



# California Times

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California, Pennsylvania 15419

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Friday, February 21, 1992

## Fire Marshall Rules in Fatal Fraternity Blaze



Left: Bystanders watch in front of the burning Phi Kappa Theta house as California, Brownsville and Roscoe firemen extinguish the blaze that took the life of David Herth during the snowy early morning hours of last Thursday. Right: A picture taken of the rear of the house the following day shows the extent of the damage. The Washington County fire marshal has determined that the probable cause of the disaster was faulty wiring. Photograph left by Michelle Rosato, right by Pete Carney.

by James Panarella

Faulty wiring was the cause of the blaze that resulted in the death of a California University student at the Phi Kappa Theta fraternity house on the morning of Thursday, Feb. 13.

According to County Fire Marshall John Robson's official report, the cause of the blaze, which started at approximately 3:30 a.m., was most likely an accidental electrical fire.

David Herth, 21, of Mechanics-

burg, died as a result of smoke asphyxiation, according to Washington County Coroner S. Timothy Warco.

Herth was pronounced dead at the scene by Deputy County Coroner Bernie Stanek at approximately 6:30 a.m. and was identified through dental records.

According to California Fire Chief Tom Hartley Jr., the third floor of the Phi Kappa Theta house, located at 210 Fourth Street, was completely destroyed in the

fire. The second floor received some smoke and water damage and the first floor was undamaged. A damage estimate was not available at press time.

None of the other residents of the house were injured and one fireman, Chief Kevin Waltz, was treated at Mon Valley Hospital for smoke inhalation.

Some 60 firefighters from California, Brownsville and Roscoe fire companies arrived on the scene by 3:52 a.m. The fire was con-

tained 45 minutes later.

According to neighbors, members of the Phi Kappa Theta Fraternity were yelling out to each other in the street. "I heard the boys yell 'Over here! Over here!' and were yelling about the back of the house," said Judy Ansill, who lives across the street from the fraternity house. "It sounded like they thought someone was still on the third floor."

Herth's apartment was on the third floor of the house. According

to fire officials, firefighters on the scene attempted to get to the door of Herth's apartment, but were driven back by increasing smoke and flame.

According to Warco, the result of the toxicology examination indicated Herth's blood alcohol content was .20, twice the state legal limit.

According to C.H.O.I.C.E.S. coordinator Liz Gruber, .20 BAC is a very dangerous level.

"Depending upon the weight and

Continued on page 18







**From the Pen of Nigel Leach**

**Could It Have Been Prevented?**

**Jim Black**

The death of a Phi Kappa Theta fraternity member last week, sparked questions as to whether the fraternity house had met with local building codes.

The Phi Kap house was apparently cited last year for several building code violations.

Looking around California, I see houses that looked like they haven't been touched in decades and probably don't meet building standards.

The problem with slum-like houses is rampant in California, and with student population at California University constantly increasing, the problem will only continue to grow.

I have to wonder what landlords of these houses do with the money they collect. The average rent of an apartment in the borough is \$650 to \$700 a semester per student.

That gets to be a rather large amount of money for a landlord when two or three people are living in one house and paying rent.

Surely landlords could fix these places up. I've been in apartments in which pieces of living room ceilings were falling, plumbing was atrocious and the walls were ready to cave in.

I wonder how these places pass building codes. These apartments at most can meet only the minimum of standards set forth by building codes.

California adopted the Building Officials and Code Administrator's National Property Maintenance Code in 1990. The code sets requirements for buildings and places responsibilities on both the landlords and occupants.

I understand the Phi Kaps own the house and do not have to rely on landlords to see that repairs are done, but the building codes must continually be met.

How many fires do we have to have to get something done? The Deltas were lucky; no one was killed in the fire at their house last July.

The cause of fire in both cases was faulty wiring. Wiring is something that should be checked every few years.

Some of the Deltas moved into the Bromley house near Manderino Library. That's like moving from the wretchedness of Cambodia to the slums in Calcutta.

The Bromley house looks like a stack of wood in the hours before a bonfire. One match and the place would go up in an instant.

If landlords do make repairs on apartments, the repairs are made only because local officials like zoning officers and laws force them to make the repairs.

Students at CU are forced into the dilemma of not finding a dorm room or having to live in an apartment unsuitable to live in.

Upon arriving at school, some students have received notices that due to a lack of dormitory space, they should consider looking for off-campus apartments.

To avoid such problems, steps toward construction of a new dormitory should be considered. Many students shared rooms with three people. The rooms are about the size of a small den.

How can three people live in such a small room comfortably?

With a new dormitory, students could live comfortably, two to a room, and not have to worry about moving into slum houses off campus.

And maybe if more landlords would return some of the rent money they collect into making repairs on their houses, the risk of other tragedies in the future would be less.

**Black Student Union Holds Special Forum**

by Jill Runfola

A special forum, "Am I My Brother's Keeper?" was held by CU's Black Student Union in the North Greene Room on Monday.

Broad topics dealt with various challenges facing black men and women of today. Such discussions raised questions: How can successful black adults dedicate themselves to helping peers and youths overcome obstacles or, should the struggle remain a more individualized effort?

Coordinated by Michelle Holly, BSU president and a Comprehensive Social Science major, the forum featured Po, of the Academic Development Services Dept. and Assistant Director of Upward Bound, expressing his viewpoints on each given topic. A panel of five CU students discussed the issues: Eletta Brown, freshman Biology major; Nathan Bullock, majoring in Management; Brian Johnson, a sophomore majoring in English Mortuary Science; Kent Prayter, Psychology major; Clarissa Thompson, Elementary Education.

Starting the discussions, Prayter addressed the role of the black male in society.

He stressed that the role has to be one of self-sacrifice, sacrifice of the male's own pleasures, and he cannot try to dominate others in relationships with females or other males.

Po, agreeing at the conclusion of Prayter's speech, said, "Historically, the black male has had to

take a back seat—a back seat in the household and in business. He does, however, say later that the male should not always be head of the household. "Some people are just better managers," he said.

"And if you're going to be head of the household, you have to set examples, examples that will keep the family unit together; I don't see that happening a lot either. I'm not putting it all on black males, because a lot of historical avenues have perpetuated this behavior that exists today."

On the panel, Johnson made a forceful argument. "We need to quit blaming everyone else for our problems. Yes, we have had a long history of being dogged out. But, I think it's time to quit blaming the white man. There are a lot of things we're doing on our own...."

"We have to quit relying on each other—sometimes. We have to go out on our own. We have to educate ourselves. There is only one way you're going to make it, and that is through education...."

"The role of the black man and woman is to build themselves up. Sometimes you have to move on for yourselves."

Bullock stated, "I agree we have to pull ourselves up, be we cannot do it without the help of the white man; we can't do it without the help of our brothers and sisters. We just can't do it, because we're not strong enough; because racism has pulled us down through the years. We just can't do it by ourselves."

An audience member explained the problem lies in the fact that we need to instill a sense of pride in the young black man, letting him take a more active role in society.

Po broke in, "A young man must have a role model. There are not enough role models. The only role models they (the youth) see are the ones working the street. And, in the city, when somebody makes it, they don't come back. They go out to the suburbs."

He continued, mentioning that those who rise above their environments should later return. He then said in order to be able to achieve that success, you need an education.

"Education means a variety of things. First of all, it means knowledge. Once you get the knowledge, you get opportunity, jobs. Education works on three levels. On the third level, you get the chance to influence."

Po insisted that education is the individual's own responsibility. He also said, "A lot of you do it (attend college) just to get by; when, in fact, you ought to be busting your...(butt) to get all that you can."

He concluded, saying there is still much, much more to talk about pertaining to the evening's topic, a topic which held an audience's full attention for approximately two hours.

Am I my brother's keeper? Yes and no—we can make a difference, but only by making one in ourselves first of all.

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Theatre Now presents...

**Les Liaisons Dangereuses**

by Christopher Hampton  
Tonight and Tomorrow at 8 p.m.  
Steele Auditorium

Admission \$5  
Free with a Cal. ID



Warning: This play contains nudity. Those offended by such scenes are encouraged not to attend.

**Extended Hours**  
**John G. Watkins**  
Assistant Dean of Student Services  
Now available to discuss student concerns during the following hours:  
**M-W-F 9 a.m.-5 p.m. T-H Noon-9 p.m.**  
Schedule an appointment by calling Mr. Watkins at 938-4477, or visit him in the Commuter Center (next to the Patio), Herron Hall.

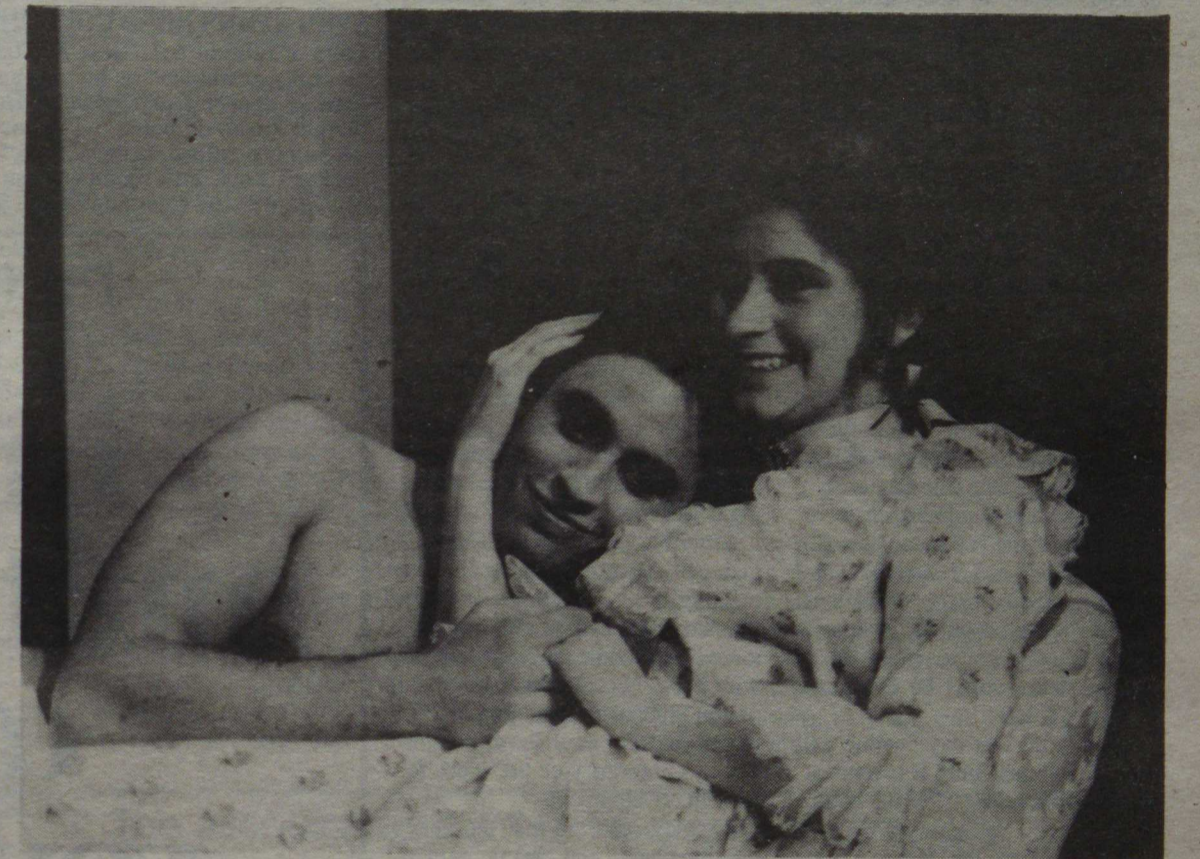
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*Tonight and Tomorrow*

# *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*

8 p.m. Steele

*Photography by Justin Vesgo*









**WHAT, AGAIN?**  
Didn't Suzi Landolphi strut her stuff just two pages ago? To be sure, but here she is again, this time making folks' ears burn with embarrassment in a classroom on Love Carefully Day. And burn they most likely did—believe us. Photograph by Mark Schmalig.

**Literacy Training Workshop to Be Held**

California Area Literacy Council is offering training workshop for volunteer literacy tutors. Additional tutors are needed to address the waiting list of adults in search of tutoring. Interested persons who would like to volunteer as tutors are urged to register for the training session. The workshop will be held in three sessions: Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday evenings, Feb. 25-27, from 6 to 10 p.m. at the Public Library. Patrice Bennett, a member of the Literacy Council and a certified Laubach Reading Method trainer,

will conduct the workshop. The Laubach Method, used by the California Council in its program, stresses a one-on-one approach in working with adult students. Tutors are assigned one student and the tutor meets privately with that student once or twice a week. The registration fee for the workshop is \$10, which covers materials. Registration is required since the class cannot run without a minimum number. To register or to receive more information, call the library at 938-2907 during the afternoon.

**Keating Places at Forensics Tourney**



Members of the spring forensics team. First row: Melissa Smith, Lori Gindlesperger. Second row: Kerry Moeller, Shannon Keating, Victor Shandor, Lauri Bloss, Rick Kaltreider, Rick Crofutt. Photograph by Rick Crofutt.

The California University Forensic Team enjoyed success in intercollegiate individual events competition at Geneva College on Saturday, Feb. 15. Shannon Keating won first place in Informational Speaking and fourth place in Pentathlon. The latter refers to total scores earned in five speaking and/or interpretative activities. Keating also competed in Prose Interpretation, Poetry Interpretation,

Single Dramatic Interpretation and Informative Speaking. Other students who competed were Rick Crofutt, Lori Gindlesperger, Renee Grush, Rick Kaltreider, Trinette Schmidt, Robin Scivaggi and Lauren Weekley. Fifteen colleges and universities competed in the Geneva Tournament including Penn State of University Park, Ohio University of Athens and Youngstown State University.

Also at the tourney were Ken State University, Duquesne University, St. Mary's of Maryland and Clarion University. Both Dr. Hal Holloway and Ms. Belinda Eber, the individual event instructors, believe that the quality of competition was high. Any person interested in intercollegiate forensics, contact Professor Robert Cowles or Holloway in the Department of Communication Studies in South Hall, 938-4170.

**SAI Seeks Candidates for Open Position**

The Student Association, Inc. has a position open for an Associate Program Director/Greek Advisor, a full-time, regular position. The position's responsibilities include reports to the Program Director, supervision and review of all program activities of SAI and development of specialized activities in conjunction with Adult Learners, Commuters and other SAI and university organizations. Other responsibilities include Director of Greek Development Office, development and implementation of small budget activities schedule, assistance in summer

camp and conference program, advisor to the university cheerleading program, fiscal management of assigned activities budgets, and supervision of assigned employees. Requirements for the position are a Master's Degree in Student Personnel, Counseling or a related field. Also, three to five years in student activities or Greek affairs. Salary for the position is \$27,130 to \$36,401 annually, and benefits include health insurance, retirement plan and tuition remission. The deadline for applications is Wednesday, Feb. 26.

A complete job description and additional information are available in the California Memorial Union, Room 201. Qualified individuals should send a letter of application, resume, and three letters of recommendation to: Student Association, Inc.; Associate Program Director Search Committee; California Memorial Union; California University of Pennsylvania, California, PA 15419. The Student Association is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer, actively seeking qualified minority candidates.

This Week's Movie  
**BARTON FINK**  
8 p.m. Saturday Student Union  
7 and 9 p.m. Sunday Steele  
Free with valid I.D.



**THE HOUSE ON THE HILL**  
What dreadful secrets await those who climb the steps to this creepy mansion? You'll find out soon enough with the March 1 premiere in the Greene Room, Student Union, of the Channel 29 movie, "The Middle Toe of Her Right Foot." Photograph by Erik Sprowls.



**ATTENTION SKI CLUB!**

**Wednesday, February 26, 9 p.m. LRC**  
Meeting and money collection for the Wednesday, March 4, ski trip

**Friday, March 6, 9 p.m. LRC**  
Meeting concerning the budget, possible ski trips and ski club banquet

This schedule is correct and **will not** be changed!  
The cost of ski trips is \$14 for lift, \$9 for rentals, bus included. Anyone can join the Ski Club at any time. Must pay for trips at meetings. Come and ski with us.

**Jazz Guitarist Workshop Offered**



Fred Adams, here shown (center) with the band SNAP!, will offer a jazz guitarists' workshop as part of this year's Jazz Experience.

California University's Jazz Experience X will host a workshop for guitarists entitled "Surviving as a Solo Jazz Guitarist" over two evenings, Monday, March 23, and Wednesday, March 25, in the Reeds Arts Center's Recital Hall from 7 to 10 p.m. Fred Adams, CU faculty member and solo guitarist will be the instructor. "There's been considerable interest in solo guitar performance recently among guitarists and jazz aficionados in general," says Adams. "Albums released in the last few years by Tuck Andress, Earl Klugh, Joe Pass and others have forced musicians to reevaluate the guitar as a solo instrument with all the potential of a piano or a Hammond organ. "This workshop will explore that potential and the ways in which a guitarist can aesthetically expand his or her horizons as well as supplement musical income by culti-

vating a working repertoire of solo pieces." The workshop will provide the intermediate to advanced level guitarist with an introduction to solo jazz guitar performance styles as exemplified by contemporary artists and exposure to a variety of techniques which the guitarist may employ to arrange all types of music for solo performance. Lessons in the workshop will also focus on application of these techniques to songs assigned in common and to songs chosen by the student with an eye toward building a solo performance repertoire. It is open to all interested guitarists who are able to read standard musical notation and tablature. There is no fee for the workshop, but participation is limited to ten people. Information concerning registration and workshop content may be obtained by calling Adams at the English Department, 938-4070.

The Entertaining Arts Committee Presents  
**MALCOLM X**  
Tuesday, February 25, 8 p.m.  
Gold Rush, Student Union

**Cajun Joe's Delivery**  
Available 4 p.m. - 1 a.m.  
Mon. - Sat.  
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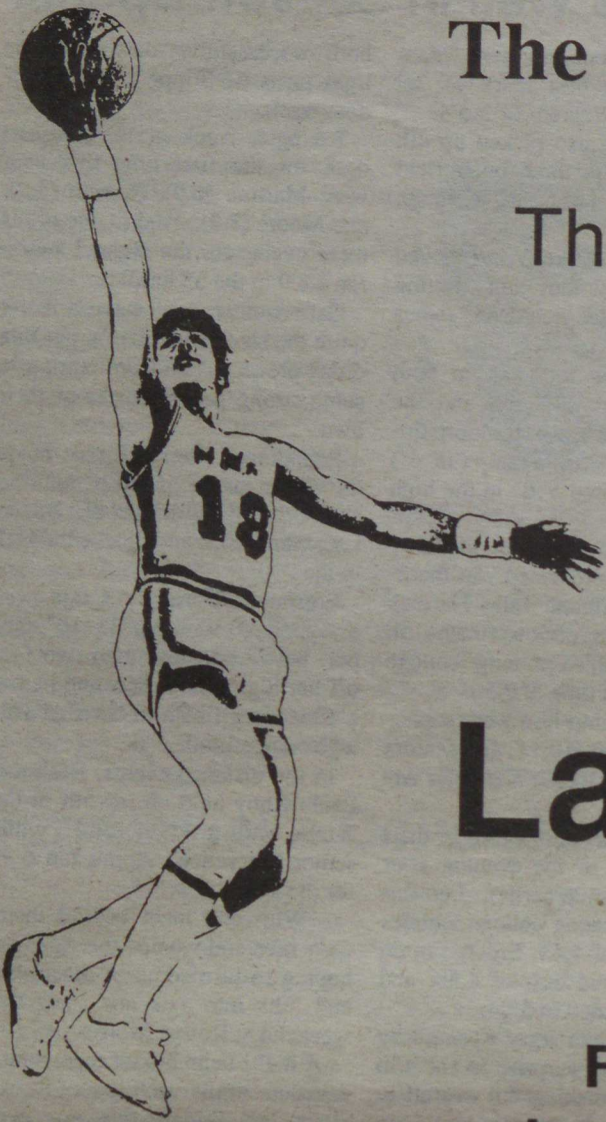












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