

As bad as booze?

President Obama claims
weed is no more dangerous
than alcohol.

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**Pleasing the crowd**

Comedian Christopher
Titus delivers a solid
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Close doesn't count

CSUB loses on last
shot to Kansas City.

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The Runner

California State University, Bakersfield

Jan. 29, 2014



Vol. 39, No. 11

therunneronline.com

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CAMPUS

CSUB secures funding for foster students

By Michael Wafford
News Editor

Former foster children who now attend California State University, Bakersfield are able to access year-round housing more easily.

Due to the work of a CSUB director, the university has received \$85,000 to remedy a number of needs that foster students face. According to Steven Walsh, Guardian Scholar and Summer Bridge director, over \$60,000 will go toward direct

aid to students in need of housing and food.

The Guardian Scholar Program was started in January 2011 with a grant from the California Wellness Foundation and is designed to help foster children who are emancipating and attending college according to Walsh.

A study conducted by the University of Chicago in 2010 showed that once a foster youth has aged out of the system they face challenges, like a 25-percent homeless rate, lack of fam-

ily support and a higher chance of poverty, that prevent them from attending college. According to Walsh, their completion rate for a college degree, either two-year or four-year, is three percent.

In 2010 Walsh and other at CSUB began to work toward creating a program that would give aid to this at-risk group – CSUB just didn't have enough money at the time.

"When we wanted to extend our services to foster youth in 2010, it was a horrible budget

year for the CSU. We had furloughs in 2009-2010.

There was no new funding for anything—instead, we were trying to make sure no one lost his or her job. Our approach that year was to appeal to a private foundation," Walsh said in an email.

In 2011, Assembly Bill 194 passed which granted foster youth priority registration and priority housing consideration at colleges. The CSU system mandated that these students would have year-round housing



Schaelaur Smith/The Runner

Steven Walsh

as they did not have a "home" to return to in the summer according to Walsh.

[See PROGRAM, Page 3]

CAMPUS

ASI eyes gen ed models

By Stephanie Cox
Staff Writer

Student input is now being encouraged regarding the general education reform in the university's switch from quarters to semesters in 2016.

During the weekly Associated Students Inc. meeting on Jan. 24, a large portion was devoted to the discussion of general education reform, led by associate professor of English, Emerson Case.

The reform, necessitated by Executive Order 1065 released by the Chancellor's Office, requires the new general education model to contain 48 units.

The smaller program could be based off of any one of three separate models.

The model that the faculty general education committee designed resembles the general education programs at CSU Chico and CSU Northridge and is referred to as a thematic model.

Case said that the traditional sense of theme classes that students and faculty know at CSUB is not what this new program will be. The new program would focus on classes that fall under umbrella topic themes.

Hilda Nieblas, president of ASI, said, "I would like to see a theme around leadership."

Case encouraged the ASI members to talk with students and email him with feedback.

"It takes a load off when you're talking with other students," said junior biology major Payal Bhavasar, 20, who would like more student interaction out of a general education reform.

Director of General Studies Vincent Ortiz, asked how the [See ASI, Page 3]

CITY

TAPPED OUT

Drought brings health, financial risks

By Steven Barker and Sandy Ornelas
Managing Editor and Assistant News Editor

Last winter was the driest in the last 100 years throughout most of California, according to a report published by the University Corporation for Atmospheric Research.

In response to the lack of rain, Gov. Jerry Brown declared a state of emergency on Jan. 17 for California due to drought. This is the state's third

consecutive year of dry weather.

In addition to the commercial strain that California's current drought is predicted to have on Kern County's agriculture industry, the state's dry spell also projects to drain both its residents' pocketbooks and immune systems.

Janice Gillespie, a professor of geology at California State University, Bakersfield, expects the scarcity of water will cause the prices of both food and water to spike, the latter in part to discourage

recreational use of water.

"Water rates will go up substantially to discourage non-essential uses," Gillespie said in an email. "Cars will be dirty, grass will be dead. Food prices will go way up."

The cost of groceries similarly rose from January 2006 through December 2009, a three-year period of little rain. During that stretch, indexmundi.com, an online database that charts the prices of

[See DROUGHT, Page 3]

CAMPUS

Campus rises to recycling challenge

By Maggie Rodriguez
Staff Writer

What started as a friendly competition between Ohio and Miami University, as a way to motivate their student bodies to recycle more, is now a nationwide tournament known as RecycleMania.

RecycleMania is an annual friendly competition between colleges and universities that seeks to promote waste reduction on school campus communities.

By framing the program as a competition, RecycleMania hopes to reach students who may not otherwise respond to environmental messages.

For the fifth year in a row CSUB will be participating in the tournament.

During the eight week challenge, beginning Feb. 10, CSUB's Associated Students Inc. is encouraging students, faculty, and staff to recycle as much as possible.

ASI member, Ricardo Perez, 23, said ASI has made a conscious effort to raise awareness

about sustainability.

Perez, who is also a member of the Recycle Mania committee, said the committee plans on coordinating events that'll bring awareness about the benefits of recycling.

"We have a beautiful campus, I encourage the students [to] make a conscious effort in reducing waste by taking small steps like placing plastic in the appropriate bins, or investing in a eco-friendly reusable water bottle. The outcome... a healthier environment," said Perez.

ASI will also be asking club officers to participate in order to increase school spirit on campus.

There are labeled recycle bins all over campus, making it easy for students to recycle accordingly.

Communications major, Michelle Moreno, 21, thinks it's great that CSUB is getting involved.

"I'm not on campus too often, but when I am, I make an effort to recycle," Moreno said.

[See RECYCLE, Page 3]

CITY

Russo's closes store, switches to website

By Rachel Hill
Staff Writer

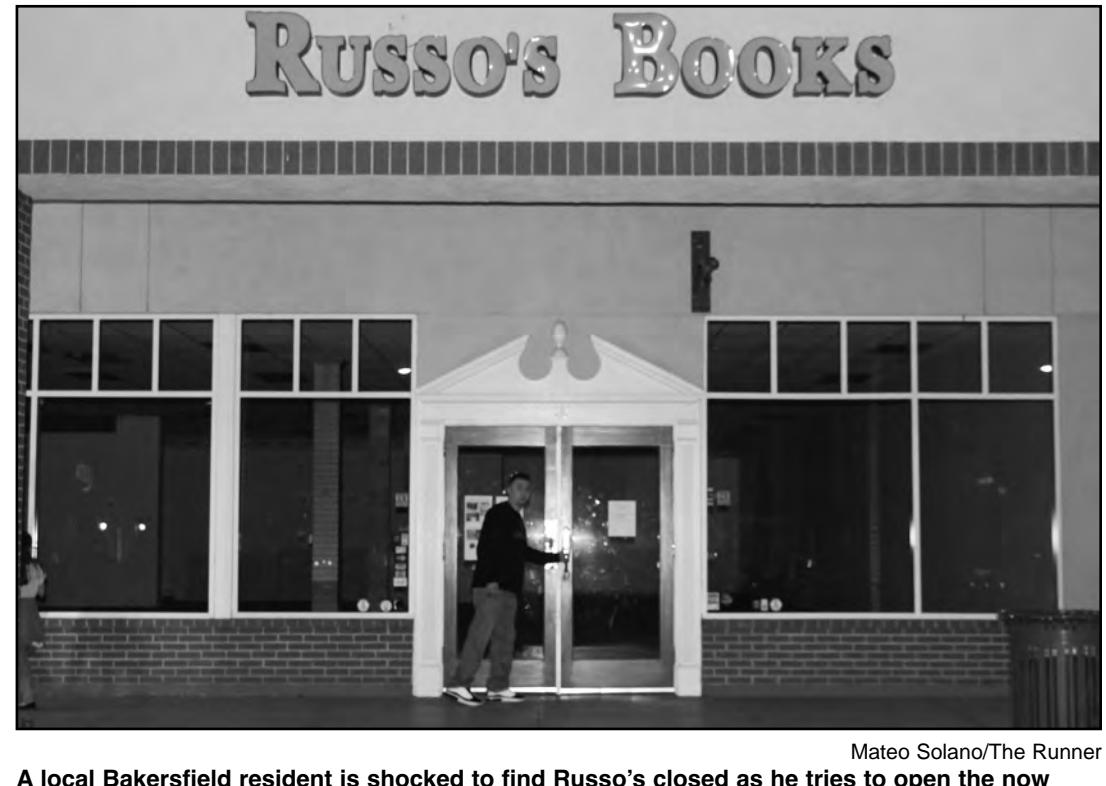
After 24 years in business, Russo's Books closed its doors and sold its furniture, no longer welcoming bookworms and comic book readers alike.

Russo's opened in 1989 and announced in December that their business would move completely online, closing its location on Ming Avenue where they had been for the last 17 years.

According to Californian staff writer, Steve Levin, in his Dec. 15 article, bookstore owner, Michael Russo, said impending lease increases and changing reading habits caused the closure.

This bookstore didn't only sell books; it was an outlet for local authors to sell their work. It held almost daily events such as Storytime with Miss Lynn and hosted tournaments and open play for card players of Magic the Gathering, Pokémon and Yu-Gi-Oh.

Once a month was open mic poetry night, where poets and writers gathered, sharing and commenting on their personal



Mateo Solano/The Runner

A local Bakersfield resident is shocked to find Russo's closed as he tries to open the now out-of-business bookstore's door.

closed. She stopped by to purchase a book for her grandson.

"I had no clue it was closing," she said. "It's ridiculous. I always just come here; it's so easy and small. You can just pop in and out and be done."

Sarah Jamison, 54, was surprised to find the store had

part of her family's Saturday afternoon. Along with her husband and three children, Angela was surprised to find the doors locked.

"We thought we'd walk around the store a little bit," she said. "I guess we won't be

[See BOOKSTORE, Page 3]

Volume XXXIX, Issue 11
THE RUNNERThe Runner
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The Runner is a laboratory newspaper published weekly, in conjunction with the Department of Communications at California State University, Bakersfield. The Runner believes all advertising to be correct but cannot guarantee its accuracy or be responsible for its outcome.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORSend letters to the editor to runner@csub.edu. All letters must be signed and verified and be no more than 300 words in length. Letters may be edited for clarity and length.**DISCLAIMERS**

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President Obama's marijuana statement causes controversy

By Anthony Jaregui
Staff Writer

On Jan. 19 2014, President Barack Obama said in an interview for The New Yorker, "As has been well documented, I smoked pot as a kid, and I view it as a bad habit and a vice." Obama then went on to say, "I don't think it is more dangerous than alcohol."

Expressing an opinion on a controversial topic like this wouldn't be as bad for a day-to-day person, but Obama is president, and ultimately this statement will be taken seriously and be used for or against him.

Frank James of npr.org said, "Obama's comments, cautious as they were, could still fuel momentum for legalization at the state level, especially since he endorsed that approach."

Washington and Colorado have already legalized recreational marijuana use, but since Obama made this statement, an expanding nation-wide legalization debate has started.

Misinterpretation of Obama's statement has left people wondering whether he's saying this to get supporters on his

side or whether it's to give discretion on marijuana.

Some think that Obama made this claim to get people on his bandwagon since previous supporters have dropped off over the term he's been president.

Ed Morrissey of HotAir.com says "The President spends years opposing its normalization, then as states start acting on their own, he tries to jump out ahead of it by slowly embracing in public opinion. That worked for Barack Obama on same-sex marriage, and it's beginning to look like the same strategy is in play for marijuana legalization."

Giving this unclear comparison between marijuana and alcohol seems like the perfect way to resurrect fallen allies.

President Obama lost a lot of supporters during the Affordable Care Act conundrum.

Marijuana enthusiasts still assume there's a chance of legalization even though Obama's views haven't changed.

White House Press Secretary Jay Carney answered a question from CNN saying, "The President's position on these matters haven't changed."



<http://letsrageclothing.com/>

After Obama's recent comments, the fight to legalize marijuana is getting more interesting every day.

The issue with Obama's whole statement is that he is not straightforward.

First he says it's a bad habit, and then he says he smoked it. After that he says it's not as bad as alcohol, but then he says we should be careful because it affects the user in different ways.

Obama is unclear with his answer. I don't think he should be playing for both teams.

Obama is entitled to his opinion, but he should be more cautious to how he expresses things to avoid a chain reaction of hopeful marijuana enthusiasts.

Sochi Olympics plagued by scandal

By Alex Ripepi
Assistant Opinions Editor

Violent protests induce an orthodox priest to come between Ukrainian rioters and police.

seem sort of intangible nuisances, this group presents an extreme danger not only to Russian locals, but the thousands of tourists that flock to the games. In a world in which the Olympics have been breached by terrorists in the past, this insecurity and the acceptance of it are unacceptable.

While the Olympics are a worldwide celebration of unity in sports, an outside observer of this year's incidents would be appalled at the lack of cohesion between the participating nations.

In fact, as a country that participates in the Olympics, we should be mortified that such controversies are being dismissed by the recommendation that tourists attending the events act "less American" in order to avoid conflict.

If this is how we respond to such struggles, then the union that these games are supposed to represent is dead and gone.

Peaceful protests devolved into rioting and even the seizing of the Ukraine Justice Ministry. Kiev, the capitol of the Ukraine is approximately 850 miles from Sochi, and although the distance seems staggering, a very clear danger is still pres-

ent; the protests began due to the backing out of a plan to join the European Union, a decision that was made due to a supposed need for closer ties with Russia.

However, this isn't even the biggest possibility for danger

this Olympic season.

A group of terrorists known as black widows, women who are meant to carry out suicide bombings, have been spotted in central Sochi.

While the two previous conflicts that have arisen this year

move over crystal meth, something new is putting Bakersfield on the map. According to a 2012 study conducted by Central Connecticut State University, out of 76 cities with an estimated population of 250,000 or more, Bakersfield ranked last in overall literacy of its citizens.

The several aspects that the study used in order to determine a city's place on the list were a city's newspaper circulation, booksellers, overall citizen education, Internet resources, libraries, and periodical publishers.

Bakersfield's place in

each of the categories

was, needless to say,

abysmal.

Newspaper circulation saw Bakersfield at 67.5.

Bakersfield booksellers placed us ahead of Los

Angeles, Calif. and El Paso, Texas at 74.

Adult education ranked Bakersfield at 68. In Internet

resources, which included number of E-readers in

each household, Bakersfield scored its best rank-

ing at 56. Libraries and periodical publishers

were 71 and 74, respectively.

After punching all of the aforementioned num-

bers and facts into a calculator and working some

mathematical magic, the study finds Bakersfield

at a pathetic 76 out of 76.

Now you might be thinking, "It's all fine and

dandy to know this, but what can I do to help?"

I'll tell you. You know that movie that you've

been dying to see? Don't watch it, pick up a book.

You know that video game you've logged a cou-

ple of weeks on and are trying to beat? Don't play

it, pick up a book. You know that 'Hunger

Bakersfield illiterit? That's unpossible

By Richard Garibay
Staff Writer

Games' series all of the kids say you should read? Don't watch it, pick up a real book.

If my suggestion of picking up a book seems facetious, you're right.

The fact is that you are already doing your part by attending college and reading this newspaper, but this isn't a problem that will simply end with our college careers.

To further combat this problem, however, we must look to officials who continue to cut education spending, library funding and make college an impossible dream by constantly increasing tuition.

How can education flourish when high schools struggle to keep teachers and fund extra-curricular activities that keep children interested?

How can people access books they might have an interest in if public libraries are forced to open at erratic hours and are unable to stay current with new works? How can students pursue higher education when they can't pay for the books classes require? Literacy isn't simply a matter of how much money is spent on one subject, the matter is intertwined with almost every other subject, just as an economy is built on both supply and demand.

Education funding as a whole is the only way to increase literacy; it greatly improves a child's chances of learning how to read and helps adults appreciate the artistic aspect.

We must pressure these officials to make it more affordable and accessible to pursue an interest in literature.

More information on the subject of adult literacy is available online at the National Center for Education Statistics (www.ncees.ed.gov).

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Drought carries additional risks for city residents

[DROUGHT, Page 1] commodities, showed that the cost of wheat rose roughly 23 percent and beef and poultry prices climbed 11 and 17 percent respectively.

Dirk Baron, also a professor of geology at CSUB, predicts that Bakersfield's aridity will lead to more dust storms like the one residents experienced on Thursday, Jan. 23.

"For now, for individuals here in Bakersfield, the impact is going to be limited mostly to more dust storms like the one we are experiencing right now, and maybe increased wildfires throughout the year," Baron said in an email.

An increase in said storms also poses potential health risks, for the spores responsible for Valley Fever, the potentially-fatal fungal illness that replicates flu-like symptoms, are transmittable by wind.

In a March 2007 study conducted by Sam Behseta, Charles Zender and CSUB chair of the physics department, Jorge Talamantes, they concluded that the correlation between weather changes and Valley Fever outbreaks was weak. However, the authors note that some of the study's observations limit the ability for its results to be representative of all of Kern County.

Christopher Gambrioli, a physician at CSUB, says that people with respiratory illnesses will be affected most by worsening weather conditions.

"Drought will affect people with chronic respiratory illnesses more significantly than those without," Gambrioli said.

"Water rates will go up substantially to discourage non-essential uses. Cars will be dirty, grass will be dead. Food prices will go way up."

Janice Gillespie
CSUB Professor of Geology

"People with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, asthma, cystic fibrosis and sensitive immune systems who have more airborne dust particulate inhalation will occlude already compromised airways leading to increased trouble breathing, wheezing, shortness of breath, chest tightness and coughing."

Gambrioli said that other byproducts of the drought include a decrease in the amount of potable water, greater risks for wildfires, possible contamination of recreational waters, a potential increase in heat-related illnesses and a decrease in agriculture.

On Wednesday, Jan. 22, House speaker John Boehner (R-Ohio) announced emer-

gency drought legislation intending to bring more water to California. If the bill, passes it will include three parts: help capture rain in the Delta, reduce water waste in the San Joaquin River and the House and Senate will establish an emergency joint committee to

create a long-term legislative solution.

Brown recently said that all citizens should cut back at least 20-percent of their water use in order to reserve water.

Kern-Green.org

sent out a press release on outdoor water saving tips. Some of the tips include: wash your pet outside over an area that needs watering, water your lawn or garden in the morning when it's cool and windy and check for leaky hoses and nozzles.

"As much as 50 percent of water people use outdoors is wasted from inefficient watering methods and systems," according to Kerngreen.org.

Gillespie goes on to say if the drought continues, California is in trouble.

"The city is in the process of deepening many of the wells around the city with the expectation that the water levels in the aquifer will drop substantially," Gillespie said.

Campus enters recycling contest

[RECYCLE, Page 1] According to recyclemaniacs.org, over half of the campuses surveyed, "report a noticeable increase in recycling that is attributable to the school's participation."

One of those schools is CSU San Marcos, who is currently the only school in California in the top ten in terms of recycling

CSUSM student, Maria J. Hernandez, 21, has experienced first hand the positive effects Recycle Mania had both on campus and her in personal life.

"I've embraced it. I bring my water bottle to school every day and we have water bottle refilling stations all over campus. Little things really do make a big difference," said Hernandez via Skype.

Although the recycle mania tournament is only eight weeks long, art major, Steve Garcia,



Image from recyclemaniacs.org

CSUB has entered the RecycleMania competition this year.

23, hopes that students don't stop recycling after the competition comes to an end. "I recycle as much as I can and I hope that this [tournament] helps reinforce the practice of recycling in students," said Garcia.

So far there are 387 schools participating in this year's Recycle Mania.

Remember Runners; Reduce, re-use, recycle.

Local bookstore closes its doors

[BOOKSTORE, Page 1] doing that anymore. We didn't come here a lot and I don't think I bought stuff very often. I mostly just download books; the kids I know buy books online. So I'm not surprised, it's just the way things are going now days."

Russo's will be surviving through their website russosbooks.com. The online store offers used and new merchandise. Textbooks include free shipping and are often available in rental or electronic form. A newly remodeled website

will launch in February. A new office has also opened, located at 1601 New Stine Road with a phone line available seven days a week.

The company is continuing their focus on benefiting schools, churches, non-profit organizations, and local businesses. Russo's offers services such as discounts, bulk orders and rebinding worn-out textbooks.

The bookstore might be closed but it is not gone. They will continue to support the community and their inventory of three million books available online.

Program funding to house, feed, assist foster students

[PROGRAM, Page 1] The program is important to CSUB because our community cares about our youth. Foster youth are important to everyone you ask. As soon as we mention what we do, even strangers ask what we're doing to help our population and what else can be done. [The Guardian Scholar Program] is a manifestation of that care and concern," Walsh said.

Before a school year begins a foster student

would have to spend hundred of dollars to before their first financial aid disbursement date on housing, testing and food. Without the support of a traditional family, the financial burden was too much for many foster youth.

The remainder will be spent on support services and staff as well as a student retreat for those in the program, and to helping stock CSUB's food bank.

Student government considers changes to university general education

[ASI, Page 3] reform was going to affect transfer students from Bakersfield College. Case informed the ASI board that members of the B.C. campus had been invited into the discussion to help with integration.

The board members also expressed concerns for the nursing program on campus to which Case explained the thematic classes would correlate with majors more fluidly. "We're going to change the culture of general education," Case said.



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February 5th 3-5pm in DDH 101E

Women's Basketball Game

Februday 8th vs Grand Canyon
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Brown Bag Discussion

Mrs. Cora Jordan
Februday 13th Noon-1pm
in Stockdale Room



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Thur 1/30

Women's Basketball
Game
7pm in Icardo Center
&
DJ-Off
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Student Union Patio

Fri 1/31

Ping Pong
Tournament
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in
Student Union
all day

Sat 2/1

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Basketball
Game
1pm
in Icardo Center

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Mon 2/3

Homecoming
Tickets go on
sale today
at the
Cashier's Office!

Tue 2/4

Homecoming
court candidacy
applications
can be picked up
in the
Student Union!

CSUB pitches in on MLK Day of Service

By Ileana Angulo
Staff Writer

On Monday, Jan. 20, people in the community came together to commemorate Martin Luther King Jr. in the sixth annual MLK Day of Service. Stop the Violence hosted the event at its location on Virginia Avenue.

Day of Service consists of picking up trash around the neighborhoods in the community. Every year more adolescents choose to be a part of this event.

About 150 people, of all ages and ethnicities, participated in this event.

The event began at 8 a.m. with breakfast and free distribution of orange and gray shirts. The gray shirts were for people who had a team or people who pre-registered.

Once groups gathered, gloves and trash bags were handed out.

Pastor Josephate Jordan, from a local church, immediately proceeded with prayer to initiate the trash pickup.

People were designated to certain areas from Martin Luther King Boulevard to Virginia Avenue.

Jordan has been involved with this event since it began in 2008.

"Every year there is an increase in people. The same individuals participate, but come with additional people each year," Jordan said.

Community involvement is growing because locals are now



Alma Sandoval/The Runner

Above, Pastor Josephate Jordan, founder of the group Stop The Violence, spoke at the MLK Day of Service on Jan. 20, 2014.

Right, Brittney Smith, right, a CSUB alumna, joins her sorority sisters from Delta Sigma Theta to pick up trash near Martin Luther King Jr. Park on Jan. 20, 2014.

aware of trash being dumped on the streets.

Delta Sigma Theta sorority from California State University, Bakersfield has been involved in this event for a few years.

CSUB alumna Brittney Smith said, "Martin Luther King Jr. had a dream for unity of people of all races, not only African Americans. In this event, it is evident we are fulfilling his dream."



Impoverished neighborhoods in East Bakersfield need the most cleaning. Objects such as trash, glass and furniture lie in the streets.

CSUB sophomore Viviana Flores, a part of the Project Explorer Program for six years, said, "Glass in the streets is dangerous for residents. Children could potentially get injured; every year we gather a detrimental amount of trash. It's very gratifying to take trash off the streets and help the community."

Stop the Violence leader Calvin Guilory Sr. drove a van full of volunteers from Shafter High School.

Instead of sleeping in on a holiday, students chose to participate to help the community.

"The goal of Stop the Violence is to empower youth by giving them different experiences, life skills and moral reasoning," said Guilory.

Millie Allen, the coordinator of this event, said, "It takes

approximately six months to plan this event and it takes at least 30 volunteers. It is great to see adolescent involvement increase every year."

The community will always remember Dr. King and what he fought for.

"MLK day signifies the legacy he left behind. A little bit of everybody has unified for a good day of service. People will continue making Dr. King's dream a reality," Allen said.

Allen said.

"It's very gratifying to take trash off the streets and help the community."

Viviana Flores, CSUB sophomore

Student finds friendly faces in Financial Aid

By Connie Hayes
Staff Writer

As a returning graduate student who took two years off, coming back to the university has been a big transition. Most noticeably for me is having to learn about financial aid. I attended the graduate workshop given by the Financial Aid Department Jan. 15 and learned a great deal.

One of the things I first encountered is that the Financial Aid Department is

willing to help all students.

At the workshop, the director of Financial Aid, Ron Radney, hosted the presentation and gave students a chance to understand the semantics of weaving through the financial aid process.

Students were encouraged to ask questions throughout the presentation to make sure everyone had a clear understanding.

Also present at the workshop was Dr. Vandana Kohli from the graduate

department who sat in the audience and asked questions that she thought would be helpful to students.

Valari Kirkbride, the Activity Coordinator for the Graduate Student Center, also attended the workshop I went to.

When I was in the graduate center a few days later, she was on hand to talk to me about the university's role in financial aid. "The Financial Aid Department is very willing to help students out for their needs," she said.

Shortly after attending the meeting, I received an e-mail letting me know that another workshop was being given to walk students through the process of applying

for financial aid.

This helped me considerably as the thought of dealing with tax forms is overwhelming.

I then visited the Financial Aid Department and spoke to Stephanie Perez, who is in charge of imaging and indexing. She started out as a student assistant in the department and was then offered a job upon graduating.

Perez informed me that in the next year a "middle-class scholarship in California for the student aid commission will be available," and "will start out at 30 to 40 percent of what a student is eligible for. That amount will actually be given to the student and will go up after that."

Thus proving financial aid for students whose families have middle-class incomes as well.

I was also informed by Perez that the CSUB website for financial aid is

extremely helpful and most questions can be answered through it. It also gives the direct link for the FAFSA website which student's access to apply for financial aid.

Upon visiting the website myself, the first thing I noticed is the deadline for financial aid, "January 1-March 2: Complete the FAFSA on the web at www.fafsa.ed.gov for the upcoming academic year." Meeting this deadline for the following year is extremely beneficial to students as it gives "Priority deadline to submit the FAFSA to the federal processor for on-time financial aid consideration," according to the site.

Information for the financial aid department can be found at: www.csub.edu/finaid.

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C Peter Dervin Photography

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Crystal Becks shares her difficult battle with cancer



Crystal Becks shares her story of holistic health with fellow staff and students at a brown bag discussion on Jan. 23, 2014.

By Alex Ripepi
Assistant Opinion Editor

Last week, Crystal Becks, the CSUB director of housing, invited others to hear and learn from her experience with ovarian cancer as part of the Brown Bag Talk series. Becks spoke on Jan. 23 in order to both convey her feelings during her struggle and inform attendees about her choice to use holistic medicine when the prognosis was most grim.

One of the first things Becks discussed was her reaction to the diagnosis. Becks' cancer was discovered in 2001 when she was 28 years old, but she admitted that before her diagnosis she "knew something was wrong." She visited a doctor after experiencing extreme lethargy, and while the results weren't immediately found to be cancer, Becks was told of her condition by a doctor at the City of Hope branch in Buena Vista.

"I felt very helpless," Becks said. Once the diagnosis was delivered she shut down. She began urging anyone with an important medical exam to take a friend or family member with them, as she candidly admitted that anything past that point went in one ear and out the other.

Becks' choice to undergo holistic treatment was not immediate however, and she initially decided to use traditional western medicine. Becks underwent chemotherapy and explained that the entire experience

was miserable. She was later informed that her diagnosis was terminal.

Making an honorable choice, Becks decided to take a journey to the East, traveling to Korea and Vietnam on a service mission. While working at an orphanage, Becks discovered Eastern medicine for the first time, and after further research on holistic cures, decided that she would not just live the rest of her life, but she would fight the cancer.

When she returned from her life-altering trip, Becks enlisted the help of a healer named Trisha, a woman Becks described as "crunchy-granola," during her first impression. She admitted that in her meeting with Trisha, she was skeptical that this woman would be her salvation. Strictures such as removing gluten, sugar, soda, and other things were among the laundry list of treatments Trisha had to offer. Becks explained that Trisha told her very bluntly that she would die if she didn't follow those prescriptions to the letter.

Becks followed Trisha's advice. She explained her following experiences and the medical roller coaster ride she endured was rather tense. After staying true to Trisha's orders, Becks entered remission, but fell out of it again when she decided to stop the treatment. This happened twice. Then, last November, Becks entered remission for the third time and has been staying the course since then.

Becks began to explain the different ways that she has changed her life since then, and

urged her audience to be more conscious of their health. She explained that in her holistic route, she stopped taking certain medications in lieu of alternative options, and that medicine similar to the Eastern style that she learned of is available everywhere.

However, she let the audience know that each person's choice is their own entirely and that she would never force her beliefs on anyone. But even then, Becks had one piece of advice that she believed everyone should take to heart. She explained that

"I feel like cancer was a gift."

Crystal Becks

writing health issues down in some type of notebook or journal and keeping a log of them allows her to make the most of her current visits with her doctor that she uses in addition to supplementing her health with Trisha's advice.

"I feel like cancer was a gift," Becks said, explaining that her life right now could never have been attainable even if she hadn't struggled with such a dire medical problem. More than sharing her experience, Becks seemed excited to be able to offer even the possibility to improve the lives of others, much in the way she found her salvation while on a mission to help the helpless.

Survival 101: The quarter-life crisis

By Athena Skapinakis
Features Editor

You probably should have bucked up now that you're a 20-something-year-old. What began as first-world problems and growing pains quickly became a quarter-life crisis when plans go awry and drama occurs. It would have been nice if all this came in your campus life pamphlet, except it didn't.

1. Keep Calm

Likely, you've changed your major, missed the opportunity to take a class only offered in the fall and forgot a gen ed requirement. Your parents keep asking when you're going to graduate, and honestly, you don't know. You're frustrated, tired and overloading on units — on the verge of a mental breakdown, and you can't guarantee the safety of the next person you come into contact with.

Take a deep breath. College is about changing your mind, learning how to prioritize, doing a balancing act, retaking a class, showing up late to your final in your pajamas and figuring out what you want to do with your life. Don't be so hard on yourself. You've got this.

2. Seek Thy Elders

It's okay to admit you're lost, existentially, metaphorically and literally. Enlist the help of a real grownup, someone who pays their bills on time and doesn't have drinking buddies for roommates. Most likely, someone older than you has already been there and can help guide you through. It's dangerous to go alone, so ask for advice when you need it.

3. Unplug

Everything people should keep in their diaries is out in the open for the world to see through social media. While that's fun, the selfies, creepers, bragging job interview statuses and make-you-want-to-puke relationship crap can get outrageously exhausting and, not to mention, annoying.

Liberate yourself by unplugging every once in a while. It may be hard at first. Your fingers will twitch from the absence of scrolling through your newsfeed and the constant urge to check your notifications, but you'll be surprised how productive and relaxed you are without all the distractions.

4. Pour Your Pepsi in a Coca-Cola Glass

Stop giving a damn. Does that mean YOLO? No, it doesn't. Avoid drugs, wash your hands and know the difference between risk-taking and taking too many risks.

Don't conform to social pressure. If you want to roll up to campus with your superhero backpack and matching shirt, laugh out loud too hard with your best friend and sing off-key, windows down, in your car, then do it.

5. Put the Tissues Down

You broke up with the one and only person who could ever truly understand you, and now you're lying in the remnants of your broken heart, slowly bleeding out. You'll probably just die.

See how stupid that sounds? Boohoo, breakups suck. Put your helmet on and repeat after me: I will survive.

6. It Is What It Is—So Get Over It

These are the years you'll spend lost and confused. You'll make dumb mistakes, repeat them, second guess yourself and stumble plenty because you just weren't prepared for everything 20-something has thrown at you.

After the hard life lessons, eventually, you'll get it right and be well on your way finally—at least until your next life crisis.

Comedian Christopher Titus visits the Fox Theater in his 'Angry Pursuit of Happiness'

By Robin Gracia
Editor in Chief

Pink and green neon lights flashed in rapid succession on the Fox Theater marquis. A line formed around the box office promptly at 7 p.m. to acquire tickets for the visiting comedian. The air was electric as Bakersfield citizens prepared for Christopher Titus to take the stage and deliver laughs with his new tour, "The Angry Pursuit of Happiness."

This is not Titus' first time in Bakersfield. In January 2013, Titus graced the Fox Theater with his "Scarred for Life" tour, which opened to rave reviews and much acclaim. He opened his previous tour saying, "I'm a loser and I can prove it." He then informed the audience of his tumultuous marriage and subsequent divorce, being tackled by a military German shepherd and the one-sentence utterance to a Fox executive that cost him his \$30 million and ultimately led to the cancellation of his show.

For being a self-proclaimed loser, Titus has an extremely devoted following which stems from his extensive screen credits.

According to IMDb.com, Titus has guest-starred in more than 20 different television shows, written seven TV movies and acted as the executive producer and star of his own self-titled show, "Titus," which was loosely based on his own experiences and dysfunctional family.

"I am so excited to see him again," said Miguel Reyes, a 28-year-old construction worker. "I listen to his podcast and I am pretty sure I've seen every episode of his TV show when it was on Fox. This will be the third time I've seen him perform live."

When the lights dimmed at 8 p.m., the crowd erupted in cheers and screams, eager for the first comic to take stage. Opening for Titus was his wife, Rachel Bradley.

Bradley, who married Titus in August 2013 and claimed to be the evening's "fluffer," was everything one would hope a comedienne would be: Personable, relatable and just a touch controversial. Bradley discussed race and gender issues in a manner that had one individual spit out her soda in a fit of laughter onto the hapless person seated in front of them.

As Bradley exited the stage, people began stirring in their seats waiting for the star of the evening to appear. A few minutes later, he appeared, clad in jeans and a T-shirt, smiling and waving to his fans.

From the second he stepped on stage, Titus had complete com-



Christopher Titus made fun of the government and gun culture during his performance at Bakersfield's Fox Theater.

mand of the surrounding space, projecting his booming voice into the theater. He poked fun at the government and gun culture, his mortifying relationship with his father and joked about how much he loves performing a "half sold-out show." His fast delivery and sarcasm secured the fact that Titus is a comedic force to be reckoned with.

After the show, Titus encouraged his fans to line up in the lobby for a meet-and-greet. He prides himself in staying in the venue until he has met, talked with and taken photographs with every person who would like to meet him. Fans carried their box sets of his comedy specials under their arms for his autograph as well as purchased T-shirts and other memorabilia.

"The Angry Pursuit of Happiness" shows that Titus can tap into every day experiences and personas and find the comedy of life. Even after numerous televised comedy specials and stand-up, he's focused on keeping his fans loyal.

"So many comics do the same act for 10 years," said Titus. "I want to make sure you guys keep coming back. I can't do a hit song and play it forever. I want new material. I want new stuff. I want to beat back Louis C.K."

Seeing this powerfully hilarious comedian could not come more highly recommended. Whether you catch his specials on Comedy Central or online, you can catch "The Angry Pursuit of Happiness" when it's recorded and released this fall.

UMKC pulls a stunner against the 'Runners

By Josh Bennett
Assistant Sports Editor

The California State University, Bakersfield men's basketball team lost a heartbreaker to the Kansas City Kangaroos, 70-69, Saturday night at the Icardo Center. This was due to a last second 3-pointer from Kansas City.

CSUB drew up an inbound play, which opened redshirt-senior guard Brandon Barnes with 14 seconds left, but Kansas City responded with a 3-pointer with two seconds left to win the game.

Redshirt-junior guard Javonte Maynor and redshirt senior guard Issiah Grayson led the team with 16 points each in the losing effort.

The game began with both teams trading droughts and runs. After a slow start from both teams, Kansas City struck first with a 13-2 run and limiting the 'Runners to a scoring drought of nearly four and a half minutes. CSUB (8-12, 1-5 WAC) was able to answer with a 14-0 run of their own and held the Kangaroos scoreless for over four minutes.

CSUB maintained their lead until the very end of the game. The 'Runners would struggle to close out the game as they saw their lead vanish, thanks to two turnovers and another scoring dry spell of three minutes.



Senior guard Brandon Barnes attempts to dribble past the defense in Saturday's game against Kansas City.

Mateo Solano/The Runner

"I think we didn't know how to keep the ball safe, when we were up by eight points. We should have taken care of the ball more and played harder defense. I thought we ended the game early," said sophomore center Aly

Ahmed.

"We had a turnover and [Kansas City] tied the game up, so my main concern when the game was tied was to get a good shot and come down and play good defense. Unfortunately [Kansas

City] hit a good shot in the corner," Maynor said.

"I'm proud of the effort they gave tonight," said Head Coach Rod Barnes. "I thought we did a good job of playing together. I thought we fought hard as a

team and communicated well on offense and defense. The turnovers we did have were pretty aggressive plays, and I'm okay with that."

Despite the loss, there was a positive vibe within the locker room, with the captains telling the team to keep their heads up. CSUB was a perfect 15-15 from the free throw line, and Ahmed recorded his first career double-double with 12 points and 11 rebounds.

"We won a lot of things. We poised down and played together. We did [well], except that shot at the very end," Ahmed said.

The 'Runners were coming off another tough loss on Thursday night to Chicago State, where they lost 71-63. Grayson led the team with 28 points, but nothing else seemed to work in the 'Runners' favor.

"Overall, I feel much better about our team play tonight and how they responded to the loss than I did when I left here on Thursday. Both were losses, but it's the way you lose sometimes and it's the way your team plays," Barnes said.

CSUB will try to erase their current three-game losing streak on their upcoming three-game road trip. They will travel to New Mexico State on Thursday, and Texas-Pan American on Saturday. Their road trip will come to an end on Saturday, Feb. 8, at Grand Canyon.

Roadrunner baseball team is back in business

By Nate Sanchez
Sports Editor

The 'Runner baseball team took the field again on Friday, Jan. 24 for their first practice of the year. The 'Runners opened their practice to the media for questions as they prepared for their opening series against the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee on Feb. 14.

'Runner baseball will have an all-new look for the upcoming season after losing six players to the Major League Baseball draft. With 10 freshmen joining the squad, the major factor in repeating last season's success for Head Coach Bill Kernen and returning players is experience.

"We're happy for the guys who were able to move on and play professionally," said Kernen. "As far as filling in for them, that's not that easy. We've got 15 new guys and we've got major pitching that we've lost."

"We've got a lot of new guys this year and they've caught on really quick and I think we'll have a great team this year," said senior left-handed pitcher Taylor Aikenhead.

"I know we have the talent to be able to do that, but whether we're a team that can do that is the question," said Kernen.

Among those returning to this year's team is senior shortstop Oscar Sanay. In the offseason, Sanay won a good amount of awards for his exploits on the field. As a junior, Sanay was named first team All-Conference and second team preseason All-American by the National Collegiate Baseball Writers Association.

Sanay led the 'Runners in batting average, on-base percentage and slugging percentage.

"We've brought in some good guys, these guys can play," Sanay said. "They just need experience. You can't teach that."

The 'Runners, who won the Western Athletic Conference regular-season title, were eliminated from contention for postseason play by the University of Texas in San Antonio, which left a bad taste in the 'Runners' mouths. Now the WAC has restructured its playoff format, and the 'Runners now look to take advantage of it.

"The format is realistic with the double-elimination and the top two seeds get a bye," said Kernen. "Last year it was ridiculous for a one-bid conference to use pool play. So now at least a team will have to beat us twice."

Despite losing pitchers Jeff McKenzie, Jonathan Montoya and Scott Brattvet, pitching does not seem to be a concern for the 'Runners.

"Pitching's always been good here and that's gonna continue on this year," said Aikenhead. "We work harder than anyone else and we're just gonna let that translate onto the field."

"We want to try and overcome the 'rebuilding year' mentality," said Kernen. "I think we're going to be a good team but we don't want to be just a good team, we want to be the champions."

With a 37-22 record last year, the 'Runners have big shoes to fill left by their former, now-professional teammates. They look to continue their success this year with a new class of players and a core of veterans to provide leadership on the field.



Senior shortstop Oscar Sanay stops at third base during practice on Friday, Jan. 24. Sanay led the 'Runners in most offensive statistics last season and looks to lead the team to a repeat of last year's great conference success.

Alma Sandoval/The Runner

Super Bowl XLVIII promises to be an exciting match-up

By Josh Bennett
Assistant Sports Editor

The Super Bowl is widely considered one of the most watched events of the year. According to Forbes, over 108 million people worldwide watched the game last season. That is the equivalent of a third of the US population tuning in.

Here is a preview of Super Bowl XLVIII and the festivities surrounding it.

The game itself features the best team from the American Football Conference, the Denver Broncos, and best team from the National Football Conference, the Seattle Seahawks, a feat that has only occurred 8 times since the 1978 season, the first year the wildcard was included in the playoffs, most recently back in Super Bowl XLIV with the Saints and Colts.

One of the big stories coming into the game is the resurgence of Peyton Manning. Manning has broken all of the major single-season records for a quarterback, and he can cap off the greatest season ever for a quarterback with a Super Bowl win. The Broncos also had the highest scoring offense in NFL history, scoring 606 points according to NFL.com. With Manning and the Broncos' excellent passing attack as well as a solid running game, the Broncos offense is certainly very tough to stop.

However, if one team was to be able to go toe-to-toe with this record setting offense, it's the Seahawks. They can match up with Denver's passing game, as they were the best defense in

terms of giving up the least amount of passing yards, total yards and points scored according to NFL.com.

The Seahawks defense was a scrappy, tenacious group, led by cornerback Richard Sherman, who usually makes headlines with his mouth, but has the ability to back it up on the field.

While the main attraction of the game will be Denver's offense against Seattle's defense, the key to winning the game will lie with Seattle's offense and Denver's defense.

Outside of Seattle's great running game led by Marshawn Lynch, Seattle struggles with passing, ranked 26th in the NFL.

While Denver is good at stopping the run themselves, they also struggle defending the pass, which makes this matchup just as intriguing. One big concern for Denver is that they will be missing multiple key players on defense, leaving some bench players being required to step up for the big game.

This should be a very exciting and entertaining game. Denver's offense versus Seattle's defense has been an anticipated encounter by many, and Seattle's offense versus Denver's defense will end up being game defining.

However, when it is all said and done, Seattle's defense will slow down Denver some, but I don't see Seattle's offense keeping up with what the Broncos will be able to do on offense.

Prediction: Denver 31 Seattle 27

Women's Head Soccer Coach Melissa Phillips has resigned

By Josh Bennett
Assistant Sports Editor

Women's Head Soccer Coach Melissa Phillips resigned from her responsibilities on Saturday, Jan. 25.

Phillips was the head coach of the 'Runners for three years, compiling a 13-39-4 record over that span.

She was the youngest head coach in Division I, at age 23, at the time of her hire in 2011. She was an assistant coach for two years prior to being promoted to Head Coach.

"It was probably sudden," said Athletic Director Jeff Konya about Phillips' resignation. "Coach Phillips did a real-

ly nice job here and gave us five years. I guess she's going to pursue other opportunities, and we think she will be successful."

Konya and the school will immediately begin a nationwide search to fill the position. They had to do the same thing weeks ago with the head coaching position of the men's soccer team was vacant.

The search is expected to take a few weeks.

"I would like somebody who's tapped into the recruiting world. I would like somebody with experience in coaching, but somebody who's connected in the west coast, and somebody who's a leader," said



Photo from gorunners.com
Former women's head coach, Melissa Phillips

Konya.

Phillips thanked the school on Saturday for her time as coach and wished the program well in the future.

Athlete of the Week

Tyonna Outland was recently honored by the WAC by being named it's women's basketball Player of the Week for the third time this season. Last week, she led the 'Runners to a 2-0 record and scored 45 total points while shooting 75 percent from beyond the 3-point line.

Photo courtesy of CSUB Sports Information

