Ouellette did answer her primary question though, "Why should we care about math? And especially calculus?"

The answer being that it gives us the option to use it or not, in short, "It gives us a choice."

Rocha wins first place

Patricia Rocha of the Renegade Rip student newspaper staff won first place for mail-in critical review at the Journalism Association of Community Colleges conference held March 22-24 in Burbank.

Rocha's review of "Star Wars" movies - after watching them for the first time - won against more than 100 other entries statewide. In the same category, the Rip's Jon Nelson was awarded third place.

In other mail-in awards, the Rip's Zak Cowan, Nate Perez and Eleonor Segura won honorable mention for inside-page layout with a story and photos on a local boxing club. Cowan

also won honorable mention for front-page design, featuring three of the Rip's front pages from the fall 2011 semester.

Students also participated in on-the-spot contests during the conference. The Rip's Greg Cook placed fourth for page design, Breanna Fields earned honorable mention for critical review, and Nelson took another honorable mention for opinion writing.

The annual three-day state conference drew nearly 50 community colleges and more than 500 community college journalism students, who participated in workshops, contests and other activities.

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