On Friday, February 9th, a CSUMB student living on Princeton Court in Frederick Park was diagnosed with a case of noninfectious bacterial meningitis. Another Frederick Park resident called 911 Thursday morning after finding the student seriously ill and unconscious in his room. By acting quickly, the unidentified caller saved the student's life. Police and paramedics transported the student to Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula (CHOMP) immediately. The student's condition has improved since being admitted to the hospital. This is good news, for meningitis is an infection of the brain and spinal cord. This disease effects about 3,000 Americans per year and causes about 300 deaths. Meningitis seems to be on the rise, especially among college students since risky behaviors like excessive drinking and smoking can lower the immune system. There are about 100 to 125 cases of meningitis that occur on college campuses annually with 5 to 15 of the students dying from it.

Because this form of meningitis is noncontagious there is no reason to seek immediate medical treatment. Should you be concerned about contracting meningitis call the Campus Health Center at 582-3965 or, afterhours, call Doctors on Duty at 883-3330 (Marina) or 372-6776 (Monterey). Vaccines for meningitis are available at the Campus Health Center for the cost of $75.00. If anyone would like to know more about this disease call the TelMed medical information number at 624-1999 and dial extension 238.

Many students who voted yes on the Student Union Referendum to restore the Black Box Cabaret (BBC) may not get to enjoy the box by graduation. The last renovation cost estimate of $600,000 has been upped to $727,000 which includes more roof work, trim for the windows, added sheathing in various areas, extra support beams under the flooring, patio and deck work, and concrete access ramps, railings and stairs. All the above changes need to be made before the BBC will be able to be reopened so it meets fire code, safety and ADA regulations.

In the spring of 2000 the BBC was closed due structural deficiencies. Prior to its closure the BBC served many purposes. It was a place that students, staff and faculty could gather on even ground, have a latte, a salad or a sandwich. The BBC was a place to hang out and talk or just chill out and read. It was also a place for students to work, or play pool or dance the night away at Spin Cycle. Open Mic Night, for those who don't know, was an opportunity for students to say anything or do anything they wanted such as skits, music, dancing, comedy, spoken word, etc. But since the BBC closed down there have been murmurs that there is no longer a place worthy of such activities.

The BBC coalition, currently headed by Rebecca Rosenthal, has been doing all they can to get the BBC back up and running and the new estimated renovation costs are just another hurdle to cross.

"The BBC was a place were we could build community, have events, it was the essence of the CSUMB students community. We need to know if students still want it and they do so Farah and I will take that to the BBCFG so we can start the business plan."

Former BBC employee, Dominic Manchestre took the stage and addressed the audience at Club Fest on Wednesday, February 7th. "We love the BBC, and we know you love the BBC. I want my job back, I want my family back, and I want my home back, so help us support the BBC."

Photo by Caroline Musto

Otter Realm
A CSU Monterey Bay student-run newspaper dedicated to informing a multicultural community

February 14, 2001 Volume 6 No. 10

Student Diagnosed with Meningitis
By Caroline Musto

"I Want My Home Back"
By Brian Kees
Dear All,

In the coming months, I will again be participating in a very special and powerful event. We are raising money for the San Francisco AIDS Foundation and the Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Center in their mission to end the AIDS pandemic and the human suffering caused by AIDS. Together, we are raising more than $11.25 million last year for individuals living with, at risk for, and affected by HIV and AIDS, and important AIDS prevention programs in San Francisco and Los Angeles.

I have agreed to raise at least $2,700 in pledges between now and the beginning of the Ride on June 3rd. I need your help to meet my goal. I am asking you to make a pledge in the amount that is right for you. Please in mind how far I am riding, the commitment I have made, and how long I will have to train for this event!

You have heard the numbers before, but it is easy to become numb to that information. Let's consider them again: AIDS has affected nearly all of us, having taken more than 418,000 of our loved ones. In addition, it's estimated that over 1,000,000 are living with HIV right now in the United States alone. With your support, you can share in the commitment and hope to avert any more deaths caused by this pandemic and to help those who are in desperate need of care.

If you decide to contribute, all you need to do is reply to this letter, and I will contact you and either give you a pledge form along with information from past AIDS Rides and to our riders, we will not be here to see the doors open again. Over the last few weeks, I have heard new students questioning what the BBC was. So now is the best time to explain the history of the BBC. It did. After a few years, we the students had a place to hang out. The great thing about the BBC was the fact that there was a lot more space on campus where everyone was equal: staff, faculty, students, and administrators. The problem was that the BBC was so popular that every single year the BBC was so popular that everything that was going to happen there would be a lot more people. I hope that the new students want to keep this legacy alive. The Box needs the support of the new students to reopen. When the BBC comes back online, there will be more life for the Box and for CSUMB students. The change excites me. The original students to this campus dreamed and started our Box and it will be the new students that recreate the BBC. It's hard to explain but I look forward to coming back to CSUMB to see the BBC and how the new otters reshape the old Box. I hope that the new students agree with all the students in 2000 to use their student fees to bring the Box up to code and open her doors once again.

Sincerely,
Kendall Harrington

Cynthia Gonzalez, Liberal Studies
What is your favorite Valentine’s day memory?
When my boyfriend snuck in my room and decorated it. He put roses all over everything. There were balloons all over the ceiling and on my bed there were chocolates and teddy bears. How will the two of you celebrate this Valentine Day?
I won’t be able to see him, because he is at the police academy. We are going to have really hot sex all day long. Anything else?
We might eat some really good food, if we have any time.

Martina Garcia, Liberal Studies
How do you usually spend Valentine’s day?
We have a tradition in our family, that everybody, daughters and sons and husbands, everybody gets together and we exchange gifts. Such as?
Flowers, jewelry, cards and hugs too.

Jessica Smiley, KCOM
What’s your most memorable Valentine’s experience?
Two years ago boyfriend and I went whale watching in Santa Cruz. As soon as we got out to see I started throwing up and didn’t say anything. So, we didn’t even see any whales even a otter, nothing!

Steven Rivas, D.C. Cook
Are you going to cook your girlfriend a Valentine's Day meal?
No, I want to take a break from cooking and go out, have someone cook for me. Where will you eat out?
The Whole Enchilada in Moss Landing again.

There is no denying that at Cal State Monterey Bay, school spirit is an ideal long in the making. Nearly plunging into the straining pool of developing an athletic program its first year in existence, CSUMB has worked strongly and quickly to achieve a diverse array of activities ranging from basketball to rugby to cheer. After practically five years of diligent labor developing sports from nonexistent to the now competitive status, the athletic department is more than deserving of a few claps of praise.

The Otter basketball team is at the height of exemplifying what it takes to survive in athletics at CSUMB. Students and coaches alike practice daily to ensure not an overwhelmingly winning status, but that hard work truly can lead to a continuance of hope to do better, to eventually be better.

After surviving a Fall semester of continual mishaps coupled with less and less wins, the men’s team is finally emerging from the tight grip of decline and forcing open the doors of victory. Head Coach Bill McClintock explains just a few of the tribulations that pervaded the team last semester as directly coinciding with having a "very strong, difficult practice schedule," due mostly to playing Cal Poly, who is NCAA Division 1, as well as UCDavis, NCAA Division 2, and continuing on to better teams that can offer scholarships as well as possess larger enrollments compared to Monterey.

In addition to the competition that every team must face, the men’s team has also had to deal with the loss of several players. There is of course the constant fear of losing a player due to restrictions, lack of scholarships by CSUMB, and as always, the dark cloud of injury. Matt Dalhamer, the leading scorer from last year only had one more semester of eligibility remaining. In order to be able to play in the league games, and have a chance at the playoffs, Dalhamer elected to play second semester, a factor which makes the present team that much stronger.

The addition of transfer students such as Alex Frank and Rocky Steryo, who were barred from playing due to the 16-week ineligibility period of first-semester transferring, are also recent assets to the team. Of all the players that were not playing last semester, two and often three are currently starting: a fact which McClintock admits "in itself makes a big difference." Although the team has strong new additions, there is always the cycle of change. Next year the team will be losing three talented graduating seniors, and undoubtedly receiving new recruits, as well. Since players and policies don’t often remain constant, one of the few stable things in this sport is the spirit it takes to play it.

CSUMB is lucky to now possess a winning and dedicated team, the proud victors of four recent games, but even that is not enough. In his second year here, Coach McClintock reflects that he knew the difficulties which awaited him in coming to the school. Although impatience and struggle affects him the same as it does the players and the student body, he has enough experience to know that "It takes a couple of years to build a foundation," realizing that without the lure of scholarships and fame, school spirit justifiably takes time.

In the hustle and bustle of classes and practice, it is easy to forget all the elements that combine to make anything victorious. The unfailing hard work of other teams, such as volleyball, women’s basketball, cross country, and soccer; those also dealing with the difficulties of starting from scratch on a very limited athletic department budget, are also deserving of school support. With the aid of fundraising and community assistance, such as the most recent Fresh Express sponsor, as well as the support of CSUMB’s Dance Team and Cheerleading squad, the cheers of the crowd are that much louder.

At the last home game against Menlo College, the perseverance of the players and the support of the school combined to make a close game a stunning and explosive victory. McClintock sums up all the hard work and joys by realizing that "It is like anything, you have to work hard and prepare. We’re still in the beginning stages here, and the school spirit will come..."

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Local.

No other information source covers the Salinas Valley like The Californian.
Self and diversity awareness were the themes for CSUMB's weeklong event, Diversity Days. Students, staff and faculty participated in a variety of events that stimulated reflection on diversity, cultural awareness, and gave opportunities to explore new ideas. From Club Fest to Diversity Days. Students, staff and faculty stimulated reflection on diversity, cultural awareness, and gave opportunities to explore new ideas. From Club Fest to Diversity Days. Hyon Chu Yi, Diversity Days Chair, thanked the idea of Diversity Days saying, "we don't require a special event to celebrated ourselves; everyday should be a diversity day." 

Hyon Chu introduced Provost Diane Cordero de Noriega who then introduced Winona Laduke.

Winona Laduke, who traveled with her youngest child to the campus, discussed her background in activism and said that the most important reason for her activism is her children. Along with discussing her background, she also gave the audience advice to improve issues of diversity. "The challenge we face as humans is to reconcile ourselves with our environment, with each other."

In regards to the economy, Ms. Laduke pointed out the economic problems faced by Native Americans and the unjust distribution of wealth, "Wal-Mart alone has a higher economy than 100 countries." Winona Laduke's discourse commenced a week of discussion with a diverse group of presenters and orators.

President Smith continued discussion on Wednesday evening at an informal dinner. Here students, staff and faculty had the opportunity to participate in a dinner and roundtable discussion with President Smith. The free dinner covered on-campus issues about "achieving a more multicultural learning community." Former Black Panther, Elaine Brown was the last speaker of Diversity Days and a featured speaker for BSU-sponsored Black History Month.

Diversity Days participants not only listened to speakers but could also participate in discussion of diversity issues. Throughout the week, participants had the opportunity to take part in a variety of workshops and panel discussions such as Religious Wars and Linguistic Diversity. All in the Family, CSUMB's club for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered, Straight and Questioning students, faculty and staff presented a panel on Tuesday regarding issues faced by the gay community. The panel consisted of All in the Family club members, who wore "Just Ask, It's OK" buttons, to inform the community that they were available to answer questions or engage in discussion of diversity. "I'm glad I went, because it gave me an better understanding of the gay community and how I can be an ally to their cause" one student said.

We don't require a special event to celebrated ourselves; everyday should be a diversity day.

HYON CHU YI
DIVERSITY DAYS CHAIR

Various participants outside of the LGBT program panel wore the "Just Ask, It's OK" as part of the "Passive Programs" of Diversity Days. Participants with these buttons were free to answer Diversity-related questions or engage in a conversation of diversity with students that were not comfortable discussing those issues in a workshop or roundtable setting.

Diversity Days also had two different experiential events to increase the welcoming of diversity among the CSUMB community. Thursday's Disability Dinner, not only taught participants how to welcome diversity but how a person with a disability may feel in having a meal. The Disability Dinner gave participants various examples of disabilities which the participants had to portray. Participants later were involved in a reflection with facilitators from Student Disability Resources. Margaret Keith, director of Student Disability Resources, reminded participants that a disability can occur to anyone at anytime of her or his life.

But beyond speakers and panels, Diversity Days also held events that were entertaining to all audiences and yet delivered the message of the importance of Diversity. On Wednesday Ibrahima Ngom taught students healing dances from Senegal, which left a few students sore after the lesson. Friday, February 2nd, kicked-off Diversity Days and Black History Month with "Let's Groove Tonight," a dance that helped participants "celebrate Black History Month and the First Annual Diversity Days at CSUMB." The Saratoga Annex assisted participants in learning how to appreciate his or her culture "as well as others" with a free event called Culture Sculpture.

Two feature films were shown during Diversity Days. "Remember the Titans" and "Iron Giant." Both films highlight the problems of prejudice and intolerance. "Remember the Titans," starring Denzel Washington told a true story of a football team and their coaches fighting a town's prejudice. "Iron Giant," an animated film for children discusses the discrimination of a town and how a child and his friend, an Iron Giant from outer space, learn to challenge discrimination and prejudice.

Photos by Gabriela Lopez

Club Fest, held on Wednesday afternoon in the Main Quad brought together different student clubs and organizations to showcase their organization and inform other students of upcoming events and to recruit new members. The main attraction of Club Fest was Oakland children's choir, The Cantare Samaritan Singers. The singers, composed of children, sang songs and recited poetry that have had an important influence on African American culture, such as the poem "Phenomenal Woman," by Maya Angelou. A barbecued lunch, a climbing wall and back massages were only a few of the activities available at Club Fest. Along with the Cantare Samaritan Singers, a "thrift-hop" group, as they labeled themselves, called the Tremendous Trio played a variety of "old-school" and funk songs and voiced their support for the opening of the Black Box Cabaret (BBC).

The first annual Diversity Days was an avenue for participants to explore issues of diversity and of self-awareness through different mediums. Whether by listening to Winona Laduke speak, or making a culture sculpture, Diversity Days brought out awareness throughout the campus community. The next step is, as Hyon Chu said, to make every day a diversity day.
Producing a Pliable Plan for TAT

CSU Monterey Bay is a small campus with twelve major areas of study and sometimes not enough money to go around. Recently, it has been a major concern of many participants in the Telecommunications and Technology (TAT) program that they are not getting their fair share of the budget. TAT is a CSUMB major conceived in the idea of linking technology with the theatrical arts, an expensive process. Since majors get funding largely based on the amount of students enrolled in classes, and TAT has approximately 120 students, that isn't always enough to fund everything needed in TAT. This semester, for example, two production classes usually offered every semester (a beginner and an advanced level), had to be cut in half and only one course could remain.

These funding issues, along with the perceived division between the function of TAT and the function of the World Theater by TAT Director Amy Ambush, recently led him to announce his departure from CSUMB. Concerned students, faculty and staff want to know why TAT is having the problems they are currently experiencing.

As far as the World Theater is concerned, it was never intended to be for the sole use of the TAT Department. In the "World Theater Business Plan," created last summer by a nationally known theater professional, Jerry Yoshimoto, and endorsed by the President's Council in October, it is stated that a campus the size of CSUMB cannot support several different theaters, though many people have the need for such facilities (such as TAT and MPA, etc.). According to Provost Dr. Diane Cordero de Noriega, "The report recognizes that it makes no sense on a campus of this size to resource the World Theater, TAT and MPA individually to do similar work, and recommends that the World Theater be the central source of these services for all activities held in the theater, as well as those produced by TAT and MPA, no matter where they might be held. As the World Theater operational infrastructure is developed, these services will be enhanced." Ambush is not in favor of the plan and was the sole abstaining vote at the President's Council meeting to endorse the plan.

Ambush states that it is not the sharing of the World Theater that is the problem though but rather where the priorities lie. For example, if more than one person need to use the theater at the same time, some decision of priority would need to be made. Provost Cordero de Noriega continues, "One challenge that we as a rapidly growing campus currently face is the need for additional space for classrooms, specialized instruction and offices. At this time, the World Theater serves as the site for a wide variety of functions, and in that capacity is a university-wide facility. Part of the tension we as a campus currently feel about the use of the World Theater is that there is no alternative space for performances, rehearsals, performance-based classes (such as TAT's acting, production and film courses), and large gatherings that require the technology available in the World Theater. The World Theater is currently called upon to serve all of these needs, which it cannot continue to do in the long run. The World Theater report acknowledges that the campus will need to develop alternate space for many of these events, courses and activities. Until that occurs, there will continue to be more demand for the World Theater than can be reasonably met, and conflicts will undoubtedly continue to arise which require rescheduling or relocating. The day-to-day decisions on what activities will be held in the World Theater will be made by the World Theater staff, who work extremely closely with the TAT and MPA Directors, faculty and students. It is my understanding that this last semester, great effort was taken to avoid disturbing courses that had been scheduled in the World Theater when conflicting activities and events arose. Given that TAT has chosen to schedule a larger number of classes in the World Theater this semester, the potential for conflict has increased."

This "potential" for conflict is a very real concern for Ambush, as several of TAT's classes need to use that space, seven this semester. In a meeting between Ambush, Cordero de Noriega and President Peter Smith however, Cordero de Noriega's assurance was that, "there is agreement that the academic programs are the first priority."

Cordero de Noriega says that while she understands what Ambush's view is regarding the World Theater (that the Theater operation should be absorbed into the TAT program), "that simply isn't possible, given the variety of uses and the broader vision we have as a campus for this facility." Cordero de Noriega finishes.

As far as the budget problems go, those seem to be university wide. CSUMB, no longer in its infancy, is now facing the growing pains of moving from the enhanced start-up costs it once received to the now typical California State University funding. TAT is an expensive major when compared to others and the Provost recognizes the challenge of keeping all the technology on-campus. "There is no doubt that TAT is an expensive degree program," begins Cordero de Noriega, "and the campus will be challenged to keep the technology current, as well as expand the program to serve a growing number of students."

TAT has been encouraged to propose a "realistic budget" for TAT through the current budget development process. Cordero de Noriega states, "We (Ambush, Smith and Cordero de Noriega) agreed that in order to avoid conflicts, we need to develop an annual schedule for the World Theater and then respect that schedule. The World Theater plan proposes a scheduling procedure, which we will be implementing next year. President Smith and I both reassured Mr. Ambush that we fully support TAT and its students and faculty."

Finally, as far as Ambush's departure from CSUMB, he says it still cannot be avoided. Even after recent meetings with the Provost and Provost and assurance of continued support, Ambush still feels he can no longer continue at CSUMB. Ambush mentioned that it is difficult to look his students in the eyes and not feel like he is able to deliver what has been promised to them by the mission of TAT.

According to many, Ambush is a valued member of the campus community and the Provost states, "I have great admiration for Mr. Ambush and am saddened that he has decided to leave CSUMB at the end of this academic year." Ambush's replacement will be the sixth TAT Director in six years.

CSUMB is Going the Distance with Ready2Net

On January 31, 2001 California State University Monterey Bay's President, Dr. Dr. Smith, took part in a nationwide satellite and internet telecast regarding the future of colleges and the integration of technology. This is Ready2Net, and this was the first of four large-scale broadcasts that will be conducted, ranging in topics from e-commerce for colleges, to distance learning, to wireless applications in a learning environment. During these discussions, several of the top educators in the academic learning system talk about technological issues and the impact it will have on staff, faculty, and students alike. The first of these four sessions dealt with the concept of distance learning classes over the Internet.

With the establishment of CSU Monterey Bay, the idea of distance learning has been something the campus has strived to achieve. Steve Reed, the associate VP for University Relations, stated that, "we have actually hoped we would be able to do that immediately." Imagine taking a class from Chico State in the comfort of your own room, at your own computer, and it is clear why. CSUMB's forefathers felt distance learning would be an intricate part of the curriculum. The idea behind distance learning is simple classes are taken at a distance, and the only time, if at all, the student enters the classroom is on the first day, or for large class projects. The rest of the work is done outside of the university, reducing the number of students that must remain on campus. Another benefit of Distance Learning is the accessibility it provides for students with disabilities or special needs who, otherwise, might not be able to attend classes. This method of teaching, however, does not take into consideration the diverse abilities of the students in a given classroom. To remedy this, CSU Monterey Bay created a model for teaching distance learning, a framework that is being mimicked in other campuses throughout California.

For teaching over a vast difference to be effective, learning must take place. The campus has strived to integrate technology into its curriculum, making the transition from classroom to home room effortless. Online discussion boards and mailing lists make it easy for students to discuss class topics, and with the ability to send video through the campus servers, a real-time classroom can be created. The facility seems ready for this transition, "we're not going to have to take many steps..." Steve commented. "We are a new campus, and the new campuses have already assimilated this technology. As far as a campus community accepting digital communication, it is as much a part of us as our DNA." With email and FirstClass being fundamental skills, applying these skills to the classroom, and later the workplace would be the ultimate practicality.

As futuristic as it may seem, online courses are quickly becoming a reality. Students wishing to fulfill the Technology/Information University Learning Requirement have the option to take an online version of CST 101, Tech Tools. Soon students will be able to take other courses online.

The discussions held during this satellite and web broadcast dealt with the issues of education, and the topics discussed will have a direct impact on the methods of teaching with technology implemented in the future. This being the first of four talks, the other three vary in coverage, including the training and certification of teachers in an online environment, March 1, what campuses must do in order to compete in an online business, April 5, and the impact of wireless networks on a campus environment, May 2. Each focused talk deals directly with issues that impact students, and will be available for downloading over the Internet at CSUMB's website: http://ready2net.monterey.edu.
The time has finally come for the Class of Spring 2001 to put their party hats on. Senior commencement is just around the corner and the excitement is definitely in the air. Along with the commencement ceremony there are many other important activities to remember, such as the Senior Capstone Festival (which not one single senior is likely to forget) and the Senior Commencement Awards.

There are many exciting events that have been planned in honor of graduating seniors. These activities will take place from April 3-11, a week that has been fittingly named ConGRADulations week. As of right now there are only two events scheduled. The first is Career Day at the University Center on April 4th from 10am-2pm. Next, on April 10th from 9:30am-9:30pm, GradFest will be held at the University Center. This is when you can purchase announcements, the ever-fashionable cap and gown, have your picture taken, check out the spelling of your name in the commencement program, and basically do everything necessary to prepare yourself for the big day. There will be a number of people available to answer any questions that the nervous and deliberately excited seniors may have. You don't want to miss this. As for the rest of ConGRADulations week, stay tuned for details about other events.

As all CSUMB students know, capstone is a BIG deal. From the minute you step foot on this campus as a student you hear whispers of the graduation project that will take over your life in your last semester. It sounds scary at first, but the closer it gets the less intimidating it really is. As seniors, we have worked so hard to get to this point in our undergraduate education. This is our chance to show the world (or at least everyone who attends the Festival) what we have learned. So, although it is a lot of work, it truly is a worthwhile effort in the end. This year's campus-wide celebration of the Senior Capstone Festival will be held on May 26th at 10:00am-12:00pm at the University Center. American Sign Language interpretation for the ceremony will be held on Saturday, May 24th and 25th. Times and locations will be announced by each department as the date draws near.

Along with the many activities in store for graduating seniors there are awards galore to be given out. To start, the awards ceremony will be held on May 25th from 4:30pm-6:30pm at the University Center. Tickets are required for admittance. They are free of charge, and will be available at the UC after April 10th. The Awards Ceremony will honor the recipients of the student awards (see sidebar) and students awarded Academic Honors and Distinction in the Majors. The academic honor criteria are as follows: 3.0-3.49 for Cum Laude, 3.5-3.74 for Magna Cum Laude and 3.75-4.0 for Summa Cum Laude. The GPA used to determine the students who will receive honors is the cumulative GPA of coursework from all institutions attended.

Finally, we reach the Senior Commencement Ceremony, the culmination of our struggles and triumphs in higher education. For some it is the end of their school career, for others it is the next step. However, it is a proud day for all, regardless of where the individual goes from here. The long anticipated ceremony will be held on Saturday, May 26th at 10:00am-12:00pm. The ceremony will be held at Freeman Stadium, located off Second Avenue near Gen. Jim Moore Blvd. This is an outdoor ceremony and will be held rain or shine so advise your guests to be prepared. As for the ceremony procedure itself, students will be called to the platform and individually recognized. The ceremony will proceed alphabetically by major. Tickets are not required for attendance and guests should be in their seats by 9:45am. Disabled parking and seating will be available, as well as American Sign Language interpretation for individuals with hearing limitations. Keep in mind that this is Memorial Day Weekend and it would be wise to make hotel accommodations early. If not yet sure of where to start on this arduous task of making reservations for the entire family, call Resort To Me at 864-9250 first. This is a reservation service that helps find accommodations on the Monterey Peninsula for the right price. Or, check out their website at www.resort2me.com.

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CSU Monterey Bay's Undiscovered Dance Artist

By Elizabeth Ahrens

Fran Spector Atkins, CSU Monterey Bay ballet, modern dance, and yoga teacher owns her own ballet school and dance company, Spector Dance, located at CSUMB. Fran is a highly motivated and respected dancer that combines ballet, modern dance, and modern technology to show the interested spectator the fine art of dance. Fran believes that dancing is an art form that can be studied historically, scientifically and emotionally. She uses the form of classic ballet and turns it into the beauty of modern dancing in attempt to cross cultural boundaries.

Fran Spector Atkins mentions that she is constantly investigating the process and theory of ballet. For instance, why do we plie, why do we tendue? After understanding the theory and process of ballet, she can use our bodies to help access our inner voice through dance. According to Fran, ballet is something that one must devote themselves to. After doing that, Fran believes that a student can then appreciate the outcome of relaxation being physically healthy as well as mentally healthy, and aware of one's body. Spector Atkins believes that ballet is a "user-friendly" activity that can be personal, inventive, challenging, experimental, and thought provoking.

Fran has traveled all across the world dancing in countries including Denmark, Egypt, England, Israel, the island of Guam, and Taiwan. She has danced with teachers including Zena Rommett and Richard Gibson. Fran danced for The Incredible Journey Dance Company as well as the Mariko Sanjo Dance company, both in New York City. She mentioned that she began ballet during her first year at Boston University after dancing with guest choreographer Twila Tharp for two weeks. "Those two weeks changed my life," Spector Atkins said. Fran believed that was a calling for her and soon after she traveled to New York City to pursue her dream.

After a typical class, Fran hugs each student and discusses the progress that has been made during the class time. Dr. Jo Ann Carrino, faculty here at CSUMB, has seen Fran Spector Atkins teach and mentions, "Her teaching style is incredibly kind and even, which as an educator I find most rare." Fran believes that she has given herself the opportunity of a lifetime and has chosen a path of life that has lead her to many successes and accomplishments. She notes with a subtle smile and a warm tone, "Ballet is what I love to do and I want to share that with the community in the best way I can."
Cheez Doodles could save your life. When archaeologist/anthropologist/rocket systems designer Charles Pellegrino goes exploring, he always takes a bag of Cheez Doodles: "A Cheez Doodle on the end of a tweezer will burn for at least two minutes. A bag of them can provide you with an extra hour of light if you're stuck underground," he writes in his book, Return to Sodom and Gomorrah.

In 1981, Pellegrino was exploring a New Zealand cave looking for the remains of a centuries-dead Maori princess. A quarter mile inside the mountain, all his spare lights had either malfunctioned or were destroyed as he lit a Cheez Doodle for light, his life was saved when the light revealed "a 10-foot drop onto a field of stalagmites, pointing up like a hundred swords."

Charles Pellegrino is a cross between Albert Einstein and Indiana Jones. He worked on the deep-sea robot that probed "The Titanic," designed an anti-matter reactor, and his article in Omni magazine on cloning dinosaurs was the inspiration for "Jurassic Park." Return to Sodom and Gomorrah is quickly turning into one of my favorite books of all time.

At first glance, it appears to be an easy-to-read book on archaeological evidence of Old Testament stories. But, a few pages into it, you are swept up into a whirlpool of interconnectedness: "All philosophy ultimately dovetails with religion - which is ultimately reducible to history. All history is ultimately reducible to biology. Biology is ultimately reducible to chemistry. Chemistry is ultimately reducible to physics. Physics is ultimately reducible to mathematics. And mathematics is ultimately reducible to philosophy."

From continental drift and the creation of the Nile River, to quantum mechanics, Pellegrino tries to capture and explain all of this. If you have questions about who we are, where we came from and where we're going, you definitely need to read this book. And if you need a good reading light, I suggest a good lamp. Save your Cheez Doodles for snacking.

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February 15-17
What: The Vagina Monologues
When: 8pm
Where: The World Theater
Cost: $3 for CSUMB students, $5 all others
For more information: Please contact Ethan Brown at 831-582-4067 ext3

February 17
What: TAILGATE PARTY AND BASKETBALL DOUBLE HEADER
When: 4:00pm
Where: In the lot adjacent to the Otter Sports Center
Cost: $5, includes tailgate food and admission to both games following the party (Students can use their meal cards)
Two games will follow the tailgate party. The Women's basketball team will play UC Santa Cruz at 5:30pm and the Men's basketball team will play CSU Maritime at 7:30pm.
Parking: Free in lots 86 and 99
For more information: Please call Bill Trumbo at 831-582-4270

February 17
What: Men's and Women's Basketball v. College of Notre Dame
When: 10AM-2PM
Where: Otter Sports Center
For more information: Please contact Drew Ready via First Class 831-582-3015

February 23
What: "Our Future in Space" by Sally Ride, the first American Woman in Space
When: 6:30pm for private reception, 7:30pm for lecture only
Where: University Center Room
For more information: Please call 831-751-1858

March 9
What: Kayak the Salinas River
When: 8am
Where: Meet at building 93
For more information: Please contact Julia Montgomery at 831-582-4644

Every Tuesday
What: Rinse (DJs and dancing)
When: 10pm - 2am
Where: University Center Living Room
For more information: Please contact Julia Montgomery via First Class

Every Thursday
What: Piecemakers Quilting Group
When: 12noon-1:00pm
Where: MLC room 171
For more information: Please contact Lynda Haddox via First Class

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Website: www.csus.edu/calst