

Polar bears are focus of Brown Bag

By **MICHAEL ABURAS**
Opinion editor

As of Jan. 9, Polar Bears will be placed on the U.S. endangered species list, according to Conservation Biologist Juliet Hoffman, at last Friday's Brown Bag seminar on the condition of the Polar Bear in northern Canada.

Hoffman spent the last six years in Churchill, Canada working with the wildlife and residents and studying polar bears. Churchill is located at the western shore of the Hudson Bay which made it ideal to study polar bears. "It's the first place to freeze, and last place to lose its ice [in the region]," said Hoffman. Polar bears are highly dependent on ice and distribution of seals, which are their main prey, added Hoffman.

According to NASA, within the next 100 years, the melting polar regions of Greenland, Antarctica and Canada will raise global sea levels by 7 to 15 inches.

Hoffman informed the audience that the U.S. declaring Polar Bears an endangered

species is a step forward. "Canada is reluctant to admit this because it means you haven't been doing a good job of taking care of the environment."

As a result of the receding ice, Hoffman observed decline in weight by 15 percent in cubs. The ice is an integral part of the polar bears' habitat. "Ice, if you were to flip it over, would be like a giant underwater garden," said Hoffman. In addition, within the last year there has been three confirmed starvations, compared to one documented starvation within the previous 10 years.

The polar bears also use the ice and snow to hibernate. "Dens protect cubs and form surrogate wombs to protect them from freezing," said Hoffman.

Hoffman also included the physical characteristics of polar bears, whose scientific name is sea bears, during her presentation. For instance, males grow to be two to three times bigger than females. The bears grow to about 5 feet to their shoulder, and may stand up to 10 feet tall when upright.

Polar bears have extremely sharp claws, which allow them to have traction on ice and can smell a seal up to 20 miles away. "They can go out on three inches [of ice], which is pretty amazing because of their weight."

During the summer, polar bears are forced to live on land, eating berries and kelp for food. Because of the ice retreat and, in effect a longer summer, the bears are unable to return to their normal diet of seal to gain a higher weight for hibernation. This has resulted in lower birth weight.

The lowest concentration of ice in the Hudson region was in 2002, however, a new record was set in 2005. "Without the reduction of greenhouse gases, you'll have habitat destruction. It's not a hunting issue," said Hoffman. "I'm not asking people to give up their cars. I'm not planning on giving up my car."

Hoffman explained that she was not trying to argue whether or not global warming exists, but said in her opinion, "There's no excuse for wasting resources."



Photo by Eric Dorman

Biologist Juliet Hoffman explained that polar bears will soon be an endangered species.

ASOC wraps up semester with holiday bash

By **BARRY KEARNS**
Staff writer

The Associated Students of Ohlone College (ASOC) met for the last time this semester, but discussed plans to resolve unfinished business.

ASOC President Tatyana Hamady announced that the ASOC would be celebrating a holiday bash on Dec. 15 at either Yuki's or Sushi Harbor. The ASOC approved a \$250 money request to partially fund the celebration; the rest, Hamady said, would come out of the members' pockets. She also announced that there would be volunteers needed for the Green Tie Gala.

Two last-minute "emergency" items were added to the agenda. A money request came from the cafeteria for the sum of \$9,372.17 to repair a rice and meat steamer that had been non-operational for several weeks due to short circuits in the wiring. In the mean time,

the cafeteria has been using a rice cooker to do the job. The ASOC decided to postpone a decision as they reviewed their financial obligations to the cafeteria.

Student Member, Board of Trustees Ken Steadman announced that bids for the frontage property would be received on Dec. 12 at 3 p.m. in the Jackson Theater.

Representative at Large Zuhul Bahaduri announced that the some members of the ASOC still had to turn in student ID discounts and that the current number of discounts is at 26 of the proposed 50.

Senator Dan Zhou announced that after going over 500 surveys regarding the state of the cafeteria, he was able to come up with a rough assessment. Among complaints and recommendations for the cafeteria surveys were that the students believed the food was too expensive, appliances were old and students wanted the ability to pay with ATM or credit cards.

During the committee reports, the parking committee announced that they had not yet had a chance to meet. Steadman added himself to the committee and stressed the importance of getting permits to students at the beginning of the next semester. The committee will meet to discuss the criteria for getting a permit to park in the 20 spots allotted to the ASOC in Lot N.

Ohlone Foundation Executive Director Dave Smith and Vice President of Student Services Ron Travenick addressed the ASOC to discuss fundraising for the Newark Ohlone Campus. Smith explained that the cost of construction had increased and that the NOC now needed another \$10 million to furnish the campus. The ASOC agreed to allocate \$50,000 for the NOC and would hold executive meetings in the future to discuss the dispersment of the funds.

The ASOC voted to support the concept of giving carpools preferen-

tial parking and granting discounts for fuel-efficient vehicles, but in a second motion rejected the policy that came with it. The policy, the ASOC felt, left too many holes and unanswered questions regarding the criteria and enforcement needed to award spots and discounts.

Faculty members Chris Warden and Robin Kutokuri presented a program that would call for five new automated external defibrillator units to be placed on the campus. During a slideshow presented to the ASOC, Warden explained the benefits of having more units on campus for faster response times and accessibility.

The addition of the units, according to Warden, would ensure a three minute turnaround to bring the unit to a person experiencing a heart attack. The AED units run from \$1,200 to \$3,000 each and might also require up to \$300 additionally for accessories and expenses such as placement.

While no action was called for or taken, Warden explained that the purpose of the presentation was to "get the word out."

An amendment was made by the Life Club in their money request to show the film "the 11th hour." The amount requested increased from \$355 to \$500 to pay for unforeseen expenses. The ASOC granted the increased money request.

In what may have been one of the most contentious decisions among the ASOC the request for the sum of \$1,685 for the Latina Leadership network was denied. Critics of the request stated that they felt that the funds of the students should not go to a group that was specific to a ethnicity or gender. Other members of the ASOC argued that Hispanic females were underrepresented and drew parallels between the network and the ASOC that did receive funds to attend conferences. The decision came to a roll call vote, where the money request was denied.

Seminar to offer internship tips

By **KATHY SUNG**
Staff writer

December's Brown Bag Seminar will affect all students who are searching for internships this coming summer. Laurel Egenberger, a representative from Berkeley, will lecture on having students apply for the Community College Internship (CCI) program at Lawrence Berkeley Lab.

The event will be held this Friday in Room 3201 from 1 to 2 p.m. It will be the last Brown Bag of the semester.

The website for Berkeley Lab says, "The Lab is managed by the University of California, operating with an annual budget of more than \$500 million (FY2004) and a staff of about 3,800 employees, including more than 500 students." The website also says that the "Berkeley Lab conducts unclassified research across a wide range of scientific disciplines...[such as]...quantitative biology; nanoscience; new energy systems and environmental solutions; and the use of integrated computing as a tool for discovery."

Yvette Niccolls, the Math, Science, and Technology Coordinator, arranged for this Brown Bag Seminar because she said that "a student who does an internship has an advantage in anything they apply to." The internship offered will involve "working with a science researcher in various scientific fields." The internships are usually rewarded to people who have excelled in science and already taken courses in the science field. Students are granted internships based on GPA, essays and teacher recommendations.

College plans to optically digitize student records

By **ANDREW CAVETTE**
Staff writer

Students and counselors will soon have access to their own digitized, paperless records.

As reported in the Nov. 29 issue of the *Monitor*, Ohlone is purchasing optical scanning equipment and software that will allow the college to create digitized versions of a student's records.

Project analyst Gillian O'Farrell has worked on the optical scanning project for more than a year and is currently involved in the purchasing of the scanning equipment. O'Farrell said Ohlone faculty and staff will begin learning how to utilize the system in January 2008.

The optical scanning project is funded by a Title III federal grant. Overall, the college's objective for the annual \$350,000 Title III funding is to improve student success. Title III is currently providing the funding for a diverse assortment of projects, including an update for

Webadvisor.

According to O'Farrell and Title III project coordinator Deb Parziale, implementing technology like the optical scanning equipment will assist the college in achieving this goal.

"All of the student records are going to be scanned in so that everything is available online [in an internal network]," said Parziale. "When a student meets with a counselor, they'll have the transcripts and the data they need and they won't have to go to Admissions and Records [to get them]."

Currently both students and counselors do not always have immediate access to all of a student's records. O'Farrell noted, "In a community college it's a little tricky because students are not assigned to a specific counselor. Typically they will find one they like, but if they can't get in to see that person they will go see whomever [is available]."

O'Farrell said that sometimes there was a disconnect with the

students information, "There was not a [universally accessible] depository for that information."

The digitized records will be accessible to all authorized staff members, including all counselors on both the Fremont and Newark campuses. In this way, they will be better equipped to collectively help students.

Not only will all of the documents be viewable on the counselor's computer screen, but the counselor will be able to attach electronic notes, reminders and comments to the documents for future use without disturbing the document itself.

O'Farrell said the college "initially thought of it as an electronic file cabinet, but once we got in and started looking at the software, we realized there is a lot more that we can do with it."

She also noted when the system is fully functioning it "relieves the students from having to be responsible for their [own] documents."