

California Times

California University

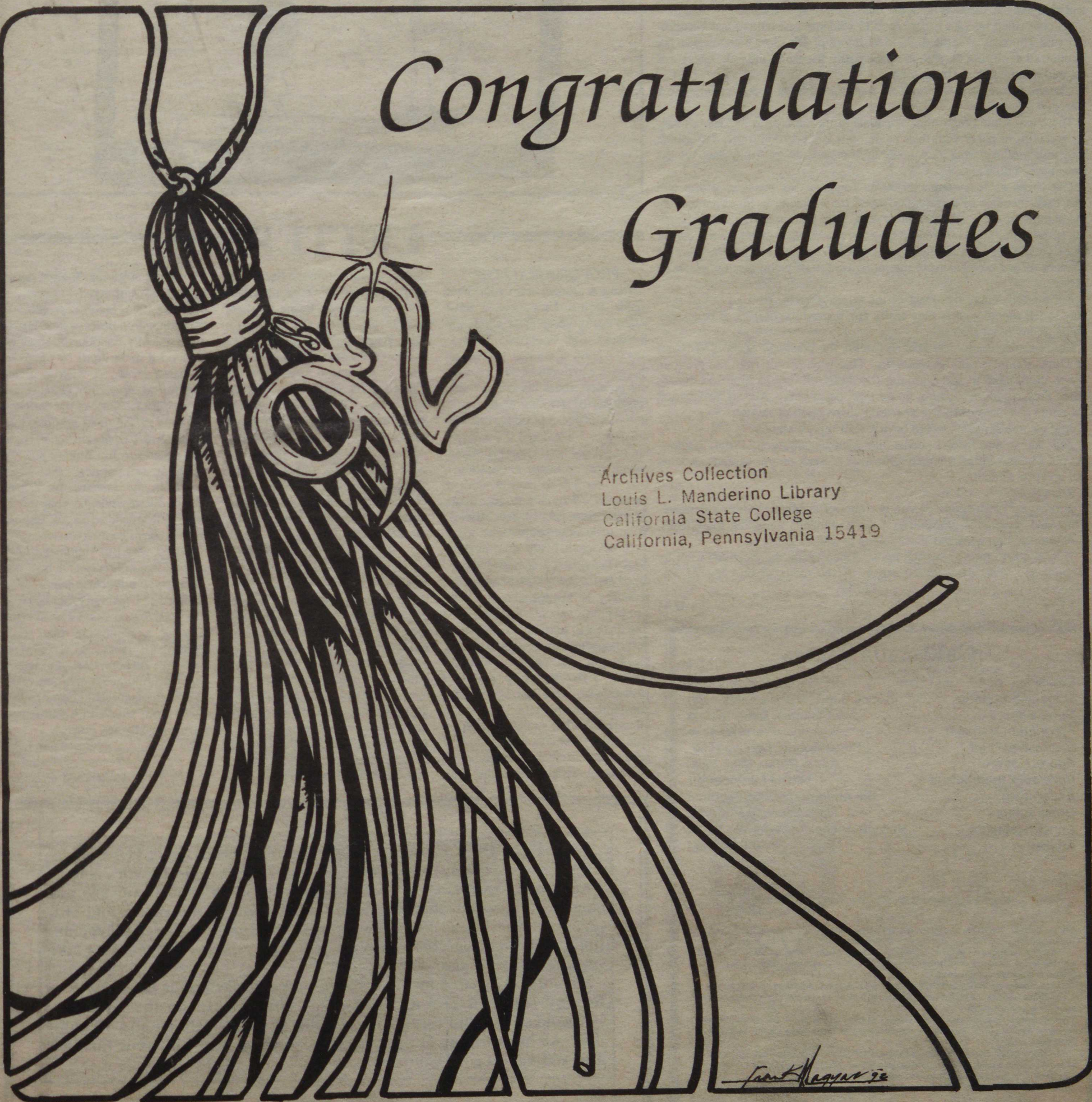
California, Pennsylvania

Vol. LXX, No. 11

Friday, April 24, 1992

Congratulations Graduates

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Frank Maguire '92

Synthesis

Final Speculations

Jeff Diehl

As this is the final installment of *Synthesis*, it will be used as a "last ditch smorgasbord" for some crazy (or maybe not-so-crazy) ideas I've been carrying around for a few years.

Idea I—Psychology. Multiple Personality Disorder, or "split personalities" is only the unleashing of a variety of personalities we all have.

We may all have several personas within ourselves, but only experience a single dominant personality. The dominant personality has command of communication and expression faculties of the mind, so this is the personality that is most familiar to the "outside world."

However, the inside personalities may disagree, gang up on one another, or feel completely differently about some event.

In one case of a split-brain patient (a man who had nerves cut in his brain to alleviate epileptic seizures), a husband arguing with his wife was forced to use his left hand to stop his right hand from striking her. The half of the brain with access to the communication faculties was not so infuriated as to strike, but the other half (which controlled half of the body) was. The missing nerves probably served as a channel of negotiation for the personalities on either side of the divide.

If you've ever had mixed feelings, or did something you didn't want to, you may have felt the peer pressure of those other personalities you share your brain with.

Idea II—Computers. This column has considered the merits of neural net computers. Perhaps the most powerful, and the most frightening application of this kind of computer technology will be the direct integration of a sophisticated near-intelligent neural network and a high speed digital computer.

Apple computer touts the Macintosh as the "power to be your best," but a human being can only communicate with a Macintosh as fast as he or she can click-and-drag the mouse.

Direct integration could provide an instantaneous link: imagine you could use a powerful computer with the ease of blinking your eyes, while keeping the computer inside your head.

Hooking humans to machines is farther away than making computers think like humans.

Idea III—Language. The English language is becoming a bit more like German, especially in the world of computer use.

Look at many of the titles of programs, say at the word processing lab: WordStar, WordPerfect, PageMaker, WriteNow, ReadySetGo.

I want to know who started it—probably some programmer somewhere who wrote a little too much Pascal code and forgot that spaces are allowed to go between words in regular English.

With over 400,000 words in its non-technical lexicon, English doesn't need many more artificial words. English is recognized worldwide for being beautifully melodic. (There is even research that shows how lyrical meter is naturally part of everyday English speech.) If this kind of practice continues, the beauty of English will suffer.

Idea IV—Not only are dolphins and whales intelligent, so are chain link fences, but we'll never know for sure.

Here's one for the loony bin. Seriously, though, chain link fences are networks of elements that follow similar behaviors. They vibrate when the wind blows against them, and certain resonant frequencies will remain within the structure, while other frequencies will self-destruct through interference. The kinds of frequencies that remain are dependent on the shape of the fence at any one time, and the internal shape of the fence can change depending on the frequencies of energy shaking it.

Within such a system, not unlike our own brains in terms of signals, pattern, and quantity and nature of connections, a coherent, self-aware consciousness may arise.

Of course, there are very good arguments that this is all a bunch of hokey. But having no idea as to which elements of the fence will exhibit consciousness or intelligence, we poor humans cannot hope to determine whether such sentience exists or does not exist. If it does, it will be markedly different than our own.

We will have better luck with the dolphins.

U.S. President Expected in Washington County

Officials of the Washington County Historical Society have invited the President of the United States to their annual dinner meeting on Saturday, May 9, at the Holiday Inn, Meadowlands.

A presidential spokesman said, "The President is thrilled to return to Washington. In a previous visit, he had placed a time capsule in Old Town Hall. He is anxious to see if the contents have weathered as well as he."

Of course, the president referred to is not President Bush. Instead, it is President Ulysses S. Grant, who

had placed the time capsule.

The historical society has arranged for the nationally known President U. S. Grant impersonator Paul LeGreco to speak and answer questions at its banquet.

During the banquet the contents of the time capsule will be exhibited for the first time.

Much of the cost for the banquet has been underwritten by local individuals and businesses so that the proceeds from the banquet can be used to further conserve the documents found in the capsule and continue the historical society's educational programs.

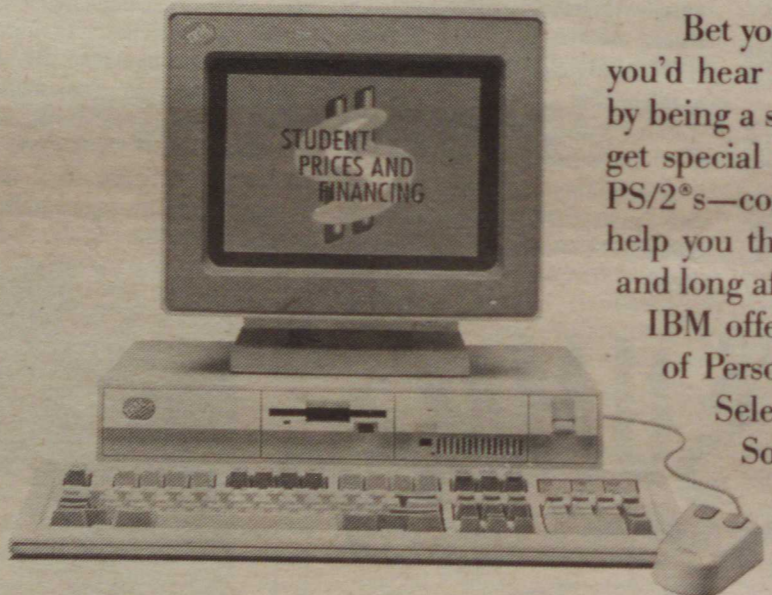
ucational programs.

"I feel the opportunity to see the time capsule displayed for the very first time and question President Grant about his recollections of that eventful September 1869 day will be an experience," said Laurie Scott, chairperson of the banquet fundraising committee and board member of the Washington County Historical Society.

The banquet is open to the public.

Reservations are necessary and must be made before Fri., May 1. For information, call 225-6740.

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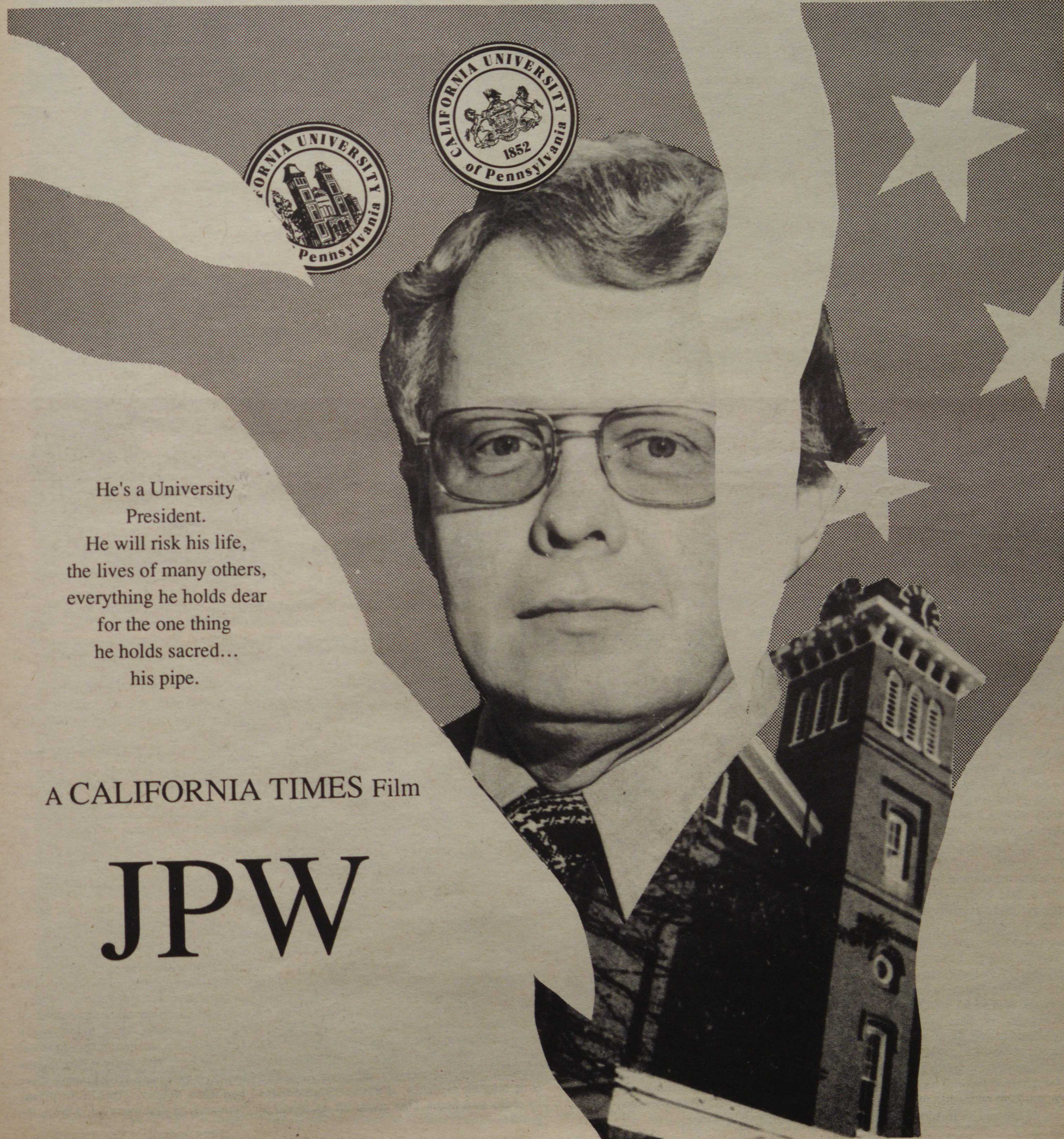
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Dr. John Pierce Watkins Announces Retirement"



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Table Tennis Team Triumphs



California University dominated the Eastern State Table Tennis Championship held on April 4th and 5th at Bloomsburg University.

The event was sponsored by Dave Dickson from Berwick, Pa.

Winning first place honors in the doubles competition were Tony Chang and Gary Zoppetti from CU. Trailing in fourth place were James Sealy and Chie Nakamura, also from CU.

Chang also looped first place honors in the singles competition. Second place went to Zoppetti and third place went to Sealy.

Giving support and helping to wear down the opposition were CU team players Meakara (Mick) Chheang, Daniel (Spin) Cook, Mark Jeffcoat, Bill Foreskin, Matt Stengle and Dave Smith (who supported the team with his generosity).

The table tennis team holds practices at McCloskey dorm and Herron Recreation and Fitness Center weekly.

Anyone interested in joining the team or watching should contact Daniel (Spin) Cook or Harry Metz at 938-5907 for more information.

Business and Economics Clubs Honor Watkins

California University's Economics Club organized the 15th Annual Business and Economics Dinner on Friday, April 10 at Holiday Inn Meadowlands.

President Dr. John P. Watkins was guest speaker and honored by the clubs at the function.

Present at the occasion were Vice President Dr. Nancy Nelson; Dr. Hart, Dean of Science and Technology; Dr. Crane Dean of graduate studies; Dr. Chawdhry, Chairman Business Department, faculty members and students.

Also present at the function were John Cavalier, Marketing Club Secretary; and Mark Bowman, vice president of the Accounting Club.

The function is an annual event of the Business and Economics Department in which all the clubs of the Business Department participate.

"It's a function meant for the students of business studies," said Chawdhry, department chairman.

Dr. Chawdhry praised Watkins for his efforts and dedication to higher education at CU.

"The Economics Club has been very active this year," said Gilani.

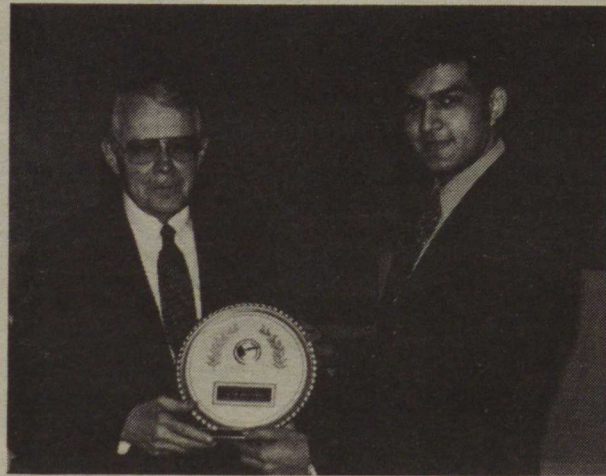
"We took the students to the Federal Reserve Bank, invited a guest speaker from Pittsburgh National Bank, organized the CEO Forum. I am happy that all of them were a great success.

I appreciate Sherri Pruce, Vice President of the Economics Club Efforts to the Club."

"She and Lisa Wright, Treasurer of the Economics Club, solely organized the CEO Forum while I was busy in organizing the Annual Business Dinner," he said.

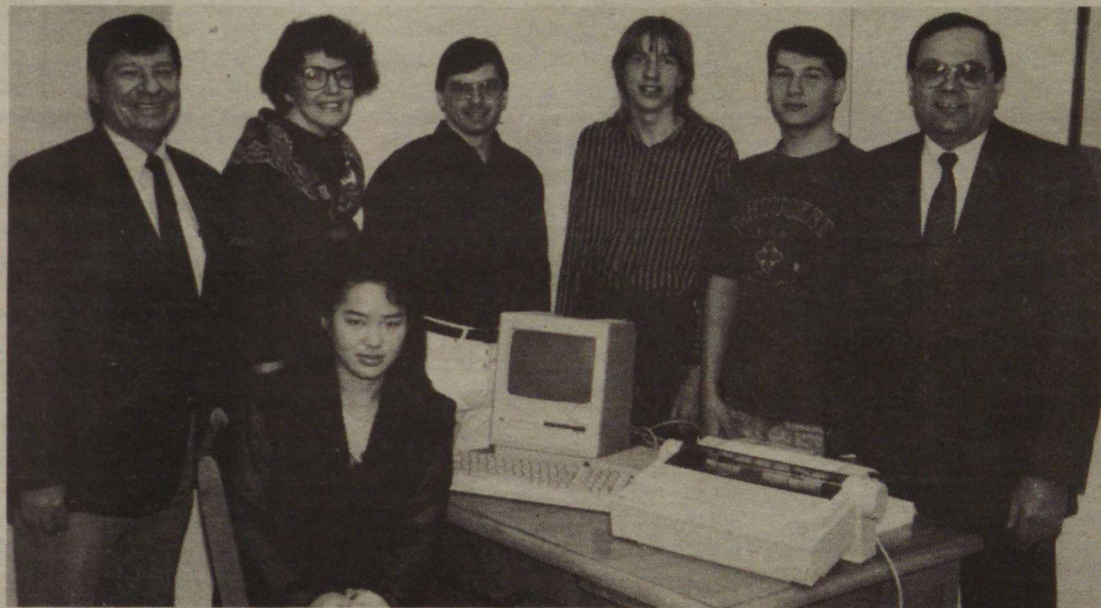
There has been a great response from students. A lot of them attended the meetings and enjoyed being with the club. The club intends to continue with their plans next semester.

When students return in the fall, the club will take the students to Economics Club meetings at the Vista Hotel, a trip to Mellon Bank and a trip to Washington, D.C.



Later the President of the Economics Club, Raza Gilani, presented an award to Watkins.

Earlier, awards of appreciation and participation were given to officers and students of all the clubs by the guest speaker, Watkins.



CU'S MATH AND COMPUTER SCIENCE PROGRAMMING TEAM

The Foundation for California University helped to support the Math and Computer Science Programming Team that competed in the Spring 1992 PACISE Conference held in Edinboro.

Practicing before the actual competition were (Standing) George Novak from the math and computer science department, Joann Sarkett Naser, development director for the Foundation, team members Steve Knesovich, Chris Santo, and Anthony Verguldi, Jerry Blackmon, math and computer science department, and (seated) team member Christine Vuono. The CU team placed fourth in the over-all competition which featured teams from all fourteen of the sister institutions of the State System of Higher Education.

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Dorm Discussion Group
Wednesdays 9:15 P.M. - 316 McCloskey Hall

Daily Prayer Group
Monday thru Friday 12:00 to 12:30 P.M. - Stanley Rec Room

For More Information Call Jeremy At 938-5405

California University Marching Band

Silk & Dance Line Tryouts

Saturday, April 25 - 9 a.m.

Saturday, May 9 - 9 a.m.

Herron Hall

For additional information call
Band Director Max A. Gonano, 938-5942
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Choreographer Shelly J. Guerra, 938-8882



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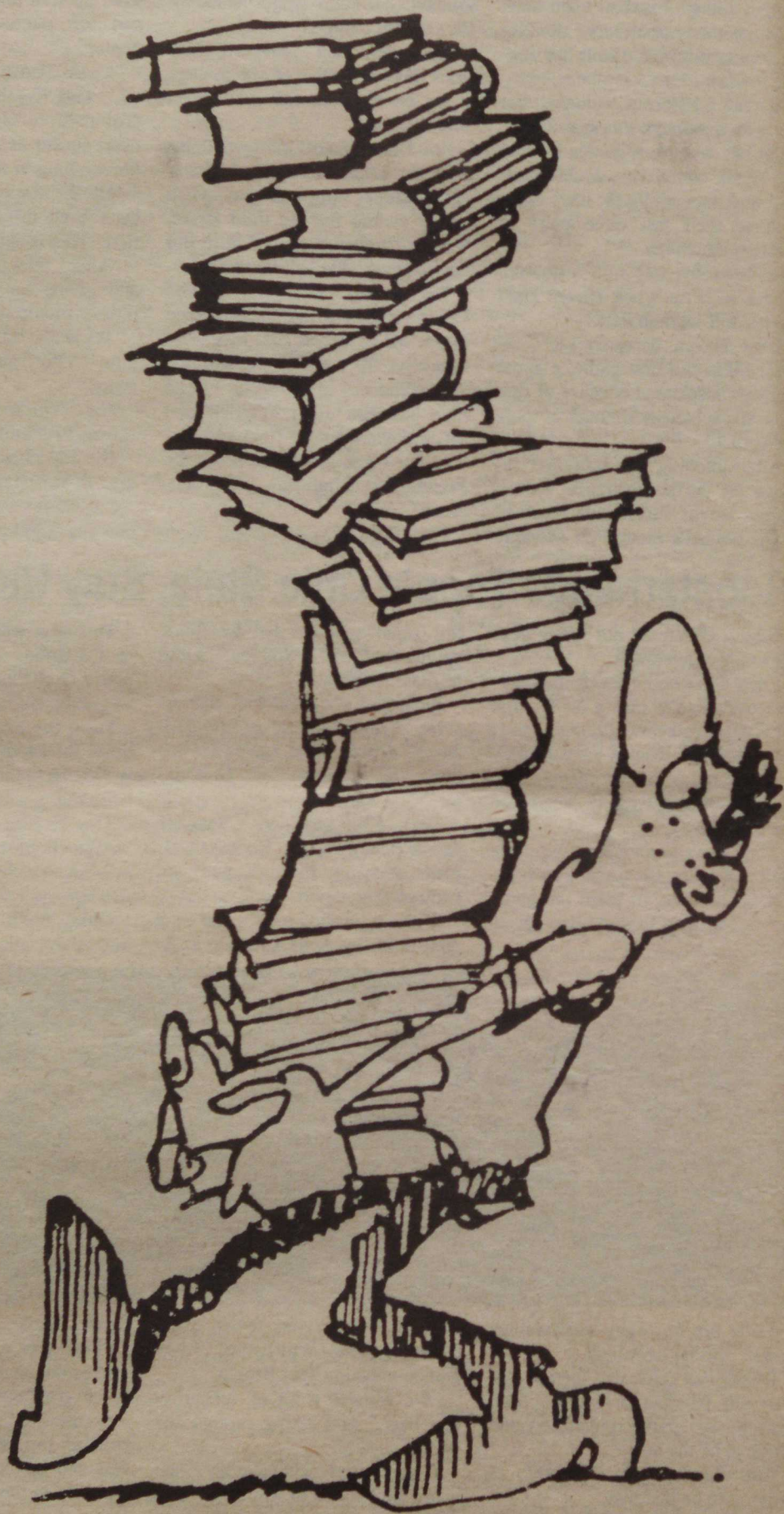
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