



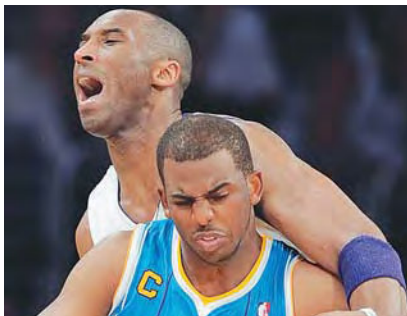
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# Want to go to CSULB? Good luck

**TREND:** South Bay students find little room as 'promise' to Long Beach prevails.

By Rob Kuznia Staff Writer

Kate Gray, the senior class president at South High School in Torrance, wasn't surprised this month to learn that even though she'd been accepted at UC Santa Cruz, her application to California State University, Long Beach was rejected. "A lot of people at South, they just kind of apply there and know they are not going to get in," she said. The Long Beach campus was once a fairly common option for South Bay students heading off to college. But

now, that practically neighborhood campus might as well be located across the state. In recent years, the number of South Bay students attending Long Beach State has fallen precipitously, both among recent high school graduates and community college transfer students. At El Camino College near Torrance, the drop has been so severe — by more than half in two years — that the school's president recently wrote a letter to CSU Chancellor Charles Reed requesting better treatment. "We're all about student success, and this is certainly not helping students be successful," said El Camino spokeswoman Ann Garten. The trend is the product of two

main phenomena: exploding demand that set in a few years ago and the more recent budget crisis plaguing the state. The situation is expected to get worse before it gets better. That's because a wave of deep budget cuts is forcing the entire CSU system to shave enrollment by a combined 10,000 students next year — even as demand continues to surge. "We have unprecedented demand, and the budget is forcing us to take fewer people," said Vincent Novack, CSU Long Beach's assistant vice president of institutional research and assessment. Like many of the CSU system's 23 campuses, CSU Long Beach responded to rising demand in 2002,

when it began granting preference to high school students in its immediate area. The school often refers to the policy as the "Long Beach Promise." For instance, at Lakewood High in the Long Beach school district this past fall, 86 percent of the students who applied to CSU Long Beach were accepted. At South High, where test scores are much higher, the success rate was just 42 percent. Meanwhile, students in the South Bay do not benefit from such a promise, because the only four-year school in the area — CSU Dominguez Hills in Carson — is among the handful of CSU schools in the state not to extend preference to local students. This year, access to CSU Long Beach for nonlocals grew even more

difficult than in prior years, as the entry requirements for them steepened again. Even before this year, the policy put a big dent in the number of South Bay students going to CSU Long Beach. From 2001 to 2009, the number of graduates from Torrance's four high schools enrolling there as freshmen shrank from 130 to 45, according to state figures. The corresponding figure at Redondo Union and Mira Costa high schools decreased from a combined 47 to 11; at the two Palos Verdes Peninsula high schools, from 28 to 13. Even more pronounced has been the reduction in the number of El **CSU A9**

## SAN PEDRO. THE 700-POUND 'PUSSYCAT'



Steve McCrank Staff Photographer

Dr. Laura Palmer feeds "Big Guy," a 700-pound sea lion who has been living at the Marine Mammal Care Center in San Pedro for a year. Because he's blind, he can't be released into the wild, and the center fears it won't be able to shelter him much longer.

# Blind sea lion's in a bind

## 'Big Guy' is loved, but marine care center can't keep him

By Sandy Mazza Staff Writer

He's tall, dark and handsome in a blubbery, whiskered, scarred kind of way. This 700-pound California bull sea lion is so charismatic that he's even charmed women outside his own species. And his ability to get along with every mammal he meets has literally saved his life — for now. Staff members at the Marine Mam-

mal Care Center in San Pedro named him Big Guy because he's what you could call big-boned. In the wild, Big Guy would claim a beach as his territory and have a harem of about a dozen females during breeding season. But he has one fatal flaw. Big Guy's totally blind. "His corneas are completely opaque and there are deep scars from lacerations on his eyes," said Dr. Laura

Palmer, the center's veterinarian. "One eye is rotated downward. The muscles around it are damaged." Peter Wallerstein, a local marine animal rescuer, found Big Guy on a Santa Monica beach last winter suffering from both blindness and a massive gash to his mouth. Wallerstein and several lifeguards worked together to coax the giant pinniped

**BIG GUY A9**

# Storm system slams NC with 60 tornadoes

**WEATHER:** At least 45 have been killed by twisters across half the nation.

By Brock Vergakis and Emery P. Dalesio  
The Associated Press

ASKEWVILLE, N.C. — A tornado-spewing storm system that killed at least 45 people across half the country unleashed its worst fury on North Carolina, where homes broke apart, trees snapped and livestock were swept into the air. Residents in Raleigh — the capital city — and rural hamlets alike on Sunday mourned the dead, marveled at their own survival and began to clean up devastated neighborhoods. Observers reported more than 60 tornadoes across North Carolina on Saturday, but most of the state's 21 confirmed deaths occurred in two rural counties. A thunderstorm spawned a tornado that killed four people in southeastern Bladen County, then kept dropping tornadoes as it hoppedscotched more than 150 miles, eventually moving into Bertie County and killing 11 more. Heavy winds swept some homes from their foundations, demolished others and flipped cars on tiny rural roads between Askeville and Colerain, Bertie County Manager Zee Lamb said. At least three of

those who died were from the same family, he said. The winds ripped to shreds the doublewide mobile home in Askeville where Justin Dunlow had sought shelter for his 3-year-old daughter, 5-year-old son and himself. The 23-year-old roofer, whose own mobile home nearby also was destroyed, lay on both children as the storm did its worst. "I just started praying, and the wall fell on top of us and that's what kept us there," he said. "I can replace the house, but I can't replace my babies. And that's what I thought about. I'm alive. My babies are alive." In Bladen County, Milton McKoy had thought his mobile home in Ammon was out of the storm's path before he saw a tornado over the tops of pine trees, lifting pigs and other animals into the sky. "It looked just like 'The Wizard of Oz,'" said his wife, Audrey. The couple took shelter in the laundry room as the tornado snapped trees and carried off several homes in the neighborhood. When they stepped out, it took them a moment to figure out the twister had turned their own home around, leaving them in the backyard. The violent weather began Thursday in Oklahoma, where two people

**WEATHER A9**

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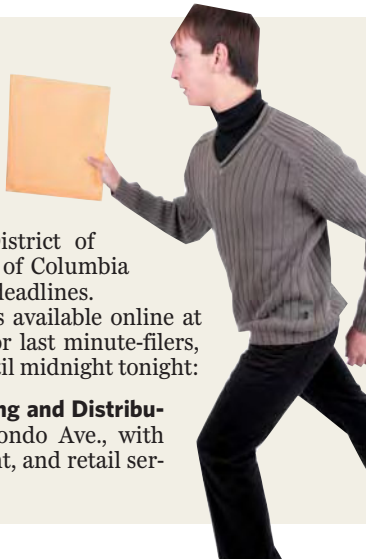
Some post offices across Los Angeles County will stay open late today to accommodate people trying to get their tax returns in the mail before the midnight deadline.

Taxpayers have had an three extra days to file this year because Emancipation Day, a holiday observed on April 15 in the District of Columbia, fell on a Friday. By law, according to the IRS, District of Columbia holidays have the same impact as federal holidays on tax filing deadlines.

Most post offices will be open for regular hours. Information is available online at [www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com) or by calling 800-ASK-USPS (800-275-8777). But for last minute-filers, the following local post offices will extend their collection hours until midnight tonight:

**Airport Station**, 9029 Airport Blvd., Westchester, with mail collection and retail service until midnight.

**Long Beach Processing and Distribution Center**, 2300 Redondo Ave., with collection until midnight, and retail service until 7 p.m.





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Transfer students

The number of El Camino students transferring into California State University, Long Beach, has fallen steeply in recent years. This chart reflects the number of El Camino students transferring into various CSU and UC schools over the past six years.

| UC SYSTEM       | 2004-2005 | 2005-2006 | 2006-2007 | 2007-2008 | 2008-2009 | 2009-2010 |
|-----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Berkeley        | 23        | 25        | 21        | 47        | 36        | 38        |
| Davis           | 5         | 8         | 4         | 10        | 5         | 10        |
| Irvine          | 52        | 42        | 60        | 55        | 47        | 59        |
| Los Angeles     | 131       | 141       | 116       | 133       | 113       | 162       |
| Merced          | —         | 3         | 1         | 1         | 3         | 4         |
| Riverside       | 12        | 22        | 14        | 17        | 14        | 25        |
| San Diego       | 20        | 26        | 26        | 39        | 37        | 45        |
| Santa Barbara   | 23        | 32        | 25        | 13        | 33        | 28        |
| Santa Cruz      | 11        | 10        | 5         | 8         | 8         | 6         |
| Total transfers | 277       | 309       | 272       | 323       | 296       | 377       |

| CAL STATE SYSTEM | 2004-2005 | 2005-2006 | 2006-2007 | 2007-2008 | 2008-2009 | 2009-2010 |
|------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Pomona           | 30        | 44        | 47        | 29        | 33        | 22        |
| Dominguez Hills  | 337       | 358       | 349       | 346       | 385       | 395       |
| Fullerton        | 100       | 69        | 83        | 99        | 82        | 75        |
| Long Beach       | 369       | 342       | 449       | 434       | 315       | 180       |
| Los Angeles      | 91        | 90        | 74        | 90        | 83        | 55        |
| Northridge       | 40        | 50        | 55        | 55        | 44        | 75        |
| San Diego        | 9         | 31        | 30        | 29        | 24        | 7         |
| Total transfers  | 976       | 984       | 1,087     | 1,082     | 966       | 809       |

Source: California Postsecondary Education Commission Paul Penzella Staff Artist

CSU

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Camino College students who transferred into CSU Long Beach as juniors. From fall 2007 to fall 2009, the figure dropped from 434 to 180. In 2009-10, El Camino students were almost as likely to transfer into UCLA as CSU Long Beach, with 162 of them heading off to Bruins country.

Officials from CSU Long Beach have fielded plenty of complaints about the issue, but say they are only trying to do well by the students in their area.

"I think we get kind of a bad rap on this," Novack said. "This campus is really bending over backwards to accommodate our local area."

The number of freshmen applicants at CSU Long Beach has more than doubled in a decade, to nearly 48,000 this past fall. Meanwhile, the number of students who enrolled there actually shrank during that time, from about 4,500 to nearly 4,000.

The flood of applicants is partly due to a mini baby boom that swept through California's high schools in the latter 2000s, as well as the fact that more and more students have designs on going to college.

As for the local high school

students in and around Long Beach, they still must meet minimum standards to qualify for a CSU school. For high school graduates, this means getting a minimum of a C in all required course work. Students who get a single D are often out of luck.

For students living outside the area, the GPAs and SAT scores must be higher. (For some fields that are in especially high demand — such as nursing — even students in the area need to achieve the higher scores.)

As for Gray, the senior class president at South High, getting rejected from CSU Long Beach might mean that she will go to a community college next fall, even though she was accepted at UC Santa Cruz.

"As of now, my family can't afford a UC," she said, adding that she is pinning her hopes on San Diego State, which still hasn't given her final word.

Gray, who expects to finish high school with a 3.8 GPA, said she wanted to go to Long Beach not only because it's close to home, but also because she wants to be a teacher, and the school boasts a stellar education program.

"It would just be a very good school for me," she said, "but I guess it's not in the cards."

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WEATHER

FROM PAGE A1

died, before cutting across the Deep South on Friday and hitting North Carolina and Virginia on Saturday. Authorities said seven people died in Arkansas; seven in Alabama; seven in Virginia; and one in Mississippi.

More than 240 tornadoes were reported from the storm system, including 62 in North Carolina, but the National Weather Service's final numbers could be lower because some tornadoes may have been reported more than once.

Saturday was North Carolina's deadliest day for tornadoes since 1984, when 22 twisters killed 42 people and injured hundreds. The state emergency management agency said it had reports of 23 fatalities from Saturday's storms, but local officials confirmed only 21 deaths with The Associated Press.

The conditions that allowed for the storm occur on the Great Plains maybe twice a year, but they almost never happen in North Carolina, according to Scott Sharp, a meteorologist in Raleigh.

The atmosphere was unstable, which allows air to rise and fall quickly, creating winds of hurricane strength or greater. There was also plenty of moisture, which acts as fuel for the violent storms. Shear winds at different heights, moving in different directions, created the spin needed to create tornadoes, Sharp said.

In Virginia, local emergency officials reported seven storm-related deaths, said



Thomas Babb The News & Observer An aerial photo shows the damage to a Lowe's Home Improvement Center in Sanford, N.C., after Saturday's tornado system ripped through the region.

state emergency management spokesman Bob Spieldenner.

Spieldenner said the state medical examiner's office confirmed two people died in Gloucester County, where a tornado hit; two died in flash flooding in Waynesboro; and one person died in Wythe County when a tree fell on a mobile home. Officials were still investigating a death in Page County and one more reported in Gloucester County.

North Carolina officials have tallied

more than 130 serious injuries, 65 homes destroyed and another 600 significantly damaged in North Carolina, according to state public safety spokeswoman Julia Jarema. Officials expect those totals to climb as damage assessments continue.

Gov. Beverly Perdue declared a state of emergency. After spending much of Sunday touring hard-hit areas, including downtown Raleigh, she said that despite her experience with natural disasters, the damage this time was so hard to bear it nearly brought her to tears.

BIG GUY

FROM PAGE A1

into a net. They then lifted him with a crane onto a boat, and into Wallerstein's truck to be delivered to the Marine Mammal Care Center.

Palmer can only guess how he got his injuries — a fight with another bull, cat-racts or possibly an attack from a fisherman.

When Big Guy was brought to the center on Feb. 6, 2010, Palmer had to decide whether he would live or die. He could not be released back to the wild blind. Luckily for him, she found his easygoing nature endearing.

"I hesitated to euthanize him," said Palmer. "He was so gentle, and he seemed like such a magnificent animal."

She made a decision to try to find the bull sea lion a permanent home at a zoo. A year later, Palmer has had no luck, and Big Guy still resides at the center. Palmer is anxious that she is running out of time to save him.

"He would love to have the Pacific Ocean again but it's just not in the cards," she said. "These nonreleasable animals have no place to go."

Now, he stays in a pen at the center with a 6-foot-deep pool and five sickly

female sea lions. One lost a flipper, one is missing an eye, and the others are recovering from domoic acid poisoning — the result of a toxic algae that essentially eats away at the sufferer's brains, causing seizures and extreme confusion.

Volunteers and visitors at the center have gotten used to his large presence.

Bill Marks, an 11-year volunteer, said he hopes Big Guy finds a home.

"He's been pretty much a pussycat the whole time he's been here," Marks said. "I can't understand why someone won't take him. He's magnificent."

Palmer doesn't know how much longer the National Marine Fisheries Service will allow her to continue to house Big Guy because the center serves only as a temporary home for rehabilitating animals.

Blindness is normally a death sentence for seals and seal lions that arrive at the center after they are found sickly or near death on local beaches.

The Marine Mammal Care Center has several enclosed pools, and relies on dozens of dedicated volunteers to nurse patients back to health until they can be returned to the ocean.

Big Guy seems comfortable in his temporary home. He regularly swims laps around the pool in his pen, easily bumping other smaller sea lions near him out of his way. Male sea lions rarely come to

the center, and they can grow to be up to three times larger than females.

Center staff members have trained him to jump in and out of the water on command, and they hand feed him so that he will be comfortable around humans if he is adopted by a zoo.

Big Guy weighed about 450 pounds when he arrived at the center last year. He is now about 700 pounds, and is on a diet of four pounds of fish a day, Palmer said.

She does not know how old Big Guy is, but as an adult, he is at least 5 years old. Sea lions live 20 to 30 years.

The center has recently been inundated with sick animals because of a domoic acid outbreak and the start of baby elephant seal season. Dozens of 2- and 3-month-old elephant seals can be heard shrieking like monkeys throughout the day, but Big Guy doesn't seem bothered by the noise.

His new female roommates have brought out a different side of him, Palmer said. Though normally silent, he has started making grunting noises around the ladies.

"I think he's saying he's the big man on the beach," Palmer said. "He rules wherever he goes. He hasn't found anyone who is a threat to him."

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