

There's a distinct feeling in the air.
It's more than the dank humidity of El Nino's first whispers. It's more than the anticipation of another quarter of intellect and inebriation. It's more than the muggy body heat oozing everywhere thanks to the university packing too damn many people in the tiny confines of campus and Isla Vista.

## $f 1$

...it truly is we who sculpt this planet's destiny.

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No, I'd say this feeling is much more than any of this. I'd say it's more of a rumble in the air, a tingling, a buzz, if you will. People are talking. And people are acting. It's almost as if we, as a community, are just starting to awaken, slowly rising to the massive potential we hold as students and as human beings. We are realizing more with each passing day that the each passing day that the
power to make positive power to make positive
change lies in our hands; that it truly is we who sculpt this planet's destiny.

The conduit of this power is embedded deep in communication, and not just through the popular mediums requiring electricity and paper. The most powerful method of spreading The Word is through the streets; the many ramblings we hear, from the slurring of stony keg party randoms to the bellows of Storke Plaza speakers, shape the way we see this oceanside hamlet and the world.
But within these many announcements, we often hear tidbits bearing no nutritional value to our intellectual physique. Many times, people try to hype up worthless causes just to provide fat for the masses to chew.
But together, we can see through this tainted talk that only riles bullshit politics. And in this column, our goal is to cut through that fat - and provide The Skinny.

And speaking of nutritional matters, upon moving into their Purple Pa lace offices, some of our Associated Students executive officers were surprised to find out that they would have to tighten their belts this
$\overline{\text { See SKINNY, p.3A }}$

Let The Daily Friday's Nick Robertson be your tour suide through our realm of the unexplained... UCSB's WORLD OF MYSTERY!!!
 THE CURSED
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in wooden chairs:


Photos by Alan Jacoby

## DOOM

Continued from p. 1 A
would lie unburied and unremembered till some titmouse or squirrel carried the corpses off to their unseen nest among the trees.
Yes, those battles were easy. But what kind of resistance could you expect from a bunch of dandelions? Scattered pockets of ragwort or onion grass might hide cowardly behind their ivy hostages, but with the way I was connected, they never had half a chance. Indeed, my lord's connever had half a chance. Indeed, my lord's con-
tract with the Department of Water and Power tract with the Department of Water and Power
had paid off well. With their help, even the baneful cedar hedge, whose sheer size and chemical defenses wounded my father and burned my brother, had been easily tamed from atop an alloy stepladder using my semiautomatic Black \& Decker.
But today's fighting would be different. Bristling with microcarbonate spines and towering 30 feet tall, the enemy I faced was far tougher than even the mightiest weedwacker. The closed ranks advanced slowly, like a glacier, a thin leafed jug gernaut that swallowed the border, smothering al in its path. The tool shed and tiki torches were already cut off and completely surrounded. The Weber and half the patio would soon suffer a similar fate unless somebody did something soon.
That somebody was me
Me alone.
Here in the Woods of Wessynton, today's combat would have to be fought the old fashioned way: muscle vs. meristem, brawn against bamboo. So as I sharpened the blade, once again did I prepare my soul for a day of massive violence
The act was as much a meditation as it wa tradition; the repeating metallic grind honing my focus, stropping away the blunting doubts and dulling compassion with each caress of the whetstone. I tested the edge with my thumb. The fearsome tool seemed almost eager, hungry even craving destruction.
Then the bell tolled. Its clang rippled distant and directionless through the damp air, announcing to God and everyone else within earshot that the Hour of Reckoning had arrived.
It was high time the invasive shrubbery taste my wrath.
I moved in to attack. Knuckles whitening, my fingers closed tighter around the age-old plant-
slayer in my right hand, as if in anticipation of the pain it was poised to unleash. Then, whistling through the sliced air like some vengeful demon cast down from the sky, the first sweeping arc of my cane knife carried it straight through three spindly antagonists in the front rank.

But they didn't fall.
Cut in two, with no possible hope of survival, they were held upright by their crowding comrades. So I pulled them down and flung them behind me. I hacked again. And again. Scores of others met their destiny like those before, and soon the dead and dying piled up in my wake, a ghastly tangle of the doomed, blocking my only path of escape. But there would be no escape for me today, only victory.
Or death.
I pressed my assault as the steel killer I swung sang out its glorious executioner's song with each impact. Yet for every six I slew; 60 more still stood against me, and already my sword arm was tiring.

My enemy could afford to take me apart slowly, piece by tiny piece, bit by tiny bit.

## g

## Spike-like extremities tore at my flesh and sought

 to pull me down, skewer me on a bed of razoredged pungi stakes where my enemy had stood, tall and defiant, only moments earlier.Mechanically, I fought on. The wounds I'd already taken were nothing compared to those I doled out, but they were adding up fast. Hundreds more would have to die before the legions of flora would be routed, but their numbers were so great, such losses meant nothing. My enemy could afford to take me apart slowly, piece by tiny piece, bit by tiny bit.

If it came to that.
Every crash of steel on stem seemed to jar my very bones now. Drawn like carrion birds to the smell of battle, the flies had already begun their feast on the sweat and blood weeping thickly from my skin like so many tears of rage. Endless ranks of vicious vegetation mocked my resolve.

Thousands of whispery voices taunted me, falling on my ears like the wind itself. The utter hopelessness of my struggle weighed heavily now, my will to fight slowly spiralling down an everwidening pit of despair.
But I would not yield, I could not stop.
Deep within all men exists a doorway, a hidden portal through which few ever pass, and fewer still return. Yet, those who survive the journey come back with knowledge of a certain power, a dark river of strength flowing cool and steady toward some vast, unknowable ocean. When these waters are tapped, they surge upward, flooding out and beyond, bringing the impossible suddenly within grasp.
I reached down and threw these gates wide open.
The same river which had carried my distant ancestors to dominion over this wild and unknown planet now pulsed powerfully in my veins. Ascending the granite throne carved into that stony peak high atop the landscape of the mind, all pain and fatigue were washed downstream, filling some remote valley far, far below.
The machete became almost an extension of my will. Over and again the black blade rose and fell, cleaving a trail of triumph and leaving behind me a path of unthinkable devastation. I was a berserker amok, killing bamboo like a rabid panda on a ravenous return from Hell.

The horde of verdure was thinning now. At once, I realized I'd long since crossed all boundaries.
In my fury, I had taken this war deep beyond the lands the Autarch had charged me to defend. As my battle-lust ebbed, I took a long look at the fruit of my struggle. Once again my eyes swam in the pulpy anguish my own hands had inflicted. Thunderclouds glowed crimson in the tired light of a fast-sinking sun, red as the shredded meat on my exhausted arms. I threw down the blade.
It lodged upright, quivering in the damp earth, waiting eagerly for another hand to pick it up and carry on with the killing. The cicadas began their nightly chorus, as if to cheer my supremacy in this twisted arena of death. Turning my back on the vanquished, I carefully picked my way through the lifeless litter of my dreadful harvest, and headed home.
I needed the rest. Cleanup operations would begin tomorrow. $\infty$


## SKINNY

Continued from p.2A year. According to the 1997-98 A.S. budget provided by the administrative office, the post of external vice president for local affairs, held by Leila Salazar, took a $\$ 450$ cut from last year's budget. And the vice president for statewide affairs, Felicia Perez, took a whopping $\$ 2,070$ chop from the previous year's funding.
This may not seem like very much money, but keep in mind the nature of these offices. Salazar's post is the one most directly involved with Isla Vista, a region the university often treats like an unwanted mutant stepchild. Keeping over 10,000 I.V student residents informed about local issues takes a lor of dedication-and money. And Perez's office inherently demands travel expenses throughout the year for the monthly UC Regents meetings and related affairs. She is our only direct A.S. link to the UC Student As-
sociation, often the only organization that tands up for

tre up to things fishy. If

or has an extra 86,902 to TheA.S. main office the scantly-funded Women's Journal 10 Makes you wonde setting the prioritics there.

## Nonetheless, Salaza

## with what they've got,

 hough they may have to the year. Without regaining at least some of the money they lost, the two are severely restricted in working on their projects, which include plans to inform students of their rights when dealing with our beloved I.V. Foot Patrol and a possible hotline to voice local police complaints.And it is high time that we, as students, have somewhere to turn when we feel violated by our own police force. Right now, the only place to file a complaint against an I.V. Foot Patrol officer is at their very headquarters, where Lt . Geoff Banks (who is actually a very friendly guy) is eager to hear any stories you have to tell. I went to speak with Banks myself earlier this summer, after 1 was fondled and illegally searched by one of the UC Police Dept.'s finest. It was an August Friday night of light drinking and heavy conversation, and after I had split off from my friends, I decided to take a late night beach-cruiser journey.
After riding for a few mi-
nutes, I noticed one officer was pulling over bikes en nasse, and so I made every effort to ride to the letter of the law.
Of course, the officer noticed this suspicious allegiance to the law, and pulled me over immediately. He asked the standard questions; did I have any I.D. No.") and had I been frinking ("I had a beet about anhour ago."). And then, he
atered the line. ng, I'm all for bike y, but was pretty taken
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His next action, , was too much.
fter feeling the change
se in my leff fre se in my leff front pocket,
taining about 37 cent taing lucky domino, he reached into my pocket and seized the pouch. "Officer, I aid not give you consent to esponded that he had fe something similar to a knife in his search and now he had probable cause. After not finding the drugs or other contraband he was expecting ne to carry, he returned my belongings and told me to be on my way.

But I didn't let this travesty of justice end until 'd gotten Johnny Law's real name. Remember, even if you are being dragged away by six not cops as they beat you senseless with their batons and taser guns, you still have the right to know their names, so don't hesitate to ask for their card. Thanks to this right I was able to report he cocky constable to Banks, who said he'd talk to the Right People. Nonetheess, keep an eye out when stumbling down Del Playa Drive -"No Tolerance" is in effect.
$+\quad+$
There's another reason to keep an eye out on Del Playa - as many of us already know, our friendly community slumlords want to build a massive seawall along the length of the entire I.V. beach.
The next phase of approval lies in the hands of our County Board of Supervisors. There is a slight chance that they'll deny the project and tell the landowners to look into other (possibly gfection), ways to slow the ineviable crosion. But it's gonna take a frrong stance on the part of us
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