FOR THE WEEKS OF JANUARY 2—FEBRUARY 8

In Progress
Ayako Abelon is working with the editor of the Norwalk Community News to provide articles and photos for one dedicated newspaper spread per month.

Abelon is also working with designer Kelly Kwan to create newspaper ads in preparation for the summer session.

Coverage

Orange County Register—January 6, 2008—Article on a singer/conductor Bobby McFerrin who is a Cerritos College graduate.

Santa Monica Daily Press—January 10, 2008—Article on Santa Monica College’s Vice President of Planning and Development Marvin Martinez, a former Cerritos College Director of Economic Development.

Long Beach Press Telegram—January 11, 2008—Article on Cerritos College ranked third place in the state supremacy standings.

Whittier Daily News—January 11, 2008—Article on Cerritos College ranked third place in the state supremacy standings.

Los Angeles Times—January 11, 2008—Article on Plaza Comunitaria learning centers, which help Mexican nationals complete their basic education, includes the quote of Daryabuth Martinez, program assistant of the Plaza Comunitaria at Cerritos College


Whittier Daily News—January 13, 2008—Article on the passing of Leonard “Lee” Korf, who helped found the Cerritos College theater arts program.


Bellflower Bulletin—January, 2008—Article on new Cerritos College board of trustees for 2008 (from
press release).


*Santa Clarita Signal*—January 22, 2008—Article on a fundraiser poker tournament for the Michael Hoefflin Foundation Scholarship Fund written by a staff writer who is a Cerritos College graduate.

*Long Beach Press Telegram*—January 24, 2008—Article on Lt. Governor John Garamendi’s visit to Cerritos College


*Wave Community News*—January 31, 2008—Article on Cerritos College students receiving automotive awards

*Bellflower Bulletin*—February, 2008—Article on Lt. Governor John Garamendi’s visit to Cerritos College (from press release)

*Bellflower Bulletin*—February, 2008—Front-page mention of Cerritos College Spring Festival (from press release)

*Bellflower Bulletin*—February, 2008—Promotional brief on Cerritos College Music Concert “Faculty Gala” (from press release)

*Long Beach Press Telegram*—February 4, 2008—Article on the passage of Long Beach bike shop owner Arthur Lambrose, whose granddaughter is a Cerritos College employee.

*Whittier Daily News*—February 4, 2008—Promotional brief on Cerritos College Theatre performance *The Comedy of Errors*

*Long Beach Press Telegram*—February 5, 2008—Article on “Rock 50” program on Cerritos College radio station

**Related News**

Woodworking Program to Host Open House

For Immediate Release: January 9, 2008

Media Contact: Aya Abelon, Public Affairs; (562) 860-2451, ext. 2287

WHAT: The Spring Open House of Cerritos College’s Woodworking Program, held Jan. 9, 10 and 12, will offer community members a chance to learn more about developing their skills in a rewarding hobby and profession. The Open House will feature tours of the 24,000-square-foot facility, a chance to meet current instructors and students, information about spring course offerings, and help enrolling in spring courses. Classes are only $20 per unit for state residents.

Cerritos College Woodworking, one of the finest woodworking schools in Southern California, offers classes in furniture making, cabinetmaking, woodturning, and related topics. The 20 instructors work out of a spacious facility, where over 100 stationary and portable woodworking machines are available. The program emphasizes hands-on training and real-world experience, and all classes are project-focused. Over forty different classes cover topics including faceframe and frameless cabinet construction, architectural millwork, table and casework construction, solid surface fabrication, hand tools and veneering.

WHEN: Wednesday, Jan. 9, 6:30 – 8 p.m.
Thursday, Jan. 10, 6:30 – 8 p.m.
Saturday, Jan. 12, 8:30 – 10 a.m.

WHERE: Woodworking Building, Room WD-5
Cerritos College
11110 Alondra Blvd.
Norwalk, CA 90650

A map of the campus is available at www.cerritos.edu/guide.

CONTACT: For more information or to RSVP, contact Jennifer Simpson at (562) 860-2451 ext. 2986 or at jsimpson@cerritos.edu.

###
Cerritos College 15-Week Session Begins January 28

Online Registration Makes Enrollment Process Easier

For Immediate Release: January 9, 2008

Registration Contact: Rose Alegre, Admissions and Records; (562) 860-2451, ext. 2211

NORWALK, CA – January 9, 2008 - Cerritos College’s 15-week session begins Monday, January 28, 2008, and a second nine-week session begins Monday, March 17, 2008. Students may access a schedule of classes, complete an application and register online for a variety of classes by visiting www.cerritos.edu/admissions.

All eligible returning students have an option to either register online through MyCerritos or by using the automated Falcon Phone registration system at (562) 865-3276.

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###
Cerritos College Theatre to Present William Shakespeare’s Comedy of Errors

A Delightful Comedy of Mistaken Identity with a Mod 60’s Twist

For Immediate Release: January 28, 2008

Media Contact: Aya Abelon, Public Affairs; (562) 860-2451 ext. 2287

WHAT: Cerritos College Theatre Department is proud to present William Shakespeare's The Comedy of Errors. This production is directed by Eleanor Packwood, Bellflower High School theatre instructor with a Master’s in Theatre Production and an emphasis in Shakespeare. This delightful comedy of mistaken identity will be presented with a mod 1960’s British look, similar to that of Austin Powers in GoldMember. For group sales information please contact Renée Bloch, Performing Arts Promotions Specialist at (562) 860-2451 ext. 2638.

WHEN: Comedy of Errors will be presented on the following dates:

- Friday, February 29 at 8 p.m.
- Saturday, March 1 at 8 p.m.
- Thursday, March 6 at 8 p.m.
- Friday, March 7 at 8 p.m.
- Saturday, March 8 at 8 p.m.
- Sunday, March 9 at 2 p.m.

WHERE: Burnight Center Theatre
Cerritos College
11110 Alondra Blvd.
Norwalk, CA 90650

A map of the campus is available at www.cerritos.edu/guide.

COST: General $12, Cerritos College students/faculty/staff, seniors and high school students (all w/ID) $10, children 5 - 12 yrs $8

Tickets may be purchased online with a credit card (credit card only online) or in person at BC-G Mon - Fri from 1pm - 5 pm only. (Cash or Check only in person)

CONTACT: For more information on Comedy of Errors and the Cerritos College Theatre Department, please call (562) 467-5058 or visit www.cerritos.edu/theatre
Group Sales: ext. 2638
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###
Cerritos College Music Faculty to Perform in Gala

Concert Proceeds to Fund Student Scholarships

For Immediate Release: January 28, 2008

Media Contact: Aya Abelon, Public Affairs; (562) 860-2451 ext. 2287

WHAT: Cerritos College Music Department faculty members will showcase their talents in a Feb 24 concert to raise scholarship funds for students in the applied music program. The concert will include performances by some of the most accomplished musicians in the greater Los Angeles area and will encompass a wide variety of musical genres. The faculty is honored to offer their talents in support of their students, many of whom have gone on to pursue degrees from USC, UCLA, CSU Bakersfield, CSU Fullerton, Berkeley School of Music, the San Francisco Conservatory and Chapman University.

WHEN: Sunday, February 24 at 2 p.m.

WHERE: Burnight Center Theatre
Cerritos College
11110 Alondra Blvd.
Norwalk, CA 90650

A map of the campus is available at www.cerritos.edu/guide.
Free parking is available in parking lot C-3, in front of the Burnight building during performances.

COST: General admission $10

CONTACT: For more information, contact the Music Department office at (562) 860-2451 ext. 2629.

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###
Lt. Governor John Garamendi Visits Cerritos College

Discussed Issues Facing Career Technical Education

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 28, 2008

Media Contact: Aya Abelon Public Affairs; (562) 860-2451, ext. 2287

NORWALK, CA – January 28, 2008 - Lieutenant Governor and Chair of the Economic Development Commission of California John Garamendi visited Cerritos College on Wednesday to discuss issues around future workforce training.

The afternoon began with a warm welcome by Cerritos College President/Superintendent Dr. Noelia Vela, followed by tours of the career technical education programs including the Nursing and Pharmacy programs, led by Nursing Department Chair Dr. Charlene Fobi; Automotive Technology programs, Woodworking and Metal/Welding programs led by Dean of the Business and Technology Divisions Dr. Randy Peebles; and Child Development Center. The tour was also accompanied by Construction Trades Council's Southern California Regional Director Eddie Barnes, South County Labor Committee Chair Ray Cordova, and a business owner Kelli Johnson. As Garamendi actively interacted with students in each classroom, he emphasized that their skills are demanded in future workforce.

A panel discussion following the tour was joined by specialists in each area. Cerritos College and its partners were represented by Director of Economic Development Jose Anaya, Associate Professor of Mathematics and Director of Teacher TRAC Sue Parsons, Dr. Fobi, Dr. Peebles, Southeast Regional ROP Superintendent Gil Montano and Southland Motor Car Dealers Association Executive Director Todd Leutheuser. Commissioners of Economic Development Commission Hector Barreto and Demos Vardiabasis also joined the panel.
The panel acknowledged Cerritos College’s critical role in career technical education such as automotive technology, health occupations and teacher training and the unique partnerships the college has with businesses, regional occupational programs and high schools. The discussion included the challenges in career technical education and the need for an integrated educational system across different levels of education.

Garamendi was very impressed by the college’s unyielding efforts to directly involve business community and regional occupation programs and outreach high schools. “I haven’t seen (a regional occupation center involved in community college education) before. We must try to replicate this model.”

At the end of the visit, Garamendi was presented with a plaque, a souvenir jacket and a gift bag by Dr. Vela, Cerritos College Board Trustees Dr. Bob Hughlett and Dr. Tom Jackson.

“I’m most impressed. I’ve been to several campuses in the last few months,” Garamendi commended, “and this is one of the most impressive colleges that I have seen thus far. “

“We are delighted that you have chosen to come and learn more about Cerritos College.” stated Dr. Vela. “Cerritos College has had for a long time a great history and image of having strong academic and career technical education programs. We are delighted that you had an opportunity to tour the programs and have seen first-hand the quality of work we do.”

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###
Cerritos College Foundation Presents Pat Pinder Memorial Scholarship

Scholarship Rewards a Health Occupations Student

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 30, 2008

Media Contact: Aya Abelon Public Affairs; (562) 860-2451, ext. 2287

NORWALK, CA – January 30, 2008 – The Cerritos College Foundation presented the Pat Pinder Memorial Scholarship to Jessica Gutierrez at its board meeting on Thursday, January 10.

Established in 1999 in memory of Pat Pinder, a long-time faculty member in the Health Occupations Division, a $300 scholarship is awarded to a Health Occupations major who demonstrates outstanding academics.

“It’s great that you are recognized for what you did,” said the high-spirited Gutierrez, “and it’s also great to see your field getting recognition.” Gutierrez, a resident of Whittier, is a Child Development major who has been attending Cerritos College since 2000 while working full time as a Program Director for Children’s Village Preschool in Orange. Gutierrez has maintained a 3.6 GPA.

“Jessica comes to each class prepared, and with a positive attitude.” said Susan Gradin, Child Development Department chair, who acknowledged her student’s dedication and hard work. “We also know that Jessica has the qualities to be a wonderful teacher of young children and administrator of a center program.”

“She is making a difference in the lives of young children and families.”

Gutierrez is planning to transfer to the University of La Verne this year, and move onto a master’s program after completing her bachelor’s degree. She hopes to one day own a preschool and teach Child Development at a community college.
The Cerritos College Foundation, a non-profit organization, serves as a charitable vehicle for the community, individuals and alumni, to assist with financial support of Cerritos College. Visit the Foundation online at www.cerritos.edu/ccf.

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###
Cerritos College Plans Event Honoring Black History Month

For Immediate Release: January 31, 2008

Media Contact: Aya Abelon, Public Affairs; (562) 860-2451 ext. 2287

Event Contact: Connie Hunter, Cerritos College; (562) 860-2451, ext. 2255

WHAT: Cerritos College’s Black Student Union will present “Seasoning for the Soul” an event honoring Black History Month, on Saturday, March 1 at 6 p.m. in the Cerritos College Student Center, located at 11110 Alondra Boulevard in Norwalk. This year’s event is centered around health issues and presidential election.

Stephen Johnson, the Vice President/Assistance Superintendent of Student Services will be opening the event. Two guest speakers Dr. Eugene Krank, a retired podiatrist, and Mr. Michael Wade, a respiratory therapist at Martin Luther King Jr.-Harbor Hospital, will be exploring health issues including diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, and sickle cell.

A fashion show and a steppe team will feature elementary, middle school and high school students as well as Cerritos College students and staff. A student from Norwalk High and a junior high school student in Norwalk, representing Obama and Clinton respectively, will perform a political skit. The mothers of students on campus that plays a strong part in their student life, the staff and people that have contributed to the Black History Month program will be honored during the event.

WHEN: Saturday, March 1 at 6 p.m.

WHERE: Cerritos College Student Center
11110 Alondra Boulevard
Norwalk, CA 90650

COST: The event is free and open to the public.

CONTACT: For more information, please contact Connie Hunter at (562) 860-2451, ext. 2255 or at chunter@cerritos.edu.

The Black History program has involved and honored individuals within the Cerritos College community as well as within those neighborhoods surrounding the college. The variety of activities planned and executed over the years have included local elementary, middle and high school levels; resulting in an effectual marketing endeavor. These marketing endeavors have introduced future students to the college campus and educational options. Cerritos college students involved in the planning, organizing
and implementation of the programs have experientially acquired hands on training and practice. The skills learned are not only transferable to other areas of their lives yet reflect the Cerritos Community College’s value-based educational commitment to the success of its learners. The networking opportunities have created a greater awareness within the community of Cerritos College’s commitment to recognize and honor diversity within its student and faculty bodies. The local business community continues to contribute various products, services as well as support for this annual event in light of their commitment to social responsibility. While the program involves one evening out of 365 (366, leap year) it continues to engender a sense of pride and critical historical recognition designed to teach invaluable lessons of tenacity, endurance, responsibility and accountability through the lives of great Americans.

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###
Open house set on woodworking

NORWALK — The spring open house of Cerritos College’s woodworking program will be 6:30-8 p.m. Wednesday and Thursday and 8:30-10 a.m. Sunday.

Those interested in learning more about developing their skills in woodworking as a hobby and profession can attend any of the three dates at the Woodworking Building, Room WD-5 at the college, 11110 Alondra Blvd.

For more information, call (562) 860-2451, Ext. 2986.
Singing
WITH
his baton

Singer Bobby McFerrin has made his mark as a conductor. And, yes, he’s still happy.

By TIMOTHY MANGAN

Bobby McFerrin – that Bobby McFerrin – will be on the other side of the podium when the Pacific Symphony Orchestra and conductor Carl St. Clair perform Thursday at the Segerstrom Center for the Arts. The MCIFERRIN: Conducting world premiere of McFerrin’s “Don’t Worry, Be Happy” as well as its upcoming rendition of the

MCFERRIN: Conducting

With the McFerrin, conductor and vocalist

WORLD MUSIC: McFerrin’s conducting experience at early has decades already.

Bobby McFerrin, conductor and vocalist

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With the McFerrin, conductor and vocalist

WORLD MUSIC: McFerrin’s conducting experience at early has decades already.
1929
Martinez to serve as vice chancellor for
L.A. College District

BY DAILY PRESS STAFF

SMC Marvin Martinez, Santa Monica
College’s vice president of planning and
development, will be leaving after 11 years
to serve as the first vice chancellor of
economic and workforce development for
the Los Angeles Community College District.

“Martinez’s extensive administrative
experience in economic and resource
development will move our district for-
ward in developing capable and high-
grade workforce,” said LACC Chancellor
Marshall E. Drummond.

“Recent reports revealed that more than
half of Los Angeles residents live below
the federal poverty level and we import
nearly 40 percent of all construction work-
ers from outside the county,” Martinez
said. “It is important that we place our basic
skills education and our academic tracks
into contact with career ladders.”

Prior to serving as vice president of
planning and development at SMC, Martinez, as,
was present at the college, where he was responsible for planning
and supervising a new on-campus site. In
addition, he served as associate vice-pres-
ident of planning and development, and
dean of business and industry.

He has also worked at El Camino
Community College District as director of
Economic Development — contract education.

“I look forward to working with all nine
colleges at LACC to improve current pro-
grams and develop new ones, in order to
prepare our students to succeed in the
workforce,” Martinez said. “Our goal, as we
work together, will be to put all nine col-
leges at the forefront of economic develop-
ment activity taking place in Los Angeles.”

Looking back at his career at SMC,
Martinez, who has a master’s degree in
urban planning from UCLA, said he is
most proud of helping to enhance voca-
tional programs after the college was
forced to cut popular programs such as
automotive because of budget constraints.

Now the re-emerge program is back and
better than ever, providing students the
latest information on new technologies
driving the auto industry.

In addition, SMC will be offering classes in
logistics, which is the move-
ment of goods. This is crucial for Martinez
said, given that Los Angeles County is
home to two of the largest ports in
the nation, as well as Los Angeles
International Airport.

SEE MARTINEZ PAGE 11
Cup within Falcons' grasp

By David Falcon, Staff Writer
Article published: 5/17/2008 1:16:21 AM PST

Paced by a state championship in women's soccer and a second-place finish by the wrestling team, Centros College is in third place in the Pepsi/National Alliance of Two-Year College Athletic Administrators Cup standings.

The Falcons have 93.5 points and trail only Fresno City (109) and Mt. San Antonio (99.5) in the standings for state athletic supremacy after the fall season. Points are awarded for a team's final position in post-season competition. The women's soccer team earned 20 points with its state crown and the wrestling team earned 10. The women's cross country team placed fourth in the state to earn 17 points and was followed by men's soccer (14.5), men's water polo (13.5) and men's water polo (9.5).

Last year, Centros finished fifth in the final Pepsi Cup standings, its highest finish ever.

Long Beach City is 28th after the fall season with 31.5 points. The women's water polo team finished third in the state to earn 18 points and the men's team finished fourth in Southern California for 13.5. LBCC won the Pepsi Cup in 2006.

Cypress earned 8.5 points from its women's soccer team.

The final standings will be released May 28.

Back on the ice

Longtime LBCC Instructor and coach Paul Chase has once again taken over the men's golf program.

Chase coached the Vikings from 1978-2001 and earned 20 conference titles in those 23 seasons. LBCC also claimed seven Southern California titles and four state crowns under Chase.

He replaces Mike Roe, who coached LBCC for six years before leaving to coach at Saddleback College.

Chase was also the head football coach at Long Beach from 1996-98.

The Vikings open their season Jan. 28 at the Pinion Plaza at Spring Valley Lake Country Club in Victorville.

Also...
Cerritos third in state supremacy

By Andrew J. Campe, Staff Writer
Article Launched: 01/10/2008 19:44:21 PM PST

The California Community College Athletic Association, in association with the National Alliance of Two-Year College Athletic Administrators, recently released its fall state supremacy standings of the 2007-2008 NATYCAA cup, State Associations Division.

Cerritos College was the highest ranking area school with 93.5 points. It was in third place behind traditional powers Fresno City (100) and Mt. San Antonio (99.5) colleges.

A school is awarded points on its teams' final positions in post-conference competition.

Each college's top five men's and women's team results count toward the school's overall point total.

The NATYCAA Awards were designed to reward overall program excellence at the two-year level.

This is the fifth year the NATYCCA has sponsored a State Associations division championship.

Cerritos has finished in the top 20 every year since the inception of the award. Its fifth-place showing last year was its highest in school history.

The Falcons' high seeding is partly due to the success of its women's soccer team, which won its first-ever state title with a 2-1 victory over Santiago Canyon College back on Dec. 9.

The Falcons also collected points for the wrestling team's second-place finish at the state championships. The women's cross country team picked up big points for finishing fourth.

Of the 10 completed fall sports, Cerritos fields nine of them, with six earning points toward the award.

East Los Angeles College, which failed to crack the top 20, still had 26 points, thanks to strong performances from its men's cross country and wrestling squads, both of which finished seventh in state.

Rio Hondo turned in three points with its 18th-place finish at the men's wrestling state championships.

PAZ LEADS SELECTIONS

Cerritos freshman men's soccer forward Michael Paz (California High School) recently was named by the (National Soccer Coaches Association of America) NSCAA/Adidas as a Community College Men's Division III first-
Los Angeles Times
January 11, 2008

Mexican education comes to U.S.

Adult immigrants can complete their basic education in Spanish at one of 13 centers across L.A. County.

BY ANNA GORMAN
Staff Writer

Fernando Vidal began working in his family’s market in Mexico at age 7, forgoing grammar and high school for a childhood spent growing lettuce, carrots, watermelon and tomatoes.

Vidal, 47, said he knows the Spanish alphabet and can read some, but gets confused writing much more than his name. Now he will have the opportunity to resume his studies and earn his Mexican diploma here in the United States.

The Mexican government opened its latest, Pico Rivera, or Community Plaza, Thursday at San Fernando Middle School, situated near Vidal’s house. There are 13 such centers throughout Los Angeles County, aimed at helping Mexican nationals reacquire their basic education. The centers offer free classes in person or through video and the Internet, to Mexican nationals who are living in the U.S.

“They are leaving our country without that education,” said Marlo Velasquez, acting regional general for the Mexican Consulate in Los Angeles. “We have failed in giving education to those Mexicans. We must try our best to give that education, even if they are adults.”

More than 90 percent of Mexican nationals over age 15 living in the U.S. do not have a ninth-grade education, according to 1990 data compiled by the Pew Hispanic Center.

Consider officials said the Spanish-language classes improve immigrants’ self-esteem and help their children with homework. The education in their native tongue also better prepares immigrants to learn English and encourages their assimilation. Hundreds of Mexican nationals have taken classes since the first local center opened in 2004. There are similar programs elsewhere, including San Jose and San Bernardino.

Vidal, a legal permanent resident who arrived in the U.S. in 1980, said he and his wife raised their four children to value education and not to take anything for granted. The eldest now attends Cal State Northridge.

“We would tell them to study, study, study, until we got ready,” he said.

Vidal wanted to study but said he was busy working reconstruction to support his family. At the opening of the San Fernando center Thursday, Vidal stepped through a third-grade Mexican geography book. He said he was interested in learning about the history of his country so he could pass that culture along to his children.

Jose Palma, 34, who also attended the opening, started high school in Mexico but dropped out after one year to work in Mexico and then came to the United States. Palma, a naturalized U.S. citizen, said he has earned the same salary in his maintenance job for many years and believes that finishing his education will enable him to advance in his career.

“I feel like something is missing,” Palma said. “I decided not to attend school when I was young, but now I am going to study to get ahead.”

Palma’s son, also known to be a good role model for his children, ages 11, 13 and 18.

Lourdes Cervantes, a parent community facilitator for the Los Angeles Unified School District, works with about 150 students at a Plaza Community in Rosemead Elementary School in San Joaquin Valley. Many come to her unable to read or write.

That illiteracy affects people in all aspects of their lives, including their ability to get apartments and jobs, said Efrain Rangel, a bilingual program assistant at the Plaza Community at Centro College. Many parents have been in the U.S. for many years and believe that finishing their education will enable them to send their children or grandchildren to college or to advance in their current careers.

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Many parents have been in the U.S. for many years and believe that finishing their education will enable them to send their children or grandchildren to college or to advance in their current careers.

“Told them what to do and send them to school,” Rangel said. “They are going to college because they have learned to read and write.”

For more information about the program, call 213-626-8286.
Cerritos College
15-Week Session Begins Jan. 28

Online Registration Makes Enrollment Process Easier

NORWALK, CA – January 9, 2008 - Cerritos College’s 15-week session begins Monday, January 28, 2008, and a second nine-week session begins Monday, March 17, 2008. Students may access a schedule of classes, complete an application and register online for a variety of classes by visiting www.cerritos.edu/admissions.

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Services held for noted professor Korf

By Kathy Johnson
Correspondent

WHITTIER — Friends and family gathered Friday to remember a man who inspired the love of life in everyone he knew.

Leonard “Lee” Korf, 90, died Jan. 4 at his Whittier home.

“If you love life so much, you should get a free pass and Lee should have gotten one,” said Frank Dwyer, 62, during Korf’s eulogy.

As a World War II veteran with six medals, the funeral proceeded with military honors at Rose Hills Memorial Park and Mortuary.

‘Artist was the true nature of the man. For generations of students, he not only taught them theater, but the love and joy of what he was doing. He was invested in being alive.

— Frank Dwyer, friend of nearly 28 years

Eight honor guards carried the flag-draped casket and placed it before the canopy, where the flag detail was completed.

The military guard stood holding the folded flag close to his heart through the eulogy until the other guardmen completed the traditional three-ride salute volley.

Then his wife, Jean Prinz Korf, removed the flag from the guard and 12 doves were released in Korf’s honor.

Korf helped found the theater arts program at Cerritos College and later in life started KorfTeam, which arranged trips to theaters around the world to benefit the Whittier Cultural Arts Foundation.

His wife is a retired theater arts professor from Rio Hondo College, where she helped found that program.

“A great artist was always the true nature of the man,” said longtime friend Dwyer, who knew Korf almost 25 years.

For generations of students, he not only taught them theater, but the love and joy of what he was doing. He was invested in being alive,” said Dwyer of Palos Verdes, a literary agent.

Please turn to KORF / Page 10

LAID TO REST:
Leonard “Lee” Korf helped found the Cerritos College theater arts program and, later in life, started KorfTeam, arranging trips to theaters around the world to benefit the Whittier Cultural Arts Foundation. He died Jan. 4 at age 90.

Beloved professor remembered

Continued from page 1

Korf’s students cared for him too, said Paul Laramore, 59, who studied under Korf about 40 years ago.

“He was one of those people who change your life and I knew it then,” Laramore said.

Those around Korf spoke of his love for life and the way he shared it with others.

Whittier resident Allen Cagle, 64, told how Korf used to love confounding the staff at restaurants by asking them for a “Sprala.”

They were always confused, he said, but Korf would then get them all laughing by explaining the drink is a mixture of Sprite and soda that makes you live longer.

Cagle said it was Korf’s way of sharing laughter and putting people at ease.

Korf’s son, William “Bill” Korf, 51, a theater instructor at Rio Hondo College, said, “He spoiled us rotten with love, attention and fun.”

Korf is survived by his wife of 55 years, Jean Prinz Korf; three children: daughter Kerry, 55; sons William and Geoffrey, 48; and three grandchildren: Leo, 11; Hannah, 10; and Ava, 1.

Donations in his name are being accepted by the Lee Korf Institute Scholarship Fund of Cornerstone Theater in Los Angeles. For information on making a donation, call (213) 613-1700, Ext. 37, or visit www.cornerstonetheater.org.

A public memorial for Korf will be held at Rio Hondo College’s Wray Theater at 3 p.m. Saturday.

news.wdn@sacnews.com
(562) 888-9356, Ext. 3015
New Cerritos trustee named

NORWALK — Entrepreneur J.P. Wang has been named a new trustee to the Cerritos College Foundation’s board.

Wang, a computer engineer, worked for Sanyo and Ericsson before founding Golden Star Technology, Inc., one of the largest privately owned IT solutions providers in Southern California.

The nonprofit Cerritos College Foundation serves as a charitable vehicle for the community, individuals and alumni, to assist with financial support of Cerritos College beyond that which state funding supports.

For information visit www.cerritos.edu/ccf

If you have an event or notice deserving attention, write us! Send your notice to Tracy Garcia, education reporter, at 7612 Greenleaf Ave., Whittier, CA 90602. Call the office at (562) 698-0955, Ext. 3051, or send e-mail to tracy.garcia@agvn.com

New Cerritos College Board of Trustees 2008

NORWALK — The Cerritos College Board of Trustees held its annual reorganization meeting on December 12, 2007, conducting swearing-in procedures for recently-elected board member Tina Cho and re-elected members Bob Arthur, Ted Edmiston and Tom Jackson.

The board also chose new officers for the coming year, electing immediate past vice president Bob Arthur as the new board president, secretary Bob Elledge as
New session to begin at Cerritos

NORWALK — A new 15-week session at Cerritos College gets underway Jan. 28, while a different nine-week session begins March 17.

Students may access a schedule of classes, complete an application and register online for a variety of classes by visiting www.cerritos.edu/admissions.

All eligible returning students can either register online through MyCerritos, or use the automated Falcon Phone registration system at (562) 865-3276.

For information call the college at (562) 860-2451.
I’ll Donate to the Pot
Parimal Rohit
Bicentennial Baby

The yells of “re-buy” at a poker tournament are about as commonplace as the rains in Seattle. For most poker players, re-buying additional chips is all for naught — it usually ends up going into the pockets of the casino and the tournament winner.

This is the reason I avoid playing poker tournaments — that, and it is not really a wise investment to be playing at the tables to begin with.

So why did I find myself sitting at a table in a one-room casino in the middle of nowhere at the base of Kern County — coincidentally the same county with the unhealthiest air in America?

It was for the kids. Specifically, for the Michael Hoeftlin Foundation Scholarship Fund. At least that is what the Michael Hoeftlin Foundation representative told me, as he took my charge card and docked me $100 for my first (but not last) re-buy. He also told me it was tax-deductible.

On Saturday afternoon, the Michael Hoeftlin Foundation held a no-limit poker tournament at Diamond Jim’s Casino in Rosamond, a few miles south of Edwards Air Force Base. The fundraiser tournament was to benefit kids with cancer, with all the money people spent to play poker going straight to cancer research and treatment. Approximately 130 people made their way to Rosamond, from just about every corner of Southern California imaginable.

I personally made the trip there from East Long Beach, which made it a 100-mile trip from door to door.

Once I arrived, it was game time. I was assigned to Table 10, Seat 2. Next to me in Seat 3 was a fellow Indian, a non-practicing Moslem from Mumbai (formerly Bombay) by way of Gujarat. What do you know — I am a kid born in Los Angeles that is a non-practicing Hindu with a mom who happens to also come from Mumbai by way of Gujarat. Automatically a way to bond. He was the first person to be eliminated from our table.

Across the way in Seat 7 was a middle-aged Caucasian proudly wearing his scarlet-red shirt with University of Southern California boldly written in golden letters across his chest. I now had a target, as I am a graduate of UCLA. Of course, the Trojans beat my Bru%ins in a basketball game earlier in the day, so I had extra incentive to go head-to-head with him on a few hands.

Sitting next to me in Seat 1 was a mild-mannered man in his 60s. He looked like he had years of poker experience, but struggled to catch a winning hand early on in the tournament.

In Seat 5 was another gray-haired man, probably in his 50s, who seemed to like every card he had in his hand, yet always appeared to play with a sense of hesitation.

A trio of men in seats 8, 9 and 10 all seemed to be regular poker players, as all three appeared to win the most hands.

Unfortunately, the other three people at the table did not leave much of an impression, mostly because they were quiet and just seemed content being there. Coincidentally, they did not stick around long enough at my table to get to know them — two of them were transferred to other tables, and the third went for brake two hours into the tournament before leaving for the day.

Yet, for nearly three hours, poker players unleashed their game with ultimate bravado, knowing that if they went all-in and lost the hand — and their chips — another $100 would get them back in the game. The $100 re-buy did not swing, since the money went to a good cause in the Hoeftlin Foundation. It was not uncommon to hear someone yelling “re-buy!” every 10 minutes or so, with several people re-buying four or five times before they won new game.

My new brother from another mother in Seat 2 put his poker face on, but it didn’t help.

Apparently, I bonded well with my new brother — I was the next sucker to run out of chips. As I stood up and walked away, everyone at the table wished me well — even the guy wearing the Trojan T-shirt. It reminded me of why I was at the one-roomed casino in the middle of the Kern County desert. I walked away smiling at my Trojan brother, and not feeling guilty that I spent $300 to play a silly game of poker. If I had lost that money in a normal game of poker, I would have guilt written all over my face. After all, it is not fun losing any amount of money.

Yet somehow I walked away feeling as if I were the winner. The chips may not have landed where I wanted them to land, but for millions of children with cancer, it is not like the chips fell where they wanted them to fall.

Who am I to complain about losing $300 in a game of poker when I had the luxury of losing that amount of money. Luckily for me, I have the luxury of waking up everyday without pain. I have the luxury of assuming that I will be alive tomorrow. I have the luxury of planning out what I want to be doing when I turn 40.

For many children with cancer, they can only wish to have the things I take for granted. I take for granted that I actually have the ability to get up and drive to a small building in the desert to play four hours of poker with 130 people I did not know.

Walking out of that casino in Rosamond reminded me why I showed up to play on Saturday. I spent $300 so the Hoeftlin Foundation can help some child have the same luxuries that I have, to take the same things for granted that I do.

By the time I made it to my car, I remembered another reason why I needed to play cards on a beautiful Saturday afternoon — I myself experienced the ravages of cancer when it struck my father 13 years ago.

As an 18-year-old attending my first year of college at Cerritos College, I still remember the cold January morning in 1995 when my mother kept me from leaving home to attend class, to tell me my father had cancer and only had weeks to live.

My brave father ended up fighting cancer for 13 months, yet it was a painful experience for all of us. Watching a man who taught me everything I knew in my young life suffer from chemotherapy and radiation, then eventually wither away into oblivion was very hard to swallow, especially for the two women in my life — a 42-year-old gregarious mother and 12-year-old sister still lost in her shell.

On Saturday I was reminded of the pain cancer brings to everyone affected by the disease. I was reminded how I have lived the last 13 years honoring the loss of the man I called “Pops,” hoping that another son, father, mother, daughter, sister or brother would not suffer the same pain as my family did back in 1995.

I walked away not feeling guilty because the money I spent did not go to a degenerate gambler. I drove away knowing that my hard-earned dollars may help someone not experience the same pain people such as my father and I had to share in his losing battle with the disease. I got home that night knowing that the Michael Hoeftlin Foundation hosted a poker tournament to help children with cancer get one step closer to a cure.

probiti@thesignal.com
College role seen in jobs training

By Kevin Butler
Staff Writer

NORWALK — Expanding opportunities for California high school students to take career and technical classes at community colleges was among several ideas for improving education discussed Wednesday by a panel that included Lt. Gov. John Garamendi.

After touring the Cerritos College campus, Garamendi joined a panel of college administrators, state officials and businesspeople to discuss the challenges facing community colleges in preparing the California workforce of the future.

Panelists discussed the role of the state-funded Regional Occupation Programs, which allow high school students to take classes at community colleges to learn career and technical skills.

Garamendi noted that in a challenging budget environment, school districts can’t afford the investment in the faculty, facilities and technology that community colleges possess in order to teach such technical courses.

“We’re not going to see the money to build those laboratories in the high schools,” said Garamendi, who chairs the California Commission on Economic Development.

Career and technical education has received increased attention in recent years as a way of providing well-paying careers to high school students who choose not to pursue a four-year degree immediately after getting their diploma.

After years of cutting back on vocational education programs like auto shop, school districts across the state are re-examining the issue.

Gil Montano, superintendent of Southeast Regional ROP, discussed Cerritos College’s program allowing high school students to take automotive technology courses at the campus.

Often students who are disinterested in traditional high school curriculum after taking those auto tech courses at Cerritos College will become more motivated to complete a high school diploma, said Montano.

Community colleges and school districts are bracing for funding cuts following the release of Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger’s proposed state budget.

Schwarzenegger is seeking a $40 million cut for the state’s community colleges this year, plus another $483.5 million in 2008-2009.

Garamendi said that the proposed education cuts are among the reasons why the governor’s budget plan is a “nonstarter” with the state legislature, which will review and approve any new budget.

“I think you will see a different budget evolve in the next several months,” he said after the forum.

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Los Angeles Times  
January 25, 2008

THIS WEEK


LUXEMAN FINE ARTS COMPLEX Cal State L.A. 808 State University Dr., L.A. Ivan Macchiala, drawings, photographs, sculpture and videos; thru March 15. Reception Sat., Jan. 26, 6-9 p.m. (323) 953-6602.


Up This Week


GALLERY MICHAEL 6416 N. Redbird Dr., Beverly Hills, "Soap: Progressive Posters & Rare Prints"; thru March 2. (310) 293-3177.

GIGHETTODOS 7940 Melrose Ave., L.A. "Gigi Group Show". Noon-8 p.m. thru Feb. 17. (323) 192-0108.

HONOR FRASER 2625 S. La Cienega Blvd., L.A. "Night at the Kalamazoo". Marcus Caton, paintings; thru March 29. Reception Sat., Jan. 26, 6-9 p.m. (310) 397-6914.


KINCAD CONTEMPORARY 6020 Washington Blvd., Culver City, "Inimitation of Other Cinematographers in Contemporary Art"; group show, paintings, drawings and photographs; thru Feb. 16. (310) 810-7462.


THE WHOLE 9 GALLERY 600 Washington Blvd., Culver City, "Avant-Garde". group show; thru March 15. Reception Sat., Jan. 26, 6-9 p.m. (310) 616-4600.

San Francisco Area

ACUNA HANSEN GALLERY 427 Bernardo St., L.A. "Danielson: Dan Weisz, drawings, photographs and sculpture; thru March 8. Reception Fri., Jan. 25, 6-9 p.m. (323) 441-8472.


BLACK DRAGON SOCIETY 904-907 Chung King Road, L.A. "I think we are fostered with azaleas". Gustavo Herrera, paintings and sculptures; thru Feb. 23. Reception and performance by the artists collective Ten Pound Ave., Fri., Jan. 25, 7-9 p.m. (323) 262-0009.


FRINGE EXHIBITIONS 154 Chung King St., L.A. "Walton Springs". Meridith Price, sculpture and drawings; "Passe Marianne". Danial Ward video; thru Feb. 23. Reception Fri., Jan. 25, 6-9 p.m. (213) 511-0040.

THE HAPPY LION 963 Chung King Road, L.A. "Take Empires". Tamar Lapidot, paintings; thru March 3. Reception Fri., Jan. 25, 6-9 p.m. (321) 625-1463.

MARY GOLDMAN GALLERY 902 Chung King Road, L.A. "What Do You Care?". Alexander Dula, Ashraf Malakh and Andrew Laidlow, sculpture and mixed media; thru March 8. Reception Fri., Jan. 25, 6-8 p.m. (310) 677-8272.


Hollywood and vicinity


Students receive automotive awards

NORWALK — The Cerritos College Foundation has presented the Jeannie M.T. Yang Automotive Scholarship to two students in the automotive division, according to Allison K. Abel, the college’s media relations assistant.

Todd Leutheuser, executive director of the Southland Motor Car Dealers Association and a foundation board member, awarded Bruce Gonzalez and Joseph Park with $500 scholarships each for their progress in the vocational auto technology courses.

Gonzalez, of Norwalk, returned to school after downsizing left him unemployed. With an interest in turning his hobby into a career, he enrolled in the automotive technology program at Cerritos College.

Park, of Victorville, is studying public administration at Biola University in La Mirada. He is taking automotive classes at Cerritos College to expand his career options and is considering a career in the transportation sector, Abel said.

The Jeannie M. T. Yang Scholarship awards a total of $2,000 each year to four promising students in the automotive department at Cerritos College.

Yang was a community college professor originally from mainland China who had a great love for education. The award was established in 2004 by Peter Leutheuser, Yang’s longtime friend and executor of her estate.
Lt. Governor John Garamendi Visits Cerritos College

Discussed Issues
Facing Career Technical Education

NORWALK — Lieutenant Governor and Chair of the Economic Development Commission of California, John Garamendi, visited Cerritos College on Wednesday to discuss issues around future workforce training.

The afternoon began with a warm welcome by Cerritos College President/Superintendent Dr. Noelia Vela, followed by tours of the career technical education programs including the Nursing and Pharmacy programs, led by Nursing Department Chair, Dr. Charlene Fobhi; Automotive Technology programs, Woodworking and Metal/Welding programs led by Dean of the Business and Technology Divisions, Dr. Randy Peebles; and Child Development Center. The tour was also accompanied by Construction Trades Council’s Southern California Regional Director, Eddie Barnes, South County Labor Committee Chair Ray Cordova, and a business owner Kelli Johnson. As Garamendi actively interacted with students in each classroom, he emphasized that their skills are demanded in future workforce.

A panel discussion following the tour was joined by special guests in each area. Cerritos College and its partners were represented by Director of Economic Development, Jose Ayala, Associate Professor of Mathematics and Director of Teacher TRAC, Sue Parsons, Dr. Fobhi, Dr. Peebles, Southeast Regional ROP Superintendent, Gil Montanez and Southland Motor Car Dealers Association Executive Director, Todd Leufbauer, Commissioners of Economic Development Commission Hector Barrete and Demos Vandiabaki also joined the panel.

The panel acknowledged Cerritos College’s critical role in career technical education such as automotive technology, health occupations and teacher training and the unique partnerships the college has with businesses, regional occupational programs and high schools. The discussion included the challenges in career technical education and the need for an integrated educational system across different levels of education.

Garamendi was very impressed by the college’s unyielding efforts to directly involve business community and regional occupation programs and outreach high schools. “I haven’t seen a regional occupation center involved in community college education before. We must try to replicate this model.”

At the end of the visit, Garamendi was presented with a plaque, a souvenir jacket and a gift bag by Dr. Vela, Cerritos College Board Trustees Dr. Bob Hughlett and Dr. Tom Jackson.

“Lt. Governor,

Continued from page 1

I’m most impressed. I’ve been to several campuses in the last few months,” Garamendi commented, “and this is one of the most impressive colleges that I have seen thus far.”

“We are delighted that you have chosen to come and learn more about Cerritos College,” stated Dr. Vela. “Cerritos College has had for a long time a great history and image of having strong student and career technical education programs. We are delighted that you had an opportunity to tour the programs and have seen first-hand the quality of work we do.”
Cerritos College to Host Spring Festival Celebration

Event will Feature Food, Concerts, Dance Performances, Fashion Show and Cultural Workshops

NORWALK — Cerritos College, the Chinese Culture Association of Southern California and the Cerritos Chinese School will host a Spring Festival Celebration to bring the community and the college together on Saturday, February 23rd from noon - 3:30 pm.

See Spring Festival on page 2

Spring Festival, Continued from page 1

“The Year of the Mouse” will be celebrated through traditional dishes, various performances and workshops that have touches from many Asian cultures. Performances will include a traditional lion dance, a royal oriental fashion show, traditional songs, cultural dances, martial arts and more.

Workshops showcasing various cultural heritages will include mahjong (a board game), knotting demonstrations, calligraphy, brush painting and handcrafts will be offered. Download a flier here.

The event will be held at Cerritos College Student Center, Cerritos College, 11110 Alondra Blvd. in Norwalk. A map of the campus is available at www.cerritos.edu/guide.

Event is free and open to the public. Parking for the event is free in lot C-10 in white stalls only.

For more information, contact Daniita Kurtz in the International Student Center at (562) 860-2451 ext. 2133 or at dkurtz@cerritos.edu.
Cerritos College
Music Faculty to Perform in Gala

Concert Proceeds to Fund Student Scholarships

NORWALK — Cerritos College Music Department faculty members will showcase their talents in a February 24th (Saturday) concert to raise scholarship funds for students in the applied music program.

The concert will include performances by some of the most accomplished musicians in the greater Los Angeles area and will encompass a wide variety of musical genres.

The faculty is honored to offer their talents in support of their students, many of whom have gone on to pursue degrees from USC, UCLA, CSU Bakersfield, CSU Fullerton, Berkeley School of Music, the San Francisco Conservatory, and Chapman University.

Burnight Center Theatre
Cerritos College
1110 Alondra Blvd.
Norwalk, CA 90650
Sunday, February 24 at 2 p.m.

A map of the campus is available at www.cerritos.edu/guide. Free parking is available in parking lot C-2, in front of the Burnight building during performances. General admission is $10.

For more information, contact the Music Department office at (562) 860-2451 ext. 2629.

Cerritos College serves as a comprehensive community college for southeastern Los Angeles County. Communities within the college’s district include Norwalk, Bellflower, Cerritos, Downey, Hawaiian Gardens, La Mirada, La Palma, and portions of Bell Gardens, Lakewood, Long Beach, Santa Fe Springs, and South Gate.
on the board

1929

It’s all about Shakespeare, baby

NORWALK — The Cerritos College Theatre Department will perform William Shakespeare’s “The Comedy of Errors,” from Feb. 29 to March 9 at the Burnight Center Theater on campus, 11110 Alondra Blvd.

This comedy of mistaken identity will be presented with a mod-1960s British look, similar to that of the “Austin Powers” movies.

The performances will take place at 8 p.m. nightly on Feb. 29 and March 1, 6, 7 and 8, along with a 2 p.m. matinee show March 9.

General admission is $12 per person, $10 for Cerritos college students, faculty and staff, senior citizens and high school students with ID cards, and $5 for children between the ages of 5 and 12.

For more information, call (562) 467-5058 or visit www.cerritos.edu/theatre
Our super weekend

Mawkishness Alert: in our line of work, it’s a lot easier to make fun of people, especially our own failures, than to engage in mawkish praise and adulation. This, then, will be a tough column to write, because it’s largely about how much we rule. Let’s start with Sunday’s Super Bowl and work backward, which is our favorite direction.

TIM GROBATY
WHAT’S IN IT?

We started with great expectations, the Barn builder and once and future councilman Mike Donelon, who came over to pour some bloody Marys. He brought us some secret ingredients as CLAMATO JUICE and PICKLED ASPARAGUS SPEARS.

After Donelon’s departure and a post-bloody-Mary nap, the weather forced the Hot Family out of The Barn and into the tiki room at the Cop, Across the Street’s house for the usual table full of fare. Mrs. Cop’s recovered fried won-ton, a platter of homemade taquitos and guac, a half-dozen grilled Italian sausages (that we bought way the heck up in Paramount at Eastern Meats & Deli), a mess of hot dogs, PIE, smoked oysters and a Beefeater martini that we accidentally bought across the room, ended up being a ton of laughs for the day, save for a halftime Irish car bomb that we had back at the Barn — the whole lot of us streaking across the street like the immigrants in those highway signs down south — and the oddey of Tacate.

For amusement, we had a Beecher’s Pool and, because it’s illegal to gamble, even in a cop’s house, we played for LBP-approved “amusement points,” in increments of 10 (each 10-ammusement-point certificate comes with a stunning engraving of Alexander Hamilton on it). Long story short, our lovely daughter Hannah won 20 amusement points after the first quarter (of which we kept for amusement-expenses associated with running the amusement-point pool, including writing numbers on slips of paper and putting them into a hat), our stunning wife won 20 at the half and another 20 at the end of the third quarter, and, with Eli Manning’s little duckduckgoobly pass landing on the back of fifth-string receiver David Tyree on the way to besting the not-best-in-history, we won 40 amusement points at the end of the game.

The Hot Family came away with enough points to remain amused for a long, long time, while the Cop Family, which is where amusement points go to die, will, unfortunately, continue to live like sullen hobos, at least through March Madness.

ON THE V-WAVES:
Saturday wasn’t really anything to overly brag about. We got up in time to hustle over to Norwalk, where Carrus College inexplicably is, to be a guest on Mike Stark’s “Rock 60” program on WPMJ.com Internet radio.

Still considering our crippling fear of speaking, we were hopelessly impressed with ourself for pulling off this horrendous task of chatting with the terrifyingly affable Stark and spinning our Friday Playlist of songs about radio. This should make a Lifetime movie about it, with a few other things thrown in to make it a story of one Man’s Battle With Fear & How He Overcame It. Thanks to a Caddy Dog & a Big But Horribly Slim in a Women’s Prison. If you enjoy the sound of our voice as much as we do, you can check out the show by tuning your computer to WPMJ.com.

WE’RE THE TIGER WOODS OF GOLF: Friday? Oh, nothing much. Just got up at 8 o’clock in the stupid morning, slumped down into a golf cut at Recreation Park — again with the bloody Marys — and went out and quickly won the Wilson Alumni Charity Invitational Charity Golf Tournament pretty much single-handedly, to hear us tell it. Truth is, we don’t even remember the names of the other four golfers on our team, neutralized throughout with mower contributions they might’ve made to our staggingly low scores. There was a restaurant owner, a couple of cops (not the one across the street) and a guy who hit the ball further than we’d ever like to walk without a snack lunch.

It is being said that our victory, technically, was in the tournament’s ‘B flight, which assume means “Best” class, though there will be some wannas who will come out and tell you that we were mere bastards of the bad golfers.

SUPER ADS: In the midst of all this excitement, we want to pay attention to the Super Bowl commercials, although they didn’t have to. They’re all on the Internet now, including YouTube, AOL.com, Super Bowl-Ads.com and many more. Our Top Five ads were:

1. “Unibrow” — Planters Peanuts ad about guys going for a woman who uses Planters as perfume.
2. “Barkley/Wade” — A creaky cartoon with one-hispanic dog named which Dwanye Wa finally gets on Charles Barkley’s T-Mobile’s T-Mobile. It was.
3. “Giant Pigeons” — A horrifying look at FedEx’s very tightly made and messy commercials.
5. “Cave Men” — Cave men can’t do sitcoms, but they still work great in the short form. This Bad Light spot was also the rock start of the invention of the wheel.

Probably@yahoo.com or 323-438-1254
STEVE LOPEZ
POINTS WEST

College Bound earns its name

She was headed down the wrong path and moving fast.
A 1.0 GPA in her first year of high school.
Zero ambition.
No role model.
No time for anything but taking care of younger siblings for an overworked mother who wasn’t always around.

This story is about how Evelyn Santiago finally found her smile, a broad, lit-from-within glow that came from jumping all those hurdles.

The story begins, actually, with Mike Lansing looking out the window in San Pedro a few years back and seeing members of his Boys & Girls Club going off in the street when the nearly high school was in session.

“What’s the dropout rate?” the former L.A. Unified school board member asked an aide.

About 50% of the kids attending the club don’t finish high school, he was told.

“Then we’re doing something wrong,” said Lansing, who started the College Bound program in 2002.

“We had four seniors in the program the first year,” says director Yesarla Aguilar. “And then eight the following year. And then 28. And then 44, and now it’s just exploded. We have over 120 seniors this year.”

The walls of College Bound’s study room are plastered with college pennants. After-school tutoring and guidance are free, and the kids keep coming — now about 560 of them in sixth through 12th grades. When kids get their college acceptance letters, their names and photos go up on a wall of fame.

Kids who go through College Bound are much more likely to finish high school. Their SAT scores are 78 points higher on average than non-participants. And 68% of the seniors in the program have gone on to two- or four-year colleges.

Like Evelyn Santiago, Evelyn was encouraged to forget about school so she could help out more at home, according to the grandmother who eventually took her in.

“I pretty much gave up,” says Evelyn. “Then she heard about College Bound.”

“All we did was give her a path,” Aguilar says.

This meant telling Evelyn she was intelligent and capable and free to decide for herself whether she wanted to graduate from high school and do something with her life other than settle for disappointment.

Aguilar drew up a list of the courses Evelyn needed in her last three years of high school and kept her on track. Evelyn learned that when her family moved to Harbor City, they had to drop out of the program. But the Boys & Girls Club athletic director, who had known her since she began hanging around the club as a 6-year-old, volunteered to drive her to and from College Bound each day.

“I had a similar family situation growing up,” says Justin Owens, whose parents split up when he was young. “I think when she first had someone believe in her, that’s when she started to turn it around.”

As her 18th birthday approached, Evelyn had no doubt that she should be her quinceañera godfather.

“I was kind of surprised because I didn’t know I had meant that much to her,” says Owens, who is African American.

He admits to having been.

[See Lopes, Page 18]
From a 1.0 GPA to six college acceptances

Los Angeles Times
January 16, 2008 (continued)