



Stone cold thinker

By NOAH LEVIN
Opinion editor

Legalize marijuana

With our nation's economy in its current state, the government seems particularly open to any ideas that would help lighten the load on our wallets. So now would seem like an ideal time to propose the decriminalization and taxation of marijuana.

San Francisco Assemblyman Tom Ammiano has already begun the fight for legalization by putting forth a bill that proposes to regulate all marijuana in the state of California the same way the state regulates alcohol and tobacco. The bill, entitled Marijuana Control, Regulation, and Education Act, would allow for the sale and taxation of marijuana to adults 21 years or older. The legalization of marijuana would also lift an enormous burden off the judiciary and penal systems, saving the state billions of dollars annually. The estimated yearly revenue from marijuana is placed at around \$14 billion, making it California's number one cash crop.

These figures are based largely on profits from illegal sales. There is no way to know how the pricing, supply, or demand for the wily weed will be affected by a sudden legalization. Pot smokers across the state are simultaneously elated and worried by the prospect of legalization. I feel that a tax in place of legal prosecution is more than acceptable if I don't stand the chance of being arrested. Cannabis activists like myself are united in belief that cannabis is no more, if less harmful, than tobacco or alcohol. In addition, the black market demand made by criminalizing marijuana could still thrive and provide quality pot in the event that large corporations began to mass-produce and weaken the cannabis. Many pro-cannabis, anti-legalization proponents claim that making pot legal would open up the production of marijuana to the dreaded tobacco companies. This leads many to fear that marijuana would become just as unhealthy and addicting as the nicotine in cigarettes.

Many opponents to cannabis are firm believers in the "gateway drug" theory, which claims that smoking pot leads directly to using and abusing harder, more dangerous substances. The legalization of this "gateway drug" would in turn cause chaos and turmoil the likes of which have never been seen. The good in legalizing cannabis clearly outweighs any negative issues. Though it can be habit forming, marijuana is not addictive like alcohol or nicotine, and the side effects from using marijuana pale in comparison to alcohol abuse or nicotine addiction.

If our state legislature is truly wise, and wishes to actually take action to save our state from bankruptcy, then legalizing marijuana can only be good for California.



Photos courtesy of Narinder Bansal

Narinder Bansal and his students are learning to install solar panels on the Newark campus.



Taking advantage of the sun

By DEVERY SHEFFER
Staff writer

Uninterested in conventional blue and white collar jobs? Change both your and the world's future with a green collar job. Ohlone offers a Photovoltaic Design (ENVS 213A) class Sundays from 9 a.m. to 12:20 p.m.

Right now the two key types of alternative energy are being found in solar and wind. This class focuses on creating solar panels that are installed to turn sunlight into a source of energy.

Solar panels are made of silicon and polycrystals. They work best in cooler temperatures, and have ability to store energy when there isn't any light. Diodes work as on-and-off switches to regulate the electricity. The industry continues to make the panels more clean, safe, and affordable.

The industry slowed with the downfall of the economy due to

a lack of funds. But it has taken an upturn with Barack Obama's stimulus package, which passed on Feb. 10. Money will be used to make the installation alternative forms for energy more affordable and efficient for homeowners.

Jobs involving alternative energy have become known as "green collar jobs." As this industry continues to grow, it can create jobs and improve the economy.

Students who take the class learn about photovoltaic systems requirements along with design and configurations. Starting off in the industry they are getting paid \$20 to \$25 an hour, depending on who they work for.

At the end of the semester students have the option of taking the North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners (NABCEP) test. According their website, "Professionals who choose to become certified demonstrate their competence in the field and their

commitment to upholding high standards of ethical and professional practice."

Taking the test is the first step into getting your foot into the door of the solar energy industry, although it does not guarantee you a job.

Narinder Bansal, instructor of the photovoltaic class, has been teaching at Ohlone for about nine years. He started off by teaching physical and cultural geography. For the last three years has been teaching Environmental Studies (ENVS) classes.

Bansal co-teaches the class with Hal Aronson. The first day of class, 40 students showed up, but that number had to be cut down to the 24 currently enrolled students. As a class, they work on solar panels with 300 to 400 volts of power.

The number of students must be kept low so they can be closely observed by the two teachers while dealing with high amounts of power.

Bansal is currently working on creating a certificate for Ohlone students in Alternative Energy. Three of the six or seven classes that would be required for the certificate have already been created, including a wind energy class that will be offered next semester. Bansal hopes that this certificate will be available by next fall, but due to budget cuts nothing is certain.

"We have to make decision as a society to move forward in the next five to ten years," Bansal said about "going green."

Alternative energy is just one way to go green.

There are lots of things people can do to participate in "going green," such as recycling cans and bottles, turning off unused lights and appliances and taking a walk or a bike ride instead of driving to close destinations.

The purpose of "going green" is for our society to one day be self sustainable and livable.

English professor to explain metaphor

By ISAAC WEST
Staff writer

English Professor Perri Gallagher will give a stirring presentation on metaphors this Friday. He will be speaking at the Conference on College Composition and Communication "Four C's." The convention will be held in San Francisco. It will be from 3:30 to 4:45 p.m.

Gallagher will be featured during "Research on Writing in Digital Environments." Gallagher's presentation is entitled "More Than Poetic Examination: Metaphors That Structure Online Instructor Views."

"I will be speaking about my research on the metaphor, which

is not the 'poetic' kind that we normally think of, but a form that reveals how we are thinking about something. So, for example, when we say that a romantic relationship is 'going nowhere' that is understood in terms of the metaphor 'love is a journey.' This is called conceptual metaphor, and is part of what I'm studying," said Gallagher.

Gallagher is currently working on his Doctorate of Education Degree (Ed.D) at Alliant International University, getting the title of his presentation from his dissertation.

He wants to be involved in the presentation for the CCCC annual convention because it's very difficult to get a proposal accepted,

with hundreds of people presenting over three days.

"I wanted to be involved because it's good to present my research before defending it formally, and to learn from questions or feedback from my professional peers," said Gallagher.

The special aspect about the CCCC Annual Convention is to hear award-winning keynote speakers, attend presentations by colleagues on the latest innovations in education and network to gain acknowledge of best practices in the field.

The Four C's is the college specific interest group within the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), a professional organization of English and language

arts teachers at all levels.

"Within the NCTE, the two-year colleges are represented by the Two-Year College Association (TYCA) and it's great to be able to meet with that group, and those in it who also represent the English Council of California Two-Year Colleges (ECCTYC) which is the California regional representation within TYCA.

"I was a board member of ECCTYC and chaired their conference in 2001. All of these organizations are deeply committed to the teaching of writing, advocacy, and to research in the profession," said Gallagher.

For more information, or to register for the Convention, visit www.ncte.org/cccc/conv.

Battery standard, gas is optional

By **JAPNEET KAUR**
Photo staff

In a time when both the economy and the environment have become controversies, political platforms, and the basis for personal reinventions, an Ohlone College professor has taken a personal step toward environmental reform, and it doesn't hurt his pocket, either.

Don Chu is the proud owner of a converted Prius plug-in, meaning that his car can run entirely off of electricity for an extended period of time.

The Prius, in hybrid mode, runs off of electricity until the speed hits 40 miles per hour. However, once it has been converted, the plug-in can run off of electricity at higher speeds. It takes about four hours to fully charge the car, and it runs on electricity for about 10-12 miles — perfect for running errands or a night out on the town.

"I can go out to the theater, go for a drive, buy some groceries and make it back home, all on electricity. I can switch back to hybrid mode for longer trips, and still do better than regular cars that run on gas."

Chu had taken his car in for regular 60,000 mile servicing, only

to find he had to shell out \$600. He decided to try a different garage, and found Luscious Garage in San Francisco — a "green" garage specializing in Toyotas and, specifically, Priuses. Not only did he pay less for the servicing (a little more than \$200), but the owner of the garage suggested the conversion kit, and he decided it was a step he wanted to take.

The garage is owned by Carolyn Coquilllette, who has bachelor's degrees in English and Physics from the University of Michigan, and a master ASE certification with L1 Advanced Engine Performance. The garage "combines the best of both worlds: factory-level training, parts, and equipment with the personal attention of a neighborhood shop," according to www.lusciousgarage.com.

The car has been relatively trouble-free, aside from the time he was stranded because the car's battery ran out. When he called for help, it was the technicians at the garage who helped him to get the car started in hybrid mode so he could continue on his way. This was his first experience that, like anything else, the plug-in Hybrid is not foolproof. Though Chu saves



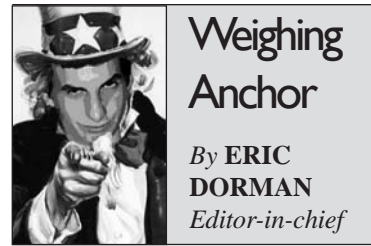
Photo by Japneet Kaur

Professor Don Chu shows off the battery in his Prius.

himself a lot of gas money, he didn't decide to convert his Prius for financial reasons. In fact, the initial conversion cost was quite steep. His reasons for taking this pricey step lie elsewhere.

"It was the right thing to do," he

said. "It's been far too long with no one doing anything for the environment—it's about time people started. That's why I like teaching here at the Newark campus—everything is green. It's great to think you can do the "right thing."



Weighing Anchor

By **ERIC DORMAN**
Editor-in-chief

No Rush needed

How do we love thee, Rush? Let us count the ways...

He's the gift that keeps on giving—to the Democrats, that is—and a bridge to nowhere when it comes to the rehabilitation of the Republican brand. If the GOP is ever going to make forward progress, it needs to say "thanks, but no thanks" to Rush Limbaugh's leadership.

Don't get me wrong—as a liberal and thus a member of the party that perfected the circular firing squad, it gives me not a little satisfaction to see the GOP pulling a few pins within their own ranks. Furthermore, after eight years of the Republican brand, I can't say I'm particularly eager to see it rehabilitated. However, if I did have a vested interest in the long-term health of the Republican Party, I'd give RNC Chairman Michael Steele this piece of advice—take the wheel of the Republican party from Limbaugh now, or prepare to spend a whole lot of time stuck in Rush hour.

The GOP's Limbaugh problem was brought to the forefront after the radio personality's Feb. 28 address at the Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC). The address was nothing special by Limbaugh's standards, but his appearance on national television, still publicly standing by his controversial "I want [Obama] to fail" statement, his controversial remarks and appearance on the center stage seemed to affirm his status as the de facto leader of the Republican party, a long-time Democratic claim. The accusations only intensified when Steele, forced to make a statement about Limbaugh following the public's post-address outcry, called Limbaugh's remarks "incendiary" and "ugly"—before being blasted by Limbaugh the next day and apologizing.

Obama was right when he said, "you can't listen to Rush Limbaugh and get things done." Limbaugh is an entertainer, not a politician and certainly not a leader; his sole goal is to grab headlines, not provide leadership. Immensely popular, with as many as 20 million listeners, he can afford to say what he wants—no matter how bigoted, wrongheaded or simply wrong. (The "fail" quote doesn't nearly make the Top 10—among other things, he's called Obama an Arab and a "halffrican American" and said that MLK's confessed assassin "deserves a posthumous Medal of Honor.") He might be popular, but he's also extreme in his views and divisive in his remarks. If he's the face of the Republican Party, the GOP is going to need a face lift.

The DNC is looking for a billboard slogan for Limbaugh, 10 words or less. How about this: "Rush Limbaugh. Not ready to lead."

Ohlone goes down under... mate

By **SEAN NERO**
Staff writer

Ohlone students have an opportunity to visit Sydney, Australia this coming fall and earn course credit while doing so, as part of the school's study abroad program.

The program will be coordinated by English Professor Mark Brosamer.

The trip is currently scheduled for Sept. 6 to Nov. 29. It will cost each attending student approximately \$7,599 plus airfare if a minimum enrollment of 20 students is reached.

Airfare is approximately \$950 plus tax and cannot be confirmed until time of ticketing, according to the informational pamphlet.

During the trip, students will get to visit Australia's Blue Mountains, the Royal National Park as well as the famous Sydney Opera House.

"Students will live with local families in their homes. All families are carefully screened and selected by CAPA International program staff in Australia," according to the Sydney, Australia brochure. Two students will be in each house. They will receive daily continental breakfast and dinner.

According to Brosamer, "students can use their weekends to explore more of the country" and will also have "a one week fall break in which they will have the opportunity to travel."

Brosamer said, "Sydney is a beautiful city that's a lot like San Francisco in that they both share a friendly walkable downtown."

Brosamer participated in a study abroad program while at UCLA and said he "learned more in four months in Paris, France than in four years at UCLA."

On growing up in Fremont, he

said "going around Fremont isn't the same as going around Sydney" due to there being a "huge number of cultural events."

Brosamer also led a semester abroad in the fall of 2001 to Cambridge, England saying, "There is no better supplement to education than traveling abroad." Brosamer also notes "since Australia is in the Southern Hemisphere weather gets sunnier and sunnier during the months of September [through] December," thus allowing participating students to skip cold weather for a whole year.

The cost of the program fees will cover room and board, breakfast and dinner for the duration of the semester, all of the excursions and medical and travel insurance.

Brosamer said, "Cost is less than the tuition and room and board of most four-year institutions."

Brosamer also said "financial

aid applies to the event as well" and advises students "to go to the financial aid office for help."

Brosamer is instructor of a four-unit English 101B class as well as a three unit English 107 (Literature and Film) course. Other courses offered include a four-unit Art 103B (Survey of World Art History) course and the three-unit Anthropology 102 (Cultural Anthropology) class. An Australian adjunct professor will teach the latter two classes.

A meeting for the trip is scheduled on March 18 at 4 p.m. in Room 5209 for students seeking more information.

Students can contact Brosamer at mbrosamer@ohlone.edu or by phone at 659-6249. Students are encouraged to check out the student-created MySpace page at www.myspace.com/sydney-abroadohlone.

Students look for place to stay

By **SEAN NERO**
Staff writer

Students "came to Ohlone looking for emergency housing and no one was able to provide them with listings," said student assistant Khusboo Chabria.

Chabria's determination to help ease the situation led her to find as many resources in the Tri-City area as possible to assist all students with this problem. Her search led her to call more than 160 shelters over the summer of 2008. Chabria, the president of the AMSA (American Medical Student Association), asked each shelter about the services they offer specifically "those aimed

at adults or students in need of a place to stay."

From these calls Chabria "discovered a pattern of how the system worked," stating "one night shelters were on a first-come-first-serve basis." Chabria noted, "all the shelters had rules such as attendance at the mandatory meetings with a case manager." Chabria also said, "other programs require the guest keep a steady job and save a percentage of their income."

Looking to help students long-term, Chabria compiled a list of about 34 transitional living spaces that offered varying degrees of short to long-term housing, hot meals, washing machines and other ameni-

ties to best serve students.

Chabria "made sure to include programs that provided assistance for different situations such as victims of domestic violence, pregnant women, students with disabilities and shelters designed for women and men in various age groups."

Chabria gathered information from each of their websites and included information on projected stay time and "what the process is to become apart of the program etc."

According to Chabria, the AMSA "aims to increase awareness of these types of situations." Chabria was a Biology major but soon switched to Public Health due to her "work on this project."

Chabria said she "wants to try and make changes in the healthcare field because of the number of people that don't get help. There is more to health than meets the eye" and that "being homeless can cause mental health issues such as stress and depression that is often overlooked."

According to Chabria, "Director of Campus Events Debbie Trigg took the results of her research to a committee meeting and they will soon be available for student use at places such as the EOPS office and Financial Aid office."

Chabria tells students not to be scared to ask for help, because help is always around the corner.